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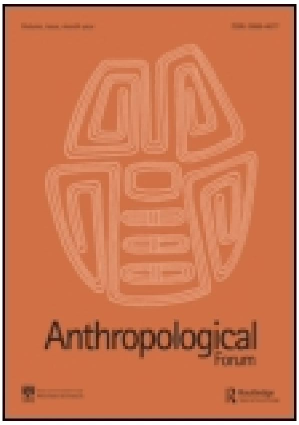

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Mythes, missiles et cannibales: Le récit d'un premier contact en Australie

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would have preferred the use of 'evidence' to 'data' here but this is far too large a discussion for a review such as this. The final chapter in this section looks at the process of writing an account. Here he adopts a 'storied' approach and works hard to show how we engage in writing in different ways. This taking apart the complexity of writing an ethnographic account is very helpful. The author elegantly covers a lot of ground here and makes a clear argument for a strong connection between evidence and interpretation. He ends with some comments on the importance of considering style in our writing.

The final section of the volume, 'Expanding ethnography', contains a single chapter, 'Ethnographic horizons', that serves both as a conclusion to the volume and an exploration of some ways we might imagine a broader context for being ethnographic. The author focuses particularly on the ethnography of cyberspace and our relations with animals as two exemplars of how we can expand the space of being ethnographic into new topics and domains of social life. The point of this exercise is to demonstrate the flexibility of ethnography and, therefore, its continued relevance as a way of making knowledge, of being ethnographic.

This one small volume cannot possibly deal in detail with every issue, every theoretical perspective or every discipline where we might find ethnographic work being done. What the author has done is to provide us with a most useful introduction to the reflexive practice of this important craft. Reading this account will not in itself transform the reader into an experienced ethnographer; but there are ample useful insights and techniques to help practitioners develop their skills.

Mythes, missiles et cannibales: Le récit d'un premier contact en Australie, by Laurent Dousset. Société des Océanistes, Paris 2011, 194pp., photographs, maps, bibliography, index. ISBN: 978-2-85430-029-1 (paperback).

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This volume offers a thorough account of the first years of interactions between white 'settlers' and Aboriginal populations in the Australian Western Desert, in particular the group now called Ngaatjatjarra. The circumstances of colonisation in this region are exceptional. Originally, Australian settlers had no intention to venture in this arid immensity. It is only in the wake of the Second World War that this part of the continent was chosen as a site for nuclear testing. The Giles meteorological station, subsequently set up in the desert, thus became the theatre of the first long-term interactions between Ngaatjatjarra people and white workers. This situation is unique in Australia: settlers had no missionary intentions and were not in competition with locals for land or resources. Dousset offers a captivating account of the years following the establishment of the Giles meteorological station in 1956, finally leading to the 'transfer' of Ngaatjatjarra people to the neighbouring mission of Waburton.

Mythes, missiles et cannibales contributes a critical view of Australian colonial history, complementing classic works such as Rowse (1998) and Cowlishaw (1999). The narrative is well-paced, pleasant to read, and will be of interest to both a specialist- and a non-specialist-audience. On the way, the author provides a welcome introduction to Australian ethnography and colonial history, which will be useful to students or readers less familiar with the Australian context.

The volume is structured around the anthropologist's viewpoint. Particularly well-documented are colonial policies, their ideological grounds, and the motivations of the white actors involved. Indigenous perceptions of history are taken into account but do not constitute the focus of the work. At the heart of the book is a reflection on colonisers' representations of the colonised, in Australia and elsewhere. The first three chapters locate these issues within a broader framework, with a critical study of three myths of colonisation and anthropology: the idea of 'first contact', the use of 'ethnographic present', and the fantasy of the 'lost tribe'. The idea of 'first contact' encapsulates the ordinary belief in an inherently different 'primitive' state, the purity of which becomes radically altered when meeting 'the West'. This essentialist representation of primitivity goes hand in hand with the use of the 'ethnographic present' to describe 'pre-contact' lifestyle and practices. Dousset associates these 'clichés' with the bible-anchored myth of the 'lost tribe', originally the 12 tribes who left Israel in exile after the Assyrian invasion (p. 29). The articulation of this trope with the other two seems less straightforward, because the 'lost tribes' are supposed to have lost touch with their land and origins. This seems contradictory with the cliché of a 'primitive society' intimately connected to its environments and ancestors.

In spite of this minor discrepancy, it is clear what colonial ideologies are at stake, and how they shed light upon the historical situations described. The myth of the 'primitives' purity' implies that the 'good savages' become 'bad savages' as soon as they are in contact with Western society: while 'tribal' Aborigines are acclaimed, 'detribalized' Aborigines are considered depraved parasites. This dichotomy justifies various colonial strategies, in particular segregation policies like the one implemented at the Giles meteorological station.

Dousset points out that the colonial ideology of the 'depraved savage' relies partly on the belief that indigenous populations are overwhelmed by the coloniser's technology. Once exposed to new techniques and goods (for example, flour, riffles, cars), they abandon their lifestyle in a bid to access new comfort (p. 26). Dousset's narrative is partly structured around an effort to prove this view wrong. Throughout the volume, he demonstrates that the attitudes and choices of the Ngaatjatjarra people in their interactions with white people around Giles were socially oriented. Ngaatjatjarra families came to the station guided by their desire to entertain social interactions with their peers (for pleasure or in the hope to identify spouses) rather than by the need to obtain food and other resources. Such insights into local intentions and motivations are a major contribution of the book.

However, reading Dousset's detailed account, I was frequently amazed by the extent of the impact of the material changes brought by settlers. For instance, while it would indeed be naive to think that the Ngaatjatjarra converged on Giles solely in order to access food and water (rather, they used the station as a social hub), Dousset also explains that before the station existed, social gatherings were constantly constrained by environmental factors (water was never sufficient at a given location to accommodate a large number of people for a long time; p. 135). Hence it does seem that bore technologies had significant social consequences. A distinction between people's motives on the one hand, and material causes on the other hand, is useful here. While people's motives to come to Giles had to do with social interactions, their social structures have always been constrained by material causes, and the creation of the meteorological station modified the chain of causes. Presumably, these modifications impact on social systems in return: one would expect marriage practices to evolve subsequently, and a series of social transformations may incur (for instance land tenure; see p. 74). In spite of the author's intention to put social motivations to the fore, the far-reaching consequences of material change surface in several occasions along the volume.

By saying this, am I conceding too much to the myth of 'primitive purity', or acknowledging the 'good savage'/'bad savage' dichotomy? I do not believe so. To say that the goods and techniques brought by colonisers had effects on the colonised does not amount to saying that the colonised were perverted or depraved in the process. Social change does not mean depravation, transformation does not mean 'impurity'. These points are also part of Dousset's argument. Minimizing the impact of technologies and goods contributes to proving this point, albeit partially. *Mythes, missiles et cannibales* raises interesting questions. It would be good to find more detailed accounts of how social structures take advantage of material parameters: What is modified and how? How do local actors perceive material benefits and needs in colonial situations? To which extend were colonizers aware of the social consequences of their technological input? Did Australian colonial governments and missions manipulate these factors consciously, rather than blindly provide goods in a bid to obtain power, or avoid doing so in the fear of perverting 'noble savages'?

In conclusion, *Mythes, missiles et cannibales* is an important critical contribution to our understanding of colonial interactions, in Australia and elsewhere, and it would be good to see Dousset's volume translated into English. Dousset clearly articulates and deconstructs colonial ideology, connecting it with historical facts. With respect to this deconstruction, the book opens up important questions to be addressed in future research.

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Adopted Territory is a *tour de force*, masterfully traversing a complex transnational terrain that is at once overtly public involving multiple vested interests and competing agendas, and intensely personal and emotive. It is the first comprehensive ethnographic account of the transnational Korean adoptee network. From the outset, true to the title of the book, Kim critically interrogates and destabilises notions of bounded territorial belonging through the lens of South Korean intercountry adoption and the emergence of an adult Korean adoptee community and network. Drawing mainly on multi-sited ethnographic fieldwork over six years and historical document analysis, she ambitiously locates and grounds intercountry adoption within a complex web of geopolitical, historical and transnational processes while simultaneously challenging the very foundations of intercountry adoption, namely kinship, citizenship, belonging and personhood. Through her various subject-positions as researcher, anthropologist, volunteer, translator, confidante, insider and outsider, she strategically positions herself at the embroiled centre of transnational adoption politics while flitting to the peripheries in order to understand it from multiple angles.