'WAYS OF KNOWING'

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This book examines knowing as a practical and continuous activity and the implications of this understanding for anthropology. It is commonplace to talk about different kinds of knowledge: knowledge from intuition or experience, from a skill or the senses, from being acquainted with a place or person, from inference and so on. What often gets left out of these discussions is that knowing is always bound up in one way or another with the world: a person does not leave their environment to know, even when she is dealing with the most abstract of propositions. Nor does she *stop* in order to know: she continues. Anthropologists are well placed to examine these contexts, for their fieldwork makes them familiar with the practical lives of the people they come to know. The argument here is that these observations make a difference to how anthropologists may proceed in their study of other people's knowledge.

Some of the essays consider the political aspects of this understanding of knowledge, a few evaluate the philosophical dimensions of it, a couple analyse the biological bases of learning new skills, and others detail what happens when knowing is somehow blocked or radically transformed by an event. The variety of topics is unified by the idea that a 'way of knowing' is the movement of a person from one context to another, rather than the different kinds of knowledge mentioned above. A way of knowing is more a path to knowledge in terms of an apprenticeship (not in the mystical sense). Knowing, as developed here, is an achievement of work, experience and time. What is the nature of this accomplishment though – is it cumulative or, thinking of T.S. Eliot, a stripping away? In what way

is knowing measurable against not knowing? Is ignorance a lack of awareness, knowledge or linguistic dexterity? A worker may express in his posture and gestures his sense of exploitation by an employer but not do so in words.

The overall argument is about 'intellectual workmanship' in C. Wright Mills terms (1970: 214–5), and it is always connected to ethnographic problems. If knowing is ongoing and practical, a form and method – a crafting – has to be initiated which captures the process adequately. This approach is an attempt to achieve a consistency across the stages of the knowing of others. It is no good being interested in experience as an analytical concept, for example, and only writing about verbal reports on the topic. Experience should be integrated in theoretical perspective (e.g. phenomenology), a fieldwork method (e.g. participatory learning, see Dilley 1999, or participant perception rather than observation) and a form (e.g. writing which evokes the texture of experience).[1]

However, biological processes also mediate experience. What place should they have? Recently, a number of influential anthropologists who have written on knowledge have shown that an outdated theory of cognition lies implicit in many anthropological texts which sees the brain as a computer running programmes and processing information (Sperber 1985; Bloch 1998; Toren 1999; Whitehouse 1999; Ingold 2000). This view of the brain is indefensible since it implies a series of assumptions about biology and culture, the individual and society, sensation and perception, which are not always consistent with each other or supported by analyses from beyond anthropology. The argument of this book is theoretical as well as methodological, for it offers a range of anthropological ventures into philosophy, neuroscience, psychology and history in its attempts to mark out a terrain of enquiry. The contention here is that this project should take place collectively and address an arc of human experience, such as the historical and the contemporary, the diseased and the strong, the ideational and the physical. Given this focus and scope it will not be surprising that many contributors engage with and extend a phenomenologically-based anthropology.

Phenomenology's concern is with the world as it is lived and experienced (Csordas 1994; Jackson 1996; Toren 1999). Thus the methodological connections between it and knowing in practice are well fused here. Part of the appeal of phenomenology is its insistence that any attempt at objectivity is always mediated by the context and personalities within which it is framed (Moran 2000). But can the objective and the subjective be reduced to each other? Some contributors have examined this mediation – that subjective experience can never bring anything like certainty that phenomena are real (see below). For example, Dominic Boyer (this volume)

demonstrates that Hegel's conceptualization of the dialectic was embedded in the bourgeoisie's nation-building projects of the time. That is, Hegel codified the aspirations of a particular class at the end of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century and made a universal concept out of them. For the present purposes, phenomenology serves to reclaim the phrase 'ways of knowing' and distinguish the approach here from others which have also used the phrase. But the theory does not limit the various investigations, rather it enables new departures.

So a clarification is in order regarding the phrase 'ways of knowing', for it is a familiar and informal phrase heard in classrooms and encountered in titles and texts and has been interpreted differently. One often cited source is Gilbert Ryle's distinction between 'knowing how' and 'knowing that' (1949). The former is the knowledge of a skill, how to put something into action; it is tacit and situation-dependent, performative and non-propositional. 'Knowing that' is propositional knowledge (theoretical or factual), since it conveys meaning, is based on rules or laws, and is not dependent on context. The distinction between the two kinds has either been developed or challenged from a number of quarters in philosophy and anthropology (see the chapters by Marchand, Downey and Grasseni). One argument against this division is that in the enactment of what we know, the two kinds are merged and are both activities and convey meaning. For example, knowing how to transform the use of a machete from an axe to a paint-can opener or a screwdriver requires a flexible mental representation and previous experience of how to employ the tool. Even so, the distinction has been influential, particularly in Maurice Bloch's work (see below, p. 13) and is important in Trevor Marchand's contribution in bringing together cognition and embodiment.

There are alternative usages of 'ways of knowing'. Robert Borofsky's (1987) ethnographic study of Pukapukans, who live on an atoll in the Cook Islands, makes a central virtue of the difference between native and anthropological ways of knowing, which he understands as separate patterns of cultural learning, each organized and valued differently. Other anthropologists who have used the phrase talk about how the diverse ways of knowing overlap (e.g. Parkin 1995 on Western and Islamic medical knowledges); some, on the other hand, argue for a strong functional separation (e.g. Bloch 1985 on cultural knowledge as being composed of two kinds: everyday [non-propositional] and ideological [propositional] knowledge), and a few call for their integration (i.e. difference is created by the point of view, e.g. Leach 2005 on scientific and artistic working practices; Crook this volume). These are just some recent published examples. The general attraction of the phrase is its appeal to multiplicity and an inclusive sense of what is considered to be knowledge.

The phrase 'ways of knowing' is used to remind us that any knowledge is inevitably situated in a particular place and moment; that it is inhabited by individual knowers and that it is always changing and emergent. As such, this book builds on discussions of the 'anthropology of knowledge' (Crick 1982; Barth 2002; Boyer 2005), which have focused on the ethnographic and disciplinary meanings and status of knowledge. It extends Pierre Bourdieu's notions of practice and habitus by making them the objects of investigation, rather than, as Greg Downey writes here, 'merely the explanatory bridge to resolve theoretical problems, such as the relationship between structure and agency, or the endurance of class differences' (p. 237). This Introduction prepares for the following chapters by first defining some of the principal issues, with a short illustration, and then identifying the main directions of enquiry in the 'ways of knowing' approach. These are: (1) an examination of how anthropologists work, which can be called a crafting of their knowledge; (2) an understanding of the relationship between language, senses and skills, or knowledge that is not articulated verbally; and (3) knowing the past and how time is 'brewed' and 'percolated', to use Michel Serres's terms (Serres with Latour 1995: 58).

What counts as knowledge and knowing? This is obviously a huge philosophical question – there is nothing new in the current anthropological attention to knowledge – and for the present purposes I shall follow Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann's understanding that knowledge is 'the certainty that phenomena are real and that they possess certain characteristics' (1971: 13). My purpose is not to prioritize or privilege philosophical knowledge over utilitarian knowledge, rather to locate them both in the contexts in which people live. Not all experience becomes knowledge, and not all knowledge becomes articulated into theories of that certainty or language. However, the English language does not make a distinction between knowing as an ongoing process (what we may know by experience, such as the heat in the tropics) and knowledge as a certainty (the actual temperature in Celsius, see Collingwood 1938: 160). This linguistic confusion rather suits our purposes for both are activities involving the whole person. However, it also illustrates the conceptual difficulties being confronted in the following pages and reveals the tension we are grappling with.

These definitions roughly demarcate our enquiry, so what if we bring this to an ethnographic level: can the fieldworker presume other people hold to the same certainties, doubts, and truth-values? Is the practical basis of knowledge – its usefulness – similar across places, times and people? A fieldworker may find herself answering these questions in a contradictory manner. She may attribute common

capacities to others, such as conscious thought, and also ask questions which assume humans do not share basic understandings about the world – otherwise why do anthropology? (Toren 1999).

The point here is to ask about the limits of a notion of humanity in common when we locate knowledge in practice and time, and brings us to appropriately uncertain ground. In this respect, Michael Herzfeld has argued that the discipline should pay more attention to the ways in which people claim to know each other, '[i]n that way we may be able to grasp more convincingly how they come to know the world' (1995: 140). He wonderfully captures not only a sense of shared humanity but also its failings in the title to his article from which I have just quoted: 'It takes one to know one.' Indeed, it is precisely in an individual's ambivalent identification either with a 'pan-human we' or with an exclusive collectivity that she chooses, or is forced to choose, that Herzfeld is interested.

What this means can be briefly illustrated with two queries which challenge a glib pan-human framework. In English, do we immediately muddy the waters by lumping together what other European languages separate, *savoir* (e.g. *saber, wissen,* to know a fact or skill) and *connaître* (e.g. *conhecer, kennen,* to know a place or a person)? Does this mean English-speakers understand all knowledge to have the same social character? Clearly, knowing occurs in relation to the meanings of a particular language but it may not be determined by it. As anthropologists often work in their non-native tongues, the semantic differences between languages are an important part of the analysis (see the chapters by Boyer, Dilley and Platt). Humans may share a common grammar of inter-subjective experience, but the languages they use direct their expressions and ideas in definite ways.

The second point of interrogation is best raised by the poet Ted Hughes and is of a general literary nature. Hughes asks, 'What about the experience itself, the stuff we are trying to put into words – is it so easy to grasp? It may seem a strange thing to say, but do we ever know what we really do know?' (Hughes 1967: 120). Hughes goes on to discuss the uncanny ability of some observers of human life to see a whole biography in a walk or gesture, or to recognize somebody out of the corner of the eye (see Downey's chapter). It is strange because often we may not be conscious of this knowledge, hence Hughes's question. This offers a short illustration of one kind of information ethnographers might pick up in the field, but might not be aware of (see Dilley 1999). Some aspects of what we know may remain 'inarticulable', but it is the task of ethnographers to try to bring them into a framework of common appreciation. The papers by Marchand and Downey discuss the process of moving from experience to language or understanding, arguing that while action is deliberate

much happens beyond awareness. Moreover, Hughes suggests that profound knowledge is reached only by intellectual minimalism, a stripping away of previous knowledge, reminding us of the epigraph to this book by Hughes' fellow poet, T.S. Eliot.

These questions express a general problem of translation, between languages, and also between experience and a linguistic form. Commonly, a reader is presented with only the final result of the process of translation, rather than a reconstitution of the manner in which it was made. The contributors here, instead, attempt to capture the unfolding of the moments from fieldwork to writing-up, for research has its own temporal sequence. Of course, this re-enactment is made up after the event and is one possible narrative, but it is the result of critical reflection on what can be known and a bridging of the stages in the process. In this sense, we can think of a way of knowing not as productive of knowledge, but as the continuous line of its reworking by human practice from one context to another.

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Let me now give an example of the kind of unfolding of anthropological knowledge being proposed. In particular I am interested to reveal the peculiar quality of fieldwork in the way it mixes up the skills and ideas in a nexus of reciprocal relations. My interest in 'ways of knowing', and the spur to gather together others interested in the topic, can be pinpointed to a moment at the end of a relatively long period of fieldwork in a peasant village on the banks of the Amazon River in Brazil.

I had felt myself reasonably competent in some of the physically demanding skills needed to live on the flood plain, such as paddling a canoe, fetching water, using a machete and so on. Managing daily life turned around a person's ability to do such actions reasonably well. However, by the end of my time in the field my companions (*ribeirinhos*) thought I still was not performing these skills in the way they did: my paddling was not quite right and my machete strokes were not flowing enough. I lacked their knack for effortless accomplishment; nor had I learnt these skills in the domestic contexts they had. Their comments forced me to reflect on what I had learnt and how I had learnt it. They were not artisans, so I had paid scant attention to the practical aspects of their life. Moreover, they seemed uninterested in the formal aspects of culture – in the articulation of a history and an identity in self-conscious terms. I felt this apparent lack of formalized knowledge was directing me to what they knew in the form of their skills. My notebooks had little information to help but I had at least participated in many activities and so I started to try to understand these people's

history and identity as silently embedded in their practical knowledge. I am not saying you need to be good at these skills to know them, but you do need to have experienced them to know what it feels like to live as the flood plain villagers do. According to these Amazonian river-dwellers the fact they perceived I was not carrying out the skills in an effective way was evidence that I did not share their identity. I could come to know them through their skills and our shared humanity but I could not be one of them.

These skills are a way of knowing since they offer a form of 'certainty' within the world. Ribeirinho survival depends on the successful implementation and adaptation of certain skills to changing market demands (Harris 2005). Thus a skill is a good example of Berger and Luckmann's definition above since the fact that fish can be caught, for example, is proof that ribeirinho perception of the environment is real and their intervention in the world has material consequences.

This is an anecdote to show something of the stages at which I came to realize the importance of practical knowledge. But at first I did not see it in terms of a process that needed unravelling and historicizing. I only gradually realized that their knowledge was constituted in different forms to my own once I started reflecting on my fieldwork. Skills were not part of a toolbox of technical proficiency, but coordinated movements which expressed a certain style and aesthetic. Given the implicit nature of this kind of knowledge it was difficult to translate it into analytic prose without distorting the subject matter. So in writing I searched for a form in which to convey it properly and settled on a 'word painting', focusing in each passage on a single event or action. This went some way towards writing an ethnography that took as its beginning experience and practice (Harris 2000).

I have tried here to establish the common ground between the ribeirinhos' knowing of the world, how they understand it and my knowing of their lives, for I do not wish to make a categorical distinction between these ways of knowing. Of course, they are organized differently and are commanded by different regimes of control and value. But they are also grounded in the practical uses of knowledge and are temporal. A number of contributors in this book draw attention to this commonality by discussing the crafting of knowledge in both anthropology and human life (e.g. Marchand, Herzfeld, Ingold and Ravetz). Tim Ingold (this volume) discusses his experience of teaching a university undergraduate course that was based in his conviction that 'learning is understanding in practice'. His objective was to unite his theoretical pronouncements in anthropology about how humans learn with how students could learn that anthropology. This seems a good example of the search for consistency I mentioned earlier. If we have a theory of learning that

says people learn best by doing, how can we, as teachers, then require students to understand anthropology by talking at them? Students and teachers just like anybody else craft their own understandings.

What exactly is this notion of crafting? Herzfeld (this volume) suggests that anthropologists have a number of points in common with the Cretan artisans he has studied, as well as craft workers more generally. This companionship is founded of the primary significance of 'practical epistemologies' but their togetherness is now facing fission. Industrialization and globalization have resulted in artisans becoming 'deskilled' (which means that a person is no longer recognized as having a particular skill). Similarly, as academics are subjected to auditing, the implicit, the non-measurable, features of intellectual labour are marginalized, and diversity becomes standardized. However, anthropology remains stubbornly an awkward discipline, faithful to telling the stories of its interlocutors. 'Writing anthropology,' declares Herzfeld comparing the process to sculpture, 'is a shaping of ideas grounded in direct personal experience and made accessible through a shared language we know as theory' (p. 98). This echoes Wright Mills's (1970) argument that the scholar's life and work should not be dissociated. The tasks are how to keep hold of this texture-like quality in the making of anthropology and to be rigorous concerning the terms involved.

With this aim stated, let me move to detail the three main themes to emerge from the ways of knowing perspective outlined above.

Methodology and the Practical

By placing the emphasis on knowledge in practice and experience, methodology comes to the forefront of an anthropological analysis. This is because the ethnographer is forced to confront two aspects: first, how to develop fieldwork techniques which enable such knowledge to be elicited; and second, how to give adequate expression to the tacit in a recognizable form of anthropological theory (also see the following section on 'kinds of knowing'). The term methodology is used here to include both these parts, since they concern a way of working and its procedures. However, the term is not satisfactory; workmanship or craft is preferable. In the interests of the wider argument I will maintain the usage of methodology. Traditionally, anthropologists have paid little attention to their methods, but now they are dogged by calls to make them teachable and transferable.

Methodology has become a key area for anthropological debate since the 1980s and has intensified with the growth of subdisciplines. This attention arises from a need to rethink the way anthropologists work

as the people they engage with, and the world about them, change. Moreover, the politics of doing anthropology has been transformed radically in the period since the Second World War. Anthropologists now often find themselves caught between the local political realities of their interlocutors' lives and the academic demands of their jobs. Nevertheless, the contributors to this volume have all carried out fieldwork, many of them have returned to their fieldsite a number of times, and some have carried out long-term fieldwork in more than one place. We are fully committed to the value of the knowledge derived from fieldwork. The methodological issue here is about what is done with this knowledge as it moves out of the field location to the academy or to national debates involving one's informants (Herzfeld, Platt this volume).

The point here is to understand the connection between various aspects of the research process and how they relate to each other. In particular, the focus is on how anthropologists transform the information they gather in the field of participation and observation (the field site) and analyse it in the field of the reflection (the academy). Stoller's chapter is a good example in this respect. He juxtaposes his experience of a serious illness and its treatment in the United States and his long-term ethnographic work with Songhay sorcerers of West Africa. As Stoller undergoes a profound personal transformation, he re-evaluates the knowledge he acquired with his Songhay subjects. He attempts to put into practice their cures and rituals in the biomedical setting of the cancer clinic in the U.S. Not only does he describe what he learnt at each stage, and how he wrote about it at the time, he demonstrates how his experiences were being altered by illness. Stoller's piece is a narrative of thirty years of ethnographic work in West Africa as seen from the present.

Another principal source (aside from Ryle) for the phrase 'ways of knowing' is found in John Berger's influential book *Ways of Seeing* (1974). Berger emphasized the active and reciprocal nature of seeing in relation to what a person believes or knows, arguing that what a person knows is influenced by what she or he sees, and vice versa, although there is never a direct relationship between them (1974: 7–9). The medieval notion of Hell, for example, owed much to daily encounters with fire and burns. Anna Grimshaw (2001) borrows Berger's phrase to understand vision as a critical tool with which anthropologists can address issues of knowledge and method. A way of seeing generates a particular mode of knowing, which influences how the world is understood. The way of seeing of Bronislaw Malinowski, the pioneer of modern anthropology, according to Grimshaw, can be characterised as 'romanticist' because his method was about the novelty of knowing the Trobrianders and exposing himself to

them; Alfred Radcliffe-Brown, the other ground-breaking figure in anthropology, has a vision which is more akin to a rationalist approach since he was interested in structures and underlying patterns. Ways of knowing is likewise intended to foreground the situated and relational character of knowledge.

According to Ladislav Holy, before an ethnographer reaches the field site she is directed to understand in particular the way: '[a] specific theory about the constitution of the investigated object does not only shape the method of investigation; it also defines research problems and directs the researcher's observations of the specific aspects of the object deemed theoretically significant' (Holy 1984: 18). Each theoretical approach generates 'an overall methodological stance' and turns the investigator to particular kinds of questions. For example, functionalism, which dominated British social anthropology for much of the twentieth century, was notable for the kind of consistency this volume seeks. There was, according to Keith Hart, a 'unity of its object, theory and method. The object was "primitive societies" ... [t]he theory was functionalism, the idea that customary practices however bizarre, make sense and fit together, since daily life would be impossible otherwise. And the method ... was "fieldwork-based ethnography", joining people where they live to find out what they do and think, and then writing it up at universities back home' (Hart 2004: 3). As the world changed and anthropological theories advanced, the method, the representation and the object did not transform at the same pace. The contributors here attempt to achieve an innovative kind of unity, though each piece differs in how it can be done.

In her exploration of how art and anthropology may combine at the level of practice and theory, Amanda Ravetz uses her observations of fine art students in Manchester and her fieldwork experiences of a poor housing estate in the North of England. She sets up the methodological framework in which a combination could take place, which centres on linking the students' proposition that art is a verb and the anthropological one that knowing is an activity. The self-consciousness of art in form and expression can provide lessons for ethnographic studies in how to re-engage with its subject matter, in this case women on the housing estate. Here Ravetz offers the technique of 'tracking', which describes this re-engagement and attempt to bring together visual culture and ethnographic representation. Tracking involves following the movement of people in their activities. Moreover, the term alludes to the hard-to-pin-down nature of social experience, as well as to the positional nature of knowing; women who are pursued by police and live on poor housing estates know the world from a very different place when compared to fine art students

checking out each other's work. This last theme of the positionality of knowing is also important in Otávio Velho's piece (see below).

The concern with methodology has also been critical to those who have used indigenous conceptions of knowledge to interrogate 'Western' and anthropological ones (e.g. Overing and Passes 2000; Hirsch and Strathern 2004). Marilyn Strathern has pioneered this approach (1988), in particular using Melanesian ethnography to scrutinize what are called Euro-American concepts, reversing the normal flow of analysis from centre to periphery. This procedure has been productive in throwing up new ideas about anthropological topics such as kinship, gender and exchange – that is, various aspects of social relations. Strathern also talks about the 'scaling of knowledge'; the work of an anthropologist is to move knowledge from one scale to another (1995). There is a conversion from one form of understanding, scale or idiom, to another order, along a pathway of knowing. Tony Crook's chapter develops a Melanesian reading of contemporary anthropological work by focusing on a 'style of thinking' about knowledge in terms of the social relations in which it is embedded. Scales of knowing which seem different on the surface actually bear important similarities.

Continuing the attention to the practical basis of symbolic systems, Otávio Velho and Kai Kresse investigate the philosophical dimensions of ideas in the 'South'. For Velho, the starting point is to recognize, in a political way, the position from which a person knows. Thus, he asks how can an alternative account of modernity can be made from the tropics, one which valorizes hybrid forms and has never had much time for essences. Velho, who develops his argument alongside Bruno Latour's body of work in network theory, is interested in the religious conversion, and emphasizes the need to move beyond categorical divisions (i.e. between indigenous and other knowledges) and the presumption of rupture and change, especially that associated with modernity. Then the continuous nature of the social world can be regained, as symbols and ideas move from one context to another.

Kai Kresse's protagonists are a poet writing in Swahili and an Islamic scholar who both live in Mombasa and are intellectuals concerned with the production of their knowledge. Like Boyer, Stoller and Dilley, Kresse focuses on the life and thoughts of certain individuals in social worlds. But unlike these other contributors, Kresse concentrates on the words and texts produced by the two men and analyses their socially and historically constructed meanings drawing on Islam and African philosophy. The result is 'a thinking about thinking' and provides a framework for the study of philosophy contextualized in social practice.

The attention to methodology is not an end in itself, rather it is a means to an end. That end is the re-engagement with ethnography, a better understanding of how anthropologists come to know the people they work with and the uses to which that knowledge can be put. In turn this demystifies the conditions in which ethnographers come to understand their subjects and de-exoticizes the lives of others. This unfolding is tantamount to making anthropology more 'scientific', because the connections between method, theory and object are made an explicit part of the analysis. Dominic Boyer states that 'the work of turning anthropology to look at others' knowledge has invariably meant symmetrically turning anthropology inward on its own epistemic practices, forms and relations' (2005: 147). In terms of the present objective, the focus has allowed a move away from methods understood as formal procedures or tools. The shift is towards developing an artisanal approach to anthropology.

This methodological responsiveness is epitomized in the titles to two important books. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Lucien Levy-Bruhl wrote a book called *How Natives Think* (first published in 1910) and at the end of the same century, Maurice Bloch entitled his collection of essays *How We Think They Think* (1998). It can be concluded that in the intervening period between the publication of the two books, anthropologists developed a critical awareness of the nature of their accounts. We can see this book as a reclaiming of a particular understanding of knowledge, which is different to Bloch's (see the conclusion to this Introduction), and how our accounts of it are made. As framed for this book, this involves, in addition, consideration of the various modes of apprehension of the world and the time of knowing, either conceived in terms of an individual or across generations.

Kinds of Knowing

Anthropological interest in the different modes of cognitive or perceptual apprehension of the world is a relatively recent one – although as pointed out earlier, the concern with the inexpressible and experience has a more general character, as much literary as philosophical. Ethnographers have always dealt with the explicit part of the information they gather in the field, such as what is told them, what they observe and can measure. The tacit aspects such as body techniques, skills, the senses (Howes 2003), practical know-how have been less considered. Certainly since Pierre Bourdieu's promotion of habitus as a set of embodied dispositions to behave in a certain way (1977) more analytical consideration has been given over to the various kinds of non-propositional knowledge.

Having recognized the significance of the tacit as an important part of the ethnographic encounter and allocated due methodological place to it, the anthropological problem becomes what theoretical concepts can be used to understand it. Two chapters here by Downey and Marchand seek the answer outside anthropology in the incorporation of theories from neuroscience and linguistics. Others (e.g. Dilley, Stoller, Grasseni, Herzfeld) have taken a more strict anthropological line and sought to apply existing disciplinary concepts to develop a more finely tuned sensitivity to the unsaid. The aim is to avoid reducing what people know to what they say.

Nevertheless, even if we avoid this reduction, we can ask whether the different modes of apprehension are fundamentally of the same kind, part of the same subjective experience? On the other hand, whether the tacit is really a ragbag term which is not analytically strong enough to contain all that it is supposed to? Downey (this volume) argues for the 'diversity of embodied knowledge [which] includes perceptual, physiological, and behavioural change, important in their own right, not because of what they might represent in a propositional or symbolic sense'. They are individually significant because they open up the 'black box' (in the sense of being unclear about what happens) of 'knowing how': people do not just learn a skill and somehow perform it, as is implied in Bourdieu's notion of habitus. The changes which occur can be documented and given a precise location and time. Recognizing the body's malleability then is an important part of rethinking embodiment.

However, the answers to the questions above are not uniform and in some cases they are mediated by the local ideas on the topic. That is, the kind of knowing is given ethnographic saliency by considering simplicity (Herzfeld) or the opposites of knowing – ignorance, incompetence, silence and deception (Platt and Dilley). Before outlining these chapters' contributions I need to make clear the kinds of knowing under consideration.

Fully aware of the limitations of equating language and knowledge, Maurice Bloch has explored the 'relation between what is, on the one hand, explicit and conscious – that is to say, the type of informants' knowledge that anthropologists can hope to access easily – and, on the other hand, what is inexplicit or unconscious but perhaps more fundamental' (1998: vii). Elsewhere, he attempts 'to go some way towards writing ethnography in such a way that actors' concepts of society are represented not as strings of terms and propositions but as governed by lived-in models, that is models based as much in experience, practice, sight, and sensation as in language' (1993: 130). Bloch proceeds to write about 'five linked mental models' for the Zafimaniry of Madagascar (1993: 132). It should be made clear that

the form of these models is structured by cognitive operations given in the brain; which are called schemata (1998: 6; see Toren 1999 for a phenomenological reading of schemata). Their content is, of course, socially given. Such models exist independently of language, since the way in which children put them together is never voiced. So verbal communication neither plays an important part in the learning of schemata, nor is it particularly useful as a method of accessing them. Human awareness of them is necessarily limited, but, according to Bloch, ethnographers cannot ignore their importance.

In this book, Downey and Marchand provide a response to the challenge work like Bloch's presents, which is that it is not credible to limit an analysis to semantics and ignore the biological or psychological aspects. Downey argues that anthropologists need, when necessary, to have models of knowledge which are in keeping with research elsewhere. His chapter examines the bodily transformations that take place in learning *capoeira*, a Brazilian martial art, which involves two people 'fighting' in a circle to music. Like Marchand, he draws on neuroscience in order to shift the terms of knowing and understand what bodily knowledge might mean in biological terms. Can a person see without being aware what they are seeing? Downey argues that the reactions to an opponent's movements have to be so quick that it is impossible to process consciously the information. Developing the themes of vision and learning (see Grasseni this volume), Downey shows that vision in capoeira is a form of seeing that involves a tangible grasp of one's opponent. Learning how to see in combination with one's bodily movements is the technique to master in capoeira. More generally, this process of learning can be linked to anthropological studies of magic: possessing a representation of an object is to have a substantial connection to it (Taussig 1993). For Downey, there are different forms of knowing, each one with its own domain of enquiry, which extends our understanding to include how biological processes clarify the separation. Marchand, on the other hand, agrees there is a degree of specialization in cognitive and perceptual abilities, but at the level of practice says these cannot be distinguished.

Marchand's chapter picks up many topics from other papers, such as vision (Downey, Grasseni) and craft (Herzfeld, Ingold). A central concept for Marchand is an 'environment of situated learning', which he takes from Jean Lave's studies to indicate the definite social contexts and relations of learning. Marchand's environment is a building site of temple construction in Mali and his objective is to understand the kind of communication passing between masons. As they work on-site, they take part in numerous half-finished conversations and yet manage to coordinate successfully between themselves and the completion of tasks. Drawing on two recent linguistic theories (mirror

neuron and dynamic syntax), he deepens an understanding of non-propositional forms of knowledge by showing how the gestural and the linguistic are fused. The theories Marchand uses show that the craftsmen's ways of knowing are not the implementation of a schema or rule, rather it is emergent in the fluid connections between the environment, the individual's processing of language, his skill in masonry and attending to others in the effort of a collective goal.

Pursuing ethnographic aspects of different kinds of knowing, Roy Dilley asks about 'not knowing'? Building on Mark Hobart's writings, he examines the social construction of ignorance (e.g. Hobart 1993). The context is colonial Senegal in the early twentieth century where efficacious knowledge of language, settlements, ethnic identities and the physical environment is at a premium. Perhaps for this reason, the training of French colonial officers was largely implicit, derived from 'being there' and learning on the job. Of course, the price of colonial ignorance was high. Dilley focuses on one man, Henri Gaden, who became extraordinarily knowledgeable about colonial Senegal. Gaden married a Senegalese woman and took seriously the task of his ethnographical and geographical missions, but he was a member of a dying breed. The next generation of officers, from the 1920s, were trained in France at the Ecole Coloniale, and posted for relatively short periods to a number of different countries. These new officers looked down on those like Gaden for whom knowledge was practically generated. For Gaden, the new recruits were not competent to conduct their work and relied more on the government in Paris for advice and direction. This shift in colonial context and policy parallels the one Herzfeld draws between audited and artisanal knowledge.

The contributions here also address the question of form, as raised in the previous section. For how can the unsaid be given adequate representation without fundamentally distorting its character? However problematic the task of giving expression to experience, we should distinguish between our accounts and what they refer to. Marchand opens with an evocative description of how one apprentice mason was considered to have shed his status as a novice. And Downey describes the skills of capoeiristas in detail. Nigel Rapport narrates a scene from his fieldwork in a Scottish hospital with a view to showing how the routine of the place belies the creative nature of individual conversations. He argues that people zigzag between different kinds of knowing, imaginative and perceptual for example, in an eclectic engagement with the world. In other words, the drive to analyse the various kinds of knowing is mirrored by the attempts to find a form in which to evoke them. For writing, according to Rapport (1997), is an act of perception. This diversity of form is an appropriate way to keep open the significance of different forms of knowing.

Knowing the Past

Many chapters deal with how knowing as an activity is caught up in time. Some of this interest is linked to transformations of individual lives as a consequence of illness, apprenticeship or events in the environment. Others are taken up with longer time-scales, such as Velho's interest in modernity, and how the past can be known. Platt reminds us that the past is not a preparation for the present and that the present consists of multiple times, in the sense that each action, for example, has its own rhythm. In Latour's terms this is the 'assembly of the contemporary' (1993), recalling Serres's image of the car as composed of different parts, each of which has its own design history, some new, others old (1995). In this respect, we can say that some aspects of social life may change without disturbing anything else, while others may be so central to a particular group that when they are modified they cause a collapse of all the parts around them. Similarly, certain concepts and practices form conceptual bridges to related external ones much more easily than others, which remain stubbornly in place. If we see knowing as inherently temporal, then we need to recognize, first, the different durations of kinds of knowing, second, the ways these times are constituted by our informants, and third, the continuities, or not, between knowing the past and the present.

Traditionally, phenomenology has had little to say about knowing the past. The experience of time has, on the other hand, received much attention, but not beyond the immediate world of the subjective. A phenomenologist might say that this is a basic method of the theory, namely the 'bracketing off' of subjective experience. Be this as it may, an anthropologist would find it difficult to employ this method and be taken seriously. The problem is that in many phenomenologically inspired anthropological analyses there is a view that the past cannot be known because it can only be known through the present. The present here means ongoing life, and the way it reconstitutes what is known in the whirling force of the here and now. In one sense this is undeniable, but it neglects the significance of a non-modern view of time, the way it folds and pleats, so that what seems far away actually comes nearer, and vice versa. There is as Wendy James and David Mills write, a 'profound tendency to presentism' (2005: 5) in anthropology which has the effect of not just ignoring past labours but divorcing the present from what has preceded it, and eschewing the practical side of human life (what is done), and favouring what people say, their representations and discourses.

A sophisticated argument concerning the way the past informs the present is made by Christina Toren (1999: 2). Writing about human development (ontogeny), she maintains that adults can never return to the child they once were because there is an opaqueness and a

density to their personal pasts which cannot be appreciated through their current selves. She concludes that we cannot 'have access to how we came to know what we know' (1999: 13). By the same token it could be said that retracing (or re-enacting) the progress of anthropological research, for the purposes of being methodologically candid, is similarly unfeasible. A person cannot again be a part of and experience the same environment of the past but does that mean she cannot in good faith try to recreate the conditions of learning? Taken to its logical conclusion, this developmentalist understanding seems to deny the possibility of engaging with the past (personal or otherwise), let alone one imbued with the hopes and fears of those who want to know it. Of course, we should not mistake collective and individual memory forms of memory. Even though it is impossible to go back to the past as it was once precisely experienced, can we, as scholars, not try to know the past as if it were another present?

The possibility is common currency in ethnography, for it is neither desirable nor possible for an anthropologist to have experienced all the subjects she writes about. Yet the initial training, if it is of sufficient length and intensity, is constitutive of a 'new organ of understanding' (Merleau-Ponty 1964: 120). This organ is one of perception and can then be used in the classroom and at the computer to perceive other societies at other times encountered in texts and images – one's own experience becomes a guide to cross-check other analyses. Can we not settle then for something in between presentism and historicism, ask present-minded questions but not give present-minded answers?

The version of historical knowledge most closely associated with this method is re-enactment theory, as conceptualized by R.G. Collingwood (1994). Tristan Platt examines this method and how it may be of use to anthropologists, arguing that 'knowing the past involves a specific kind of activity which should not be strange at all to ethnographers, namely the imaginative re-enactment of other people's thoughts, purposes, intentions' (p. 119). This knowing could involve recreating the technologies and materials used in silver mining in the Andes in the sixteenth century in order to get a feel for what it was really like. Platt's case study is a reconstruction of the early days of the conquest of South America and the Spanish interest in silver. Through piecing together various testimonies, he argues that the Inka remained silent to the Spanish about the existence of large silver mines, only revealing the whereabouts of a smaller one. There was a deliberate deception taking place, a 'concealment about the concealment'. Platt's point is as much methodological as historical, since the silence does not appear in the evidence itself, it has to be inferred and constructed. In Collingwood's method, such evidence is considered to be a trace, and has no independent meaning; it has significance only when it is

constituted by an argument. Traces of the past are then incomplete and are waiting for the right question to be put to them.

Platt ends his chapter by turning to the way political demands of a subordinate people often appeal to the past, for example, the collective land demands by indigenous groups are based on their historical residence of an area. Using colonial land titles (among other documents), long-term occupation can be demonstrated, which might lead to national recognition of their rights to the land. In other words, a present struggle is leading the desire for land, and the evidence comes from the past, giving legitimacy to a claim of continuity. This process complicates the way the past is at the service of the present, since new forms of agency are made possible by documenting continuous occupation, which may derive from what Platt calls 'falsification, mythologization and essentialist self-reinvention' (p. 135). The task for the analyst is to protect historiographical methodology in order to know the past as it was experienced, however imperfectly, but not as it is invented in the present.

In my dialogue with Nigel Rapport, I have tried to move beyond a presentist understanding of the fisherpeople of Brazilian Amazonia. The fisherpeople manifest what is commonly seen as a hybrid of cultural traditions from the Amazon, Portugal and Africa. I argue that these traditions come together in different mixtures depending on the activity and the historical value they were given by people or institutions in the past. Thus a contemporary shamanic curing complex combines Iberian practices around spirit possession, Catholic priestly functions and Amerindian abilities converge to see the invisible world with the use of tobacco. I show that these combinations derive from the imaginative bridges people made in the past between what they knew and what they encountered for the first time, which then became part of accepted practice. Some practices, such as whipping a possessed person with a special plant stalk, are continuous with medieval European ones, but others have changed, such as the role of the shaman-like priest. In other words, I have avoided lumping all actions together but have treated each one separately in terms of its own time and place. Some practices have continuity or resilience over long periods, distances and ideologies, and others change remarkably quickly. Knowing what to do when a person falls ill, then, is an activity which has multiple strands, following Serres and Latour. This understanding is a temporalization of the 'kinds of knowing' outlined in the previous section.

Dominic Boyer's chapter usefully brings together many themes discussed across these three sections. He starts off by showing how the social context in which Hegel devised his theory of the dialectic determined the very idea itself. However, Boyer's interest in the dialectic

derived initially from his fieldwork with East German intellectuals after the fall of the Berlin Wall. He thus reveals something of the manner in which he came to understand the dialectic. For Boyer, the notion of dialectic powerfully expresses a central tension in experience, that between being and becoming. He uses this tension to study Hegel's philosophy and how the dialectic continues to influence the worldview of intellectuals in Berlin: '[it] hovered as a constant resource for social knowledge' (p. 36).

This brief review can only touch on some of the salient issues. The aim is to move towards an expanded notion of presentism in order to incorporate other presents, which existed in the past, and to understand the past as differentially composed and embedded in practice. Not all pasts inform the present in the same way: some have more pertinence than others.

Plan of the Volume

The first section opens with the volume's critical priorities: the examination of the social and practical life of philosophical ideas, the significance of where a person knows from, and the global ordering of different kinds of knowing. Part II examines the pathways of learning from one place or person to another, and how they are broken up by disease or ignorance or blocked by deception. The third part is also concerned with learning, but incorporating biological and psychological understandings of vision and language in order to conceive of more 'plausible' models for anthropology. Part IV builds on the revisionist arguments of the previous section, and seeks new vehicles for conveying their content. This includes teaching at a university, learning about form from art students as they attend their Masters' course, a comparison based on a close reading of styles of analysis, and a conversation. These final topics serve to remind readers of activities in which most anthropologists occupy much of the daily lives and craft their work accordingly: teaching, reading and talking.

Other Approaches

To end I want to situate the ways of knowing domain of enquiry in relation to other approaches with an interest in human knowledge. This will highlight the objective of the current volume in relation to developments in anthropology. Broadly speaking, since the

Enlightenment there have been two opposing answers to these questions, the first deriving from René Descartes and the second from Giambattista Vico. We are not dealing with recent developments but long-standing divisions in how philosophers have argued over the nature of knowledge. As I said earlier, this topic is too large to summarize adequately here, but a brief genealogy will show how the present volume fits into this larger scheme. This will help clarify why the situated, practical nature of knowing adumbrated here contrasts with other approaches. At the core is an argument over whether human society can be understood in the same way as the world of nature. Is information, empirically verifiable raw data perceived by the human brain, different from knowledge, the interpretation of that data by the mind?

This philosophical question has its modern origin in the first part of the seventeenth century with Descartes's establishment of the rational subject whose search for knowledge and truth would consist of discovering laws governing nature. This view came to be challenged by Vico when he developed a theory of human history, which ran in opposition to Descartes's (and Spinoza's) emphasis on rationalism (Israel 2001). This caused a split in the Enlightenment early in the eighteenth century, for Vico insisted that the study of humanity required different methods to those used in the natural sciences (1999). Humans, according to Vico, can have true knowledge only of themselves and there is a progressive order in the way this development occurs; other kinds of knowledge, such as 'nature', are of a different kind (Vico 1999; see also Herzfeld and Platt this volume). Thus forms of life or the environment could not be studied using the same framework. Reason, for Vico, was only one way to comprehend the human condition and discover truth (Herzfeld 1995: 126): there were others such as imagination and empathy (called 'kinds of knowing' earlier). This division has been transformed and reworked by many others, but its specific influence continues in the understanding of knowledge as shaped by the human mind whose nature is still much contested (Whitehouse 1999).

Moreover, these contrasting Enlightenment and counter-Enlightenment positions have been thrown into contemporary relief by the quickening of what can be seen as related positions in anthropology (Whitehouse 1999). On one side lie the phenomenologists who argue that cognition and perception are social activities situated in the nexus of ongoing relations between the person and the world (these scholars may or may not acknowledge Vico as an intellectual predecessor). Skills and techniques of the body are neither simply innate nor simply acquired, but mature both biologically and socially in the whole person. Thus great attention is given in this perspective to the dynamics of

everyday life and individual development, inducing an ecological type of approach, bringing together brain, body and environment. On the other side, there are the cognitivists (the rationalists, we might say, e.g. Sperber 1996) who seek to understand what an individual needs to know to be culturally competent. Their focus is more on the 'what' rather than the 'how' of social life, recalling Ryle's distinction. Cultural competencies derive from cognitive structures in the brain, which are universal; they therefore reject the ecological understanding. Thus attention is given to the concepts and categories (e.g. living kinds, colours) that humans recognize and whether they are shared widely or not. Essentially this kind of study treats knowledge as an objective or naturalized domain separate from subjective experience.

While these rival positions may conceal other more nuanced arguments, the gulf between them is not only historic but continuing. As Harvey Whitehouse (1999) shows, the debate is at the forefront of contemporary anthropology and in one way or another it is difficult to ignore. This book is a continuation of the Vichian side of the debate in an attempt to develop an anthropology of knowledge as skill, and take it forward into new dialogues.

Kresse (this volume) argues forcefully that the significance of such a project is both reflective and cumulative. Intellectual exploration should be about the critical improvement of one's ideas; without reflection on intellectual practice, there can be no understanding of understanding. The essays here can also be characterized by a scholarly concern with the effects of anthropological knowledge (such as Platt's comments on the use to which Bolivian Indians put the reconstruction of their history). This book is about the different textures of knowing as they pass through their and our hands, and about 'getting things right'. This anthropological anxiety may not be new, but its current expression in a period of capitalism which puts a premium on transferable skills, flexibility of employment and exclusive notions of academic expertise gives a new pressure to the labour of writing about the knowledge of others.

Acknowledgements

Notes

1. Anthropologists have only recently come to be interested in experience (e.g. Turner and Bruner 1986; Jackson 1989), with a few exceptions such as Rodney Needham (1972) and Godfrey Lienhardt (1961).

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