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Guest Editor / Rédactrice Invitée :
Marie Nathalie LeBlanc

Anthropology in the Era of New Information and Communication Technologies: New Explorations / L'anthropologie à l'ère des nouvelles technologies de l'information et de la communication : nouvelles explorations

Editorial Policy

Open to contributors from Canada and abroad, *Anthropologica* publishes in French and English, articles and reviews in all areas of cultural and social anthropology. All manuscripts are refereed anonymously by two reviewers.

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Cover / Couverture

Note de rédactrice / From the Editor

Cela fait maintenant presque un an que j'ai accepté le poste de rédactrice en chef de cette vénérable publication et, perchée sur les épaules de mes illustres prédécesseurs, je commence à avoir pied, voire à trouver ma voix. Je suis particulièrement reconnaissante à Andrew Lyons, notre précédent rédacteur en chef, pour son mentorat et sa disponibilité sans faille à répondre à mes appels à l'aide, à Leslie Jermyn, notre rédactrice-administratrice de longue date et à Michelle Wyndham-West, qui a sauté au pied levé pour remplacer Leslie à son départ. Avec l'ensemble de nos éditeurs, nous constituons une équipe solide, et le journal est entre bonnes mains. En novembre 2011, nous avons présenté *Anthropologica* à la conférence annuelle de l'American Anthropological Association (AAA) à Montréal, dont les membres nous ont chaleureusement accueillis, certains nous saluant comme de vieux amis tandis que d'autres nous découvraient comme nouveaux compagnons de voyage. Plusieurs parmi nos collègues de l'AAA et nos membres de la CASCA ont l'intention de soumettre le texte de leur communication au comité d'*Anthropologica*. Cette conférence nous fournit deux thèmes pour des éditions à venir : *Bons esprits, bonne médecine, fondements de l'art des guérisseurs dans les religions caraïbes* avec les rédacteurs invités George Brandon et Leslie Desmangles; *Montrealology/ Montréalologie* avec la rédactrice invitée Martha Radice; et de CASCA 2011, nous retenons le thème : *Le temps et l'expert : les temporalités et la vie sociale du savoir expert* avec les rédactrices invitées Jean Mitchell et Alexandra Widmer. Nous assemblons aussi une brillante collection d'articles individuels dans chaque numéro, et planifions d'inclure davantage de photos pour accompagner certains articles. La préparation de CASCA 2012 va très bien, ce qui n'a évidemment rien pour nous surprendre, et nous comptons sur le plaisir de vous revoir toutes et tous à Edmonton.

Naomi McPherson

It is almost a year since I took on the appointment as Editor-in-Chief of this venerable journal and, while I stand on the shoulders of the Editors who have preceded me, I am beginning to find my feet and, dare I say, my voice. I am very grateful to Andrew Lyons, our previous Editor-in-Chief, for his mentorship and on-going responsiveness to my occasional holler for help, to Leslie Jermyn our long-standing Managing Editor and to Michelle Wyndham-West who stepped into the breach as Managing Editor when Leslie departed. With the rest of our Editors we constitute a solid team and the journal is in good hands. In November 2011, we took *Anthropologica* to the American Anthropological Association (AAA) Annual Meeting in Montreal where we were warmly received by the AAA membership, some of whom greeted us as an old friend and many others as a newly discovered fellow traveller. Many of our American colleagues and our CASCA members are planning to submit their AAA conference papers to *Anthropologica* for consideration. Two upcoming themes from the meetings include *Good Spirit, Good Medicine: Foundations of Healing in Caribbean Religions* with Guest Editors George Brandon and Leslie Desmangles; *Montrealology/ Montréalologie* with Guest Editor Martha Radice; and, from CASCA 2011 we have *Time and the Expert: Temporalities and the Social Life of Expert Knowledge* with Guest Editors Jean Mitchell and Alexandra Widmer. We are also gathering a brilliant array of individual articles in every issue, and are planning to include more photos to accompany an author's article.

CASCA 2012 is rolling along splendidly, not "unexpectedly" of course, and we look forward to seeing you all in Edmonton.

Naomi McPherson

Thematic Section
Anthropology in the Era of New Information and Communication Technologies: New Explorations

Marie Nathalie LeBlanc *Université du Québec à Montréal*

Recent dynamics of cultural globalization as well as the emergence of Internet networks have given rise to a plethora of anthropological works in the 1990s on issues regarding new information and communication technologies (NICTs). Many of the studies published to date focus on the construction of cyberspaces, their uses, and their impact on local sociocultural dynamics and on the sociopolitical forces of globalization. The five articles by Boudreault-Fournier, Traoré, Guïoux and Lasserre, Meintel, and de Bruijn and van Dijk, included in this theme section aim to revisit the question of NICTs with an emphasis on the epistemological, methodological and ethical significance of these technologies for the practice of contemporary anthropology. To do so, the articles examine how communication technologies reconfigure representations and practices of individuals and groups. They also assess to what extent these new resources may reconfigure the anthropologists' practices, taking into account how the use of virtual tools in the transmission of local knowledge. Finally, the five articles explore the various styles of texts in anthropology that have emerged in relation to media aesthetics and existing tools of information and communication. The five articles came out of papers presented at a symposium funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Council of Canada that was part of the CASCA 2010 annual conference in Montreal.

Section thématique
L'anthropologie à l'ère des nouvelles technologies de l'information et de la communication : nouvelles explorations

Marie Nathalie LeBlanc *Université du Québec à Montréal*

Les dynamiques récentes de la mondialisation culturelles et la mise en place du réseau Internet ont suscité dans les années 1990 plusieurs travaux anthropologiques portant sur les enjeux des nouvelles technologies de l'information et de la communication (NTIC). Toutefois, la grande majorité de ces travaux traitent de la constitution du cyberespace, ses usages et ses effets, ainsi que sur l'articulation entre les dynamiques socioculturelles locales et les forces sociopolitiques de la mondialisation. Les articles de Boudreault-Fournier, Traoré, Guïoux et Lasserre, Meintel, et de Bruijn et van Dijk réexaminent la question des NTIC en centrant la réflexion sur les enjeux épistémologiques, méthodologiques et éthiques que comportent les NTIC pour la pratique contemporaine de l'anthropologie. Pour ce faire, les cinq articles sondent comment les technologies de la communication réorganisent les représentations et pratiques des individus et groupes dans une perspective réflexive qui tente d'évaluer dans quelle mesure ces nouvelles possibilités technologiques peuvent recomposer le travail de l'anthropologue. Les auteurs portent aussi attention aux rôles et à l'impact des espaces virtuels créés par les NTICs dans la construction et la transmission interculturelles des savoirs locaux et anthropologiques. Finalement, les articles soulèvent la question des différents styles de textes anthropologiques qui émergent face à l'esthétique des NTIC dans un contexte où l'accessibilité des outils d'enregistrements audio-visuels (de la caméra vidéo au cellulaire) interpellent des nouvelles avenues d'exploration anthropologique en plus de créer des défis majeurs d'un point de vue éthique. Les cinq articles proviennent de communication présentées dans le cadre d'un symposium financé par le Conseil de recherche en science sociales et humaines tenu dans le cadre de CASCA 2010 à Montréal.

Écho d'une rencontre virtuelle : Vers une ethnographie de la production audiovisuelle

Alexandrine Boudreault-Fournier *University of Oxford*

Résumé : *Écho* est le nom d'un projet ethnographique qui a pour but de créer un « espace de correspondance » dans lequel deux artistes cubains accomplis (l'un vivant à Montréal et l'autre à Santiago de Cuba) se rencontrent sur une scène virtuelle pour composer une pièce musicale originale. Au-delà du défi technique, compte tenu des limitations imposées par l'île socialiste, cette expérience stimule le thème de « terre natale » comme source d'inspiration, en créant un espace intersubjectif d'échanges entre deux musiciens qui partagent les mêmes racines. En s'appuyant sur une démarche anthropologique qui emprunte au concept des arts relationnels, cet article analyse le processus de création d'un lieu virtuel de rencontre ainsi que les défis technologiques qui s'y rattachent. L'adoption d'une méthodologie qui prend en compte les concepts d'esthétique et la technologie permet de mettre en évidence des champs de recherche sous l'angle d'une approche créatrice jusqu'à présent sous-estimée en anthropologie.

Mots-clés : Boudreault-Fournier, anthropologie visuelle, technologie, création, arts relationnels, expérimentation, terrain ethnographique

Abstract: *Écho* is the name of an ethnographic project whose aim is to create a "space of correspondence" in which two accomplished Cuban artists (one living in Montreal and the other in Santiago de Cuba) meet on a virtual stage to compose an original piece of music. Beyond a technical challenge, given the limitations characterizing the socialist island, this experiment develops on the theme of the "native land" as a source of inspiration by creating an intersubjective space of exchange between two musicians who share the same roots. Based on an anthropological approach that borrows from the concept of relational art, this article explores the process of creation of a virtual space of encounter, as well as the technological challenges related to it. The text, by adopting a methodology that considers the concepts of aesthetics and technology seriously, allows one to raise areas of research using a creative approach that has, up to now, been underestimated in anthropology.

Keywords: Boudreault-Fournier, visual anthropology, technology, creation, relational arts, experimentation, ethnographic fieldwork

Introduction

Dans son récent article « Contemporary Fieldwork Aesthetics in Art and Anthropology: Experiments in Collaboration and Intervention », George Marcus (2010) établit les ressemblances et dissimilitudes entre le terrain ethnographique et le processus de création d'espace du point de vue de la démarche artistique. Les anthropologues, suggère-t-il, devraient s'inspirer de cette approche comme une manière alternative d'imaginer « la rencontre » qui caractérise le terrain ethnographique. *Écho* est un exemple concret d'un projet en cours qui utilise des outils technologiques de pointe pour explorer des dimensions de représentation et d'esthétique à l'intérieur d'une démarche ethnographique, tout en s'inspirant du domaine des arts visuels[1].

Depuis *Writing Culture* (Clifford et Marcus 1986) et la crise de la représentation des années 1980 qui s'en est suivi, la majorité des développements expérimentaux ont été effectués dans le domaine de l'écriture et de l'ethnographie. Marcus ajoute que jusque dans les années 1990, les anthropologues n'ont pas exploré d'une manière cohérente la notion d'esthétique en rapport avec le contenu ethnographique et qu'une appropriation radicale du visuel[2] aurait le potentiel d'élargir les avenues de recherche (Calzadilla et Marcus 2006:96; Marcus 2010). Ainsi, le projet *Écho*, tel que présenté dans cet article, se donne pour but d'investiguer les notions de représentation audiovisuelle à travers un processus intersubjectif qui repose sur l'utilisation de nouvelles technologies – la vidéo caméra HD, l'enregistrement audio numérique et le montage.

Selon cette démarche, les technologies audiovisuelles comprenant caméra et son numérique ne sont pas considérées comme de simples outils d'enregistrement. Elles sont en fait utilisées de façon à favoriser le potentiel des approches exploratoires de la représentation et de la production d'image et de son dans un contexte anthropologique. En d'autres termes, les technologies utilisées

dans ce projet ethnographique nous permettent de nous interroger sur, et d'expérimenter des aires de recherche nouvelles qui sont encore sous-développées en anthropologie et dans les sciences sociales.

Le projet *Écho* nous permet de surcroît d'établir les fondements d'une ethnographie de la production audiovisuelle ainsi qu'une esthétique de la relation en anthropologie. Cet article vise à présenter le contenu et les objectifs de ce projet, et de discuter des dimensions technologiques en relation avec notre démarche. Nous illustrons ainsi le potentiel qu'offre l'utilisation de nouvelles technologies de captation en explorant les thématiques suivantes : le rôle de l'anthropologue dans la création d'un espace virtuel de rencontre intersubjectif ainsi que la dimension créatrice de son implication dans le processus par l'entremise des technologies – plutôt que l'anthropologue en tant que contemplateur ou participant. Nous mettons enfin en évidence une avenue de recherche prometteuse qui émerge du projet *Écho*, soit les dynamiques de diaspora et de nostalgie de la terre natale.

Le projet *Écho*

C'est en janvier 2010 que Marie-Josée Proulx – cinéaste indépendante et étudiante diplômée en anthropologie à l'Université de Montréal – et moi-même avons imaginé *Écho*[3]. Ce projet ethnographique avait pour but de permettre à deux musiciens cubains, l'un vivant à Montréal et l'autre à Santiago de Cuba, de se rencontrer virtuellement en différé grâce au médium vidéo, dans le but de créer une pièce musicale originale. Un montage vidéo a permis l'intégration des deux musiciens sur une même trame audiovisuelle en donnant l'impression qu'ils performaient côte-à-côte sur la même scène.

Ce projet soulevait, entre autres, un défi technique puisque les conditions d'éclairage, de son et de production devaient être identiques dans les deux contextes afin de jumeler parfaitement les différentes images sur un même plan, et de créer l'effet désiré. Avant de nous pencher sur les aspects techniques, examinons les aspects conceptuels et méthodologiques de ce projet.

Au moyen d'une caméra, nous avons provoqué une collaboration entre musiciens qui aurait autrement été difficile à réaliser, même à l'heure des technologies globalisantes que nous connaissons. Grâce au médium de l'Internet, les collaborations de création entre artistes qui sont séparés par de grandes distances sont devenues monnaie courante. Cependant, le cas de Cuba nous rappelle que l'accès universel à Internet et à la haute vitesse est loin d'être acquis. En raison de l'embargo américain qui oblige Cuba à dépendre des satellites, l'île est reconnue comme ayant une des connexions Internet les plus lentes au monde[4]. Par conséquent, les sites et plages d'information et de communication qui nécessitent des connexions à haute vitesse demeurent difficilement accessibles à Cuba. Même si une légère ouverture dans le domaine des télécommunications a été annoncée en mars 2008[5], seule une minorité de Cubains a accès à ce moyen de communication et d'information (voir Venegas 2010). Au-delà des limites structurelles, des restrictions idéologiques compliquent l'accès libre à Internet (et aux autres sources d'information telles la radio et la presse écrite). Les visites à l'étranger demeurent par ailleurs limitées et dépendent d'invitations formelles provenant de l'extérieur. Enfin, les appels internationaux sont extrêmement coûteux[6]. Ainsi, en créant un espace et un moment virtuel partagé, nous avons agi comme des entremetteuses[7] entre des acteurs qui n'auraient autrement pas eu la possibilité de collaborer ensemble pour la production d'une pièce originale.

Le projet *Écho* a été conçu en trois étapes avec comme objectif de nourrir une relation intersubjective entre deux musiciens. La première étape, qui a été réalisée en janvier 2010, consistait à enregistrer un musicien cubain vivant à Montréal selon des paramètres de son, d'éclairage et de contexte bien précis. Le trompettiste d'origine cubaine Eduardo Sánchez, qui vit à Montréal depuis plus de 12 ans, a accepté de participer à notre projet. Eduardo provient d'une famille de musiciens et est trompettiste depuis plus de 20 ans. À Cuba, il a été membre de groupes de musique populaire tel que Son 14 avec lequel il a fait plusieurs tournées internationales. À cause de son expérience à la fois musicale et diasporique, il était clair pour nous qu'Eduardo s'avérait le candidat idéal pour se prêter à cet exercice, car le projet tel que conçu demandait une précision d'exécution et une grande spontanéité musicale. Une fois Eduardo informé de l'objectif de notre démarche, nous lui avons demandé de jouer des pièces originales ou des extraits de thèmes qu'il affectionnait. Durant l'enregistrement qui a duré plus de 3 heures à la Sala Rossa à Montréal, Eduardo a joué presqu'exclusivement des extraits de thèmes cubains connus tels que *La Comparsa*. En vue d'arriver à l'effet visuel désiré, nous avons de plus demandé à Eduardo de prendre des pauses, d'écouter et de réagir à un musicien imaginaire jouant sur la scène à ses côtés (photo 1).

Grâce aux images recueillies au cours de l'étape 1, nous avons réalisé le montage d'un clip de 1:21 minute au cours duquel Eduardo interprète une série d'extraits musicaux, ainsi qu'une partie improvisée. Eduardo est seul sur scène, mais quand on visionne le clip on peut facilement imaginer une présence invisible à ses côtés[8]. Ce premier clip vidéo répondait à deux objectifs : tout

Photo 1 : Écho : Phase 1. Complicité. Eduardo Sánchez. Photo : Simon Couturier

d'abord nous familiariser avec la technologie; et ensuite, développer un outil qui stimulerait l'échange intersubjectif, contrairement à l'approche unidirectionnelle généralement adoptée. Ce clip ne sera pas utilisé dans le produit audiovisuel final. Il demeure en quelque sorte l'outil de la rencontre entre les deux musiciens.

Pour réaliser la deuxième phase du projet, nous nous sommes rendues en juillet 2010 à Santiago de Cuba. Nous avons présenté le vidéoclip réalisé avec Eduardo à cinq musiciens : une chanteuse, un flûtiste, une *tresera*[9], un joueur de bongo et un violoniste. Nous leur avons tous expliqué en quoi consistait le projet et nous leur avons indiqué que l'un d'eux serait sélectionné par Eduardo pour poursuivre la collaboration jusqu'à la phase finale du projet, c'est-à-dire la réalisation du produit audiovisuel intégrant deux musiciens.

Nous avons demandé aux cinq musiciens de nous interpréter une composition originale qui serait *potentiellement* mise en dialogue avec une performance d'Eduardo. La consigne était la suivante : les musiciens devaient interpréter des extraits de leur pièce, prendre des pauses, écouter et réagir comme si Eduardo partageait la même scène qu'eux. Les cinq musiciens ont été enregistrés au moyen d'une caméra Panasonic HD et deux microphones externes de qualité professionnelle. Chaque musicien devait reprendre sa performance huit fois, pour nous permettre de capter différents plans de prise de vue. L'éclairage et la mise en scène ont été soigneusement contrôlés par une équipe de techniciens de Santiago de Cuba du théâtre Cabildo, lieu où nous avons effectué les enregistrements.

La phase 3 du projet *Écho* s'est déroulée de janvier à mars 2011. Cette dernière étape consistait en une série de rencontres avec Eduardo, au cours desquelles il devait sélectionner l'un des cinq musiciens de Santiago et enregistrer une performance en dialogue avec celui-ci. Pour élargir notre expérimentation auprès de la diaspora cubaine à Montréal, nous avons également demandé à la pianiste Neisy Wilson de se joindre au projet. Neisy et Eduardo se sont connus à Montréal il y a deux ans; ils ont partagé la scène à plusieurs reprises lors de concerts de musique latine. Neisy a une expérience considérable en composition et en interprétation musicale. Lors de son retour à Cuba à la suite d'une tournée de deux ans en Jordanie, profitant d'une escale à Montréal, Neisy décide d'y rester et d'y poursuivre sa vie. Elle y habite depuis plus de deux ans. Elle est actuellement étudiante à la maîtrise à l'Université de Montréal dans le programme de composition de musique de film.

Les phases 1 à 3 du projet font partie intégrante d'un terrain ethnographique où deux anthropologues sont activement impliquées dans la production d'images et d'effets sonores. Ce terrain ethnographique est le résultat d'une approche artistique autant du point de vue méthodologique, pratique que théorique. Le terrain est ainsi pensé méticuleusement suivant une approche sensible aux conventions que nous avons établies en ce qui a trait à l'éclairage, à la disposition des musiciens, à la sonorité et aux prises de vues.

Lors d'une rencontre avec Eduardo et Neisy, nous leur avons montré cinq montages correspondant aux cinq musiciens qui avaient accepté de participer au projet à Cuba[10]. La consigne était la suivante : 1) entrer en relation avec le musicien de Santiago qu'ils auraient sélectionné après avoir visionné les cinq clips recueillis à Cuba; 2) réagir à la fois musicalement – en interprétant une réplique à ce musicien – et physiquement – en imaginant que cette personne partage la même scène qu'eux. Nous avons remis à Eduardo et Neisy un DVD comprenant les cinq clips. Ils ont eu plus d'un mois pour écouter, regarder

Photo 2 : Yeniset Boudet Sarmiento jouant du très avec un verre d'eau. Clip du tournage, caméra : Marie-Josée Proulx, 2010

la prestation des musiciens, et préparer leur réplique au musicien choisi.

Eduardo a vivement réagi au clip de la prestation de Yeniset Boudet Sarmiento, une *tresera* originaire de Santiago de Cuba. Le *très*, une guitare à trois cordes, est un instrument traditionnel typique de Santiago de Cuba; il constitue la base instrumentale dans les groupes traditionnels de la Trova Santiaguera. Yeniset est *tresera* professionnelle dans le groupe féminin Perlas del son de Santiago de Cuba. Les musiciennes de ce groupe interprètent presqu'exclusivement un répertoire de musique traditionnelle et de balades. Deux éléments principaux ont interpellé Eduardo lors du visionnement de la prestation de la *tresera*. Tout d'abord, le fait qu'elle soit une jeune femme l'a particulièrement amusé et même surpris; cet instrument est habituellement joué par des hommes, le plus souvent âgés. Enfin, Yeniset joue habilement de son instrument et bien que le *très* porte une symbolique traditionnelle, elle se l'approprie selon un style novateur en jouant avec un verre d'eau (voir photo 2) et en portant la guitare à son dos. C'est pour ces différentes raisons qu'Eduardo a choisi de répondre au jeu musical de Yeniset.

Neisy, quand à elle, a décidé d'accompagner la chanteuse Orielis Mayet Lugo. Neisy nous a raconté qu'elle connaissait Orielis de vue car elle l'avait souvent croisée dans les rues de Santiago lorsqu'elle y vivait. Orielis est membre d'une église évangélique et en est la choriste attitrée. Son style a tout de suite plu à Neisy qui affectionne les voix langoureuses et rugueuses de certaines chanteuses afro-américaines de blues et de gospel. De plus, Neisy est habituée à composer et à accompagner la partie vocale des groupes pour lesquels elle performe.

Au cours de l'enregistrement de la phase 3, Eduardo et Neisy se sont prêtés à l'exercice de répondre aux performances du musicien qu'ils avaient sélectionné[11], un dispositif électronique porté à l'oreille leur permettant de suivre la trame sonore de leur performance respective. À la suite de l'enregistrement, nous avons produit deux clips unissant les deux paires de musiciens.

Le montage final des clips des duos sera utilisé lors d'événements ultérieurs[12]. Cela ajoutera un aspect « mise en public » à notre démarche, en plus d'approfondir les dimensions de réception et de diaspora.

Axes d'investigation du projet *Écho*

À ce jour, cinq axes d'investigation ont motivé la réalisation de ce projet. Premièrement, une ethnographie de la production audiovisuelle basée sur des stratégies d'investigation visuelles et sonores sera proposée. Le concept d'« esthétique relationnelle » tel que développé par Nicolas Bourriaud (1998) nous servira de base pour proposer une « esthétique de la rencontre » en anthropologie. Deuxièmement, nous désirons nous pencher sur le rôle de l'anthropologue en tant que producteur ou agent social (Mjaaland 2009), plutôt qu'observateur participant. Conséquemment, nous nous interrogerons sur les implications éthiques, méthodologiques et théoriques d'une telle forme d'intervention dans la concrétisation de modèles alternatifs de terrain (Marcus 2010). Troisièmement, grâce au processus de production musicale ainsi qu'à l'œuvre originale créée par les musiciens mis en contact virtuellement, nous nous attarderons aux concepts de diaspora et de terre natale comme sources d'inspiration. Nous pourrons ainsi développer les thèmes d'intersubjectivité virtuelle dans le processus de création et d'improvisation musicale. Quatrièmement, la dimension de réception d'une production audiovisuelle née d'un montage exploratoire et présentée dans un contexte public sera investiguée. Enfin, la dimension technologique du processus de production de l'image selon une approche ethnographique nous intéresse plus spécifiquement dans ce numéro spécial et fera l'objet de la suite de cet article. Nous croyons qu'une sensibilité aux technologies visuelles a le potentiel de provoquer de nouvelles aires d'investigation en plus de relancer le débat sur la notion d'esthétique dans la démarche ethnographique.

Le facteur technologique et stylistique

Le choix de l'appareillage technologique utilisé lors du terrain ethnographique peut être contraint par des limitations budgétaires (voir MacDougall 2001). Néanmoins, ces outils acquièrent un sens et construisent l'identité de celui ou celle qui les utilise, comme nous le rappelle Sarah Pink (2001) dans le cas du terrain ethnographique. Ces choix déterminent aussi comment l'anthropologue, le public (dans notre cas), et les musiciens, interagissent avec les

images produites. De plus, dans le cadre de notre projet, les technologies utilisées ont une influence directe sur l'objectif que nous nous proposons, soit de produire un espace virtuel unique de création.

Deux développements technologiques ont selon nous eu un impact majeur sur la production d'images mouvantes en anthropologie : l'enregistrement du son synchronisé depuis 1960 et la vidéo numérique. La caméra portable offrant l'enregistrement du son en synchronisation avec l'image a transformé l'esthétique du film dans le domaine de l'anthropologie, passant d'une narration superposée aux images et aux dialogues et aux entrevues à un style beaucoup plus spontané caractérisé par un son en temps réel.

La technologie numérique, de son côté, a élargi les possibilités de support autres que le film (Pink 2001). En d'autres termes, cette technologie permet d'expérimenter davantage sur la forme et le contenu de l'image et du son. Comme l'explique MacDougall (2001), la technologie numérique permet de revisiter certaines idées en anthropologie grâce à une plus grande variété de formes expérimentales du médium vidéo. Il serait cependant faux de croire que les expérimentations obtenues grâce à ce médium sont une pratique nouvelle dans notre domaine, puisque le montage de pellicules filmiques et de vidéos implique, à la base, la mutation de données audiovisuelles brutes. La manipulation de l'image et du son existe donc depuis le tout début de la production filmique.

Ce qu'offre la technologie numérique est une plus grande étendue de ces transformations ainsi qu'une relative facilité à appliquer ces changements à des coûts moindres. Ainsi, ce médium s'est démocratisé, rendant la production de films et autres textes audiovisuels plus accessible et moins onéreuse.

Quoique l'avènement de la technologie Haute Définition (HD) puisse représenter pour certains une banale amélioration de la qualité de l'image, nous croyons au contraire que cet avancement technologique ne devrait pas être négligé. La technologie HD permet une plus grande flexibilité des traitements appliqués à l'image, donc une plus grande liberté dans les manipulations effectuées sur le visuel. Par conséquent, certaines manipulations de l'image deviennent plus accessibles aux utilisateurs qui ne possèdent pas nécessairement les connaissances techniques spécialisées de conception de tournage et de montage. Dans le cas du projet *Écho*, cette technologie nous permet donc d'atteindre l'effet désiré, soit la coprésence virtuelle de deux musiciens en performance, et ce, avec plus de facilité. En d'autres mots, sans cette technologie, il nous serait plus difficile de créer un espace dans lequel deux musiciens séparés par le temps et l'espace puissent se rencontrer. À notre avis, sans la technologie HD, nous ne parviendrions pas à créer un effet totalement convaincant du point de vue des spectateurs[13].

La manipulation des données recueillies, et donc du spectateur (ou du lecteur), demeure un sujet tabou en anthropologie. Dans le cas du projet *Écho*, les données recueillies représentent des images et du son enregistrés lors d'un contexte de mise-en-scène conçu par les anthropologues impliqués. Malgré l'acceptation générale que le processus de montage implique une transformation majeure des données audiovisuelles brutes, le projet *Écho* pose un défi à certains préceptes propres à la démarche dite scientifique : entre autres, celui de limiter l'interférence des chercheurs dans le contexte d'étude.

Ainsi, *Écho* reconnaît l'intervention de l'anthropologue dans la manipulation pleinement assumée des données recueillies. Cette approche hautement « interventionniste » diffère d'une quête de la représentation du réel qui encourage certains anthropologues à produire des films ethnographiques de type observationnel ou documentaire réaliste en adoptant une esthétique caractérisée par de longues poses, donc un rythme lent où la caméra capte ce qui se passe sans s'imposer. Ainsi qu'on l'enseigne lors de la formation en anthropologie visuelle[14], la recherche du « naturel » implique aussi d'accepter que rien ne puisse se passer, et que ce vide d'action a aussi sa place dans la production filmique ethnographique.

D'un point de vue technologique, les films ethnographiques ressortant de ces styles sont souvent jugés comme manquant de sophistication technique (Tomaselli 1996 dans Wynne 2010:57). En comparaison, *Écho* se penche sérieusement sur les dimensions techniques propres aux phases de production et de postproduction (lors du montage), puisque sans ces considérations, l'objectif de créer un espace commun de création perdrait son sens. Ainsi, *Écho* offre une nouvelle dimension de récits, celle d'être participant-créateur dans la production d'une réalité autrement impossible à capter.

Il n'en demeure pas moins que les styles filmiques observationnel et de type documentaire du réel *sont généralement perçus* comme des récipients de sens et d'information contribuant à leur manière au développement de la discipline, et ce, malgré le fait que les anthropologues visuels sont souvent accusés de fraterniser avec le monde des arts (Grimshaw, Owen et Ravetz 2010). Cependant, une esthétique du réel est généralement acceptée comme coïncidant avec les normes académiques de la discipline car elle est perçue comme se distanciant des arts[15]. Nous ne pouvons nier le fait que les productions artistiques et expérimentales sont souvent considérées comme n'ayant pas leur place en anthropologie

(Schneider et Wright 2010:11; Wright 1998:19) ou du moins, qu'elles sont difficilement acceptables. Cette perspective, que je ne partage pas, influence la représentation esthétique de thèmes abordés en anthropologie dans l'écrit comme dans le visuel.

Encore une fois, notre démarche s'inscrit selon une toute autre vision. Plutôt que de vouloir « rendre le réel », nous nous attaquons d'emblée à la transformation de l'image en considérant avec tout le sérieux le potentiel qu'offrent les nouvelles technologies pour le développement d'une anthropologie de la production d'image et de son. Les effets spéciaux, les filtres et autres techniques de transformation de l'image, et les effets visuels de postproduction permettent de questionner l'approche méthodologique et théorique en anthropologie (Boudreault-Fournier 2009; Schneider 2008). Tout comme Fewkes (2008:10), nous croyons qu'une attention particulière à ces transformations numériques permet de révéler un choix délibéré d'une esthétique ethnographique. L'outil filmique crée ainsi un espace dans lequel l'anthropologue est directement et consciemment impliqué dans la production de sens (voir aussi Barbosa 2010). De surcroît, de même que l'anthropologue, par son travail de cueillette de donnés sur le terrain, permet de faire surgir des métadonnées jusqu'alors demeurées invisibles, notre technique permet de rendre palpable l'aspect d'isolement qui fait de l'Autre une fenêtre sur l'extérieur (voir plus loin).

Certes, les technologies numériques ont le potentiel de promouvoir la création d'une large variété de textes audiovisuels en anthropologie. Cependant, nous croyons qu'il est nécessaire de franchir les frontières qui divisent le monde de l'art de celui de la science pour ainsi développer une approche de recherche unique de l'image et du son en anthropologie (Schneider et Wright 2006; Sullivan 2010). Comme le souligne Mouloud Boukala (2009:35-36), le cinéma et l'anthropologie sont intrinsèquement liés de par leurs intérêts pour l'espace et le temps du même sujet, l'être humain. Conséquemment, explique-t-il, « mépriser le cinéma à l'heure actuelle coïncide avec une dévalorisation tant de l'anthropologie que du respect des autres, c'est-à-dire de soi-même » (*Ibid.*). Ainsi, nous proposons de développer de nouvelles stratégies méthodologiques et d'études de terrain qui s'inspireront à la fois du domaine des arts et de l'anthropologie. Le projet *Écho* propose une telle démarche novatrice car le processus de production devient le terrain impliquant l'anthropologue, l'équipe de production et de logistique, et les musiciens. En d'autres termes, l'espace de création devient le terrain sous introspection.

La dimension relationnelle

> La relation est un moment de partage.
> – Richard Martel (2008-9:29)

Jusqu'à ce jour, très peu d'anthropologues se sont approprié les possibilités que permet la vidéo à l'instar de ce que font certains artistes visuels qui interviennent dans la dimension exploratoire de la production d'image et de son (Schneider 2006; 2008)[16]. Concrètement, cette appropriation du visuel implique que l'anthropologue s'engage dans la manipulation de l'image en tant que telle. L'intervention sur l'image et le son, définie comme étape clé d'un processus d'investigation, soulève néanmoins plusieurs interrogations tant au niveau de l'approche ethnographique et de son esthétique que du rôle de l'anthropologue en tant que simple observateur; sans oublier les enjeux éthiques que soulève cette approche. Et pourtant, comme nous l'avons souligné, le style documentaire observationnel contient depuis toujours une forme de montage, de scénarisation en vue de la captation et même d'expérimentation (Grimshaw, Owen et Ravetz 2010).

Dans le cadre du projet *Écho*, la manipulation du visuel, qui nécessite des connaissances techniques, est développée en relation avec une recherche de création esthétique et de dialogue. Sans toutefois nous considérer comme des artistes, nous nous inspirons d'éléments appartenant à une approche que nous qualifions d'artistique. Nous considérons sérieusement l'aspect créateur des musiciens ainsi que le nôtre, en tant qu'anthropologue *créant* un sens esthétique à travers la production d'images et d'effets visuels et sonores et ce, grâce à l'implication de plusieurs acteurs. Nous ne sommes donc pas seulement des observateurs : nous assumons notre rôle de créateur et d'entremetteur dans le processus.

Notre projet s'inspire du concept d'art relationnel tel que défini et développé par Nicolas Bourriaud dans son livre *Esthétique relationnelle* (1998). Bourriaud rapporte que les artistes contemporains ne s'intéressent plus seulement à créer des utopies, mais également à construire des espaces concrets. L'auteur définit l'art relationnel comme un « Ensemble de pratiques artistiques qui prennent comme point de départ théorique et pratique l'ensemble des relations humaines et leur contexte social, plutôt qu'un espace autonome et privatif » (Bourriaud 1998:117). Les pratiques relationnelles s'expriment entre les sujets sociaux, les artistes, les membres du public et tout autre acteur qui contribuent à la réalisation du processus artistique. C'est donc un appel à sortir des musées pour se plonger dans la foulée des relations humaines; c'est un « passage de l'œuvre d'art comme objet à l'art comme

événement » (Martel 2008-2009:28). En d'autres termes, les relations humaines deviennent le travail artistique en tant que tel (Schneider et Wright 2010:11). Cela implique que ces relations soient considérées comme des expériences esthétiques (Kester 2004). Bien que l'esthétique relationnelle telle que développée par Bourriaud bénéficie d'un intérêt plutôt timide en anthropologie[17], elle domine déjà au niveau international dans le domaine des arts visuels et médiatiques (Barber 2008-2009).

Une esthétique relationnelle implique la « création de zones de correspondances » dans lesquels des liens de partage peuvent s'activer (Martel 2008-2009:27). En nous intéressant dans notre démarche au potentiel d'une esthétique relationnelle, nous considérons que c'est dans la rencontre entre l'anthropologue et les acteurs, autant que dans la « convivialité construite » de tous les acteurs impliqués, que l'expérience du ressenti génère des connaissances d'ordre anthropologique. Dans son article « Evocative Encounters: An Exploration of Artistic Practice as Visual Research Method », Thera Mjaaland (2009) développe une approche similaire en suggérant que les connaissances anthropologiques émergent de la rencontre et de la relation instituée entre le photographe et le sujet photographié (qui peut être dans les deux cas l'anthropologue). En intervenant dans la production d'un espace de relation et de création virtuelle, nous nous positionnons face à une série de relations qui émanent du sens et du ressenti. C'est donc dans l'échange intersubjectif entre les musiciens, entre l'anthropologue et les musiciens, entre tous les acteurs impliqués dans le projet (techniciens, coordonnateurs, collaboratrice, etc.) et dans la production d'un espace virtuel que notre approche méthodologique prend forme.

Le produit visuel final réunissant les deux musiciens importe donc moins au vu de l'expérience du processus méthodologique (voir aussi Schneider 2006). Il agit plutôt comme trace du processus relationnel. De plus, la réalisation du produit final n'est qu'une étape de plus dans la mise en public de la production, puisque c'est au moment de sa réception que le texte atteindra de nouveaux signifiants (voir aussi Fewkes 2008:2). La réalisation des phases 1, 2 et 3, étapes essentielles à la création du lieu virtuel, nous permet donc de développer les éléments émergents de notre démarche méthodologique qui emprunte à la pratique artistique dite relationnelle.

Au cours de ce processus, le rôle de l'anthropologue est transformé et des éléments traditionnellement exogènes à la discipline y sont intégrés. Plus qu'un participant observateur, nous devenons des anthropologues créateurs et entremetteurs. Nous cartographions l'espace de rencontre. Il y a donc une transposition de l'anthropologue comme participant-observateur vers un rôle d'agent social (Mjaaland 2009). Il est à noter que la prise d'action ou d'intervention sur le terrain n'est pas un fait nouveau à l'intérieur de notre discipline, à l'instar de ce que suggèrent Calzadilla et Marcus (2006:98), lorsqu'ils se réfèrent à l'ethnographie comme acte de performance[18].

Les projets que l'on qualifierait d'« indigeneous medias » mis sur pied par des anthropologues qui fournissent les outils technologiques et les autres composantes faisant partie du processus de création pour favoriser la production de textes audiovisuels (le projet vidéo *Kayapo* et le projet de film *Navajo* étant les cas les plus connus) font aussi appel au rôle de l'anthropologue en tant que concepteur et intervenant. Ils peuvent donc servir d'exemples de terrain où l'intervention de l'anthropologue est notoire. En fait, l'idée d'un anthropologue activement impliqué dans la création d'espaces à l'intérieur desquels des acteurs s'expriment fait partie d'une stratégie de collecte de données qui est passablement commune. Par exemple, en encourageant l'artiste Tshibumba Kanda Matalu à peindre l'histoire du Zaïre et à commenter une série d'œuvres en cours, Johannes Fabian (1996) nous livre un portrait complexe et fascinant de la mémoire et de l'expérience postcoloniale. Les groupes de discussion ciblés sont un autre exemple de méthode de recherche couramment utilisée qui contribue à la mise en scène d'un espace de rencontre qui n'aurait pas eu lieu spontanément. Cet espace est donc créé par l'anthropologue.

Ce qui est particulièrement novateur dans le projet *Écho*, c'est l'utilisation et le perfectionnement de nouvelles pratiques technologiques fondées sur une considération sérieuse et contemporaine de l'art et de ses processus de création comme approche méthodologique exploratoire de terrain ethnographique, une approche qui demeure jusqu'à aujourd'hui marginalisée à l'intérieur de notre discipline (Taylor 1996). Cette approche méthodologique implique une nouvelle reconfiguration de l'expérience du terrain ethnographique qui devient en quelque sorte un espace d'exploration. En effet, selon une telle approche méthodologique, ce n'est donc pas seulement l'étude de la performativité et de l'« agency » des objets (Gell 1998) ou des sujets de recherche de l'anthropologue qui priment, mais également les pratiques visuelles de celui-ci (Schneider et Wright 2006:5). En d'autres termes, le rôle de l'anthropologue se définit en tant qu'intervenant et agent plutôt qu'observateur impliqué.

Enfin, parmi les composantes d'une telle stratégie d'approche du terrain ethnographique qui ne doivent pas être négligées, notons la présence parfois encombrante de l'imprévu, de l'inattendu et de l'incomplet (Schneider et Wright 2006:25; 2010). En se référant aux

pratiques dialogiques des arts visuels – des pratiques qui s'imprègnent de l'esthétique relationnelle – Kester (2004) affirme que l'impureté est dans la nature même de ces projets. Communes dans le domaine des arts, ces composantes sont plutôt mises de côté, ignorées et évitées en anthropologie. Elles doivent cependant être considérées avec attention car elles ajoutent significativement à la nature de l'expérience du terrain. Nous nous référons, entre autres, à des enjeux et défis techniques, à des mises en scène de l'éclairage, à des dilemmes relationnels avec l'équipe de techniciens, à des négociations de droits d'auteurs qui n'aboutissent pas, et plus important encore, à des relations qui demeurent difficiles à imaginer pour les musiciens au cours des phases de production. Toutes ces dimensions font partie intégrante du terrain exploratoire et de la démarche que nous proposons de développer.

Une avenue d'exploration : la muse de la terre natale

L'un des objectifs principaux de notre projet est la création d'un espace qui unit deux sites, représentant non pas le local et le global, mais deux espaces performatifs. La production audiovisuelle à travers laquelle des paires de musiciens se rencontrent relève d'une esthétique qui rappelle l'idée d'un espace-temps relationnel, défini par Bourriaud comme :

> Des expériences interhumaines qui s'essaient à se libérer des contraintes de l'idéologie de la communication de masse; en quelque sorte, des lieux où s'élaborent des socialités alternatives, des modèles critiques, des moments de convivialité construite. [Bourriaud 1998:47]

Ainsi, les musiciens se rencontrent dans l'obscurité et le silence presque total; les faisceaux lumineux qui les enveloppent nous rappellent un espace scénique. Cependant, nous ne pouvons reconnaître le lieu exact où se déroule la scène. En effet, très peu de détails visuels et sonores peuvent être captés par les musiciens lors du tournage, et par les spectateurs lors du visionnement. Il s'agit d'un endroit où les stimuli externes à la rencontre ont été éliminés par l'anthropologue (photo 3).

Photo 3 : Eduardo Sanchez et Yeniset Boudet Sarmiento. Montage photo à partir du clip vidéo, Écho, Phase 3. Montage vidéo : Alexandrine Boudreault-Fournier, Clip du tournage, caméra : Marie-Josée Proulx, 2010.

Bien que l'espace créé soit dépourvu de toute référence locale, les identités communes des protagonistes (comme musicien et cubain) s'expriment fortement à travers la performance d'une « cubanité musicale ». En se référant aux zones de correspondances formées par l'adoption d'une approche relationnelle, Martel explique que ces espaces servent à « créer des liens qui inscrivent dans la mémoire des tissus qui sont performatifs dans le temps et l'espace » (Martel 2008-2009:27). Notre projet suggère que la relation entre les musiciens requiert une *récupération* de la mémoire (en plus d'une inscription de celle-ci) représentée par la nostalgie de la terre natale et d'un retour aux racines.

L'expérience diasporique est vécue parfois tragiquement par les Cubains qui ne peuvent pour des raisons légales retourner au pays. Et même s'ils le peuvent, les contraintes monétaires rendent difficiles les déplacements multiples et de longue durée. La vie en diaspora est donc bien souvent teintée d'un sentiment de nostalgie du lieu d'origine[19]. Bien qu'ils vivent dans leur terre natale, les musiciens de Santiago ressentent également une nostalgie, un désir insatisfait, liés à l'envie de voyager à l'extérieur de l'île. Cette nostalgie est d'autant plus forte que ces musiciens sont confrontés à l'image de l'un des leurs (Eduardo) qui a réussi à l'étranger. La liberté de voyager en dehors du pays est un droit non acquis qui est extrêmement prisé par les Cubains; c'est souvent la première critique faite par les jeunes face aux politiques de leur gouvernement[20].

Une relation complexe s'installe donc entre les musiciens car l'Autre fait jaillir des sentiments de nostalgie et d'envie. Cela est aussi vrai pour Eduardo qui chérit l'idée de retourner à Cuba pour y prendre sa retraite. À cet effet, il a commencé à construire sa maison de rêve dans la province de Las Tunas[21]. Il y voyage chaque année pour en superviser les travaux[22]. Neisy, quant à elle, s'est identifiée à Orielis qu'elle croisait autrefois dans les rues de Santiago. Elle n'y a pas remis les pieds, et n'a pas revu sa famille, depuis plusieurs années. Considérée comme déserteur, Neisy ne peut retourner à Cuba tant que le processus d'immigration au Canada ne sera pas plus avancé.

À la fin du tournage de la troisième phase du projet à Montréal en mars 2011, Eduardo nous a confié son désir

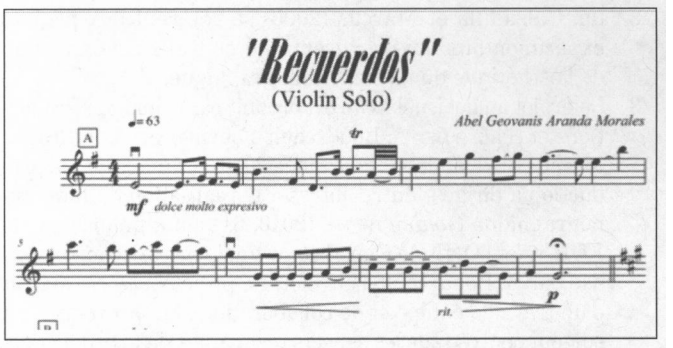

Tableau 1 : Extrait de la composition d'Abel Geovanis Aranda Morales pour le projet Écho (juillet 2010; Santiago de Cuba). Crédit et remerciements à Abel Geovanis Aranda Morales pour cet extrait original.

de poursuivre sa collaboration avec la *tresera* Yeniset Boudet Sarmiento. Il nous a demandé ses coordonnées pour la contacter à Santiago de Cuba au cours d'une prochaine visite. Il a l'intention de la rencontrer et de lui proposer d'enregistrer un thème avec lui pour un disque qu'il prépare. L'intention d'Eduardo de poursuivre des échanges personnels avec Yeniset est un indicateur qu'une relation a été établie grâce au projet *Écho*. Enfin, cette rencontre envisagée nourrit la nostalgie d'Eduardo en lui permettant de se voir dans une union symbolique avec sa terre natale.

La performance du violoniste Abel Geovanis Aranda Morales, directeur de l'Orchestre symphonique de Santiago de Cuba, qui a participé à la deuxième phase du projet *Écho* à Santiago en juillet 2010 (mais qui n'a pas été sélectionné par Eduardo et Neisy) nous offre également plusieurs dynamiques face à la nature de cette relation imaginée qui repose sur la mémoire et sur le sentiment de nostalgie.

Comme musicien professionnel classique de calibre professionnel, il n'est pas surprenant qu'Abel se soit sérieusement prêté à l'exercice de composer une pièce musicale qui répondait à la performance et au style d'Eduardo. Nous avons montré le vidéo d'Eduardo à Abel (vidéo clip de la Phase 1) et lui avons expliqué les fondements du projet. Deux jours après notre première rencontre, Abel s'est présenté au théâtre pour l'enregistrement en nous remettant une composition qu'il avait terminée le matin même (voir l'extrait au tableau 1).

Le titre de la pièce, « Recuerdos » (Souvenirs), nous transporte directement dans l'expérience diasporique et dans la « mémoire ressentie ». Abel s'est imaginé dans la peau d'un expatrié en identifiant des styles musicaux qui lui rappelleraient sa ville natale s'il vivait à l'extérieur de son pays. Avant l'enregistrement, Abel nous explique que sa pièce fait ressortir des traits musicaux propres à la tradition musicale de sa ville. Bien que selon notre perspective d'amateur en matière de théorie musicale, ces traits demeurent difficiles à cerner concrètement, Abel nous a confirmé son intention d'accentuer l'essence propre du carnaval et de la rumba, deux traits tout à fait en symbiose avec la nature de ce qui constitue l'essence musicale cubaine. Les crescendos utilisés par le compositeur, mais aussi la nostalgie qui s'en détache caractérisent cette pièce ainsi que la performance du musicien.

Il est important de souligner que c'est l'outil audiovisuel produit dans la première phase du projet qui a donné à Abel l'inspiration pour composer cette pièce unique. Son idée de se transporter dans la peau d'un expatrié lui est venue spontanément alors qu'il visionnait le clip d'Eduardo. Abel savait que s'il était sélectionné, Eduardo s'inspirerait de sa pièce pour la création de la phase ultime du projet. De plus, Abel était convaincu que des éléments musicaux représentant l'essence de l'identité cubaine partagée par les deux musiciens promouvraient un échange reposant sur des bases identitaires communes.

Conclusion

La production d'un espace virtuel de création intersubjectif entre deux musiciens telle que décrite dans cet article est possible grâce à l'utilisation d'une gamme d'outils technologiques de communication comme la caméra vidéo. Cette approche pourrait s'inscrire dans le domaine des arts visuels dits relationnels. Nous avons cependant démontré que notre démarche résulte plutôt d'une intention anthropologique reposant sur une manipulation des technologies, et sur une sensibilité et une ouverture aux possibilités qu'offrent les dimensions artistiques qui y sont rattachées. Les technologies utilisées dans le projet *Écho* et sa mise en scène nous permettent d'approfondir et de mettre en évidence des composantes concrètes de ce que pourrait constituer une ethnographie de la production audiovisuelle. Nous avons suggéré dans cet article que cette ethnographie reposerait sur l'adaptation, l'utilisation et la manipulation de l'outil vidéo, y compris la dimension sonore.

Dans son livre *Art Practice as Research...*, Graeme Sullivan (2010:104) explique que l'aspect relationnel de la recherche artistique se retrouve dans son pouvoir de transformation. Le projet *Écho* tel que présenté ici est un exemple d'une démarche qui tente de franchir les frontières posées par une vision rigide de l'anthropologie et des arts visuels. Similairement à l'esthétique relationnelle qui tente de « sortir de l'attitude conventionnelle des académismes de tout genre » (Martel 2008-2009:27), le projet *Écho* propose une nouvelle approche de l'esthétisme en anthropologie en développant une méthodologie qui

intègre une vision de mise en relation à travers un processus de création. De plus, nous croyons que ce projet démontre un potentiel caché de ré-articulation de certaines dimensions propres à notre discipline telles que la nature du terrain ethnographique, l'expérimentation comme formule méthodologique, et le rôle de l'anthropologue dans la production des connaissances. L'implication directe des anthropologues dans l'utilisation des nouvelles technologies est d'autant plus stimulante qu'elle soulève le thème de l'esthétique comme contenant et contenu des textes produits. La dernière phase du projet *Écho* donne l'occasion aux anthropologues impliqués de se questionner sur le pouvoir de transformation d'un tel engagement et sur les nouvelles aires de recherche qui en émergent.

Enfin, du fait que nous assumons le rôle interventionniste de notre démarche, nous comprenons que des critiques puissent être formulées face à la nature de l'implication des musiciens dans le projet *Écho*. Nous reconnaissons qu'il peut y avoir un danger à rendre la rencontre artificielle. Les musiciens se prêtent-ils au jeu des anthropologues dans le but de satisfaire le désir de metteur en scène de ceux-ci? S'engagent-ils vraiment dans la rencontre vers l'Autre ou s'impliquent-ils de façon superficielle? Si ces questions complexes nécessitent des réponses, elles ne constituent cependant pas des préoccupations nouvelles, puisque la relation de l'anthropologue avec la figure de l'informateur a souvent été rapportée comme dilemmatique, sinon déstabilisante (voir Rabinow 1977). Certes, le projet *Écho* fait ressortir plusieurs inquiétudes face à cette problématique. Par ailleurs, *Écho* nous permet de réaffirmer un des rôles majeurs de l'anthropologue : développer une dynamique éthique de relations à travers le temps et dans un espace partagé, tout en considérant les intérêts de chacun. N'est-ce pas là le but ultime de *la relation*?

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Notes

1 Le projet *Écho* a été subventionné par une bourse post doctorale du Département d'anthropologie de l'Université Laval, de l'Université York et du Centre interuniversitaire d'études sur les lettres, les arts et les traditions (CÉLAT) de l'Université Laval. L'auteure remercie la professeure Francine Saillant pour son soutien continu. Marie-Josée Proulx, qui collabore à la réalisation et à la production du projet *Écho*, demeure une riche source de motivation et d'inspiration. Je remercie également Robert Fournier, Karoline Truchon, Maryse Morin, Diane Boudreault et Marie-Josée Proulx pour leurs commentaires sur des versions antérieures de cet article.

2 Ici, Calzadilla et Marcus (2006) se réfèrent aux projets expérimentaux qui proposent une nouvelle configuration de l'esthétique du terrain ethnographique.

3 Le projet audiovisuel *Écho* est produit par Cimarron Productions et réalisé par A. Boudreault-Fournier et M.-J. Proulx. Mis sur pied au début de l'année 2010, cette maison de production a dirigé – entre autres – la réalisation du film ethnographique *Golden Scars* (2010, 61 min.), financé par le FQRSC et l'ONF du Canada (www.goldenscars.com) et réalisé par A. Boudreault-Fournier. Le projet *Écho* est le fruit d'un travail d'équipe et de collaboration : M.-J. Proulx s'est surtout centrée sur les aspects techniques de la production, alors qu'A. Boudreault-Fournier a assuré la direction et la démarche anthropologique du projet.

4 La situation devrait changer prochainement du fait qu'un câble de fibre optique sous-marin provenant du Venezuela et détournant l'embargo américain serait en cours d'installation.

5 Changements annoncés par Raúl Castro peu après sa prise de pouvoir comme chef d'État.

6 Du fait aussi que les connexions téléphoniques internationales se font via satellite.

7 M.-J. Proulx, qui a participé aux collectes de données du projet *Écho* à Montréal et à Cuba, a aussi contribué à la rencontre des musiciens.

8 Le clip peut être visionné sur Youtube (http://www .youtube .com/watch?v=8FSZ120NlHo), disponible le 25 juillet 2011. Crédits du clip *Écho* : Phase 1 : M.-J. Proulx a filmé le clip et en a enregistré la trame sonore. Elle en a également réalisé le montage. M.-J. Proulx et A. Boudreault-Fournier ont collaboré à la conceptualisation, à la direction et à la réalisation du clip, une production de Cimarron Productions (©2010).

9 Musicienne d'un instrument à corde originaire de Cuba qui s'appelle le *tres*. Le *tresero* réfère à l'appellation masculine.

10 Le clip de Yeniset peut être visionné sur Youtube (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VcvgvezqWPY), disponible en date du 25 juillet 2011. Crédits des 5 clips : Phase 3. M.-J. Proulx a filmé les clips et enregistré les trames sonores. A. Boudreault-Fournier a réalisé les cinq clips et fait le montage. Les cinq clips sont une production de Cimarron Productions (©2011).

11 Le tournage de la phase 3 a eu lieu à la Salle d'essais de l'Université de Montréal, le 30 mars 2011.

12 À ce titre, nous avons établi des contacts avec la Société des arts technologiques (SAT) et le Centre des nouveaux médias et arts interdisciplinaires Eastern Bloc à Montréal.

13 Bien que le but des clips finaux ne soit pas de créer une illusion parfaite continue, nous voulons jouer avec l'impression que les musiciens sont situés l'un à côté de l'autre. Il y a donc des moments où cette illusion doit opérer de manière convaincante.

14 University of Manchester et Granada Centre for Visual Anthropology.

15 Bien que ce ne soit pas une vision que j'encourage pour ma part, mon implication pratique dans la production et la réalisation de films et de projets audiovisuels ethnographiques m'a permis de constater la présence de cette esthétique dominante.

16 Voir par exemple les projets du Center for Research in Engineering, Media and Performance à l'University of California in Los Angeles, et plus particulièrement les travaux de Fabian Wagminster et William J. Kaiser. *Into the Field* (2006, 28 min.), produit par Alyssa Grossman, est une exception dans le domaine du film ethnographique. Celle-ci a en effet collaboré avec l'artiste en arts visuels Selena Kimball pour expérimenter avec le médium vidéo et le 16mm. Voir leur article (Grossman et Kimball 2009).

17 Dans les domaines de l'anthropologie et de la musique, Georgina Born (2010) s'est intéressée au concept de Bourriaud.

18 « ethnography as performance ».

19 À ma connaissance, la diaspora cubaine à Montréal n'a pas fait l'objet d'études récentes en sciences sociales. Ce constat se base sur des observations faites dans la communauté cubaine à Montréal.

20 Cette affirmation est basée sur des observations effectuées lors de multiples séances de terrain à Cuba depuis l'année 2000.

21 Eduardo est né dans la province de Las Tunas. Il exprime également un grand attachement pour Santiago de Cuba, un endroit où il aimerait également vivre.

22 La construction d'une maison représente un long processus dans le contexte cubain où les matériaux sont rarissimes.

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Seeking the Sacred Online: Internet and the Individualization of Religious Life in Quebec

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Abstract: Research I am conducting with colleagues on religion in Quebec today shows three main types of Internet use for religious purposes: (1) for building and maintaining contacts with other congregations and individuals within the same religious orientation on local and international levels; (2) for governance of religious groups at a distance; (3) accessing spiritual/religious resources (prayers, sermons, rituals). This technology can be used to reinforce transnational religious governance. At the same time, it contributes to the individualization of religious life. I suggest that the findings of our team shed new light on religious individualization; that is, rather than implying superficial religiosity per se, individualization involves agency and self-responsibility for religious actors.

Keywords: Internet, religion, sociality, religious individualization

Résumé : Selon nos recherches et celles de nos collègues sur la religion au Québec aujourd'hui, l'Internet sert à trois objectifs principaux : 1) construire et maintenir des contacts avec d'autres congrégations et individus dans le même courant religieux, que ce soit au niveau local ou bien au niveau international; 2) assurer la gouvernance des groupes religieux à distance; 3) pour accéder à des ressources spirituelles religieuses (prières, sermons, rituels). Nous trouvons que cette technologie peut servir à renforcer la gouvernance transnationale religieuse; d'autre part, il contribue à l'individualisation de la vie religieuse. Nous considérons que les résultats de recherche que nous présentons ici jettent une nouvelle lumière sur l'individualisation religieuse; plutôt que de signifier une religiosité nécessairement superficielle, cette individualisation entraîne l'agentivité et la responsabilité pour soi des acteurs religieux.

Mots-clés : Internet, religion, socialité, individualisation du religieux

Introduction

The impact of the Internet on social relations is the subject of much conjecture and debate in the popular press and has attracted the attention of a considerable number of scholars (for example Bakardjieva 2005; Wellman and Haythornthwaite 2002). A good deal of attention has been given to the issue of whether the Internet decreases face-to-face social interaction (Nie and Hillygus 2002), weakens or strengthens community ties (Matei and Ball-Rokeach 2001; Wellman et al. 2001), and whether it reinforces or subverts authoritarian political regimes (Kalathil and Boas 2003). Here I address somewhat similar questions in regard to the religious domain: for example, how does use of the Internet reinforce or weaken social ties within religious groups? How does the Internet threaten or reinforce religious authority? In short, how does the Internet shape religious sociality? These questions are framed within the larger issue of what a number of scholars have termed the "individualization" of contemporary religious life.

As Sade-Beck (2004) has noted, the Internet integrates personal and mass media and provides the user with a new sort of topography, "a rapid, new, immediate, multi-layered world," (46) one that is available 24 hours a day. What this new world means for life in the physical world—often referred to, perhaps erroneously, as the "real world," as opposed to a virtual one—is not entirely clear. A number of psychological studies associate heavy Internet use with loneliness (for example Amichai-Hamburger and Ben-Artzi 2003; Morahan-Martin and Schumacher 2003); however, in a review of the psychological literature, Bargh and McKenna conclude that, despite mass media stereotypes, "the Internet does not make its users depressed or lonely and it does not seem to be a threat to community life—quite the opposite, in fact" (2004:319). Political scientists Nie and Hillygus (2002) emphasize that time is not elastic and that indeed, Internet use does take away from time spent with family and

friends; however, its effects on relationships appear to vary depending on the time and place of use. Sociability and community involvement are not *created* by the Internet, according to a review of sociological research on the subject, although existing tendencies are likely to be reinforced by it (DiMaggio et al. 2001). Several anthropological studies examine new forms of sociability generated by the Internet (McLard and Anderson 2008; Wilson and Peterson 2002) especially as regards intimate relationships (Johnson-Hanks 2007; Nisbett 2006; Padilla et al. 2007). To a large degree, the findings on religious use of the Internet that I present here confirm these more widespread tendencies. At the same time, I suggest, they shed new light on questions that concern students of religion, namely the individualization of religion and emerging forms of religious sociality. Results from the ongoing team research I direct on contemporary religious groups in Quebec, along with work done by others, show that these new forms of religious sociality are partly fuelled by new information technologies. Different types of religious groups and religious actors use new technologies (Internet, chat rooms, DVDs, email, websites) in different ways, for different objectives and with varying degrees of reflexivity.

Our team's research has found three main types of Internet use for religious purposes: (1) for building and maintaining contacts with other congregations and individuals within the same religious orientation on local and international levels; (2) for governance of religious groups at a distance; (3) for religious learning and training; and (4) for accessing spiritual/religious resources (prayers, sermons, rituals). To illustrate each of these, I will use one or several examples from the team study or from independent research by team participants. Our team research shows that Internet technology can be used to reinforce transnational religious governance. At the same time, it contributes to the individualization of religious life by giving actors direct access to a wider range of religious information and resources than is available in their immediate environment, as well as a wider choice of authorities to consult. I suggest that our findings shed new light on religious individualization; that is, rather than implying superficial religiosity per se, individualization involves agency and self-responsibility for religious actors. This, I argue, is the case for those who seek resources on the Internet so as to keep their spiritual lives and religious practice vibrant, authentic, and in some cases, orthodox. Moreover, by supporting religious agency, the Internet is also giving rise to new forms of religious communalization.

The Research

Most of the examples I present of how the Internet is used for religious ends are taken either from a broad ethnographic study[1] that I am directing on religious diversity in Quebec as it has developed since the 1960s or from independent research done by participants in the team study. The research, still in progress, is oriented to documenting the new religious diversity that has developed in the province. Our second objective is to explore the meaning of religion (spirituality) for those who frequent the groups our team studied in this modern, secular society.

Since 2006, we[2] have carried out observations with groups representing (1) religions established in Quebec since the 1960s (for example Neoshamanism, Druidism, Wicca); (2) new forms of religious practice in long-established religions (for example a Jewish "Reconstructionist" synagogue and various Catholic charismatic groups); and (3) religions imported by immigrants (for example Islam, Hinduism, certain forms of Buddhism). The study also includes congregations of religions long established in Quebec that include a substantial proportion of immigrants among their members (for example a Laotian Catholic congregation). Thus far, observations have been completed on a total of 90 groups; of these, 30 have been studied in depth for six months or more. In the first phase of the project (2006-2010) most of the data, including most of the cases mentioned herein, were gathered in the Montreal area. In the current phase of the project (2010-2014) similar studies are also being carried out in various other regions of Quebec as well as in Montreal; some 20 groups are currently the object of extended observation while about 40 more are being documented in short-term studies.

The research methodology is strongly influenced by approaches termed variously as "phenomenological," "experiential," or "experience-near" (Wikan 1991). This broad current includes McGuire (2008), Csordas (2001, 2002), Desjarlais (1992), Goulet (1993, 1998), Turner (1992, 1994, 1996) Dubisch (2005, 2008) and many others. Our research tools give an important place to the voice of the actors, their subjectivity and embodied experience; that is, to the "complex and seemingly subjective evidence" required for *verstehen* (McGuire 2002:198). At the same time, we seek to limit the biases of such an approach by the use of standardized interview and observation formats (adjusted as needed for each group) and careful supervision of the work of assistants by several researchers. A detailed analytical grid covering a wide range of themes[3] guides the preparation of the final reports, which are abridged and evaluated by an outside specialist, as well as several of the researchers before publication.

Assistants observe religious rituals and other religious activities, such as neighbourhood prayer groups, as well as social activities involving members of the group such as communal meals and picnics, funding events and courses (language, dance, martial arts) sponsored by the congregation. They interview leaders and members who vary in terms of gender, age, profession, matrimonial status, and level of commitment to the group. Data has been and continues to be collected on members' personal religious practices, as well as those involving the group. Interviews focus on personal and religious trajectories, the role of the religious group in their everyday lives, the level of economic and ideological commitment to the community and, when relevant, religious activities related to other religions.[4] The observations and interviews necessary to complete the final reports require repeated attendance at religious rituals and many informal contacts with members; this usually takes at least five to six months of fieldwork, often longer. It should be noted that no particular effort was made to discover the uses of Internet in the fieldwork. Rather, it was through the research that we discovered how important this new technology has become for religious actors and groups.

Religion and the Internet

The effect of the Internet on religious behaviour is the subject of a growing new body of literature.[5] According to Larsen (2004:18), more Americans have consulted the Internet for religious reasons than for any other purpose, such as online dating, gambling or banking. New religious uses for the Internet abound, including online churches (Hutchings 2010), online rituals (Helland 2005) and virtual pilgrimages (MacWilliams 2002). At the same time, the Internet offers a forum of exchange and networking possibilities to opponents of particular sects and contested groups such as the Church of Scientology (Cowan 2004), as well as opportunities and support for individuals seeking to leave sects (Barker 2005). Similarly, work on disaffected Hassidic Jews in New York by Hella Winston (2006) and Sandrine Malarde's (2011) research on such Hassidim in Montreal, shows that the Internet is often a tool for transgressing community norms and in some cases, for leaving the group.

This last example illustrates the challenges that the Internet is likely to pose to established, local religious authority. This is true both of marginal groups, such as witches' covens (Dawson and Cowan 2004a), as well as more established churches. As Helland (2004) sees it:

> Although the Internet is in many ways a blessing to religious institutions that use it to their advantage, it can also be an official religion's worst nightmare. Like the printing press, power has shifted through the development of a tool of mass communication. Doctrines and teachings that were once centralized and controlled can now be openly challenged, contradicted, or ignored through a medium that is accessed by hundreds of millions of people every day. [30]

Indeed, our research finds many examples whereby local religious authority is circumvented through recourse to online resources. However, as I explain further on, the Internet can also be used to strengthen established religious authority and extend it across national boundaries.

Though Internet technology places a wide array of religious resources at the disposal of individuals that cannot normally be monitored by religious institutions (except in the case of certain sects), one may well ask whether virtual religious sociality can replace offline religious groups and networks. After all, how much of the religious emotion or embodiment that are part of lived spirituality can be experienced via the Internet? In a study of Israeli support communities for the bereaved, Sade-Beck (2004) comments that:

> Online communication on the Internet facilitates the expression of emotions (output) and the input of emotional messages, thus developing and reinforcing important social ties between users, forming a system of relationships similar to ties of family and friendship, all taking place without participants being physically present. [46]

How true this might be for specifically religious experience; that is, contact with the sacred is less clear. The power of real-life shared ritual for creating religious contexts that engage the emotions of participants is amply documented (for example Mossière 2007). Dawson (2005) and O'Leary (2005), both cited by Hutchings (2010:348) express scepticism as to the potential of cyber rituals to substitute for those held in physical space, though Hutchings (354) mentions the case of a disabled woman who greatly appreciates such rituals. In the same vein, one may argue that online rituals may reach a public that otherwise might have no access to them. Here I am thinking of those with certain physical limitations, agoraphobics, along with those who would not normally enter a church, temple or other religious space, or who, because of physical distance, might not have access to the type of ritual that interests them. Moreover, Rosemary Roberts, a participant in the team project, describes how, after the BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico in April 2010, far-flung practitioners of Reclaiming Witchcraft mobilized via an email listserv for performing concerted healing magic and for sharing their feelings about the event:

> The following day, after many had met "in the ether" the night before, brought a chorus of shared experiences from various points in the Eastern United States, with many reporting that they had seen visions of light moving in spiral formation, drawing the oil back down to the sea floor. Several expressed feeling lighter and more hopeful; many pledged to continue to keep vigil and raise healing energy for the Gulf and all the ecosystems affected by the oil spill. [Roberts in press:10]

As for embodiment, let us consider the question of pilgrimage, generally seen as an embodied form of religious practice, one that has found increasing popularity in many traditions across the world in recent years (Reader 2007). MacWilliams (2002) makes a strong case for the religious contributions of virtual pilgrimages:[6]

> First, they create a mythscape, a highly symbolic sacred geography, largely based upon oral or scriptural traditions. Second, they use interactive visual-auditory techniques to evoke experiences of divine presence. Third, they provide liminoid forms of entertainment for the traveler/viewer. Fourth, as a leisure activity done at home or office computers, virtual pilgrimages allow individuals to join online traveling communities, which they often describe using the discourse of *communitas*. [320]

Nevertheless, MacWilliams (2002) sees many differences between virtual pilgrimage and "the real thing," the former is instantaneous, figurative rather than literal; as he puts it, the pain experienced by the barefoot pilgrim cannot be simulated on the Internet, at least not yet (326).

The question of whether virtual practices can replace embodied ones is something of a non-issue for our present concerns. According to a broad survey by the Pew Religious Forum, "faith-related activity online is a *supplement* to, rather than a *substitute* for offline religious life" (Clark et al. 2004: ii, italics in the original). This is certainly the case in our team research, given that our focus was on actual, offline congregations and networks. Thus our research speaks to the question of how the Internet is shaping the sociality and governance of religious groups, and how individuals' use of the Internet may or may not contribute to the trend toward the individualization of religious life noted by a number of researchers working in various national contexts.

The Individualization of Religious Life

In an inversion of Durkheimian priorities, the emphasis in religion today—whether in the form of established religions or newer spiritualities—appears to be on the subjective experience of the sacred much more than on religious institutions themselves, a trend amply confirmed in our research. One sign of this is religious mobility, as it concerns change in individuals' religious behaviour as compared with their religious upbringing. For example, some 44 per cent of Americans have changed religious affiliation over the course of their lives according to a survey by the Pew Research Center (2008:22).[7] Our research finds that many immigrants have converted to Evangelical Protestant churches from Catholicism or animism; sometimes this happens in the home country before migration, sometimes after arrival in Canada. In the past, especially in the 1970s, Evangelical congregations have attracted a number of Quebecois born in the province and raised as Catholics. At present we are finding many recently established Evangelical churches in the Saguenay region that are attracting followers raised as Catholics, much like what happened in Montreal in the 1970s. Presently, in the town of Chicoutimi (in the Saguenay region), there are at least six such churches. Muslims appear to convert less often, though we have encountered a few such cases. However, many Muslims become much more active in their religious practice after migrating to Canada. Meanwhile, Islam is the religion that attracts the most converts in Quebec, particularly among women, typically non-practicing Catholics, in younger age cohorts.[8] Buddhism is in second place, attracting older individuals and, of these, men more often than women (Castel 2003).

Conversion, though, is but the tip of the iceberg as far as religious mobility is concerned. Much more frequent are changes of religion and changes within the same religion to different types of practice (for example, from Sunni to Sufi practice among Muslim migrants); among the Quebec-born we find many who have changed religious frequentations several times during their lives. Such individuals frequent groups of different traditions, often simultaneously, and develop personal spiritual syntheses involving symbols and practices from various traditions. The Spiritualists I have followed for over a decade often integrate neoshamanic practices (for example, sweat lodges) as well elements of Catholicism, for most the religion of primary socialization, into their spiritual repertoire. In the team research, we found many Catholic-raised Quebecois who circulate among other types of groups (Buddhist, Neoshamanic and Spiritualist, for example) without converting or changing religious identity. Though I have not analyzed the motivations behind this type of religious mobility in other cases, I have found that the born-Catholics who frequent the Spiritualist church I study (that is, most of the congregation), are not seeking a new religious identity (Meintel 2007) but rather are looking for what I call "tools for transcendence": that

is, for personal experience of a reality beyond the mundane that gives meaning to their everyday lives.

Religious bricolage (Gellner 1997), or individual syntheses of practices and beliefs from different traditions, is very common in our study. Indeed, we find a good many cases of parallel religious practice, that is, individuals who frequent different types of religious groups; for example the Spiritualists who still attend Catholic Mass on occasion (Meintel 2012) and the Latin American Catholics who go to Spanish-languages services in Catholic churches but also to those in Evangelical churches on occasion. We have found cases where, after frequenting another type of religious group, such as a Buddhist temple, a Spiritualist church, or an Umbanda group, individuals return to the regular practice of Catholicism. Some of those we met in religious groups are reluctant to identify with any particular denomination, whatever their actual practice. In fact, in previous research on non-religious themes, I found individuals who termed themselves as "having no religion," meaning not that they were atheist or even agnostic, but rather that they did not identify with any particular religious affiliation.

Most non-immigrant Quebecois who frequent a religious group—or several—on a regular basis, as well as some of those born elsewhere, prefer to speak of "spirituality" rather than religion, much as other researchers have found. The emphasis on religious subjectivity gives renewed importance to emotions in religion (Champion and Hervieu-Léger 1990; Heelas and Woodhead 2005; Riis and Woodhead 2010) and along with this, embodiment (McGuire 2007; Dubisch 2005). For many, religious activities offer an occasion to recover a sense of unity between body mind and spirit that has been lost owing to what McGuire (2008) calls "secularization" of the body, health and health care. Not surprisingly, healing is a key element the religious rituals of many groups in Quebec.

In keeping with the tendency toward less institutionalized religious life, non-denominational congregations are multiplying in the United States (Baylor Institute for the Study of Religion 2006:8). Furthermore, a great many Americans—some 21 per cent of the population according to Fuller (2001:4)—are concerned with spiritual issues but are "unchurched." As per the title of his book, they are "spiritual but not religious." However, several caveats are in order. Though the Quebecois follow the broad tendency observed in many Western countries toward more individualized religious life, in many cases they are not, strictly speaking, "unchurched." That is, Quebecois who are in fact religiously active do not always equate their practice and ritual participation with denominational identity; rather, "religion" is seen as a matter of institutions and hierarchy and usually equated with the Catholic Church. They may in fact identify in some way as Catholic, yet actually practice with what they consider a "spiritual" group. This is the case with the great majority of those in the Spiritualist congregation I study. Those I have interviewed, including those serving the group as healers and mediums, often do not see themselves as "Spiritualists," rather when asked about their religion, will say something like, "well, I was raised Catholic."

The centrality of personal, lived experience in religion today (Hervieu-Léger 1999) often leads individuals to undertake a personal quest for meaningful practice, be it in the tradition of their birth or in other religious currents. For some scholars, the (relative) de-institutionalization of religious life is disquieting. In the past, Robert Bellah and his colleagues saw "radically individualistic" religion, as exemplified by "Sheilaism" (the name their informant, Sheila Larson, gave to her personal faith) as inherently fragile, in that its adherents are "deprived of a language genuinely able to mediate between self, society, the natural world and ultimate reality" (1985:237). The French sociologist Françoise Champion (1990) speaks of the "nebulous" syntheses between what she terms "mystical and esoteric" currents and elements of psychotherapy and uses the terms "self service" and "à la carte" (52) to describe the individual's personal spiritual syntheses. Elsewhere Champion (2003:179) remarks that "the way of believing today is particularly significant: one believes in an uncertain, undefined, relative way ... in the mode of 'why not?'" (my translation). In the same vein, Hervieu-Léger (1993:203) speaks of the "dislocation, pure and simple, from any memory that is not immediate and useful" (my translation). The implication is, for those who engage in spiritual bricolage and who do not identify exclusively with a single religious current, religiosity is likely to be rather flimsy and subject to a logic of pragmatic, short-term satisfaction.

Canadian sociologist Reginald Bibby has used the term "à la carte" (1988, 1990, 2007-8) and "fragmented" (1987) to describe contemporary religion in Canada, and more specifically, in Quebec. Yet Bibby also notes the "pervasiveness" (2007-8) of Catholicism in Quebec, and the resilience of religious institutions across Canada; yet, intriguingly, he finds a surprising number of Canadians, the highest being in Quebec where 57 per cent of those interviewed feel they have experienced God's presence (2004: 149-150). This last is particularly interesting given that religious attendance in classical terms (for example Sunday Mass for Catholics) is lower in Quebec than elsewhere in the country (2007-8). I suggest that there may be a relation between these two observations—on the

one hand, apparent disaffiliation from institutionalized religion, as assessed in conventional terms, and on the other, personal experience of the sacred. I return to this question at a later point.

Transnational and Local Networks

Transnational networks are evident among very different types of religions in our study. Immigrant Evangelical congregations, for example, tend to have close contact with other congregations of the same religion in the country of origin and elsewhere; this is the case for certain Latin American congregations and for the *Communauté Évangélique de Pentecôte* (CEP), a Pentecostal church studied by Mossière (2007, 2010a). In this case, the Montreal congregation keeps in close touch with ten others that it sponsors in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The pastor posts his weekly sermons on the French-speaking Christian website Topchretien[9] and receives communications there from members all over the world. Moreover, the CEP has a development project in the DRC for which he draws funding and management skills from other Pentecostal congregations located in various parts of North America.

The female *murids* (members of an Islamic Sufi order based in Senegal) who Traoré (2010) studied in our project are in regular email contact with other murid groups and individuals across the world, particularly in New York, Spain and Paris, as well as with their sacred cities in Senegal, Pohokane and Touba.[10] News, messages and announcements are transmitted via an email list that keeps murids all over the world informed of religious activities. Muslims in Quebec also use the Internet for local networking, according to research by Haddad (2008); Cesari (2004) notes in Haddad that the Internet is both "instrument" and "environment," both a means of and a forum for communication among believers. He finds numerous Quebec-based Muslim websites, most of them bilingual (French/English) and, far from reducing real-life interaction between those who chat on certain sites, Haddad finds that the Internet facilitates it. Much like the case of the murid brotherhoods mentioned earlier, the Internet extends the purview of other Montreal Sufi groups into cyberspace, and helps members stay in touch, locally and transnationally; also, as in the case of the Montreal Sufi Institute,[11] it may bring in new members (Haddad 2008:205).

For those involved in more marginal spiritualities, the Internet allows contact with others of the same or similar orientation. Quebecois Druids, Wiccans, Pagans maintain close ties with networks that extend to the United States and, for Druids, to France. One such group is the Montreal group of the Foundation for Shamanic Studies (Normandin 2010), a worldwide organization founded by anthropologist Michael J. Harner. The workshops held in the Montreal area by teachers trained by the Foundation are announced on the Foundation's website.[12]

In virtually all these nature-centred spiritualities, email contacts link at least some of the members with each other. In some cases, Facebook and electronic mailing lists are crucial for announcing rituals and other religious events; this is the case, for example, with Wiccans, Pagans, Druids, Reclaiming Witchcraft, "Native spirituality" groups and so on. There is considerable overlap among those who frequent rituals in these spiritual currents. The French-speaking Druids studied by Jourdain (2011) are developing a website; the Reclaiming movement in Montreal (a Wiccan group studied by Rosemary Roberts in our team project) has had a website for some time.[13] Some Spiritualist groups in Montreal have websites, including the church I study, and many of its members who also practice "Native spirituality" are on a mailing list managed by a man who is very active in the congregation. Emails inform recipients of sweat lodges, visits by Native North and South American shamans and other events of interest. Many larger groups (Catholic parishes, Protestant congregations, synagogues and mosques) also have websites that keep members informed of coming events. Druids and Wiccans tend to make greater use of interactive social media such as blogs and Facebook.

Anna Luisa Daigneault's (2011) first contact with the Anglophone Druids she studied in our project was via the Meetup[14] website, which allows like-minded individuals to find each other, organize and communicate about forthcoming events. Most of these Druids are under 35 years of age, and include a number of solitary practitioners of Paganism or Wicca who discovered these Druids and their rituals through Facebook or websites. For example, two male Pagans were practicing in solitude until they discovered each other through online profiles on a vampire website; now they attend Druid rituals. (These Druids often have a background in role-playing networks, such as "Dungeons and Dragons.") Similarly, Rosemary Roberts (2009, 2010) found young Wiccans who came to Wicca via the Internet (see also Berger and Ezzy 2004). Some of the Anglophone Druids are still involved in contemporary online gaming culture, but Druidic events are kept separate from fantasy-inspired online activities. While most participants Daigneault met were enthusiastic about new communication technologies, she observed some lively debates about the dangers of the Internet (for example too much government surveillance). Wiccans, for their part, also express some ambivalence to electronic media.

Though Adler (1997:4) speaks of technological advancement and modernity as "alienation" from the Pagan point of view, most of the Montreal Wiccans and Pagans Roberts (2010) interviewed, especially younger ones, are avid users of social media, websites and listservs for organizing their events.

Religious Governance and Authority

Though many of our findings show how the Internet expands the possibilities for individual religious agency, it is also clear from our findings that it can reinforce religious authority at a distance. For one of the groups in our study, an Umbanda[15] temple in Montreal where Annick Hernandez (2010) did fieldwork, the Internet is essential for day-to-day functioning and governance. The syncretic product of many influences, including African and Amerindian traditions, Spiritism, or Kardecism and Catholicism, Umbanda originated with Zélio Moraes (1891–1975), a Spiritist-influenced medium working in Niteroi, a city located near Rio de Janeiro. Bastide (1960) describes Umbanda as something of a reinvention of macumba via Spiritism (443) that retains African mystical associations between days, colours, *Orixás* (forces of nature), plants and animals (450).

A small Umbanda group of about a dozen members formed in Montreal some twenty years ago; they include a few mediums (three to five at any given time) who incorporate Brazilian spirits in a weekly public ritual, called a *gira*, where all singing is in Brazilian Portuguese. The mediums are highly educated and all but one or two of the members are of European or Quebecois origin. The mediums in the group did not discover Umbanda through Brazilian immigrants nor had they visited Brazil, except in the odd case as tourists, before becoming *umbandistas*. Rather, they encountered Umbanda via a complex process of transnationalization that began with a visit to Brazil by a few Swiss therapists. Isabelle, the coordinator of the Montreal group and a psychotherapist by occupation, became a member of the group that developed in Geneva. When she returned to Montreal in the early 1990s, she formed a group that, like the one in Geneva, became part of the "Arán Temple"[16] whose leader, or *pai de santo*, lives near São Paulo, Brazil.

Annick Hernandez, a participant in the team project, has had extensive contact with the Arán Temple in Montreal, first as a participant and later as a researcher/participant over two years. She has also made several visits to the Arán Temple in Brazil and has interviewed the representative of the Temple abroad, who happens to be the sister of the pai de santo. Hernandez has participated in three retreats in the São Paulo temple, and one meeting where the coordinators of all the temples, abroad or inside Brazil, were invited. Besides ongoing participant observation in the Montreal temple, she carried out many informal interviews with Arán Temple mediums in Montreal, Brazil and elsewhere.

The notion of the Arán Temple as a single entity that is presently rooted in many different nation-states is more than an image; it is a guiding principle of its governance (Meintel and Hernandez in press.) The Internet is crucial for contact between "overseas temples" and the centre of the network in São Paulo. Information about events at the São Paulo temple, initiations of mediums into higher levels there, other rituals and social events are transmitted regularly from São Paulo to the other Arán temples by email. The São Paulo temple maintains several websites in Portuguese as well as one in English, French, and Portuguese that provides links to the sites of a number of the member temples. In this religion, ritual exactitude is paramount and deviations, unless agreed to by the leader, are not encouraged.[17] Isabelle sends a report on the gira to the leader of the temple in Brazil every week.

Internet contact also allows frequent lateral contact between temple groups, for example between certain overseas temples. Over time, for example, a close relationship has also developed with the Washington D.C. temple, due to its size, importance (unlike the Montreal group, this temple has a permanent ritual space), and relative proximity. If the overseas coordinator, affectionately called *mae* (mother) visits the Washington group, the Montrealers are informed and some may travel to see her there. However, the finances of each temple group are separate and autonomous.

The CEP studied by Géraldine Mossière in Montreal and in the DRC (2010a) also exerts transnational governance, but in this case, the line of authority runs from north to south. Since 2005, the congregation in Montreal has founded ten churches in the DRC, some of which are situated in the capital, Kinshasa, and the others in Kasai, the pastor's home province (Mossière 2010b). As part of the CEP's religious consortium, the congregations in the DRC are obliged to follow CEP guidelines for sermon content and liturgy and to file an annual report to the Montreal congregation regarding their development. The pastor in Montreal inculcates leaders of the DRC churches with the CEP's evangelical message and trains them in preaching techniques. These leaders are of diverse ethnic origins but are mostly from the pastor's own personal network from his days as a theology student. Material resources circulate constantly from Montreal to the CEP congregations in the DRC. For instance, Montreal's mother church may cover the

purchase of musical instruments or motorcycles for pastors in Africa, as well as computer equipment. The pastor founded a non-governmental organization in 1983, the Citadel of Hope, situated on land he owns. This organization hosts, among other things, a micro-credit program for widows and single mothers who are church members. Other projects include animal husbandry, sewing workshops for women and classes in adult literacy and family budgets (see Mossière 2010b).

Religious Learning and Socialization

The foregoing shows how the Internet can be used to strengthen religious authority and extend it across geographical distance. In other cases, this technology allows individuals to circumvent local-level religious authority and seek information on their own, rather than through clerical intermediaries. A broad American survey conducted by the Pew Forum found that 26 per cent of respondents had gone on the Internet to find information about a tradition other than their own; 28 per cent had used it to find out more about their own tradition; and 18 per cent had done so for both reasons (Clark et al. 2004:7).

Our research finds many instances where individuals seek information on the Internet about their own tradition, one they have recently adopted or one that they are considering adopting. For example, the leaders of the young Anglophone Druids studied by Daigneault (2011) had never met more experienced practitioners when they began to explore Druidry, so they sought training via the Internet on a site called "A Druid Fellowship" (ADF).[18] Such training, according to the site, normally takes about two years. Though the ADF sets down requirements as to readings and rituals that must be documented, there are no other controls over those who go through its training programmes. French-speaking Druids in the Montreal area, also studied in our project (Jourdain 2011), tend to be of a different milieu and generation; these Druids, unlike their younger Anglophone counterparts, make very limited use of Internet technology; in fact, the two groups only learned of each other's existence through our research assistants.[19]

Muslim converts, in particular, seem to make ample use of the Internet in order to learn more about their new faith and how to practice it, as well as to chat with other converts. It appears that the search for information on Islam is one of the early steps toward conversion to Islam for women in Quebec and in France (Mossière 2010a: 96). The female converts Mossière studied find "born" Muslims to be less than dependable as sources of information on their religion, and prefer to consult the Internet to learn about Muslim practices and norms of behaviour. Also, they prefer to seek information on the Internet so as to make their own choices between competing currents of Islam. Converts often join chat rooms to exchange with "sisters" and "brothers" in Islam; in some cases, virtual encounters lead to marriage. Though our research team did not encounter Jewish individuals who had consulted the Internet in the process of conversion, one can find a number of Internet resources oriented to potential converts to Judaism and to Catholicism, in French as well as in English.[20] Moreover, other sites are designed to provide Catholics and Jews with information about their faith and how to practice it.[21]

Online Ritual and Prayer Resources

Perhaps the clearest example of expanded possibilities of religious agency the Internet affords is the many ritual and prayer resources available online. For those who practice neoshamanic spiritualities, Wicca and Druidry, online spiritual resources are usually integral to spiritual practice. The new availability of such resources represents something of a challenge to the secrecy practiced in certain Druidic and Wiccan traditions, whereby arcane knowledge was transmitted via carefully guarded oral tradition. At the same time, as Cowan points out, "these spaces provide alternative, hitherto unavailable venues for the performance and instantiation of often marginalized religious identities" (2005: x).

Druid leaders often go online to find inspiration when planning rituals, as well as to announce these events to their network. Likewise, for the Pagans studied by Roberts, prayers, spells and rituals are constantly renewed, often with the help of Internet resources, to accommodate an evolving personal synthesis. For example, Monique, one of Roberts' informants, who was in her mid-thirties at the time of the interview explained how, as a child, she experienced premonitions, prophetic dreams and communication with angels. Later, after her father's death, she often heard him speaking to her. Internet research on spirits, ghosts and ancestral worship led her to contemporary witchcraft (Wicca and Paganism). She is currently involved in a coven that incorporates the diverse perspectives and interests of its members, including High Magic, Hindu, and Buddhist practices. Also drawn toward the Sacred Feminine, she decided to follow in the footsteps of her coven's High Priestess to become a priestess of the Fellowship of Isis, currently based at Conegal Castle, Ireland.[22] Monique is half-Haitian and most recently, has been cultivating her relationship with Vaudou entities (Roberts 2009:125-128). Such hybrid spiritualities are fairly typical of the Pagans and Wiccans interviewed by Roberts, and online research is a normal part of the constant search for new inspiration.

Mainstream religions are also using the Internet to offer new spiritual resources to their followers. For example, a Catholic congregation established in 2004 in the Plateau, a central-city Montreal neighbourhood, under the auspices of the Monastic and Lay Jerusalem Communities (Fraternités de Jérusalem) founded in Paris in 1975, offers a weekly homily that can be downloaded from its website or received by email. Like many Catholic parishes in the city, it also offers a weekly liturgical flyer on its website that can be used to follow the readings from the Mass at a distance.[23]

Internet and the Individualization of Religious Life

It is clear from our research findings that the Internet expands the possibilities of religious agency for individuals, making it easy for them to find new resources for personal spiritual practice, to connect with others of similar orientation, share religious matters, and learn more about a religious tradition that interests them. Moreover, religious resources have multiplied, thanks to the Internet, and new ones (virtual pilgrimages and online churches, for example) have emerged. For discovering a different tradition, or a different current within one's own, to leave a sectarian group, to convert to a different faith, or to acquire information that was once available only to a few, the Internet has proved itself a formidable tool.

Our research has also found that the Internet is a useful support for religious networks and congregations, extending their reach across physical space, be it to outlying regions of Quebec, or across national borders. Transnational contacts between local congregations and similar groups abroad, as in the case of Pentecostal churches, allows for sharing of resources and other forms of collaboration. As I have shown, these contacts may be asymmetrical rather than egalitarian. For, while the Internet offers alternatives to localized religious authority, it can be a tool for strengthening governance of religious groups at a distance.

There is no doubt that the Internet has certainly given momentum to the individualization of religious life. Following Gauthier et al. (2011), the trend toward individualization reflects to some degree the consumer capitalism of our age. In the context of what the authors term "cultural deregulation," a vast array of new religious possibilities proliferate, fueled by new media. In the new context of consumer society, the authors argue,

> highly differentiated products can now be made available, catering to a vast range of identities, with very different forms of—say, Reiki—being marketed for different income brackets, ages and genders. [Gauthier et al. unpublished:7-8][24]

At the same time, as these authors note, religious "consumerism" is not simply a new form of narcissism, given that individuals continue to need recognition by others to validate them in their quest for authenticity and self-definition. Nor, as the authors point out, can it be assumed that individual religious agency is based on pragmatically self-interested or utilitarian motives. Emotion, for example, enters into such choices, as do identity concerns.

The results of our study suggest that the individualization of religious life brings with it new burdens and obligations. In a context of symbolic abundance and choice, the quality of personal, subjective religious experience is seen as depending a great deal on the individual. Part of being a "pilgrim," as Hervieu-Léger (1999:109) terms those whose religious orientation places the personal quest for meaning above institutional regulation, is taking responsibility for the quality of one's spiritual life. The "pilgrim" stance is typically characterized by mobile beliefs, practices and affiliations. However, as Hervieu-Léger notes (1999:95-96), even individuals who remain active in the religion in which they were socialized, such as practicing Catholics, may see themselves as "pilgrims" of a sort; that is, as being engaged in a search for meaning. Similarly, Muslims interviewed in previous research I have directed in the past (Meintel and Le Gall 2009) often emphasize the centrality of one's personal spiritual trajectory, even for those born into the faith.

Berger and Ezzy (2004) expected that the teenaged witches they interviewed in Australia and the United States would be "frivolous" in their spirituality, but discovered this was far from being the case. Rather, the young practitioners they interviewed made extensive use of libraries, bookstores and online resources, including complex training programs that appear similar to those of the ADF used by the young Montreal Druids mentioned earlier. Similarly, the Montreal Pagans studied by Roberts constantly seek to revitalize their spiritual practice through the rituals they discover on the Internet or through library research. Typically, these are borrowed from other spiritual traditions or other currents of Paganism. On the basis of her case studies, Roberts finds that these Pagans:

> will do what they can to keep their spirituality alive, moving, and meaningful. If they come to an end of one path, they will either move in a different direction altogether, or they will seek out aspects from other sources that can be incorporated into the work they are already doing. [Roberts 2009:101-102]

Similarly, many who attend the Spiritualist church I have been following for over a decade acquire other practices along the way (meditation, sweat lodges, or so on) while hanging onto Catholic practices and beliefs—prayers to the Virgin, visits to St. Joseph's Oratory (associated with Brother André, canonized in 2010)—that they still find meaningful (Meintel 2012). This throws something of a new light on the eclectic, à la carte spiritualities that have attracted many in Quebec away from Catholic practice in the form of Sunday Mass. Rather than new denominational affiliations, the native-born Quebecois interviewed in our team study are often seeking what I call "tools for transcendence," ways to experience contact with the sacred. It is often via the new (to Quebec, at least) spiritualities that are part of their personal spiritual bricolage that they have the direct experience of the Divine or the Sacred reported by so many Quebecois in Bibby's research mentioned earlier.

Typically, although today's religious "pilgrims" in Quebec are drawn to groups that do not demand exclusive religious belonging and require little in terms of institutional involvement, they do make important sacrifices in pursuing spiritual well-being. Apart from the cost of workshops, intensive retreats, and other activities, there are often specific requirements for attending or performing rituals. For example, the neoshamanic rituals studied by our team (among Druids, in an Ayahuasca group, in "Native Spirituality" groups) often require a period of abstention from alcohol and sexual activity and in some cases, from coffee and certain foods as well. A woman who practices a Native-inspired form of spirituality wears skirts as much as possible because of the symbolic importance of this garb in Native shamanism (Corneiller 2011). Practicing Buddhism may involve long periods of meditation as well as abstinence from alcohol and other drugs. Such constraints are embraced by individuals who have rebelled against the strictures of religious institutions in the past because they are seen as necessary for reaching a certain level of spiritual experience.

Conclusion

Our team research gives much evidence that the Internet contributes to individualization of religion by multiplying available sources of religious authority, knowledge and information, and opportunities for exchange about religious issues. It is also investing various social actors with new possibilities of religious agencies: disaffected sect members, converts and potential converts, youth, not to mention the many online purveyors of religious and spiritual resources. At the same time, our study finds that the Internet can bolster religious institutions by strengthening religious governance and generating networking and exchange within and between congregations, while providing ritual and administrative resources for religious leaders. New kinds of religious conviviality (Meintel 2010) are emerging for which the Internet plays an important, sometimes crucial, role. Religious landscapes and neighbourhoods, to borrow Appadurai's (1996) terminology, are now virtual as well as physical. In the end, the issue is less one of individuals versus collectivities, but rather one of how the Internet is changing the parameters of religious sociality, how it is reconfiguring the relationships among religious actors as well as between these actors and religious collectivities.

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Notes

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2 The first person plural as used in this article refers to the author and the other researchers on the team who are named in Note 1.

3 These include, for example, governance, ritual life, transnational contacts, social activities, differentiation of members by ethnicity, age and gender, healing practices, mobilization of the body and emotions, family norms and individual religious practices.

4 Abridged digital versions of reports from the project are available at www.grdu.umontreal.ca/fr/publications-workingpapers.html.

5 Notable contributions include Marcotte (ed.) 2010, Højsgaard and Warburg (eds.) 2005; Dawson and Cowan (eds.) 2004.

6 For example, virtual pilgrimages to Compostela (http://www.caminodesantiago.me.uk/forum/camino-frances/1635-virtual-pilgrimage-group-leaves-usa-long-walk-santiago.html), to Mecca (http://www.pbs.org/muhammad/virtualhajj.shtml), both accessed March 19, 2011.

7 The authors add that these figures do not take into account the multiple changes of affiliation by individuals, nor changes of those who return to their original faith after having changed religions.

8 Mossière (2008) sees such conversions as expressing criticism of modern society and in particular of the family models current in Quebec. For further information, see Mossière (2010a, 2010c).

9 www.topchretien.com.

10 Touba is the sacred city of the founder of Muridism, Sheikh Amadou Bamba; Porokhane is that of his mother, Mam Diarra Bousso.

11 http://www.institut-soufi.ca/IsmAng/Activity.html (accessed March 19, 2011).
12 www.shamanism.org/index.php (accessed January 5, 2012).
13 www.cosmic-muse.com/reclaiming/home.html (accessed January 5, 2012).
14 www.meetup.com (accessed January 5, 2012).
15 Umbanda is a syncretic Brazilian religion founded in 1920 in which participants incorporate spirit entities (see Brown 1994).
16 Like all proper names used herein, this is a pseudonym.
17 In at least one case I know of, a European group was removed from the worldwide Temple for this reason.
18 http://www.adf.org/core/ (accessed January 5, 2012).
19 Older, Francophone Druids are likely to be secretive given the prejudice against them in the era of Catholic hegemony and some, according to Daigneault (2011) still practice secretly. Daigneault learned of cases dating from the 1980s when Druids lost their jobs for religious reasons; similarly, Rosemary Roberts found a small, very secretive Francophone coven of Wiccans in her research on Montreal Pagans.
20 For example, for conversion to Judaism, www.convert.org/; to Catholicism http://www.ancient-future.net/conversion.html; see also news.catholique.org/13733-%C2%AB-Que-signifie-se-convertir-?-%BB,-question-et (all accessed January 5, 2012).
21 For example, the multilingual sites www.catholic.net/ and www.catholic.org; for Judaism, http://reclaimingjudaism.org/) (all accessed January 5, 2012).
22 www.fellowshipofisis.com/ (accessed January 5, 2012).
23 http://www.jerusalem-montreal.org/bienvenue.html (accessed January 5, 2012).
24 Gauthier et al. (2011) is based on this manuscript, which was transmitted to me by François Gauthier; however, the passages I cite here were not included in the published version.

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Se jouer des situations : Usages de mondes « virtuels » en contextes de handicap

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Résumé : Le présent article s'inscrit dans le prolongement d'une recherche en cours portant sur la compréhension et l'analyse des usages de jeux vidéo en ligne par des personnes en situation de handicap. En soulignant les apports épistémiques et méthodologiques d'une ethnographie en ligne, il pointe les limites heuristiques de la classique distinction entre un monde supposé réel qui se verrait redoublé par son pendant virtuel. L'exemple précis des jeux vidéo permet ici non seulement de questionner la dichotomie virtuel / réel mais aussi la définition traditionnelle du jeu élaborée à partir du modèle de la règle distincte de son effectuation concrète. L'analyse des pratiques ludiques de personnes en situation de handicap pointe enfin la nécessité d'une attention portée sur les modes d'appropriation corporelle d'un dispositif techno-communicationnel. En conséquence, il s'agit d'envisager les formes d'expériences vidéo-ludiques comme des « instances de procuration » autorisant l'exploration sensible de mondes moins disjoints les uns des autres qu'en interaction constante.

Mots-clés : ethnographie, handicap, jeux vidéo, virtuel, expérience, corps

Abstract: This article is a continuation of ongoing research to understand the uses of online gaming by people with physical disabilities. By emphasizing the epistemic and methodological contributions of online ethnography, it points to the heuristic limits of the traditional distinction between a supposedly real world and that which would be repeated in the virtual. The specific use of video games in this example, makes it possible not only to question the virtual–real dichotomy, but also to question the traditional definition of the game which starts from the premise that the rule is distinct from its concrete execution. Analysis of the recreational practices of disabled people also points to the need for attention to modes of bodily appropriation of techno-communication devices. In the end, it is a question of considering video entertainment experiences like "instances of proxy," authorizing the sensitive exploration of worlds that are less disconnected and instead are in constant interaction.

Keywords: ethnography, disability, video game, virtual, experience, body

Suivre à pied Sara dans les rues et avenues d'une grande ville de France s'avère un exercice beaucoup moins aisé qu'escompté. Sara a une quarantaine d'années et est paraplégique depuis l'âge de deux ans. Installée dans un fauteuil électrique, la main posée sur la commande directionnelle qu'elle manipule du bout des doigts – son « *joystick* », comme elle se plaît à la nommer –, elle semble connaître en détail la topographie et la géographie de l'espace urbain qu'elle parcourt régulièrement. Les tracés et courbes qu'elle dessine sur l'asphalte paraissent répondre à une connaissance minutieuse de la ville et de son agencement. Ici, elle esquive la présence d'un plot délimitant une zone piétonne, se détourne d'une foule compacte de flâneurs en empruntant une ruelle; là, elle anticipe par un louvoiement habile une descente de trottoir trop abrupte, proteste contre la présence d'un véhicule de service garé sur la chaussée; ici encore, elle se fraie un chemin entre deux tramways, coupant à la perpendiculaire les voies de rails des engins. Plus loin, elle fait face à un autre usager lui aussi en fauteuil roulant. Sara le croise sans même un regard. Se tournant vers nous, elle s'exclame : « Et alors ? Il est handicapé... Mais je ne le connais pas. Vous imaginez, si je m'amuse à discuter avec tous les gens que je rencontre ? ». Sara va vite. Parfois trop vite. Lorsqu'elle pressent une modification nécessaire de son itinéraire, elle pousse la tige en métal fixée sur le boîtier de son accoudoir. Une orientation légère, en arrière, en avant, à gauche ou à droite modifie la direction; une pression accentuée agit, elle, sur la vitesse de déplacement. Le passage est étroit, Sara nous dépasse et se glisse entre une poubelle et une barrière de sécurité protégeant les passants de la circulation : « On tient de la place, mon fauteuil et moi. Il faut toujours prévoir ! ». L'accélération, franche et marquée, nous laisse quelques mètres en arrière. Bien que « valides », nous tentons de la rejoindre mais le chemin emprunté et les obstacles qui le parsèment complexifient notre avancée. Sara s'amuse de notre laborieuse progression :

> C'est normal, c'est comme marcher, ça s'apprend. Les trajectoires, il faut les connaître. Personnellement, j'ai beaucoup appris et j'apprends encore en jouant aux jeux vidéo. Quand je déplace mon personnage dans un FPS[1] par exemple, hé bien, c'est comme lorsque je déplace mon fauteuil. C'est la même chose. Je me repère dans l'espace et j'essaye d'améliorer mon utilisation du joystick... La relation entre ce que je vois, ma main et mes déplacements. C'est comme un entraînement. Jouer m'entraîne à me déplacer. Et inversement, me déplacer me permet aussi de m'entraîner pour jouer. J'ai même corsé le truc en m'obligeant à me servir de la main droite alors que je suis gauchère ! [*Sourire*] Je m'entraîne quoi !

Cette assertion est loin d'être anecdotique et revêt une importance heuristique capitale. Sara est en effet une férue de jeux vidéo. Une grande partie de son temps est consacrée à cette activité. Elle multiplie les supports jouant aussi bien sur les consoles disponibles sur le marché que sur un ordinateur qu'elle améliore ou « *upgrade* » régulièrement afin de profiter de conditions techniques optimales. De même, elle explore une multitude de genres vidéo-ludiques, s'adonnant autant aux jeux d'action, de stratégie qu'aux jeux de rôle en ligne pour lesquels elle avoue une préférence assez nette. C'est d'ailleurs au sein de l'un de ces derniers que nous l'avons rencontrée lors de circonstances aussi hasardeuses qu'incongrues[2]. Cette rencontre s'inscrivait dans le cadre d'une recherche entamée en 2006 sur l'usage des nouvelles technologies, en particulier celui des jeux vidéo en ligne par des personnes en situation de handicap[3]. Le terrain exploré privilégiait le jeu *World of Warcraft* qui, depuis quelques années, fait l'objet d'un intérêt croissant de la part des sciences humaines et sociales. *World of Warcraft*[4] appartient à ce que le vocabulaire courant des *Game Studies* nomme MMORPG, acronyme tiré de l'expression anglo-saxonne *Massively Multiplayer Online Role Playing Games*. La traduction française littérale de l'expression – Jeu de Rôle en Ligne Massivement Multijoueur – transcrit assez bien ce qui caractériserait ce type d'activité vidéo-ludique. Dans le cadre d'un MMO, l'expérience de jeu se définit ainsi par l'exploration d'un *monde virtuel* en trois dimensions : dans le cas de *World of Warcraft*, fortement imprégné par un imaginaire *Heroic Fantasy*; accessible en *réseau*, *via* l'Internet donc nécessitant l'emploi d'un ordinateur; caractérisé par une *persistance* – il continue d'exister même lorsque le joueur se déconnecte –; et un aspect *communautaire* socialement régulé[5]– le joueur n'y est jamais vraiment seul, il partage son expérience avec des centaines d'autres joueurs coprésents[6]. L'interaction avec ces partenaires de jeu ainsi qu'avec l'environnement est rendue possible par la création d'un *avatar* qui, littéralement, concrétise, formalise la présence de l'utilisateur dans l'univers numérique. Enfin, la finalité des actions, le *but du jeu* pourrait-on dire, se résume à l'accomplissement d'une série d'objectifs – les « quêtes » et « missions » – qui apporteront au personnage expérience et reconnaissance, seules garanties de sa progression et de son évolution. Dès lors, en saisissant comme point de départ cette rencontre avec Sara ainsi qu'avec d'autres joueurs en situation de handicap dans le contexte d'un MMO, l'objectif du présent article visera à explorer les conséquences d'une expérience concrète, incarnée de ces mondes numérisés. En quoi consiste justement cette expérience de la virtualité ? À quelles modalités de l'activité ludique nous renvoie-t-elle ? L'usage d'un avatar modifie-t-il la perception même de la situation de handicap ? Plus largement, l'exploration d'univers virtuel n'ouvre-t-elle pas sur des modalités d'ajustement entre corps et appareillages techniques qui, en fin de compte, relativiseraient la spécificité corporelle supposée de l'expérience du joueur en situation de handicap ?

Une ethnographie « virtuelle » ?

Les prémisses de cette recherche se sont donc inscrites résolument dans ce que Christine Hine (2000) définissait, il y a plus d'une dizaine d'années, comme une « ethnographie virtuelle »[7], en l'occurrence une démarche reprenant les bases de cet « idéal méthodologique » qui vise à explorer les liens complexes reliant les usage concrets des nouvelles technologies aux différentes « arènes » (*arenas*) de la vie quotidienne : « An ethnography of the Internet can look in detail at the ways in which the technology is experienced *in use* » (Hine 2000:4, nous soulignons)[8]. À l'instar de cette connotation d'une enquête « not quite » exposée par Hine, ce travail de terrain s'est heurté et se heurte encore aux obstacles méthodologiques et épistémologiques évoqués plus loin par notre auteure au travers des dix principes qu'elle soulève pour la mise en œuvre d'une ethnographie des mondes numériques. D'emblée, il s'agit d'assumer les effets de ce « not quite », de ce « pas tout à fait », que nous pourrions aussi traduire par l'idée d'une ethnographie inaboutie, en partie absente à elle-même, quasi-carencée. Absente, inaccomplie, carencée car dépendante de phénomènes par essence virtuels qui révéleraient en creux notre propre interprétation culturelle et philosophique de l'appréhension de cette même virtualité. Renvoyé au possible, à la promesse de formes en attente, le terrain virtuel trahirait dès lors la supposée exigence d'une ethnographie en prise avec l'accomplissement d'événements conçus comme factuels donc *réels*. En ce qui nous concerne et pour reprendre la célèbre expression de Malinowski,

est-il possible de planter – effectivement, concrètement – sa tente au milieu d'un campement de gnomes dans *World of Warcraft* ? Si l'effet métaphorique de la formule est parfaitement recevable, elle reste une image qui ne peut être redoublée par l'exigence ontologique d'une conception classique de l'ethnographie qui ferait reposer sa légitimité sur le nécessaire transport physique parmi les autres. Explorer une terre virtuelle implique une forme de déplacement, y compris nous le verrons dans les effets corporels qu'elle suscite, mais cette modalité du transport ne peut se résumer, sous peine d'être épistémologiquement anéantie, au postulat réaliste d'une présence essentialisée d'un autre distant duquel dépendrait le processus de production des données. Ainsi, ce postulat présentiste s'est parfois résumé à cette incise exprimée à l'endroit de notre démarche : « C'est intéressant d'étudier des avatars, mais quand est-ce que vous allez rencontrer les vrais gens qui les agissent ? ». Comme l'indique l'exemple de Sara précédemment évoqué, la possibilité d'une rencontre *in concreto*, en « face-à-face » des usagers de mondes virtuels reste mobilisable et, dans le cas de ce propos, possiblement féconde. Pour autant, Hine a raison de souligner que l'enquête en terre virtuelle nécessite des abandons et des acceptations méthodologiques. Elle postule ainsi de reconnaître la mobilité des phénomènes étudiés, obligeant l'ethnographe à prêter une attention soutenue au flot et à la connectivité des groupes plutôt qu'à leur localisation et aux frontières qui en présupposeraient l'organisation[9]. Il s'agit bien de considérer des associations en train de se faire par l'environnement technologique, donc par l'entremise de ce dispositif complexe que serait le virtuel. L'objet de l'enquête, dans cet ordre d'idées, ne peut se constituer indépendamment du dispositif technique et des interactions que nourrit le chercheur avec celui-ci. Il se formalise « dans », « sur » et « au travers » du virtuel[10], ce qui implique par conséquent de laisser derrière soi la conception d'une préexistence de réalités isolables et vérifiables. L'ethnographie d'un monde virtuel et, dans le cas présent vidéo-ludique, implique de reconnaître l'avatar comme forme plausible. Même si en fin de compte *quelqu'un* – utilisateur, usager, joueur, etc. – se tient bien derrière ou au-delà de la figure numérisée qu'il incarne, il n'en reste pas moins que l'avatar en tant qu'agencement concret le présentifie, le rend saisissable ici et maintenant comme phénomène de perception donc comme sujet de l'enquête. À ce titre, l'« ethnographie virtuelle » évoquée par Hine met à mal la commode et classique séparation entre virtualité et réalité. En jouant littéralement le jeu de l'interaction avec l'avatar, le chercheur attribue à son existence une pertinence, donc une crédibilité. Il négocie avec sa tangibilité reconnaissant, par son entremise, la présence en actes de son utilisateur, utilisateur certes distant et anonyme mais néanmoins rendu visible par le dispositif technique qui l'incarne[11].

Plus encore, il nous semble que l'exemple de Sara nous permet d'aborder ces complexes relations à l'« interstitiel » qu'évoque Hine concernant l'enquête virtuelle. Sara, en jouant avec le joystick de son fauteuil électrique, en attribuant à ses expériences le statut d'« entraînement » visant à modifier la perception de son propre corps en relation avec un environnement, nous permet de souligner trois niveaux principaux d'interprétation que nous allons nous efforcer d'examiner. D'une part, et au-delà de la possibilité même d'une ethnographie posant la question de la présence différée de l'autre dans un monde virtuel, Sara nous invite à reprendre non seulement la dialectique entre virtuel et réel mais aussi à reconsidérer les conséquences de l'expérience même du jeu. Pour Sara, mais nous le verrons aussi pour les autres joueurs rencontrés, jouer, c'est *opérer*. C'est donc mettre en œuvre des modalités d'action qui font voler en éclat la traditionnelle conception du « cercle magique » ludique qui apparaîtrait comme une parenthèse dans l'ordinaire du quotidien – le jeu comme espace virtuel qui s'immiscerait dans la routine du réel. Dans le prolongement de ce qu'avance Thomas M. Malaby (2007, 2009), le jeu participe d'une expérience élargie qui ne peut être séparée de ce que Alfred Schütz (2008) nommait de son côté la « réalité primordiale ». D'autre part, en revêtant le statut de contexte de simulation vecteur d'apprentissages et d'expériences, le jeu, et en particulier vidéo tel qu'évoqué ici, ne peut se limiter à une appréhension de type strictement représentationnel. Il n'est pas une simple surface prenant vie en images dans le cadre délimité par l'écran. Il engage plutôt, au regard de nos observations, une « position projetée » (Gee 2008:260) qui mobilise le sujet et l'ensemble de son étendue corporelle. Enfin, la prise en compte dans le cadre de cette recherche d'une population de joueurs spécifique, en l'occurrence en situation de handicap, pose justement la nécessaire question de la notion de « situation » proprement dite. Les joueurs que nous avons rencontrés expérimentent au final ce que nombre de joueurs dits « valides » expérimentent eux aussi de leur côté, à savoir la négociation avec le dispositif technique et l'interface vidéo-ludique, la constitution de repères cognitifs et perceptifs nécessaires à la manipulation de l'avatar et du déplacement dans l'environnement virtuel. Simplement, leur situation singulière nous conduit à prêter une attention encore plus soutenue aux expériences corporelles engagées dans ce type d'activité. Si nous prenons l'exemple de Gilles, tétraplégique, qui ne peut se servir que d'une seule main afin de manipuler son avatar à l'écran à l'aide d'un clavier et d'une

souris, il expérimente de façon certes accrue ce que néanmoins l'ensemble des joueurs vivent au quotidien : la synchronisation indispensable entre son corps prolongé par son appareillage, l'interface technique et l'environnement virtuel. Mais ici et plus qu'ailleurs, l'exercice nécessite une attention et une présence soutenues. La singularité des efforts qu'il requiert ne doit pas cependant se muer en une forme de particularisme stigmatisant donc excluant, le « joueur handicapé » devenant par là une catégorie absolue et irréductible.

La virtualité de la règle du jeu

La compréhension des usages d'un univers vidéo-ludique en ligne confronte la démarche conceptuelle à un double enjeu théorique : celui, tout d'abord, renvoyant à la notion même de « virtualité » et aux « connections » qui la relient à la « réalité » (Hine 2000:64); celui, ensuite, de l'activité ludique proprement dite qui instaure une relation problématique entre l'imaginaire entendu comme possibilité conditionnant l'acte de jouer et l'action de jeu postulant une effectuation de cet imaginaire. Il en résulte que jeu comme virtualité se déploient, selon les approches analytiques classiques, dans le sillage de la distinction entre « ce qui est en attente » et ce qui, effectivement, s'opère, s'effectue. Rob Shields, de son côté, atténue cette distinction en renvoyant le virtuel et ses phénomènes à ce qu'il nomme des « intangibles » (Shields 2006:284), ces « choses » qui, *a priori*, seraient un mélange d'abstractions et de potentiels. Si l'on suit les conséquences de cette acception, les virtualités existent et ne sont pas de pures idées cantonnées dans un espace théorique fait d'inconsistance et d'immatérialité : « Virtualities are not just 'ideas' but things: a code, habitus or class that exists even if one cannot treat it as tangible object » (*ibid.*). Le virtuel désignerait donc des objets et des états existant mais non « concrets ». À ce titre, il définirait un mode d'être participant du réel mais qui resterait distinct de l'actuel. Un souvenir, par exemple, peut être considéré comme une virtualité idéale, bien réelle, mais qui n'aurait pas la même actualité concrète qu'un objet matériel. Le virtuel s'effectuerait par une actualisation impliquant un acte de performance le faisant advenir mais cette actualisation produirait, toujours selon Shields, des transformations. Ainsi, lorsque Sara se déplace virtuellement dans un jeu vidéo puis transpose ce déplacement dans les rues de la ville, les modalités de ce transport ne participent pas d'une conversion pure et simple d'un univers à l'autre. Il est une traduction établissant un lien entre des situations de perception en relation. Sara effectue une action réelle dans un monde « virtuel » puis déplace cette action en la faisant advenir autrement dans le monde « réel ». En conséquence, à l'instar de ce que précise Alain Milon, le virtuel demeure un « état » dont le possible reste un « attribut » (Milon 2007:257). L'opposition traditionnellement mobilisée entre le réel conçu comme une matérialité absolue et le virtuel abordé comme une forme immatérielle pure devient inopérante. Elle peut, en effet, être rattachée à une simplification du concept produite par certains usages fantasmés de la « cyberréalité » : « C'est en réduisant le virtuel à l'immatérialité de l'information que la cyberculture franchit le pas pour en faire une abstraction pure » (*ibid.*). Or– et nous rejoignons Milon sur ce point précis –, même si nous nous détachons par ailleurs des conclusions pathologiques qu'il déduit des effets simplificateurs de la notion de virtualité telle qu'utilisée dans une partie de la « cyberculture »[12], les transitions entre mondes qu'effectue Sara restent des transactions de corps. À aucun moment, nous semble-t-il, elles n'impliquent une dilution de la matérialité et de la densité corporelle. Elles se modulent, en revanche, selon des possibles perceptifs sensiblement différents.

De la même manière, l'acception classique de la notion de jeu a mis l'accent sur une opposition analytique binaire distinguant un possible – la règle – de son effectuation concrète – l'activité ludique proprement dite. Ainsi, le « jouer » en tant qu'acte se distinguerait du « jeu » en tant que potentialité. Pour Johan Huizinga (1951), le jeu demeure cette activité « fictive » qui, dès lors, soulignerait l'opposition entre production imaginaire et réalité ordinaire. De son côté, Roger Caillois (1958) reprend à son compte cette intromission du fictif dans le rythme routinier des activités quotidiennes. La distinction qu'il opère concernant ces deux manières de jouer donc de bousculer le déroulement du quotidien que seraient *paidia* et *ludus* s'inscrit en partie dans cette conception duelle du jeu : d'un côté, l'activité pure, spontanée cause de trouble et de désordre; de l'autre, l'intervention de la règle mais aussi de l'habileté source d'une progressive domestication de la pratique ludique. Ainsi, *paidia* et *ludus* se situeraient à l'interstice de cette tension première pointée par Donald W. Winnicott (1975) entre *game* et *play*. La potentialité/virtualité de la règle parcourrait l'acte même du jeu afin d'en maîtriser – Caillois dirait d'en « civiliser » – les effets. Le *play*, geste inchoatif, permettrait la mise en œuvre des vertus structurantes du *game*, saisi comme instance de régulation. Dans cette optique, le jeu reste une action délimitée, régulée et fictive, Roger Caillois lui ajoutant les caractéristiques d'improductivité, d'incertitude et de consentement assumé. L'émergence plus récente des recherches dans le champ académique sur les jeux vidéo a aussi été en partie marquée par cette structuration analytique duelle. Le débat des *Game Studies* s'est ainsi organisé

à partir d'une controverse opposant les tenants d'une approche qualifiée par les acteurs du champ de « narratologique » à celle définie, par ces mêmes acteurs, comme « ludologique ». Cette dispute a posé, plus largement, les bases d'un enjeu théorique définissant la pertinence même d'une étude des jeux vidéo considérés comme phénomène culturel de masse émergeant. Pour les défenseurs de l'approche narratologique, le jeu vidéo peut être conçu dans les termes d'une compréhension holiste du phénomène culturel. Selon cette approche, ils sont une narration, une construction de sens définie par une activité humaine spécifique. Au-delà de la légitimité de l'objet et dans le cadre d'une narratologie extensive, les jeux vidéo, au même titre que les supports traditionnellement étudiés par les *Cultural Studies*, participeraient d'un phénomène de narration globalisée. La narration, en tant que phénomène social et culturel étendu, est dès lors partout. Les jeux – y compris vidéo – n'échapperaient pas à cette narrativisation généralisée et partageraient avec le livre, le film, etc., une logique narrative, c'est-à-dire un agencement de traits structurels organisant les modalités spécifiques du récit. Ce dernier formerait un tout, pouvant être transféré dans de multiples médiums. Rien ne pourrait se tenir hors de cet impératif immuable et constant de narration. Par conséquent, les jeux vidéo raconteraient à leur manière des histoires et permettraient à leurs utilisateurs de raconter à leur tour des histoires à leur propos. Comme l'indique Julien Rueff (2008), la posture narratologique pourrait être reprise à l'aune de ces trois arguments majeurs : les êtres humains par leurs pratiques et mises en représentations produiraient à l'infini du récit; en tant que loisirs, les jeux vidéo s'inscriraient de fait dans les trames de cet impératif du raconter; ils partageraient, enfin, avec d'autres narrations des formes d'organisation structurées. À cet argument totalisant du récit, les représentants de l'approche ludologique opposent l'impératif de la pratique. Le sens n'expliquerait pas tout. Et surtout, il conduirait à une conception strictement sémantique et logocentrée de l'activité ludique. Rueff encore :

> Pour les tenants de la ludologie, l'essence des jeux résiderait dans leur système de règles. En d'autres termes, il serait impossible de considérer un jeu vidéo (en tant que jeu) en faisant l'économie des mécanismes définissant les conditions de victoire, d'une part, et les modalités d'action des joueurs, d'autre part. [Rueff 2008:149]

Le point de divergence majeur concernant la saisie de ces modalités d'action reposerait sur la reconnaissance et l'appréhension de ce mode spécifique d'agir que concrétiserait l'*interactivité*. Ainsi, le jeu vidéo serait parcouru par un impératif de narration. En ce sens, le joueur peut raconter l'histoire du jeu qu'il a vécue. Il peut revenir sur les éléments, mêmes basiques, de la narration de ce à quoi il a joué. Pour autant, le récit ludique et plus particulièrement vidéo-ludique, renverrait à une logique temporelle spécifique, à un « ici et maintenant » faisant dépendre le déroulement des événements de l'influence directe du joueur. Comme le précise Jesper Juul :

> The game constructs the story as *synchronous* with narrative time and reading/viewing time: the story time is *now*. Now, not just in the sense that the viewer witnesses events now, but in the sense that the events are *happening* now, and that what comes next is not yet determined. [Juul 2005:223][13]

Le joueur interpréterait les événements de la narration, leur attribuerait un sens comme dans toute pratique de réception/construction de contenus narratifs. Cependant, la logique temporelle de ce processus d'interprétation serait séquentielle. Les événements auraient lieu *maintenant* et dans un *ici* ambigu, autant constitué par la réalité de ce qui se déroule virtuellement dans le jeu que par ce qu'éprouve concrètement le joueur : « the player establishes a concrete order of events in the course of playing the game. The player is responsible for creating the plot, in addition to the interpretative task » (Neitzel 2005:239)[14]. Le joueur est donc projeté dans le monde fictif, il le constitue et se constitue par lui. Il reste un auteur – compris en tant que producteur et vecteur de récits –, mais plus encore, il peut être appréhendé en tant qu'auteur « impliqué », déclencheur de la chaîne des événements dépendant du monde virtuel qu'il explore.

Cette notion d'implication, comprise comme mobilisation générale du joueur/acteur, nous paraît essentielle afin de dépasser la dualité théorique qui a longtemps distingué ce qui peut être défini comme la virtualité de la règle et la mise en œuvre de celle-ci par l'activité ludique proprement dite. Nous rejoignons ainsi Thomas M. Malaby (2007) sur ce point particulier : l'approche narratologique *stricto sensu* se heurte, à terme, aux limites du formalisme en ne voyant dans le jeu qu'un agencement de sens. De même, le postulat ludologique, en rapprochant le jeu d'une activité supérieure réglée, toute entière tournée vers le plaisir et l'amusement, peut finir par le muer en activité hyperspécialisée, empêchant de le relier à d'autres types d'actions sociales. Dans les termes de Malaby, le jeu en tant qu'expérience humaine ne peut se réduire à une simple mise en relation de significations : « It also consists in human practice, in the lived experience itself » (Malaby

2007:101). Compris en tant qu'expérience vécue, le jeu, saisi dans les termes d'un paradigme pragmatiste explorant l'agir humain, ne peut se résumer à une logique stricte de la représentation. Il révèle un engagement du sujet-acteur au monde[15]. En soulignant son inscription dans le social, Malaby détache ainsi le jeu d'une interprétation non-productive (l'activité ludique comme pure « perte » de Roger Caillois). Dans ce prolongement, il extirpe la pratique ludique de la conception du désintéressement qui longtemps a été accolée similairement à l'expérience artistique par exemple. L'art comme le jeu tireraient leur légitimité et leur nécessité de leur non-congruence avec les actes triviaux de la vie sociale. Dans cette vision fondée sur l'expérience du sublime en tant qu'élévation et libération, jouer comme contempler, c'est imaginer, donc s'extirper des nécessités – forcément laborieuses et aliénantes – du quotidien. Pour Malaby, cette conception du jeu fait l'impasse sur la dimension pratique de l'activité ludique. En reprenant les analyses de Csikszentmihalyi, il envisage *de facto* le jeu comme un « état de l'expérience » : « a state of experience in which the actor's ability to act matches the requirements for action in his environment » (Malaby 2009:209) [un état de l'expérience dans lequel la capacité d'agir de l'acteur correspond aux exigences de l'action dans son environnement]. Jouer, c'est agir. C'est donc faire advenir du social en acte, tout en négociant avec une part de contingence. Dès lors, compris au travers du prisme du paradigme ludique, l'acteur, en agissant avec d'autres, joue, se confronte aux possibles, négocie et parie avec une part de hasard et d'imprévisible : « every time we act, we effectively make a bet with the universe that may or may not pay off » (Malaby 2009:211)[16]. La classique dialectique entre virtualité de la règle et réalité de son effectuation s'amoindrit au profit d'une vision engagée et négociée du processus social. En conséquence, le « *game* » et le « *play* » apparaissent moins comme le produit d'un lien de subordination que d'une négociation constante. La remise en cause de l'exceptionnalisme supposé de l'activité ludique – jouer, ce n'est pas produire ou travailler – contrarie tout autant la nuance entre réalité du jeu et virtualité de sa régulation que celle établie entre fiction du jouer et rationalité de ses agencements. Le jeu reposerait plutôt sur un engagement parfois contraint, engagement mobilisant une implication tout autant corporelle, émotionnelle qu'intellectuelle du sujet : « [we] must see [games] as socially created artifacts with certain common features and allow for the way inhabit, reflect, and constitute the processes of everyday life » (Malaby 2007:102)[17]. En résumé, le jeu, selon Malaby, est à envisager comme un processus vecteur de contingences (sociales, performatives, sémiotiques) voire de désordre. Mais plus largement, il est plus qu'une simple part du social, il est de part en part un procès social : « it places game contexts and other arenas of human experience ontologically on a par with each other » (Malaby 2007:109)[18].

Simulations et avatars

Articulée dans les termes d'une approche transformationnelle et pragmatiste, l'activité ludique et plus spécifiquement vidéo-ludique implique similairement une saisie complexe du rôle et du statut du joueur. Celui-ci est tout autant observateur qu'agissant. Il se situe au carrefour d'un « point d'action » et d'un « point de vue » pour reprendre l'expression de Britta Neitzel, engageant un « processus d'observation de soi constitué d'un feedback permanent »[19] (Neitzel 2005:230). Selon Douglas Thomas et John Seely Brown, cette saisie reprend le concept d'auteur impliqué évoqué plus haut en considérant le joueur comme le résultat d'un « mélange conceptuel » : « Players in virtual world are neither authors nor readers, but they are, themselves, a new conceptual blend: both author and reader, both player and character, both virtual and physical » (Thomas et Brown 2007:168)[20]. Le statut de l'avatar, du personnage joué dans l'univers ludique, est à ce titre essentiel. Ainsi, pour Luc, paraplégique, la manipulation de son personnage permet de « retrouver » des sensations, affects, impressions sensibles « perdus ». L'avatar devient le vecteur d'expériences dérivées qui paraissent, selon les termes de Luc, se « reconnecter ». Un « transfert » s'effectue alors entre les actions impulsées et visibles à l'écran et l'expérience corporelle du joueur. Il précise :

> Le fait de manipuler, d'utiliser le personnage, de le faire courir, de le faire sauter, de le faire nager, des choses comme ça, on récupère un certain nombre... Enfin, on récupère entre guillemets, on retrouve une certaine liberté, un sentiment de liberté que tu n'as plus ou que tu as perdu quelque part.

L'avatar apparaît comme étant bien plus qu'une simple coquille vide s'emplissant des actions et intentions que lui accorde le joueur; il ne peut être résumé à une conception strictement représentationnelle qui ferait de lui un agencement projeté sur un écran. Comme le précise Patrice Flichy à propos de l'usage des avatars de joueurs dans *Second Life* : « Les avatars ne sont pas de simples vignettes, ils ont des corps qui interagissent selon des processus proches de ceux de la vie réelle » (Flichy 2009:170). Tour à tour « extensions », « doubles » ou « partenaires », ils deviennent le médium d'une exploration d'un monde virtuel participant en retour à l'émergence d'expériences

sensibles spécifiques. Gilles, à ce propos, évoque des rappels de « souvenirs » lorsqu'il déplace son personnage le long d'une plage « virtuelle » située au sud de l'aire de jeu de *World of Warcraft* :

> J'aime bien me balader sur la baie quand le soleil se couche avec la mer au fond. C'est bizarre mais ça me rappelle des trucs. Quand je vivais aux Antilles... Que je regardais la mer, les cocotiers... Il y a des endroits comme ça dans le jeu auxquels je suis très attaché.

Ainsi, l'avatar et les possibles qu'il suppose dans le jeu interrogent plus largement la constitution même de l'identité du joueur. En tant qu'étendue, lieu d'incorporation, il participe de la redéfinition constante que le sujet effectue des multiples modes relationnels qui le relient aux contextes d'action, que ces modes soient référentiels (en lien avec le monde), communicationnels (avec les autres)[21] ou autoréférentiels (avec lui-même)[22]. Ce que nous invitent justement à penser Sara, Gilles et Luc, c'est la constante négociation entre différents niveaux d'expérience qui brouillent la trop commode séparation établissant une frontière, voire une dépendance entre le virtuel et le réel, la fiction et la réalité. Les perceptions ressenties par ou au travers de l'avatar interpellent ou se mêlent aux expériences ordinaires présentes et/ou passées. Elles *procurent* des sensations, ouvrent sur des possibles. Gilles, situé avec son avatar à l'interstice du point d'action et de vue souligné par Neitzel, se sait physiquement derrière son écran et non pas, réellement, sur la plage numérisée d'une région tropicale. Pour autant, à l'image de Luc et de son expérience différée de la nage et de la course ou encore de Sara et de son perfectionnement des déplacements en fauteuil, il éprouve – concrètement – les effets d'un transport sensible, mobilisant les souvenirs physiques d'une expérience passée. Les frontières du quotidien se brouillent, l'implication que suppose l'expérience vidéo-ludique participant de la reformulation constante de sa propre trajectoire existentielle.

Selon James Paul Gee (2008), ce processus d'implication reste inhérent à l'expérience des simulations que nous effectuons au quotidien. Notre relation ordinaire au monde serait informée, voire plus largement structurée par des logiques de résolution de problèmes, elles-mêmes reliées à des dispositifs d'incorporation impliquant l'environnement objectif et technique. Dans cette optique, l'exemple spécifique de l'usage des jeux vidéo favorise l'émergence d'un paradigme permettant de comprendre la mise en œuvre d'une pensée de l'action en prise avec un contexte. Le jeu vidéo renverrait alors à des expériences dynamiques, reliées à la perception du monde, du corps, des états extérieurs et des sensations. Ces expériences ne peuvent être réduites à de simples données stockées dans le cerveau du sujet. Pour Gee, jouer nécessite de simuler, c'est-à-dire d'adopter des points de vue et des possibilités d'action qui doivent s'adapter et se modifier au gré de la chaîne d'événements qu'impliquent l'interactivité avec le dispositif technique et l'interaction avec les autres. Il s'agit donc de produire des mondes possibles en s'y projetant. La perception de soi et d'autrui se fait mobile afin de réévaluer constamment les possibilités de l'agir : « [our simulations] are not 'neutral' but capture a given perspective or viewpoint, foregrounding some things and backgrounding others, though our perspective or viewpoint changes in different contexts » (Gee 2008:257)[23]. Dès lors, l'usage de l'avatar participe de cette mobilité des points de vue et d'action. Le personnage joué est littéralement « habité » (« *inhabit* ») par les intentions du joueur. Ce dernier incarne et est incarné par le personnage virtuel dans la simulation. Découle de ce principe l'expérience d'une résistance nécessitant pour le joueur d'être « accordé » (« *attuned* ») avec la forme qui le représente. Gee dépeint ici les contours d'une quasi naturalisation du personnage virtuel : celui-ci aurait un corps et un état d'esprit spécifiques qui déterminent un ajustement des intentions du joueur aux contraintes concrètes du personnage avec lequel il négocie : « You must take these to be the character's mental states; you must take them as a basis for explaining the character's action in the world » (Gee 2008:258)[24]. En d'autres termes, si l'on reprend l'exemple de *World of Warcraft*, jouer un personnage de voleur ou de guerrier, *incarner* plus précisément un voleur ou un guerrier dans la simulation du jeu oblige le sujet à penser et à agir *comme* un voleur ou un guerrier, c'est-à-dire à soumettre ses propres actions aux contraintes liées à l'*état* de voleur ou de guerrier. La relation est donc double. Tout autant centrifuge que centripète, elle s'impose au joueur qui impose à son tour ses propres intentions. Gee, afin de désigner ce principe d'affordance symétrique qui conceptuellement déborde l'analyse stricte de l'usage du jeu vidéo, déploie la notion de « position projetée » (« *projective stance* »). Ainsi, nous faisons des expériences du monde. Nous percevons des objets, des sujets avec des propriétés attribuées permettant de projeter nos actions. Ces actions renvoient à des rôles ou des identités supposées autorisant l'élaboration de simulations. En réalisant ces actions, nos identités et nos modes de perception se voient modifiés en retour. Agir dans le monde par des actes ou des mots repose donc sur la construction de virtualités nécessitant l'expérience de multiples points de vue. Pour Gilles, l'expérience de cette « position projetée » s'est tout entière construite à partir de l'usage spécifique qui

caractérise sa relation au dispositif technique : « Avec une main, je ne peux pas jouer de personnages qui nécessitent trop de mouvements rapides. Un voleur par exemple... Il me faut un personnage relativement statique, qui me permet d'alterner les passages de la souris au clavier... ». La relation centrifuge et centripète que dépeint Gee, tout autant éprouvée que provoquée, conduit Gilles à recourir à une interface adaptée : « Ma souris est blindée de raccourcis. Je peux faire des actions sans le clavier ». Concernant l'avatar joué qu'il privilégie, il ajoute :

> C'est principalement un chasseur, parce qu'il bouge peu. Il reste à distance. Et puis, il a un animal familier qu'il peut lancer en attaque à sa place. Le nom que j'ai donné à mon perso', il vient du surnom d'un type que j'aimais bien et que j'avais rencontré dans un centre de rééducation.

Le chasseur de Gilles peut donc être considéré comme la résultante de cet impératif d'ajustement entre le dispositif technique, une situation corporelle donnée et la configuration spécifique du personnage virtuel. L'ajustement de ces actions, impliquant l'expérience de résistances et donc la production de simulations – jouer avec une main un avatar qui doit répondre à des objectifs dans un monde virtuel – rend possible l'accession à ce qu'Étienne Armand Amato a nommé, de son côté, une « corporéité agissante » (Amato 2008:318). De fait, l'avatar révèle la possibilité d'un « champ opératoire » (*ibid.*) mettant en jeu différentes modalités de l'expérience corporelle. En jouant, le joueur accomplit des actes en lien avec le dispositif technique (une « corporalité gestuelle »). De même, il expérimente une palette de perceptions proposée par la simulation (une « corporéité percevante ») au sein de laquelle il peut se mouvoir et agir en occupant un corps d'action (la « corporéité agissante » proprement dite). Ces situations corporelles intriquées mettent en relation à leur tour des conditions dynamiques d'émergence et d'effectuation : les « instances ». Ainsi, l'« instance opérationnelle » permettant au sujet d'exister dans la simulation dépend de l'« instance sensorielle », en l'occurrence des processus de perception qu'elle engage. Ces derniers ne pourront advenir qu'au travers des instances « fonctionnelle » et « orchestrale » renvoyant à l'utilisation de l'interface technique, elle-même reliée aux procédures physiques plus générales qu'elle implique. Dans le cas de Gilles, l'immersion dans l'univers du jeu nécessite une exploration sensorielle par l'intermédiaire du personnage qu'il dirige, exploration conditionnée par l'ajustement dynamique entre le schéma de son propre corps appareillé, l'avatar et le dispositif vidéo-ludique (souris, écran, clavier et unité centrale d'ordinateur). Pour Sara, les instanciations et les modes de corporéité qu'elle expérimente dans l'utilisation des jeux vidéo se déplacent, s'« instancient » symétriquement dans un autre contexte perceptif. Toujours en suivant Amato, la co-émergence de ces instanciations multiples participe d'un phénomène global de « co-instanciation » faisant exister simultanément des possibles :

> L'instanciation se définit [...] comme la présentification et la concrétisation d'une des instances décrites en attente d'occupant. Lorsque le pratiquant de jeu vidéo s'empare d'une instance, c'est donc à la fois l'humain et le programme qui s'instancient de part et d'autre de l'écran. Ils accèdent à certains de leurs possibles, le premier pour prendre existence à travers les instances qu'il épouse, le second pour simuler l'état de l'univers selon l'intentionnalité déposée dans le programme par les concepteurs du dispositif. [Amato 2008:348]

Plus largement et à partir de ce présupposé, il est possible d'envisager les exercices de simulation de Sara comme des formes de co-instanciation mettant en relation de façon différée et dynamique des modes de translation corporelle. Ce que l'instanciation vidéo-ludique a permis est ici déplacé, traduit autrement dans le contexte de l'instanciation complexe que nécessite le déplacement en fauteuil dans une géographie urbaine. Les mondes se répondent, sans pour autant se confondre totalement.

Conclusion

En partant de l'examen des effets concrets que présuppose une ethnographie dans et sur le virtuel, nous nous sommes efforcés tout au long de notre propos de réévaluer un certain nombre de prémisses théoriques et méthodologiques à l'aune de cette rencontre entre corps en situation de handicap et dispositifs techno-ludiques caractérisant notre terrain d'étude. Nous sommes ainsi revenus sur les limites heuristiques qu'impliquerait une opposition duelle entre réalité et virtualité, opposition que nous avons, dans ce prolongement, reliée à la classique distinction, elle aussi directement héritière d'un dualisme conceptuel similaire, qui scinderait la virtualité de la règle du jeu de sa réalisation concrète – le « jouer », comme acte effectif. L'expérience vidéo-ludique en ligne, qui nous a plus particulièrement intéressés, nous a conduits à déborder de cette opposition afin d'insister, tout d'abord, sur une remise en cause de la conception exceptionnaliste de l'activité ludique. Le jeu, en tant qu'état de l'expérience, fait advenir du social en acte. Il traduit un engagement complet du sujet. L'usage du jeu vidéo nécessite, ensuite, la prise en compte de cette modalité d'expérience particulière qu'est l'interactivité avec le

dispositif technique *via* ce mode d'incarnation que représente l'avatar. Les joueurs en situation de handicap rencontrés, en interagissant avec les personnages qui les présentifient dans la simulation vidéo-ludique, ne font pas que manipuler une forme distante devenant par là le véhicule de leurs actions. La situation d'interactivité qu'ils expérimentent par l'avatar devient bien plus le vecteur de sensations procurées reposant sur leur nécessaire projection dans l'univers numérisé du jeu.

En conséquence, Gilles, en jouant son personnage chasseur, fait l'expérience de l'ajustement nécessaire entre ses intentions et la simulation. Sara, de son côté, par ses circuits urbains, effectue des transpositions de déplacement du virtuel vers le réel et réciproquement. Luc, quant à lui, en expérimentant des registres sensibles par l'usage de son avatar, multiplie des processus d'instanciation qui deviennent alors autant de situations choisies. Les usages incorporés qu'implique dans le cas présent l'avatar joué dessinent les contours d'un principe d'affordance contextué. La situation de jeu, ou plutôt le corps assumé dans la situation du jeu, s'agence avec les autres situations plus spécifiquement reliées au handicap. À l'instar de ce qu'indique René Jahiel, elle interpelle la « situation d'altérité » inhérente à l'expérience sociale du handicap (Jahiel 2008:138). L'avatar apparaît comme une forme à incarner qui pourra faire l'objet d'un détournement ludique. Ainsi, Bruno choisit de placer son avatar de *Second Life* dans un fauteuil roulant afin qu'il lui « ressemble » comme dans la « vraie vie ». Sara, de son côté, crée des personnages « moches » qui introduisent une forme de dissonance dans le monde esthétique plutôt stéréotypé de *World of Warcraft* : « Tout le monde fait des personnages beaux et musclés... Eux, ils sont moches, c'est un peu leur handicap! ». De même, la situation ludique interpelle directement la situation de déficience et de handicap proprement dite. L'interaction avec la simulation, la « position projetée » qu'elle nécessite participe d'une négociation plus large du sujet avec l'environnement technique. L'exemple de Sara traduit bien ce processus de co-définition incorporant la relation à l'appareillage, en l'espèce le fauteuil, à l'environnement et à son propre corps. La simulation que procure ainsi le jeu vidéo redéfinit l'appréhension des contextes d'action. Dans une certaine mesure, le jeu que nécessite l'usage de l'avatar rejoint les logiques d'ajustement structurant le quotidien de la personne handicapée[25]. Il interpelle par ailleurs - et ce, bien au-delà de la situation spécifique de handicap - la négociation sans cesse relancée de notre « accommodement » avec le monde objectif. Partant, nous négocions continûment avec les choses et les êtres par nos actions et engagements. Nous définissons notre propre présence en la faisant co-émerger *avec, par* celles des autres. En jouant la situation que l'avatar suppose, en se prêtant à l'instanciation qu'il engage, la situation de jeu dessine les contours d'un « faire avec » (Winance 2010:127), ouvrant potentiellement – virtuellement ? – sur la possibilité d'un « faire autrement ».

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Notes

1 FPS pour « First Person Shooter », jeux vidéo d'action basés sur une vue « subjective » ou à la « première personne ». Contrairement à la vue « à la troisième personne », le joueur appréhende l'environnement virtuel dans lequel il évolue au travers du regard du personnage joué. Ainsi que l'indique Thomas H. Apperley : « Although the first-person games are played as if the screen were the player's own vision, third person are played with avatars that are fully visible to the player » [bien que les jeux à la première personne se jouent comme si l'écran représentait la vraie vision du joueur, les troisièmes personnes se jouent avec des avatars qui sont parfaitement visibles par le joueur] (Apperley 2006:15).

2 Nous nous permettons de renvoyer à notre article : Lasserre, Guïoux et Goffette (2011) : « Dynamiques ludiques : dialectique intrinsèque du virtuel au réel », Anthropologie et Sociétés 35(1-2):129-146.

3 Jérôme Goffette, Axel Guïoux et Évelyne Lasserre, « Les voyageurs immobiles », S2HEP (Université Claude Bernard Lyon 1 – ENS) et CRÉA (Université Lumière Lyon 2); recherche inscrite dans le cadre du cluster de recherche 14 : « Enjeux et représentations de la science, de la technologie et de leurs usages ». Nous avons rencontré cinq personnes adultes en situation de handicap et retiendrons plus particulièrement l'expérience de quatre d'entre elles dans le présent article. Nous les nommerons Sara, Luc, Bruno et Gilles; toutes les quatre sont paraplégiques. Notre étude longitudinale s'est appuyée sur un corpus mêlant observations directes et intensives des pratiques à un recueil de données par entretiens semi-dirigés. Nous avons rencontré Sara, Luc et Bruno à plusieurs reprises au sein de leur domicile. Ils ont ainsi pu nous introduire concrètement dans l'intimité de leur quotidien, nous montrer et nous décrire leurs interactions liant espaces domestiques et agencements informatiques. Sara a été notre informatrice privilégiée, étant la première personne rencontrée dans le cadre de cette étude au sein même du dispositif de jeu. C'est elle qui nous a guidés méthodologiquement en nous indiquant des joueurs-ressource et un réseau associatif référent grâce auxquels nous avons pu rencontrer les autres

interlocuteurs. Gilles voyageant entre les États-Unis, la Belgique et la France a accepté de dialoguer avec nous par un outil de communication vocal et vidéo permettant les échanges verbaux et la découverte par webcam de son lieu de résidence et de travail. Cette approche impliquée et participative a nécessité de notre part une bonne connaissance des mondes persistants et des jeux en ligne afin de saisir les codes et les langages qui structurent les pratiques. Notre questionnement s'est structuré à partir de quatre thèmes centraux revenant sur l'histoire de la pratique du jeu et ses implications dans le quotidien de la personne; sa biographie personnelle liée à sa situation de handicap; le choix du jeu et l'histoire du ou des avatars qui la représentent; le rapport à la communauté et aux espaces sociaux en ligne et hors ligne. Notons que le choix méthodologique d'avoir recours à une personne particulière pour construire un réseau d'informateurs nous a permis de dépasser l'écueil de l'anonymat lié aux usages de l'Internet, les personnes en situation de handicap physique ne souhaitant bien souvent pas être identifiées directement et jouant du virtuel pour effacer cette caractéristique.

4 Jeu de rôle en ligne multijoueur développé par Blizzard Entertainment en 2005, pour la société Vivendi Games.

5 Voir sur ce point Humphreys (2008) et son analyse de la « gouvernance » des jeux vidéo en ligne.

6 Les estimations de Blizzard Entertainment et de Vivendi Games en 2008 avançaient le nombre de 11 millions d'abonnés dans le monde (Europe, Asie, Amériques), ce qui révèle pour nombre d'observateurs le basculement de ce type de loisir vidéo-ludique dans la culture de masse. Ainsi, pour Nieborg et Hermes : « from the perspective of cultural studies, games are more popular culture than most popular culture » (Nieborg et Hermes 2008:143) [selon la perspective des Cultural Studies, les jeux font plus partie de la culture populaire que la plupart des cultures populaires].

7 Littéralement, « the principles of virtual ethnography » (Hine 2000:63-66).

8 [Une ethnographie de l'Internet peut examiner en détail les façons dont la technologie est expérimentée *en direct*].

9 « The object of ethnographic enquiry can usefully be reshaped by concentrating on flow and connectivity rather than location and boundary as the organizing principle » (Hine 2000:64) [l'objet de l'enquête ethnographique peut utilement être redéfini en se concentrant sur le flux et la connectivité plutôt que sur la localisation et les frontières comme principe d'organisation].

10 « The shaping of the ethnographic object as it made possible by the available technologies *is* the ethnography. This is ethnography *in*, *of* and *through* the virtual » (Hine 2000:65) [La forme de l'objet ethnographique tel qu'il est rendu possible par les technologies disponibles, c'est l'ethnographie. C'est l'ethnographie dans, sur et au travers le virtuel].

11 Ce qui, précisément, complexifie la constitution méthodologique de la population dans l'enquête qui nous intéresse. Un joueur handicapé rencontré nous a ainsi formulé cette remarque : « Lorsque je joue avec mon avatar, j'ai pas envie d'être reconnu en tant que handicapé. Lui, il marche sur ses deux jambes au moins. Ça me rend relativement anonyme… ».

12 Selon Alain Milon : « Cela se retrouve dans tous les jeux de rôle virtuel où chaque joueur devient un avatar, sorte de personnalité réduite à des stéréotypes convenus et sans surprise, que l'on soit dans le jeu de rôle ou dans le jeu d'aventure. Il serait intéressant de voir dans ces conditions si le surinvestissement psychique du joueur conduit à un dédoublement de la personnalité, ou à la mise au jour d'une carence affective » (Milon 2007:259). Il nous semble que l'analyse plus nuancée que fait, de son côté, Patrice Flichy de l'utopie cybernétique traduit mieux l'enjeu esthétique à l'œuvre dans cette conception du corps informationnel : « derrière cet abandon du corps de chair, se cache en fait une volonté de faire corps avec la machine, de fusionner avec elle. Le fait de se sentir comme machine peut créer une sorte d'extase, les sens sont libérés des contraintes du temps et de l'espace » (Flichy 2009:165).

13 [Le jeu construit une histoire qui est synchrone avec le temps de la narration et le temps de lecture ou de visionnement : le temps de l'histoire, c'est maintenant. Maintenant, pas juste dans le sens que celui qui regarde est maintenant témoin d'événements, mais dans le sens que les événements se déroulent maintenant, et que ce qui va se passer après n'est pas encore déterminé].

14 [Le joueur établit un ordre des événements concret au fur et à mesure qu'il joue sa partie. Le joueur est responsable de la création du scénario, en plus de l'interprétation].

15 Cet engagement pourrait se rapprocher de la notion de fiction reprise de Clifford Geertz par Denis Cerclet : « La fiction est bien de notre monde et nous en ressentons les effets dans nos corps, dans la réalité que nous ne quittons jamais. La fiction est bien réelle et nous en faisons l'expérience. Et même si elle est fausse, elle n'en est pas moins réelle » (Cerclet 2009:30).

16 [Chaque fois que nous agissons, nous faisons effectivement un pari avec l'univers qui peut s'avérer payant ou non payant].

17 [Nous devons considérer les jeux comme des artéfacts créés socialement avec certaines caractéristiques communes et autorisent une façon d'habiter, de refléter, et constituent les processus de la vie de tous les jours].

18 [Il place le contexte du jeu et les autres arènes de l'expérience humaine ontologiquement de pair l'un avec les autres].

19 « [A] process of self-observation with continuous feedback ».

20 [Les joueurs dans le monde virtuel ne sont ni des auteurs ni des lecteurs, mais ils sont, eux-mêmes, un nouveau mélange conceptuel : à la fois auteur et lecteur, à la fois joueur et personnage, à la fois virtuel et physique].

21 Cette formulation est d'autant plus importante que le système de jeu des MMO repose sur la coprésence constante des autres joueurs.

22 Voir sur ce point, la relecture qu'effectue Jos de Mul (2005) des notions d'ipséité et mêmeté avancées par Paul Ricœur.

23 [Nos simulations ne sont pas « neutres » mais capturent une perspective ou un point de vue donnés, mettant premier plan certaines choses, et en reléguant d'autres en arrière plan, bien que notre perspective ou point de vue change selon les différents contextes].

24 [Vous devez les considérer comme étant les états mentaux du personnage; vous devez les considérer comme étant une base pour expliquer l'action du personnage dans le monde].

25 « Simultanément et successivement au processus d'ajustement, s'opère un processus d'accommodement, qui désigne

l'adaptation non réfléchie au et du fauteuil roulant, la prise de forme "matérielle" du corps et du fauteuil. [...] le processus d'ajustement est un processus réfléchi : l'ajustement se fait via une mise à distance entre le sujet, son corps et son fauteuil. Il y a objectivation, distanciation et réappropriation : la personne est à l'aise dans et avec son fauteuil, elle acquiert des savoir-faire, en intégrant le fauteuil à son schéma corporel. Celui-ci devient ce à travers quoi la personne agit » (Winance 2010:126).

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Connecting and Change in African Societies: Examples of "Ethnographies of Linking" in Anthropology[1]

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Abstract: Africa has been witnessing rapid changes in the social landscape over the past ten years. Processes of globalization and the advancement of new technologies have been impacting on local social networks significantly. This paper moves away from an analysis of networks as defining social space, towards an ethnography of linking and connections. What does the linking entail and how does this encompass moments of change? We consider two linking technologies of different natures—the mobile phone and the passport-to-life—and assess what these technologies link. Central in this analysis is how linking connections possess agency in producing social change.

Keywords: linking, connections, agency, social change, ICT, passports-to-life, Mali, Cameroon, Botswana

Résumé : L'Afrique connaît des changements rapides de son paysage social depuis 10 ans. Les processus de la mondialisation et le progrès des nouvelles technologies ont un impact significatif sur les réseaux sociaux locaux. Cet article s'éloigne d'une analyse des réseaux comme facteurs de définition de l'espace social, au profit d'une ethnographie des liens et des relations. Qu'exige la création de relations et comment cela intègre-t-il des moments de changement? Nous observons deux technologies de mise en relation de natures différentes – le téléphone portable et le « certificat de santé avec mention de contamination ou non au VIH », appelé passport-to-life au Botswana – et évaluons ce que ces technologies servent à relier. Au centre de cette analyse, nous cherchons ce que les liens de relation possèdent d'agentivité dans la production du changement social.

Mots-clés : liens, relations, agentivité, changement social, TIC, certificat de santé avec mention de contamination ou non au VIH, Mali, Cameroun, Botswana

Introduction

We would like to start our analysis of linking technologies, which bring about social change, with the image of the bridge. A bridge connects, but it does much more. It links different places and different people, and creates new opportunities for the building of relationships economically, socially, politically and culturally. We problematize any static notion of the bridge: as a link it appears to have a life of its own in the way it shapes relationships between land and water, between the various people on either side, between the various economic endeavours of trade and transport, and between the everyday and levels of (political, military and civic) means of control and supervision of a population. There is not only "life in the link," but an agency of the link—what it represents and what it does to people and societies—that transforms through time.

It is for this reason that we introduce the idea of the social life of linkages, and of the connections they forge. The metaphor of the bridge helps us to understand how the linkages between people are important because they appear to have a transformative power in their relations. By invoking Appadurai's (1986) social life of things, we can understand that by emphasizing the thing-like nature of linkages, these connections become subjected to the meaning that people attribute to them in the context of human transactions and motivations. By exploring the social life of links and connections—in the way they generate histories and develop relations and transactions—we are able to understand how social transformations occur from a particular and new perspective that moves away from a static definition that takes connections as inert, unchanging and frozen in time. The central question in this article is how can we perceive social change through the lens of the social life of connections?

In our search for exploring processes of social transformation from a connections perspective, we are moving explicitly towards understanding the significance of

linking. In processes of linking, of making new connections and of the decisions that people are making at these moments, we can see new constellations of power coming into being and social transformations taking place. The connection has a bearing on the people concerned, which means that we move beyond network theory—in which agency is fully placed in the people who produce connections—and put the connection at the centre of the analysis. It is primarily the connection that makes a new constellation emerge, and it is not so much the "dots" in the network that are being connected. It shifts the attention for agency (cf. Jackson and Karp 1990) from the ones that are connecting to the linking itself by emphasizing a perspective that takes linking as a paradigmatic point of departure.

We will attempt to understand this by using two examples that demonstrate how connections and social relations transform together through the introduction of new linking technologies. We will explore and discuss two connecting devices, for example two objects that display the capacity to link people to wider networks of exchange and relationships. However in the process we will also demonstrate their capacity to transform the nature, significance and intensity of these relations and thus appear to have some form of agency of their own.

The first example discusses the recent introduction of the mobile phone in two areas in Africa: the Sahel zones in Mali and the North Western Province of Cameroon. Exploring the linkages in their various (social, cultural and economic) meanings becomes a more challenging idea when we consider the changes in communication technologies that we have observed over the past 20 years in Africa and beyond. Today, telephone companies are reaching the most marginal areas of Africa (in terms of geography, infrastructure and politics), aiming to establish new connections. It is through the introduction of this information and communication technology that Africa and African societies have become connected globally in new and unprecedented ways, thereby creating fresh fields of social interaction.

The second example discusses a tool that has been introduced to control the spread of HIV/AIDS in parts of Southern Africa (particularly in Botswana): the so-called "passport-to-life." Passports-to-life are documents that record a person's AIDS status and their enrolment in behavioural change programmes that connect people to new biopolitical means of population and health control. In other words, while the passport communicates a person's status, it links the person to a world of global health-related intervention policies that have become significant in many places in Africa. Like the mobile phone, the passport-to-life is changing people's relational intimacies as it connects people to new forms of communication (in this case the opening up of discussions on sexuality, HIV/AIDS and the body), modern institutions that monitor people's health (testing and counselling centres) and new forms of power that discipline one's personal and sexual behaviour. The recording of people's AIDS status connects them to new fields of social relations but at the same time transforms these relations in the process.

These examples will demonstrate how the transformative power of connections is particularly relevant in the study of African societies in today's age of globalization. The mobile phone and the passport-to-life are connecting devices that change relations between people, but they are tools that are the product—and producers—of a world of global interactions. The ubiquity of connections, also in African societies, has become phenomenal and has led to a situation where hardly any group in society is untouched by a wide diversity of connections in terms of communication technologies, phones, roads, the Internet and electricity. We argue that we can even speak of a post-global phase in the transformative process of the omnipresence of connections and the social changes these produce, and which we are only just beginning to unravel.

We propose an ethnography of linking and linking technologies in this article. Central in such an ethnography is how new devices of connectivity, in relation to all other linking technologies, lead societies and individuals into new relations. Can we see an intensification of old patterns and hierarchies that are now extending to a wider social space? Or is there an intensification of connections shaping relations and making the lives of individuals deeper and more intimately related to wider social fields or forms of power?

The Post-Global Phase of Omnipresent Connectivity: A New Ethnography?

The ethnography of connections or linkages clearly relates to the occurrence of processes of globalization. Although globalization is not to be viewed as a process of today (cf. Cooper 2001), we cannot deny that there has been a range of remarkable "intensifications" of the global linked to the local over the past decades, with the enormous increase in transnational travel, mobility, the unprecedented rise of information and communication technologies (particularly the mobile phone), the significance of new patterns of consumption, and the flow of global images and ideas of modern social relationships through all sorts of media. One can no longer think of the local without the global in Africa, and indeed many local realities are being shaped and reshaped in view of new global connections.

In rural and urban areas alike, social realities are increasingly being confronted with an intensification of connections in which groups of different socio-economic status, gender or age are becoming closely connected. Villagers in rural areas of Africa are now connected with overseas migrants, and money, objects and ideas can circulate easily and at great speed. Therefore in addition to the ways in which African settings were connected to an outside world in the past, a new and highly vibrant tapestry of connections through the media, modern means of travel and communication and a wide-ranging exchange of goods and styles have come into being.

The realization of an abundance of connections in Africa is reinforced by ongoing developments in infrastructure. The building of roads, railway lines and bridges, the process of electrification, the improved coverage of media and communication technologies, and the increasing activities among international organizations, NGOs and faith-based organizations are all part of the expansion of the infrastructure. Unfortunately in areas of conflict and violence, this expansion of infrastructure may have been (temporarily) brought to a standstill but even in war-torn areas the remarkable entry of the mobile telephone and the infrastructure it requires has not gone unnoticed.

The combined process of intensification of connections and the expansion of infrastructure and linking technologies is not only enabling each other to develop but also forms the basis of the notion of a post-global society in Africa. The creation of a globalized society has been realized. The multitude and omnipresence of connections is a fact and has become part of the experience of almost everyone in Africa. Connections are no longer scarce but are at the centre of the social fabric in many African societies. We propose studying these connections for the very reason that so much of the social reality of today is being shaped this way.

The conceptual study of globalization as it has developed in anthropology since the 1990s (van Binsbergen et al. 2006) has made a revisit of the anthropological object of study unavoidable. In anthropology, the study of society used to be grounded in places and in a globalizing world this premise has been questioned. For example, Gupta and Ferguson (1992) no longer situate the object of study in place but in space, Appadurai invented the term "scapes" instead of place, and the famous work of Olwig and Hastrup (1997), *Siting Culture*, redefined the object again into nodal points of social relating that link the local and the global, with the field being situated in various sorts of relations. Here we take this discussion further, going beyond the nodal points perspective. Networks and the relationship between the local and the global are new fields of study but has the anthropological endeavour escaped its fascination with place and locality?

Within network studies, the study of linkages in networks was developed by Granovetter (1973) who proposed the idea of strong and weak ties that keep society going. Strong linkages are, for instance, people who are closely related, for example good friends and family, while weak linkages are the occasional linkages with neighbours or the shop owners where one buys bread. Granovetter suggested that the weak ties might be more important for the smooth running of society than strong ones, although people are inclined to give more value to their strong ties. With a focus on ties, Granovetter situated research in the linkages or relations between people. The question in an ethnography of linking would be to consider how these ties come into being and how they influence the social construct of society.

A recent development in social science theories is to put mobility, instead of being "settled," at the centre of the analysis (cf. Castells 2004; de Bruijn et al. 2001; Urry 2007). As a result, an anthropology of mobility has emerged within the discipline of anthropology (Salazar 2010). In this mobility paradigm, the object of study is the interrelationship between culture and place by conceptualizing the relationship between culture and patterns of (im)mobility and (in)flexibility. The focus of research then becomes the linking, the mobility per se, and how mobility shapes relations. The study of mobility distinguishes geographical mobilities and social mobilities. However if we adapt the idea of studying connections and the social life of these connections, mobilities also become embedded in ideas, imaginaries and in non-physical displacement. An example of such connections is the *Branchement* study by Amselle (2001), in which he follows a ritual in its social life. Some studies on migration have tried to grasp the itinerary of migrants (cf. Schapendonk 2011) and studies of transnationalism (Bryceson and Vuorela 2002) have defined a transnational habitus (Vuorela 2002) which indicates a new pattern or even style in the way in which people learn to deal with the formation of connections over extended distances of space and time. Yet the study of places at both ends of the transnational remains the focus of research in all these examples.

The study of mobility, transnationality and connections seems to qualify the study of geographical borders and social boundaries. These fields of study are associated with notions of freedom and flexibility, as borders and boundaries appear to have the capacity not only of demarcation and closure, but of connection as well. However, the study of mobility is also a study of immobility, and the study of connections should include the study of

disconnections. The study of borders and borderlands might function as an interesting mirroring point. Studying borders seems to relate to a fixity of social and geographical space where the linking occurs and is rendered meaningful. And the immobility of borders could be relevant for understanding how they produce connections of a specific kind and thus bring into relief the condition of mobility and flexibility of the linking technologies that are the focus of our analysis.

The connections that we define also refer to the nodal points of Olwig and Hastrup (1997) that are seen as the point of encounter between the local and the global, also including contact zones (such as borderlands) and points of communication. These nodal points create a social life of their own because of the different dimensions they can adopt. In an ethnography of linking, the itinerary between the local and the global, between places of contact, between the visible and the invisible, and between mobility and immobility becomes the focus of research. In conventional studies, these are seen as a no-man's-land, beyond research, while in mobility studies the in-between is considered as the centre. As mentioned above, in discussions about migration, the flexibility of the movement itself is often not questioned and in cases of network analysis, the links between the dots often escape serious analysis. However we suppose that it is in these itineraries or in the linkages themselves that the social reality is hidden. This leads us to a discussion of the control of the connections, as these are also the spaces where supervision is difficult. We need to understand what is going on here, either in terms of the technology of connecting or the life of the technologies that are making the connections.

Such an ethnography of connections is still in its infancy. The ethnography of linking technologies starts with an in-depth understanding of individuals and families and moves on to the concrete lives of people and instances of connecting. The example of the bridge (above) shows that we have to follow the life of the connections—where do they go in fields of social interaction? It is the appropriation of the linkage that then becomes central in the methodology and analysis.

Appropriation implies conscious decisions and the connection thus becomes a form of social capital, and potentially an element that could improve lives, although people also become aware of dangers, new inequalities or the depletion of (financial) resources. It relates to rules of access to technologies, the economy of the linking and the characteristic of the linking technology; a bridge for example differs from a mobile phone in all these aspects in its form of connecting. The linking will also influence the content of the relations, for example the meanings given, and feelings about it by the people concerned. The two case studies on the mobile phone and passports-to-life are an attempt to show the way a linking ethnography can take shape. Both are similar in the way they link local to global worlds, how they communicate aspects of private lives to wider domains of social life, how they indicate identities and social relations and how they are part of a technologized modality of shaping social life, yet differ in the nature of the domains they address. Whereas at first glance putting these examples of linking technologies together in a comparative study does not seem an obvious thing to do, it is precisely the way in which they differ that makes clear how forceful linking technologies can become in shaping social life. The passports-to-life are linking a world of health interventions and personal identities to wider schemes of health policies, behavioural change programs and global initiatives in the fight against AIDS. The passport communicates aspects of one's personal life to higher circles of control and interventions, while from higher circles of policy-making and health interventions models for appropriate, responsible behaviour trickle downward in an intricate manner in every layer of social life in a country like Botswana. This makes for a good comparison with the power of the mobile phone, which likewise trickles and penetrates many layers of social life to nestle in intimate social relations while shaping these and communicating important aspects of these domains to wider circles of social interaction. The force of linking is directly related to the force of shaping social life, and although the passport makes this clear for the domain of health and the mobile phone for the domain of communication, what brings them together is the force of this shaping that is embedded in the linking of different layers of social reality that these devices provide.

The Ethnography of Linking Technologies: The Mobile Phone

In recent work on mobile communication,[2] both network analysis and space analysis have been central. In this new school of thought, the focus is on people's relationships with communication technology in the past and in the present. One of the central questions in this field is how relations between people change with advances in new communication technology, especially the mobile phone and computers. The density of networks, the frequency of phone calls and the way the phone is perceived are central. Some authors ascribe a lot of power to change to the mobile phone and even see this as the start of a "phone culture" (Goggin 2006; Katz 2006). Indeed the mobile phone is being hailed for its ability to connect even

the most remote areas where the infrastructure is still to be developed. It could become the linking gadget per se, and is already referred to as the umbilical cord of our society, not only linking but also intimately tying people (*The Economist* 2008). In a study on mobile phone "use/appropriation" in Jamaica, Horst and Miller (2005) propose a kinship analysis of phone use. They move away from the phone as pure technology by understanding it as a social thing, in which the social life of people can be discovered. They propose a methodology in which the phone is (literally) opened and people are questioned about who they talk to and about what. This information offers insight into the networks and relationships involved and is leading to an understanding of the new contacts people are making as a result of the phone and the content of messages, and comes close to a social understanding of the linking itself. As a result, Horst and Miller (2006) have coined the term "anthropology of communication."

In our study of mobile phones, mobility and marginality in several remote regions in Africa, we are trying to understand how mobile phones connect and the transformations or changes that are happening.[3] The economically and politically marginal areas of Africa can now be connected (Skuse and Cousins 2007).[4] The study of mobile phone appropriation in these regions, where the Internet is still scarce or not accessible at all and where access roads are poor, we see the need to develop a grounded ethnography of communication in which an understanding of the connections is central. This research links mobile phone communication to the history of communication in these areas and to the various existing linking technologies, to understand the communication or connectivity ecology of a society. Through a historical ethnographic approach, the meaning of these technologies, mutual appropriation and all that happens in-between the linking can be discovered (cf. de Bruijn 2008; Panagos and Horst 2006; Tacchi et al. 2003).

How is the mobile phone imposing new connections and how are the inhabitants of these regions appropriating the new possibilities for linking? And how does this linking lead to social transformations in society? In transnational studies, the transformative power of the mobile phone is especially ascribed to the new ways of linking and thus to an intensification of certain relations to the detriment of others. The mobile phone is sometimes called the social glue that keeps migrant societies together (Vertovec 2004), while in other cases the ambiguity of the intensification of this device of long-distance relations is emphasized (Nie et al. 2002). Below we will explore these questions for Anglophone Cameroonian society and a herders group in Central Mali that have both always been part and parcel of migration histories. In short, they are cultures of migration and mobility (Hahn and Klute 2007).

Cameroon

The first case presented here refers to the Grassfields of Anglophone Cameroon. This is a region that can be depicted as being marginal for both political and economic reasons and has known a long history of migration and mobility. Under colonial rule, the Grassfields were the labour reservoir for the plantation economy, but we can trace mobility back to before the 20th century when the political organization of the region, combined with its ecological particularities, made travel and displacement a common feature of villages, individuals and even kingdoms.[5] It would seem that the recent mobilities entailing migration to the United States and Europe are an extension of the mobility cultures that have always been common in this region.[6] In such a mobile society one could imagine that communication is at the heart of society. The social fabric of society is one that consists of linking technologies from early travel to the latest development: the mobile phone.

Let us consider the story of a middle-class family in Bamenda town in Anglophone Cameroon that is "linked up" in the world. This family is globalized in its thinking, in its choice of TV programmes and clothes, and in the fact that they are physically spread all over the world. They comprise all the aspects of family life in the world of today that have been described in articles on the advent of "modernism" or the local in the global. Theirs is a world of post-globalism in that they are exposed to an omnipresence of connections:

> In December 2009, I (Mirjam) am observing Suzanne,[7] the eldest sister, as she is standing outside her beautiful house in the colonial neighbourhood of town and was phoning her youngest sister who is studying in the United States. She is planning to send her eldest son to the United States as well. The distance does not bother her, as her family overseas is very accessible. Her son is looking forward to this adventure: his exams went well and he can go. The next time I (Mirjam) see him is on Facebook and there he is in pictures with his new friends in Las Vegas. He regularly calls his uncle, his mother's younger brother who is a student in the Netherlands. This uncle received funding for studies in the Netherlands, which was only possible through his connection with me in my position as a university lecturer and thus knowing my way in the land of university grants. The mother of the family is ill, her eyes hurt and nobody knows what the matter is, so they consult their doctor friend who has a private hospital in the town where they live. He has the latest instruments

from China that he bought on one of his regular trips there, but he can order by phone too. He prefers doing business in China, as it is cheaper than the United States. The younger brother in the Netherlands, the brother in England and the sister in the United States all contact their eldest brother in Cameroon who keeps them updated on their mother's condition. She is OK but needs surgery so her plans for going to the United States will have to wait for a while. By the way, she tried to get a visa a few months ago but was refused, much to her disappointment. The embassy in Ghana did not send her passport back in time for her to sort out payment. Her eldest daughter borrowed money to show the embassy that she could afford it. She borrowed it from a rich lady in town, like the mortgage on the house and the money used to buy all the things the family has. The interest rate she charges is set at 10 per cent and money can be borrowed for two weeks, no longer or they risk having to pay another 10 per cent interest.[8]

This is the context of the family today. What is said in these exchanges and how does it shape today's social realities? Let's again consider the linkages made by the phone and see what they have changed in an emotional and a social sense, as well as in material well-being, or even simply in material realization. The first realization mentioned is the son's travel. Would this 18-year-old son ever have travelled to the United States if his mother had not had a phone? This leads to questions about how different today's travel is compared to the past. In this sense it is interesting to note that the linkages the first migrants had were not similar. They were often invited for scholarships, through external connections like missionaries. The fact that people now easily organize it themselves is an important social change. One of the family's sons decided to construct a house in the village and was able to push the construction through by phone. This is what many people do in this part of Cameroon, and indeed the landscape of the village is changing because of linking and linking technology.

Increasingly, analysis of funerals in Africa in a diasporic world is at the centre of our analysis (cf. Geschiere 2009). These studies and our own observations in Cameroon and Europe demonstrate how the organization of this ritual has profoundly changed with the new possibilities for connecting. Funerals in Cameroon are often put on hold until children living in the United States or Europe can be present. Mortuaries are playing an increasing role but the costs of these funerals and their grandeur have increased as a consequence of easy access to money in the diasporic communities. The connection that is visible in texts on the Internet in exchanges between families and that is clear from phone calls has changed the emotions surrounding the death of the fathers and mothers of the Grassfields.

Mali

Central Mali is a Sahelian area where Fulani nomads developed a semi-sedentary lifestyle herding cattle and becoming part of the chiefdoms that were vested in the region by warlords. The nomads' mobility developed in relation to the ecology of the area and to the hierarchies they were part of. Droughts and conflict have always been part of their lives and influenced mobility patterns. They have always lived spread over large areas, keeping in contact with each other through travel itself. Important moments of contact are their ritual dances and marriages that are mostly celebrated in the rainy season when larger groups of nomads can be together due to the availability of pasture areas. Today cattle rearing in Central Mali is still one of the most successful ways of making a livelihood.

The droughts in the 1970s and 1980s were, however, exceptional in their devastation. The nomads compared them with the droughts at the beginning of the 20th century—a period that is remembered as one of the worst famines ever. Although moving has always been the normal way of life for nomadic pastoralists, the number of people who had to move was far greater this time. Families moved to the south, following itineraries that they had never followed before and these have now become part of their lives. Many of these families were no longer connected to their kin in Central Mali; they left impoverished and found a living in town or as herders for rich villagers. The need to relate to kin was not felt and they had no means of travelling back to the area. This led to new relations being created with the people in the South (de Bruijn and van Dijk 2003). Nonetheless the old lady in the cattle camp in Central Mali asked me (Mirjam) to bring my cassette recorder (to her a "radio") and tape the news of the camp and her kin so that I could travel with it and deliver it to her lost son. This was in 1991. She had no idea where he was at that time but the eagerness to know about each other had not disappeared.

In the region where these nomads live, access by cars was not common. There were no roads and the nearest town had a weekly market, which is a moment of contact, but no telephone lines for the public. This started to change in the first years of the 21st century when electricity arrived in the region, first in Douentza, the capital of the region with its 12,000 inhabitants, and then in smaller towns (3,000 to 8,000 inhabitants) along the tarred road in 2006. Today it has partially reached the nomads' hamlets

and camps in the bush. Electricity changed the region, bringing more markets, better contact by radios and lights, which make life different. It also helped to develop the market in one of the small towns, which led to the further development of markets in rural hamlets. One of these, surrounded by cattle camps, was the hamlet where we were doing our observations on the use of the mobile phone in 2009. With the market came more transport and more contact with the outside world. And eventually this led to the installation of the mobile network masts in the small town. Access to mobile telephony became a reality also for the nomads living in the surrounding camps.

Since 2006 this geographically remote region in which nomadic pastoralists live has received mobile networks, and the mobile phone market in the region has grown at a fantastic speed. Even in the small hamlet surrounded by seven camps of cattle nomads, one can buy phones, accessories and credit. Although there is no electricity, phones are charged in inventive ways and nomads are spending a lot of time and money getting connected so that they can contact their families in the south or even in other countries. When the phone network was only available in the capital city, people would travel there from the rural areas to call others further away. It was remarkable how people were able to get the phone numbers of their kin in the south; it even led to retracing family members that were thought to be lost. One example was a woman who managed to reach her husband who had left and set up a new family in Paris. Another example is how one of our friends in the cattle camp was using his phone to link to one of the country's big politicians in order to discuss his own political campaign. He managed to be elected as the political representative of the herdsmen of this camp. In 2007-2008 he used his phone at one spot, the hangar next to his hut, which was the only place where one could access the network, although for more serious matters, he still had to travel to the nearby town where the network was much better. Today, in 2011, this is no longer an issue and he can easily call from the camp at any time. He used to be one of the few to own a phone (that others also used) but it will soon be a gadget owned by every local herdsman and woman.[9]

The new linking has had an important effect on the economy of the herders. Many young men leave for the south in the dry season with large numbers of cattle that they herd for rich city dwellers. They are nowadays often contacted by these owners by phone and mobile telephones help when checking the prices of cattle at the markets. What they did in the past by travelling, for example taking messages for people, they do today with their mobile phones, and far more effectively (Sangare 2010).[10]

New Developments

When the mobile phone network first emerged in Africa, the main aim of the companies involved was to reach out to as many people as possible to achieve the highest possible profit. After all, business is business! The costs of subscriber identity module (SIM) cards and calling were kept relatively low and there were soon many possibilities to call very cheaply and African citizens were clever at adopting these technologies. SIM cards were not registered and there were few controls, although this changed recently when the initial announcement was made in 2010 that SIM cards would soon have to be registered. In January 2011 it was chaotic at the various service points in Cameroon as everybody tried to register their cards because their numbers would be blocked if they were not registered. Registration is required by showing one's identification card or passport. This type of registration was very new and it did provoke discussions. Some felt that it would be for their own good to register because in case of theft or loss, the card could be blocked and the number easily replaced. However the measures were immediately criticized as an attempt by the state to control its people. The SIM card is not only a means of connecting and freely relating but it has also become a passport for communication life and a way of controlling identities.

The Two Cases and Linking Analysis

These are two different examples of people/families in Africa who are living in a global world and at first sight do not appear to have much in common. However if we take a closer look, we can distinguish a common feature: the families have both appropriated the mobile phone and can now easily reach out to a geographically large space. How would we describe their lifestyle and their way of being? It is usual nowadays to see these families as transnational or transregional: they live in different countries/regions but their relations and connections allow them to ignore national localities and they blend in practice into one space, for example a social, economic and, in some instances, political space as well. They do not seem to live in geography but rather in sociology, in linking and relating.

The life of the family in Cameroon is dominated by their contacts with those far away, where the future of the sons and other family members is located. Every member of the family has a phone and some have two. They have all travelled either to Europe, the United States or within Africa to South Africa or to neighbouring Nigeria. They are a linking family and what happens in this linking reveals more about who they are and how their family is

organized than when we only concentrate on the people, the members of the family. For the Malian nomads, the situation may be slightly different because they are a mobile society in which travelling and mobility are normal features of social life, as has been the case for centuries. This is a typical migration or mobile culture (de Bruijn 2007) where linking has always been important, not only for their basic (ecological and economic) livelihoods but for their identity too, for who they are. This is visible in their kinship idioms, in the exchange relations they have developed over the course of the centuries and in the stories about the crises they have lived through. The linking itself is also part of the local discourse on society. Relating and ways of relating are essential elements of being. For both cases to understand social change it would not be enough to check the situation in the various geographical places, but it is the constant being between, the negotiations about the itineraries, the way contacts are made, for example the linking itself, that makes us understand these societies better and the processes and dynamics of social change.

In the end it seems that linking and relating over distances is as much part of the social life of the "community" as the linking and relating with those nearby. It is also important to question the quality of the linking. How do people relate to those they contact mainly by phone or who they see on Facebook or Twitter? Research has shown that the face-to-face relationship is still of utmost importance (cf. Molony 2009). In the case of Cameroon however, we observed an intense relating with those far away that might even be more intimate and emotional than the relating with those next door. People make choices about keeping some contacts going while others may fade away. Thus the choices made and the money spent on these relations reflect the emotional load of the relations and their importance for the daily well-being of the people involved. Calling those far away may become the most important moment in the week! However as the SIM card will also be an identity marker now that it is registered, calling is no longer without borders or limits.

It is important to note that in the cases presented above the new ways of connecting have had material consequences. They have led to people moving to other places in the world, to the redefinition of the funeral (and other rituals) or have made people return. These moves may literally change the landscape of the regions. On the other hand, this change places an emphasis on continuity and on building on older patterns of communication, movement and sociality.

Passports-to-Life: The Connecting Technology of HIV/AIDS Status Cards in Botswana

In the course of explorative research on sexuality and marriage in Molepolole, a rural town 80 kilometres west of Gaborone, focus group interviews[11] were conducted on the relationship between marriage, HIV/AIDS and society among a group of boys and girls aged 15-17 who were members of a local dance group and still attended school in Molepolole. We started by asking them about their ideas on marriage, with two or three boys answering our questions while the others, especially the girls, remained silent. On marriage, the dominant view among the boys was that girls demand too much from men. Whereas the unofficial leader of the group rejected marriage completely, one boy pointed out that he wanted to marry because of HIV: "One partner, one life!" he announced when we asked him to clarify his answer. Then we raised the issue of love and whether it was important or if only money counted. On love, the whole group remained silent but then the group started to talk about HIV. One boy said:

> Yes they told us about it at school. They told us not to have sex. But last month I did. A! Aish! I felt some. I felt it in my body, I suddenly felt my body. And I did it! After that, I went to the Tebelopele people. They told me not to do it again and tested me. And I was negative. I was positively negative!

The group laughed. Then young people started pulling out their passports-to-life, the cards people receive from the Tebelopele Voluntary and Counselling Centre (VCT) in which the results of their tests are written down and which serve to include them in so-called "risk-reduction" behavioural change programmes. "Oh you also got one!" cried one boy, taking his neighbour's passport. The boy then asked, "let me see what are you?" "Oh," answered the owner: "I am positive." The group laughed again.

What kind of technology of connection is this passport? What is its significance in terms of connecting people to public health policies that at the same time shape and transform people's intimate relations? To understand how linking technologies impact on social relations we want to highlight a second perspective in which we point at the bridging between the public and the private in social life for which certain linking technologies are responsible. While we can point to many examples of how the domain of public policies and power impact on the private lives of people in African situations (through institution building, schools and law),[12] we see one area where

this has become especially important, namely the domain of health. Due to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, many African governments have been forced to put in place strong public policies through public health interventions, awareness campaigns, the establishment of voluntary testing and counselling centres aimed at targeting the private and intimate lives of citizens in an attempt to curb the spread of the virus (Iliffe 2006).

The globally available funds for the fight against the pandemic connect to and enable the development of many, often government-run, programmes that aim to promote behavioural change in the domains of sexuality, reproduction and relationships (Rabbow 2001; Fassin 2007; Robins 2009). An entire field of (medicalized) knowledge, social technologies of conscientiousness and awareness-raising and of care, treatment and prevention has emerged targeting the sexually active groups of the population in particular. Many African societies have in fact entered a new phase of the development of biopolitics that intimately link the public with the private and have seen the emergence of technologies that make this possible (Dilger and Luig 2010; Nguyen 2005). In Botswana, one of the linking devices that has been developed to establish interaction between behavioural change policies and the private lives of individuals is the passport-to-life that these young boys mentioned. Botswana is one of the countries where a process of biopolitical control has developed since the country demonstrated one of the highest HIV prevalence rates in the world (Heald 2006; Ntseane and Preece 2005). This is combined with a situation of relative wealth that has enabled the government and civil society organizations to effectively put in place an extensive infrastructure of biomedical systems for AIDS care, treatment and control. It has been developing an infrastructure of counselling and testing centres, AIDS clinics and antiretroviral (ARV) therapy roll-out programmes (Dilger and Luig 2010). AIDS-awareness campaigns focus particularly on sexual health and aim to impart ideas concerning the responsibility of the person in terms of safe sex and the reduction of risks vis-à-vis the transmission of the virus (Burchardt 2009). An important aspect of this is that every sexually active person in Botswana should know his/her status. This is considered a true sign of sexual responsibility.

In the course of the roll-out of intervention and treatment campaigns, this process of imparting responsibility requires people to open up their intimate spheres of life for inspection and supervision. AIDS workers, medical practitioners, counsellors and peer educators interview people about their lifestyle and the decisions they make in terms of their sexual and reproductive relations. In so doing, people receive counselling so as to be convinced of the value of a "responsible lifestyle" and to know about the moral obligations they have vis-à-vis their partners, families and society at large. In addition, many of their intimate behavioural patterns are recorded in statistical and other taxonomic systems of knowing the subject. A responsible person is expected to allow for a subordination to the detailed forms of knowing (about AIDS status, coital diaries, fertility and extra- and pre-marital relations) that biomedical regimes require. Authors are pointing at the new constellations of power that are emerging in the process, where medical systems join with political, religious and traditional authorities to create such systems of control and inspection (Nguyen 2005; Nkomazana 2007). In many cases this is related to the rise of testing and counselling centres and places where people can go to receive life-prolonging drugs.

In this context the passport-to-life was introduced through the country's voluntary counselling and testing centres. It is a document that records the HIV/AIDS status of the person as well as his/her "risk-avoidance" behaviour (meaning that much of the person's sexual behaviour has been made known to the counsellor/medical practitioner interacting with the person). This document is vital in the connection between the person and the state and between the person and intervention and treatment programmes. The passport creates connectivity to the state, but in its social life also changes the personal relations of the people that are recorded. One's AIDS status is now known to the person and having knowledge about it creates a moral and even legal context for the responsibility that people have in entering intimate relations with sexual partners.

To understand the power of the shaping of social relations that this passport stands for, the boys' blatant unruliness by publicly waving about a document that demonstrates their connection to behavioural change programmes and control but that is meant to remain hidden and confidential, is highly meaningful. If people turn up at the VCT centres they have, in principle, the choice of being HIV tested either anonymously (no details being recorded, except for the person's status) or being tested confidentially. In the latter case, the details are recorded in the passport-to-life giving the person's status and the counselling sessions that she or he will attend in view of enhancing "risk-reducing" behaviour. The passport has a number that corresponds with the Tebelopele record on the person and their trajectory of counselling and behavioural change. Tebelopele (which means vision) began introducing these passports in 2007 (*BOTUSA News*, July 2007) and since then has focused on "confidentiality testing." This means that the passport-to-life has become *the*

symbol of confidentiality and because it only has a number, it can never be linked directly to its owner by others.

The document refashions the notion of the self as testing is followed by counselling, when the person is informed of his/her status and what this demands in order to be responsible. Behavioural change implies adherence to safe-sex practices, regular testing, or ARV therapy. The technology of connecting that is described here connects these passports to a feature of social control and discipline: it effectively has the potential to monitor individuals. From the point of view of the user, the passport interestingly seems to suggest a kind of standardization. It turns a person's sexual history and an HIV/AIDS diagnosis into set procedures and attributes "positive" or "negative" qualities to them that then map out how people should start behaving. We argue that passports-to-life, as a device of connectivity, have helped to bring this linking of behaviour, supervision and taxonomy into being. Furthermore, the passport is linking people's lives to much wider circles of local-global interactions in health interventions, the fight against AIDS and the pressures being put on a government to introduce measures to steer the sexual lives of its population.

Passports in Botswana have always implied various rights and community services. They are an identity document linking the individual with the state and thus creating access to its services, yet they make it possible for the state to also gain information on its citizenry. The use of identity documents in the sphere of sexual health is building on this history. The most noticeable identity document in Botswana is the *Omang*, an identity card issued to every Botswana citizen over the age of 16 by the government. With it, citizens can make transactions, interact with the government, open a bank account, buy property and get a marriage or driving licence. Having a reasonably small population (2 million) has contributed to the taxonomic success of the Omang as inhabitants can be "known" to the government and the regular need to renew the Omang ensures the government of up-to-date knowledge of its citizenry. It has also played a crucial role in the way people access health-related facilities. Not having an identity card means that foreigners face difficulties in this respect. While Botswana has been Africa's economic miracle since the mid 1970s, the identity card provides access to all the benefits that a middle-income-earning society can offer (Durham 2002). Much is at stake regarding possession of a card of this nature, and young and old in the country are well aware of its intrinsic value. Due to its exclusionary nature, the Omang is another important "passport-to-life" by providing exclusionary access to the comparatively good life that Botswana can offer its citizens.

The major difference between the passport-to-life and the Omang is the aspect of confidentiality. While the Omang is a public document that proves one's identity in the public domain, the content of the passport-to-life is strictly private and has the added power of supervising and changing (intimate) behaviour. Omang (meaning who you are) is based on a wider field of social relations. It does not simply indicate a question of personal, "atomic" identity. Omang inquires about one's ancestry in particular, asking about one's family, parents and social location in order to identify a person against a backdrop of relationality and renders this social belonging public and knowledgeable.

This brings us to the question of the *effects* of linking technologies. The boys in the focus groups were demonstrating unruliness not only in terms of social conventions of sitting still and listening when adults are addressing them and being civil and letting others speak but they were inverting the idea of control and playing with it. Knowing that the passport-to-life subjects them to some control over their private lives and to a notion of being "responsible," it creates a much greater space for unruliness than the Omang can ever do, by "breaking the rules" concerning confidentiality. They made public (and even boast about) what should not be made public. In addition, their age was an issue as it was not clear whether they were over 16 (the age at which no parental consent is officially required to possess a passport-to-life). They were demonstrating independence with regard to this authority and the act of publicly displaying their passports-to-life is thus also significant: they demonstrated courage by contradicting the aspect of social control that the passport represents, yet in fact reconfirmed the way their personal lives are interlinked with such systems of social control. While the passport-to-life connects the boys to regimes of health and supervision, it impacts their social position and their social relations.

Discussion

Exploring the social life of linking within the paradigm of the social life of things brings us to analyze the linking itself, and the changes found there. It brings together different ideas from network theory, mobile communication studies and transnational studies. This paper has focused on how the social life of linking informs us about how people construct identities and the impact this has on the social changes in their society. This question is becoming more pertinent today as the possibilities for linking have increased enormously and the activity of linking is creating an intensification of social relations. While linking is often the central occupation of many people, also in

Africa, it changes our conceptualization of sociality and how sociality is demarcated within the confines of society. This point is not new and many authors have already pointed out that in an era of globalization the question becomes "where" society—its actual demarcations—can be located (cf. Amselle 2001; Ferguson 2006; Gupta and Ferguson 1992; Olwig and Hastrup 1997). While this is leading to a renewed interest in network analysis and an increased understanding of the flows and blockages of people, objects, images and ideas, we contend that society is becoming visible, as well as demarcated in the linking activities and devices, and in what these actually do. In analyzing these patterns of mobility, in which the role of linking for geographical mobility as well as social and mental mobility can be distinguished, linking devices are social facts that do not remain passive in the way social relations and identities are shaped. The types of "linking technologies" available are important to understanding social change. It is clear that people often combine forms of linking, or that one form of linking is reserved for a specific relationship. Importantly, the practice of linking or the practical outcome of linking, goes beyond the individual. It influences larger social formations, for instance the transnationalization of society, the creation of entrepreneurial networks or the flows of objects and images across cultural boundaries. The linkage itself is becoming like an actor (similar to Latour's actor network theory) in the shaping of these structures.

The first step in the analysis of linking will thus be questions about how people link, interpret links and appropriate them but also how the linking devices reversely come to possess them. In the example of the Cameroonian family, the linking is nowadays mainly done by mobile phone. These phones have a life of their own and when one loses them, life is no more. During our research in Cameroon we repeatedly heard exclamations that referred to the phone as the identity of the person in itself. The nomads have replaced their physical displacement by communication by phone but this does not make them feel less mobile.

The second point to be made about the technology of connections is that it establishes new opportunity structures. New relations can be formed (by using the mobile phone for instance), existing relations can change in nature and intensity, and connections may provide for new economic or political chances in trade, initiative and the pursuit of interests. An ethnography of connections can demonstrate what a difference it makes for a village in Cameroon or Mali if, in addition to the bridge, the mobile phone is introduced as a way of bridging distances. The shaping of the opportunity structures for the villagers directly relates to the power of the connection. The same applies to the study of connections relating to ideological and bureaucratic domains as we discussed regarding the introduction of the passport-to-life. It matters for people who are potentially HIV positive if a direct link is established with programmes of care, prevention and treatment, which is what the passport represents. This can even be a matter of life and death.

At the same time, we cannot be celebratory about connections as they also have the capacity to restrict and compartmentalize social life. In Cameroon, where technology is well developed and people are able to use the Internet, planes, cars, roads and mobile phones in advanced ways, these devices denote strong relationships/ties that are being kept alive and easily become the primary social space in which people think and act. The ties that run via these devices and are shaped by them can and often are much stronger than the ties people build up with their immediate social environment. In the case of nomadic societies, we see a stronger embedding in social linking, faraway and closer to home, as the mobile phone gives them an opportunity to pick and choose but also to develop stronger and more frequent ties. The family in Cameroon thus creates its own global space in which family matters are discussed, but in which new social and political identities can also be formed. In this sense, it may mean a continuation elsewhere in the transnational domain of the marginal socio-political and economic space that is similar to their positioning in Cameroon. Their marginality is "exported." The nomads also link up to family elsewhere and relate more intensely to their group members who are far away. Their social relations, which occur at a distance, have changed in the sense that they have become more intensive and are increasingly part of the various compartments in which they live.

This is an example of the division of social life into divisions/compartments that are guided by the technologies of linking. In a way, these compartments follow the patterns introduced by Granovetter (1973) and mainly compose of strong linkages, either characterized by ethnicity, identity or family ties. In other words, while divides—such as boundaries—often have the capacity to link people and spaces, connections have the capacity to divide social life into new compartments. This also applies to connecting devices that relate to ideological and moral domains such as was indicated by the passport-to-life. While it is a device of linking people to structures of power, (sexual and relational) discipline, medical treatment and care, it also has the capacity to divide and therefore compartmentalize social life. Its governmentality (cf. Foucault 1991) is deeply related to its compart-mentality. While

linking people, it also divides them into the "negatives" and the "positives," those on "risk-reduction" behavioural change programmes and those who are not, the ones that need counselling and those who do not, and those who need ARV treatment and those who do not.

A similar process of linking also can be seen to create new forms of governmentality. This becomes clear in the comparative example of the political control and supervision that SIM cards for mobile phones make possible. These now require the detailed identification of the user in a growing number of African countries and this has become an additional device for controlling populations in their linking activities. The point is that phone providers are connecting to political systems of control even in areas marked by violent conflict or oppression. While establishing connections, it appears as if a politically neutral and sheer "technological" operation of providing telecom facilities is underway, whereas in fact the registration of SIM-card users is also offering the opportunity for increased supervision and inspection. Linking thus is becoming synonymous with control, and specifically control of particular sections of a population.

This leads us to one final point. An analytical distinction still needs to be made between connections and emotional attachment. This distinction is relevant at the level of subjectivity and emotions because, as we demonstrated for the mobile phone and the passport-to-life, these devices of connectivity can have deep subjective meanings or layers of emotional expression and experience that also exist for feelings of attachment. In our opinion, connectivity precedes attachment. In a sense, emotional attachment can be the product of what connections make possible. This becomes clear if we compare, in the bridging of geographical distances, the bridge with the mobile phone. Relationships can be established with both, but differences in levels of attachment to people, place, culture and identity can also be created. As the cases in Cameroon and Mali demonstrate, new modes of connectivity may lead to shifting emotional attachments: the spaces and places of a person's local environment acquire new meaning and significance with the arrival of new modes of connectivity. The transnational domain can suddenly become a field where new emotional attachments emerge relating to new consumer identities, the city or the phone network. The passport-to-life makes this even clearer as the connection has the direct aim of changing attachments both morally and ideologically. Sensitivities surrounding the matter create a new emotional field whereby it is significant to become attached to an AIDS programme or a certain counsellor, or to a "buddy." The connection structures a landscape of attachments that are not automatically the kind of relationships that we may think of in the common understanding of spouse, family or friendships, but which nevertheless indicate attachments that are crucial or even life-saving.

Our analysis shows that the "work of connections," for example understanding what connections actually *do*, should be intimately part of any ethnography of modern African situations. The relative significance of connections is not predetermined but is highly contingent on local socio-historical and cultural situations. Such an ethnography can demonstrate how and why certain connections are preferred, become powerful and are capable of introducing change. It should intersect with a cognitive approach to connections, as the connections discussed in this paper require knowledge, skills, competences and understanding in their operation and use by providers and consumers alike. Importantly, there is a "learning of connections" going on in African societies in which many aspects cannot be assumed a priori as the skills and competences are about teaching and praxis that are highly situated, yet global at the same time.

Nevertheless linking technologies are not accessible in a similar way for everybody. Economic power and social capital (for example rules of access) are, as always, at the centre of the appropriation of these technologies and the outcome of the compartmentalization is only for those who have access to the technologies. Thus we may indeed see a perpetuation of marginalities or global shadows (Ferguson 2006), while at the same time the "fourth world" of those without access (Castells 2007) may become even more of a reality. An in-accessibility of linking technologies and thus an exclusion from specific forms of linking will lead to large groups of non-users being denied access to social opportunities—a darker side of the information and communication society and the abundance of linking technologies that a global world seems to promise.

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Notes

1 The ideas presented in this paper are based on discussions held in the "Connections and Transformations" research group at the African Studies Centre, Leiden, the Netherlands (www.ascleiden.nl). They form the core of an edited volume to be published in 2012 by Macmillan called *The Social Life of Connectivity in Africa*. We are thankful to the members of this research group for their many stimulating ideas and suggestions. We are also grateful to Karin van Bemmel for her assistance in completing this text.

2 Prof. Katz heads the Centre for Mobile Communication Studies at Rutgers University: http://comminfo.rutgers.edu/ci/cmcs/.

3 Research programme funded by NWO/WOTRO, www.mobileafricarevisited.wordpress.com. Countries of research: Senegal (Casamance), Chad, Cameroon, Mali, Angola and South Africa.

4 Skuse and Cousins (2007) discuss how marginal/rural areas are linked to mobile phone networks and most (but not all) connect and thus develop. They emphasize the importance of the understanding of access to these new technologies.

5 These mobilities are described by Warnier (1984), one of the region's first ethnographers.

6 Hence the concept of bushfalling, which refers to the early mobility related to hunt, to Europe or the United States is a new form of this same hunting: to go and come back with rich pickings (cf. Nyamnjoh, fc).

7 A pseudonym to ensure anonymity.

8 This case study is a part of ongoing research by Mirjam de Bruijn (2009-2013) as part of a WOTRO/NWO-funded project (see Note 2).

9 The case presented here is based on observations in Mali but a recent study in Niger and Nigeria among similar pastoral groups revealed that the nomads have indeed embraced the mobile phone (de Bruijn et al. 2011).

10 Sangare (2010). This research was done as part of the WOTRO/NWO-funded project on communication and mobility (see Note 2) in a region where the author of this article spent several years for Ph.D. and post-doctoral research among nomadic pastoralists (1990-1992; 1997 and with regular visits in 2001, 2005, 2008 and 2009).

11 The focus-group discussion was conducted together with Dr. A. Bochow (MPI, Halle) who kindly allowed us to use the material gathered here. The quotes of the focus group conversation are taken from the field notes of A. Bochow, Molepolole, dd. April 6, 2009.

12 There is an extensive literature on this linkage, exploring first of all its cultural-historical features in the West (Foucault 1986; Giddens 1992), while recently there has also been an emerging interest in the ways in which these transformations of the public *and* the private occur as a result of the spread of globalizing ideas and images (Cole and Thomas 2009; Hirsch and Wardlow 2006).

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Entre profane et sacré : Usages d'Internet et islam dans deux communautés musulmanes ouest-africaines à Montréal

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Résumé : Cet article, en se basant sur une étude ethnographique de vingt mois parmi des ouest-africains musulmans à Montréal, explore les usages d'Internet dans deux communautés musulmanes ouest-africaines. À l'aide d'un cadre conceptuel adapté de la dichotomie profane-sacré d'Émile Durkheim, cette étude tente de reconstituer les modes de préservation et de démantèlement du sacré, ainsi que les façons dont Internet participe à ces processus. Tandis que dans la communauté mouride, Internet est un agent de maintien des hiérarchies religieuses et des espaces sacrés, un autre centre islamique guinéen et sénégalais utilise Internet comme outil de désacralisation et de démocratisation du savoir religieux. L'étude des usages d'Internet au sein de ces deux communautés ouest-africaines à Montréal offre un regard mitigé sur les modalités d'être musulman dans un contexte migratoire et transnational, et sur le rôle des nouvelles technologies de l'information dans la mise en œuvre des pratiques religieuses.

Mots-clés : Internet, islam, mouridisme, ouest-africains, Montréal, sacré

Abstract: This article, based on an ethnographic study of twenty months among West African Muslims in Montreal, explores the uses of the Internet in two West African Muslim communities. Using a framework adapted from the sacred-profane dichotomy of Emile Durkheim, this study attempts to reconstruct the modes of preservation and dismantling of the sacred and the ways in which the Internet is involved in these processes. While in the Mouride community, the Internet is used to maintian religious hierarchies and sacred spaces, another Guinean and Senegalese Islamic Center uses the Internet as a tool for democratization and secularization of religious knowledge. The study of Internet usage in these two West African communities in Montreal offers a mixed view on how to be a Muslim in the context of migration and transnationalism, and the role of new information technologies in the implementation of religious practices.

Keywords: Internet, Islam, Mouridisme, West African, Montreal, sacred

Introduction

C'est vendredi. La prière rituelle vient de prendre fin, et fait place aux annonces communautaires. Je suis assise parmi des femmes musulmanes dans une mosquée de fortune, petit espace commercial reconverti, située dans un quartier défavorisé de Montréal. Après avoir indiqué les horaires des activités de la semaine, l'imam lance un appel « important » : « S'il vous plaît, mes frères, mes sœurs, on a besoin d'un *webmaster* pour s'occuper de notre site web. C'est vraiment urgent. Pour ceux qui sont bons en informatique, on a besoin de quelqu'un pour construire notre site parce que tous les sermons sont dessus ». Cette annonce, bien que banale de prime abord, met en évidence le fait qu'Internet occupe une place de plus en plus grande dans la vie sociale. Le domaine du religieux ne fait pas exception.

L'impact des nouvelles technologies et d'Internet sur la religion contemporaine, en particulier, commence à faire l'objet de questionnements. La convergence du cyberespace et du sacré, de la spiritualité et des nouvelles technologies suscite des interrogations sur l'avenir de la religion et les effets des nouvelles technologies de l'information sur l'expérience religieuse (Brasher 2001; Campbell 2005; Cottin et Bazin 2003; Hadden et Cowan 2000). Certains ont suggéré qu'Internet causerait l'abolition des frontières territoriales et la formation d'une communauté religieuse transnationale et supranationale (Roy 2000). D'autres, à l'opinion plus nuancée, choisissent de parler de mobilité à travers les frontières plutôt que de déterritorialisation (Hepp 2004). En effet, déterritorialisation ne signifie pas toujours absence d'ancrage, comme le montrent certains travaux sur la reterritorialisation et la continuité des territoires religieux dans la plupart des cas. Mais que se passe-t-il lorsqu'Internet s'immisce dans le religieux? Comment le fait religieux est-il mis en scène et recréé à travers ce médium? Que nous apprend l'usage d'Internet sur l'islam en contexte migratoire?

Cet article, basé sur une étude ethnographique parmi les musulmans originaires d'Afrique de l'Ouest, et notamment les Sénégalais et les Guinéens, dans la région de Montréal menée entre juillet 2008 et mars 2010, examine l'usage d'Internet dans deux centres religieux fréquentés par ces migrants. Je propose de montrer que, d'une part, les usages d'Internet servent à préserver les hiérarchies religieuses et les espaces sacrés du côté des mourides en raison de leur conception particulière de la spiritualité islamique; et, d'autre part, qu'Internet peut aussi constituer un moyen de désacralisation du savoir religieux, ainsi qu'on peut l'observer au sein d'une petite mosquée fondée par des ouest-africains de leur perception d'un islam mondialisé. À cet effet, cet article se divise en trois sections. En premier lieu, nous présentons le contexte des migrants musulmans originaires d'Afrique de l'Ouest à Montréal et la problématique de l'islam mondialisé ou déterritorialisé. En deuxième lieu, l'article offre une description de la communauté musulmane mouride à Montréal et une interprétation de l'utilisation d'Internet. La troisième partie présente une autre communauté musulmane ouest-africaine dans son rapport à l'usage d'Internet.

Les ouest-africains musulmans à Montréal

Pendant vingt mois, entre juillet 2008 et mars 2010, j'ai mené un terrain ethnographique parmi des ouest-africains musulmans dans la ville de Montréal. Mon projet était surtout de documenter les expériences religieuses des femmes ouest-africaines. Au sein de la communauté mouride, majoritairement sénégalaise, j'ai été vite acceptée, et même intégrée à l'une des associations féminines. Les méthodes utilisées pour la collecte de données étaient l'observation participante et les entretiens semi-directifs. Lors de mon terrain, j'ai aussi passé du temps dans les domiciles et à la mosquée avec les migrants, découvrant ainsi de nouveaux lieux ainsi que des communautés moins connues à Montréal, telles que la deuxième communauté qui fait l'objet de cette étude.

Au Québec, l'immigration ouest-africaine est récente, probablement en raison de la politique très restrictive de l'immigration au Canada qui refusait le droit d'immigrer sur des critères raciaux et ethniques. La Loi sur l'immigration est abolie en 1962 (CIC 2000). L'immigration ouest-africaine débute donc dans les années 1960 avec une première vague d'étudiants africains sur des visas d'étudiant dans le cadre d'échange du Commonwealth et de la francophonie (LeBlanc 2002). Dans les années 1980, elle augmente considérablement, en partie à cause du durcissement des politiques d'immigration en Europe de l'ouest, et aussi grâce au contexte linguistique francophone et à la nouvelle politique d'immigration du Québec. Les immigrants s'installent principalement dans les grands centres urbains et en particulier à Montréal qui accueillent 90% des nouveaux arrivants au Québec (CIC 2007). Au Québec, entre 1997 et 2006, le nombre d'immigrants en provenance de l'Afrique de l'ouest était d'environ 7 000 personnes (MICC 2008); en 2008, on estimait à 5 000 le nombre d'Ouest-africains résidant à Montréal. Malgré le cosmopolitisme de la métropole québécoise, l'immigration pose la question de l'identité religieuse et des pratiques religieuses en général pour les Ouest-africains, surtout depuis le tournant du XXI^{e} siècle et les attaques terroristes du 11 septembre. Comme le souligne Mahmood Mamdani (2002), le 11 septembre 2001 a mis les musulmans au centre d'un débat culturel qu'il qualifie de *culture talk*. Selon lui, les musulmans sont désormais très conscients de l'image qui circule à leur propos dans les médias, et de ce qui fait la différence entre les « bons » et les « mauvais » musulmans (Mamdani 2002). L'islam en contexte montréalais, comme dans chaque contexte migratoire, va donc exiger de nouvelles configurations par rapport à la façon dont il était pratiqué en Afrique de l'ouest. Olivier Roy (2002) fait référence à un « islam mondialisé », qu'il définit comme étant cette nouvelle configuration du paysage islamique, désormais éparpillé au-delà de frontières géographiques et culturelles. Cet islam mondialisé nuance l'idée de l'islam comme culture concrète du lieu d'origine, et force les musulmans vivant dans les pays occidentaux à reformuler leur définition de l'islam devant une nouvelle évidence sociale, que l'on retrouve par ailleurs dans les autres sociétés musulmanes également : la mondialisation. Ce qui colore l'islam en Occident dans sa pratique et dans sa structuration, c'est en partie la sécularisation des sociétés occidentales. L'islam, loin de se distinguer des autres courants religieux en Occident, partage les mêmes tendances générales : l'individualisation du sentiment religieux et la recherche de l'épanouissement personnel. Ces nouvelles tendances sont symptomatiques de nouvelles modalités d'être musulman, ce que Haenni (2005) et Otayek et Soares (2007) appellent « l'islam mondain ». Il s'agit d'un islam qui se démarque comme étant moral et moralisant, en se focalisant sur l'amélioration individuelle et la pratique correcte de la religion (Haenni 2005). Dans le contexte migratoire, les communautés musulmanes opèrent souvent une sorte de réislamisation des pratiques quotidiennes et de l'identité, comme en témoigne le cas des immigrants pakistanais aux États-Unis et dans les pays du Golfe (Mohammad-Arif 2006). Cet « islam mondain » se situe entre le local et le global dans un contexte où les communications transnationales sont facilitées par les nouvelles technologies et

la libéralisation du marché. Le transnationalisme croissant des musulmans soulève, entre autres, la question de l'identité culturelle et religieuse. Dans les sociétés où les musulmans sont une minorité composée d'immigrants et de convertis, les nouveaux médias (principalement Internet) jouent un rôle important dans le maintien des liens entre les diasporas et les pays d'origine (Starrett 2003; Winder 1967). Ces nouvelles formes de communication impliquent des échanges immédiats entre des communautés musulmanes très éloignées géographiquement les unes des autres. D'un côté, elles contribuent à la préservation des liens entre musulmans de même affiliation religieuse; d'un autre côté, elles donnent lieu à des espaces d'échange, tels que les forums de discussion qui peuvent être l'occasion de plus d'ouverture. C'est en tenant compte de cette problématique de l'islamité en Occident et en contexte migratoire que cette étude se propose d'explorer les usages d'Internet au sein de deux centres islamiques ouest-africains à Montréal.

Espace sacré et Internet : l'exemple des mourides

Mon étude de terrain a été menée durant vingt mois parmi les mourides de Montréal. J'ai ainsi participé aux réunions hebdomadaires des mourides, aux réunions mensuelles des femmes mourides, ainsi qu'aux célébrations rituelles annuelles. De par la nature de leur réseau transnational et du fait de la concentration des ressources spirituelles dans un centre précis, la ville sainte de Touba, les mourides se sont montrés très ouverts à l'usage des NTIC (Gueye 2002b, 2003; Copans 2000).

Le mouridisme, fondé au XIXe siècle par Cheikh Ahmadou Bamba (1857-1927), est considérée comme une branche de la Qadiriyya, une confrérie soufie originaire de la région de l'Iraq répandue à travers le monde musulman sunnite et qui pénètre au Sénégal au XVIIIe siècle (Cruise O'Brien 1971:27). Le mouridisme, qui à l'origine était une confrérie rurale et agricole, prend toute son ampleur sous le joug de l'administration coloniale française, période pendant laquelle Bamba gagne en popularité et attire de plus en plus de disciples (Copans 1980:19-33). Bamba est exilé par le pouvoir colonial successivement en Mauritanie et au Gabon, pour ensuite mourir en résidence surveillée au Sénégal. Aujourd'hui, les mourides forment une diaspora commerçante présente dans tous les grands centres urbains de l'Europe et des États-Unis, et que l'on retrouve jusqu'à Hong Kong. Les mourides sont une communauté religieuse très étudiée par les sociologues et les anthropologues, non seulement au Sénégal (Evers Rosander 2003; Diop 1981; Salem 1981; Bava et Gueye 2001; Babou 2007), mais également en contexte d'immigration en Europe et aux États-Unis (Maestro 2006; Kaag 2008; Ebin 1996; Bava 2003b; Diouf 2000; Babou 2002; Kane 2009; Riccio 2006). Les études sur les mourides en contexte migratoire traitent principalement des thèmes du commerce, de la transnationalité, ainsi que des aspects religieux et économiques des réseaux mourides.

Les mourides de Montréal fonctionnent en tant qu'association socioreligieuse, plutôt que comme groupe religieux[1]. En effet, chaque mouride est affilié à son propre guide spirituel au Sénégal, et aucun *shaykh* (guide) ne réside à Montréal. Le lien avec un *shaykh* est important car il représente le *shaykh*-fondateur Ahmadou Bamba qui accorde le salut. Le *shaykh*-fondateur, après sa mort, demeure celui à travers lequel le salut et la rédemption sont possibles du fait qu'il relie ces *shaykhs* avec le prophète Muhammad (Cruise O'Brien 1971). Les liens guide-disciple sont donc transnationaux et varient d'un individu à l'autre sur une base commune. Les liens acquis dans le pays d'origine entre un disciple et son guide spirituel ne sont pas modifiés par la migration. Les femmes possèdent une sous-association féminine, constituant également une *dahira* (association)[2], indépendante de la *dahira* mouride principale, mais se mobilisant pour les mêmes célébrations religieuses. Tout comme dans les zones urbaines du Sénégal, les mourides se regroupent à fréquence hebdomadaire afin de réciter les poèmes d'Ahmadou Bamba.

Le local où ont lieu les rencontres est situé dans le quartier Côte-des-Neiges, sur une rue bordée de magasins abandonnés et de petites usines textiles. Dans le même pâté d'immeubles, et beaucoup plus imposante, se trouve une mosquée. Cette dernière est notoire, étant donné son architecture islamique, son insigne géant, et finalement, les attroupements d'hommes qui s'y rassemblent. En comparaison, le local des mourides est plus difficile à trouver. En guise d'insigne est affichée sur la porte une feuille de format lettre, sur laquelle le nom de la *dahira* est sommairement dactylographiée. Quant au local en question, il se trouve au deuxième étage du bâtiment attenant à la mosquée. Les samedis soir, la porte est ouverte, et les fidèles (*taalibés*) empruntent des escaliers pour s'y rendre. En arrivant, on se retrouve dans une sorte d'antichambre, où les chaussures peuvent être rangées sur des étagères. À gauche de l'antichambre, une porte mène à une large pièce vide au plancher entièrement tapissé dont les fenêtres donnent sur la rue de l'entrée. Cette salle est généralement utilisée pour des rassemblements plus larges, lors de célébrations mourides. À droite, une autre porte, ouverte en permanence, mène à une cuisine, où, tant bien que mal, des fidèles mourides s'affairent à faire le café Touba ou à réchauffer des mets qu'ils serviront aux fidèles après le rituel. Une fois dans

la cuisine, une porte mène au local où les récitations et les prières ont lieu. On y descend deux ou trois marches et on arrive dans une pièce tapissée. C'est ici que les réunions hebdomadaires du samedi ont lieu. La direction de la prière, *qibla*, qui indique la Mecque en Arabie Saoudite, est marquée par une sorte de petit paravent dans le coin avant gauche de la pièce. Comme tous les musulmans, les mourides doivent faire leurs prières rituelles en faisant face à la Mecque. Les hommes s'asseyent en y faisant face et les cercles se forment autour de la *qibla*. La salle de prière est dénuée de faste et de décorations. Néanmoins, sur les murs sont accrochés les portraits des *shaykhs* mourides, tous descendants ou parents par alliance du *shaykh* fondateur.

Chaque samedi soir, les mourides à Montréal se retrouvent pour prier, chanter les poèmes de Bamba, et partager un repas ensemble. Les poèmes, *qassaides*, sont en arabe et consistent en éloges du prophète Muhammad et en exhortations pour les disciples sur la conduite quotidienne et la spiritualité. Pour les mourides, les *qassaides* représentent bien plus que de la simple littérature, comme l'exprime une femme mouride de Montréal :

> Les *qassaides* d'après moi c'est une source. Par exemple, si j'ai mon dictionnaire à la maison, et puis que j'ai un mot qui me trouble, je m'en vais l'ouvrir et je trouve la définition. Donc, les *qassaides* d'après moi, c'est une source pour la vie des problèmes tout sorte de choses qu'on rencontre dans la vie, on les trouve dans les *qassaides*. Donc c'est un remède, dans le fond. [Mouminatou, 10 juin 2009]

La récitation des *qassaides* se fait selon des mélodies et un rythme spécifiques. Bien que le corpus de *qassaides* demeure inchangé, la mélodie peut varier selon la manière dont on les chante dans la ville de Touba, capitale symbolique et matérielle du mouridisme. Fondée en 1888 par Bamba, l'agglomération est devenue la deuxième ville du Sénégal avec plus d'un demi-million d'habitants au début du XXI[e] siècle (Gueye 2002a). Les mourides visitent la ville pour y faire des pèlerinages et des miracles sont réputés y avoir lieu (Bava et Gueye 2001). Sous tous aspects, la ville de Touba est une ville sainte, à l'image de la Mecque en Arabie Saoudite. D'un tout petit village au départ, Touba s'est retrouvée transformée en ville moderne par les mourides eux-mêmes, et continue de recevoir des contributions financières considérables. Quant aux mourides qui résident hors du Sénégal, les marabouts itinérants leur rendent visite plusieurs fois par an, ce qui fait l'objet de *ziyaras*, ou visites pieuses.

Les objets en provenance de Touba sont traités avec déférence. Dans ce contexte et dans la plupart des domiciles des migrants mourides, on trouve des posters représentant la ville, les khalifes (califes), etc. On peut affirmer que la ville de Touba demeure le centre de toute activité mouride, décisionnelle ou rituelle. Les guides spirituels, ainsi que les califes – chargés de gérer la communauté – ont leurs quartiers généraux à Touba. Une femme mouride explique :

> Parce que Touba, c'est la base du mouridisme. C'est le symbole du mouridisme. Tu peux être partout dans le monde et tu dis « Touba », y a un seul Touba au monde. C'est chez nous. C'est Touba qui fait le mouridisme. Quelqu'un qui est pas mouride qui débarque au Sénégal, qui entend parler du mouridisme par exemple ici en occident, Touba lui donne l'idée de quoi c'est le mouridisme. Par sa vie par son activité donc, honorer Touba en y faisant tout ce que le cheikh voulait qu'on y fasse en évitant toute chose qui pourrait la rendre malsaine, nocive, mal vue. C'est important. Je crois que c'est une façon de conserver notre, euh, identité. [Ndeye, 26 novembre 2008][3]

Le lien que fait Ndeye entre l'identité mouride et la préservation et vénération de la ville est fondamental. Pour tout mouride, Touba demeure le centre de toutes les activités rituelles. Avant pour toutes les célébrations importantes du mouridisme, s'ils ne peuvent pas se rendre à Touba, les mourides entament les préparatifs plusieurs mois à l'avance. Le Grand Magal, en particulier, constitue le festival le plus important de l'année. Le Grand Magal commémore le départ en exil du fondateur Bamba, sur ordre de l'administration coloniale française qui craignait la forte mobilisation des disciples autour du marabout. Chaque année, cet évènement est célébré en parallèle à Montréal, attirant des mourides de Sherbrooke et de Québec. Les préparatifs incluent non seulement des levées de fonds, mais aussi des répétitions pour la récitation des *qassaides*.

L'Internet joue un rôle important dans ces préparatifs. Les *qassaides* sont diffusés sur Internet à partir de Touba. Comme Cheikh Gueye le constate dans son étude sur les nouvelles technologies à Touba en 2002, plusieurs marabouts possèdent des ordinateurs afin de rester en contact avec leurs disciples vivant à l'étranger.

Durant l'une de mes observations dans la *dahira* des mourides de Montréal, un ordinateur portable fut placé à même le sol, au centre du cercle formé par les hommes. Leurs livrets en arabe sur les genoux, assis en tailleur, les hommes écoutaient religieusement les chants émergeant de l'ordinateur. L'un d'eux appuyait sur pause tandis que les fidèles s'évertuaient à apprendre la mélodie-modèle. Au centre du cercle des disciples, l'ordinateur portable occupait la place habituellement réservée aux marabouts

de Touba, une place symbolique. Du côté des femmes, le silence était respectueusement observé pendant que les voix de Touba tonitruaient dans les haut-parleurs. Par le biais de l'outil technologique, Touba devient personnifiée, et les cérémonies peuvent se vivre simultanément malgré l'éloignement géographique et le décalage horaire. Le centre de pèlerinage, locus de vie et de savoir spirituels, est amené dans l'espace local de la *dahira* de Montréal.

La hiérarchie spirituelle est préservée par le biais d'Internet qui permet de faire la continuité entre la ville sainte et les migrants mourides. Sur tous les plans, la direction spirituelle continue d'être basée à Touba, tandis que les disciples de Montréal et d'ailleurs demeurent les récipiendaires de la ville sainte.

Comme le suggère l'étude de Jean-François Mayer (2008), Internet a le potentiel de renforcer les tendances centralisatrices dans un groupe religieux en donnant accès immédiat à la même information pour tous les fidèles, sans l'écran que peuvent représenter les niveaux intermédiaires, par exemple dans une institution religieuse à structure hiérarchique. Ceci rejoint la théorie d'Émile Durkheim (1912) selon laquelle les célébrations religieuses et les rituels sacrés unissaient la communauté et intégraient les individus, tout en permettant le partage de sentiments collectifs de solidarité dans des domaines profanes de la vie sociale.

Les mourides utilisent donc Internet comme connexion à leur centre religieux, à leurs guides et source spirituels : Touba. Dans son étude sur les technologies de l'information à Touba, Cheikh Gueye (2002b) souligne le rôle de la ville comme centre d'unité et de réunion. Par conséquent, et principalement à cause des réseaux transnationaux de mourides, la ville a été en avance quant à l'usage de la télévision et de la téléphonie cellulaire au Sénégal. Sur tout site web mouride, Touba prédomine : les images de la ville et de sa hiérarchie agissent comme des icônes. Il n'est donc guère surprenant de constater que l'acte d'écouter des récitations issues de Touba, chantées par des mourides situés à Touba, est un vecteur de bénédictions spirituelles. Internet permet la transmission de savoirs et de rituels sacrés, ainsi que de bénéfices spirituels (*baraka*) que seule une visite à la ville pourrait normalement procurer.

En plaçant symboliquement l'ordinateur au centre du cercle des disciples, dans l'espace même normalement occupé par le guide spirituel, les mourides expriment la sacralisation de la nouvelle technologie qui agit en tant que transmetteur de sacré et de bénédictions divines. Sophie Bava (2003a, 2003b) a déjà montré dans son étude sur les mourides de Marseille le symbolisme du marabout itinérant comme porteur de *baraka* :

> La *baraka*, signe de réussite pour la majorité des *taalibé-s* est également, par la force spirituelle qu'elle suggère, un instrument, une technique pour se rapprocher de la confrérie et de Touba. Si un proche se rend à Touba pour un événement particulier comme le Grand *Magal* par exemple ou simplement pour visiter sa famille et son marabout, il reviendra porteur de *baraka* pour ceux qui sont restés, lesquels lui ont demandé de transmettre leurs prières à Sérigne Touba. [Bava 2003a:15]

Dans le cas du groupe mouride, Internet sert à perpétuer le sacré à travers une mémoire construite à partir de Touba en tant que symbole du fondateur et de la confrérie, tout en matérialisant un présent perpétuel. Les mourides étant aujourd'hui une communauté transnationale, l'usage du cyberespace assure le maintien nécessaire des rituels et des traditions religieuses. Les hiérarchies spirituelles sont gardées intactes par les enseignements, les chants, ainsi que les images de la ville sainte de Touba. La révérence exhibée par les mourides au contenu de leur site web montre que la distinction entre disciples et maître ne change pas avec la nouvelle technologie. Au contraire, Internet affirme la distance entre disciples et maître, en gardant Touba et la hiérarchie du mouridisme sacrés et saints au centre du dispositif religieux mouride.

L'usage d'Internet dans le cas de mon observation est en soi un rituel. Le cyberespace dans cet exemple agit comme un espace sacré, et la pratique qui consiste à répéter des mélodies de *qassaides* à partir d'Internet, suggère également une temporalité sacrée.

La thèse de Roy (2000), selon laquelle Internet contribuerait à la déterritorialisation de l'islam est ainsi remise en question dans l'exemple mouride, où la territorialité sacrée du mouridisme est renforcée et préservée par l'usage d'Internet.

Savoir désacralisé et Internet : le cas d'une mosquée ouest-africaine

Un autre exemple que cette étude explore est celui d'une petite mosquée, que j'appelle ici la mosquée M., située dans un quartier pauvre de Montréal. Au début, le groupe était composé de quelques familles guinéennes qui se réunissaient dans les domiciles de chacun. Au fur et à mesure que le groupe s'élargit, un autre imam sénégalais se joignit à l'imam guinéen et une salle est louée dans une grande mosquée de Montréal dans le quartier Parc Extension pour l'instruction des enfants. Finalement, en 2009, le groupe trouve son local actuel. L'objectif des organisateurs est d'acquérir le bâtiment au complet en réponse à la croissance rapide du nombre de fidèles. L'imam de la mosquée est d'origine guinéenne et dispense

ses sermons en français, anglais et arabe, langues qu'il maîtrise parfaitement. Les membres organisateurs de la mosquée sont tous originaires de la Guinée et du Sénégal.

Pendant mon terrain, j'ai assisté aux prières du vendredi sur une période de quatre semaines. Selon mes observations et la nature des sermons, la mosquée appartient au courant réformiste, tel qu'identifié en Afrique de l'ouest (LeBlanc 2006; Launay 1992; Schultz 2008; Soares 2006). Ce mouvement adopte une lecture puriste de l'islam et rejette les pratiques syncrétiques culturelles communément associées au soufisme, par exemple. En Afrique de l'ouest en particulier, ce mouvement se caractérise par la promotion de l'alphabétisation en langue arabe, ou phénomène qualifié d'arabisation (LeBlanc 2006). Parfois, cela implique également l'adoption d'un style vestimentaire arabe, tel que le voile pour les femmes ou les *djellabas* pour les hommes. Les leaders sont généralement choisis en fonction de leur niveau de connaissance de la langue arabe et de leurs études dans les pays de l'Afrique du Nord ou du Moyen-Orient. La connaissance de la langue arabe apporte avec elle une légitimité et un statut de savant. À cet effet, l'imam de la mosquée M. parle l'arabe couramment, et s'applique à prêcher dans les trois langues : l'arabe, l'anglais, et le français. Les versets coraniques sont fréquemment cités en arabe dans ses sermons, ainsi que les traditions orales relatant les faits et gestes du prophète de l'islam. L'imam est vêtu d'une longue robe blanche de style saoudienne.

Le lieu est modeste et décoré parcimonieusement avec quelques tableaux de calligraphie coranique. On y entre par la porte arrière, qui donne accès à une petite antichambre bordée d'étagères sur lesquelles les fidèles déposent leurs chaussures. On peut ensuite pénétrer dans la mosquée à travers une porte ornée d'un épais rideau. Les femmes se trouvent dans un petit espace sur la gauche, séparées des hommes par un paravent et des rideaux. Les pratiques et les rituels se limitent aux pratiques orthodoxes. Le site web de la mosquée présente l'organisation en ces mots : « L'actuelle mosquée M. offre des services de qualité (lieu de prière, formation islamique, célébration de cérémonies religieuses) et cela en trois langues : l'arabe, le français et l'anglais », déclare le site web. Il faut noter ici l'expression « services de qualité » qui évoque une forme de commercialisation de l'objet, et également le fait que le multilinguisme soit précisé.

Le site web d'origine insistait alors sur l'identité « africaine » de la mosquée, précisant qu'elle résultait des efforts d'une association islamique africaine. Le site a été remplacé en août 2010 par un blogue qui replace l'historique de la mosquée dans la lignée de celles qui ont logé dans le même local : une mosquée afghane, une mosquée nord-africaine, et finalement, la mosquée M. On peut interpréter ce changement comme une volonté de s'inscrire dans un islam supranational et réellement ancré dans la pratique religieuse, plutôt que dans l'identité ethnonationale.

Du fait que le site est un blogue, il permet une interactivité accrue et donne la possibilité aux visiteurs et aux membres de laisser des commentaires au sujet des annonces, sermons, et informations présentés. Les sermons sont disponibles sous forme d'enregistrements vidéo, et l'on peut choisir un thème, tel que « L'éducation islamique des enfants » ou encore « La mort ». Sous la vidéo se trouve un formulaire électronique sur lequel le visiteur peut poser des questions ou laisser des commentaires. Le site présente également les horaires des prières quotidiennes et un convertisseur de calendrier grégorien en calendrier islamique.

Bien que la notion du sacré proposée par Dukheim (1912) soit utile pour analyser le cas de la communauté mouride à Montréal et de la continuité territoriale avec la ville sainte via l'usage d'Internet, sa définition de profane exige quelques éclaircissements afin de mieux appréhender l'usage d'Internet dans la mosquée ouest-africaine. Dans son ouvrage *Elementary Forms of Religious Life* de 1912, Durkheim définit le profane comme tout ce qui n'est pas sacré. Mon intention ici n'est pas d'utiliser la dichotomie profane-sacré pour expliquer l'expérience religieuse classique d'un côté et l'expérience religieuse via Internet de l'autre. Mon objectif est plutôt de comprendre la façon dont l'usage d'Internet interroge le rapport au savoir religieux. J'utilise donc le terme de profane dans le sens de désacralisé et démocratisé. Par désacralisé, j'entends un processus par lequel ce qui fait l'objet d'interdits et de normes sacrées est graduellement démystifié et rendu accessible à un plus grand nombre d'adeptes. Par ce processus, on présuppose une rééducation et une transformation des croyances, fait que la notion d'islam mondain explique bien (Haenni 2005).

Le site web agit comme une communauté virtuelle où les réunions sont accessibles aux fidèles depuis leur domicile. Les sermons peuvent être étudiés individuellement par les fidèles. À cet égard, le site web de la mosquée M. rappelle celui des églises évangéliques où les vidéos des sermons de pasteurs sont disponibles après le culte pour les membres. La mosquée M. virtuelle est une réplique de la mosquée physique. Un membre de la mosquée explique :

> J'essaie d'aller à la prière le vendredi quand je peux. Mais quand je ne peux pas, c'est correct. Pour ça je ne

> m'inquiète pas du tout! Le site est là donc même si je ne vais pas, je sais toujours ce qui se passe. C'est soit ça, soit tu téléphones à quelqu'un. Mais maintenant avec le site on n'a pas besoin d'appeler quelqu'un pour savoir ce qui s'est passé à la mosquée. [Fatoumata, 5 février 2010]

Comme l'illustre le commentaire de Fatoumata, le site renforce le sens de la communauté sans pour autant exiger beaucoup d'efforts pour rester en contact avec les autres membres. Dans un contexte urbain comme Montréal, où les emplois du temps sont chargés, le site permet de coordonner les activités religieuses de la communauté. Le site web, contrairement à l'exemple mouride, ne recrée par le sacré et le rituel, mais permet justement la désacralisation de la pratique religieuse. Ce qui nécessitait auparavant pour y avoir accès tout un rituel de purification chez soi, avec l'obligation de prendre le bain rituel de la racine des cheveux aux orteils, de se vêtir – dans le cas des femmes – d'habits couvrant tout le corps, est désormais accessible sans déplacement requis.

Le libre accès aux sermons, ainsi que la possibilité de laisser des commentaires et de poser des questions sur le site, désacralise l'accès au savoir islamique. On y a accès sans initiation préalable, sans autorisation formelle.

Internet permet ici une transformation des modalités de transmission, d'acquisition, et d'interprétation du savoir. En effet, l'arrimage entre l'éducation de masse et les technologies de la communication a contribué à démanteler la frontière entre savoir profane et savoir sacré (Eickelman et Anderson 2003). Le savoir religieux autrefois confiné aux institutions religieuses est désormais disséminé librement et devient accessible aux masses. Comme Dale Eickelman et Jon Anderson (2003) le soulignent, un nouveau public assiste et participe aux débats sur l'islamité. L'éducation de masse et les nouvelles élites intellectuelles dans les sociétés musulmanes participent à l'élaboration des définitions, des modalités, et des dynamiques d'être musulman et de penser l'islam sans non plus être dispensés de tout contrôle. Le savoir religieux prend de nouvelles formes dans sa transmission également, émergeant par endroits tel que biens de consommation qui circulent, comme les livres, les vidéos, les logiciels, et les enregistrements audio (Starrett 2003; Hirschkind 2001; Sardar 1993).

Conclusion

Internet joue un rôle important dans la vie religieuse de ces deux centres religieux ouest-africains à Montréal. En tant qu'immigrants, les Ouest-africains musulmans doivent reconfigurer leurs pratiques et créer de nouveaux signifiants religieux adaptés à un contexte différent de celui de leur pays d'origine. Cette étude a montré qu'Internet a une fonction différente dans les deux centres, notamment à cause de leurs idéologies et des objectifs religieux respectifs, mais peut-être aussi du fait de leur désir plus ou moins fort de s'inscrire dans la société locale. Le rôle d'Internet varie donc en fonction des objectifs religieux des communautés. Les mourides utilisent Internet comme un outil de préservation des hiérarchies spirituelles et de maintien du sacré que représente la ville de Touba et les festivals annuels dans d'autres territoires. Internet agit comme vecteur d'une identité territoriale (Sénégal, Touba) et spirituelle. Internet donne aux mourides une connexion immédiate et perpétuelle aux espaces sacrés du religieux. La migration éloignée du centre du mouridisme ne signifie donc pas véritablement un changement de la perception du sacré. Le savoir religieux est localisé au même endroit, et y accéder exige le même processus quasi-initiatique. À la mosquée M., Internet fonctionne comme un outil de désacralisation d'un savoir auparavant considéré comme l'apanage d'une élite. Les hiérarchies traditionnelles sont démantelées et le sacré perd sa signification d'« interdit » pour devenir accessible à tous.

À la lumière de mes observations au sein de ces deux communautés musulmanes à Montréal, les usages d'Internet permettent de mieux cerner les transformations qu'engendre la migration dans le fait religieux, ainsi que les nouvelles dynamiques auxquels les musulmans en Occident, et également dans d'autres régions du monde, sont confrontés, à savoir la nécessité d'adapter les modalités d'être musulman dans un contexte de plus en plus mondialisé. Internet et ses usages dans ces deux groupes étudiés sont symptomatiques de la diversité des fonctions des nouvelles technologies de l'information et de communication, et de l'imbrication croissante entre technologie et fait religieux.

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Notes

1 Les mourides de Montréal sont organisés au sein d'une *dahira*, une association religieuse affiliée à un guide spirituel spécifique au Sénégal. La *dahira* à Montréal est dirigée par un comité organisationnel, dont un président nommé par les mourides eux-mêmes. Les décisions sont prises à la suite des délibérations des membres du comité, qui compte un président trésorier, un chargé de l'administration, un secrétaire, et des chargés d'organisation pour les divers évènements sociaux et religieux.

2 La *dahira* (dérivé du mot arabe dar, signifie cercle, cellule, maison) est une association regroupant les disciples mourides soit sur la base des allégeances maraboutiques, soit sur la base du lieu où ils se trouvent.

3 Les noms des répondants dans cet article ont été changés pour préserver leur anonymat.

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Articles

Charisma in the Margins of the State: Dara'ang Buddhism and the *Khruba* Holy Men of Northern Thailand

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Abstract: Dara'ang in Thailand practice a form of Theravada Buddhism similar to that found amongst many Tai-speaking populations in the upper Mekong region. A feature of this regional Buddhist tradition is a belief in *ton bun* (persons of merit), holy men who are renowned for their miraculous powers. In this paper I examine the relationship between the Dara'ang of northern Thailand and a contemporary holy man, *Khruba* Theuang. In doing so, I argue for an understanding of religious charisma that is embedded within the context of cultural revitalization and a recognition of the distinct forms of Buddhism being produced within the margins of the state.

Keywords: Dara'ang, Palaung, Buddhism, Thailand, monks, charisma

Résumé : Les Dara'ang de Thaïlande pratiquent une forme de bouddhisme Theravada similaire à ce que l'on trouve chez plusieurs populations de langue tai dans la région du haut Mékong. Une caractéristique de cette tradition bouddhiste régionale est la croyance en des *ton bun* (personnes de mérite), des saints hommes qui sont renommés pour leurs pouvoirs miraculeux. Dans cet article, je m'intéresse aux rapports entre les Dara'ang du nord de la Thaïlande et un saint homme contemporain, *Khruba* Theuang. En ce faisant, je plaide pour la compréhension du charisme religieux qui se trouve enchâssé dans le contexte de revitalisation culturelle et pour une reconnaissance des diverses formes de bouddhisme produites à l'intérieur des marges de l'État.

Mots-clés : Dara'ang, Palaung, bouddhisme, Thaïlande, moines, charisme

Introduction

In this article I examine the relationship between the Dara'ang community of Huai Dam[1] in northern Thailand and a contemporary charismatic monk known as *Khruba* Theuang Natasilo. The *ton bun* (literally source of merit) tradition of northern Thailand, which revolves around holy men reputed to possess miraculous powers, is found in various forms across the Tai speaking Buddhist world (Cohen 2001). In northern Thailand today a network of ton bun monks known by the traditional honorific title "khruba" lead movements to revive the old Buddhist traditions of the region, modelling their mission on the life of Khruba Siwichai (1878-1939 CE). Through my analysis of Dara'ang participation in the movement of Khruba Theuang, I take issue with the characterization of religious charisma as an inherent property of their person. I argue for a more situated understanding of the popularity of khruba monks in the highlands, one that is embedded within the context of cultural revitalization and the distinct religious traditions being produced and reproduced within the margins of modern state Buddhism (Tiyavanich 1997).

Dara'ang in Thailand

The Dara'ang are a highland Mon-Khmer speaking population with a long history of Theravada Buddhism. Better known as Palaung in English, the Dara'ang of northern Thailand refer to themselves as "Dara'ang Re'ng" or "Red Dara'ang," a sub-group identification based upon the colour of skirts worn by Dara'ang Re'ng women. This paper is based on fieldwork conducted in the Dara'ang village of Huai Dam during a nine-month period in 2002-2003 and a fifteen-month period in 2007-2008, as well as interviews and fieldwork undertaken at Khruba Theuang's temple of Wat Den.

The village of Huai Dam sits within the borders of the Chiang Dao Forest Reserve of Chiang Mai province. Like many highland ethnic minority villages, the Dara'ang who

live there have no legal title to their land. They migrated to Thailand from Burma in 1983 to escape the ongoing violence that has marked life in Shan State since Ne Win's military coup.

Dara'ang began migrating from southern Shan State to the Thai-Burmese border in the late 1970s. A community grew on Angkhang Mountain, close to the site of the King's Royal Project Agricultural Research Centre (Howard and Wattanapun 2001:81). The Dara'ang who were living there were granted permission to settle within Thailand by King Bhumibol Adulyadej (Rama IX) when he visited the area in 1982. Representatives for the Dara'ang met with the king at this time and presented him with seven old Buddha images they had brought with them from Burma and a complete set of Dara'ang women's clothing. After listening to their plight, the king granted the Dara'ang permission to live within the borders of Thailand and gave them THB 5,000 to construct a new Buddhist temple (Deepadung 2009:14). The first Dara'ang village in Thailand was thus established, but the limited land provided (250 *rai*)[2] remained under the control of the King's Royal Project. Later arrivals were unable to clear new land for farming and sought wage work in Chiang Mai province's large agricultural sector.

The families who established Huai Dam village arrived too late to be allocated land on Angkhang Mountain and as a result migrated to Chiang Dao district to pick tea for a local Chinese businessman. After one year they had saved enough money to establish their own village. They purchased a plot of land from a local Tai Yuan (also known as Northern Thai or Khon Muang) man and several fields from Karen farmers who had been living in the area for decades. Since then the village of Huai Dam has grown to 56 households with a population of 279 individuals (in 2008).

The head of Huai Dam, an elderly man named A-Tun, recounts the following story about the founding of the village. It refers to a time when the community was picking tea in Chiang Dao district and searching for new land to settle:

> The *da bu meung* [the village spirit specialist] and I were returning from Chiang Dao market where we were buying supplies. It was getting late and when we passed the cave temple the novice monk residing there asked us if we would like to come in and make merit. So we stayed the night in the cave meditating and chanting. In the early morning we were woken by a loud cracking sound. The river that was just outside the cave, which had been dry for many years, was full of water! It had not rained that night.

The river feeds a number of Dara'ang fields today and for many years served as the village's primary source of water for drinking, cooking and cleaning. The story is frequently told in the village to demonstrate how the land welcomed the Dara'ang because of the "merit" the group possessed. Merit (*agieu* in Dara'ang,[3] *kusala/puñña* in Pali) is the spiritual force that determines the condition of a person's future incarnations. An individual who undertakes good deeds with good intentions accumulates merit, while misbehavior and ill intentions produce "de-merit" (*hmap* in Dara'ang, *papa* in Pali). Making merit leads to a better rebirth, as a rich man or a celestial being in heaven (*meung daeng* in Dara'ang, literally kingdom/land in the sky), while de-merit results in future lives spent as an animal, ghost (*karnam* in Dara'ang), or a tortured being in hell (*meung krum* in Dara'ang, literally kingdom/land below). As can be seen from the story above, merit also operates within this life as a source of power or potency (Tannenbaum 1995; Terwiel 1994). The flowing river was taken to be a highly auspicious sign. "The previous occupants did not have enough merit," explains A-Tun, "we Dara'ang are strict Buddhists, and the land welcomed us because of that."

It is unclear when the Dara'ang first adopted Buddhism, but today the large majority of Dara'ang communities in Burma, China and Thailand are self-identified Theravada Buddhists. Milne (1924:312) recounts that the Palaung of Tawngpeng believed Theravada Buddhism was first introduced by the Burmese King Bodawpaya (r. 1782-1819 CE) in 1782, but suggests that they likely had some knowledge of Buddhism prior to this date given its presence in the nearby Shan states of North Hsenwi and Möng Mit since the sixteenth century. Du provides a similar timeframe, writing that "according to the historical record of imperial China, Theravada Buddhism was introduced to the De'ang [Palaung peoples of China] before the late eighteenth century" (2007:136). Given the heterogeneity of Buddhism in the hills, the distribution of Dara'ang sub-groups, and the earlier presence of distinct forms of Buddhism in close proximity to Dara'ang villages, it is likely that different streams of practice influenced Dara'ang Buddhism from its earliest days.[4] Communities in southern and eastern Shan State, including those who migrated to Thailand, are most influenced by the Tai Khoen style of Buddhism.

A Dara'ang myth frequently recounted in Thailand tells how the Dara'ang originally learned their Buddhism from the Tai. The following story was told by the lay Buddhist leader of Huai Dam and illustrates well the interconnections between Buddhism, ethnicity and the state.

During the time of the Buddha, the Buddha himself came to this region. Did you know this? He came, and all people from the different groups wanted to pay their respects and give him offerings: Tai, Dara'ang, Lahu, Bamar and all the others. Each group wanted to be the one to offer the Buddha food for his midday meal, but there were so many people that all could not give him offerings. The ones who were able to give their offerings first were the Tai people. After they had presented the Buddha with his midday meal the Buddha blessed them and said, "You shall be rulers over your lands." Since that time the Tai people have been rulers over their own state and have lived in peace.

The next people to arrive were the Bamar, but they were too late. The Buddha had already eaten his midday meal. The Bamar nevertheless asked the Buddha for a blessing, and he gave it to them, saying, "You shall be rulers over your lands." As the Bamar left they threw the food that they had brought to the Buddha onto the ground. All the animals that had gathered around, the dogs, the pigs, the chickens, they started to fight over the food. Ever since then the Bamar have fought for power in their country and have never known peace.

The next to arrive were the Dara'ang, but they were too late. The Buddha had already departed. So the Dara'ang asked the Tai if they could see the temple where they had offered the midday meal to the Buddha. They entered the temple and examined all the ritual objects used to pay respect to the Buddha. They learned the proper way to honour the Buddha. Since that time the Dara'ang people have continued to pay respect to the Buddha in the same way that was taught to the Tai. However, because they did not receive the blessing from the Buddha they do not have their own state. This is why the Dara'ang have a temple while other highlanders do not.

The Lahu were the last to arrive. When they found that the Buddha had already left, they were upset. They asked the Tai people which way the Buddha had gone. They quickly headed off after the Buddha and did not stop to look at the temple. All they found was the tree under which the Buddha had stopped to rest. They presented their offerings to this tree. That is why the Lahu do not have a temple and always have a large tree at their village ceremonies.

Stories that connect the Buddha with a particular location, one he is said to have visited as the Buddha or a place where he lived during a previous life, are common among Theravada Buddhist populations of Southeast Asia. In Tai this genre of legend is known as *tamnan* and copies of tamnan texts are commonly found among the collected scriptures of temples. The "Buddhological geography" presented within these texts is also depicted in the paintings that adorn the interior walls of older temples where, in addition to their pedagogical and decorative functions, they perform a similar role in establishing an association between the Buddha and a particular place (Winichakul 2004:22).

Stories that connect a particular ethnic group with the life of the Buddha are not as common. Rather than presenting a "Buddhalogical geography," the narrative above represents a kind of "Buddhalogical ethnology" dealing with questions of ethnicity, religion and power. The Dara'ang are connected to the Tai through Buddhism, but do not receive the blessing of the Buddha and therefore do not acquire sovereignty over their own land. They are nevertheless closer to the source of state power (Buddhism) than other highlanders (such as the Lahu) because of their knowledge of proper Buddhist practice.

Dara'ang elders in Huai Dam village cite their close connection with Tai temples in Burma as one reason they chose to migrate to Thailand. Many had been ordained in Tai Khoen or Tai Yai temples when they were young and had some knowledge of Tai languages. "We decided to move to Thailand because we are Dara'ang-Tai," explains A-Tun. But life in Thailand has not been easy despite the fact they share a common religious tradition with Tai peoples. Like many highland villages, Huai Dam is located on state land and villagers face the constant threat of arrest and relocation. In 1989, police and forestry officials conducted a raid on the village, arresting every adult male living in Huai Dam and the surrounding villages on charges of forestry encroachment. The men spent three years, six months and eighteen days in prison. Those left behind (women, children and the elderly) were ordered by the Royal Forestry Department (RFD) to leave their homes, but having nowhere to go they remained, doing their best to feed their families as the RFD planted teak trees over fields once used to grow rice, corn and beans.

After the men were released from prison, the community struggled to revitalize itself. They erected a new territorial spirit house (known as a *ho tsao meung* in Dara'ang, or "palace of the lord of the territory"), within the newly created teak plantation and a new hall for Buddhist ceremonies constructed out of split bamboo. They also became involved with a Buddhist revivalist movement led by a monk named Khruba Theuang, a holy man renowned for his miraculous powers and his mission to revitalize the old Buddhist traditions of northern Thailand.

Buddhist Distinctions

There is ambiguity within the literature on Theravada Buddhism regarding the way distinctions are to be drawn between various groups of practitioners within Southeast Asia. Thailand has a state Buddhist bureaucracy centred in Bangkok that officially includes all Theravada Buddhist temples and monks within the country. Modern state Buddhism is rooted within the Buddhist tradition of Bangkok, yet for centuries there has existed other regional forms of practice that differed from Bangkok Buddhism in terms of rituals, chanting styles, religious scripts and ecclesiastical organization. In the region that is today northern Thailand, a form of Buddhism developed within the Tai Yuan Kingdom of Lan Na and spread across parts of northeastern Burma, northwestern Laos and southern Yunnan province of China. Scholars typically refer to this form of Buddhism as "Yuan Buddhism" (Cohen 2001; Keyes 1971), a term initially used by the Christian missionary William Dodd (1923) in his posthumously published book *The Tai Race.* Following Dodd, many scholars look to the use of the Tham or Dhamma script to delineate the borders of the Yuan school of Buddhism (Penth 2000; Veidlinger 2006). However, this ethnic label suggests a homogeneity that masks the cultural diversity of groups who used or continue to use texts written in the Tham script. As Iijima (2009) points out, the label "Yuan Buddhism" also signifies a group of Buddhists who imagine themselves part of the same religious community, though there is no evidence that this perception ever existed.

Historically, the primary distinctions within Theravada Buddhism were ordination lineages and these continue to be important referents for divisions within Thailand today (Skilling 2007:182-183). It was ordination lineages that the government attempted to control with the introduction of the *Sangha Administration Act* of 1902, which incorporated the northern temples into the national Buddhist bureaucracy of Siam (Keyes 1971). While there has not been a sustained effort to suppress the northern style of Buddhism, Bangkok Buddhism has nevertheless permeated into many northern temples as young monks travel to urban centres to be educated, returning to their village with knowledge of ceremonies performed in the Bangkok style and books written in the Central Thai script.[5]

The Dara'ang of Thailand consider their Buddhism to be similar to that practiced by other Theravada Buddhists, including themselves within the larger imagined community of Buddhists, yet distinct from the style propagated by the Thai state. In particular, they point to their use of texts written in the Tham script and the rituals proscribed in these texts. Dara'ang in Thailand use a variety of religious texts written in the Tham script, including Tai language texts (Tai Khoen and Tai Yuan), Pali texts, and Dara'ang texts, in addition to less commonly used ones written in Shan and Central Thai scripts.[6] Older men also use the Tham script for writing secular documents in Dara'ang. There has been a decline in the use of this script in northern Thailand since the introduction of state run compulsory education which uses the Central Thai script, and many Shan communities in Burma today use one of several Shan scripts or the Burmese script. In Kengtung, however, and its surrounding areas, the Tham script continues to be used within Buddhist monasteries and is common in Dara'ang temples of southern and eastern Shan State (Karlsson 2009:77).

The lay Buddhist leader of Huai Dam, A-Mon, age 53, explains that in Burma distinctions between practice often developed along textual lines, as proper ritual form was proscribed within the texts. Many older men in Huai Dam (approximately 29 per cent of men over 40) can read the Tham script, having spent time in Tai monasteries in Burma, and young Dara'ang monks who reside in the Dara'ang monasteries of Thailand are expected to learn to read the script. Reflecting upon different styles, A-Mon notes that although he would not identify Dara'ang Buddhism as something fundamentally different from other Buddhist traditions, there are important distinctions, such as rituals and beliefs that deal with spirits, creating forms of religious practice that are distinctly Dara'ang.

Khruba and the Dara'ang

The Tai Khoen style of Buddhism is closely related to the tradition found amongst the Tai Yuan of northern Thailand (Karlsson 2009). In Thailand, where the Bangkok form of Buddhism has increasingly penetrated the northern temples, monks known as khruba attempt to revitalize the older form of Buddhism associated with the region amongst the local lay and monastic population. *Khruba* literally means "esteemed teacher" and is an old honorific title local communities award to respected monks. There exists a type of khruba monk, however, who are renowned for possessing miraculous powers (Cohen 2001; Keyes 1971, 1982; Tambiah 1984:306). They are ton bun, or "sources of merit," and lead what Buadaeng (née Srisiwat) (1988) calls "khruba monk movements."

While there is a long tradition of ton bun in northern Thailand and the Tai speaking regions of northeastern Burma, northwestern Laos and southern Yunnan province of China, contemporary khruba monks in northern Thailand are distinct insofar as their activities are directed towards reviving the regional Buddhist traditions that have waned since the introduction of modern

state Buddhism. These traditions include the use of the Tham script, the construction of religious monuments that reflect the architectural traditions of the region, the chanting of Pali according to the "old style" and the performance of rituals and ceremonies that are distinct from those propagated by modern state Buddhism. Contemporary khruba monks are linked together in a network of relationships, visually displayed on posters and amulets, outlined in pamphlets and even recounted in songs sung by their followers. Their festivals and construction projects attract thousands of people and their photos can be seen throughout homes and businesses across the region.

One khruba monk quite active in the Dara'ang communities of Thailand is Khruba Theuang Natasilo. Theuang was born on February 20, 1965 in Hua Dong village of Sarapi district, Chiang Mai province. His family name was Noreaung – "Natasilo" being the Pali name Theuang was given after his ordination. He was the third born out of four children. His father, Mun, and his mother, Na, were ethnically Tai Yuan, though like most khruba his followers come from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. He is widely recognized as a ton bun and says he follows the tradition of Khruba Siwichai. In fact, many of his followers claim that he is the reincarnation of Khruba Siwichai himself, noting that he was born on the same day of the year Khruba Siwichai passed away. He was ordained as a monk at Wat Hua Dong on May 26, 1986 and took up the position of abbot at Wat Den (temple) in Den Village of Mae Taeng district, Chiang Mai province, on March 9, 1988. He has resided there ever since, notwithstanding his frequent peregrinations throughout the region of northern Thailand and Burma.

The Dara'ang of Huai Dam first encountered Khruba Theuang in 1994 when he was engaged in construction projects nearby the village. While restoring a temple in the nearby Tai Yuan village of Thung Luk, Khruba Theuang visited the site of a Buddha footprint located on a mountain top less than one kilometre away from the village of Huai Dam. While there, the Dara'ang of Huai Dam heard a ton bun was in the area and went to the site to make merit with him. Several men who met Khruba Theuang at this time report miracles being performed during his visit to the summit, including making his staff stick into solid rock, demonstrations of his telepathic abilities and creating food from the earth.

Khruba Theuang decided to construct a *chedi* (reliquary) over the imprint of the Buddha's foot. The Dara'ang of Huai Dam offered their labour for the project, carrying bricks and mortar to the summit and helping to build a stone stairway up the mountainside. When the reliquary was complete, Khruba Theuang interred a clipping of his hair within, infusing the monument with sacred power (see Strong 2004:72-94). Dara'ang today continue to visit the site frequently to make merit individually and hold larger communal ceremonies there several times a year, including an annual rain calling rite conducted at the end of the hot season.

After the completion of the reliquary, Khruba Theuang invited the Dara'ang to participate in temple festivals regularly held at Wat Den. He also asked the men of Huai Dam if they would help with the restoration of his temple complex. "It was full of dogs, everywhere, and the buildings were rotting," explains A-Ong, a 42-year-old Dara'ang man who worked on the renovations. Photos taken by Khruba Theuang during this time show that the temple structures were decrepit with age and the grounds were not well kept. "We would go to Wat Den during the cold season, when there was not much work in the fields. Some people still go, but mostly it is Karen who work on the temple now" (A-Ong). Trucks sent by Khruba Theuang would pick up workers in the village and transport them to the temple grounds where they would be fed and housed while they laboured. Financing for the project came primarily from Tai donors, including wealthy patrons from Bangkok, while Dara'ang men from Chiang Dao and local Tai Yuan men from Den Village provided labour free of charge.

Today, the temple complex of Wat Den has been built up to the point where it has become a tourist attraction for foreigners and Thais alike. The once dilapidated image hall has been transformed into a richly ornate building, complete with bas-relief artwork along the outer wall depicting Khruba Theuang as a young monk. Khruba Theuang has added several large, open air pavilions, a new ordination hall, a set of bathrooms to accommodate festival attendees, a large monastic residence for visiting monks, a dining room, a new drum tower, a building for storing rice, a new spirit house for the guardian spirit of Den Village and a new residence for himself, much of it built with labour provided by Dara'ang and members of other highland ethnic minority communities. A large wall surrounds the temple grounds and giant stone mythical lions tower over visitors as they arrive.

According to Khruba Theuang, the full name of the temple is Wat Den Sari Sri Muang Gaen Daen Singhagutara Nakon. The name reflects a legend Khruba Theuang tells about the temple that connects the site back to the time of the Buddha. Once long ago the Buddha was born as a lion in the kingdom of Singhagutara Nakon, which stood on the place where Wat Den is now located. The word *singh* is an Indic term for lion, and statues of stylized and lifelike lions are prominently displayed around

the temple grounds. Khruba Theuang says many years later another city called Gaen Nakon was built on top of the same location and the Buddha visited this city as well. Like the tamnan stories found throughout Theravada Buddhist Southeast Asia, this story connects the Buddha to the sacred site of the temple.

Khruba Theuang has done more to establish Wat Den within the sacred geography of regional Buddhist traditions. He has constructed a large reliquary within the temple grounds known as the *Phra That Chedi Sip-Song Rasi* (Reliquary of the Twelve Zodiac Signs). The Phra That Chedi Sip-Song Rasi is a collection of twelve reliquaries, each representing one of the twelve sacred chedis of the old Lan Na world. While the pilgrimage practices connected with these sites are no longer widely known amongst the laity, in the past it was considered meritorious for a person to make a pilgrimage to the reliquary associated with the year of one's birth (Keyes 1975:72). One reason for constructing the Phra That Chedi Sip-Song Rasi, according to Khruba Theuang, is to compress the old pilgrimage sites into one place in order to revive the traditions associated with these dispersed locations.

While the Dara'ang communities of Thailand do not identify with the old kingdom of Lan Na, they share a religious worldview that includes a belief in ton bun holy men. They were therefore pleased when Khruba Theuang invited the community to send young boys to ordain as novices at his temple. The lack of opportunities for ordination was a problem for the village, as it remains a cultural ideal amongst the Dara'ang that a man should spend some time as a novice or monk. No Dara'ang village in Thailand, however, maintains an ordination hall. While men in Burma typically ordained within Tai temples, the strict regulation of ordinations by the state prevented Dara'ang men from ordaining in Thailand because, until quite recently, the large majority of Dara'ang lacked proper identification papers (this remains a problem today, and many elderly monks, including the abbot of Wat Huai Dam, are not recognized as legal monks).

Five boys from Huai Dam ordained as novices at Wat Den in the late 1990s and remained at the temple for five years. At the time they were the only novices who were living at the temple. While the grounds of Wat Den are quite large (able to accommodate thousands of guests during festivals and rooms for over a hundred monks), Khruba Theuang is the only full time resident. Monks and novices visit the temple, staying temporarily and helping out with various tasks such as collecting donations from visitors, but there is no permanent monastic community. The Dara'ang consider it a privilege to be invited to ordain there, an offer Khruba Theuang extended to the community of Huai Dam once again in 2008.

Khruba Theuang acts as patron for Buddhism in Huai Dam in other ways. He donated 70,000 baht towards the temple hall currently in use within the village and 16,000 baht towards the construction of a new hall that is being built in a style regarded by the village as traditionally Dara'ang. He provided much of the furnishings for the temple in Huai Dam, including the temple's Buddha image, cushions for monks, fans, trays, candle holders, incense burners and miscellaneous decorations that make up the main altar. Khruba Theuang has also helped finance the construction of temples in other Dara'ang communities of Thailand and has sponsored a number of village festivals. He has also funded non-religious projects for Dara'ang villages, such as a bridge along the dirt road that leads up to Huai Dam.

Khruba Theuang does more than provide material support for Buddhism within the villages; he also encourages the Dara'ang to maintain their distinct religious traditions. According to Khruba Theuang, the Buddhist practices found in Dara'ang villages of Thailand are similar to the style of Lan Na Buddhism, "Buddhism in Huai Dam is performed correctly ... I encourage them to keep their Buddhist practice, not to change them, even when Thai monks tell them to" (interview, March 15, 2008). Because the Dara'ang are framed as a tribal minority, a *chao khao* (hill tribe) population, monks from the *Thammajarik* program and other sectors of the monastic community (such as social worker monks) frequently visit and live within Dara'ang villages with the intention of instructing them on "proper" Buddhist practice.[7] These practices typically reflect the Bangkok style of Buddhism, which the monks learn within the monastic universities. As A-Tun, the village head of Huai Dam, explains, "People come here and tell us to do this and that, but Khruba says not to change our practice. He says our way is the old way, the way closer to that of the Buddha."

Khruba Theuang's praise for Dara'ang Buddhism is not limited to private conversations or interviews. At a *kathin* festival held at Wat Den on November 17, 2007, he explained to the crowd of Tai attendees that "the Burmese way of pronouncing Pali is more correct than that found in Thailand," that it is "similar to the old Lan Na style," and that "the Dara'ang pronounce their Pali properly, unlike most Thai monks." Khruba Theuang frequently chides the Tai of northern Thailand for abandoning the old Lan Na style Buddhist traditions and not being serious about their Buddhist practice. He also encourages his Tai followers to respect the Dara'ang as fellow Buddhists, as they are "unlike most chao khao" and "more like Tais" because of their strict adherence to the Buddhist religion.

The legitimating aspect of the relationship between Khruba Theuang and the Dara'ang operates in both

directions. One feature of a contemporary khruba monk movement is the participation of people from highland ethnic minority backgrounds. According to Buadaeng (2003:267), the ability of khruba to convert non-Buddhists is taken as evidence of their *parami* (perfection), a term some Thai and international scholars see as a Thai concept for "charisma" (Jory 2002). This ability to attract highland ethnic minority peoples also demonstrates that they are the legitimate continuators of the mission of Khruba Siwicha who was known for his ability to mobilize thousands of highland men and women to work on his construction projects, most notably the road leading up Sutep Mountain outside of Chiang Mai city.

Khruba Theuang clearly identifies with this aspect of Khruba Siwichai's life. Every year around Visakha Bucha day he makes a mimetic journey, accompanied by hundreds of Dara'ang and Karen followers dressed in their traditional outfits, up the road to the summit where a famous reliquary on Sutep Mountain is located. While no Dara'ang communities existed near Chiang Mai during the time of Khruba Siwichai, the present day communities perform as highland ethnic minorities, providing legitimacy to the event through their non-Tai ethnic identity.

There is a long history in northern Thailand whereby the indigenous Lua' population played an auspicious role within the rituals of the Tai Yuan people (Hutchinson 1937:169; Turton 2000:25). Dara'ang from Huai Dam and other villages perform a similar function within rituals performed at Wat Den, such as funerals held for prominent Tai disciples of Khruba Theuang. On May 10, 2007 I travelled with a group of Dara'ang from Huai Dam whose presence was requested at such a funeral. The Dara'ang who made the journey had never met the deceased. They were served food and pickled tea, and then invited to take part in the procession to the cremation grounds. Several Dara'ang men in the party helped carry Khruba Theuang on a palanquin, while the women walked behind with the rest of the attendees. As soon as the funeral pyre was lit the Dara'ang headed for home in pickup trucks provided by Khruba Theuang. While the community had migrated to Thailand relatively recently, their presence was considered auspicious due to their chao khao status, which framed them within the ritual context as an indigenous population.

The legitimating function of upland ethnic minority groups is present throughout the movement of Khruba Theuang, from festivals to construction projects. Dara'ang villages do not have much money to donate to his movement, but their presence confirms the connection between Khruba Theuang and the life of Khruba Siwichai. The large amounts of money collected by the temple typically come from donors living in urban areas, such as the northern cities of Chiang Mai, Lampang and Lamphun, where Khruba Siwichai primarily operated, as well as more southerly cities, such as Bangkok. While I was attending Khruba Theuang's annual birthday celebration on February 17, 2008, a large party of business elite from Bangkok arrived in two air-conditioned buses to donate hundreds of thousands of baht to the temple, along with a large marble Buddha statue. The search for more authentic religious figures has led urban Thais to seek out monks situated away from the centres of wealth and power, centres that are perceived as more corrupt and decadent in part due to the number of sexual and financial scandals that have struck the *sangha* (Buddhist monastic community) in recent years (Jackson 1997:82).

Discussion

Previous studies of ton bun holy men tend to treat their charisma as innate properties of their person, noting their reputed miraculous powers, their organizational skills and their ability to serve as a field of merit for their followers (Cohen 2001:237; Hayami 2002:106; Keyes 1971:557; Srisiwat 1988:13-14; Tanabe 1986:198). While anthropologists have long recognized crisis as an important factor within millenarian movements (Keyes 1977; Worsley 1957), a category that includes khruba monk movements (Cohen 2001; Tambiah 1984:306), the attraction of highland ethnic minority peoples to khruba monks is typically ascribed to the power that these holy men embody, a power that resonates with the "animistic" beliefs of highland peoples.[8] In this paper I have attempted to show the situated aspects of Khruba Theuang's charisma in the highlands, how this charisma is embedded within a worldview shared by the Dara'ang, and how he is able to address particular sociocultural needs and desires for his Dara'ang followers. In this section I examine these themes in more detail with regards to the anthropology of charisma and the rationalization of modern state Buddhism in Thailand.

According to Weber, charisma resides in the "specific gifts of the body and spirit" held by "natural leaders" who arise in times of crisis or distress, gifts that "have been believed to be supernatural, not accessible to everybody" (1946:245). This conjunction of leadership and supernatural powers is a prominent feature of modern ton bun movements. Cohen (2001) points out that modern ton bun embody aspects of a *cakkavatti* or *dhammaraja* (sacred Buddhist king) and a Buddhist *bodhisattva* (savior saint), two roles which are imbued with high levels of charisma (Jory 2002). Several features of Khruba Theuang's movement point toward an identification with these ideals, from his richly ornate temple of Wat Den

and his practice of being carried on a palanquin, to his fundraising activities and prolific construction projects, the latter which Tambiah identifies as "quintessential activities of kingship" (1984:304). His followers address him as Khruba *Jao* Theuang, Jao meaning "lord" in Tai, a title that is similarly ascribed to Khruba Bunchum and Khruba Siwichai.

While these two aspects suggest a possible millenarian role for khruba ton bun (bodhisattvas being identified with the future Buddha Metteya), Cohen (2001) argues that such movements are more properly understood as religious revivalist movements. From the perspective of Dara'ang communities in Thailand, this revivalism is not restricted to the construction a Buddhist kingdom based on the sacred geography of Lan Na, but reflects a local desire for social and cultural regeneration. According to Wallace (2003), a religious revivalist movement constitutes a type of revitalization movement that emerges when a group attempts to re-construct their culture rapidly in the face of severe social pressures (see also Corlin 2000; Hinton 1979:91). In his historical study of the Karen of northern Thailand, Renard (1980) suggests that their participation in the movement of Khruba Khao Pi, the white robbed disciple of Khruba Siwichai, during the early part of the twentieth century was the result of a rupture in their relationship with the old royalty of Chiang Mai as the kingdom of Lan Na was incorporated into the state of Siam. The reforms imposed upon the northern principality led to a devaluation in the price of their forest products as new imports flooded into the region, depressing the living conditions of the Karen and leading them to seek relief in the movement of Khruba Khao Pi. The Dara'ang of Thailand experienced similar social dislocation after the migration to Thailand. Dara'ang men and women first encountered Khruba Theuang shortly after the men of Huai Dam were released from prison. The pressure these arrests placed on the village extended well past the time of their release, as a large proportion of the land the village had been using for farming was appropriated by the RFD and transformed into a teak plantation. The problem of land rights and citizenship likewise remained, leaving the future open to more raids from the RFD, especially since many fields which lay to the south of the village were enclosed within the boundaries of a new national park created on August 1, 1989, the same year that the men were arrested.[9]

The revivalist message of Khruba Theuang did not simply resonate with the so-called animistic beliefs of the Dara'ang (such beliefs are widely found amongst different cultural groups in Southeast Asia), but with a local impetus to revitalize Dara'ang communities in the face of rapidly changing social conditions and repeated setbacks in terms of establishing a stable community within Thailand. The relationship between the Dara'ang and Khruba Theuang suggests the need to look beyond the charisma associated with ton bun as an inherent property of their person to the characteristics that make them socially predisposed to address the needs of those who constitute their followers (Bourdieu 1987; Keyes 2002). Looked at in terms of crisis and revitalization, it is less a matter of extraordinary qualities possessed by some persons than of extraordinary situations which position them, due to crisis and cultural frameworks, in such a way that they are able to speak to the needs and desires of their addressees. That the relationship occasionally results in exploitative situations is further indicative of this dynamic, as some charismatic figures are by no means extraordinary in their moral concern for their followers (see Buadaeng 2003:284-287 for a discussion of a controversy surrounding Khruba La and the Karen).

From the standpoint of the Dara'ang participants in the movement of Khruba Theuang, what is being revitalized is not Lan Na Buddhism or Yuan Buddhism but the religious traditions of their own community. Khruba monks and other ton bun exist as religious symbols within Dara'ang cosmology. According to Durkheim, religious symbols do not merely express the sense society has of itself, but helps constitute that sense (Bourdieu 1987:130). This (re)constitution is particularly important in times of crises when the integrity of the group as a group is threatened.

Anthropologists have noted that support for local cultural traditions under threat is an important feature of a khruba monk's popularity amongst upland ethnic minority populations (Hayami 2004:242; Srisiwat 1988:118). Buddhism in these communities represents a process of appropriation and articulation with local beliefs as much as it does the dissemination of a dominant (Tai) ideology (De Certeau 1984; cf. Tapp 2005:65). This appropriation produces distinct forms of religious identification within the margins of the state, distinctions that set communities apart in terms of their style of practice, but which also helps integrate communities into the larger bureaucratic structure of modern state Buddhism (cf. Hayami 2002:106). For Weber (1946), charismatic authority stands in opposition to rational-bureaucratic authority, a dynamic that can be seen in the movement of Khruba Siwichai (Keyes 1971), yet the two ideal types are not necessarily antagonistic. While Weber sees personal charisma as knowing "only inner determination and inner restraint" (1946:246), the personalistic elements of a khruba's charisma are only realized when superimposed upon a formal

set of regulatory practices associated with *dhutanga* (Buddhist asceticism) and *vinaya* (the monastic code) (Tambiah 1984:332). As Khruba Theuang and his associate Khruba Bunchum do not pursue ecclesiastical titles, they do not derive their charisma from their position within the modern state Buddhist hierarchy, but unlike Khruba Siwichai and Khruba Khao Pi, they do not actively resist state regulation (Buadaeng 2003:283). Officially they are registered members of the sangha and comply with the state and sangha law. Their position within the bureaucratic structures of modern state Buddhism even helps harness their charisma to the benefit of the state.[10]

Modern khruba are known for their missionary work amongst highland ethnic minority communities, whose conversion to Buddhism is considered desirable by the Thai state in terms of assimilating ethnic minority groups into the imagined community of Thailand where Buddhism constitutes an important feature of civic religion and national identity (Keyes 1977; Reynolds 1977). While the Dara'ang have a long tradition of Buddhism, Khruba Theuang encourages Dara'ang in Thailand to undergo legal ordinations, counseling re-ordination for senior monks and providing the opportunity for young boys to ordain at his temple in Mae Taeng district. The Buddhist temples he helps construct within remote villages are likewise incorporated into the modern bureaucracy of Thailand's state Buddhism, and frequently serve as meeting halls for visiting government officials and state development agencies. While Khruba Theuang's charismatic appeal depends in part on practicing a form of Buddhism that is perceived as more authentic than that propagated by modern state Buddhism, his activities along the margins help produce and maintain Buddhist identities, networks and structures that help integrate highland communities into the networks which constitute the Thai state.

Conclusion

In recent years Huai Dam has obtained a degree of relative stability thanks to the expansion of citizenship rights by the Thaksin government in 2001 and efforts by the King's Royal Project to develop the Dara'ang villages of Chiang Dao district (Toyota 2005:124). Citizenship status has allowed an increasing number of families to purchase fields outside of the forest reserve area, and educational opportunities have opened up new career paths for some young men and women. It is perhaps therefore not surprising that participation in the movement of Khruba Theuang has declined. The festivals at Wat Den are still popular with Dara'ang communities, but do not attract the mass of Dara'ang participants that the events did years earlier, nor do large numbers of Dara'ang men volunteer their labour for Khruba Theuang's construction projects.

Nevertheless, khruba ton bun continue to find supporters amongst the Dara'ang, particularly those in communities that are less established. In August of 2007, I visited a Dara'ang village in Chiang Rai province that had recently been founded by families who felt their culture was under threat because they were living dispersed amongst various Tai communities in Mae Sai district. I was surprised to find that a young monk named Khruba Noi Ekachai Ariyameti (born in 1984) had established himself in the village for the rain retreat in order to raise funds to construct a new temple. Like other ton bun, Khruba Noi is reputed to possess supernatural powers. He claims that when he was 17 years old he fell ill, died and remained dead for 15 days ("Luckily they didn't inject me with formaldehyde," he joked during our interview). Miraculously, when they were preparing the coffin for burial he came back to life and decided to take up the monastic vocation in light of his experience. Khruba Noi says he follows the tradition of Khruba Siwichai and also has connections with Khruba Theuang and Khruba Bunchum, the latter enjoying a large following amongst Dara'ang communities on the Burmese side of the border. It remains to be seen whether or not Khruba Noi's reputation will grow within other Dara'ang communities of Thailand.

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Notes

1 Huai Dam is a pseudonym for a Dara'ang village in Chiang Dao district. Dara'ang personal names that appear in this paper are likewise pseudonyms.

2 1 rai = 1600 square metres.

3 There has not been a great deal of research conducted on Palaung/Dara'ang languages (Janzen 1976; Milne 1921, 1931; Mitani 1977). Following the practice of scholars working in Thailand (Kasisopa 2003; Ostapirat 2009; Rattanapitak 2009), I use the term Dara'ang when identifying vocabulary within this article. Other terms used in reference to the language spoken by the Dara'ang Re'ng might include Southern Palaung, Pale, Silver Palaung and Ruching.

4 Mendelson suggests that, in addition to the state sanctioned traditions, "Shan States provided a refuge for many centuries to sects chased out of Burma proper for 'heretical beliefs'" (1975:233).

5 McDaniel (2008) notes that scholars typically overestimate the impact of the Central Thai ecclesia's impact on the practice of Thai Buddhism. While the *Sangha Adminstration Act of 1902* incorporated the northern temples into a national bureaucracy, many local traditions were left in

place and relatively few monks sat for the state sponsored examinations. Nevertheless, the introduction of compulsory education has led to a decline in the use of the Tham script and the proliferation of Bangkok Buddhist religious material throughout the kingdom has done a great deal to displace traditional northern texts and ritual forms.

6 The extent of the Tham script is not limited to the Dara'ang Re'ng. Texts written in the Tham script can still be found in the Ta-ang (Golden Palaung) monasteries of Namhsan, suggesting a wide dispersal of Tham scriptures throughout the area that today constitutes Shan State (Sai Kham Mong 2004:257).

7 On the *Thammajarik* program, see Keyes (1971) and Platz (2003).

8 Keyes argues that a "superficial understanding of Buddhism" amongst the Karen was largely responsible for their attraction to Khruba Khao Pi (1971:565). Cohen similarly echoes this view, writing that Karen "knowledge of Buddhism and Buddhist doctrine was limited and their devotion appears to have been more skewed towards animistic beliefs in Khruba Khao Pi's personal charismatic powers" (2001:232).

9 On March 22, 1998 a raid was conducted in a nearby village where many men and women from Huai Dam had relatives. In total 56 men were arrested, of whom 26 were Dara'ang. Unlike the arrests of 1989, however, this latest round was met with resistance on behalf of Thai activists who had become more organized in the wake of the 1997 constitution. Academics and NGOs were thus able to help free the Dara'ang men who were arrested in under a year (Sakunee 2001:72).

10 See Taylor (1993) for a detailed study of the co-option of the forest monk tradition of northeastern Thailand by the Thai state.

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Social Embodiments: Prenatal Risk in Postsocialist Germany

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Abstract: Anthropologists have linked bodies to social histories, events, and structures by way of a presence of illness or physical pathology. The social embodiment of risk evident in a hospital in former East Germany at the millennium was conceptually different: women described bodies marked by absences—of pregnancy, employment and feelings of safety. Central to the theoretical concerns of social embodiment in this article are observations of how the pregnant body embodies competing notions of risk. This article shows how notions of prenatal risk can illustrate the ways in which social embodiment can be not only a presence, but can also manifest as reproductive absence, hesitation and ambivalence.

Keywords: social embodiment, prenatal risk, postsocialist, Germany

Résumé : Les anthropologues ont lié les corps à des histoires, des événements et des structures sociales, au travers de la présence de maladies ou de pathologies physiques. L'incarnation sociale du risque, évidente dans un hôpital de l'ancienne Allemagne de l'Est au tournant du millénaire était différente au plan conceptuel dans la manière dont les femmes décrivaient des corps marqués par l'absence – de grossesse, d'emploi et de sentiments de sécurité. Dans cet article, autour des considérations théoriques relatives à l'incarnation sociale, nous apportons des observations sur comment les corps en gestation incarnent des notions de risque en compétition les unes avec les autres. Cet article montre comment des notions de risque prénatal peuvent illustrer des manières par lesquelles l'incarnation sociale peut se constituer comme une présence, mais peut aussi se manifester comme absence, hésitation et ambivalence à l'égard de la reproduction.

Mots-clés : incarnation sociale, risque prénatal, postsocialiste, Allemagne

Introduction

Risks—and death—come into being in social fields. This articles explores the making of social embodiment through perceptions of prenatal risks in the milieu of postsocialist (former East) Germany,[1] as it was made evident and corporeal during fieldwork in a university hospital. Childbirth has long served as an ontological event marking a person's "first risk," but as a result of prenatal diagnostic technologies like ultrasound, the perinatal interval (Weir 2006) has in some societies superseded birth as the first instance where embodied risk (Kavanagh and Bloom 1998:437) is identified and surveilled in routine ways. Prenatal technologies like ultrasound, fluids screenings and electronic fetal monitoring have made the perinatal interval available as a site not only of biomedical oversight and (sometimes) intervention, but also of socialization, projectification, and identity-making (for example Mitchell 2001; Rapp 1999; Taylor 1992, 2008).

The stories women (some with their partners) told about themselves as former East Germans in interviews about their use of prenatal diagnostic technologies show how biomedical and social domains are mutually constitutive. To be pregnant, to be formerly East German and to participate in the social norms of prenatal care in reunified Germany at the millennium was to embody small, everyday actions infused with post-reunification postsocialist sensibilities. Insecurities and doubts about the future were heightened in the 1990s for former East Germans; daily life changed little for most former West Germans. Some former East Germans described the work and family life transitions as "completely the other way around" (Erikson 2005; see also Beck-Gernsheim 1997; Kreyenfeld 2001). The mutually constitutive aspects of meaning-making within and outside of biomedical domains are framed here as forms of social embodiment, constituted through experiences both endogenous and exogenous to women and the prenatal care setting.

Embodiment as a theoretical construct in anthropology has taken many forms, its use aimed most broadly at overcoming the Cartesian mind and body binary theoretically predominant in biomedicine (Csordas 1990, 1994; Jaye 2004; Scheper-Hughes 1994). Embodiment in pregnancy specifically has tended to be treated by social scientists as an analytic through which to explore processes of women's individual subjectivity and sexuality (for example Lupton 1999; Oliver 2010; Young 1990). Psychologists too have taken up embodiment as a theory to think *with* the body. Social embodiment in the psychological literature has focused on bodily states, postures, movements and expressions evident between people within small social interactions (Barsalou et al. 2003; Niedenthal et al. 2005).

In this article I integrate notions of pregnant embodiment with theories of social embodiment *expanded* to incorporate biomedical and geopolitical sociality. Iris Marion Young provides two important touchstones here: (1) pregnant embodiment involves a reconstituted self, a pregnant woman is "decentered, split, or doubled in several ways," "[experiencing] her body as herself and not herself"; and (2) "[p]regnancy does not belong to the woman herself" (Young 1990:160). A social embodiment of pregnancy is both individual and collective. The pregnancy is the woman's *because it is in her body,* but it also occurs within particular social fields that are beyond her, and, in this case, biomedical, geopolitical and historical in nature. The bodily state of pregnancy, I argue, bears meaning both endogenously—originating internally for women from their bodily state—and exogenously—originating externally from social milieus, not as separate or singular trajectories but in ways that are fluid, shifting and overlapping.

In the decade after reunification, the social embodiment of risk—that is, risk that can be taken measure of in the body—manifested in former East Germany as *absences* in reunified German society. Other anthropologists have linked bodies to histories, events, and geopolitical structures, characterized almost exclusively in poor countries as various expressions of structural violence (for example Farmer 2004; Nguyen and Peschard 2003; Scheper-Hughes 1994). In those cases, bodies emblemize a *presence*, however unwelcome, as people's bodies come to literally embody epidemic and infectious disease, derivative of the inequalities, discriminations and violence of everyday life. In this view, bodies are markers of suffering, social and political oppressions, and human rights violations.

The social embodiment of risk in eastern Germany at the millennium is conceptually different in the way that women's bodies were marked by *absence*. A significant decline in the number of children born in former East Germany after reunification—a fertility rate decline of about 1.5 to 0.5 (Kreyenfeld 2003)—resulted because people were anxious about their futures, interviewees told me. Fertility rates in former West Germany remained steady at around 1.5 from 1980-2000 (Statisisches Bundesamt 2001). In former East Germany, there was a notable absence of pregnant women for about a decade after reunification. Social embodiment, in this case, was marked by a temporary exception to previous (and only recently resumed [Goldstein and Kreyenfeld 2010]) patterns of childbearing.

Women's pregnant bodies emblemize meaning for the women themselves but also for and in relation to others. Central to the theoretical concerns of this article are observations of how pregnant bodies embody competing understandings of risk for different groups. In this article, risk is the common analytic, viewed from the standpoint of multiple interlocutors—women, obstetricians, hospital administrators—in an attempt to unpack the social production of risk, and to illustrate how circulating notions of health risk refract with post-reunification anxieties of the broader postsocialist German culture on personal, individual and societal levels.

Ethnographic research for this article spanned a time period, from 1998-2008, within which a significant number of German healthcare reforms transpired. Since German reunification in 1990, government, corporations and doctors (see Giaimo 2002) have exerted influence in the reform of Germany's universal healthcare system. Reform efforts have been complex and are not addressed here. This article is based on one stage of research conducted in two German state-funded university hospitals, one in former East Germany, the other in the former West. The hospital-based research design stage was comparative. This article features the East German data, which was collected primarily in a university hospital in a city of about 100,000 residents. The city, categorized as "core" by OECD, was nonetheless located in a county considered rural (OECD 2007). Many of the pregnant women I met were from surrounding small, rural villages. This stage of research included purposeful sampling and semi-structured interviews with women (71 from former East Germany; 51 of the 71 were at East Hospital[2]) and participant observation of a total of 449 prenatal exams (233 were conducted in the former East German hospital). The interviews were conducted by the author in German and translated into English by the author and research assistants who were Germany-born, German first-language speakers.

Relative Risk: Perceptions of Pregnancy and Postsocialist Life

Several patterns were evidenced in women's responses to interview questions about risk. More than half the women (54 per cent) said that pregnancy was not risky. Beatrice,[3] a 27-year-old government worker, was typical when she said, "[Prenatal care], especially ultrasound, is not so much about finding what's wrong as it's looking to see that everything is developing like it's supposed to." Most women expected prenatal scans to confirm that their pregnancy was "on track"; few expected obstetricians to diagnose problems in *their* case. Further, many women articulated that "doing it right," that is, doing their *Aufgabe* (duty) as pregnant women—for example getting regular prenatal *Kontrolle* (surveillance), and following "doctor's orders"—would likely mean that they would not have any complications, as if prenatal care in and of itself provided totemic protection against complications. A number of women responded to the question "is pregnancy risky?" as follows:

> No. If the child's mother sticks to what she is told and if she can think a little, I don't think it is risky. If she sticks exactly to everything and if she doesn't consume huge amounts of drugs or alcohol or smoke a lot ... if the future mother sticks to the rules and keeps a healthy diet and gets some exercise, nothing should go wrong. [Olina, 30, kitchen worker]

> That depends on how you behave. If everything is okay and you behave the way you are supposed to, it is not risky. But when you do not behave the way you are supposed to, it can become risky. [Corina, 30, ceramic artist]

> It depends. If you behave irresponsibly ... I mean I am a smoker, but I reduced it. I didn't stop immediately, that wouldn't have been possible anyway. I have one glass of alcohol every now and then, but not more ... You have to be responsible ... You have to stop doing certain things ... I cannot understand some people who go to parties and smoke pot and things like that. [Christel, 17, unemployment program trainee]

Most of the women interviewed seemed unaware that the vast majority of pregnant women in Germany are considered to have a *Risikoschwangerschaft* ("at risk" pregnancy). Official statistics at East Hospital (n=1061) the year of my fieldwork, for example, identified 88 per cent of the women giving birth at the hospital as at risk. For the greater *Land* (state or province), the percentage was 75 (n=16010). Yet, the criteria obstetricians used to qualify risk[4] were different from those women used to determine risk for themselves. As a group, pregnant women in the former East shared little of their obstetricians' understandings of risk, which were based in clinical and epidemiological standards. More about obstetricians' perspectives follows in the next section, but I turn now to women's characterizations of risk in the interviews.

TABLE 1
Responses to interview question: "Is pregnancy risky?"

	East Hospital (n=54)	
No, pregnancy is not risky	29	(54%)
Depends/I don't know	17	(31%)
Yes, pregnancy is risky	8	(15%)

My question about pregnancy risk was almost always first understood by the women as *fetal* risk rather than *maternal* risk, even though the question did not specify.

> The risk is for both ... For the child [it includes] influences from the outside which you cannot prevent, like illnesses or radiation exposure ... For me, as a woman, there are very big mental and social pressures if there are financial problems or if the environment is wrong. [Helga, 36, university lecturer]

Probing further in an effort to get women to reveal what they understood and meant by risk, however, often led to a *shift* from talking about the fetus to talking about themselves, often in terms of their "bad behaviour," explained below, and also in terms of eastern Germany sociality. Risks and responsibilities were understood foremost as *behaviours*, concrete and observable. Some women identified risks such as age, early contractions and bleeding, but many more women talked about risks as behaviour they were responsible for, or could be held responsible for if anything was or went wrong. Few eastern German women mentioned genetic factors as risks threatening either their fetuses or themselves. The comment below was typical and evident in many of the interview transcripts:

> I need to lead a healthy lifestyle, not lift anything heavy, get a little exercise, not do anything that would harm the child. To be more considerate of my own body, which I might not do in regular life. [Christiana, 32, unemployed worker]

When I asked women at East Clinic if pregnancy is risky, only 15 per cent (see Table 1) said that it was—a low percentage at a clinic providing care for a wide range of pregnancy types. Women tended to define risk in terms of things they could control such as lifestyle choices like

eating right, getting enough sleep, avoiding stress, alcohol and second-hand smoke:

> I have to keep a healthy diet. I have to go outdoors a lot. I have to eat a lot of fish so that the brain develops ... and I must not sit in a room with twenty smokers. I have to have as few stressy people around me as possible, and sleep a lot. [Ute, 25, factory worker]

> I think the responsibility for the child starts with the first day of pregnancy. That means you have to keep a healthy diet, to get exercise. To do everything that is a good pregnancy so that the child does not experience any risk. [Magda, 26, nurse]

There was a marked difference in the interview data from former East and former West Germany about the issue of risk. Notably, the former East German cohort considered risk in ways that were markedly different from their obstetricians. There was far greater commonality between western German women and their obstetricians about what constituted risk during pregnancy. At West Hospital I found a general acceptance of obstetricians' views of pregnancy risk among women, as measured by an absence of challenges to obstetrical authority. A second and stronger difference also emerged between east and west cohorts as well: the most notable difference was the way that more than half of the women at East Hospital described risk in terms of social risk, such as the risks to childbearing when one is unemployed or one's future is uncertain, as was the case for many East Germans at or after reunification.[5]

Several women answered the question about risk by emphasizing that life itself was risky. Most of these women emphasized how "natural" pregnancy is for women, describing pregnancy as *Natur*, and using German euphemisms for pregnancy like "*in anderen Umständen*" ("simply other circumstances") or "*Sie im Leben gehört*" ("[pregnancy] belongs in life"):[6]

> I think pregnancy is something beautiful, I mean, after all, it's not a disease. You are just in a different condition. I think it's nice. You don't have to fear anything and you don't have to worry. [Christiana, 32, unemployed worker]

> Living is risky ... it's what women are built for. Everything has risks, so I don't think it's particularly risky ... One should think twice about telling a doctor anything [because] they will put you on tablets. They are afraid of everything. They take it too far! [Nicola, 23, unemployed]

One of the women's partners added:

> [Pregnancy is not risky] if you stick to the rules and don't get out of control. Something can happen at any time. You can cross the street, sprain your ankle and fall in the gutter. [Jahn, 28, financial advisor]

For some women, even when grave risk was diagnosed during a prenatal exam and well-explained to the patient by an obstetrician, risk remained imponderable if the patient felt physically asymptomatic or intuited no threat. In an extraordinary interview with Karolin and her partner, Karolin skipped the typical formal German greeting rituals and started talking about her pregnancy the moment she crossed the threshold into the interview room. She spoke so spontaneously on this point that I had to rush to begin to record the interview, so urgent was her need to *tell* me about her experience. Her pregnancy had been an emotional one because one of the early blood tests (Triple Test—a probability test, not definitive) had indicated a chance, she was told, of Down Syndrome. She described her experience of having "the feeling that it is impossible that things are that wrong":

> When we saw the child on the ultrasound, and everything was perfect, how it was lying there, nice and quiet, and now it is supposed to be sick? That's when I thought that, really, nothing could be wrong ... I was told they could not really tell whether there was something wrong ... But about the Triple Test, I still don't quite understand. The doctors were not able to explain it. I heard it from the first doctor who was still in training and he did not know the details. So he sent me to his supervisor, and she explained it to me again, but I still do not get it. It's a blood test that is not very precise. [Karolin, 21, nursing student]

> She was hysterical for three days after, not well at all. That's when we thought, does this test have to be done? [Karolin's partner, Andre, 30, salesman]

An amniocentesis later confirmed that Karolin's fetus did not have Down Syndrome: "After 14 days I had the final results, but until then I had no peace." Karolin was typical of the women who were unsettled by being told there was a problem that she did not register in her body, a case of *un*embodied risk, if you will. Many of the women interviewed expressed a need to *feel* the risk—a physical or mental discomfort—to perceive the risk as real for them.

When describing serious risks that they did *not* feel, women almost uniformly used "they"—as in "they tell me" or "they say"—referring to the obstetricians who had identified the risk, describing the risk in ways

that were external to the intimate experiences of their pregnancies:

> Risky? Well, yes, there are risky pregnancies. They said mine was one because I'm 33 years old and because of ICSI [intracytoplasmic sperm injection—an in vitro fertilization procedure] ... They said mine was a risky pregnancy, but I feel great ... This pregnancy was ideal! No problems ... and now there are only 2 ½ weeks to go [until the due date]! [Renate, 33, saleswoman]

This "they-ing" of risks was a way women "othered" risks. It was different from how many women characterized the behaviour they themselves "owned," like when they confessed to, for example, having had a glass of beer with last night's bratwurst.

Absence as Social Embodiment

My interviews in eastern Germany followed fieldwork in the former West, and one of the most significant departures the eastern cohort made in comparison to their western sisters was eastern women's references during the interview to endogenous and societal risks as integral and necessary components of their pregnancy experiences. There was no interview question that inquired directly about social risk, yet 30 of the 54 (56 per cent) East Hospital women interviewed *spontaneously* mentioned *in the present tense* various aspects of social life that felt risky during pregnancy. The same questions were asked of women in former West Germany prior to fieldwork in the former East, but the western German cohort spoke almost exclusively about risk during pregnancy as biomedical or corporeal risk.

More than half of former East German women saw the eastern German social milieu at the millennium as risky. The number of children per woman in eastern Germany declined precipitously during the 1990s, as many women throughout the former East simply did not have children at all in response to the social uncertainties of reunification. This dip in former East German fertility—sometimes characterized as "the kink" (Kulish 2009)—was noticeable; several interviewees commented on it. Opportunities for university education, vocational training, gainful employment and daycare had been guaranteed in East Germany. The unsettling of these guarantees for East German women was linked to post-reunification life. Several also mentioned newfound post-Fall of the Wall perceptions of menace and violence, as in the quote below:

> Now you have to be afraid. I didn't used to be afraid, for example, when I was out in the streets at eleven at night, alone, even as a little girl. I would never do that today. I would be afraid. That's the price we've paid. [Odette, 32, physician]

Embodied Risk: Screening for Statistical Norms in Real Women's Bodies

As imaging technologies for looking into the human body have become more sophisticated, there has been a shift away from women as the intimate arbiters of their reproductive experiences. Social historian Barbara Duden (1993) writes incisively about the historical trajectory of women's self-knowledge in Germany, and notes that women were once the sole arbiters of fetal "quickening," that moment when a woman reports feeling fetal movement in the uterus for the first time. In the 20th and early 21st centuries, however, social acceptance of the obstetrician as arbiter of women's reproductive experiences is near complete (see Erikson 2007).

This section focuses on obstetricians' understandings of risk, which were a complex mix of clinical, biomedical, epidemiological and statistical norms and knowledge, and which were quite different from women's understandings of risk. For obstetricians, prenatal risk is writ large into everyday practice and every woman's pregnant body. In Germany, prenatal risk is inextricably linked with ultrasound scanning. Pregnant women have on average 11-12 prenatal exams and an ultrasound scan at every exam.

Obstetricians at East Hospital treated the probability of risk as fact as they went about their regular work days, categorizing patient risk in terms of probability based on epidemiological studies. Epidemiological artifacts—like fetal anomalies increasing as maternal age increases, or higher likelihoods of slow fetal growth when pregnant women smoke, or "too much fat" on the back of fetal necks in ultrasound images correlating to a likelihood of Down Syndrome—operated less as possibilities and more often as determinants in the prenatal exam encounter. In everyday practice, epidemiological data became shorthand: anomalies increase with age; size decreases with smoking; neck fat means disability. Competing notions of risk were at work in the prenatal encounter, enlivening the notion that risk is a cultural artifact, not just an epidemiological and clinical fact (Handwerker 1994), but some notions of risk were made by people—the obstetricians—who were deemed more knowledgeable and powerful by the larger society.

One of the first observable differences between women's experiences and obstetricians' experiences of risk and prenatal ultrasound occurred almost every time they looked simultaneously at the ultrasound image on the monitor. The women were looking for their children

and the obstetricians were looking for clinically defined pathologies. Time and again, I witnessed the disconnect between what obstetricians were pointing out on ultrasound images and what women later told me they saw when they looked at the very same image. Visualizing the fetus with ultrasound was not enough for most women to share obstetricians' population health-based conceptualizations of risk to them or their future children.

When I asked the obstetricians at both East and West Hospitals about the disconnect three things became clear: (1) most obstetricians expected patients to already understand how population health statistics work, that is, how habits like smoking are linked to diseases like cancer across a population of thousands of people to produce "standard humans" (Epstein 2009); (2) they expected patients to be able to translate statistical risks to their own embodied experiences; (3) obstetricians generally assumed that once patients had had population health statistics explained and mapped onto ultrasound images of their fetuses, the education was complete and the patients would share the obstetrician's population health perspective posthaste. Except, as I have shown in the earlier section, they did not. This disconnect was not neutral in East Hospital, as in other places. As Kaufert and O'Neil (1993) have also shown, when lay, epidemiological, and clinical languages of risk do not sync, power differentials do not favour pregnant women's perceptions of risk.

Uncertainties and Ambiguities of Risk

Obstetricians sought out prenatal risk expecting to find it. In fact, that is their job. Every day they worked to identify, isolate and name risk indicators, lest they be considered professionally negligent.[7] Even when obstetricians were self-conscious and articulate with patients about the limitations of identifying risk indicators, as some in East Hospital were, they were required to act as if epidemiological-based risk was real in and of itself. After one prenatal exam, as the patient and her partner exited the exam room, the obstetrician turned to me and reiterated that the fetal skull measurements he had just taken indicated that the baby's head was too large for its gestational age. This is an indication of possible hydrocephalous, he said, which he felt obliged to document. As he entered this new data into the patient's computer record, he said, "but did you see how big both the parents' heads were? This baby is fine!"

At East Hospital,[8] not everyone who received prenatal care was a high risk patient. Several people mentioned to me that if you were friendly with your *Frauenarzt/ärztin* (women's doctor), he or she could say you were experiencing *besondere Beunruhigt* (special disquiet) to gain access to hospital services. At East Hospital, 17 per cent of the women whose prenatal exams I observed listed this indicator as justification for hospital services. Typically, by trading on the network of relationships like those so richly documented in Berdahl (1999), women who preferred going to university hospital obstetricians were able to, even when they were not in need of higher specialty care. Many women told me it was very easy to be referred to the hospital for prenatal care. Several said they asked their Frauenarzt/ärztin to write a letter of referral to the hospital because the obstetrician either did not yet own an ultrasound machine in their practice or because the machine was old and the image resolution was poor. With the hospital's newer, higher-quality, clearer-resolution imaging machines, the baby's first (ultrasound) picture was sure to be a good one. Many Frauenarzt/ärztin obliged. It appeared to go without saying that women could easily get access to better hospital machines (and therefore better, higher resolution images) just for the asking.

Easy access to the better machines, however, sometimes had unexpected results. Better resolution meant, obviously, that the obstetricians could see more. One woman, Uli, 26 years old, pregnant with her first child, was unprepared for what her obstetrician found. She admitted during her exam that she had just wanted a good picture and had easily acquired a letter from her Frauenarzt.He had obligingly written something vague about hospital obstetricians needing to check the fetal heart. During the ultrasound scan, after the hospital obstetrician quickly dismissed any medical concerns about the fetal heart, the obstetrician stopped moving the transducer across her bare abdomen and stared intently at the ultrasound monitor. She honed in what she announced was a "clitoris much larger than normal for gestational age." In that instant, Uli's pregnancy and her female fetus joined the already crowded ranks of high-risk pregnancies, and there they remained for the duration of the pregnancy.

For East Hospital obstetricians as well as for obstetricians elsewhere practicing biomedicine, enlarged fetal female genitalia can indicate life-threatening conditions like congenital adrenal hyperplasia, affecting 1 in 15,000 people (see Saada 2004). The diseases, however, are considered so rare they fall into the orphan disease category, a category of conditions for which there are typically few treatments developed or medical resources devoted. The ambiguity of prenatal genitalia begins with the ultrasound image. Real-time 2-D technology, the level of ultrasound device used for prenatal scans at East Hospital, are grey-scale digitized translations of soundwaves. The machines were new and the resolution was good, but ultrasound

visuals have limitations. Fetal movement during the ultrasound scan, the shadows between small fetal limbs, the amount of amniotic fluid, the skin and fat densities of the pregnant woman are all variables contributing to the ambiguity of determining prenatal risk with ultrasound. Sorting real threats from inconsequential physiologies is the everyday job of the obstetrician, and at East Hospital, they err on the side of identifying risk, rather than not. Statistically, the risk identified—88 per cent of the pregnancies in the year of my fieldwork—far outstrips the actual fetal anomalies present at birth—2.7 per cent in the same year.[9]

East Hospital's categorization of genital ambiguity exclusively as a medical risk speaks to the global ambiguity of prenatal risk in another way, one in keeping with what women interviewed understood as risk *within* complex and multiple social fields, beyond medical designation. In short, genital ambiguity in Germany has social and political meaning. Statistically, chances are far better that Uli's fetus simply has a large clitoris (ISNA 2010). Over the last two decades, intersexuality advocacy around the world has aimed to educate the medical profession and lay public about the variability of clitoral and penis size across human populations. Medical "regulation" of gender—that is, the neonatal surgeries conducted within days of birth to "normalize" genital size and shape both with and without parental consent—has been taken up by advocacy groups in Germany and elsewhere as a human rights issue (Fausto-Sterling 2000; Hird and Germon 2001; Intersexuelle Menschen e.V. 2010). In the context of the East Hospital prenatal exam, the omission of the social field in identification of the newfound risk for Uli's pregnancy was typical.

In sum, from the obstetrician's point of view, pregnancy is foremost embodied risk of the first instance. "At risk" is what a pregnant woman and fetus *are*.[10] This is different than how eastern German women in this research project experienced pregnancy, which was more broadly inclusive of family, employment and security concerns. It turned out, though, obstetricians themselves also experience risk in non-medical ways. As the section below details, an unexpected fetal death illustrated how risk for East Hospital obstetricians as a cohort was also institutional, juridical, and even, by small degrees, nostalgically national.

Risk Business: Managing the Uncertainty of Pregnancy in Transitional Times

"There is some trouble," the midwife said quietly to the obstetrician. Accompanying the midwife was Simone, a 23-years-old two weeks shy of her due date, and her husband. They walked into the prenatal ultrasound exam room on my first day of fieldwork at East Hospital, a Tuesday. Simone made her way over to the exam table, slipped off her shoes, and with her hand underneath her belly, holding it up the way very pregnant women do, she lifted herself from tip-toes up onto the table. In retrospect, it is remarkable that there was not more alarm in the air, not on her face or her husband's or in the manner of the midwife who had walked Simone from *Kreissaal* (Labor and Delivery) to *Ultraschall* (Ultrasound Department). The midwife turned to Dr. T., the obstetrician on duty, "the fetal heart tones aren't showing up. Will you give a look?"

Simone had been to the hospital on Saturday too, three days before, driving the 30 minutes from her home in a picturesque village known for its piano factories and quiet vacation retreats. This was Simone's first baby, and throughout her pregnancy she had seen several doctors, though not because she was experiencing complications. She came from a relatively wealthy family who, I was told, wielded a fair bit of power in their village. She had shuttled from doctor to doctor seeking "the best possible care" with a detectable sense of entitlement uncommon in most of the people I met while working in eastern Germany. When Simone found out she was pregnant, she had first gone to her local Frauenarzt for care, as is the usual first step for prenatal care. But her mother knew a doctor in a small city hospital, and trading on the informal network of relationships in former East Germany, Simone began going to the small city doctor as well, even though she was young and healthy and by all accounts experiencing a low risk pregnancy. On Saturday, Simone had felt more anxious than usual—the baby wasn't moving much, she said. "Pregnancy anxiety" is named in Germany: in West Hospital, the term was *Mütterlicheangst* (motherly anxiety); in East Hospital, the term was besondere Beunruhigt. These terms are more than descriptors of how a woman is feeling. It was also a legitimate diagnostic condition covered by health insurance. Simone did not manifest the risk factors that would have been predictive of fetal disability or death, and her prenatal care record included several mentions of besondere Beunruhigt. Based on my own observations during 233 prenatal exams at East Hospital, some obstetricians included besondere Beunruhigt in patient records with marked degrees of patronization.

The small city hospital doctor had sent Simone to East Hospital because it was considered the best hospital in the region. It was a university research hospital with a reputation based on a centuries-long legacy of high quality care and cutting-edge health research. Since re-unification, the hospital also had the best and newest

diagnostic technology, better in many cases than what was available at comparable hospitals in western Germany. On Saturday, Simone had an ultrasound scan, and her fetus was deemed to be fine. The East Hospital doctor on call Saturday night took a lot of still-images of the fetus, 14 in all. Simone had also been hooked up to an electronic fetal monitoring machine, and from the elastic belt sensors strapped across her belly, fetal heartbeats had appeared fine. Simone was sent home Saturday evening.

On Tuesday morning, Simone was back at East Hospital because she had not felt any fetal movement for over 24 hours. In the exam room, Dr. T. looked for three long minutes. Then he said gravely that he was so sorry but there was no heartbeat. Then he sat completely still, this normally bouncy jovial man, as a wave of deep sadness washed over everyone in the room. So many tears. Simone and her husband sobbed, separately at first, she on the exam table, he standing near one of the ultrasound monitors, face in hands. As Simone curled up on the exam table into a fetal position, her husband went to her and folded himself over her body. Her big belly, still bare and sticky from the ultrasound transducer gel, lay huge beneath their tangle of arms, heavy with a new meaning. In the next moments, the rest of us slipped out of the room, leaving Simone and her husband alone.

Institutional Risk Management

Every morning at 7:00 I joined the East Hospital doctors for *Hörsaal*, referring to both a daily conference and the lecture hall in which it was held. The rest of the hospital had been renovated since reunification, but this room had not. The room looked like it could have hosted Vesalius' anatomy classes with its tiers of old wood chair-desks, stacked steep, focusing attention on the speaker at its deep centre.

Thursday morning after Simone's tragedy, the Hörsaal filled up with white coats, senior doctors, as well as the freshly-minted medical students. I saw Dr. T. conferring quietly with colleagues at the room's lecture centre. Hovering on the front wall high above them was a slide of Simone's baby. Her son lay still before us, huge, about 50 times larger than life. In the picture he was covered with vernix and framed in the slide by Simone's bare legs, the whiteness of her legs made all the more stark by bright smatterings of blood. Cause of death was obvious: the umbilical cord, wrapped around the baby's foot three times, ran diagonally across the torso and up and around the neck. Each time the baby had kicked, the umbilical cord tightened around his neck, acting as a noose in utero.

The discussion amongst the doctors that followed was at first clinical—"...uncommonly long umbilical cord...," "...asphyxiation..."—then the discussion became defensive—"there was nothing that could have been done," "this was a rare occurrence," "we have no control over something like this." The discussion then shifted again and stayed focused on the juridical implications of the case. Simone's mother had reportedly filed a lawsuit. There was, however, a question of jurisdiction; the small city hospital may have been at fault first. The director of obstetrics, a stalwart and gentle man, repeated several times in vain that the hospital's focus needed to be on the woman and her family, not on defending the hospital for a death they could not have prevented. But his comment was largely unacknowledged as tasks were delegated in preparation for a hospital defense. A senior obstetrician strode to the front of the lecture hall, taking loudly and gesturing as he made his way forward. He had reported two days earlier on how good the hospital's infant mortality statistics were. Now he was mobilized, lawyer-like, energetically elaborating at some length on the case East Hospital could make in its defense. Electronic fetal monitoring strips as well as the 14 ultrasound images the physicians had taken on Saturday night would all be used as evidence to prove that East Hospital was not at fault. Many physicians in the Hörsaal were aware of the 1999 landmark "wrongful birth" ruling in Austria (followed three years later by a similar ruling in Germany) that set in motion legal precedents for claims of "wrongful pregnancy," "wrongful life," and "wrongful death" (Brezinka 2000, 2006).[11]

When I saw Dr. T. later that morning, he told me how exasperating he found this case. East Hospital doctors had done "everything right," he said. Simone's mother must have filed the lawsuit out of unbearable grief, he added compassionately. Simone's situation was tragic and terrible, but Simone's had been "a no-risk pregnancy" and, he said with great passion, there was just *no way* the obstetricians could have prevented what happened.

Tragic Paradox: Risk and No-Risk in Postsocialist Germany

Simone too had done "everything right." She had sought and received early and regular prenatal care, replete with lots of ultrasounds, as is the norm in Germany. During her pregnancy, she did not smoke or drink alcohol; she had gained the "right" amount of weight. At 23, she was young and healthy, and physiologically speaking, she was considered at the prime and "least risky" of her reproductive years.

When the fetus of a healthy woman dies in Germany, people assume something has gone terribly wrong and

that something could have been done. Perhaps not (see Enkin 2006). Still, a woman "like Simone" was considered unlikely to experience a problem pregnancy. The paradox of Simone's case is tragic: Simone was not considered at risk, despite the increase in screening, diagnostic testing, and epidemiological indicators that categorized the vast majority of pregnant women in Germany each year as potentially at risk. Simone's case was especially troubling to many obstetricians because, epidemiologically, her baby was not supposed to die.

The physicians on duty Saturday night may have missed whatever brief window of opportunity existed to rescue the fetus when Simone came in complaining that her fetus' movements were "strange and different." There was no evidence that the physicians were medically negligent. Still, on a Saturday night, Simone went first to the obstetrical hospital's Emergency Room, where an experienced obstetrician was likely on call but not present. Talk after Thursday morning's Hörsaal was that two young, relatively inexperienced physicians were on duty that night. They took 14 ultrasound images, but a question quietly circulated about whether or not they would have known what an umbilical cord around the neck looked like in an ultrasound image. In Germany, physicians conduct and interpret ultrasound images; sonographers as a separate class of medical professionals do not exist. Physicians of any specialty can legally conduct ultrasound exams without a single day of ultrasound training (though few do). The question remained however whether an experienced obstetrician would have seen that Simone's fetus was distressed.

Simone's loss affected the hospital administrators and obstetricians in ways that were not only professional but deeply social. The loss brought to the fore insecurities about the quality of eastern Germany's medical care that lay just beneath the veneer of everyday interactions. On the one hand, in East Hospital I witnessed hard-earned and well-deserved pride in the excellent health research and provision of patient care, as well as occasional declarations of unchecked bravado. In my everyday interactions at the hospital, there were many expressions by many different kinds of people—patients, physicians, administrators—of confidence in the hospital system and East German medicine generally as well as regular mention of East Hospital's historical legacy of providing first class medical care, dating back to the 16th century. On the other hand, there were also moments when it was clear that physicians and administrators felt continual pressure to meet or, better yet, exceed West German standards. During a coffee break, when I asked a group of obstetricians why a former West German physician was director of East Hospital's *Frauenklinik* (Women's Hospital) when there were so many qualified former East Germans, the general consensus after lively discussion was that East Hospital, like so many others in eastern Germany, needed a former West German at its head to be taken seriously as a university hospital. During a 2005 visit to East Hospital, I learned that the beloved director of the obstetrical department, a former East German, had just announced he would be stepping down from his position. The talk of the obstetricians and nurses centred on his reasons why: He had lived all of his adult life in East Germany and he simply "couldn't take" any longer the pressures from management to think of healthcare primarily in terms of profits. The mental shifts required to administer the hospital—from "solidarity to profit," they characterized it—were demoralizing to him.

The tensions arising from the threat of a lawsuit, the question of physicians' inexperience and possible error in judgment on Saturday night, and the doubts that more could have been done to prevent Simone's stillbirth played out against a social backdrop of a lingering anxiety that former East Germany had not quite yet arrived. Over the ten years I conducted the larger research project informing this article, concluding in 2008, I continually witnessed actions, events and attitudes that conveyed the sense that eastern Germany remained backward. Oft-quoted exceptions of former East German cities like Dresden, Jena, Leipzig and of course Berlin did not overcome prevailing linguistic chauvinisms that *all* of former East Germany was behind. With the passage of time, these sentiments lessened. But since reunification, there have been and remain marked policies that build East-West inequality into the German medical system, starting with obstetricians working in the former East earning about 80 per cent less than their western German counterparts. Right after reunification, West German domination of reunification processes—some have said colonialization (Stack 1997)—contributed to widely acknowledged competitions and antagonisms between the two Germanys (for example Azharyahu 1997, Boyer 2001), and sometimes resulted in new cult and cultural forms (for example Berdahl 2000). But in medicine, the West's advantage was not subtle. At East Hospital, for example, one of the obstetricians was within months of finishing her Doctor of Philosophy in Medicine degree when the Berlin Wall fell. Her degree was awarded four years later after she re-took coursework originating in former West German universities; her former East German coursework was inadmissible for requirement fulfillment. She described the coursework as virtually identical.

This was the backdrop against which lingering doubts about the death of Simone's baby found traction. On a day-to-day basis, the not-subtle markers of presumptive East German inferiority—for example, less pay, preference for West German-trained heads of hospital and West German medical coursework—were mostly ignored. But events like the death of Simone's baby brought to the surface individual and institutional desperation for an irreproachable medicine in eastern Germany, lest the event be used as proof of ongoing and systemic deficiencies.

Conclusion: Social Embodiment as Constitutive Praxis

In a postsocialist German hospital, we see how varying conceptualizations of risk—personal, clinical, scientific, institutional and geopolitical—make particular kinds of claims about women's pregnancy experiences, naming for women what they are not authorized to name for themselves. In this article, social embodiment has been used to explore the interrelationships between a corporeal condition—in this case pregnancy—with an unsettling of a "state body," as was the case in former East Germany. The upending of the East German social order meant new and differential meanings of family, work and, in this case, risk, were evidenced after German reunification. Risks are historically and culturally constituted phenomenon (Handwerker 1994; Zola 1972), and here we see this manifested in the everyday, ongoing co-habitations of different perceptions of risk, replete with historical referents and social exegeses. Women's endogamous and exogamous understandings of risk co-existed with the operative epidemiological standards used by their obstetricians. The epidemiological construction of risk superseded embodied and social conceptualizations of *what* about being pregnant is risky. Women, though, articulated how pregnancy seemed risky (and not risky) to them nevertheless, and, in so doing, interrupted biomedical constructions of risk so that such constructions were never complete.

In postsocialist Germany, as in other places, risk is presumed during pregnancy; there is no such thing as a no-risk birth. But, as we have seen, prenatal risk does not originate exclusively with the body. Prenatal risks, because they are both corporeal and social, refract; they were not discrete. The social embodiment of prenatal risk can mean that women's bodies reflect for individuals and a wider society biomedically-anticipated threats to bodily maternal and fetal health, but, moreover, can provide insights into collective sentiments of social well-being.

It has been theorized that bodies remember criticism, resistance and delegitimations resulting from political violence (Kleinman and Kleinman 1994). In postsocialist Germany, during the perinatal interval, women likewise registered—with both newfound presences and absences—social criticisms, resistances, and delegitimations resulting this time from a (mostly) peaceful political transition. Women's pregnant bodies became marked in new ways when the whole of Germany made its postsocialist turn, embodying some of the unanticipated social risks of German reunification.

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Notes

1 Throughout the text, capitalized *East* and *West* refer to the two countries before reunification. Lower case *eastern* and *western* refer to the now reunified sections of Germany that fall within former East and West German boundaries.
2 For anonymity and ease of reference, I refer to the hospital in former East Germany as East Hospital and the hospital in former West Germany as West Hospital.
3 All names are pseudonyms.
4 See Stahl 2002 for discussion of German risk indicators.
5 The effects of unemployment and feelings of future uncertainty are also discussed in Erikson 2005.
6 A reviewer kindly and rightly pointed out that these terms are grammatically incorrect. Because they are direct quotes from interviewees, I leave them intact.
7 I have argued elsewhere that this reflects an overproduction of risk (Erikson 2008).
8 This was also true at West Hospital.
9 Some have questioned this well-established practice (Jahn 2002; Stahl and Hundley 2003).
10 As opposed to risk *done* to a person (for example industrial waste) or a person's risky actions (for example drinking alcohol and driving) (Kavanagh and Broom 1998:442).
11 These legal categories have been anticipated in North America and Europe for about a decade. See Macones et al. 1989.

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Can You Love More Than One Person at the Same Time? A Research Report

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Abstract: The contemporary U.S. American model of love is that it is essentially a dyadic bond between two and only two individuals. Out of this bond arises feelings of eroticism, passion, and companionship which somehow merge together to form a unified conceptual whole. Co-existing with this ideal is an alternative model that survives in the popular medium of films that holds out the possibility of simultaneously loving two people at the same time. Our study was designed to explore how individuals caught in a concurrent love bond experience and managed their relationship(s). Implications of our findings are discussed below.

Keywords: dual love, sex differences, U.S. society, polyamour

Résumé : Le modèle nord-américain contemporain de l'amour consiste en un lien essentiellement dyadique entre deux et seulement deux individus. De ce lien émergent des sentiments d'excitation érotique, de passion et de camaraderie qui fusionnent parfois pour former un tout conceptuel unique. À côté de cet idéal, un autre modèle subsiste dans le médium populaire qu'est le cinéma, qui illustre la possibilité d'aimer deux personnes simultanément. Notre étude a été conçue pour explorer comment des individus pris dans des liens d'amour simultanés vivent l'expérience et gèrent leurs relations. Les conséquences de nos conclusions sont exposées ci-dessous.

Mots-clés : amour en double, différences entre les sexes, société états-unienne, polyamour

> "Caught between two lovers and I love them both the same"
>
> —Mary Wells, "Two Lovers," 1962

Introduction

The contemporary U.S. American model of love is that it is essentially a dyadic bond between two and only two individuals. Out of this bond arises feelings of eroticism, passion, and companionship that somehow merge together to form a unified conceptual whole. Co-existing with this ideal is an alternative model that survives, if not thrives, in the popular media of films and literature that holds out the possibility of simultaneously loving two people at the same time. Given that the U.S. American model embraces both romantic passion and companionate love necessary components of an ideal relationship, it is reasonable to assume that some individuals may seek an alternative path to achieve this ideal if they cannot find both in one person.

The idea of a simultaneous or concurrent love is also an emergent philosophical position. This position argues that the greatest love is not a dyadic bond but rather a concurrent love with multiple partners. In support of their position, advocates of concurrent love repeatedly point to the frequency of extramarital love affairs, the worldwide institutionalization of the mistress, and the prevalence of the polygynous family system as all suggesting that humans are not a monogamous species (Barash 2002; Giles 2004). More recently, the appearance of polyamour "marriages" are noted as further evidence of not only the ability but also the willingness of some individuals to enter into and maintain strong concurrent love relationships (Anapol 1997; Kipnis 2000; see overview in Wolfe 2003).

Although novelists and artists have probed some of concurrent love's psychological nuances, psychologists have been remarkably silent in forming research designs to determine how individuals feel about and manage

multiple relationships. Psychologists' reluctance to investigate concurrent love relationships may stem from their deep seated cultural assumption that it is highly improbable for anyone to truly love two people at the same time. For example, Sternberg (1997) notes that a concurrent love may be sustained provided the individuals involved create separate and distinctive narratives of how their love was formed and what it means to the individuals involved. This allows the individual to create different roles for themselves in the relationship as well as for their lovers and so fulfill different desires. Sternberg speculated that these narratives will be hierarchically arranged to help individuals manage their often conflicting emotions arising from competing emotions and resources invested in a concurrent love relationship. Concurring, Sternberg et al. (2003) suggest that if a concurrent love is possible it would seldom be intentional, planned, or expected. Moreover, it would always result in a painful internal conflict.[1]

If passionate or romantic love is organized around emotional exclusivity that includes the reordering of an individual's motivational priorities (Jankowiak 1995; Jankowiak and Ramsey 2000; Jankowiak et al. 2005), what then is the effect of becoming emotionally (as opposed to sexually) involved with more than one person? Secondly, do individuals who insist they are involved in a concurrent love develop a similar level of intimacy with both lovers or do they, albeit tacitly, rank their lovers along a continuum of emotional significance? Finally, how do people involved in a plural love relationship manage potentially troubling issues of loyalty and exclusivity that have disrupted so many love inclusive communes and most contemporary "open marriages"? Are our respondents attempting to achieve the U.S. American cultural model of the ideal love relationship through a mechanism that also violates the mandate that it be dyadic through accessing a model suggested in modern literature and popular media? To this end, our study was designed to understand whether it is possible, as Wells eloquently states in our opening quote and as the popular media and literature suggest, for human beings to be deeply in love the same way with more than one person at the same time.

Methods

We began our study somewhat cautious of the idea that a concurrent love is possible. Initially, we suspected that individuals were bracketing or shifting affectionate, and thus motivational, hierarchies between the two lovers. Thus, what appeared to be co-loves would be in actuality nothing of the sort. Our interview posture was polite and respectful but cautious. We needed to be convinced that individuals were deeply caught up in a simultaneous or concurrent love. To this end, we noted body language, statements or expressions of emotional angst, and the strength of a person's conviction that they held deep-seated affections for two lovers. We found an open interview approach a more productive means for obtaining subjective information. Individuals were remarkably insightful and self-reflective in describing their various experiences of being caught between two lovers. The interview approach, as Arnett notes, is excellent for exploring a topic that has not been studied much and about which not much is known (2006:25). We used excerpts from the interviews to illustrate people's everyday eloquence and thereby demonstrate various thematic patterns common to individuals who experience concurrent love.

Individuals were recruited from a university population that included a sizeable percentage of mature (i.e., over 30-year-old) students. Las Vegas is a very diverse community with most people coming from another state or country. Market research firms have found that Las Vegas is highly representative of mainstream U.S. American society such that if a consumer item is accepted in Las Vegas, it will be accepted in other regions, too.

There were two stages to our study. The first phase was exploratory. Upper division university students were asked if they were ever in a concurrent love situation. Those who affirmed that they had been were invited to participate. If they agreed to participate, they were sent a questionnaire and asked to write about how they met their lovers; each lover's personality; how they managed their concurrent love; and, the anxieties, if any, they felt about their relationships. Lastly, everyone was asked if they remembered their concurrent love experience as satisfying or unsatisfying. Upon the completion of this first phase, our study moved forward to include in-depth, face-to-face interviews that explored these and related questions. The open interview phase enabled us to observe an individual's reaction to our questions which enabled us to ask probing follow-up questions to elicit a richer, more complete explanation of their experiences.

There are 37 students (22 females and 15 males) in the written survey and 27 participants (19 females and eight males) in our face-to-face interview sample. Everyone interviewed was either in college or was a college graduate. Half of our sample included individuals from divorced families, while the other half were from intact homes. At the time of their involvement in concurrent love relationships, the relative age range for men was from their early 20s to late 40s. In contrast, most women were in their late teens or early 20s, with four in their 30s and one in

her 40s. All names used in the study are aliases. The ethnic composition of our sample population is: 46 white (or Anglo), six African-American, and one Chinese-American.

Each participant filled out a baseline form that included age, birthplace, marital status and parents' marital history. Each interview began with asking the person about how they came to be in love with two people at the same time, how they defined love, how they described the state of love felt toward each individual (e.g., passionate or companionship love), and to explain if they experienced an ethical and emotional dilemma while "loving" two different people at the same time. Most people will never experience being in love with two people at the same time. However, based on the percentage of individuals who replied to our query, we estimate that in the U.S. around 25 per cent of the college-educated population has, at one time or another, experienced a concurrent love relationship. Because we wanted to understand the psychological and ethical aspects of the phenomenon we have labelled concurrent love, we did not focus on possible factors that may explain why someone entered into a dual love relationship. Our pilot study was designed to understand how individuals may have experienced being involved within a concurrent love relationship. To this end, everyone was asked to comment on how they tried to emotionally "manage" and ethically balance being in concurrent love relationships.

After only a few interviews, we found individual's accounts of their involvement were remarkably similar to those in the earlier survey sample. By the midpoint of the study, we found recurrent themes and behaviours that cut across gender lines and age cohorts. So powerful was the predictive quality of our analysis that we could often anticipate an individual's comments before they were voiced.

Unlike polyamour relationships where everyone is aware of each other's relationships, the concurrent love relationships we studied are best characterized as a kind of hidden love affair in that the different lovers were initially, and for a long period of time, unaware each other. Our study did not focus on possible factors associated with individuals who stayed in a concurrent love relationship, instead we focused on how individuals defined, reacted to and thus experienced a concurrent love relationship.

Ethnographic Patterns and Themes

In our participants' stories, several themes emerged regarding concurrent love relationships:

1 There are two types of love—one love is a comfort or companionship love, while the other love is a passionate or excited love.
2 Individuals justify their concurrent love by appeals to a cognitive or psychic unity—each person constituted a partial or half sphere but, when combined together, formed a cognitive whole of an ideal love.
3 Their concurrent love was "managed" through bracketing or compartmentalization of their behaviours to such an extent that most individuals adopted a different persona when interacting with each lover.
4 Men and women used similar metaphors and were equally forceful in noting how they were overwhelmed with desire, excitement, anticipation and involvement with being in a concurrent love.
5 Everyone acknowledged that their concurrent love produced a recurrent ethical dilemma that arose, in large part, as a result of their inability to make a choice.
6 There were sex differences: males were more open than females and admitted to enjoying having sexual relationships with two different women; in contrast, women were indifferent to this fact.
7 Regardless of sex, no one was satisfied with being stuck, in the words of a 26-year-old woman, in "my serious and painful dilemma."

We will now discuss each theme in more depth.

Comfort Love and Passionate Love: A Division of Emotional Labour

The research on love repeatedly finds there are two distinct types of love—companionship (sometimes called comfort or attachment love) and passionate or romantic love—and that each has its own hormonal and neurobiological properties (Hatfield and Rapson 1993; Fisher 2006). Passionate love refers to any intense attraction that involves the intrusive thinking about one person in an erotic context, with the expectation that the feeling will endure for some time into the future.

Psychologists found 12 psycho-physiological characteristics often associated with being in passionate love (Fisher 1996, 2003; Harris 1995:86). These are: (1) thinking that the beloved is "unique"; (2) attention paid to the positive qualities of the beloved; (3) contact or thought of the beloved inducing feelings of "exhilaration," "increased energy," "heart pounding," and intense emotional arousal; (4) in adverse times, feeling connected to the beloved is magnified; (5) "intrusive thinking"; (6) feeling possessive and dependent on the beloved; (7) a desire for "union" with the beloved; (8) a strong sense of altruism and concern for the beloved; (9) a re-ordering of priorities to favour the beloved; (10) sexual attraction for the beloved; (11) "emotional union" takes "precedence over sexual desire"; (12) passionate love is generally temporary (i.e., it can "range

from a few days to a few years), but the limited duration is one distinguishing departure from companionship love" (Fisher 1996:416-417).[2]

In contrast, comfort love is a deep affection felt toward "those with whom our lives are deeply intertwined," and involves feelings of deep friendship, empathic understanding and a concern for another's welfare (Hatfield 1988:193-194; Hatfield and Rapson 1993). It is tacitly understood that comfort love, which often starts with a sexual or erotic component, may or may not retain these as a primary feature. This does not mean companionate love is not without its passions. Percy Shelly, the 19th-century poet, thought passion an integral aspect of both loves, albeit romantic love tended to be more physical, while companionate love more spiritual. It also does not mean that passionate love does not shift with the layering of mutual exchanges into companionate love over time. In fact, we found that at times, as suggested by popular media and literature, the shift from passionate to companionate love plays a role in providing a rationale and context for becoming involved in a second relationship that fulfills a desire for passionate love.

Everyone interviewed shared, more or less, Shelly's insight into how they experienced the different loves. Individuals readily acknowledged they were deeply in love with both lovers, albeit differently, and sexually involved with one and occasionally both. Our interviews further revealed each person had a deep companionship love with one person (usually the first lover) and a passionate love (usually the second or newest) with the other. In addition, no one in our sample admitted to being in love with two companionship lovers or two passionate lovers. In all instances, there was a clear-cut separation—one person was the companionship love and the other was the passionate love.

Respondents noted that their companionship lover had the following personality traits: kind, easy going, considerate, giving, committed to family, and, in general, a "good person" who was more of a "stay at home mom or dad." In contrast, the passionate lover was characterized as someone who was bubbly, lively, fun to be with, exciting, well spoken, aloof and mysterious, and as someone with a strong sexual presence. Several people noted, upon reflection, that the passionate lover had a personality that was more equivalent to "a bad boy" or "a bad girl." In many ways, the passionate lover shared many traits associated in literary accounts with a femme fatale or status fatale persona (Jankowiak and Ramsey 2000).

The difference between types of lovers can be seen in the following examples: A 32-year-old woman recalled that "John [her second and more passionate lover] does things for me, he has intensity and unexpectedness to his demeanour I find attractive. Jim [her companionship love] is more down to business. I love him because he loves me and all my kids." A 32-year-old man made a distinction between his lovers. He observed that "one type was sexually powerful and the other was comfortable: she cared about me more and I also thought she understood me more." And, a 27-year-old man acknowledged that "my love for both women was intense but in a very different way."

Another example that illustrates the equally strong but contrasting reasons behind the deep emotional bonds our participants sought to articulate, comes from a 29-year-old woman who admitted that,

> I love both men deeply but for different reasons. I wanted one for emotional support. For example, Dave [her first love] is always there for me. He helped me solve my problems. He always encouraged me in everything I tried to do. On the other hand, I wanted Steve [her second or passionate love] physically. I just wanted him so much. I would have someone to make out with. I was passionately attracted to Steve though I always put more importance on Dave.

Later in the interview she qualified her attachment to Steve by noting, "he made me laugh and I felt good about myself. Dave was never good at that. I was totally in love with Steve (her second love) just after a few days, where it took me a year to fall in love with Dave." She was acutely aware that her concurrent love bonds resulted in the reordering of her priorities. She observed that, "after falling in love with Steve everything about Dave started to annoy me. The only thing that bored me about Steve was he was a flirt; he created anxiety and I could not relax and keep focus on maintaining the relationship." Still, she added, "I always got excited when Dave [her first love] instant-messaged me but with Steve this was not so."

A person's first lover was, overwhelmingly, the comfortable love who was considered to be a good man or woman and a potential father or mother. In short, he or she is a life companion. The second lover is seen as exciting, aloof, mysterious, dangerous and potentially a "bad boy" or "bad girl." For example, a 32-year-old woman acknowledged that she was attracted to her second lover because "there was a secret in him that I wanted to discover, even if it took me 20 years." The second lover was a "hot lover" whom she did not consider worthy of marriage. The very qualities that made the person attractive were also the qualities that made them less attractive as a life partner. For example, a 42-year-old woman noted, "He was a charmer but I didn't look at him as father material.

He knows how to spend quality time with me. I enjoy that." On the other hand, she adds, "Carl [her first love] I love because he truly loves me and all my kids. He saw to it that we were all taken care of no matter what."

No one admitted to falling in love with two people they were dating at the same time. For everyone, concurrent love relationships arose when they were already deeply involved in a relationship or were in the process of ending a relationship at the time they met someone new. Unlike a "typical" extra-marital affair, where the individual involved either returns to their first lover or divorces and moves on with their new-found lover, a concurrent love existed in a state of liminality whereby the individual(s) involved refused to make a choice and give up one lover for another. Instead, there was a concerted effort to maintain an ongoing relationship with both lovers. In the individual's mind they had two different kinds of lovers. In fulfilling different desires with each, they had, in a way, achieved an ideal love combining both passionate and companionate love. For example, a 42-year-old woman who was adamant she loved both men, equally noted, "I had the best of both worlds. Each lover had different qualities and I wanted to combine them together. I thought it possible to love both, but in the end, I found I could not." A 28-year-old woman admitted that, "my new lover gave me more first-hand attention compared to my first lover. He told me he cared about what I did and what I liked." She added, "I was attracted to that attention. I want to possess him completely." But then she adds, "when I was faced with having to leave my first love, a kind man who often tried to help me, I found I could not leave him. I wanted to and yet I could not. It was then that I decided I wanted to combine my lovers together and form a perfect whole. But I failed."

Justifying Concurrent Love: The "Best or Worst of Both Worlds"

Our respondents' struggles to unite both types of love into a unified whole is consistent with the Western folk model of love that regards romantic love and comfort love as constituting two ends of a continuum. Given this folk understanding, there is a level of plausibility in the individual's justification for wanting to keep concurrent loves; they are striving to combine features, albeit with different partners, to create a unified whole. For many, there was, at least in the beginning, little or no contradiction. Everyone acknowledged that both lovers were, in their own way, complementary and thus fit into a unified cognitive scheme that appeared plausible, suitable and livable. In striving to produce a rationale for their ideal lover, respondents took attributes and behaviours they preferred from each and wove them into an imaginary whole. A number of individuals reported, as concurrent love advocates claim, experiencing a deeper, richer and more meaningful satisfaction with their lives because of being involved with multiple lovers. Their satisfaction, however, appears to be relatively brief. Interpersonal conflict arose whenever passionate love shifted to a more comfortable love.

Individuals sought to keep the twin loves separate. This need to keep the cognitive and emotional relationships separate in "tone" accounts, we suspect, for the volatility of interpersonal communications wherein physical and verbal fights erupted with the passionate lover but never the companionship lover. In not wanting to have the passionate love relationship lapse into a more comfortable love, and thus have the two relationships occupy a similar feeling state with overlapping demands, individuals struggled to reinsert some tension and anxiety back into that particular relationship. In the end, their efforts failed.

It is significant that no one who maintained concurrent loves acknowledged being happy, satisfied or nourished emotionally during this time. It speaks loudly to the burdens of departing from a pair-bond relationship organized around emotional exclusivity. For example, a 25-year-old man admitted that "being in love with two women at the same time was one of the most difficult situations I had ever dealt with. The time commitment alone was astonishing. Between two women and my job I didn't have time to relax. Mentally the situation was unbearable." He added, "I felt guilty, especially to Nancy, my first love, but I found Jane so exciting too." He goes on, "Nancy is the woman I want to spend the rest of my life with and Jane is just a strong love passion." Another 27-year-old man acknowledged that, "I liked having multiple sex partners but once it developed into a close relationship I found I was not able to give undivided attention to both lovers. It was very time consuming and emotionally wore me out." Concurring, a 23-year-old woman told us,

> I did not like it when I was in love with both of them. It took up much of my time. I started to get depressed. I felt no peace. I got little psychological satisfaction. I also became anti-social. I decided to break it off and focus on school. I was able to bring my GPA up again. I am happier now than I have ever been in the last couple of years.

Compartmentalization of Behaviour: The Creation of a Dual Persona

Although individuals imagined they had created a unified, albeit complex, love that involved two distinct

personalities, they were acutely aware of the importance of keeping the two lovers separate from one another so as not to engender jealousy, and to more effectively manage boundaries and time commitments to reduce cognitive dissonance. Further, respondents noted that it was imperative not to treat each lover the same. To this end, individuals used different means to bracket each relationship ranging from adopting different personas with each lover, maintaining geographic distance between lovers, deliberately seeking to have completely different experiences so that they would be able to create different, and thus non-competing, narrative histories and, in the case of women, using degrees of sexual intimacy to maintain a tacit ranking in their motivational priorities.

Individuals in our sample, much like some bisexuals in concurrent relationships (Weinberg et al. 1994), tried to manage their relationship through bracketing. Bracketing is a cognitive technique that allows individuals to seek to forget, however momentarily, about their conflicting involvements with more than one individual. For example, a 36-year-old woman admitted that she tried to "mentally zero out the lover I was not with. If a lover called, I totally zeroed in [or focused] on the one who called." She acknowledged that sometimes when she was having sex with one lover, she started to think of the other lover, which she found highly disturbing. Another 23-year-old woman admitted her efforts to create psychological borders often failed. She noted,

> At times nothing worked, I couldn't even function or think straight. I was completely preoccupied; I thought about them all the time but my inability to choose paralyzed me. It resulted in me losing both of them. Now I am alone again.

Other individuals were relatively more successful in maintaining their concurrent love. One way was to create separate histories or narratives of their beginnings and activities. This served as a foundation for establishment of anchoring memories that reinforced their mutual commitment. Anchoring memories are symbolic of a strong bonded relationship (Collins and Gregor 1998). They are, therefore, an important index of the presence or absence of intimacy. We found that, for most people, their anchoring memories served, as they had for Collins and Gregor's monogamous couples, as the most emotionally salient memory of their relationship. If the vitality of a relationship is dependent upon having a distinct historical memory that can reinforce a couple's collective identity, then it is essential for individuals involved in a concurrent love to develop couple memories through engaging in different activities. This is exactly what individuals strived to do. For example, if one lover liked to go dancing, then that individual would not go dancing with the other but rather would go see a movie. If both liked movies, the individual would select action films for one lover, and comedy or horror films for the other. The type of activity was less important than keeping the activities and micro events separate and thus different. Further, several people readily admitted that they took on a different persona with each lover. As one woman admitted, "I truly became a different person when I was with each lover. I wore different clothes, even adjusted my hair style, so I seemed, at least to myself, to become a different person." Another 34-year-old woman noted that she had to be different with each lover. "If not, I would not be able to stay in love with both." What stood out in all of the interviews was that individuals were highly cognizant of why this bracketing was important.

Another way individuals sought to maintain boundaries between two loves was the use of geographic distance. Choosing individuals in different cities by maintaining one relationship and starting another after moving to a different city, allowed some to live with their comfort lover while negotiating a long distance affair with their passionate lover. This enabled them to focus on one lover at a time and not have their momentary prioritization undermined by an unexpected appeal from the other lover. Compartmentalizing enabled the individual to momentarily forget they were involved with someone else. Thus, they strove to create the illusion of a single dyadic bond in line with cultural models. For some, these strategies did reduce conflicts that may have arisen from each lover demanding greater focused attention. Most strove, to borrow a line from an old Crosby, Stills and Nash song, "to love the one you're with." Others adopted a different strategy by momentarily rank ordering their loves: one became their primary lover and the other a secondary lover. These mental acts enabled respondents to "postpone" having to choose between lovers. When the bracketing actions and compartmentalization tactics failed, individuals' ability to keep separate their motivational priorities broke down, resulting in feelings of guilt and deep-seated remorse. For example, a 25-year-old man noted he strove to balance his involvement with two women by talking with both each day. However, he noted that with his first lover, Jamie, he only spoke for five minutes, while with his second, or newest and most passionate lover, Nicole, he always called last and spoke for a long time. When asked why he did not leave Jamie for Nicole, he quickly admitted that,

> As the days went by, the warm fuzzy excited feeling I had for Nicole started to deteriorate and my love towards Jamie started to strengthen. I started missing Jamie intensely, and I called her anytime that I could to talk to her. During the first few weeks of dating Nicole, I would always put Jamie on hold or tell her I would call her back. But after a couple of months, I started to do the opposite, putting Nicole on hold all the time or cancelling dates so I would be able to talk to Jamie on the phone. Things eventually didn't work out between Nicole and me, and the relationship between Jamie and me became stronger than ever. I later broke up with Nicole and continue to this very day dating Jamie and I couldn't be any happier. But the feeling of love that I feel towards Jamie is something of greater magnitude. I don't only love her physically, but I also love her mentally and emotionally. I feel as if I can't be without her or spend another day living, knowing that she isn't okay.

His shift in feelings between passionate and a deeply-felt companionship love is representative of others' life stories.

Commonalities and Differences in the Experience of Concurrent Love

With the exception of value placed on sexual pleasure, there was no significant sex difference in the way men and women described their feelings, dilemmas and uncertainties of being in love with more than one person. We did find that men more than women commented on the importance of sexual passion. A 28-year-old man recalled, "I did love her and the sex was so good too." All eight men's comments are descriptions of passionate love that were always intertwined with an emphasis on heightened sexual satisfaction. In the words of one 37-year-old man currently involved in maintaining concurrent love bonds, "I love my wife, she is kind and loyal and will always be there for me, but with Sue [his new and more passionate love] the sex is so good. I never had it that good. She moans and turns and moves her body in such an 'hmm' way." He adds, "I love both women, they give me different things. It is not just sex, there is deep feeling for Sue too ... all my friends say I should give up Sue because she is no good and is using me and I will miss Cathy [his wife]. I really do not know what to do." His angst is typical of the men interviewed in that it highlights the heightened sexual tension that is encompassed in powerful emotional bonds.

Women's comments on sexual desire, on the other hand, were more diffuse. Emphasis on erotic or sexual aspects of the relationship may or may not be noted and, if so, they were noted in passing. Women were adamant in wanting to discuss their emotional entanglement. For the vast majority, emotional conflict was the primary cornerstone upon which they preferred to organize their memory.

It is notable that women, but not men, used degrees of sexual intimacy as one way to distinguish and rank order, in degrees of relative importance, their two loves. Women indicated that, if they were sexually intimate with one lover, they would not be with the other. A few women viewed sex with both lovers as, in the words of a 22-year-old woman, being "awkward and dirty." No man voiced this concern.

Men's comments revealed a stronger, more emphatic, declaration of the importance of sexual fulfillment and how one woman, usually the newest, was more sexually satisfying. This may reflect a prevalent pattern where men are expected to voice their preference for sexual enjoyment. Men's heightened interest in sexual satisfaction is also consistent with research that finds men more adamant about their need for sexual fulfillment, whereas women tend to blend the sexual into the emotional, so that talking about one implies the other (Baumeister and Tice 2001; Diamond, personal communication 2008). It is important to note that no matter their expressions of the importance of sexual satisfaction, the men we spoke with were willing to struggle, at least for a limited time, with the difficulties attendant with being simultaneously involved with multiple lovers. Further, we found that there was a sex difference in the final choice of lover where our participants felt compelled to choose one or the other. Our results found that 14 out of 41 women ultimately selected, after much anguish, the "good guy," or comfort lover, as their marital or long-term partner; while five out of 23 men, with equal anguish, selected the "good girl" or comfort love. In contrast, 12 men and nine women selected the passionate or newer lover, while 11 respondents (five men, six women) were not able to make a choice and lost both lovers (see Table 1).

Men and women tended to experience excitement and the difficulties of concurrent love more or less the same way. However, as Table 1 reveals, they resolve their cognitive dissonance differently through the choice of which love bond is chosen as primary. Men overwhelmingly placed a high value on passionate love as evident in their choosing that love experience over the more familiar comfort love. In contrast, women showed a preference for the companionate love bond. It is important to note here that none of our respondents had children. We suggest, based on the physiological and neural mechanisms involved in mate selection (Fisher 2002 et al.), that the number of men who selected the companionate love would have been higher if that relationship also involved children.

TABLE 1
Mate Choice Data

	Companionship (Good Guy/Girl)	%	Passionate (Bad Guy/Girl)	%	No Choice	%	*Unknown	%
Men (23)	5	22%	12	52%	5	22%	1	4%
Women (41)	14	34%	9	22%	6	15%	12	29%

*Unknown represents those who, at the time of the survey or interview, had not made a choice or, in a few cases, did not convey whom, if either, they had chosen.

Discussion

The statements quoted above concerning the discomfort of trying to live within a concurrent love are highly representative of our sample. Further support comes from our interviews in which each individual was asked if there were any advantages in being in love with two people simultaneously. Everyone quickly answered "None!" They readily and easily admitted that the experience was "not pleasurable," but something "emotionally stressful." They also acknowledged that their efforts to gain the "best of both worlds," by conceptualizing their lovers into an idealized union, failed. Ironically, attempting to create a unified whole through striving to treat each relationship as separate and thus different served less to unify and more to preserve two discrete love bonds. Ultimately, this served to undermine the very cognitive unification they saw as fulfilling. Further, their continuous efforts to hold onto this ideal had a negative impact. Individuals continuously commented on how "frustrated and confused" they felt, and how "stressed out [they were] all the time," and how simply exhausted they were "with living."

The desire to forge a greater, more unified, love created the worst of both worlds. For example, a 42-year-old woman admitted that she thought "God was punishing me for getting involved with these men." Another woman "thought of suicide." The inability to sustain their commitment to two different relationships that involved different personas proved to be an unstable and untenable situation. The lovers', and we suspect, the individuals' desires for emotional and sexual exclusivity proved too powerful.

Why are these relationships so unstable? What accounts for their fragmentation? From a cultural perspective, is it the absence of cultural scripts to provide a guide and ethical justification for forming plural love relationships? Had such scripts existed, would there have been less guilt and better outcomes? If love is a constructed emotion, there should be little or no universal attributes associated with its presence. It should be completely reshaped into anything a community wants it to be, including the denial of love's very presence. On the other hand, if love is a universal emotion that has its own psychological and endocrinological properties, it would be difficult for a community to completely reshape love according to its local values.

Passionate love, within a relatively short period, evolves into a more subdued, albeit equally profound and comfortable, companionate love. As a result, it seems, at least for most of the participants in our sample, that as soon as an individual is no longer able to keep his or her concurrent loves separate, an acute cognitive dissonance arises and, with it, an immensely psychological and ethical discomfort. When this occurs, a person's guilt is heightened.

In the end, the problematic nature of concurrent love may stem from the dyadic nature of love. Only two individuals can co-exist simultaneously on the continuum and then only if they remain within different domains along that continuum.[3] This raises the question: Would the experience of the individuals in our small sample have been any different if they lived in a community that supported plural or concurrent loves? In spite of hopeful claims and positive assertions, other researchers have shown that concurrent love is inherently fragile, unstable and seldom long-lasting (Gillis 2004; Steinberg et al. 2003). We suspect that, while there may occasionally be successful concurrent love relationships, ethnographic and historical studies repeatedly document that it is not feasible on a larger community scale. For example, Zablocki's (1980) comprehensive sociological research into plural or group love arrangements (in Oneida, Kerista and New Buffalo) found that group love arrangements presented insurmountable difficulties for members. In spite of the claim that plural love is a viable alternative to monogamous love, research has found that sex-inclusive communes and ad hoc individual polyamour bonds never last beyond the lifespan of the founding generation (Berger et al. 1972:244). In fact, in a relatively short time, they are often abandoned in favour of some type of pair bond relationship (Zablocki 1980).

Mormon fundamentalist communities proclaim that the polygamous family is based in a plural love where

everyone should love everyone equally. Research in the community found no evidence that any family had successfully reached this religiously inspired ideal (Jankowiak 1995). Historians have also found little support that the 19th-century Oneida community organized around group or plural love achieved that state or was able to prevent the formation of dyadic love bonds (Foster 1992).

A definitive study on contemporary polyamour lifestyles has yet to be written. To date, most commentary on the polyamour lifestyle has been written by insiders who are also practioners. Leanna Wolfe (Personal communication 2005), an anthropologist who has studied polyamours, admitted in conversation that polyamours, much like the individuals in our study, seem to sustain their complex relationships due, in part, to a division of emotional labour: one person is the passionate lover and the other is the companionship lover. Lisa Diamond's research among long-time polyamours found there was little passion but a lot of comfort (Personal communication 2008). This raises an intriguing possibility: if concurrent love is possible, it will only be among companionship lovers. Clearly, we need a more systematic and in-depth study to understand how individuals manage their plural love bonds as well as the reasons behind the relative success and failure of polyamour marriages. Further, the inability of our respondents to manage these often competing emotions arises out of their need to reorder motivational priorities that are linked to the formation of an exclusive bond. It is clear from the majority of interviews that individuals in concurrent loves also felt intense guilt. This is evidence for the power of culture to influence emotional and cognitive models and resultant scripts. It is also clear from written accounts and interviews that people quickly became overwhelmed by trying to live with competing emotional experiences. The pull of companionship love and the push of passionate love prove to be too powerful for individuals to effectively manage, especially, we suspect, without cultural scripts and strong societal approval and acceptance to support them. In the end, they simply lost control of their love, their lovers and their relationships.

Conclusion

Our research findings have implications for the studies of the anthropology of gender, sex and sexuality that have, at times, over-emphasized the difference between men's and women's attitudes toward love and sexuality. We did find that more men than women expressed greater sexual satisfaction in concurrent love relationships. However, men and women were in strong agreement on the importance of trying to blend the two loves into a unified whole. A salient finding was that in every instance, love was a fundamental value for *both* men and women. Another significant finding is the remarkable similarity in the way men and women voiced their pain and displeasure at being trapped in a concurrent love relationship. Clearly, in the domain of love, men and women are the same.

We did find support for artists and other advocates of concurrent love that humans are capable of deep-seated simultaneous loves. However, concurrent loves seldom last for any significant length of time. Passionate and companionate love have their own neurological, hormonal and cognitive elements that both enable the initiation of concurrent love bonds and undermine efforts to sustain them. Because romantic passion and its sibling, companionate love, have separate endocrinological components, the love states can be distilled and exist separately from one another to a large degree. In time, however, passionate love tends to move toward a more companionship-based, or oxytocin-influenced, love. Whenever that occurs, cognitive dissonance arises as the two lovers that embody these endpoints of the love spectrum can no longer be readily or easily separated or compartmentalized. Because the love experiences now occupy a similar mental category or cognitive geography, dictates of time and emotional commitment create a need to make a choice that the individual, driven by an internal need for both loves, agonizes over making. The blurring of categories and emotional experiences presents a severe challenge to the individual's motivational hierarchy of values that ultimately undermines his or her ability to manage concurrent love relationships. It is the inability to maintain the separate love types that accounts for concurrent love's inherent instability in all but cases of companionate love, though this is also an area that needs more study.

A concurrent love requires a strong dedication to maintain simultaneous, albeit separate, life histories or narratives. For most, these are simply too difficult to sustain. Moreover, the construction of separate personas creates a dual personality that also cannot endure. The very nature of what these individuals hope to achieve fragments their sense of self, in the process, weakening the very foundation of the bond they seek to sustain with another individual. What may have begun as a need to satisfy passion and secure companionship, eventually turns into an acute psychological dilemma that is experienced as intensely dissatisfying and ultimately personally destructive. The inability to resolve the dilemma of merging both types of love into a larger, unified whole underscores the primacy of the dyadic bond that is based more on emotional, rather than sexual, exclusivity. In the end, love's pull toward dyadic exclusiveness conquers all.

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Notes

1 *Psychology Today* in its March-April issue in 2003 had several experts respond to the query "can you be in love with more than one person at the same time?" Their conclusion was that dual or concurrent love can only exist in a state of psychological turmoil and thus it can never be a complete or satisfying experience (Sternberg et al. 2003).

2 Passionate love's emotional state may also be manifested behaviourally as "labile psychophysical responses to the loved person, including exhilaration, euphoria, buoyancy, spiritual feelings, increased energy, sleeplessness, loss of appetite, shyness, awkwardness ... flushing, stammering, gazing, prolonged eye contact, dilated pupils ... accelerated breathing, anxiety ... in the presence of the loved person" (Fisher 1996:32).

3 Moreover, it may explain why no one in our sample acknowledged being simultaneously in love with three, five or more people at the same time. In fact, everyone thought it was absurd that this could ever be possible.

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When Dragon Met Jasmine: Domesticating English Names in Chinese Social Interaction

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Abstract: The acquisition and use of English names in China is usually treated by scholars as evidence of growing Westernization by Chinese speakers, who are forced to acquire these names to successfully converse with foreigners. In this article, I draw on an ethnographic examination of Chinese English names and naming narratives to reveal the indexical connections between names and meanings. Rather than acting as simple indices of Western identities, English names are dynamic signifiers in a complex social field of interactions that are distinctly Chinese. The characteristics of desirable English names borrow from a cultural pragmatics of Chinese naming instead of foreign norms.

Keywords: language, China, names, English, domestication

Résumé : L'acquisition et l'utilisation de noms en anglais par des sinophones sont généralement considérées comme un indice de l'occidentalisation croissante des Chinois, qui sont contraints d'adopter de tels noms pour échanger avec succès avec des étrangers. Dans cet article, je m'appuie sur une étude ethnographique des noms sino-anglais et des histoires associées à ces noms pour montrer les liens indexicaux entre les noms et les significations. Plutôt que de simples marqueurs d'identités occidentales, les noms anglais sont des signifiants dynamiques dans un champ social complexe d'interactions qui sont distinctement chinoises. Les caractéristiques des noms anglais désirables empruntent à une pragmatique culturelle de dénomination chinoise plutôt qu'à des normes étrangères.

Mots-clés : langues, Chine, onomastique, anglais, domestication

Naming Baobao: English Names and Chinese Identities

On a return trip to China in the summer of 2010, I met Susan, an English teacher I had worked with extensively during my original fieldwork in 2005, and her husband for dinner. Both Susan and her husband are Chinese, but like many people of their generation (born in the 1980s after the end of the Cultural Revolution) Susan uses her English name in interactions with foreigners. This preference also extends to many "international" contexts, such as with the other Chinese teachers at the English school where she works. Susan and her husband were excited to introduce me to their one-year-old daughter, Baobao, born since the last time I had visited, with each taking turns holding her while the other ate and recounted the numerous milestones Baobao had reached in her infant development. Because of the limitations of China's one-child policy (Fong 2004; Greenhalgh 2008; White 2006), Chinese parents are characteristically competitive and highly invested in their child's development, noting intellectual and social cues that indicate early progression or advanced understanding. Parenting foregrounds Chinese discourses of individual *sùzhì* (quality), a concept that indexes the moral constitution of the individual, particularly as it is formed in childhood through the investment of the parents in both emotional and financial senses (Anagnost 2004; Fong 2007; Kipnis 2006). After Susan recounted their own investments in Baobao's future (high-quality infant formula as opposed to cheaper brands, her use of a protective radiation gown while using a computer or watching television during pregnancy) she asked me to make one of my own: Baobao, she explained emphatically, needed an English name.

This was not a rare request during my time working in China. As an educated representative of the English-speaking world beyond China's borders, I was often told that I had both the skill and insight necessary to help bestow an English name on a child. Nor is it strange

for parents, whose children might be years away from speaking their own language with any measure of fluency, to seek out English names for those children (or themselves—see also Duthie 2007; Matthews 1996; Tian and Zheng 2003). The English language industry in China is increasingly targeting younger and younger middle-class children with the language-learning mantra *yuè zǎo yuè hǎo yuè* (the earlier the better) to increase the size of the market (see Huang 2011:224; Lam 2005:114-5). With so much at stake in a child's educational future, where an English examination constitutes one fifth of a student's admission score in the all-important university entrance exam, many urban parents feel obligated to enroll their child in the best possible private language institutions with the best possible teachers at the earliest possible age. As in other East Asian nations, such middle-class desires percolate through the broader population, inciting even lower-class urban residents to consume less expensive versions of the same product, or to pool their resources to provide for a single child who will be responsible for pulling up the rest of the family (Kipnis 2011; Park and Abelmann 2004).

In this article, I argue that growing acquisition and use of English names by (and for) Chinese speakers represents an example of linguistic domestication, the importation of non-native speech forms along with an adaptation of those speech forms to conventional ideologies of use. This is a process long recognized in studies of language contact, often under the related terms "appropriation" or "indigenization" (Kramsch and Sullivan 1996; Park and Wee 2008). One drawback to these approaches, however, appears to be a simple equivalence between appropriation and "borrowing," as though the process involved merely trying on a new mask or identity (see for instance Edwards 2006; Li 1997). Such a view assumes that the identity being borrowed already exists in a pure, complete form, circulating as identical copies in cultural discourse. Adopting an ethnographic approach allows us to mine linguistic data for what it can reveal about the metapragmatics of naming, the linguistic ideologies underlying actual contexts of use, which may vary even where the form of the name appears stable and standardized (Rymes 1996; Silverstein 1993). In other words, even though a native English speaker and a Chinese might share the same name (George or Alice, for instance), the exact forms of signification, ideologies of use and means of bestowal will differ quite dramatically. Rather than merely serving as indices for already-constituted foreign identities, I propose that English names represent emerging transnational subjectivities that mediate in a dynamic fashion between local realities and global imaginaries. An English name in China becomes a key component of an emerging international and cosmopolitan identity, one shaped by the demands of China's emerging modernity, which parents hope they, and their child, will be able to claim in the future.

The title of this article refers to two common names —Dragon for boys and Jasmine for girls—that were either given to or chosen by Chinese students in English language classrooms during the period of my research. Below I will describe in more detail how such names are acquired, but in both of these cases conventions of naming and use follow Chinese rather than English norms. Although common in many English-speaking countries, the popularity of Jasmine as a female name in China derives less from its normalization as a Western name and more from its interlingual significance in Chinese (for example *mòli* or jasmine, as in jasmine tea, jasmine flower, and so on).[1] The case of Dragon appears to demonstrate, on the other hand, a complete disregard for English naming conventions in Western countries, and it might be tempting to assume that this name represents a failed or partial mimesis, either in the sense that Chinese students are incapable of choosing an appropriate or proper name (and thus representing a critique of their English fluency and, by extension, their global legitimacy) or that this represents a form of resistance to the hegemonic intrusion of English into Chinese communicative worlds, an accession to the demands of English pragmatic needs but a subversion of the exact norms of use (see Bhabha 1994:85-7; Canagarajah 1999).

I will argue throughout this article, however, that neither of these possibilities is true in this case and that they crucially assume Chinese speakers are attempting to mimic native English pragmatics in the use of names. First, even highly proficient speakers with experience living or studying abroad in English-speaking countries chose unique or Chinese-inflected names such as Dragon (or Sunny, Phoenix, Kitty, Luna, Stone, Thinker and Noodle, to cite some of the many other examples), indicating that their presence in China is not due to some deficit in linguistic knowledge of pragmatic norms. Several scholars have noted the presence of these non-standard or "fanciful" Chinese English names (Li 1997:496-7; Tan 2001:51-2), but to my knowledge none has been able to advance a convincing explanation as to their presence, an omission that is significant considering the typical association between English names and authentic Western identities. Second, as in the case of Susan's attempt to find a name for Baobao, English names are not sites of resistance or anxiety—that would only derive from the notion of *not* having an English name—but are actively sought

out and used by their owners. What I argue instead is that the pragmatics of English naming have been adapted to Chinese contexts of use and are therefore inflected by appropriate Chinese linguistic ideologies that adhere to names, rather than to foreign norms.

The name Baobao itself was only the baby's *xiǎomíng* (small name). Baobao also has a more formal given name and surname combination called the *dàmíng* (big name), which is listed on her birth certificate. This consists of a one character family name derived from the father's lineage in addition to a one- or two-character given name, meaning that, after their combination, Chinese speak of two- or three-character formal names.[2] As opposed to the small name, which is used by family members and may continue as a kind of pet name into adulthood, the formal name represents the public persona of the individual. It is the name through which the world beyond the tight family circle is engaged, carrying the status and position of the holder (see Mauss 1985). Small names are bestowed without a great deal of thought. They are usually two monosyllabic characters (often a single character repeated or a character modified by the adjectival *xiǎo* or *small*) chosen for their "cuteness" or "good sound." In contrast, *qǐmíng*, the process of giving a formal name, requires considerable thought. It is a social process rather than simply a parental responsibility, often achieved through consultation with family members, colleagues or close friends, especially those with a breadth of linguistic knowledge who can construct a name with elegance, poetic allusion and the promise of future fortune. To this end, some parents now also consult fortune-tellers or Daoist priests, who use divination practices based on the astrological information of the parents as well as the date and time of birth to select an appropriately auspicious name that will guide a child to a bright future.[3]

If the small name represents the individual's membership in a household, and the formal name represents that individual's engagement with the public, communal sphere, then the English name is a powerful signifier of a new cosmopolitan, transnational persona. Consequently, English names in China have become important sites for the formulation of new types of citizenship and identity. It is through English names that Chinese imagine themselves partaking and engaging with a global world of international flows of culture and capital, and capable of controlling them rather than being washed away in their wake. These conflicting possibilities are popularly represented through the figures of the rural migrant, wide-eyed and naïve about the ways of the urban environment, so lost about how to live in the world that he cannot secure a stable living; and of the cunning businessman, fashionably dressed, well-versed in the art of cutting deals, manipulating the system and getting what he wants (see Barker and Lindquist 2009). The rural migrant's name is stereotypically simple and unadorned, while the businessman's name is poetic and noble. And it is now the businessman who possesses, as well, an English name that manages his engagements with the world that transcends local space, a world the rural migrant can only imagine or experience vicariously as he haplessly wanders into a foreign retail outlet or walks past a foreign restaurant.[4]

English names are not simply picked out of thin air or haphazardly copied from people in movies, television and other forms of foreign media. Although many English names in China are self-chosen, the process of getting an English name borrows extensively from Chinese cultural norms of qǐmíng. English names are found through familiar processes, and their appropriateness is evaluated through familiar schema. The consultation of the foreigner for the purpose of obtaining a proper English name, for instance, is no less shrouded in mystical agency than that of the fortune-teller in providing for a child's future success. In other words, choosing a proper name demands thought, consideration, and sometimes the intercession of an appropriate expert with esoteric knowledge of a particular intellectual field: in this case, English. By receiving a name from a foreigner, a mediating figure who has access to the cosmopolitan world beyond the local, the name itself is magically invested with some of the same transnational efficacy that the foreigner possesses (see also Rutherford 2003; Taussig 1993). To be given a "good" English name is to reserve a space for the individual in a future social milieu of global significance, one that includes other English-speaking interlocutors who will encounter this person and evaluate his or her right to be there. Not to have an English name would close off the opportunities of this future space, effectively binding the individual to the limitations of the social present.

I begin by examining the form and function of Chinese names, how they are bestowed and how they are used, and what they represent in social interaction in China. I then provide an ethnographic description of related processes and features of English names. Ultimately, my task is to highlight the similarities between these processes. These are often most clearly evident when Chinese English names and naming practices differ significantly from the template they supposedly emulate: foreign names. I will argue that these practices are representative of a larger process of linguistic domestication, whereby foreign languages are adapted to local communicative norms and ideologies. The analysis is based on twelve months of ethnographic fieldwork from January to December

of 2005 in the northeastern Chinese city of Shenyang, with several return trips totaling about six additional months. The research was largely conducted in several private English language schools within the city, although attention was also paid to practices in public schools and universities. My focus was on the dynamics of language acquisition and use, but the role of English names in social interaction was a constant topic of interest, and my essay here draws upon those interviews and discussions. While the phenomenon of English names in China is quite widespread, my observations are particular to this setting and the synchronic moment of China's ongoing modernization.

Chinese Names and Forms of Address

Names in China are no mere referential tokens to a given persona, but active, creative and efficacious semiotic resources. Significant trends in the Western philosophical tradition stemming from Aristotle have tended to imagine names as logical signifiers for given individuals (or objects) with set properties (Bodenhorn and Vom Bruck 2006:5-7). Names become a simple variation on the concept of a noun, maintaining the same logical connection between the word *John* and a person as that between the word *stone* and a piece of rock. In this view, the meaning of names is both given and fixed in the act of naming, which finds clearest expression in the philosophy of John Stuart Mill, who defines a name as "an unmeaning mark which we connect in our minds with the idea of the object" (1911:22). But for this to be true, the idea of the object—the person or thing named—must by necessity already exist in advance and remain constant through time. The work of Saussure, by questioning the very nature of signification, challenged this "nomenclaturist" paradigm. Whereas philosophers such as Mill may have felt that words were really just names for things, Saussure showed that the concepts signified by a given word (or "sound-image" to adopt his terminology) are inherently social, and thus mutable and relational (1966:65-78; Harris 1988). Nonetheless such ideas have remained alive in the popular imagination as a kind of folk ideology. Jane Hill (2008:58-84) has shown how this "baptismal" ideology underlies contemporary racial politics, as proponents of retaining the name of Squaw Mountain in Arizona pointed to the term's "original" meaning (an Algonquian loanword meaning "young woman") in arguing for its inoffensiveness: if a name once meant something, how can it now mean something else? In contrast, Chinese conceptions of naming are premised upon a dynamic which is simultaneously relative, relational and metonymic. I will address each of these factors in turn.

Whereas English's baptismal ideology appears to fix the meaning of a name at the moment of its bestowal, in China, the meaning of names-as-words is relative, tied to the particular contexts of use. Li (1997:490) argues that this stems from an Eastern philosophical tradition, particularly the Confucian notion of *zhèngmíng* (the rectification of names), wherein objects and people are disciplined to conform to the properties of their names.[5] Confucian principles describe a world of shifting properties in which people and objects must be constantly monitored and relations restored if the name is to retain its significance—if the emperor failed to maintain the blessings of heaven, for instance, he was no longer to be considered an emperor. There is, of course, a danger here in essentializing West-East dichotomies as somehow opposing cultural logics; however, my point is that the significance of names proceeds in each case from differing ideologies of language use.

In a study of a rural village near Hong Kong in the late 1970s, Rubie Watson argues that the practices and politics of Chinese naming exhibit an organizational habitus, a logic by which names are acquired and used and which point to underlying ideas and assumptions. Names separated those powerful individuals who were socially connected from those who were dependent and powerless, often literally "nameless" women. "Chinese personal names *do* things: they not only classify and distinguish but have an efficacy in their own right" (Watson 1983:622). More recently, Susan Blum (1997) has considered Chinese names from a perspective informed by linguistic speech-act theory (Austin 1962; Searle 1969), arguing that the way in which names are "performed" for people (through processes of repetition and the affirmation of hierarchy) actually serves to create the relationships being referred to, rather than to simply index pre-existing ones. Some specific examples follow below but Blum notes, for instance, that marriage is not sealed through the verbal action of proclaiming "I do," as in a Western context, but by naming one's spouse's parents in a new and appropriate way (Blum 1997:361). These observations on Chinese names can be summarized as follows: naming incorporates popular ideologies of self and personhood, where the power to name indexes the authority of a person in social affairs; and the relations between people are in many ways enacted (rather than just reflected) through the use of names.

Second, and much more so than in English, Chinese names are relational, varying according to the professional, kin, or status relationships between speaker and addressee. As I noted above, the first names a child

receives are usually their small name and formal name. But as Chinese people progress in life through various status roles in multiple institutional settings, other names may accumulate. The situation is complicated by a proliferation of address forms that combine names and titles.[6] A teacher is nearly always addressed in professional interactions as, for instance, Teacher Guo by students, or a leader as Department Head Zhang by employees, instead of by a more general honorific. Additional names can include nicknames, such as a teacher at one English school who was teasingly known as *Duòduo* (lazy). They can also be pseudo-familial address forms—*gē* (older brother) or *jiě* (older sister)—used to create fictive kin relations, such as the oldest female teacher at the school who was addressed as Elder Sister Wen by her co-workers. Finally, there are relational names that derive from the status differentials of the speaker and listener, as when an older individual with the surname Liu is called Old Liu by someone much younger or of lower social position.

Addressing a person as "elder sister" is not simply an indication of affinity or informality. Rather, doing so both creates and marks an older sister/younger sibling relationship with the person, including attendant rights and responsibilities. I once accompanied an English teacher to the hospital to visit her ailing father, bringing with me a customary gift of fruit. Her father was scheduled for surgery the following day, and several other members of her family were gathered around his hospital bed visiting with him, including two people she introduced to me as her elder sister, who had flown up from the southern city of Shenzhen, and her elder brother. It was only several days later that I learned that "elder brother" was not her brother at all, nor even a relative, but one of her father's former students. He had maintained contact with her father after going to university and frequently visited with him long after graduating and finding a job. Before the surgery, it was he who had volunteered to pay the *hóngbāo* (red envelope), a gift of money to the doctor to ensure his proper care and attention during the operation. In a family with two daughters, it was this former student who had taken on the role of a son by acting in the appropriate way and providing financial support when required. This fictive kinship was created and maintained through address forms, and by taking on this role of "son" he also effectively became my friend's "elder brother."

To cite another example, the one-child policy has created a dearth of siblings among China's youth, as families formed after the policy came into effect in 1979 tend to have only one child.[7] In Shenyang, this has led to a shift in kin semantics as cousins are now referred to by the terms for siblings, a phenomenon that originally caused me some confusion as I could not understand why people growing up under the one-child policy had so many brothers and sisters. But this is not simply a terminological change. Siblings have long played crucial roles as resources in social networks, providing access to additional webs of personal and professional relationships unavailable to a single individual (Hanser 2002; Yan 1996:4). Cousins have become "siblings" not simply in name but because of a shift in the kin-based rights and responsibilities between cousins, who now act much as siblings did before the one-child policy: by finding jobs, investors, tutors, or marriage partners, lending money, dispensing advice, doing business and any of the other myriad conventional responsibilities between close kin. Additionally, in situations of multiple cross-cutting ties that include kin, professional, business and friendship relationships, Santos (2008:539) has shown how the use of kin terms shifts between the literal and the metaphorical. A person addressed as "elder brother" may be both a classificatory elder sibling and a person who has voluntarily taken on an elder sibling role, such that the referent of "elder brother" is conceptually ambiguous. Thus kin terms used as address forms do not simply name people related by blood, but identify the people who act in the capacity that a given relation should.

Finally, unlike English names which are primarily names and not other forms of signifier (although the origins and "meaning" of an English name are often discursively excavated) Chinese names employ, with few exceptions, characters with other denotational states, thus making each name a metonymic signifier for the individual him or herself. Because the components of names do have literal extrapersonal meanings as morphemes, Chinese names are also metacommunicative in the sense that they are a message transmitted to the child and reiterated with each spoken or written instantiation. Among the older generations, given names were often literal statements, such as *Wénxué* (Study culture) or *Bózhì* (Struggle for the future). During the political turmoil of the Cultural Revolution in the 1960s and 1970s, when socialist ideology came to dominate all aspects of Chinese social life, revolutionary names such as *Hóngbīng* (Red soldier), were common. By the late 1970s, shorter one-character names became more fashionable, described as simple and unadorned and more in line with the form of foreign names. Whatever their style or content, however, each name is a message for the child: grow strong, love your country, be beautiful like a flower, and so on.

Two further observations are pertinent at this point in my description of Chinese naming practices. First of all, Chinese children are rarely named *after* another person;

given names are not meant to evoke familial or intergenerational connections, such as naming a child after a grandparent.[8] Rather, Chinese names should ideally be unique, even if they follow common patterns. In practice, of course, even the vast heritage of Chinese characters constitutes a finite resource for naming, and names often draw upon common auspicious characters such as peace, flower, bright, fortune, mountain, moon and so on. Nevertheless, Chinese parents rarely articulate that the name represents another person and generally seek names not already used by close relatives.

The second observation is that most comprehensive studies of Chinese naming assume both a homogenous cultural area and, therefore, common naming practices across Greater China (including Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore and other nodes of the Chinese diaspora). This may be the result of the common practice of taking elite or urban individuals as characteristic of the whole, or, in the case of Chinese scholars, assuming that their own practices are representative of an undifferentiated Chinese culture (see Li 1997). In Shenyang, however, with the presence of long-standing urban households and rural migrants, standard and dialectal language users, striving middle class and neglected underclass individuals, along with the social processes that attempt to maintain the boundaries between these groups, naming is a process fraught with class, status, wealth and other hierarchical distinctions.

Highly prized names ideally represent a level of cultured refinement that sets them off from ordinary, common or low-class names. Most of my informants claimed that they could determine the class origins and educational backgrounds of an individual's parents by deconstructing his or her name, a process that not only requires saying the name but, because most Chinese characters are homophonous with several others, also identifying the characters that constitute it. Whereas low-status names tend to be descriptive—flowers, landscape features (mountain, sea), physical qualities (attractive, bright) and colours—high-status names are more explicitly metaphorical and "indirect." One person explained this difference to me in reference to a hypothetical child the parents hoped would be rich in the future. A low-status name would simply contain the character for *fù* (wealth) or *cái* (riches) and perhaps a descriptor like *dà* (big). But a high-status name would reference wealth more indirectly by using secondary collocations such as the character *róng* which forms the final half of words such as *fánróng* (prosperous), *guāngróng* (honourable) and *shūróng* (distinction). By stimulating the imagination of the listener and forcing them to also make the poetic or rhetorical connections that underpin the meaning of the name, the name welcomes both the hearer and the named person into a common status group of educated, high status, high *quality* individuals (in terms of the concept of sùzhì discussed earlier). Consequently, in China, names function both as referential markers for individuals as well as a kind of value or currency. With growing global economic integration (both in terms of tangible commodities like computers and cars, but also less tangible signifiers such as symbolic status objects), English names have entered into this new economy of onomastic signifiers.

With this knowledge of how Chinese names are given and operate within Shenyang, the question now is how English names for Chinese individuals are given, used and talked about. Typically, most studies (especially those that consider the effects of language acquisition on individuals) treat the presence of English names as an unproblematic index of a "foreign" cultural identity on the basis of an integrative motivation on behalf of the learner—the learner wants to be more Western and thus acquires a Western name. In this sense, there is no reason for the motivating pragmatics of discourse to be anything other than that of conventional Western usage as well. Where deviation exists from the norm, it must be due to lack of linguistic knowledge. However, as I will try to show below, the one-name-one-identity dynamic oversimplifies the complicated nature of self and identity in multilingual contexts (see also Norton 2000). English name usage in China borrows from the pragmatics of Chinese rather than English.

English Names and Naming

The acquisition of an English name is perhaps one of the earliest and most salient language learning experiences for many English students in China.[9] My informants were usually able to recall with ease, and often a degree of pride, how they had acquired their first English name: the circumstances, the giver and the reasons for its bestowal. Many Chinese students get their first English name in a childhood English class.[10] Most of the Chinese English teachers I talked to preferred to use English names when addressing their students in class, calling them *John* or *Helen* even though they might refer to them by their Chinese name outside of class or with parents. These early names are chosen on the basis of several different strategies, depending on the teacher. Sometimes names are randomly assigned. One of the things I did for teachers at one school was to compile a list of several hundred English names (sorted by gender) that they could then give to their students. On the first day of a beginner class for students aged 5 and 6, I watched the teacher move up and

down the rows of students, handing out a card to each one with a name printed on it—this would be their names for the next several years of the class.

Other times, teachers would give students English names based on their Chinese names. Some teachers translate students' Chinese given names literally into English, leading to classrooms full of students named Snow, Jade, Heaven and Candy for girls; Eagle, Pony and Red for boys; on one occasion I even observed a class where Apple, Pear and Banana all sat at the same desk. However, childhood names were not particularly salient beyond student-teacher interactions: students did not, for instance, typically call each other by English names unless the conversation specifically involved the teacher as either a listener or addressee.

Such early names might be used in elementary school and middle school, but by high school, and especially by university, many students are eager to name themselves. Students rename themselves in an attempt to find, as many put it, a name that better *biǎodá* (expresses) who they are, or is more *héshì* (suitable) to their identity or personality. When I was approached to assist in this process, the criteria I was usually given were as follows: the name should reflect the person's Chinese name, it should sound good, and it should have a good meaning. The idea of having a good meaning can reflect two sources of semantics in Chinese names—the meaning that is inherent to the name itself (in other words the characters that compose it) and the meaning created through a process of homophony or phonetic mimesis. That is, because Chinese only consists of a very limited set of phonetic combinations, meaning is often constructed on the basis of sound-similarity. A good phone number or license plate contains a great deal of *bā* (eights), which sounds like *fā* which is a component of the word *fācái* (to get rich). Similarly, the number *sì* (four) is undesirable because it sounds like the word for *sǐ* (death). This construction of meaning through homophony is extended to English, where, for instance, I quickly learned that Ben was a particularly bad choice of English name because the name sounds like *bèn* which means "stupid" in Chinese (and in fact one British textbook for children featured a regular character named Ben, and teachers always had trouble finding a child willing to fill that role in reciting the lesson).

Conversely, good names are supposed to reflect some kind of positive meaning, signifying the good qualities of the individual name-holder in a certain way. One of my informants recounted for me how her teacher had made her English class wait three months while she settled on names for everybody. She believed that the teacher had chosen a particularly good name for her.

> My last name is Gao, and the first letter of that is 'G,' so she started with the letter G to choose a name. She thought that I'm a graceful child, because I like literature. My speech was more bookish and formal compared to the other children. So she chose the name Grace. My teacher said this name suited me, and I've used it ever since.

This woman's Chinese given name also included a Chinese character meaning brightness and splendour, and so she considered the name Grace appropriate because it was evocative of three different elements: the sound of her family name, the meaning of her given name and her own personality.

While being named by others is often cited as ideal, students could also be quite creative in finding their own English name. Many of these names appear, at first glance, to be randomly chosen from the stock of standard and familiar English names as might be found in textbooks, news stories and literature: Bob, Lucy, Shirley, Mike, Casey, Ron. However, closer inquiry during interviews often revealed quite significant reasons for students to choose particular names. Many language learners sought English names that would signify in the same ways that their Chinese names would. For instance, after much reading, one of my informants whose Chinese name was the character for *wood* chose the name Sylvia because of its Latin root. Another, with the character for *moon* in her name, chose the name Luna.

A frequent name for Chinese men who studied English was Bill, a common name for Westerners but one also shared with a popular icon of American wealth and standing: Bill Gates, the billionaire founder of Microsoft. In describing why they had chosen this name, students often made the connections between their name and the qualities of the name's archetype explicit, as when one Bill told me, "I like this name, because Bill Gates, he is a rich man." A different Bill whom these names indexed was Bill Clinton, another powerful foreigner. By taking the name Bill, these students were drawing upon the power of the name to command the qualities these Bills possess, an appropriation by analogy. This could index political power but also, as one student reminded me, power of another kind as well. When I asked him why he had chosen the name Bill, he said, "I like Bill Clinton. Very strong man." His face then broadened into a smile and he gave me the thumbs up sign. Switching to Chinese he said, "You know *Láiwēnsījī*?" by which he was referring to the Chinese pronunciation of *Lewinsky*, the White House intern implicated in Bill Clinton's 1990s sex scandal. The name Bill for this student thus evoked both the power of the man, as former president, and an idea of sexual prowess, and

both of these qualities were indexed in his chosen English name.[11]

Names could also be intended to signify much more abstract connotations. Another student described for me in English how she chose the name Veronica.

> My name Veronica, I choose this name because when I say it, people hear how good is my English. The sound, you know, the 'v' sound, /v/, it's very hard for Chinese to say. /v/, /v/, /v/. Other people cannot say it. They say /w/, /w/, /w/. That's why you always can hear Chinese people say 'wictory' and 'wacation.' But I can say it. I practiced several years. So I want this name Veronica, just because of the sound.

Instead of evoking positive associations directly with her name (a relation of indexicality), the significance of Veronica's name only becomes manifest in its spoken form (a relation of iconicity), allowing the listener to perceive Veronica's proper command of the English phonetic system in the very act of introducing herself.

Sometimes, advanced English learners chose non-standard English names for themselves, names such as Summer, Spring, Sunny, Lucky, Young, Princess, Fable and Kitty. In fact, these kinds of non-standard names were common among Chinese English teachers and other fluent English speakers, much more so than among novices. Unlike children who are largely unaware of the context and practices of English naming, these learners readily acknowledged that their names did not conform to Western expectations. Many of these older learners talked about their desire to have a unique English name, one that differentiated them from the masses of Bills, Nancys and Peters who dominated English classrooms. Sunny, who had a degree from a British university, once told me, "Sunny is just my personality, like sunshine, happy day." An English teacher named Kitty also informed me, "Kitty is so different, nobody else have this name, just me. Years before, my name is Kelly, but we have three Kellys at our school. A student say 'Kelly!' and I don't know, is that me?" Recognizing that their names were not authentic (in the sense that very few native speakers would have these names), such learners nonetheless valued them for their distinctness.

Conclusion

To return to the terms within which I earlier framed this analysis, English names for Chinese language students have both pragmatic and metapragmatic components. In the pragmatic sense, names serve to identify the speaker or referential subject of discourse, acting as denotational placeholders in the normal flow of conversation ("John, can you answer the question?" or "John never listens to the teacher"). But this functional quality of names can be expanded, as Rymes (1996) has demonstrated, by understanding names within the particular cultural contexts of their use. In other words, at the metapragmatic level, names are indexical of certain qualities and attributes which attach themselves to the person named and are dependent upon wider cultural meanings and interpretations. As I have shown in this article, English names in China have been adapted to the metapragmatic functions of Chinese naming practices.

The acquisition of an English name for Chinese speakers builds upon already familiar processes of name proliferation, including the use of nicknames and multiple address forms. In this sense, an English name merely references an additional persona within each Chinese speaker's already vast repertoire of interactional stances (see Goffman 1979). However, we should not take such names as merely passive labels for pre-existing identities. As speech acts, names, both chosen and bestowed, act as creative signifiers. Within Chinese linguistic ideologies of name use, where calling someone *mother* for the first time seals the marriage or referring to someone as *brother* initiates a series of rights and obligations particular to siblings, using an English name activates powerful claims of legitimacy in terms of China's modernization.

Understanding that Chinese attribute value to names as clear indices of personal quality allows us also to explain the selection of unique, peculiar or distinctive names among Chinese learners. As I explained above, the first English names students obtain (perhaps symbolic equivalents of the small name) tend to be conventional English names picked from the stock of names circulating through foreign media or culled from the expertise of their teachers. It is only when students have more knowledge of English that they might choose to seek a "better" name, one more suited to their personality. The idea of this name accurately expressing some inalienable essence of unique personhood derives both from Confucian onomastic traditions, particularly the "rectification of names," and from Chinese naming practices which disfavour name duplication. Names should not reference other individuals in the sense of being named *for* a person, but should adhere to unique persons with individual qualities and attributes. In the cases where students do adopt names from others (Bill, for instance) it is not to evoke the person the name is borrowed from, but their individual qualities and sources of power. And in much the same way as all Chinese characters form potential name resources, Chinese speakers mine the lexical field of the English language for suitable names to perform this task,

allowing them to differentiate themselves from holders of more "common" low-status names.

English names should also ideally fulfill a particularly Chinese requirement of possessing a "good meaning," a provision largely absent in Western thinking about names because of their denotational singularity. But just as Chinese names are semantically polyvalent, both referring to a person and to a metacommunicative message encoded in the name's meaning, English names should function in the same way. This meaning may be straightforward (a name like Thinker, for instance, that belonged to a local graduate student), but as the value of indirectness discussed above implies, an English name which has significance that can be productively uncovered by a listener incorporates both the name-bearer and the listener in a common high status speech community. Thus Grace's story of how she got her English name satisfies the requirements of desirable Chinese name semantics. Even in the use of common English names, tracing the connections between name and personality becomes a highly strategic exercise of producing both meaning and modernity, with speakers asserting claims to fluency through names like Veronica, or to wealth and power with names like Bill.

My main argument here has been that English names are recruited to perform the same ideological and semiotic work as Chinese names, both as values in a political economy of name choice and as metacommunicative representations of the individual. But I also want to consider briefly the implications of this process for the broader field of foreign language acquisition and use. As knowledge of English sweeps through a post-Cold War landscape, spread as much by growing information connectivity as by formal educational initiatives, it bears thinking about the impacts of this language on new sites of acquisition. As Alexei Yurchak describes in his analysis of post-Soviet corporate naming in Russia,

> The generalized critique of cultural importation and Americanization tends to conceal the fact that cultural and linguistic forms, traveling across borders, often become comprehensively and unpredictably reinterpreted and re-customized to serve very particular local purposes. [Yurchak 2000:412]

English names may appear foreign, especially to outside observers (often possessing such a name themselves), but only because on the surface their form appears to conform to cultural expectations and a narrative of Westernization. Closer examination reveals, however, this persistent "re-customization," a refashioning of foreign linguistic forms put to very localized ends. As I indicated at the beginning of this article, English names represent new forms of social identity, where urban residents are increasingly turning to various modernizing strategies for producing symbolic value. But we should read such strategies within a more general attempt to differentiate themselves from their localized surroundings and "traditional" (read rural or poor) peers. The symbolic work of English names is directed, not at the visiting foreigner, but at a broad Chinese audience of like-minded individuals self-identified as civilized, sophisticated and high-quality.

Baobao now has an English name, Eve, which I suggested and that Susan embraced whole-heartedly; but only after I had explained its meaning and the rationale for my decision. Eve will likely take this name with her when she attends an English-Chinese bilingual kindergarten, now ubiquitous in the city. She will sing songs in English and learn to introduce herself with this appellation. It will become one important component of her persona, along with her small and big names. As China begins to look forward to a future of international travel, foreign brand consumption and global connections, Eve will become the sign which mediates these aspects of her identity.

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Notes

1 The Social Security Administration tracks the popularity of various English names in the United States over time. Jasmine enjoyed a brief surge in popularity during the 1990s and early 2000s, rising from 95th most popular in 1986 to 30th in 1989, and remaining in the top 30 until 2007. It has since fallen to 62nd in 2010. Dragon is not to be found in the top one thousand names for either gender (SSA 2011).

2 A very small minority of Chinese people have two-character family names that derive from imperial decrees honoring prominent individuals. Today these are considered particularly desirable, much as hyphenated surnames are in British aristocracy.

3 Long popular in Taiwan, the practice of consulting fortune-tellers, spirit mediums and priests was frowned upon by the state during the socialist era as backwards superstition. With less intrusion and oversight by the state in the contemporary era, these practices are coming back.

4 My description draws on imagery from recent television shows that dramatize the contrasting worlds of these figures. Such shows as *Xiāngcūn Àiqíng* (Village Love) or *Mǎ Dàshuai* (named for the eponymous main character) base much of the plot on the encounters between honest but simple village folk and suave and savvy urban residents. These are not simple paeans to urban modernity, however, as they constantly remind the viewer of how callous and capricious urban life can be.

5 Gros (2004) applies this principle to an examination of the state's attempts to define and label China's ethnic minorities. Given that the state does not play a role here in the naming of persons, the relevance of *zhèngmíng* for my discussion is limited to the second of what he calls the two senses of this concept: naming as an object of social convention.

6 Heffernan (2010) explains the tendency of Japanese students to not adopt English names in terms of the differences between Japanese and Chinese naming pragmatics; specifically, that names are more closely tied to a core notion of identity in Japanese culture, whereas Chinese and Korean culture encourages a multiplicity of names to suit each social context. For Japanese students, English names represent a threat to this notion of self.

7 There have always been exemptions and exceptions to the policy with, for instance, ethnic minorities and impoverished farmers being allowed two children instead of one. Where monitoring was lax, especially in parts of rural China, excess births were common. The policy is also currently evolving and now if two single children are married, they are allowed two children, as are families where both parents have high professional qualifications, such as doctors or professors.

8 One exception was the traditional practice of "generational indicators" (Li 1997:494) where one of the characters in a series of two-character given names was shared among all members of a given generation, such as siblings who might be named *Wénxué* (Study culture) and *Wénshēng* (Foster culture). Although the younger sibling's name is therefore referential of the elder's, this is not a case in which the younger sibling is named for the elder. I thank one of the reviewers for drawing attention to this practice.

9 Chinese speakers tend to adopt only English given names. The surname, perhaps because of powerful notions of lineage and family encoded in it, tends to remain unaltered. Since Chinese women do not customarily adopt their husband's surname at marriage, this was also true when Chinese women married foreign men.

10 Curricular standards introduced in 2001 set the introduction of English in the 3rd grade (8 years old) of primary school at anywhere from 80-200 minutes per week. However, most urban children attend classes in private foreign language schools far earlier than this. In 2010, some schools were advertising classes for infants aged 0-6 months.

11 When I suggested to one student that he call himself George, a name that had phonetic resonances with his Chinese name, he vigorously shook his head and responded. "No, no, no. That's too much like Bush."

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Graduate Student Papers in Feminist Anthropology Award / Prix pour des articles d'étudiants des cycles supérieurs en anthropologie féministe

Engendering Transnational Foodways: A Case Study of Southern Sudanese Women in Brooks, Alberta

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Abstract: This article explores the experiences of Southern Sudanese refugee women in Brooks, Alberta, illustrating how "foodways" (Long 2004) impact and reflect women's conceptions of themselves as gendered, multinational citizens. When women seek out and appropriate diverse culinary traditions to create belonging within multiple circumstances, they enact agency. Women do not passively accept their fractured connections to their homeland but instead actively work to rebuild relationships within the diversity that defines their experiences in ways that garner them power, prestige and resources to improve their lives. These movements show how gender and power are entwined in the creation of transnational belonging.

Keywords: Southern Sudanese, refugees, gender, food, identity, cosmopolitanism

Résumé **:** Cet article étudie l'expérience de femmes réfugiées du Sud-Soudan établies à Brooks en Alberta, illustrant comment la culture de production des aliments (« foodways » – Long 2004) modifie et reflète les conceptions d'elles-mêmes de ces femmes en tant que citoyennes multinationales et conditionnées par leur sexe. Quand ces femmes recherchent et s'approprient diverses traditions culinaires pour créer de l'appartenance au milieu de circonstances multiples, elles mettent en œuvre de l'agentivité; les femmes n'acceptent pas passivement leurs relations fragmentées avec leur mère patrie mais s'efforcent plutôt de reconstruire des relations au milieu de la diversité qui définit leurs expériences, d'une manière qui leur procure du pouvoir, du prestige et des ressources pour améliorer leur vie. Ces mouvements montrent comment le sexe et le pouvoir sont interreliés dans la création d'une appartenance transnationale.

Mots-clés : Sud-Soudanaises, réfugiées, sexe, alimentation, identité, cosmopolitisme

For countless women across time and space, the kitchen and the food work conducted within it have represented sites of simultaneous repression and celebration. Women's work in the kitchen becomes undervalued in societies that place greater value on the financial responsibilities of a household than the nurturing (Engels 1972). In these contexts the kitchen becomes a space that limits women's social, economic and personal mobility (Devault 1991; McIntosh and Zey 1998). However, scholars have also illuminated how a significant number of women understand the kitchen as a space for the creation of identity, love and creative expression (Abarca 2006; Adapon 2008; Avakian 1997, 2005; Counihan 2005, 2008). Due to the diverse meanings contained in the kitchen, women may utilize it in ways that represent "multiple changing levels and degrees of freedom, self-awareness, subjectivity, and agency" (Abarca 2006:19). It is therefore important to acknowledge the diversity of significances women encounter when working within this space. As such, this article contributes to feminist anthropological work analyzing the ways in which women use the kitchen, specifically foodways,[1] as dynamic spaces for social, economic and personal mobility (Abarca 2006; Avakian 1997, 2005; Counihan 2005, 2008). Because of the ideological baggage that very often accompanies foodways, women who define foodways beyond their oppressive associations are embarking on everyday acts of agency (Abarca 2006).

In this article, I investigate the specific relationship between Southern Sudanese women and food. In particular, I use a case study of refugees in Brooks, Alberta, to explore how power relations are enacted within the global movement of people, products and ideas. As globalization facilitates the reconceptualization of boundaries, identities and existences, people often renegotiate their understandings of culture and tradition (Appadurai 1996; Hannerz 1996). Global consumer society creates new markets, demands and meanings for culture (in this case, food in particular), as local practices become embedded within global structures (Ferrero 2002; Long 2004; Wilk 2006).

When people negotiate new modes of existence, "categories of power blur and create new spaces of action where the relations between the dominant and the subordinated, the self and the other, must be reconfigured" (Ferrero 2002:195). Southern Sudanese women in Brooks provide an example of these global processes as they take place within the daily foodways of women in rural Alberta.

In relation to food practices, patriarchal ideologies simultaneously define and devalue the identities of Southern Sudanese women; yet, the women assert agency by manoeuvring within these ideologies and defining themselves outside them. Their movements are facilitated by the global interaction of people, food and meaning which encompass the experiences of Southern Sudanese women in Brooks. Specifically, in this article, I will investigate how women's openness to foreign food practices and their simultaneous development of cosmopolitan consciousness demonstrates acts of agency. For these women, cosmopolitanism is an orientation; it is a readiness and competence to engage in the unfamiliar undertaken within the realm of "everyday" embodied experience (Cheah and Robbins 1998). By engaging in this orientation, women make the foreign familiar and create belonging within diverse fields of cultural meaning. Southern Sudanese women's cosmopolitan foodways are a means of empowerment because first, they represent women's challenge to the liminality of their existence and, second, they facilitate a global awareness of culture that allows women to utilize their cultural capital to gain prestige among their peers as well as new resources to manage their daily lives. In creating belonging within the diversity that defines their experiences, Southern Sudanese women in Brooks show how daily food practices are used to navigate everyday experiences of gender, ethnicity and power. Before proceeding with my analysis, I will introduce the social context that frames Southern Sudanese women's understandings of food and gender as well as how my research methods aimed to capture it.

Background and Methodology

Sudanese History and Gender Ideology

Southern Sudanese in Canada have come from a nation marked by conflict. Since independence from Britain in 1956, Sudan has been at almost constant civil war. Most understood this war as a conflict between the majority population in the north, identifying as "Arab" and "Muslim," and the marginalized population in the south identifying as "Black African" and increasingly "Christian." There is some truth to this view but, more significantly, the war is fuelled by resistances to the concentration of wealth and power in Khartoum by the immensely impoverished peripheries who desire greater regional autonomy (Deng 2010; Johnson 2003). This war has resulted in the death of millions and the displacement of millions more both inside and outside the country.

However, large-scale changes are in the midst. The war between the North and the South officially ended in 2005 when the National Islamic Front (NIF) government and the opposing rebel group, the Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement, signed the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and ushered in a period of relative peace. The CPA encompassed stipulations for a referendum held in January of 2011. This referendum provided the conditions for Southern Sudanese to vote on their potential succession from the North. Among a 98 per cent voter turnout, 99 per cent' of Southern Sudan voted for secession (UNMIS 2011) and, as of July 9, 2011, South Sudan became the world's newest nation. This is a significant milestone in these peoples' history as it represents an opportunity for Southern Sudanese to celebrate freely their collective identity within the formation of a new nation. Furthermore, it has implications for Southern Sudanese in the diaspora because many migrants are currently reconceptualizing their transnational citizenship, specifically whether they would like to return to their home country should South Sudan continue to develop peacefully.

I would like to emphasize that it is difficult to generalize about a common "Southern Sudanese culture." The diversity of ethnic groups within South Sudan means that meanings surrounding gender and food vary from context to context. However, I am conducting my analysis with the presumption that, despite a multitude of idiosyncrasies, there are common features among groups that are relevant to discuss in the context of gender relations and food. These common features reflect how Southern Sudanese women in Brooks describe themselves and their position as gendered individuals both in their homeland and in Canada. Despite the cultural diversity within my study population, their understandings of gender and foodways are remarkably similar. Nonetheless, the analysis that I provide in this article is not meant to be exhaustive of gender relations in all Southern Sudanese societies, nor of all Southern Sudanese refugees in Canada.

That being said, similarities among Southern Sudanese notions of gender are due in large part to the Sudanese government's ideology of assimilation. Until recently, the government militarily enforced nationwide adherence (to varying degrees at different times) to the Muslim religion and Arabic language and cultural practices (Deng 2010). As such, masculinity and femininity

are generally understood in Sudan through the Muslim notions of complementarity and propriety (Edward 2007). Complementarity or "natural differences" between men and women are understood to extend themselves to separate roles and behaviours for each sex. Specifically, men/husbands occupy the public sphere and provide the family with financial support, while women occupy the domestic sphere where they look after the home and care for children. The ideological separation of men and women is reflected and enforced through the Sudanese notion of *adab* (propriety). Propriety pertains to "good manners" or "politeness" and includes conceptions of morals and morality for men and women. As a whole, the concept encompasses behaviour that upholds the virtues of the larger Sudanese society (Fábos 2001). Propriety is used in a general sense to include "the sum total of his conceptions of what one should be and have and do in order to be good in the different roles one comes to play in life" (Nordenstam 1968:74). This is an idealistic framework and is enacted and resisted in different ways throughout the country (Bernal 1994; Fábos 2008). Nonetheless, the diversity that is held with regard to the relational status of men and women still largely falls under the notion that "within the family and within society, women usually occupy a subordinate position compared to men" (Edward 2007: 83). In her analysis of both Shari'a and customary law in Sudan, Liv Tonnessen describes women's subjugation likewise: "Sudanese women have traditionally suffered from discriminatory customs and traditions, which relegate them to the status of 'lesser beings' and 'a commodity'" (2008:463). This background is relevant to the subsequent analysis showing how Southern Sudanese women redefine these gendered identities in Canada.

Methodological Background

During the summer of 2010, I conducted informal and semi-structured interviews with 17 Southern Sudanese women from varying ethnicities, religions, employment backgrounds, migration histories and household structures. I interviewed all women at least once though many women invited me back to their homes multiple times after the initial interview so I could learn more about the specifics of certain foods, meanings, or cooking techniques. As a whole, I was welcomed with open arms into the community such that I also conducted extensive participant observation outside of the more formal interview setting. As other anthropologists working with this community have recorded, direct questioning is often less productive than observation if one hopes to gain any understanding of individual motivation and meaning (Berger 2001). I returned to Brooks in January 2011, where I met with the majority of women in my study to present the contents of my proposed thesis and garner their feedback. All of the women were satisfied as well as encouraged by my observations, and suggested no changes to my findings. I use pseudonyms in place of participants' real names because the subject matter discussed in the interviews was somewhat controversial in the community; pseudonyms therefore provide anonymity to ensure participants' safety.

All of the participants in this study were born in Sudan. Their migration histories are diverse; however, they also represent a unique generation of migrants. All but one of the women ranged in age from their mid-twenties to their early forties and so spent relatively little time growing up and socializing within Sudan. When the second Sudanese civil war broke out in 1983, many of these women left their homelands to seek refuge either in camps in neighbouring Kenya or Ethiopia, or as international students in Egypt or Cuba. Therefore, almost none stayed in Sudan long enough to run their own households. Some left at such an early age they could hardly remember their homes; those who stayed in the country waited in the chaos of war for their displaced relatives to get approval for them to follow to safety. The women in this study were also relatively well established in Canada, having lived in the country from three to seventeen years. Consequently, all interviewees were fluent in English and I conducted my interviews in that language. As such, they represent a specific segment of the Sudanese community in Canada, and an important one, as they represent the largest age category of Sudanese in Canada and they are raising the first generation of Sudanese children to grow up in Canada (Statistics Canada 2006b).

Brooks is a distinctive community because, despite its relatively small size, it has a large newcomer population (2080 immigrants and 125 non-permanent residents in a population of 12,000 [Statistics Canada 2006a]). The unique demographic composition of Brooks comes from its proximity to the Lakeside Packers beef processing plant in which many of its residents work. After the 1994 multinational acquisition of Lakeside, the plant increased its production and rendering capacity such that by 1996, 2,000 new employees were hired to help staff the updated facility. However, jobs in the meatpacking industry are generally unattractive to Canadians because the work environment can be dangerous and unpleasant (Sinclair 1906; Stull and Broadway 2008). Lakeside Packers therefore looked to Canada's refugee population to staff its expansion. Since that time, approximately two thousand newcomers have made Brooks their home. Meatpacking is an attractive option for newcomers looking to stabilize

their financial base as it pays relatively high wages for unskilled work. As a result, since the mid-1990s, Brooks has turned into somewhat of a multicultural boomtown (Broadway 2007; Stull and Broadway 2004). Due to the harsh nature of work at Lakeside, most newcomers conceptualize Brooks as a temporary place to improve their financial situation and move on. Nonetheless, there is also a growing group putting down permanent roots in the community, many of whom are represented in my study. Brooks is therefore a relatively distinctive community due to its temporary nature as well as the multitude of newcomers living and working in the same space. It is important to stress that although many of the experiences of women in this community are relevant to the broader Southern Sudanese Canadian experience, findings from this group must be understood within the particular context of Brooks.

Foodways and Agency in the Literature

As I mentioned above, the kitchen has been determined by many as an oppressive space that limits women's social, ideological and economic freedom (Devault 1991; McIntosh and Zey 1998). In this section, I will investigate this notion, as well as how it is challenged in the literature, in order to productively work with and move beyond it. This discussion frames my later analysis on how Southern Sudanese women utilize transnational foodways to enact agency in their day-to-day lives.

The ideological premise behind women's negative associations with foodways stems, in part, from western ideological dualism separating masculinity and femininity within a set of binary, mutually exclusive, oppositions. This framework codes masculinity with dynamic processes of "progress," "creating," and "doing," and codes femininity with static characteristics rooted in "tradition" and "stability" (Massey 1994). Thus, the home, the kitchen, and the food work done within it are conceptualized as fixed. Work done in this space is often associated with nostalgia, traditional morality, leisure and authenticity. These qualities are not in and of themselves oppressive, yet become so when they are coded and enforced as female (Abarca 2006; Massey 1994).

Nira Yuval-Davis and Floya Anthias (1989) have aptly shown how women become responsible for the continuation of ethnic and national groups, and as such, the responsibility to sustain that perpetuation limits their agency. Women are often responsible for the continuation of ethnic groups because they "symbolize" the group, and therefore, bear the burden of representing its honour. Women are expected literally to bear the next generation of that group, as well as propagate group cultural values and traditions as "symbolic border guards." This expectation encompases reified, static understandings of gender and of culture (Yuval-Davis and Anthias 1989); however, nationalist and ethnic ideologies still draw on these beliefs to naturalize, and therefore, enforce the traditional gendered roles/inequalities that stall social change (Yuval-Davis 2009). In times of change (including migration), women are often either rejected as a marker of the past (Witt 2001), or controlled to preserve the values encompassed in what was left behind (Yuval-Davis 2009). This is a western ideological perspective; nonetheless, similarities exist between western gendered dualisms and Muslim notions of complementarity which, at times, place masculinity and femininity within a similar relationship (Mernissi 1987; Yazbeck-Haddad and Esposito 1998). In Sudan specifically, (Muslim) women have played an important role in the national discourse of the NIF government as "authenticating a place of 'belonging', a community of kin, a safe haven for family, a 'home'" (Tonnessen 2008:464). Caroline Faria (2010) posits that women will also play a key role in the discourse of nation building in the new South Sudan.

The first step in moving beyond an essentialized notion of gendered identity is to recognize identities, cultures and places as not static, bounded dualisms, but as existing within dynamic states of movement and intersection (Massey 1994; Yuval-Davis and Anthias 1989). This is how I will portray Southern Sudanese women and their relationship to food and the kitchen. The participants in my study were very much aware of the ways in which foodways represented their history of gendered repression, as a space that limited their mothers and their grandmothers ideologically and physically, but also as a prevailing burden, a stress that was predominantly theirs to bear. Nonetheless, Southern Sudanese women simultaneously chose to embrace foodways as something to celebrate and manipulate for their own means. In this article, I will investigate how this is enacted by women; however, I will begin by providing a brief overview of the current anthropological literature describing how migrant women recreate foodways as spaces of power and control.

Migrant women exert agency in their kitchens by minimizing or subverting its subordinating dimensions, and acknowledging and celebrating its empowering ones. However, agency can be exerted in countless ways. For example, by actively taking control of the functioning, socialization and decision-making in the kitchen, women propagate values of their choosing while also embracing the power that comes from food provision (Avakian 2005). Other women do this by conceptualizing cooking as a celebration of talent and creativity (Adapon 2008) or

a demonstration of love (Avakian 1997; Vallianatos and Raine 2008). Others utilize the kitchen as a space of trust and sociality among women (Avakian 2005; Counihan 2005). Women also may use the kitchen for economic mobility, cooking food that they later sell for profit, thereby breaking down the dichotomy between the public and the private spheres (Counihan 2008; Pilcher 2002). Some women reject cooking as a sole pillar of their identity yet still respect the food work done by others (Avakian 2005; Counihan 2008). Lastly, women may also welcome and legitimize men's food work, thus breaking down the dichotomization of gendered divisions of labour (Counihan 2008). This is by no means an exhaustive account of all of the ways in which women show agency through foodways; rather, it represents themes that emerge in the current literature. Additionally, while much of the work done on this topic revolves around the concept of the kitchen as a physical and ideological space, I will focus specifically on the food activities undertaken within it.

The strategies described above ultimately highlight reinterpretations of the relationship between women, power, food and the importance of food knowledge. Meredith Abarca (2006) expounds a rethinking of the eminence of foodways to demonstrate the wealth of intricate knowledge encompassed in everyday acts of cooking. In doing so, she confronts the values, norms and assumptions embedded in foodwork. For Abarca, a woman's *sazon* (or sensory way of knowing when food is done or what flavours it needs to be just right) "captures the finesse, the nuances, the flair of something that involves a specific chemistry between the relationship of food, its preparation, and the person preparing it, a relationship that leads to philosophical everyday observations" (2006:54). Within this account, Abarca sees cooking as a language in which women convey the histories of their lives, as such, it is a "discourse of empowerment." Abarca rejects the western hierarchy of the senses, which privileges sight and hearing over taste and smell. For Abarca, sazon is "the ability to 'seize power over one part of one's self' through the epistemology of all of our senses, which in turn helps us to regain the body as a center of knowledge" (2006: 76-77). Ultimately, Abarca shows that definitions of what constitutes knowledge need to be reconfigured in order to reveal the value, artistry and creativity within everyday work done in the kitchen.

Southern Sudanese women's foodways incorporate forms of agency that reflect their diverse cultural and personal histories which differentially enable them to internalize, reconceptualize and subvert various forms of oppression that limit them ideologically, physically and emotionally. Many of these forms of agency include strategies that I describe above; however, I will focus on one strategy in particular that women undertake to empower themselves within a situation which could be, in many ways, oppressive. Through my participant's narratives, I demonstrate how Southern Sudanese women's incorporation of diverse cultural foodways into their culinary repertoire is an act of agency because in doing so, women take on an empowering global awareness, which provides them with personal and cultural capital to improve their standing in their families and in their communities. By defining their foodways (and by extension themselves) beyond static definitions rooted in notions of the "traditional Southern Sudanese," women affirm the power encompassed in diverse forms of belonging. In order to discuss this point, I first introduce how women have come to embody openness towards transnational foodways.

Southern Sudanese Transnational Foodways

> We learn, every year, they invent new foods back home, and those that come presently, they have that so, every time they have a party, they will make it and people will be like, "hmm, new kind of food? So who cooked it?" And people go around, "who cooked this?" And they will say "so and so." Ok, they will start booking appointment with her—"can we come to your place?" So it's like learning things as you stay ... people are borrowing from different people. Like right now that there is peace in Sudan, there's a lot of Chinese coming over, there's a lot of, you know different kind of people from the world, they are coming over to Sudan to work, like some people they just, I don't know, there's a lot of people anyway coming. And people are learning new things every time. And they add that to Sudanese kind of food, so it's not pure Sudanese. [Naya]

Naya's words introduce how I wish to portray Southern Sudanese food in this article. Southern Sudanese food is less an exact set of rules and ingredients, and more a dynamic concept. "Southern Sudanese food" is something that women conjure up when they think about their homes in South Sudan, their memories and their families there; it is something that links them to a collective identity, which they use to define themselves in relation to others (Douglas 1966; Gabaccia 1998). When women create Southern Sudanese *mullah* (stews) by frying an onion in oil and adding meat (usually lamb, beef or goat), varying amounts of water and vegetables, such as okra (*molokia*[2]) or tomatoes; or, when they boil cassava and eat it with honey, they are engaging in rituals which connect

them to their families and their homes abroad. Food traditions are a concrete connection to their historic cultural identity which can be enacted daily, and thus, are a way for women to situate themselves as Southern Sudanese within their daily lives. Like all food however, Southern Sudanese food is not without influence from the global movement of people, products, technologies and ideas (Appadurai 1996). As such, Southern Sudanese food is constantly changing both inside and outside of South Sudan, as it borrows from and recreates diverse cultural foodways (Crofts 2010).

While Southern Sudanese food holds significant meaning for women by invoking belonging through the enactment of tradition, the violent nature of these women's homelands and the forced nature of their migration create conflicting emotions surrounding the belonging that women feel towards Sudan (now South Sudan). For example, safety is an important caveat for how women defined home, yet South Sudan has not been able to provide them this in the past. Ajak's definition of home exemplifies this disjuncture: "The earth and everything in it is for the Lord. So yeah, anywhere can be your home, except ... if there's no peace there, no happiness, no. But if there's peace and happiness, and joy and *love*, that can be your home. You will be safe there." Also, because some women have lived in Canada for a number of years, they find themselves disconnected from some Sudanese customs and worldviews. Tensions between conflicting Sudanese and Canadian worldviews and traditions are highlighted in Sara's narrative of returning to Sudan for a visit:

> When I went back, I was there in December. Because I was away from Sudan for ten years, it was so hard for me to eat together [out of the same serving platter, the *sinea*] with everybody because I'm used to my own, to have my food in my plate. So I would just take two or three. When I saw everyone mixing their soups and everything I was like stop, I stop eating [laughs]. I was out of Sudan for 10 years, so there is a great difference. I was just like, no.

This narrative corresponds with the conflicted nature of many women's existences to the extent that they at times revealed a sense of belonging to nowhere. Southern Sudanese women's relationship to their homeland is similar to Gemignani's interpretation of refugee memory:

> Home is at once a memory and a hope.... The concept of home evolves into a symbolic analogy for the nostalgic feelings and memories of what used to be: for a land that exists only in narrations, for a home that perhaps was never there, and of which memory is impossible yet necessary. [2011:148]

As such, "home" for Southern Sudanese women is a contested space associated with conflicting memories and emotions all of which do not necessarily provide an adequate sense of belonging in the diaspora. Despite their liminal relationship to territory, Lissa Malkki (1995) warns against universalizing refugees as somehow lost or separate from culture. Malkki shows that refugees "categorize back" by subverting models of identification and creating others out of their own unique circumstances. Southern Sudanese women in Brooks do just that; they create belonging beyond South Sudan, within the transnational foodways of their everyday lives. Through incorporating multicultural foods into their culinary repertoires, Southern Sudanese women search for completeness within diversity, an act I define as agency.

When I asked Southern Sudanese women about how war had affected their relationship to food, women's responses echoed unanimously around a common theme: the war had enriched Southern Sudanese food because it had sent them outside Sudan where they learned new ideas and new things to add to their foods. Transnational connections, specifically in the form of complex migration histories and the multicultural nature of the Brooks community, have recreated Southern Sudanese women's understanding of food and the meanings it holds in their lives.

All of the women in this study except for one came from Sudan to Canada via another country, mostly Egypt, but also Kenya, Ethiopia, Libya, Malta, Italy, the United States and Cuba. Therefore, time spent in transit to Canada has had an impact on how women cook, what recipes they know, and their knowledge of Southern Sudanese food. For example, Ajak spoke to me about how her time spent in university in Egypt taught her that meals do not always need to include meat (as is common for the middle and upper classes in Sudan). She spoke of *maschi*, or stuffed vegetables (usually eggplant, tomato and sweet peppers), as an example. Egyptians taught Ajak to make maschi solely with rice and spices, but without ground beef as Southern Sudanese do. Ajak speaks of finding this dish surprisingly delicious and makes it frequently in her home in Canada. Similarly, Naya's time in Italy taught her a plethora of Italian recipes, such as lasagna and spaghetti, which were highly sought after in Brooks. Mary had learned numerous Cuban techniques for combining rice with beans, and other women regularly combined Ethiopian spices into Southern Sudanese dishes to give them an interesting "kick."

Likewise, due to the multicultural nature of Brooks and particularly of Lakeside, where 11 of the 17 participants either work or have worked in the past, women socialize with other international migrants beside whom they work in the slaughterhouse. Because Lakeside does not have a cafeteria, women bring homemade lunches to work and eat together during breaks. In doing so, women share their personal and cultural culinary worldviews. At work, women gain extensive knowledge about cooking in diverse cultures and many women are not shy about asking their friends how to cook their cultural dishes. In fact, some women ate their lunches in the manner of a potluck, where each of four women would bring one dish and the whole group would consume those dishes together. These two multicultural circumstances in particular have, thus, introduced Southern Sudanese women to new foods and new ways of cooking. Women are very eager to take these foods into their culinary repertoire and many women's knowledge about multicultural dishes was quite extensive. Flora's attitude is common:

> Whatever food I see, and if I like that food, I can just ask you, how did you make it? Do you have any recipe for it? Because I just want to learn different stuff. And ... I have friends from Ethiopia, from Somalia and sometimes at work, they bring their food and when I try it, if I like the food, I'll just ask, how did you make it? Then they will just tell me and then I can cook in my house.

Likewise, women showed a strong desire to learn about Canadian foods. Participants internalized a difference between "Canadian food" and "their own food," largely in terms of differences in "freshness" and "ease of cooking." Canadian foods were determined to include more chemicals and preservatives, but facilitated easy, quick meals, tailored to fast-paced Canadian lifestyles.[3] For example, women regularly incorporated boxed cereals, sandwiches and pre-prepared food such as chicken fingers or macaroni and cheese into their cooking. Women also utilized cake and brownie mixes for their children's birthdays, and they frequented fast food establishments such as McDonalds or KFC as well as Chinese takeout on a regular basis. Nonetheless, "Canadian food" also encompassed broader definitions depending on the person. Lettuce-based salads were regularly considered "Canadian," in addition to foods such as banana bread and potato-based dishes such as shepherd's pie and scalloped potatoes. Women learned this food knowledge from Canadian colleagues at work and from the Internet.

Women's reasons for wanting to learn about Canadian foods had to do with wanting to satisfy the desires of their children, wanting to save time on cooking, or wanting to explore new foods, and "not be boring" as Angelina put it. In addition, women associated learning about Canadian cooking to a Canadian identity and feeling "Canadian." As such, women sought out food to create belonging within their new country.

Transnational Belonging, Cosmopolitanism, and Agency

When Southern Sudanese women appropriate global foods as their own, they create a sense of transnational belonging. In their descriptions of how various cultural foods had influenced their cooking, some women provided me with the recipes for global dishes. This sharing demonstrates an appropriation of these dishes as their own, to the extent at least that they were comfortable enough to present them to me. Transnational foods were adopted in some cases to the extent that differences between "Sudanese" and "Other" foods became unrecognizable. For example, at one of my early meetings with Mary, she served me what she called Southern Sudanese food, left over from a barbeque she had had on the weekend with some Sudanese friends. I assumed this was Southern Sudanese food since she had introduced it as such and it was incorporated into a Sudanese gathering, yet she told me the next time we met that it was actually Cuban food (she had spent most of her childhood in Cuba). Therefore, for Mary, Southern Sudanese and Cuban food blurred as both represented "food from home." There were many instances when I asked women, "do you cook Egyptian or Ethiopian foods in Canada?" (foods from their first country of migration). At first the women responded, "no, not really," but then after thinking about it, they said, "oh yes there is this, this and this." Therefore, these foods are in some ways taken up in women's knowledge and do not necessarily stand out as non-Sudanese; they encompass a broad food knowledge which, in its totality, creates belonging and familiarity.

In talking about food, women reveal their sense of familiarity and belonging to multiple nations. When I asked Ajak why she still cooked Sudanese food she explained that it was because she felt 100 per cent Sudanese. Similarly, when I asked her why she cooked Canadian food, she went on to say it was because she was also 100 per cent Canadian. She explained that:

> All the earth and all in it is for the Lord, so what's my problem going to be? Like to feel not Sudanese anymore or to feel not Canadian? No, I still feel Sudanese 100 per cent because this is where I was born and I grew up and everything, so I don't have to forget it.

> And Canada, no I can't forget it, because it's where I came and I settled down.

Nonetheless, identification goes beyond this. As Ajak explains this idea, she reveals the fluidity of her identity —the ability to define herself based on whatever circumstances arise. She continues: "but the good things, you have to love your things, whatever is local, however it looks or something. You have to love it and do something from it, try to make something from it, then other people will love that and then it will be yours." Similarly, Amna describes her identity as a symbiosis of the new and the old, the foreign and the familiar:

> We take from Canadian people or the other people, the communities, Ethiopian, Somali, and we have to tell them what we learned. Everybody, we complete each other ... I need to take the good thing from here and I need to take the good thing from back home and put it together and use it for my life. There is no difference.

I argue that the women's willingness to engage in transnational foodways and their ability to create belonging within them demonstrates a sense of cosmopolitanism. I understand cosmopolitanism as an openness to cultures and to foreignness:

> It entails ... a search for contrasts rather than uniformity. To become acquainted with more cultures is to turn into an *aficionado*.... There is the aspect of a state of readiness, a personal ability to make one's way into other cultures, through listening, looking, intuiting, and reflecting. And there is cultural competence in the stricter sense of the term, a built-up skill in manoeuvring more or less expertly with a particular system of meanings. [Hannerz 1996:103]

Hannerz (1996), along with others, contends that most migrants and minorities are not cosmopolitan because their relationship to transnational experiences is involuntary. Cosmopolitanism is generally described as a phenomenon unique to the privileged (largely white), upper-middle class in multiethnic settings who have access to substantial cultural and material resources. Nonetheless, there is a growing call among scholars of this topic (Beck and Sznaider 2006; Cheah and Robbins 1998; Devadason 2010; Landau and Freemantle 2010) to consider how cosmopolitan practices are accessed and encompassed by people from diverse ethnic and classed groups and so, in many instances, they develop out of unprivileged and even coerced circumstances. This group argues that it is premature to dismiss ethnic minorities and lower classes from cosmopolitanism because their engagement stems from pragmatic concerns. Rather, cosmopolitanism in the elitist world travelling sense, presupposes an authority of western experience (Appadurai 1996) and, therefore, it is necessary to take into account the socio-political histories in which cosmopolitanism emerges from and is embedded within. While acknowledging the inherent "worldly" and "unlocatedness" of the term, scholars of "actually existing" cosmopolitanism (Cheah and Robbins 1998) stress that cosmopolitanism is still located and embodied within the daily lives of diverse groups of people.

While perhaps a product of forced displacement, the descriptions of open, creative and inclusive belonging in the above narratives display this sense of cosmopolitanism. Additionally, women demonstrated cosmopolitanism when talking about food. Ajak highlights her cosmopolitan identity by talking about the similarities between foods globally: "in the whole world the foods are the same, just, kind of, recipes. You know these are the different things. But all people are using meats and vegetables, that's all! And flours and that's all! All foods, they are just kind of recipes, just kind of creating recipes, those are the different things." Many women have narratives similar to Ajak's. They revealed that despite not expecting to find certain foods or cooking implements in Canada, they did find them; however, cooks in Canada used implements to prepare slightly different dishes or cooked foods in a slightly different manner. Many women also showed complex understandings about their food and its characteristics compared to other types of foods. Amna, for example, explained to me in detail the differences between Southern Sudanese food and other cultures' food: "For our food, you know it's little bit, like, different from other people, Somali, Ethiopian. Our food is well cooked. Like, it has to be real cooked. It is not like half and half; no it has to be cooked." While Ajak and Amna are conceptualizing food in different manners (one highlighting differences in food while the other expounding its similarities), both evoke a cosmopolitan knowledge about food, about Southern Sudanese food in particular and its relation to other food globally.

I propose that, when Southern Sudanese women seek out and appropriate diverse culinary traditions to create belonging within their current circumstances, they are enacting agency. This is an agentive act because it represents women's ability to actively take control over their identities. In this case, women do not passively accept their fractured connections to their homeland but instead actively work to rebuild those connections both with South Sudan, but also within diverse cultural identities that define their experiences. However, women's transnational foodways are also examples of agency because

they garner women the power, prestige and resources to improve their lives. Specifically, women's transnational foodways empower them through a global awareness of culture, an awareness that allows women to utilize their cultural capital to gain prestige among their peers as well as new resources to manage their daily lives.

Transnational Foodways as Resources and Prestige

Richard Wilk's (1999, 2006) influential work on globalization and the creation of national consciousness among local populations in Belize demonstrates how relationships between the foreign and the local interact to facilitate the awareness of group identities. Wilk contends that a national cuisine, and with it, culture, is infused with meaning through its contrast and comparison with foreign commodities. Contrasts between the old and the new, the local and the foreign, emerge with the introduction of a global consumer culture. This new transnational arena affects local Belizean perception through an increased consciousness of culture itself and, as a result, an increasing objectification of local culture. Belizeans "learned to perceive and categorize differences as 'national' and 'cultural.' They have learned that foreigners expect them to be Belizean" (Wilk 1999:247). Food is a way for Belizeans to engage in this performance of identity and with it, to showcase their ability to manoeuvre within cosmopolitan spheres of existence. People project an intelligence defined by a "mastery of self" through performances of identity such as those described by Wilk; cosmopolitan food consciousness asserts a recognition of culture and its ability to be manipulated (Hannerz 1996). This is true because "mastering the performance and the role asserts a claim to categorical equality, to knowledge and power" (Wilk 1999:247). For example, Belizeans' presentation of "authentic Belizean food" to Wilk at their dinner tables demonstrates global sophistication because it shows that Belizeans *know* that others expect them to be "Belizean."

Evidence of similar performances exist among Southern Sudanese women as participants demonstrated to me, an outsider, that they understood that they were a culturally bounded group by overwhelmingly wanting to show me their "traditional" food. They took pains to explain the significance of their foods for their community and the differences between ethnic and regional traditions. Through this self-presentation, Southern Sudanese women assert their knowledge of the significance of their specific culture and their location within a wider global system of identities.

Similarly, Southern Sudanese women's engagement in the foodways of diverse cultures also demonstrates a desire to evoke global sophistication encompassed in the knowledge and experience of cultural difference (Heldke 2008). It involves an allure of the excitement encompassed in diversity (hooks 1998), as is shown by Angelina:

> It's good to know about different [foods]. Like Canadian, I want to know Canadian cooking or Canadian food, to make a little bit. When you cook *every day* something you know, it's like you're boring right? If you get something new, it's good. So I need new things to try.

However, it also involves the allure of prestige that is contained in knowledge and participation in that diversity. When women such as Amna and Ajak discussed with me how to cook multicultural dishes, or the differences and similarities between dishes cross culturally, they were in a sense boasting. They were displaying the diversity of their skill set, which they saw as a testament to their flexibility and acceptance. In this sense, a taste for foreign food can "be seen as a consequence of the desire to know more about the world, to become more sophisticated, to acquire new forms of knowledge, and to make that knowledge material" (Wilk 1999:248).

These forms of cosmopolitan food knowledge (knowledge of self, and knowledge of other) thus evoke a sophistication that holds power in the transnational world. With an understanding of cultural capital, cosmopolitan subjects highlight this sophistication and utilize it to improve their lives, either to gain prestige in their communities or to improve their lives materially. As Liora Gvion has also shown, when displaced women:

> Welcome what they see as modern dishes and cooking methods, they are not passive recipients of novelties. Rather, women assign their own meanings and modes of consumption to novel food and use food to position themselves in their new society and develop their own ways of interpreting the world they live in. [2009:395]

Amna epitomizes the notion of tactical cosmopolitanism in her narrative in the previous section when she talks about utilizing diverse cultural traditions to create completeness in her life: "I need to take the good thing from back home and put it together and *use it for my life.*"

Southern Sudanese women who were most successfully able to integrate transnational foodways into their daily lives received prestige in their community. Indeed, women known as particularly "good cooks," whom people predominantly turned to on matters of cooking, were the ones who possessed a wide array of diverse food knowledge, both Sudanese and global. Those women who

were able to mix and interpret transnational foodways in unique and tasty ways while still presenting them as variations of Southern Sudanese were particularly valued in the community.

Women also utilized transnational foodways to decrease the burden of cooking in their day-to-day lives (Gvion 2009). Canadian pre-prepared foods, such as those mentioned above, were used to quickly prepare dishes for their families. Time is extremely scarce for most women in Brooks, whose responsibilities extended to both inside and outside the home. Therefore, food that involves little preparation time decreases some of the burden of women's domestic duties. Clara describes the differences between Sudanese and Canadian food, and why she uses Canadian food in her daily cooking:

> A lot of people enjoy cooking, but still, they don't have the time to do it, all this. Like most of Sudanese food is started from scratch. Most of Canadian food is, like, throw everything together, all the ready food. Especially like casserole, where you have to prepare food from leftover turkey, or just get a can of cooked ham, or a can of tuna. You just open it and drain it and put the mayonnaise there, and make the sandwich, and the food is done. No, with Sudanese food, you have to start from scratch, *everything*, like onion, oil, fry, you know.

Southern Sudanese women also used foreign cooking appliances, which preserved the production of traditional Sudanese dishes by easing their preparation. Barbeques, pressure cookers, microwaves, and blenders are all commonly used items in Southern Sudanese households, and facilitate the cooking of cultural dishes. Barbeques allow large groups to congregate because, as cooking moves outdoors, the barbeque provides a cooking implement which groups can gather around; pressure cookers quicken the preparation of foods that would have otherwise taken up women's time; microwaves and rice cookers allow food to be cooked quickly and then reheated so that women do not have to cook everyday but can cook most of their meals on their days off and reheat dishes during the week. Participants thus utilized foreign foods and cooking implements to move more efficiently through their daily lives.

Conclusion

I have argued that Southern Sudanese women demonstrate agency by embracing transnational foodways and with them cosmopolitan consciousness. This openness to diverse cultures enables women to define belonging in ways that provide them with the power that comes from being able to utilize cultural capital in the global arena. In addition, women garner prestige among their peers and new techniques to manage the stresses in their daily lives. The above examples also demonstrate how transnational attitudes enact "tradition." In this sense, tradition and modernity, the foreign and the familiar can be indistinct, indicating that:

> While many women continue to challenge the ideological limitations imposed on their lives, to say that these social conditions can be completely erased, or transcended, negates the acute tension many of us feel as we struggle to negotiate (and sometimes distinguish) between our rights and our obligations, between our privileges and our responsibilities, between our desires for modernity and our grip on tradition. [Abarca 2006: 36-37]

It is interesting to note that this is a gendered perspective, as women did not understand Southern Sudanese men to embrace cosmopolitanism as wholeheartedly as they did. Women more likely than men see themselves as "Canadian" and are open to diverse culinary and cultural traditions. Discussion about foodways with women in Brooks inevitably brought up attitudes toward gender roles and change and women were understood to be more open to change than men. Ajak's description of gendered attitudes towards change is representative of the majority of women in my study:

> I'm here, I don't have to live by the way in Sudan, that we used to live. No, it's not going to work. It will affect all of us. We are already affected by the war so we should look for peace, we should look for happiness, we should look for something good. Not again just to press each other down, to fight, or to lock others. Because here, women can cook, men can cook, women can take care of children, men can take care of children, that's fine. That's not mean, if your wife goes to work and you're just taking care of the children, that's not mean, you are not stupid, no! Because what she's doing is financially—in this country, this is a big problem, financially—so what she's doing is a big part, like going to work every day. This is a really big part, you should be happy. But no, like the men—maybe I don't know, there are some—that want you to go to work, and come home from work, and cook, and clean, and have the children, and go to work too. And they're just sitting and watching T.V., turning the remote. So I don't understand. But in my opinion I think this country doesn't need that. Everything here, the system, the situation, everything will tell you that the way we used to live has to be changed.

Within a context in which the embrace of cosmopolitan identities is gendered, transnational knowledge can

be understood as representative of broader issues of gendered freedom within the family, community and state (Gvion 2009; Pilcher 2002). As I have argued elsewhere (Oleschuk 2011) transnational belonging is entwined in participants' understandings of gendered divisions of labour and of "freedom" more broadly, including freedom to express a multinational identity within a safe environment, and the power that comes from being able to choose who you would like to be. As Estelle expresses, "I want to learn Italian, Chinese, Canadian, so I can feel free." Therefore, transnational foodways are encompassed in broader negotiations of gendered identity, power and freedom that are all transformed and contested in various ways by women within the Southern Sudanese diaspora. In defining both their foodways and themselves beyond static understandings of "traditional Southern Sudanese," women affirm the power encompassed in diverse forms of belonging. This positioning highlights the freedom encompassed in creative culinary expression, as well as the politics contained in the creation of belonging.

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Notes

1 Throughout this article, I use Lucy Long's definition of "foodways" as a "network of behaviours, traditions, and beliefs concerning food, and involves all the activities surrounding a food item and its consumption, including the procurement, preservation, preparation, presentation, and performance of food" (2004:8), but I also adapt it to what I term "transnational foodways," which I use to evoke the global connections which also define food and food practices, and which are ever present in the foodways of migrant women.

2 Molokia is a green, leafy vegetable grown in Africa and the Mediterranean similar to spinach.

3 Families' increasing reliance on western highly processed foods in addition to the already high fat and salt content in Sudanese food has led many Southern Sudanese migrants to experience negative health problems such as high blood pressure and diabetes. Women understood that their reliance on these foods was having an adverse effect on their health; however, many felt that they nonetheless relied on them to save time in their extremely busy lives. Many women talked about trying to make changes to reduce their fat and salt intake, though most still relied heavily on these dishes.

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Gendered Returns, Ambivalent Transnationals: Situating Transnationalism in Local Asymmetry[1]

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Abstract: Drawing on interviews with migrants to Halifax, Nova Scotia, this article illustrates the potential discrepancy between the aspirations of even the most affluent global migrants and the local contexts of immigration. Attracted to Canada for its pluralism, participants sought to contribute to Canadian society while ensuring new opportunities for female family members. However, faced with unemployment, participants developed transnational strategies that reinforced normative gender roles. Furthermore, these strategies engendered a kind of ambivalent transnationalism whereby participants wished to establish themselves locally but, due to conditions in the site of immigration, were compelled to remain highly connected to their countries of origin.

Keywords: business/investor migration, gender, class, cosmopolitanism, transnationalism, Nova Scotia Nominee Program, Canada

Résumé : À partir d'entrevues menées avec des immigrants à Halifax, en Nouvelle-Écosse, cet article illustre le décalage potentiel entre les aspirations des immigrants mondiaux même les plus aisés et les contextes locaux d'immigration. Attirés au Canada par son pluralisme, les participants cherchaient à contribuer à la société canadienne tout en assurant de nouvelles opportunités pour les membres féminins de la famille. Toutefois, confrontés au chômage, les participants ont dû élaborer des stratégies transnationales qui renforçaient la norme en matière de rôles sexuels. De plus, ces stratégies ont engendré une sorte de transnationalisme ambivalent dans lequel les participants souhaitaient s'établir localement mais, à cause des conditions dans leur lieu d'immigration, devaient conserver des liens étroits avec leur pays d'origine.

Mots-clés : immigrants investisseurs/d'affaires, sexe, classe, cosmopolitisme, transnationalisme, Programme des candidats de la Nouvelle-Écosse (Nominee Program), Canada

Migrant identities are generated, in part, through the activities of state institutions in conjunction with recruiting agencies, consultants, lawyers, the media, researchers and employers (Bello et al. 2005; Glick Schiller 2009; Tyner 2004). Drawing on both the technical (immigration and labour policies) and the discursive (ideology concerning both the benefits and risks of migration), these stakeholders create and offer intelligible yet frequently narrow articulations of what it is to be a migrant in a particular setting. Yet where individuals themselves are concerned, the "making of migrants," as it has been labelled by Tyner (2004), is not an altogether passive exercise, one in which potential migrants uncritically and unconsciously assume the identities imposed on them by state policies and the requirements of capital (Basch et al. 1994; Olwig 2007). Rather, the identities cultivated and harnessed by migrants reflect their deliberate efforts to access the benefits of globalization and mitigate the social and economic challenges of capitalism (Barber 2008; Hairong 2008). Responding to these opportunities and restrictions and reflecting the complexity of migrant decision-making, these strategies are at once reactive and creative, responsive and adaptive, and complicit and subversive. They are circumscribed, but not entirely determined, by the requirements, processes and outcomes of neoliberal capitalism.

Drawing on ethnographic field work[2] completed in Halifax with business and investor immigrants to Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada in the spring of 2009, the migrant narratives presented in this article illustrate the negotiation that occurs between identities cultivated by and imposed on migrants. Each of the migrants interviewed had been in Halifax for no more than two years and no less than six months. Countries of origin included Iran, the Philippines, Korea, China and Turkey. Nearly half of the participants were women. Attracted to Canada for its cultural pluralism and relative gender equality, this group of migrants sought to contribute to and participate in Canadian society; indeed, to live and engage

with difference. The manner in which they understood this participation was very much connected to a set of objectives intended to redress gender inequality as it was experienced by the migrants and their families in the country of origin with many of those interviewed (men and women alike) expressing considerable concern over the social, educational and occupational limits faced by female family members. In Nova Scotia, it was anticipated that female family members would benefit from opportunities for additional educational and career advancement and few social restrictions. However, their aspirations (regarded as attainable by virtue of class status, levels of education, employment experience, articulated in terms of a cosmopolitan openness to difference) were limited by structural barriers in Nova Scotia, inadequate employment opportunities, and subsequently, rapid downward class mobility. From this emerged a sort of ambivalent transnationalism, by which the migrants interviewed hoped to establish themselves primarily as Canadians in a multicultural Canada but due to a number of obstacles were unable to do so. The transnational strategies used to mitigate these obstacles tended to be highly gendered and, following from them, the gendered objectives of migration—increased mobility, opportunity and security for female family members—were largely undermined.

Class Status and Skill as Migration Pathways: Arrival through the Nova Scotia Nominee Program

Provincial Nominee Programs (PNPs) represent a shift in Canadian immigration policy. Prior to the late 1990s, immigration fell largely under the jurisdiction of the federal government. In an attempt to redress declining populations, augment economic growth, and encourage immigration to areas outside of Canada's larger city centres (Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal), the PNPs enable provinces to attract and nominate potential migrants for permanent resettlement according to their own local labour market needs (Carter et al. 2008). Potential migrants, once accepted by the province, are nominated to Citizenship and Immigration Canada, which makes the final decision on their applications. Following the success of PNPs across the country, the Nova Scotia Nominee Program (NSNP) was implemented in 2005.

While their countries of origin varied, the migrants interviewed all arrived in Nova Scotia under the economic stream of the NSPN, which was cancelled in 2006 after considerable controversy (see Dobrowolsky 2009), and all shared similar class backgrounds. Given the economist logic and labour market imperatives of the NSNP (and PNPs more broadly), the category "economic stream" is somewhat misleading. In a sense, it implies that the other streams are not economic in focus, while in fact they are. More precisely, then, the classification "economic" under the NSNP refers to a business class/investor stream in which applicants had to have a particular skill set (upper management experience) and certain levels of capital to qualify.

In line with the objectives of the PNPs across the country and the subsequent neoliberal reconfiguration of immigration programs, the stated goal of the NSNP business/investor stream was to meet Nova Scotia's social and economic needs by attracting qualified migrants who would bring their expertise, experience and financial capital to the province. To achieve this goal the business/investor stream of the NSNP carefully selected particular kinds of applicants. These would-be-migrants not only had high levels of human capital derived from successful entrepreneurial experience in the country of origin, but high levels of financial capital necessary to duplicate their success in Nova Scotia. The program required that in addition to business experience, successful applicants paid a one-time fee of C$130,000 most of which was given to Nova Scotia companies that had agreed to serve as mentors. For many of the nominees, the mentorship program, which was to include a six-month, middle management work term, did not go as planned; a number of the nominees were assigned positions well below their skill level, and, as was the case for those interviewed, many were not placed at all (OAG 2008). While the business/investor stream of the program was eventually cancelled, other NSNP categories remain active.

Much of the critique of the PNPs has focused on their tendency to recruit particular kinds of migrants, the downloading of resettlement responsibilities from the state to non-governmental agencies and eventually to the immigrants themselves, and their economic imperatives and subsequent class bias (Dobrowolsky 2009; Lewis 2010). Reflecting what Ley (2010) refers to as the commodification of citizenship, individuals who were able to pay the C$130,000 fee were effectively fast-tracked through the immigration process. Furthermore, as Dobrowolsky has argued, the economist logic of the business/investor stream of the NSNP was "conspicuous not only in terms of the institutions and actors involved, but also the ideas and political strategies to which they were committed" (Dobrowolsky 2009:21). That said, many of the migrants interviewed, even those whose incomes can be regarded as moderate (health care professionals, managers, and so on), saw this bias as a particular strength of the program—one which, given their own relatively high levels of income, they were able to take advantage of. Their class

status, in other words, was embedded in the immigration pathway available to them. That women generally tend to be relatively disadvantaged economically, however, meant that the class bias present in the program was equally gendered, with the business/investor stream representing a masculinized immigration category (Dobrowolsky 2009). Consequently, the vast majority of principal applicants were male with women arriving as spouses or dependants. This was reflected in the sample of those interviewed.

Among those interviewed class status was equally evident in the lifestyles and activities in the country of origin. Here, those interviewed spoke of high incomes, high levels of credit, private schooling for their children, summer homes, maids, multiple cars, drivers and travel. The migrants interviewed also spoke of their high levels of education and training. Most had upper level management experience, some had run large multinational companies, and many were successfully self-employed. Despite the emphasis placed on status and affluence in the country of origin, these were, however, always posited as conditional. Life was good, they maintained, but restricted by the socio-political environment in the country, the rapid pace of life, the near constant demands of work, and the limitations (delays) they experienced in relation to international travel by virtue of their citizenships. Notwithstanding the limitations of visa requirements and exit permits, all of the migrants interviewed had been able to travel and most did on a regular basis prior to leaving the country of origin. This travel and the cosmopolitanism it engendered emerged as a central feature of how the migrants understood and described their class background.

Further reflecting the class status of the migrants interviewed were many of the objectives for migration, which tended to be social in nature. Having enjoyed economic security in the country of origin, the migrants interviewed expressed none of the economic urgency that so frequently appears in the narratives of migrants concerning the decision to migrate. Instead, by virtue of their secure economic positions (characterized by high incomes, savings and other assets), they were able to downplay the economic impetus of migration and prioritize their extra-economic objectives including increased physical security and political stability, increased opportunities for female family members, spending more time with family, engaging in non-work related leisure activities, and meeting new people. This emphasis on the extra-economic, however, is not meant to suggest that those interviewed did not have objectives related to employment or class mobility, but that these tended to be tempered by these more social objectives. Part of this also stemmed from their expectations of eventual employment in Nova Scotia.

Most of the migrants interviewed expressed some insight into the limitations of Canadian labour markets—most had done considerable amounts of research and all had consulted their transnational and Canadian networks—and most anticipated a period of under- or unemployment. That said, and while employment was not the primary reason for coming to Canada, it was regarded as the obvious outcome of migration with men and women alike expecting to find employment comparable, if not identical, to that held in their country of origin. All believed that their class status, marked by a specific set of sought after skills and aptitudes, would hasten this process, and they believed that any gaps in experience or knowledge would be redressed through the mentorship component of the NSNP. Moreover, most believed that their cosmopolitanism—embedded in status, class privilege and specific values deemed "liberal"—would further mitigate these challenges. In relation to Canada, then, cosmopolitanism, cultivated in the country of origin and through travel, framed both migration objectives and strategies. Those interviewed hoped to reinforce their cosmopolitanism through migration to Canada, while at the same time, they anticipated that their cosmopolitanism would facilitate integration into Canadian society and Nova Scotia labour markets.

Cosmopolitan Identities and Cultural Openness

Cosmopolitanism represents a disembedding of agency and imagination from local or national contexts and a movement toward a global society founded on cultural hybridity and fluidity (Beck and Sznaider 2006; Delanty 2006). It denotes a commitment to the well-being of individuals regardless of where they are located and is predicated on a transcendent moral truth extending beyond the narrowness of nation-states (Unterhalter 2008). Cosmopolitans, the subjects of cosmopolitanism, then, are individuals who assume a position of "openness" toward difference: people, things and experiences that originate in locations different from their own. And while this openness is often circumscribed or may be even superficial (Skrbis and Woodward 2007), it informs how a growing number of people globally understand themselves in relation to others. This movement toward openness can be linked to the tactile experiences of globalization, the proliferation of various sorts of virtual, imaginative or corporeal mobilities (Skrbis and Woodward 2007), as well as the rhetorical potency of globalization (Kelly 2000).

Following, however, from the universalist-bent of cosmopolitanism, debates surrounding it have frequently evaded the analytical clutches of more normative

categories of identity: gender, culture, class, nationality, and so on, and instead emphasizing neutral, universal terrains. Stiven (2008) argues that this lack of concern over, for example, gender may be related to a broader disregard in political thought for that which is seen as "private," "domestic," or "intimate," spheres typically associated with women. The universalist or essentialist underpinnings of cosmopolitanism have led to a tension between Third World and First World feminists, with the latter accused of harnessing and perpetuating exclusionary epistemologies and practices that locate gender equity in the West and the most oppressive patriarchal relations in non-Western contexts (Walton-Roberts and Pratt 2005). Cosmopolitanism from this vantage point, then, is viewed as a civilizing project (Stivens 2008), an extension of an already protracted imperialism that permeates Third World/First World dynamics. Herein lies the tension of cosmopolitanism itself: openness on one hand, universalism on the other.

Attempts to broaden cosmopolitanism have resulted in the inclusion of subjectivities often ignored within the literature (Werbner 1999). Through the process of opening up cosmopolitanism, class emerges as an important feature of the debate: is cosmopolitanism the prerogative of the global elite, those who are easily mobile with high levels of capital, or is it an attitude, a way of living in the world, open to all including the working class (labour migrants, refugees, and so on)? In her early work Werbner (1999:18) argues that it is the latter, and that working class migrants inevitably "engage in social processes of 'opening up to the world', even if that world is still relatively circumscribed culturally." The manner in which the migrants interviewed engaged in cosmopolitanism was very much linked to their status as global elites (see Woodward et al. 2008). Yet, the processes described by Werbner are still very much applicable. The cosmopolitan identities cultivated and harnessed by the migrants interviewed corresponded to the global diffusion of images, narratives and ideologies concerning human rights and equality, and the migrants often situated their understandings of gender equality and multiculturalism in these universalizing yet clearly potent discourses. Fostered, in part, by these circulating discourses, the migrants interviewed can be regarded as having a particular disposition toward cosmopolitanism, a sensibility reflected in and reinforced by their activities and routines.

Before arriving in Canada, several of the migrants interviewed had lived outside of their countries of origin, some had been educated abroad, earning degrees and receiving training, all had vast transnational kinship and social networks, and all had travelled extensively. This back and forth was often regarded as a means of redressing social, political and economic restrictions in the country of origin. Following from these experiences, many of the migrants interviewed expressed an affinity toward ways of life different from their own. Added to this, many felt they had developed significant cross-cultural competencies: frequent travel to Canada, the United States, Europe and Asia; the transnational presence of family and friends; and university degrees earned abroad had given them a sense not only of the world, but also of their capacity to live in and with the world. Canada with its long history of immigration and its reputation for multiculturalism represented a microcosm of the world those interviewed wished to access. It was, as one male participant put it, an "international" place, and it represented an opportunity to engage with difference and to further develop cross-cultural competencies not just during travels but on an ongoing basis. As one female participant explained because of high levels of immigration in Canada, there were opportunities to meet and interact with people from different countries. She was excited about this possibility and anticipated that she would feel more comfortable in Canada relative to other migration destinations. While abroad, Canadian citizenship and a Canadian passport would facilitate their travel and subsequent engagement with difference. In these ways, Canada as a multicultural and, indeed, cosmopolitan place loomed large in their imaginations.

Like Werbner's (1999) working class subjects, the capacity of the migrants interviewed to "open up to the world" was predicated on a series of social practices (travel, accessing international media, and maintaining contact with friends and family abroad) that, if not culturally circumscribed, were simultaneously limited and propelled by the socio-political context in which they occurred. At the same time, however, and further reflecting the class privilege of the migrants interviewed, their particular cosmopolitan sentiments entailed a convergence of their willingness to "open up to the world" and their ambition to have the world opened up to them; their interactions with difference and their understandings of the "global" predicated on an appreciation of western liberalism and capitalist economics—their decision to come to Canada and to Nova Scotia in particular, partially informed by a desire to be more fully integrated into that socio-economic system.

Migration to Canada in itself became a particular kind of cosmopolitan project, one through which the migrants interviewed sought to expand their cosmopolitanism. Yet, as articulated by the migrants, cosmopolitanism was also very much a strategy: a means through which

the perceived limitations of global capitalism (although not expressed as such) were to be mitigated. Unlike the migrants described by Barber (2008) in her work, who adapted themselves knowingly and thoughtfully to the requirements of capital through processes of deskilling and performed subordination, this group of migrants hoped to overcome the normative relegation of immigrants to low-paid, low-status work by emphasizing their capacity to traverse diverse landscapes, to engage with the "other," and to fit in with Canadian society (as they understood it). In other words, by bringing to the forefront their liberal, cosmopolitan identities, this group of migrants felt prepared to overcome the limitations of migration as it is so frequently experienced. This was particularly well articulated by one male participant from Iran: "My wife and I are very interested in Canadian society. We match. Our [way of thinking] is very similar to the Canadian style." Yet, in Canada, faced with marginal employment opportunities and the subsequent "failure" of their cosmopolitanism, these migrants resorted to transnational strategies that reinforced their often ambivalent attachment to the country of origin.

Dominant Discourses and Gender Equality

Despite their affluence, all of the migrants interviewed felt constrained by the social, economic and political conditions present in their countries of origin. These were redressed through travel and the cultivation of cosmopolitan identities that, according to those interviewed, distinguished them from their compatriots in the country of origin. And in many ways and in spite of their privileged status within the country of origin they saw themselves in opposition to the political and social conditions present there. In talking about their cosmopolitan identities, the migrants interviewed frequently alluded to an affinity for Canadian multiculturalism and its corresponding values and practices. Equality, it was believed, was a very real possibility in Canada not just between different ethnic and cultural groups, but between men and women. In addition to the expectation of lucrative, meaningful employment, those interviewed arrived in Canada with particular expectations about the social and economic inclusion and participation of female family members.

Gender has emerged as a consideration for both conventional and more critical accounts of migration. In much of the earlier literature and paralleling the "cosmopolitanism as civilizing project" discussed above, it is anticipated that women's participation in national contexts (typically situated in the West) viewed to be more egalitarian will result not only in the empowerment of individual female migrants but also in the transmission of more equitable understandings of gender and the sexual division of labour in the country of origin (typically in the global South) (Fouron and Glick Schiller 2001; Pessar and Mahler 2003). And while much of this work focuses on the extent to which gender inequality informs migration pathways, in other words, who migrates and why, as well as the decisions of individual women in relation to emancipation from traditional gender roles, little research has been done on the extent to which gender equity informs the migration decision-making of families. Yet, for many of the migrants interviewed, men and women alike, gender equality represented a significant motivator and objective in relation to the decision to migrate, and a number of the migrants interviewed expressed specific objectives related to female family members, including both daughters and spouses. These included facilitating the growth and development of female family members and permitting their children, both male and female, more freedoms in light of higher levels of physical and political security. As one young woman who was in Nova Scotia from Iran with her mother (her father had returned to Iran to work) said: "[We came to Canada] because we can live better. The usual reasons. And because here, you know, we have some freedoms that we didn't have in our country." Echoing these sentiments, an Iranian man stated: "I have one daughter. I prefer to send [her] to a different kind of country, a more free country." Although female family members tended to be well-educated and employed, the migrants interviewed expressed considerable concern over both the social, educational, and occupational restrictions experienced by female family members in the country of origin.

With these objectives in mind, the decision to leave the country of origin was tied largely to the restrictions placed on the mobility of women, and, in this way, migration became a deliberate means of redressing gender inequality. That female partners and children were unable to access the opportunities and rights of their male counterparts in the country of origin was, for some, reason enough to leave. It is important to note, however, that while the promise of enhanced gender equality motivated the migration of many of those interviewed, the female partners of the men interviewed and the women interviewed had, with few exceptions, been employed in the country of origin. This employment, however, tended to be gendered even where it was highly professional, and additional opportunities for education, training, and subsequently, career advancement were seen as insufficient. This was particularly true for those interviewed from Iran, both men and women, who also cited various social restrictions as limiting the full participation of

female family members. One male migrant who arrived in Halifax from Tehran stated, "my wife is a paediatrician and she's very interested in continuing her studies, she is very sharp, and she can grow here." One female migrant, also from Iran, lamented the social restrictions placed on young people in Iran, commenting that in Canada, young men and women can socialize and date without fear of repercussion. For these migrants, then, enhanced emancipation was indeed perceived as located in the West. This does not negate the agency of women in the country of origin. Rather, it draws attention to the intersection of the migrants' cosmopolitanism (informed by their exposure to globalized rights discourses as mediated through travel, education and various kinds of transnational networks) and the objectives of migration. In this instance, gender equality as connected to a series of specific opportunities—labour market participation, educational advancement and particular kinds of social experiences—was regarded by the migrants as attainable in Canada rather than in the country of origin. For other migrants interviewed, where gender equality was more easily achieved in the country of origin vis-à-vis the labour market and access to education (for example, in the case of those who had arrived from the Philippines), other considerations related to gender emerged.

More often than not in the country of origin, despite both men and women working long hours in paid employment, domestic work was often performed by the female migrants or in some instances by female family members (typically grandmothers) or paid domestic labour. Even when they were not directly providing child and elder care, cooking and cleaning, the women interviewed were typically responsible for the management of these social reproductive tasks within the home. As a result, these tasks remained gendered not only in terms of who performed them (hired domestic labour or other female family members) but in terms of who managed them (the migrant woman interviewed). In the absence of paid household labour and female kin in Canada, several of the migrants hoped to renegotiate the conditions of the patriarchal household, with men and women and male and female children alike, engaging equally in a variety of household duties. Further illustrating the extra-economic nature of their migration, this hoped for shift in household or family gender relations paralleled an anticipated and even welcomed decrease in class status or appearance of class status. This was particularly true for those who had employed paid domestic labour in the country of origin.

For these groups of migrants, the value of gender equality (in both the domestic sphere as well as the public sphere of employment and education) was understood in terms of a universalism that can be likened to both their cosmopolitanism and their liberalism. It was a pre-existing value as opposed to one that was cultivated in the country of resettlement. And because gender equality and an egalitarian division of social reproductive labour was regarded as more likely to be achieved in Canada than in the country of origin, it informed their decision to migrate. As a result, a kind of reversal is apparent whereby the migrants interviewed arrived in Canada with an existing interest in and dedication to egalitarianism. This challenges both theoretical and more pragmatic framings of gender equality and women's rights as uniquely situated in the West and instead, diffuses it, linking it to global circulations of ideology but also locating it firmly within the country of origin (as embodied by the migrants prior to their departure for Canada).

For a number of participants, Canada represented the possibility of upward class mobility coupled with increased social opportunities and enhanced gender equality as reflected in educational and employment opportunities for female family members. For others, it represented the possibility of a shift in gendered family dynamics in the absence of female kin and paid (typically female) domestic labour. As opposed to potential or unexpected outcomes, these changes (both within the family and in relation to society more generally) were anticipated and hoped for; they constituted the objectives of migration and were regarded by those interviewed as fundamental. This remained true even when class status was jeopardized. Drawing on their cosmopolitanism, many migrants articulated their affinity for what they saw as core Canadian values: an openness to cultural difference, evident not only in multiculturalism but in Canada's increased efforts to recruit new migrants, and gender equality. Cosmopolitanism facilitated their move, motivating them to seek out new opportunities, and moreover, it was regarded as an asset that would expedite the processes of resettlement and integration. However, the hoped for outcomes of migration were unevenly attained, with most of the migrants interviewed unemployed and forced to rely on familial, social and business networks in and from the country of origin. This reliance on transnational networks was both unexpected and unwanted as demonstrated, in part, by the migrants' decision to move to Nova Scotia in the first place. There, they believed, they would be able to establish themselves independently of the large networks of their compatriots in larger Canadian city centres. Furthermore, the consequences of unemployment meant in some instances the re-establishment of normative gender roles as the migrants interviewed engaged in a number of unexpected transnational strategies that undermined the gendered objectives of migration.

Transnational Strategies: An Unexpected Reliance on Gendered Norms and Practices

While diverse, the objectives of the nominees can be conceptualized in relation to a particular kind of cosmopolitanism cultivated and pursued by the participants. As discussed in the previous section, very much a part of their cosmopolitanism was a genuine interest in redressing gender inequality as it was experienced by the participants in their various countries of origin. The "failure" of this cosmopolitanism in the site of immigration, Nova Scotia, was prompted by myriad social and economic conditions that are all the more salient where newcomers are concerned. As Chira (2011) points out in her work on international students to the province, relatively low levels of diversity and declining levels of immigration coupled with an overt dependence on informal social networks to access labour markets, has left many immigrants (typically without the local networks required to secure employment) struggling to find work locally. In the case of many of those interviewed, this resulted in a reliance on transnational networks to secure the employment and income they required. The consequences of this set of circumstances and the strategies it prompted were multiple and varied, yet frequently gendered in similar ways.

Unable to access the hoped for benefits of the mentorship program, which was meant to facilitate integration into local labour markets, and unable to secure employment in light of the social and economic configuration of that labour market, the migrants interviewed quickly came to learn that their previous successes were not so easily duplicated. And just as they had harnessed particular kinds of identities believed to be well-suited to foreign labour markets and immigration requirements, they were compelled by the circumstances of resettlement (in this context, characterized by the shortcomings of an immigration pathway predicated largely on economic outcomes and marginal employment opportunities) to re-evaluate these identities and adopt new, unexpected transnational strategies.

Transnationalism represents the ongoing connection among people, ideas and things across national borders (Basch et al. 1994). It differs from cosmopolitanism in that it is the "emerging reality of social life under the conditions of globalization," as opposed to the subjective feelings or attitudes individuals or groups may have toward that reality (Roudometof 2005). The transnationalism expressed in the migrants' narratives can be regarded as "ambivalent" in the sense that it was more profound than was anticipated. In other words, while the intention was never to sever ties with their respective homelands and while a transnational identity was both expected and desired, the breadth of these ties was unexpected.

The migrants interviewed all anticipated continued social and familial ties to their countries of origin. Some, by virtue of having already lived abroad or by the migration of family members, already belonged to vast transnational networks. Further, while many of the migrants came from relatively privileged families, most spoke of providing some financial or material support to family members. All spoke of regular visits to the country of origin, in some cases to provide respite for siblings caring for elderly parents, but in other instances for vacation. All remained interested in and informed of the political situation in their home countries, and all kept in regular contact (through email or by phone) with friends and family. In other words, the question was not whether they would remain connected but rather to what extent.

Unable to access the purported benefits of the NSNP business/investor stream (gaining necessary Canadian work experience and making contacts with professionals in their fields of expertise) or secure employment, most of the migrants interviewed engaged in a variety of modified survival strategies. These strategies were highly gendered, in some cases reflecting the very dynamics and hierarchies that migration was meant to remedy. For example, one couple returned to Iran after 10 months in Nova Scotia to sell property they had there. Downplaying her own employment potential while emphasizing that of her husband's, the participant stated:

> We had to sell property there because we needed money here. My son is in university. We needed money but there is no job for my husband, and I speak very little English. My husband is a doctor. We didn't leave Iran for any job. In our country, he worked very hard. For example, if he worked at McDonald's here, that would be very hard. In my country, he had a good position, a good position.

These sentiments were echoed by a woman whose husband commuted between Korea and Nova Scotia, spending two months in each location at a time:

> My husband is very smart. He is a businessman, "white collar." He comes to Halifax and he wants to live here, but right now he makes his money in Korea. He isn't able to find work or make money in Canada even though he is trying. Some Korean people come to Canada and they become "middle" workers, sometimes they even do dangerous jobs. This is a choice my husband won't make. He wants higher-level work, but because he can't find it, he stays in Korea.

In light of class considerations, professional experience in the country of origin, and levels of education, most of the migrants interviewed, but in particular the men, were unwilling to accept low-paid employment. There were exceptions to this. The husband of one woman interviewed took on employment that she described as "casual," doing translation for a telecommunications company, and several of the female migrants interviewed decided (albeit reluctantly) to work part-time well below their skill level. But again, and reflecting the gendered dynamics of the strategies employed by the migrants, these exceptions were themselves gendered with women more likely to accept low-paid, low-status work relative to their husbands. Despite these setbacks, several of the migrants interviewed described going to great lengths to maintain the appearance of class status and affluence despite their under- or unemployment and their dwindling economic resources (see Dobrowolsky et al. 2011). This meant buying a car, going on family trips, and ensuring that their children, in particular young children, did not recognize or experience the consequences of rapid downward mobility.

Faced with unemployment and generally unwilling to take on local survival jobs, many of the migrants interviewed developed strategies that spanned great distances and relied on familial, social, and business networks in the country of origin. For some, this meant continued employment in the country of origin, a strategy effective in cases in which one family income earner, typically the male partner/parent, had been able to maintain employment in the country of origin. In these cases, the migrant's spouse, typically the female partner/parent and children remained in Nova Scotia living on money earned not in Canada, as anticipated, but in the country of origin. The strategy itself was gendered, drawing on divisions of reproductive and productive labour; however, it was also predicated on access to employment in the country of origin. Take for example one couple from Iran; she was a doctor who sold her practice before leaving for Canada, while he was a businessman. He was far more able to re-establish himself professionally in Iran and, perhaps most importantly according to him, was able to do so independently. Put differently, in the case of this particular couple and, in fact, a number of those interviewed, the socio-political climate in the site of emigration in addition to the opportunities available in the site of immigration informed the strategies developed by the migrants.

Although living apart was not the ideal solution for those who embarked on this kind of strategy, it represented the partial attainment of the goals of migration: the female partner and children's security. That said, living alone in Canada, left a number of women in very precarious situations. This was particularly true for those who were not employed and who relied exclusively on their husbands' earnings abroad. Isolated, often with very little English, and uncertain of how to navigate the social landscape of Nova Scotia, these women themselves longed for the country of origin and the advantages they had there: cars, houses, maids, and the presence of friends and family. Furthermore, female partner/parents who may have been income earners in the country of origin yet were unable to secure employment in Nova Scotia, became fully responsible for the day-to-day responsibilities of social reproduction and household management in Nova Scotia. For some, this meant assuming responsibility for work that had previously been done by domestic labour or family. Their roles were, in essence, reconstituted within the traditional sexual division of labour. This division of labour, however, stretched across considerable distances, with social reproduction occurring in Canada and production or income generation occurring in the site of emigration, and as such it represented a new set of challenges and offered a series of unexpected outcomes. Notably, it compromised the awaited outcome of migration: increased social and economic mobility for female family members and, in several instances, served to diminish the autonomy achieved through paid employment in the country of origin.

For those women who took on low-paid, low-status work, the career advancement hoped for in Nova Scotia was also curtailed. Relegated to the very kinds of work they had hoped to avoid, their experiences came to correspond to those of so many labour migrants who are propelled through the circuits of global capitalism in search of employment: their skills devalued and underutilized yet representing considerable value added for their employers (Barber 2008; Ley 2010). Finally, separated from their children, a number of the men were not afforded the opportunity to engage in family and domestic life as they had imagined. For both men and women, then, normative gender roles present in the country of origin were reassigned and reinforced by the circumstances of resettlement. In these ways, gender equality, as it was envisioned by the migrants interviewed, remained elusive even in the context of migration and despite their arrival in the West.

Contradictions and Conclusions

Situated in global patterns and processes of interconnection and asymmetry, migration occurs at the intersection of a variety of material and discursive practices that are at once complimentary and conflictual. These include the strategies of states to control migration and to elicit

near permanent national allegiances despite emigration; the efforts of capital to obscure and maintain inequality between places and people in order to ensure the flow of labour and the accumulation of capital; and the objectives and activities of migrants and their families (non-migrant and migrant alike). Far from spontaneous or inherent, the identities of migrants are embedded in these practices, and they reflect the attempts of sending- and receiving-states to produce and attract particular kinds of migrants often to the benefit of capital.

Returning to Werbner's (1999) formulation of working class cosmopolitans, the migrants interviewed cultivated practices, forged identities and expressed objectives that were situated in a particular set of circumstances within the country of origin. These practices, identities and objectives spoke to the cosmopolitanism of those interviewed, their liberalism and their subsequent commitment to gender equality. Migration to Canada for many of those interviewed was very much understood as an expansion of their cosmopolitanism—an identity that had been previously developed through travel and ongoing engagements beyond the country of origin and harnessed through the immigration process. And although this objective was, in part, economically motivated, it was equally non-economic in nature. Here, the migrants interviewed prioritized security, political stability and social opportunities for both male and female children, but for female children in particular. Stemming from this, migration, and by extension their cosmopolitanism, was also regarded as a means of redressing the disparity between opportunities for men and women in the country of origin.

The NSNP sought to capitalize on the experiences and assets of a specific class of cosmopolitan subject. Despite these intentions, however, the program falsely, and to the detriment of many who arrived through the business/investor stream, assumed and presented a level playing field. It took for granted that success in one context would inevitably lead to success in another, and in so doing it overlooked the "geographical differentiation, the fundamental spatial breaks in culture, politics, and society that intervene and provide barriers" (Ley 2010:8). Ensuing from these barriers, the cosmopolitanism that facilitated migration through the NSNP did not help the migrants interviewed resettle or integrate in Nova Scotia as planned.

Once in Nova Scotia and faced with limited employment opportunities and rapid downward mobility (circumstances predicated on the asymmetrical positioning of places and people within labour markets), the migrants interviewed were compelled to develop transnational strategies that were at once informed by the conditions in the receiving- and sending-states (who could return and to what kind of employment). This reliance on transnational networks to secure employment meant a broadening and formalization of the transnational social fields occupied by the migrants interviewed. This expansion, however, was unplanned for and typically unwanted with the vast majority of those interviewed wishing to establish themselves socially and economically in Canada. These outcomes are important to highlight as they underscore the social ramifications of immigration programs geared explicitly to economic ends.

As outlined, the transnational strategies employed by many of the migrants interviewed to redress downward class mobility were themselves highly gendered, responding to the lack of opportunities deemed appropriate for male migrants in Nova Scotia, to conditions in the country of origin, conditions that prevented female family members from returning to the country of origin in order to work, and often to normative gender roles concerning child care. With male partner/parents working abroad and female partner/parents remaining in Halifax, this unanticipated transnational strategy corresponded to conventional divisions of productive and reproductive labour, and as such, it effectively undermined the gendered objectives of migration.

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Notes

1 A shorter version of this paper won the first CASCA Women's Network Student Paper Award in Feminist Anthropology, 2010.

2 Data for this analysis were collected under the auspices of "Who comes, who stays, and at what cost?: An ethnographic and political analysis of Nova Scotia's Provincial Nominee Program" for which the author was a research assistant. While the analysis presented here is the author's, use of this data has been authorized by the study's principle researchers, Dr. Pauline Gardiner Barber (Department of Social Anthropology and Sociology, Dalhousie University, Halifax NS) and Dr. Alexandra Dobrowolsky (Department of Political Science, Saint Mary's University, Halifax NS). I would like to extend my thanks to Dr. Barber and Dr. Dobrowolsky for their on-going support, encouragement and generosity. I would also like to thank the CASCA Women's Network for their support in the preparation of this manuscript.

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Book Reviews / Comptes rendus

Marie-France Labrecque, Manon Boulianne et Sabrina Doyon (dirs.), *Migration, environnement, violence et mouvements sociaux au Mexique. Dynamiques régionales en contexte d'économie globalisée*, Québec : Les Presses de l'Université de Laval, 2010, 369 pages.

Recenseure : *Anna Perraudin*
Cadis/EHESS

Entre la « décennie perdue » des années 1980, marquée par une série de crises économiques et politiques, l'entrée dans l'ALENA en 1994 et la remise en question de l'hégémonie du Parti Révolutionnaire Institutionnel (PRI), le Mexique a été confronté à des changements accélérés au cours des trente dernières années. Malgré les réformes menées en faveur d'une libéralisation de l'économie et l'influence d'agences multilatérales comme la Banque Mondiale, les inégalités sociales persistent. C'est aux impacts sociaux du néolibéralisme au Mexique que s'intéresse l'ouvrage dirigé par Marie-France Labrecque, Marion Boulianne et Sabrina Doyon, avec pour ambition d'offrir un panorama des dynamiques contradictoires engendrées par la globalisation dans le pays.

Fruit des recherches de chercheurs canadiens et mexicains, l'ouvrage collectif se donne pour projet d'appréhender les transformations du pays à partir de l'échelle régionale, pensée comme une interface entre le local et le global. Ce cadrage, outre sa relative originalité, favorise les comparaisons entre régions. La démarche comparative est adoptée à l'échelle de l'ouvrage, puisque les contributions sont ancrées dans plusieurs États (Estado de México, Yucatán, Veracruz, Tamaulipas, Guerrero, Oaxaca, Puebla, Chihuahua et District Fédéral), mais se retrouve également dans plusieurs des contributions. D'autres choix méthodologiques permettent de mettre en perspective les transformations liées à la globalisation : la plupart des contributions comportent une dimension historique et reposent sur la méthode ethnographique. On notera aussi le souci de l'ouvrage de restituer la diversité sociale du pays : plusieurs chapitres abordent la situation des populations autochtones. D'autres mettent en avant celle des femmes, ou s'intéressent aux jeunes générations.

Quatre grands thèmes structurent l'ouvrage : la migration, l'environnement, la violence et les mouvements sociaux. Sous chacun d'entre eux sont regroupés des chapitres qui abordent, à partir d'un cas d'étude précis et souvent sous un angle très original, l'une de ces thématiques.

La première partie est consacrée aux migrations internes et internationales. Dans le premier chapitre, Cristina Oehmichen analyse avec les outils de la théorie des réseaux et de la théorie bourdieusienne le développement par certains groupes indiens installés à Mexico de mécanismes corporatistes. Le capital ethnique est alors converti en capital politique et économique, afin d'obtenir des avantages pour l'exercice du commerce ambulant. Ivonne Vitzcarra et Bruno Lutz s'intéressent dans le chapitre suivant aux impacts de la migration internationale sur ceux qui sont restés au pays, sous l'angle des habitudes alimentaires. Ils mettent en évidence les difficultés tant des programmes de lutte contre la pauvreté que des transferts de devises des migrants à renverser des changements alimentaires sources de risques de santé publique (diabète, obésité, malnutrition). Plusieurs contributions reviennent d'ailleurs sur l'influence de modes alimentaires reliés au capitalisme néolibéral, en soulignant notamment la consommation croissante de soupes instantanées, y compris dans le monde rural.

Les projets liés à l'environnement font l'objet de la seconde partie. Deux chapitres y analysent la construction sociale de l'espace dans des régions côtières.Ils montrent le positionnement des différents acteurs sociaux autour des enjeux que posent les projets régionaux de conservation environnementale (chap. 3, par Sabrina Doyon, Andréanne Guindon et Catherine Leblanc) ou des politiques de gestion des catastrophes météorologiques (chap. 4, par José Luiz de la Cruz Rock). Les discours et pratiques de conservation sont institutionnalisés dans les politiques nationales et régionales, mais également réappropriés par les habitants, selon des logiques divergentes. Les analyses confrontent les politiques de conservation et leurs objectifs de réduction de la pauvreté à la persistance des inégalités sociales. Ainsi, pour José Luiz de la Cruz Rock, l'origine de la vulnérabilité n'est pas à chercher du côté des ouragans, mais du côté d'un modèle de développement engendrant un développement urbain désordonné et une détérioration des écosystèmes côtiers.

La troisième partie porte sur le phénomène de la violence. Martin Hébert adopte une perspective historique pour retracer l'« économie politique » des violences dans l'État du

Guerrero (chap. 5). Grâce à la notion de « convertibilité des violences » (p. 181), il met en évidence la variété et la variation des formes de violence, mais également la chaîne causale qui relie les violences observées localement à des structures régionales, nationales ou mondiales. En abordant le fémicide dans la région d'Oaxaca, Patricia M. Martin rappelle quant à elle la dimension genrée d'une violence spécifique contre les femmes, et propose une réflexion sur les liens entre citoyenneté et violence (chap. 6). Les initiatives de luttes contre les violences faites aux femmes sont mises en rapport avec les lieux qui contribuent à ce que ces violences se perpétuent, sous l'angle d'une « géographie politique féministe » : on observe alors la mise en place d'une « arène de la citoyenneté fragmentée mais inégale » (p. 233), dont la précarité produit des conditions propices à la perpétuation de la violence.

Enfin, la dernière partie de l'ouvrage est consacrée aux mouvements sociaux. Elle est peut-être celle qui comporte les objets les plus hétérogènes : une définition plus ferme de la notion de « mouvements sociaux » aurait permis de mieux saisir la cohérence entre les types de « luttes » très diverses qu'elle présente. Dans le chapitre 7, Manon Boulianne s'intéresse aux mouvements de la paysannerie dans le nord du Guanajuato, une région où la Révolution mexicaine a plutôt donné lieu à des mouvements sociaux contrerévolutionnaires, contrairement à ce qu'en dit l'imaginaire populaire et universitaire au sujet des luttes agraires. Au long du XX^{ème} siècle, des organisations éparses se sont mis en place, notamment autour du contrôle de l'eau, et les femmes y ont joué un rôle important. Les politiques néolibérales des années 1980 ont toutefois progressivement fait de la migration vers les États-Unis la principale stratégie de survie de nombreux ménages. Eduardo Gonzalez Castillo propose dans le chapitre suivant une réflexion sur les résistances opposées par des étudiants de Puebla à un projet de développement urbain, à partir duquel il retrace les évolutions des mouvements contestataires de jeunesse dans la région. L'article sert de support à une réflexion sur les liens entre espace public contemporain, action politique et action collective. Enfin, Marie-France Labrecque propose une comparaison entre les conditions de travail et les capacités d'organisation des travailleurs dans des *maquiladoras* des États du Chihuahua et du Yucatan. Elle montre combien les dynamiques globales de ces usines d'assemblages, fonctionnant sur la base de capitaux internationaux et très développées dans le nord du pays, se transposent dans le sud. Ainsi, en dépit des fortes différences entre ces deux régions, les similitudes l'emportent : la féminisation du mouvement ouvrier telle qu'elle est mise en place dans le cadre de l'économie globalisée entretient un faible niveau de militantisme et de syndicalisme. Les auteurs s'accordent pour signaler que le néolibéralisme, ou « libéralisme conservateur » (p. 340) domine les habitants, comme travailleurs et comme conservateurs, et infléchit les mobilisations collectives vers des revendications de plus en plus individualistes, axées sur des avantages immédiats.

L'ouvrage se conclut par une réflexion générale autour de la notion d'espace. Manon Boulianne et Sabrina Doyon proposent de penser le lien entre espace et relations sociales à travers trois notions qui interagissent : l'« espace colonisé » renvoie à la notion de *coloniality* (Grosfoguel) et aux rapports de domination qui se reproduisent au fil de l'histoire; l'« espace expérimenté » est celui vécu par les acteurs sociaux qui créent, transforment, donnent sens à l'espace géographique; enfin l'« espace contesté » est l'espace sociopolitique de la citoyenneté, des luttes collectives, de la résistance, qui rend compte de la capacité d'agir (*agency*) des acteurs sociaux. Ces différentes dimensions de l'espace participent d'un système de relations changeantes et multidirectionnelles.

L'ouvrage démontre « que les dynamiques contemporaines apparemment propres à la globalisation néolibérale constituent le résultat de facteurs présents depuis des décennies, dont certaines dimensions sont activées alors que d'autres sont freinées » (p. 27). Les inégalités sociales sont alors non seulement une conséquence, mais aussi le terreau d'une globalisation dont elles déterminent les traductions locales.

À l'issue de la lecture d'un ouvrage aussi riche, on ne peut qu'apprécier la grande cohérence que sont parvenus à maintenir les auteurs entre ces études de cas singulières. Cohérence due au fait que des thèmes transversaux, outre les quatre thématiques autour desquelles se structure l'ouvrage, recoupent les contributions : genre, inégalités sociales, relations interethniques, notamment. Les auteurs eux-mêmes font fréquemment allusion aux différents travaux en se citant mutuellement, ce qui ajoute au confort et à l'intérêt de la lecture. Même si l'on peut regretter de ne pas entendre davantage la voix de ces acteurs sociaux auxquels se montrent attentifs ces différents chercheurs, la pertinence de la conjonction entre une approche ethnographique, une mise en perspective historique et des jeux d'échelles spatiales est tout à fait convaincante. Le va-et-vient entre études de cas et efforts de théorisation plus large rend bien la complexité et l'enracinement dans des inégalités anciennes des transformations qui agitent le pays dans le cadre du néo-libéralisme.

Amit, Vered (ed.), *Going First Class: New Approaches to Privileged Travel and Movement*, Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2011 [2007], 172 pages.

Reviewer: *Julia Harrison*
Trent University

The contributors to the volume *Going First Class: New Approaches to Privileged Travel and Movement* (edited by Vered Amit) offer eight lucidly argued and clearly written chapters that demonstrate the strength of what anthropology brings to a subject area where it ventures all too infrequently: the examination of the lives of those deemed "privileged" in the world, and specifically in this case, the lived experience of those whose lives are shaped by travel and mobility. These essays examine the lives of those who could be seen in a broad

manner to be labeled, "first class." Amit's introduction situates the subjects tracked by the authors—diplomats, corporate executives (and their wives and families), international consultants, middle-class retirees, middle-class professionals, those comfortable enough to simply "opt out" of their daily lives and routines to retreat to yoga and spiritual centres, and a group of much-sought-after professional cinematographers—in the binary tension that informs a partiality towards the "local," counterbalanced with ideas that privilege the "global"—the latter presuming that one can belong anywhere and everywhere simultaneously. The fine-grained ethnographic detail of the lives of these mobile "elites" offered by many of these authors affirms that such "global" movement prompts layered strategies to manipulate, and at times endure, the "local" imposed upon such subjects. This volume contributes admirably to Laura Nader's long ago request that anthropologists "study up" highlighting in many of the essays the lives and realities of those who often "are taken along for the ride" on such journeys, willingly or otherwise. As such, several of these essays take the reader into the realms of those so transplanted. These essays specifically highlight the complexities of settlement and integration in the "new" and frequently temporary domestic spaces, continually re-created by such "privileged" movement. And even for those who seemed to have little linkage to these mundane spheres, such as the cinematographers that Greenhalgh tracked down, despite the assumedly glamorous landscape of the professional lives of these "stars" they eventually become dogged by the pull of the domestic realities of their lives. Such tensions eventually forced many to re-examine what it meant to be so tenaciously mobile.

Essays by Kurotani, Fletcher and Rodman take readers into the private, if not inner personal spaces of their subjects, finding contrasting realities there. Kurotani argues, ironically, that Japanese corporate executive wives in America relish their domestic space there as more "global," a less constrained domain than they would know in Japan. In contrast, Fletcher found the lives of a parallel cohort of European and North American partners of international corporate executives in Jakarta confined by "boundedness" of the "bubble" they were constrained to live in, resolutely isolated from the "global flows" that their lives might be imagined to inhabit. The intensely private journeys Rodman documented, taken in a yoga/spiritual retreat in Hawai'i, were both ones of personal transformation, grounded in a physical place and yet transcendent of any connection to it at the same time.

The lives of all travellers in this volume were never disconnected from the places from which they came. Essays by Amit and Oliver highlight the characteristics of the ties that produce understandings of both belonging at home and away. Amit argues the claims made by transnational discourse that ties to family and natal home are the resilient ones that continue to shape those who live mobile lives did not resonate with the realities of the lives of the international consultants she interviewed who had lived abroad for much of their professional lives. Rather the latter are often "weak" in relation to ties forged over the years with others who move and work in the same circles. In contrast, for many of the retirees in the south of Spain who are the subject of Oliver's work, one's "real" home always remains elsewhere, even if one does not want to regularly return there. Such desired distance is fostered by an understanding that the latter is a realm of tedium and personal limitation, inhabited as one retiree said by "fuddy-duddies" (p. 134). Regardless, the liminal space of southern Spain, resonating with the retreats described by Rodman, highlights the complexities of forging meaningfully constituted communities among such fluid populations. Their transient populations and a focus on "the self" perpetually work against such potential, even if the idea of community remains durable. Torresan's compelling analysis of the intricacies of acceptance of Brazilian middle-class professionals into the workforce and social spaces of Portugal demonstrates the fragility of any presumption of privilege, as such notions intersect with the entangled interplay of colonial legacies, the realities of class positioning, and obviousness of visible difference in their new home, flagging these immigrants to many Portuguese as distant but somewhat uncomfortable relatives, whose home in reality is elsewhere. In a parallel manner, Olwig's analysis of middle-class Caribbean migrants deftly teases out how cultural values and social relations informed by class positioning understood at home were challenged as they confronted vestigial colonial assumptions of who has the capacity to claim the privileges afforded by such positionings and understandings.

This small volume is a salient contribution to the scholarly examination of travel, tourism, migration, mobility, elites, globalization and transnational identities. Its arguments are sophisticated and probing, backed by rich ethnographic detail, made accessible by engaging and readable prose. It is a stimulating and pleasurable read. At a mere 172 pages, *Going First Class* could work well in a myriad of classroom situations, in courses that engage in many debates and discussions. I would highly recommend it for both personal and institutional libraries.

Choy, Tim, *Ecologies of Comparison: An Ethnography of Endangerment in Hong Kong.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011, 224 pages.

Reviewer: Alan Smart
University of Calgary

It might stretch an overused metaphor, but my reaction to *Ecologies of Comparison* is that it is a tale of two books. The first involves a set of exhilarating excursions through issues inspired by science and technology studies (STS); the second, an ethnographic study of Hong Kong based on the doctoral research of an anthropologist. My initial enthusiasm for this first book, influenced by my own current research that has brought me into productive engagement with STS, is severely tempered by dissatisfaction with a variety of elements of the second book. In doing so, it has also forced me to consider the

temptations for readers such as myself of high-velocity theoretical explorations, and the risks that "cheap theoretical thrills" might pose for anthropology. The two analytical projects may be brought together, Choy suggests, as "an ethnography of comparison" which "offers a close view into some of the comparisons, differentiations, and articulations that characterized environmental, political, and social scientific knowledge production" in 1990s Hong Kong (p. 6).

Our first book is more a set of essays than a monograph in the classic sense: the absence of a conclusion indicates this, although some themes do return in the final pages of the ultimate that have emerged in other essays earlier, particularly the relationships between particularity and universality, and the nature of contemporary localities interacting with encompassing scales of measurement and constitution. He begins from the question of the "specificity" of Hong Kong as it emerged in a variety of different kinds of discourse during his fieldwork. The first substantive chapter focuses on "endangerment"; both of pink dolphins threatened by land reclamation for the new airport on Lantau Island and other development processes, and of Tai O, a fishing village on Lantau. In talk about endangerment, he sees parallels with anxieties about Hong Kong's future in the wake of its return to Chinese sovereignty in 1997. Here my concerns about the second book, the ethnography of Hong Kong, began to emerge. There is only one written source about Tai O used, yet a number of studies have been conducted about the village, including by anthropologists Liu Tik-sang and Cheung Siu-woo of the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology. Some, but not all, of these studies were published in Chinese, which led me to realize that there is not a single Chinese publication in the list of references. This, in turn, led me to wonder about the issue of language fluency. Choy leavens the book with Cantonese terms, but it is not clear how much of the research was done in Cantonese and how much in English with the cosmopolitan environmentalists that appear so frequently in the discussion (an analysis of their accounts of adopting their environmental vocations is the subject of Chapter 5). In any case, there are relatively few anthropologists in Hong Kong's universities, so it is surprising that he did not discover that others had done work on Tai O. I also became aware in this chapter that despite considerable attention throughout the book to arguments between environmentalists and government officials, no government reports are discussed or listed in the references. For a study of the social construction of the environment, this seems a strange omission, and begins to raise questions about the solidity of the STS side of this study.

In the next chapter, Choy turns to analyses of "specificity" in Hong Kong, starting from an account of the scientific discovery of orchids unique there, and then turning to the anthropological preoccupation with the uniqueness of Hong Kong people. He criticizes these analyses, attempting to "denaturalize" the idea of "endangered Hong Kong way of life" and pointing out that the "pro-democracy mobilizations that emerged in anticipation and in the wake of the transition to Chinese sovereignty were primarily conservative" and were not attempting to "transcend conditions of finitude. Instead, it is to continue living as you were" (p. 70). This seems unfair to me: couldn't the goal of Hong Kong autonomy also be about preserving the possibility of becoming something else that China might not want it to be, about preserving the conditions for self-transformation? And if deconstructing the prominent idea that a Hong Kong identity only came into being since the 1960s was the goal, perhaps some close attention to dissenting historical accounts might have been useful. John Carroll's *Edge of empires: Chinese elites and British colonials in Hong Kong* (2005) for example argues that at least certain Chinese residents had developed a Hong Kong identity in the 19th century. History is at best thin in this volume, and even the review of the anthropology of Hong Kong leaves massive gaps. The seminal work of James "Woody" Watson, for example, is only represented by his edited volume on McDonald's in East Asia, neglecting detailed accounts of village life and politics that would have been relevant to the village-based environmental conflicts addressed in several chapters, particularly Chapter 4. Whether or not the book is an important contribution to STS, these failures to build on the existing state of the art limit its significance for anthropological knowledge of Hong Kong.

Even in the STS dimension, though, weaknesses appear, suggesting a thin body of knowledge in the relevant areas, or perhaps simply sloppy writing caught up in the theoretical pyrotechnics. Discussing the pink dolphins, Choy states that "everything hinges on endemism in the politics of endangerment. If the dolphins could swim somewhere else and survive, there would be no need to stop the dredging and dumping in Hong Kong" (p. 30). Hardly: much conservation science and politics concerns "local extirpation" rather than extinction, such as a current campaign by the Alberta Wilderness Association to protect the locally, but not globally, endangered greater sage grouse. Elsewhere, in the final chapter on "air" and its neglect in social theory, he states that "in colonial times, people cared mostly about heat and humidity" (p. 160). What about the widespread belief in the miasmatic theory of disease transmission through tainted air, that led to dual cities and segregated European areas like the Peak and is reflected in our word for malaria (mal'aria, bad air)? The massive bodies of work on colonial medical epistemologies and their impact on urban planning is completely absent here. More generally, the reader of this book would not be aware that Hong Kong is a city whose ecology and environment has been among the best studied in the world, including Stephen Vickers Boyden's pioneering *The Ecology of a city and its people: the case of Hong Kong* (1981), numerous studies since the 1960s to investigate whether the intense density of the city resulted in social pathologies, and vast volumes of work on urban sustainability.

If I knew nothing of Hong Kong, I could have probably left my reading with renewed enthusiasm for the insights of STS application of cutting-edge social theory to the production of scientific and environmental knowledge. Instead, I am left wondering what I have missed in similar books produced

about places that I have no knowledge. In the desire of anthropologists to play in the exciting arenas of interdisciplinary social theory, are we at risk of losing the strengths of intense research engagement with the social and cultural processes involved in the organization and transformation of particular places? Do we still need doctoral research in anthropology to first encompass the relevant work done in the fieldwork site in the past before following the exciting traces of global scales and theoretical debates? If not, what will be anthropology's distinctive contributions to the swirl of what we might call recombinant social science?

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Colloredo-Mansfeld, Rudi, *Fighting Like a Community: Andean Civil Society in an Era of Indian Uprisings*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009, 233 pages.

Reviewer: Kim Clark
University of Western Ontario

This book explores complex questions of indigenous identities, livelihoods and mobilization, in a country known for having perhaps the strongest indigenous movement in the hemisphere. The product of more than a decade and a half of research in several highland regions in Ecuador, *Fighting Like a Community* works up from local contexts to examine what it means to be an indigenous person, and an indigenous community, in Ecuador in the early 21st century. Colloredo-Mansfeld concludes that it does not mean uniformity, shared experiences and consensus. Instead, the very differences of perspective and experience that must be continually negotiated at the heart of such communities have informed a broadly based indigenous movement that is also able to navigate successfully considerable internal differences. This study shows all the signs of being a second book, the result of mature reflection on Ecuadorian society undertaken over time and in more than one region: the countryside of Imbabura around Otavalo, rural Tigua in Cotopaxi, and the migrant and working-class neighbourhoods in the south end of Ecuador's capital city Quito. If Colloredo-Mansfeld's first book—*The Native Leisure Class: Consumption and Cultural Creativity in the Andes* (1999)—is very good indeed, his new book is even better.

An economic anthropologist whose work illuminates political processes, Colloredo-Mansfeld squarely confronts the multiple ways of being indigenous by beginning his book with accounts of three indigenous men's very different careers in the artisan economy. The first third of the book introduces us to: the founder of Tigua painting, who uses his art to enable a life for himself and his family in the rural highlands of Cotopaxi; an Otavalo textile entrepreneur whose view of progress echoes some passages of Weber's *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (although the religion that sustains his vision is Mormonism); and a Tigua artist and community activist in Quito who has dedicated energy to organizing Tigua artists and resellers in the capital city, as well as channeling resources back to their communities of origin in Cotopaxi. The notions of the good life that each of these men pursues differ considerably, but it is significant that they all build their careers as people from particular places, particular indigenous communities, even when they work elsewhere.

Having presented a wide range of livelihoods and visions characterizing community members, Colloredo-Mansfeld turns to how indigenous communities nonetheless manage this diversity and the meaning of membership via processes of vernacular statecraft. In this area of the world where a number of elements of community structure were a product of the demands and pressures of colonizers and responses of the colonized in the 16th century (and before then, of shifting populations and identities under the expanding Inca empire), additional forms of legibility were promoted in the 1930s when the Ecuadorian government created the category of *comuna* in indigenous regions, with specific community offices and procedures. In the three situations of conflict and negotiation explored in the second third of the book, the author delves into such issues as the use of lists to record participation in community projects, how participants bring to life—make real and consequential—local jurisdictions, and how the structure of community offices and the symmetry between communities allows the negotiation of conflict that threaten to turn neighbours against each other. Throughout, Colloredo-Mansfeld reminds us time and again of how these processes take place where there are not only different careers and dreams, but also winners and losers in the new (and old) trajectories of indigeneity.

In the final third of the book, Colloredo-Mansfeld turns his gaze from internal community processes to negotiations with other groups that put additional pressures on the processes of vernacular statecraft and negotiation explored already. When Tigua artists in Quito are threatened with expulsion from their selling posts in a centrally-located park, they must negotiate with each other as they negotiate with municipal authorities and mestizo artisan associations. When community members have encounters with the legal system they must navigate not only court offices and legal procedures, but contradictory indigenous values. And when they block roads as part of a national uprising against a free trade agreement, they must negotiate internally (as community members may also suffer from a civic strike), as well as with regional and national actors, both inside and outside the state. In all cases, Colloredo-Mansfeld depicts the truces and temporary alignments that facilitate what are usually only partial successes. However, he emphasizes the larger significance of the processes followed

more than the results achieved: any consensus (or in some cases, simple consent) generated is not a product of community homogeneity but rather of working through differences, acknowledging divergences, and listening to contrary arguments. He concludes that the strong and politically significant indigenous movement in Ecuador has a complex relationship to local forms of indigenous organization, in which indeed the two levels or instances of mobilizing fulfil different functions, rather than simply building on each other. And again, given the diversity of Ecuadorian indigenous peoples in the Andes and the Amazon, in rural and urban areas, in trade associations and in local agricultural organizations, and the myriad shades of winners and losers when it comes to indigenous livelihoods, the ability to work through difference at the local level is probably central to how this larger movement itself has been built. Moreover, those methods, procedures, and negotiations are central to how indigenousness is lived today, having broken through prior definitions that tied indigenous life to rural poverty, remoteness and marginalization.

The title *Fighting Like a Community* aptly captures Colloredo-Mansfeld's emphasis on the importance of community, but also on internal differentiation and the ongoing process of resolving differences (temporarily) as specific projects are pursued, at the same time as communities participate—fight—in much broader political processes as well as economic ones. No short review can do justice to the complexities of this fine book. I have used it successfully in an undergraduate course on Latin America, and have recommended it to graduate students and colleagues interested in indigenous mobilizing, globalization, relations between indigenous peoples and the state in Latin America and elsewhere, and political anthropology. It repays a close reading, and will be of interest to a broad audience.

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Menzies, Charles R., *Red Flags and Lace Coiffes: Identity and Survival in a Breton Village.* Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2011, 160 pages. (From the book series *Teaching Culture: UTP Ethnographies for the Classroom.*)

Reviewer: Victor Barac
University of Toronto

Red Flags and Lace Coiffes is an "historical ethnography" of Le Guilvinec, a coastal fishing village in the Bigouden region of Brittany, France. It draws on a variety of historical and scholarly sources in addition to the author's own extensive ethnographic fieldwork in the region since the mid-1990s. An intriguing element to this book is the author's biographical connection to fishing. He grew up in a fishing family in British Columbia and made his living as a commercial fisher before becoming a professional anthropologist. Such life experiences provided him with a well-defined comparative vantage point from which to study fishing in Brittany. It also gave him a valuable basis for bonding with his informants who tended to view themselves as social outsiders.

The substantive aim of Menzies's book is to provide an account of how and why the "artisanal fishery" of today came into being. On the level of social theory, Menzies's mission is to introduce the basic concepts of classical Marxism (without coming right out and saying it) mostly by way of lengthy asides or digressions within an otherwise engaging ethnographic narrative. Menzies employs the model of class struggle (mediated by gender and kinship) as the conceptual underpinning of his analysis, privileging "agency" over "structure."

It is, however, in his analysis of the "structure" of fishing where Menzies is most compelling. He is at his best when weaving the complex tale of the transformation of production in Bigouden: how the development of new technology, the exploitation of new resources, and the transformation in the organization of labour created the conditions for a larger epochal shift that occurred in three well-defined historical phases.

The first, the pre-industrial, is characterized by a peasant, subsistence-based agrarian economy where fishing played, at best, a supplemental, seasonal role. During this period the region was only loosely integrated into the larger French nation-state and was more rooted in the locally based Celtic culture.

The second, industrial, phase, dubbed The Sardine Years (1864-1936), was dominated by large commercial interests which employed local men on fishing ships and local women in canneries in large numbers. The big companies benefitted from French protectionist policies and exercised strict labour discipline which led to militant labour unionism and various acts of resistance now remembered and mythologized in local social memory. Indeed it is this militant period to which the *Red Flags* of the book title refers. This period marked the transformation of the region from an agrarian to an industrial fishing economy and, to modernity.

The third phase, the present-day "artisanal fishery," developed in the vacuum left behind by the protracted demise of the big fishing companies, who moved their operations elsewhere. The artisanal fishery consists of family-owned fishing vessels, usually skippered by their owners and worked by a combination of wage and family labour. New technology has allowed smaller fishing vessels to exploit a wider range of marine resources with much greater efficiency. In addition to technology, a key factor abetting the rise of the artisanal fishery was the enactment of French and European Union legislation that has rendered large-scale commercial fishing in the region no longer viable. The closing of the canneries has furthermore resulted in great changes for women, whose "multitasking" lives require them to run both their homes and the business end of the family fishing enterprise, in addition to having to work part-time to make ends meet. The artisanal fishery has exploited new opportunities provided by the expansion of tourism and the rise of local, fresh fish markets. In comparison to the big "capitalist" fishing enterprises, the artisanal fishery is judged by Menzies to be more ecologically and economically sustainable.

As a book intended for the undergraduate classroom, *Red Flags and Lace Coiffes* comes in at a relatively light 160 pages, including the glossary and index. Yet, much is packed into such a small format, including an attempt to capture the "messiness" of everyday life within an ordered, political economic analysis of the rise of the Bigouden fishery. Such a task requires a balancing act between microscopic description and macroscopic analysis not always successfully pulled off by Menzies. The frequent side trips into the byways of Marxist theory, while maybe of interest to advanced students, offer few enhancements to the more captivating, purely ethnographic passages of the narrative.

At various places Menzies tries to shoe-horn his observations into pre-defined theory. For example, in looking for the class conflict at the root of the contemporary artisanal fishery he is forced to admit that things have become more complicated by the advent of white collar jobs generated by the expansion of labour unions, the state, and "a private sector dominated by artisanal social relations in which explicit class-conflict models of struggle had become more memory than reality" (p. 44-45). In this case the theorized antagonistic relationship between skippers and crews is tempered, in the artisanal fishery, by an underlying egalitarian, family-like social ethos operative on fishing boats, as documented by Menzies.

Somewhat annoying also are the numerous references to "struggle," "crisis," "the violence of capital" and other such epithets peppering the narrative. A discernible pattern of over-use leads to the conclusion that "struggle" has been deployed more for its effectiveness as political rhetoric than as the analytical tool it was intended to be. The political rhetoric at times is taken to extremes, such as when an anti-government demonstration by boat owners together with their fishing crews becomes, in Menzies eyes, a demonstration against "late" capitalism, pure and simple (p. 42). Poetic, perhaps, but this kind of social analysis can only lead to a reversal of the conventional meanings ascribed to emic and etic perspectives in anthropology.

Quibbles aside, *Red Flags and Lace Coiffes* delivers the goods when it comes to providing an in-depth account of the advent of the artisanal fishery from the perspective of production. It employs a variety of data sources to inquire into the roles of social class, gender and kinship in sustaining the fishery. In addition, the author's work experience as a fisher allows him to succinctly identify key aspects of Bigouden marine ecology and the ever improving industrial foraging technologies that make fishing possible and economically viable in the region. Attuned to historical context Menzies has written a readable, plausible and convincing account of the interplay of local and supra-local factors in the rise and subsequent development of the Bigouden fishery of France.

Nelson-Martin Dawson, *Fourrures et forêts métissèrent les Montagnais. Regard sur les sang-mêlés au Royaume du Saguenay*, Québec : Septentrion, 2011, 314 pages.

Recenseur : Fabien Tremblay
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Après avoir été professeur associé à l'Université de Sherbrooke pendant une dizaine d'années, Nelson-Martin Dawson se fait connaître des anthropologues s'intéressant aux questions autochtones, en 2002, par ses écrits sur la « disparition » des Atikamekw, des Ilnus et des Algonquins. Leur dévoilement dans les médias fait alors monter aux barricades nombre d'entre eux. Les travaux de l'historien sont à cette époque vivement critiqués, à la fois à cause de leur propos et du fait que ceux-ci, initialement rédigés pour le compte d'Hydro-Québec, ont pour but de fournir des arguments à la société d'État en cas de litige avec ces nations. Globalement, ces anthropologues spécialistes des questions autochtones reprochent à l'historien son manque de connaissances relatives à son sujet d'étude et l'incompréhension dont il fait preuve à l'égard de ceux qu'il étudie (Bouchard 2002, Charest 2002, Mailhot 2002, Savard 2002).

Il est fort à parier que le plus récent livre de Dawson, *Fourrures et forêts métissèrent les Montagnais...*, suscitera également plusieurs réactions, tant dans le monde académique que sur la scène politique autochtone. Dans ce dernier ouvrage, en plus de poursuivre sa réflexion sur le parcours historique des « Montagnais » (Ilnus) du Saguenay–Lac-Saint-Jean, Dawson prend position dans un débat d'actualité fort délicat sur la scène régionale : la reconnaissance historique d'une identité collective métisse. En effet, les Métis ne sont toujours pas reconnus au Québec et n'y ont donc aucun droit particulier. En 2003, la Cour suprême du Canada a néanmoins pavé la voie, en ce sens, aux « communautés historiques métisses » se situant en dehors de l'Ouest canadien[1]. Le Saguenay–Lac-Saint-Jean

abrite l'une des premières organisations métisses du Québec à revendiquer, en vertu de ce jugement, des droits particuliers pour les Métis qu'elle représente[2].

Dans ce contexte, le dernier livre de Dawson s'intéresse au « métissage à l'œuvre sur le territoire de la Ferme de Tadoussac, depuis les premières heures du régime français jusqu'au moment de l'ouverture du Saguenay à la colonisation agroforestière, au milieu du XIX^e siècle » (p. 18). Le questionnement autour duquel tourne l'ouvrage est le suivant : les conditions de coexistence dans cette région du Québec entre le XVII^e et le milieu du XIX^e siècle « pouvaient-elles cultiver l'émergence d'un groupe distinct de ses sources initiales et façonner un *monde de l'entre-deux*? » (p. 24). Cette délicate question amène l'historien à explorer une variété de « sources primaires et secondaires » : des relations des jésuites et autres rapports de missions à l'« abondante correspondance administrative coloniale au temps de la souveraineté française » en passant par les « plus discrets échanges épistolaires de Marie de l'Incarnation » et certains récits de voyage dont « les volumineuses relations de Samuel de Champlain ». À cela s'ajoutent certaines cartes anciennes, quelques annales – dont le journal des jésuites –, des archives de l'Hôtel-Dieu de Québec ou encore les mémoires de Nicolas Perrot et de Louis Nicolas.

La thèse principale que défend Dawson dans *Fourrures et forêts métissèrent les Montagnais...* s'inscrit en partie dans la continuité de ses ouvrages précédents. Elle s'appuie sur l'idée que les Montagnais ont été presque totalement décimés au courant du XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles, entraînant ainsi une rupture dans la filiation entre ces derniers et ceux que l'on reconnaît aujourd'hui comme étant les Ilnus. L'originalité du présent ouvrage réside dans l'intérêt que porte l'auteur sur les conditions de cohabitation entre Amérindiens et colons qui ont suivi ce déclin des Montagnais. Ainsi, la controversée « disparition » laisse graduellement place à un discours plus nuancé de la « transformation » que Dawson développe en s'appuyant, notamment, sur les concepts d'ethnogenèse et de métissage.

L'ouvrage se divise en deux parties, chacune d'entre elles étant composée de quatre chapitres. La première partie porte sur ce que Dawson appelle l'« ethnogenèse intra-amérindienne ». Selon l'auteur, la diminution démographique progressive des Montagnais engendrée par les épidémies, l'alcool et l'épuisement des ressources fauniques au courant des XVII^e et XVIII^e siècle auraient favorisé l'« incursion de nouvelles communautés » (p. 117) créant ainsi une « nouvelle réalité multiethnique » (p. 118). La deuxième partie, qui explore principalement la période de la « colonisation agroforestière », porte sur ce que Dawson qualifie d'« ethnogenèse extra-amérindienne ». L'auteur y explore plus spécifiquement la question de la cohabitation entre colons et Autochtones et y présente une analyse des « conditions de métissage dans le contexte de l'ouverture du Saguenay aux coureurs des bois, d'abord, aux *jobbeurs*[3] des bois, ensuite [...] » (p. 24).

Les conclusions que tire Dawson de son « exploitation maximale des sources » sont sans équivoque : il semble peu probable, selon l'auteur, que le noyau métissé observé dans la région ait pu conduire à l'émergence d'une identité collective distincte. Deux éléments permettent à l'auteur de statuer sur la non-existence de l'ethnogenèse d'une telle communauté métisse dans la région. D'une part, « L'ensemble des données socioprofessionnelles relevées pour ces lignées ancestrales reconstituées ne souligne que très rarement le cas d'individus marginalisés, en optant pour une vie différente de celle de la masse des défricheurs saguenéens » (p. 215). Dawson souligne également le fait que « L'analyse des données concernant les ancêtres de ces lignées d'ascendance mixte confirme [...] l'absence de concentration qui aurait pu donner naissance à une communauté originale sur la base d'une souche singulière » (p. 217). Ainsi, au terme de son étude, Dawson soutient qu'il ne saurait parvenir à identifier de « culture métisse » distincte ou encore une « communauté » composée de gens ayant une ascendance mixte qui aurait pu évoluer en « vase clos » au Saguenay–Lac-Saint-Jean. « [Dans la région], souligne-t-il, est donc souvent plus Métis celui qui se croit Indien que l'agriculteur issu d'un couple mixte d'ancêtres. Ce constat colore significativement la microhistoire régionale » (p. 229). C'est peut-être pourquoi l'auteur, dans le titre de son ouvrage, préfère l'expression de sang-mêlé[4] à celle, politiquement plus chargée, de Métis.

On a déjà reproché à l'historien de ne pas suffisamment donner « d'informations sur la méthodologie employée » et d'utiliser « à tort et à travers des concepts non définis » (Charest 2009). Le dernier ouvrage de Dawson, en ce sens, ne se distingue malheureusement pas des précédents écrits de l'auteur sur les Autochtones. C'est particulièrement vrai lorsqu'il traite de métissage. Dawson le dit lui-même : « La question du métissage demeure fort délicate » (p. 12). Pourtant, lorsqu'il l'aborde, l'historien se contente d'un peu d'étymologie, nommant au passage, ici et là, quelques ouvrages sur le sujet. Il évite ainsi de se positionner d'un point de vue théorique, ce qui affaiblit grandement sa démarche. La littérature sur le métissage est abondante. Dawson aurait tout eu à gagner à s'y référer. Cela aurait sans doute permis d'éclairer le propos. Au lieu de cela, le lecteur doit se contenter de formules confuses telles que « monde de l'entre-deux » et « l'entre-deux-mondes », et de termes imprécis tels qu'« intersection » ou encore « bigarrés ».

L'historien est visiblement mal à l'aise avec le vocabulaire anthropologique. C'est particulièrement frappant lorsqu'il parle d'altérité. Notons, plus généralement, que sa façon d'appréhender le concept d'identité laisse perplexe. Le point de vue de l'auteur à cet égard est en effet réducteur. Les indicateurs qu'il tente de documenter afin d'identifier ce qui pourrait constituer une identité collective métisse dans la région à l'étude se résument au « statut socioprofessionnel » des personnes d'ascendance mixte identifiées dans les documents historiques et à leur concentration géographique. Le scepticisme du lecteur atteint son paroxysme dans le dernier chapitre du livre où l'auteur se livre à un exercice où il met lui-même en garde le lecteur, celui de « l'analyse généalogique à rebours ».

Comme le note Dawson, jusqu'à présent « peu de chercheurs ont porté un regard analytique sur l'important creuset

identitaire que constituait l'expérience coloniale » (p. 211). C'est probablement, d'ailleurs, pour une question d'authenticité culturelle que la question du métissage entre Amérindiens et colons a si longtemps été ignorée par les chercheurs. L'ouvrage de Dawson, en ce sens, constitue un apport original à l'historiographie québécoise et espérons qu'il inspire d'autres chercheurs. Néanmoins, les nombreuses faiblesses de l'analyse qu'il présente en font une contribution négligeable dans le cadre des études métisses.

Plusieurs anthropologues ont souligné la difficulté de définir culturellement les communautés métisses du Canada. Cette difficulté est une conséquence directe du fait que le terme « métis » est en lui-même porteur d'ambiguïté et qu'il ne peut difficilement échapper à sa signification originale et première de « mélange ». S'il ne semble pas y avoir de consensus au sein de la communauté scientifique sur la façon de définir les Métis au Canada, notons cependant que les critères de définition juridiques, dans la foulée du jugement Powley, semblent de plus en plus servir de repères aux chercheurs. C'est dans ce contexte de judiciarisation et de politisation de l'identité métisse qu'il faut lire le plus récent Dawson. Notons, finalement, que la popularisation soudaine des recherches sur les Métis dans laquelle il s'inscrit laisse déjà présager plusieurs difficultés épistémologiques. Ces études sur l'ethnogenèse, en plus de faire ombrage aux données ethnographiques, pourraient, à partir de critères réducteurs inspirés des décisions juridiques, conduire à nier une réalité historique fort complexe.

Notes

1 Cour suprême du Canada, Jugement rendu le 19 septembre 2003 dans la cause de Sa Majesté la Reine contre Steve Powley et Roddy Charles Powley, Ottawa, Cour Suprême du Canada, 2003, n° du greffe 28533.27, paragraphes 10 et 12.

2 La Communauté métisse de Domaine-du-Roy et de la Seigneurie de Mingan au Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean défend présentement un de ceux-ci devant la Cour supérieure du Québec dans une affaire d'occupation illégale du territoire (Procureur général du Québec 2008).

3 Jobbeur : du mot anglais *jobber* : sorte d'entrepreneur qui établissait des contrats avec des compagnies forestières pour fournir du bois de coupe.

4 Il est intéressant de noter, à cet égard, que le terme sang-mêlé, bien qu'il soit généralement invariable, est accordé au pluriel dans le titre de l'ouvrage.

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Reviewer: Scott Simon
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Anthropology's Orientalist Slot? Masculinity and Chinese Nationalism in the Ethnology of Taiwan

Michel-Rolph Trouillot argued that anthropology is the West's "Savage slot" (Trouillot 2003: 2). Part of a wider symbolic field, anthropology contributed to the West's self-congratulatory discourse. In this imagined geography, (1) sociology, history and so on focused on the West, (2) literature and philology constructed the "Orient" (Said 1979), and (3) anthropology studied the non-literate Rest. Since the Cold War emergence of area studies, some anthropologists have also filled an "Orientalist slot" by acquiring Asian literacy to combine textual knowledge with ethnographic detail. When they construct rigid boundaries around imagined versions of Chinese or Japanese "culture," as in Ruth Benedict's *Chrysanthemum and the Sword* (1946), they recreate what Eric Wolf called "a model of the world as a global pool hall in which the entities spin off each other like so many hard and round billiard balls" (Wolf 1983:6). After decades of self-reflection, some have apparently not moved far from Benedict's shadow, even as studies of cultural patterns and national personalities have been discredited elsewhere. This disorienting effect is most evident in studies of Taiwan, where boundaries around "China" and "Taiwan" are strongly contested.

Two new books, by Avron Boretz and Marc L. Moskowitz, may represent a new trend in Orientalist anthropology:

multi-sited research crossing political boundaries of the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Republic of China (ROC, *aka* Taiwan). *Cries of Joy, Songs of Sorrow* is a fine example of field research and cultural analysis. The theoretically dense *Gods, Ghosts, and Gangsters* blends literary analysis with ethnography of Yunnan and Taiwan. Both works are erudite contributions to anthropology. This is precisely why they merit a critical reading, which should in no way deflect from their scholarly value.

Wenrou, Wu and Wen: Looking for Chinese Masculinities

Both books explore masculinity in innovative ways. Through analysis of lyrics, as well as interviews with mostly women, Moskowitz points out the irony that most Mandopop songs are written by men for women performers who complain about men. His approach is largely a psychological comparison of American and Chinese genders. Moskowitz demonstrates discomfort with uncritical use of the word "western," instead using "the United States as a comparative point with China and Taiwan" (p. ix). His focus on Mandarin helps him elucidate common gendered themes across the region, for example the Buddhist term *yuanfen* (karmic relations). Moskowitz finds Confucian themes of relegating women to the home, and Taoist conceptions of feminine *yin* balanced with masculine *yang* (p. 76). Lyrics have "conservative" conceptions of innate gender characteristics. Women are portrayed as dependent on men, stationary and waiting, whereas men are more likely to be independent, active wanderers (p. 71).

Moskowitz highlights the term *wenrou*, usually translated as "gentle, tender," and used positively for both genders. Describing wenrou as "effeminate masculinity" or "tender androgyny," he compares it to the American "rigid idea of male physiques and personas" (p. 89). Likewise, "unlike in the United States, where androgyny is often looked down on as lacking manliness, in Taiwan muscular bodies are often associated with stigmatized lower class occupations, gangsters, male gay culture, or barbaric Western physiques" (p. 89). At a symbolic level, Moskowitz shows that PRC music, like its politics, is masculine (even "macho"), in contrast to "southern feminized" Taiwan, Hong Kong and Shanghai (p. 27). Moskowitz uses gender to address regional politics: "Mandopop revolves on several axes—female/male, subject/ruler, Gang-Tai/PRC—and in each case yin seems to be victorious over yang as a way to humanize the masculinist rhetoric of state politics ... Taiwan's pop retaking of the mainland is therefore a gendered invasion" (p. 87). He thus imagines Hong Kong and Taiwan (Gang-Tai) as the feminine half of the traditional Chinese *tai-ji*, a discourse that binds the two halves essentially to one another. A separation is unthinkable.

The relevant psychological comparison is between American and Chinese cultures. Echoing modernization theory, Moskowitz argues: "whereas many in the West might look at the separation from friends and families as an unfortunate but inevitable event, in modern China and Taiwan, individualism has been ushered in by the modern capitalist infrastructure at such a fast pace that it has not yet been naturalized ... when so much of their culture tells them that they are part of a greater whole" (p. 56-57).

Boretz's rich ethnography of temples and ruffians in Taiwan, with a brief detour to an ethnic minority village in Yunnan, provides a deeper sinological analysis of Chinese masculinity. Boretz examines *wen* (the civil and literary) and *wu* (the military or martial) masculinities. On the wen side are men who, like Moskowitz's wenrou males, have literary talent, refined tastes, and emotional sensitivity. In imperial China, such men pursuing careers as literati and government officials were models of masculinity. On the wu side are men of martial prowess exemplifying knight-errant virtues of loyalty, sincerity and righteousness. Overall, wu and wen, "encapsulate a historical contest between common and elite structures of values, respectively, within Chinese society" (Boretz 2011:41).

Boretz ventures into the unexplored (for anthropology) territory of *jianghu* (rivers and lakes), inhabited by vagabonds, outlaws and others alienated from mainstream society (p. 31). Boretz's research was based in Taidong on Taiwan's East Coast, which was declared to be part of the Chinese empire as late as 1875, but had little government authority beyond a handful of outposts in valleys and coastal enclaves. This harsh frontier, originally inhabited by feared aboriginal headhunters, attracted adventurers, sojourners and fugitives from western Taiwan (p. 72). Taidong's working-class people still maintain a "wild frontier spirit," a sense of "rootless, treacherous and peripheral existence" (p. 86).

Boretz analyzes masculine practices including tattooing, self-mutilation rituals, martial processions, and carousing with women in karaoke bars. Through anecdotes of gangster moralities and practices, he shows that men are motivated by martial ethics, courage and self-control, illustrating "the very object of wu masculinity: to embody (self-)productive, (self-) transformative, efficacious power" (p. 211). Boretz sees individuality as intrinsic to Chinese masculinity. In the patrilineal family, men are subordinated to their fathers for much of their lives, even as they desire personal autonomy (p. 11). Martial rituals participants are "in pursuit of individual affirmation as a particular kind of vigorous, aggressively masculine man" (p. 18); or "attempting to produce themselves as autonomous subjects in their own terms" (p. 127). Individuality is thus not an American particularity; but rather a way of asserting autonomy within social relations, an intrinsic part of the Chinese masculine psyche.

By combining fieldwork with literary analysis, for example of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) martial arts novel *Water Margin*, Boretz attempts to show that this way of being is essentially Chinese. Left unsaid is that his Bai and Taiwanese informants also have good reasons to claim that they are *not* heirs to China's 5000 year cultural history. If anything, both Yunnan and Taiwan were incorporated into an expanding Chinese empire at different historical periods without the consent of the original inhabitants. If we were talking about other parts of the world, we would call it "colonialism" (Vickers 2011).

The Power-ful Problem of "Chinese Culture"

Both books focus primarily on Taiwan, but claim to represent "Chinese culture." In both cases, the ethnography of Taiwan is full of thick description, whereas that in the PRC is thinner. Moskowitz based his book on 65 interviews in Taipei, but only 18 in Shanghai. Boretz has a chapter on Yunnan's Bai Fire Torch Festival which, ironically, is held by an ethnic minority to provide Chinese tourists with "ethnic colour" (Boretz 2011:113) rather than represented as "Chinese culture." PRC field conditions make it difficult to conduct long-term, detailed research without state interference. Boretz, after describing Taiwanese rituals, says that popular religion in the PRC is "stridently challenged" and "remains a touchy subject" (Boretz 2011:159). Boretz could participate in rituals in Taiwan and establish long-term rapport with gangsters, but this "did not and probably could not have happened in the mainland" (Boretz 2011:175).

Both authors claim current social practices have ancient roots. For Moskowitz, men writing lyrics for women is partially an "extension" of literary traditions from the Warring States period (480 BCE – 221 BCE) when male poets used female characters to symbolize their powerlessness vis-à-vis the state (p. 71). Boretz compares contemporary drinking and carousing practices to Zhou Dynasty (1050-771 BCE) customs. At least Boretz recognizes that he cannot know if modern practices are actually *derived* from earlier forms (p. 177); what seem more important for him are the *poetics* of the comparison. He treads on safer ground when he documents the history of Chinese migration to both Dali (Yunnan) and Taidong (Taiwan). Those chapters are useful because they demonstrate how China was constructed.

Moskowitz makes stronger political claims, for example "the northern sphere (Beijing) houses the PRC government *whereas Hong Kong and Taiwan still retain political autonomy in the south*" (p. 26, emphasis added). He thus denies the political sovereignty of the ROC on Taiwan, which not even "pro-unification" leaders in Taipei, from Chiang Kai-shek to current president Ma Ying-jeou, have ever done. Moskowitz sometimes occults facts to make his argument. He writes, "when Japan lost the Second World War in 1945 it was forced to cede Taiwan to China as part of the treaty" (p. 33), but fails to specify *which* treaty. Is this the 1952 *Treaty of San Francisco*, with 48 state signatories, in which Japan renounced "all right, title and claim to Formosa and the Pescadores" without specifying the recipient? Or the 1952 *Treaty of Taipei*, signed by Japan and the ROC, which defined ROC nationals as "all the inhabitants and former inhabitants of Taiwan (Formosa) and Penghu (the Pescadores)"? The latter document proves that the ROC was, three years after the founding of the PRC, a sovereign state able to sign important international treaties. It is counterfactual to imply that the ROC is not a sovereign state or that Taiwan, similar to Hong Kong, is an autonomous zone of China. Intentional or not, Moskowitz appears to support PRC claims over a territory they have never governed.

The arbitrary nature of cultural analysis is visible in both works. For Moskowitz, Chinese masculinity is androgynous compared to American norms; whereas for Boretz there has always been a Chinese balance between literary and martial masculinities. For Moskowitz, individualism is a capitalist influence; whereas for Boretz, personal autonomy has long been the ultimate goal of Chinese men. Already in the 19th century, Marx made fun of philosophers who were looking for the fruitness of fruit (Trouillot 2003:5). By looking for the Chineseness of Taiwan, we return to Wolf's billiard table.

The goal is not to replace "Chinese culture" with "Taiwanese culture." The question is why it is considered legitimate to look for an essential culture or national personality at all. This is important, not because many people on Taiwan contest so-called Chinese identity (even though they do), but because anthropology has moved elsewhere. Wolf demonstrated that the culture concept originated in 19th German nationalism (Wolf 1999:29). Often employed for political control, it needs to be used prudently: "if culture was conceived originally as an entity with fixed boundaries making off insiders from outsiders, we need to ask who sets these borders and who now guards the ramparts" (Wolf 1999:67).

In all fairness, Boretz and Moskowitz both accomplished well the research tasks they defined for themselves. Boretz's book will become classic in the ethnography of "Chinese" folk religion; and Moskowitz adds new insights to the study of pop music. Yet cultural anthropology, to the extent that it still reifies certain place-based identities as "cultures," risks becoming the social poetics of nationalism. These otherwise excellent Taiwan-based ethnographies, although probably not consciously intended by the authors, refract Chinese nationalism. Perhaps this is because both anthropologists do fieldwork where nationalist ideologies are fiercely promoted and contested; or perhaps because they are surrounded by area studies specialists debating what the rise of China means for Taiwan. In the final analysis, anthropology's Orientalist slot, like its Savage slot, remains in use.

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