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In Part I of this volume, six authors offer their projects, done as dissertations under the mentorship of James Faubion and George Marcus, as texts for pedagogical reflection. In the book's Introduction Marcus provides a framing in terms of pedagogy of first projects and an opening to treat such projects as inevitably exploratory. He thus expresses his hope that "unfinished" as well as more polished dissertations have lessons to teach in worlds where it is either not possible or not desirable to reproduce older forms of ethnographic projects. In Part II Faubion presents a meta-meditation for framing the doing of ethnographic projects in terms of shifting forms of connectivity and concomitant forms of ethics.

What I can offer, having only been an interlocutor on two of these projects, and a contributor to the Rice Department of Anthropology for eleven years (1981–1992) in an earlier incarnation, is a reading of these six projects from a different space, that of attempting to help midwife and defend the possibility of an anthropology of science and technology in my subsequent and current position in the History, Anthropology and Science, Technology and Society (HASTS) graduate program at MIT (see Fischer 2003, 2007a, 2007b). There are two aspects to this perspective: First, I cannot help but be impressed by the degree to which all six projects have science and technology interfaces, interfaces which not incidentally have complex topologies having to do with what Kim Fortun in Chapter 8 of this volume calls complex issues of scale and context, sometimes involving spatio-temporal recursions and looping effects not unlike Möbius strips and Klein bottles. Second, and related, are my understandings of the legacy of earlier manifestations of Rice anthropology's insistence on reinventing forms of

cultural critique within and for globally distributed and differentiated processes in our contemporary world.

Let me call the first of these themes “Reading for the Ethnography in a Technoscientific World” and the second “Reading for the Rice Mark.”

Reading for the Ethnography in a Technoscientific World

I read these six projects as substantively rich arenas in today’s world to be read for their ethnography, importantly including the mediations of guarded, packaged, and traded elusive information. It is often as important to understand the structures of the circuits as to challenge or guesstimate the veracity in the information packets. Assemblages (Marcus and Saka 2006) are another passing metaphor hinting at modernist ancestors (montage, collage, constructivism).

The six projects are about (1) the made-up statistics and corruption stories that not only inhabit but structure the transnational humanitarian and development industries in places like Nigeria, Switzerland, and Washington; (2) venture capital industries and their claims to innovation based on a kind of “social capital” that itself proved to be a finance bubble; (3) indigenous justice forums that mediate First Nation autonomies and nation-state devolutions of court, bureaucracy, and jail burdens; (4) an Ethical, Legal, and Social Issues (ELSI) project associated with the HapMap genomics program that characterizes worries about commodification of, and regulatory capture of, bioethics; (5) the classificatory technologies and interpellations of human and civil rights NGOs in Washington, D.C., drawing on the (illusions of) proximity to power, and deployed like fishermen’s nets to catch and adjudicate the past and prepare the future; and (6) archaeologists and the local communities whose labor they hire, whose land they excavate, and whose precursors they prepare for tourists.

Reading them in this way, I think, is more productive than seeing them as somehow messy or unpolished examples of the inability to live up to what is satirically referred to in many of the essays as the Traditional or Malinowskian model of ethnography. They are ethnographies constructed within—to borrow an intellectual property metaphor—“new compositions of matter.” The six authors might be read as applying to each of their cases three doubled or split dimensions: audits (listening, accounting), projects (promissory logics, transitional objects), and the active value-added work of interpretations—cultural encounters that are “between different modes of perception and representations of reality (what one could call culture, I suppose),” as Nahal Naficy puts it.

Reading for the Rice Mark

I think it productive to read these six offerings in ways that do not satirize older anthropologies and instead build upon, and extend into a new era, a recursive series of intellectual conversations and experiments that were notable features of a distinctive Rice anthropology from the 1980s through the early 2000s. These include the Rice Circle discussion group; the inaugural editing of the journal *Cultural Anthropology*; the writing and debate surrounding *Anthropology as Cultural Critique* (Marcus and Fischer 1986) and *Writing Culture* (Clifford and Marcus 1986); the Rice Center for Cultural Studies and its six-year-long hosting of a Rockefeller Residential Fellowship program; the decade-long Late Editions Project; the follow-on volume *Critical Anthropology Now* (Marcus, ed. 1999a) a decade after *Anthropology as Cultural Critique* and *Writing Culture*; the engagement with Foucauldian thematics, with the arrival in the 1990s of James Faubion (both in the idiom of classical Greek philosophemes, Faubion bringing his expertise as a scholar of Greece, and in the translation and codification of the Foucauldian corpus, Faubion being one of the editors of an important recent multi-volume collection of Foucault's essays in English [Faubion 1993, 2001a; Faubion, ed. 1998, 2000]); the forging of conversations regarding both transnational (China and East Asian) cultural studies and the influential "public culture" initiative of Arjun Appadurai and others (through the presence of Ben Lee, who succeeded Appadurai as the provost of the New School University); and the early (from the late 1980s) and persistent presence of science studies in the department through the hiring, first, of Sharon Traweek and then of Chris Kelty and Hannah Landecker (Traweek 1988; Kelty 2005a, 2005b, 2008b; Landecker 2007).

This is not an occasion to write out this history, only to try to distill a few indexical features.

(1) *Cross-discipline experiments*: The Rice Circle was a faculty discussion group composed of a core of two philosophers, two historians, at times religion scholars, and literature scholars, as well as the anthropology faculty (which included the comparative literature scholar Kathryn Milun, who was hired in the anthropology department and whose brief was to help graduate students assimilate the critical philosophies that arose with interests in third world and postcolonial literatures and poststructuralist and deconstructionist reading strategies. Her own work was on modernist projects of settlement via terra nullius claims and empty centers in reconstructed cities inducing agoraphobia). The group staged cross-disciplinary engagements on annual themes. One of the more coherent themes, for instance, was the comparison and even stronger contrasts between the practices and theories deployed by psychotherapy and ethnography,

precisely because psychodynamics and psychoanalytic hermeneutics (in its various and derivative forms) had so infused the humanities generally. One year, this included a collaboration with family systems practitioners at the Texas Medical Center, observing and discussing together tapes of family consultations and interventions. One of the organizing thematics was an exploration of different forms of “dialogic encounter” led by Tullio Maranhão’s interest in psychotherapy and Stephen Tyler’s interest in pushing to the limit the implications of writing as an alienated form of encounter and thus recognizing only face-to-face encounters as ethical forms of engagement (Maranhão 1990; Tyler 1987).

(2) *Re-reading, recontextualizing, and reformatting for the contemporary world the modalities of anthropology as cultural critique* developed at various historical conjunctures (World War I, the Great Depression, World War II) and engagements with adjacent practices: (a) social anthropology in a generational shift between nineteenth-century grand comparative work and twentieth-century detailed fieldwork; (b) 1930s–1940s documentary and photographic realism, surrealism and the Collège de Sociologie, and the Frankfurt School’s retooling of Freud and Marx for mass politics, mass propaganda, and mass consumer society; (c) a generational shift again in the 1960s involving the integration of political economy and cultural analyses as well as the reopening of questions of how understandings of subjectivation and subjectivities rework older notions of affect, emotion, and personhood; (d) an agenda of continued experimentation for the 1980s. The subtitle of *Anthropology as Cultural Critique*, “an experimental moment in the human sciences,” signified both meanings of experiment: modernist experimental art forms, and the increasingly de-idealized and nonuniform understandings of the methods of the experimental sciences as analogues of, and subjects for, validity in the communicative and human sciences. If *Anthropology as Cultural Critique* focused on fieldwork reports as the crucibles for social theory formation and epistemological testing grounds for cultural and social critique, *Writing Culture* renewed discussions about composition of and rhetorical forms in ethnographic writing, again using a cross-disciplinary conversation, in this case, with historians and literature scholars (cf. Fischer 1992; Taylor 1998).

My own experiments, with Mehdi Abedi, in *Debating Muslims: Cultural Dialogues in Postmodernity and Tradition*, paying attention to the weave of oral, literate, and visual media in pre- and post-revolution, domestic and diasporic Iranian social-cultural contestations and transformations, was a concomitant multi-sited ethnographic exploration with contemporary stakes (Fischer and Abedi 1990), but the fullest expression of such an exploration was in Kim Fortun’s *Advocacy After Bhopal*. In her dissertation version, she literally wrote different chapters in the various rhetorical genres required by the communicative situations of Bhopal activists among whom she did her initial fieldwork. The

intent was performatively to display and explore modalities of making form fit and interrogate content and to explore how form made content. In the vastly reworked and now comparative and cross-national version of the project (Fortun 2001), these genres were integrated with a matrix of analytic questions into one of the most powerful and well-tuned critical ethnographies of the contemporary “new world order,” anticipating many of the questions raised by, and duly acknowledged and built upon by, Kris Peterson and others in the current volume. I don’t think either of these ethnographies has been dismissed as merely being about writing and not about fieldwork or the materiality of political and economic issues as the critics of *Writing Culture* have often insisted.

(3) *Reinventing the ethnographic interview form*. The Late Editions Project, a series of topical volumes under George Marcus’s editorship, over the decade of the 1990s experimented with paired collective editorial workshops (including all authors) to plan each year’s thematic topic and then to workshop draft papers. Form was meant to be determined by the richness of ethnographic content, and could vary from lightly edited transcripts, to *New Yorker*-style profiles, to French-style “entretiens” in which questions and answers were reworked by their respective enunciators until they were satisfied with the polished product, to even, in one case, collages of documents. The topics moved from directly topical concerns formatted in standard categories—new *Perilous States* (Marcus, ed. 1993) in the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union; *Technoscientific Imaginaries* (Marcus, ed. 1995), media, corporations—to topics responsive to, intensified by, and reformatted by the dramatic revolution in media of communication (the World Wide Web came in 1994): *Paranoia within Reason* (Marcus, ed. 1999b); *Para-Sites: A Casebook against Cynical Reason* (Marcus, ed. 2000a); *Zeroing in on the Year 2000* (Marcus, ed. 2000b). For a review of how the shifts in writing style over the decade tracked the shift in media consciousness, see “Before Going Digital/Double Digit/Y2000” (Fischer 2000). Many of these again are precursors to the ethnographies of the early 2000s represented in the present volume.

(4) *The shift from anthropology’s primary interlocutors being in the humanities (1980s) to science studies (1990s–2000s)*. Marcus makes this point in his introductory essay in this volume, and my “reading for the ethnography” notes the explicit reference points in the six dissertation projects even though none are explicitly framed or disciplined as science studies. That Kim Fortun and Chris Kelty provide two of the key pedagogical touchstones in the volume reaffirms the point.

(5) *Interventions in academia and the world outside academia*. The Rice Center for Cultural Studies, founded in 1986, and which I directed until 1993, was a Humanities Division response to a reorganization on the Rice campus instituted by the then new president of Rice, George Rupp, to create interdisciplinary centers

of excellence in each school of the university. That a member of the School of Social Sciences should head a center housed in the School of Humanities was a recognition of the strength and national reputation of the graduate program of the Department of Anthropology, as well as a recognition that the humanities at Rice had not kept up with the interest in interdisciplinarity in the 1980s. The Rice Center for Cultural Studies was a pioneer in the move to foster conversation among social science and humanities approaches, especially in a global context. The Rockefeller Residency Fellowships obtained by the Center were a mechanism to bring to campus representatives of topics and approaches not well represented on the faculty, with the hope that their presence would encourage the hiring of people with such skills. In this way, and in creating and welcoming Rice Circle-style faculty reading groups, the Center helped foster the creation on campus of expertises in feminism (Jane Gallop), film studies (Tshombe Gabriel, Hamid Naficy), African studies (Atieno Odhiambo, D. S. Masolo), comparative religion (Masolo, Anne Klein) and the like. The journal *Cultural Anthropology*, under Marcus's inaugural editorship, also attempted to reach out to contributors in fields other than anthropology in order to enrich the discussions in both directions. It signaled its ambitions physically in the "little journal" format of uncut edges and rag-textured covers. This ambition and signing have been reinvigorated and updated by the current editors, Rice graduate Kim Fortun and Mike Fortun, with a series of innovations—physically in returning to the little journal format now in color; in content configurations and topical foci sections; by a complementary website; and through the effort to build a public board of adviser-interlocutors outside of academic anthropology.

Outside academia, there is an underappreciated pioneering of anthropologists in the corporate and design world. Marcus alludes in the Introduction to his long interest in the arts, his periodic participation in design studios at the Rice School of Architecture, and his writings on museum worlds. Jamer Hunt, a graduate of the Rice department, has built a career in design worlds at the Philadelphia University of the Arts and now the Parsons School of Design at the New School. His graduate research on Sylvia Bataille (actress, wife of Georges Bataille and Jacques Lacan) was one of the dissertations around which our experimental writing discussions revolved, along with dissertations by Jeff Petrie (a highly evocative collage of meditations and ethnographic accounts of the Christian minority rebel groups in northern Burma), Ryan Bishop (a novel about the cultural horizon at the time of Beethoven's death in Vienna), David Syring (short stories about the culture of the hill country in Texas [Syring 2000]), and Bruce Grant (reconstructing the layerings of erased and thinned cultural accounts on Sakhalin island [Grant 1995]). Hunt's dissertation, he joked at the time, was a dissertation with a missing center and a recursive spiraling structure: Sylvia Bataille was still alive in Paris, but elusive, not willing to be a subject, yet her

moving locus in a network of celebrities and productions made the topic still eminently explorable and configurable.

Given new developments, such as the formation of the annual meetings of EPIC (Ethnographic Praxis in Industry Conference) and the visibility of anthropologists working in major corporations such as IBM and Intel, the story of Rice graduate Melissa Cefkin's remarkable career is also worth attention. The modalities of reflecting upon the practice of anthropology within corporate worlds is the subject of a parallel book to this one, edited by Cefkin: *Ethnography@Work.com* (Cefkin, ed. 2009). Recent Rice graduate Michael G. Powell has followed her into this world, and Beth Tudor, a Rice graduate in the 1980s, preceded her. Petrie, too, ended up not in the American corporate world, but in Thailand in cultural broker roles in the tourist industry and in the planning offices of the Thai government. Bishop, remaining within the academy, has helped build an American Studies center at the National University of Singapore, and has defined an important Southeast Asia node for the *Theory, Culture & Society* and *Cultural Politics* journal networks. Stella Grigorian's dissertation on conflicts among three generations of migrants to Armenia was conducted in the aftermath of a major earthquake while serving first as a translator and cultural broker for international relief teams and then as the on-site manager for building a health clinic.

The science studies thematic had its early manifestations in the dissertations of Priscilla Weeks (on aquaculture and labor disputes between fishermen and marine biologists), Maziyar Lotfalian (on scientists in Iran, Pakistan, Malaysia, and Iranian scientists and engineers in the United States [Lotfalian 2004]), and Myanna Lahsen (on climate modelers).

Ethnographic Pedagogies and Reinventions

The complexities of our times require ethnographic skills. This is a matter of opening up simplified accounts, making accountability possible at different granularities, signposting the labyrinths of possible inquiries for their relevance, their points of no return, their conceptual reruns, acknowledging in a politics of recognition pebbles of resistance that destabilize easy theories.

The essays here explore training for the ethnographic skills required by the complexities of our times. George Marcus has been toying with the term "para-site" since the volume *Para-Sites*. The term, revived in his articles with Douglas Holmes, picked up on the *Anthropology as Cultural Critique* arguments that the ethnographic style of cultural critique depends upon the locating of critiques in the play or dialogue of discourses in the world, rather than in the inventive genius of the writer, after fieldwork, alone in his or her study (Holmes and Marcus 2006). This was also the argument of locating "immanent critique,"

that is, looking to the internal cultural resources and their deployments in critique, as well as cross-cultural critiques, in a global world, that motivated the experimental essays in *Debating Muslims*. The Late Editions Project also was premised on trying to reposition interview subjects as collaborators who together with the ethnographer were jointly interested in puzzling out the ways in which the changing world has outrun the pedagogies in which practitioners as well as analysts have been trained. At the University of California, Irvine, Marcus has turned these reflections into a studio-design technique (see <http://www.socsci.uci.edu/~ethnog/>), and the term “para-site” has taken on the literal meaning of a space alongside, and different from, an actual fieldsite. Dissertation writers bring in colleagues and ethnographic subjects from the discursive spaces in which their research occurs and design the discussion in such a way that other academic colleagues can get a taste of the problematics and contribute their perspectives, disciplinary practices, and insights. This is a more dimensional modality of pedagogy than the usual workshoping where the sources of insight come from essentially one discipline or from academia alone.

In Part III of this book both Kim Fortun and Chris Kelty in their chapters on teaching ethnographic research stress the “fateful consequence of technical design.” Fortun’s combinatorial exercises for a course in Advanced Cultural Analysis recognize the transitional object mobility of ethnographic work (scanning across virtual matrices, filtering varying epistemic objects through different screens), as well as multi-player coordination of “obsessive-compulsive” and “paranoid” disorder tendencies in all interpretive circuits (cf. Fortun 2003). Kelty compares fieldwork’s commitments to those of robust, recursive, and never finished open source Linux software, “over against a commitment to research design that sets questions in advance and for which fieldwork is mere data-gathering.” This needs to be understood by institutional review boards (IRBs) if they are to work with, rather than against, ethnographic creativity and utility. “Ethics,” Kelty observes, all too often designates a residual or supplementary space for professionals “not part of everyday practice,” something to which professionals must “also” attend but which is not inherent. Ethical, legal, and social issues are often treated as parasites rather than para-sites, to be quarantined, marginalized, and pre-empted. In fact, however, the “ethical” (or “socially responsible,” “political economy,” or “social justice and access” issues) marks out troubling terrain as meriting ethnographic help. Even if initially conceived as something to be managed, the ethical is a space of anxiety, where epistemological encounters can be recursively staged under controlled, productive, therapeutic, or pedagogical facilitations.

In such ways, ethnography can contribute to robust civil society and what Kelty has called its “recursive public spheres.”