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ABSTRACTS OF THESES IN SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY FOR WHICH DOCTORATES WERE AWARDED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD IN 1998

F. S. J. ABEL, Structure and History in Kisar. (BLLD 48-8060)

The focus of the present thesis is a study of the Oirata of southern Kisar, in eastern Indonesia, who provide a demonstration of the structural historicity of socio-cosmic constructions, in which the historical manipulations of symbols aim at a total construction and reproduction of the life and maintenance of society. In this historical ethnography, I set out to describe the Oirata 'flow of history' from the hills of Manheri and Mauhara into the 'old houses', *lé ina lé ara*, of the present. The architectural enactment of socio-cosmic categories indicates the immersion of people into genealogical history, *la 'it ara*, the genealogical 'tree of the past', without which there is neither humanity nor society. Being the most deeply embedded layer of belonging, genealogy is not only history as heritage but also as pragmatic politics.

Editors' note: The research theses in social and cultural anthropology listed here are those for which doctorates were awarded by the University of Oxford in 1998. The text of each abstract is as supplied by the author. Those wishing to consult a particular thesis should apply to the Bodleian Library of the University or the British Library Lending Division (BLLD), which should be able to supply microfilmed copies or reprints on request. BLLD reference numbers have been provided below where available.

From the 'old houses', I move to the social and moral 'structures of belonging' that embody history as continuity and transformation. More than in houses or in physical spaces, transformations take place within people's biographies and genealogies. The most important structure of historical transformations is marriage. The Oirata regard marriage as the realm of ritual, symbolic, and political transformations, in which cosmic principles frame human practice; by creating what I call a 'stranger mechanism', the Oirata operate structural re-enactments of the mythical journeys of the past. Nevertheless, every marriage is always a new path which consummates all powers of repetition. Effectively, the Oirata defy structural prescriptions and assign unspoken primacy to historical contextuality.

M. BALZANI, Changing Traditions and Rituals of Legitimation: Studies in Kinship from Jodhpur, Rajasthan. (BLLD 49-10159)

This thesis, based on fieldwork carried out in Jodhpur between 1988 and 1990, deals with kingship and its relation to authority, legitimation, and power as understood in contemporary Rajasthan. These issues are approached through various instances of 'the invention of tradition' and through a multidisciplinary perspective.

Work by historians, ethnohistorians, religious studies specialists and political economists, as well as anthropologists, inform the ethnography which provides the descriptive material of the thesis. Data for the thesis came from archival records, written histories, interviews, and ethnographic observations.

Unlike some recent texts which have documented the continued function of royalty in South Asia at the levels of village and household, this thesis considers the position of 'kings' and their courts in modern Rajasthan.

Each chapter is in the form of a case-study which takes a ritual act of the Maharajas (*matampursi*, royal funeral; *darbar*, pilgrimage, ritual ploughing), locates it in historical context, and tries to suggest its contemporary significance.

The first two chapters deal with aspects of death rituals as they pertain to Rajput royalty. The third describes the *darbar*, where the Maharaja enacts his role as central pivot of the state and source of all authority in relation to the elements that go to make up his domain. The final two chapters examine a well-publicised pilgrimage and a private ploughing ritual undertaken by H. H. Jodhpur as responses to recurrent drought. Chapter Four deals with communalism and the nature of a shrine, associated with Muslims, untouchables, and women. Where Chapter One considers the manner in which a ritual performed by the rulers of Jodhpur has altered almost beyond recognition in recent decades, the last chapter examines a ritual which, although archaic, has, from the perspective of the Jodhpur royal household, been invented only in the last few years.

P. BERGIN, Maori Migration and Cultural Identity: The Australian Experience. (BLLD 48-5525)

Since the 1970s there has been a significant migration of New Zealand Maori people to Australia. The scope of this thesis, for which fieldwork was undertaken between 1994 and 1996, is to investigate the shaping and management of Maori cultural identity in Australia. Fieldwork was conducted mainly in metropolitan Sydney and New South Wales, focusing principally on those people of Maori descent who have chosen to express Maori cultural identity in the context of Maori communal activities.

The importance of the *whanau* (extended family) is revealed in the chain of cultural identity and belonging; the *whanau*'s importance is manifest in the metaphorical use of the *whanau* concept by a variety of Australian Maori groups.

The processual aspect of Maori identity is apparent in patterns of Maori language use, the activities of cultural groups, and at the *tangihanga* (mourning rituals). Death is a paramount occasion for Australian Maori to express solidarity, and may influence attitudes with regard to the value of Maori language and customs. The *tangihanga* may also heighten a sense of *iwi* (tribal) rather than pan-Maori identity. The issue of whether to bury a deceased migrant in Australia or New Zealand raises important questions as to where the Maori migrant belongs. Transitional links with New Zealand remain important.

Maori cultural identity has also been shaped by ascriptions, both negative and positive, which Australians have applied to Maori. The situational identity of Maori in Australia is revealed by Maori shearers and musicians. A feature of Maori identity in Australia is the growing sense of identification with the interests of indigenous Australians. Maori have sought to respect Aboriginal affinity with their lands, but Maori–Aboriginal relationships are not unproblematic.

Some people of Maori descent do not wish to participate in Maori cultural or communal activities or even identify as Maori. Sporting involvement, for example, reveals the multiple contexts of belonging for Maori in Australia.

F. W. GRIFFITHS, Ethnoeconomics and Native Amazonian Livelihood: Culture and Economy among the Nipode-Uitoto of the Middle Caqueta Basin in Colombia. (BLLD 49-10165)

By examining a series of formal oral texts about horticulture, the discussion reveals that the Uitoto hold a dualistic cosmology, in which life is seen as a ceaseless struggle to repel de-humanising and pathogenic forces in the cosmos. It is argued that the Uitoto see their gardening activities as a continuous affirmation of their humanity, and as the practice of cleansing internal human space through the expulsion of harmful elements to the 'outside': the peripheral space beyond the house

and settlement. Within this schema of concentric dualism, subsistence activities are conceived of as a continual process of selecting useful elements from the 'outside' which are then purified into life-giving for incorporation into the physical body and social corpus on the 'inside'. As well as fostering social peace within the human community, garden work strives to maintain cordial relations with parental divinities and related garden spirits, who sustain and protect humanity from negative forces in the cosmos. In the same way, regular labour effort in narcotics processing, and the production of garden surpluses for ceremonial exchange, has as its fundamental logic the strengthening of the support of divinities and ancestors who ensure continued social reproduction.

Overall, Uitoto models of livelihood feature a pervasive logic of reciprocal nurture, care, and helping between humans, and between humans and spiritual beings. Alongside the key cultural rationale of reciprocity, Uitoto theories of work and well-being focus on cyclical bodily processes. The primacy of a bodily idiom reveals cultural models of a 'corporeal economy' and a 'healing economy', which may find correlates in Amerindian models of livelihood and social reproduction throughout the ethnographic region. Examination of native perspectives on commerce shows that the Uitoto construct a dualistic model of their mixed livelihood which they use to organise their work strategies in the short and long term. As well as a secure source of food, native people value subsistence gardening as a specific practice which not only expresses, but also guarantees their Amerindian personhood: for the Uitoto, their livelihood practice is an essential part of their ethnic identity.

L. M. HOECKLIN, Motherhood in the Fatherland: Toward Understanding a 'Mother Centre' in Southern Germany. (BLLD 48-522)

High unemployment, negative job growth, high labour costs, tight fiscal policy, and high social transfers, combined with an ageing population, below-replacement birth-rate, and a decline in the extended family are structural conditions facing Germany in the 1990s. The roles of the state, the family, the labour market, and other institutions are being renegotiated to deal with these important changes. Internationally, Germany is also attempting to redefine its role and identity in a changed political context. This study explores changing social constructions of 'motherhood' in one area of Germany within the context of the nation's perceived current economic, demographic, and social 'crisis'.

I consider the discourses and symbolism with which motherhood is currently being elaborated. From my fieldwork, I first detail my experience with a group of women who organised around the social identity of 'mother'. I then consider the structural embeddedness of particular assumptions about appropriate gender behaviour in the welfare, labour market, and educational systems. As social 'bodies',

these institutions are made to represent and reproduce particular kinds of social persons in specific relations to one another and to the state. Finally, I trace some historical conceptions of motherhood, their interrelations with ideas of childhood, personhood, and family, and relate these to changing social, economic, and political circumstances. This includes changing uses of women's persons and behaviour in the process of nation-building.

I argue that partly due to the current socio-economic and demographic 'crisis', as well as due to external constraints of Germany's attempts to construct a national identity and to assert its 'national interests', various powerful groups are formulating political discourse and policies with the implicit and explicit use of women as mothers and *Hausfrauen* to represent harmony, stability, orderliness, and the difference of the German nation. This is accompanying a shifting of responsibility for what are being redefined as 'private needs' away from the state to 'private families', and to women within them.

L. HONEYCHURCH, Carib to Creole: Contact and Culture Exchange in Dominica. (BLLD 47-10866)

This is an ethnohistorical study of the Carib people who inhabit the Carib Territory (officially called the Carib Reserve), on the north-eastern coast of Dominica, which is one of the islands of the Lesser Antilles in the eastern Caribbean. It analyses the historical background of the Caribs from the time of their initial contact with Europeans and Africans through the period of colonisation, and considers the effects which the centuries of culture exchange have had on the indigenous societies of Dominica up to the present.

This heritage is considered in relation to the cultural revival movement which has developed since the 1980s as part of the hemispheric action being initiated by indigenous peoples of the Americas for greater recognition and rights. Promoting Carib identity in this context has become important to the community on many levels. The thesis assesses the manner in which the Caribs are using their history, material culture, and association with their land to articulate their indigenousness in the face of the centuries of cultural and biological admixture with people of European and African descent known as Creoles.

The thesis concludes that although it may be true that these symbols are distorted and exaggerated, they are not entirely invented, for they originate in the history and culture of the Carib people. Even if, in many ways, the Caribs have become as Creole as their fellow countrymen, the social fact is that in the present circumstances, they see it as important and advantageous to define themselves as Caribs in their engagement with Creole nationalism and the world beyond. By promoting their association with the cultural markers of Caribness, their cultural activists seek to engage with the current international concern and interest in in-

digenous groups in the hope that it might eventually reap some good for their people.

M. KAWHARU, Dimensions of Kaitiakitanga: An Investigation of a Customary Maori Principle of Resource Management. (BLLD 49-10167)

This thesis is an investigation of *kaitiakitanga*, a customary Maori principle of resource management. Despite *kaitiakitanga* as a concept only recently coming into common usage, particularly since the Resource Management Act 1991, its underlying values and practices have always been an integral part of tribal life. Chapter One explores *kaitiakitanga* in its customary context. It will be seen that it meant a wide range of things to Maori people, from trusteeship and guardianship, to resource management and sustainable development. Furthermore, *kaitiakitanga* is a socio-environmental ethic and has an important role in maintaining a triadic relationship between human beings, the spiritual realm, and the natural environment. Thus, according to Maori thinking, *kaitiakitanga* is a holistic concept that brings together all dimensions of the cosmos. It has continued to be important in contributing to the sustainability of kin groups. But, in order to understand its relevance in today's tribal society, it is necessary to explore the constraints and opportunities for exercising it that have developed over time. Prior to European arrival, it was mainly environmental factors, such as the health of environmental resources, kin-group population, and their needs for survival which determined the ways in which *kaitiakitanga* would be exercised. However, since contact, and particularly since the Treaty of Waitangi, Crown policies and programmes have had the most profound effect on kin groups in maintaining and developing their resource management practices. Chapter Two, therefore, discusses the transitional phases of *kaitiakitanga* since contact. It looks at how it was applied within a changing environment and what implications the new circumstances brought for Maori people. Maori society was to undergo even further change after 1840, when the Treaty of Waitangi was signed between Maori and the Crown. Chapter Three discusses the relationships between *kaitiakitanga* and *rangatiratanga*, the latter being the pivotal factor of Article Two of the Treaty. It was not, however, until the Native Land Court system was finally established in 1865 that its greatest effects upon Maori society were to be felt, especially as a result of the introduction of the individualization of title to land.

W. KELLY, Empty Orchestras: An Anthropological Analysis of Karaoke in Japan.

Karaoke first emerged in the amusement districts of western Japan twenty-five years ago and has since developed into one of the nation's most popular and lucrative leisure industries. Based on field research conducted within the karaoke industry between May 1995 and March 1996, this thesis traces the emergence and subsequent development of karaoke from an activity initially confined to Japan's urban amusement quarters, where it was associated with the 'after hours' leisure of mostly male company employees to one which now caters to every sector of the population.

The approach is holistic, encompassing economic, technological, musical, and performance aspects of karaoke-singing which have developed in tandem with one another. Focusing on the development of what the karaoke industry refers to as its 'day market' and the transformation of karaoke-singing into a manifestation of youth culture, the thesis examines karaoke with respect to the leisure patterns of the young, the consumption and production of popular music, and the articulation of generational and gender differences.

It is argued that in the course of its expansion, karaoke has gradually moved from the periphery to the mainstream of Japanese life. Promoted by the karaoke and music industries, the mass media, and even the Japanese government as a forum which facilitates interpersonal communication within the work-place, the family, or among peers, and pursued by its core enthusiastic practitioners in the context of karaoke classes or correspondence courses, karaoke is becoming established as a 'national culture'.

It is suggested that karaoke's widespread and enduring popularity in Japan can be explained, at least in part, by its compatibility with established modes and patterns of social interaction and, in this sense, constitutes an example of what Simmel refers to as 'sociability'. The broad base of participation in karaoke amongst diverse sectors of the population raises the wider question of whether a dichotomy between high (élite) and low (mass) culture is an appropriate or even useful framework for making sense of karaoke-singing in Japan.

S. C. MCFALL, Keeping Identity in its Place: Culture and Politics among the Mapuche of Chile. (BLLD 49-10169)

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the strategies employed by an indigenous people in Chile to confront large-scale development projects threatening their territory. I argue that the different groups involved in the defence of the land use their own culture as one of their principal strategies, using ritual and symbols, language and rhetoric, as means of distinguishing themselves from national society. In this way they hope to prove that these development projects are ethnocidal and that

removing them from the land is tantamount to taking away their culture and thus transforming them into Chileans.

Through an examination of how the Mapuche define themselves, I will demonstrate that the relationship with the land is the key element in distinguishing Mapuche from Chilean. Territory is conceptualised as an interlocking network of families, communities, and ritual congregations. Moreover, the land is the locus of communication with the ancestors, the focus of much of Mapuche religious activity; and thus Mapuche identity is formed through a sense of being in place and time, centred on rural territory.

P. TAPSELL, Taonga: A Tribal Response to Museums. (BLLD 49-10170)

The goal of this thesis is to provide a tribal interpretation of *taonga* in relation to their care and management within today's metropolitan museums. It is divided into five main sections. Each section, comprising a number of chapters, develops an understanding of *taonga* from the kin-group perspective of Te Awara, a major tribe of the Maori people of New Zealand.

The thesis opens with a foreword titled 'Taonga: A Tribal Response to Museums'. It presents a philosophical discussion revolving around the genealogical connections Maori tribal identity represents in our late twentieth-century context of global mobility and communication. It considers the pathways ancestors have travelled to arrive in Aotearoa–New Zealand and how today's descendants, like *taonga*, in museums, can now be found living in metropolitan areas throughout the world. The introduction concludes with a précis of the upcoming five sections titled: 'Taonga'; 'Marae', 'Tangata Whenua'; 'Mana Taonga'; and 'Mana o te Whenua'.

Section One investigates the concepts of *taonga* and its associated customary meanings. According to tradition, *taonga* can be any item, object, or thing which recognisably represents a kin group's *whakpapa* or genealogical identity, in relation to its estates and tribal resources. *Taonga* can be tangible, like a cloak, or intangible, like a song. *Taonga* are 'performed' during life crises to give descendants an opportunity to locate themselves genealogically back with their ancestors upon the surrounding landscape. Essentially, *taonga* tie people and land together as one. After the arrival of Pakeha (British descendants), however, the alienation of lands led to many of these items being released into new spheres of exchange, and they have since become entangled within a wider context of Western objectification in private collections and museums.

Section Two examines the ceremonial courtyard called a *marae*, the quintessential focus of tribal Maori society, which not only represents customary authority over surrounding land, but also provides the forum on which *taonga* are ritually performed. It begins with a historical investigation of the ancient origins of the

Polynesian *marae* and its transformations as it crosses the Pacific to arrive in New Zealand some twenty generations ago. It then traces the development of *marae* within New Zealand before and after nineteenth-century colonisation by Britain, with specific attention being directed upon the Te Arawa region. After the Second World War the *marae*, as a focus of kin-group identity, underwent transformations as its descendants began migrating from relative rural isolation to metropolitan areas. Out of this relocation arose new ways of maintaining identity which included the genesis of the visitor-tribal and the non-tribal, urban *marae*.

LING-LING WONG, The Post-natal Ritual of Han Chinese Women in Taiwan. (BLLD 49-10171)

This study examines the Han Chinese *tso yueh-tzu* post-natal practice in Taiwan, analysing it from a ritual perspective, isolating its static and dynamic properties, and noting the change and continuity in the ways that it is practised today. This ritual is interpreted in terms of the Han Chinese world-view, social order, symbolic system, and social network. The aim is to see how a ritual structurally restores and transmits cultural beliefs and social relations, and practically, how Chinese, particularly Chinese women, make and remake their world by practising the *tso yueh-tzu* ritual.

For the Taiwanese people, childbirth constitutes a critical juncture for an individual and the social group. By practising the *tso yueh-tzu* ritual, people help members pass through this critical time, and more importantly, produce and reproduce social relations and cultural beliefs, as well as the ritual itself. The *tso yueh-tzu* ritual, then, is a process of transformation that involves past experience, present circumstances, and future intentions. When Chinese, especially Chinese women, practise the ritual, they embody culture, link the individual and society, and ultimately fulfil the self.

Structurally, through practising the *tso yueh-tzu* ritual, the actors connected with it communicate with each other within the meaning and value framework of this system. The dynamic properties of this ritual allow people strategically to utilise optional ritual acts and symbolic substances to express understanding and intentions based on their experience. The ritual meaning, then, is more than a passive explanatory system that only projects a static or institutionalised picture of a social and cultural system; it is also an interpretative, changeable, and dynamic process, wherein the discourse of social relations and cultural beliefs are deconstructed and reconstructed.