# Collaborative Imaginaries*

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This essays attempts to articulate certain changes in the practice of ethnographic research necessitated by its changing conditions and circumstances. I elaborate on the paradigm of multi-sited ethnography that I developed in the mid-1990s. Changing norms of collaborations affect the relationships that produce anthropological knowledge. The content and purpose of these relationships have to do with sharing imaginaries across lines of cultural and other kinds of difference. I suggest four dimensions that empirically define the nature of such imaginaries that are shaped by processes of globalization.

**Keywords: collaboration, fieldwork, multi-sited ethnography, globalization, reflexivity**

# Introduction

I have recently moved to the University of California after many years at Rice University, where an influential critique of ethnographic inquiry in anthropology had been forged during the 1980s. In the strenuous, drawn out task of unpacking, I came across a box of forty notebooks, densely handwritten, that constituted the personal archive of my first fieldwork during 1972-1974 in the Kingdom of Tonga, an island nation of western Polynesia. The opportunity to browse these materials filled me, pleasurably, with the shock of recognition of an old self, but also with a sense of the uncanny and estrangement. This work was faithful to the method of Bronislaw Malinowski, the visionary of the emblematic ethnographic method that launched modern social/cultural anthropology early in the twentieth century, and to the attractive and influential restatements of that method in the writings of Clifford Geertz during the 1960s and 1970s. In my study of kava ceremonies, kinship relations, land tenure, chief-commoner exchanges, and Tongan Christians as early modernizers in the nineteenth century, I was resolutely concerned with cultural alterity and its distinctive logics in a world completely "Other" to my own. My scrawlings, in their shaggy mosquito-stained notebooks, could have been those of Malinowski in the Trobriands or Geertz on Java, adding to the ethnographic archive of the world's peoples by trying to "find out what the devil they think they are up to" in one of Geertz's bon mots for the purpose of anthropology as interpreting other cultures through native points of view, of understanding the internal and distinctive logics of other forms of life. Just three decades later, few anthropologists would set out on research in the contemporary world while laying claim to this pure purpose for ethnographic inquiry of exploring cultural alterity as "Other."

Indeed, even as I was living in Tongan villages in the 1970s I was well aware that Tongan society was being decentered or even internationalized by an epochal process of migration in which the large diasporas of Tongans in places like Hawai`i, Melbourne, Auckland, Fiji, and northern California were overshadowing in population, wealth, cultural vitality, and invention their poorer kinsmen in their homeland—a western-modeled nation-state qua kingdom. Of course, migration studies were prolific at the time, but only within the protocols of Cold War development studies. There really was no concept or method available at the time—in these years before globalization or even postmodernism were concepts of currency—to understand what was happening culturally in this dispersion. (Actually Tongan society, like many others, was at the time living anticipations of aspects of both these fashions of contempo-

rary social thought still in the future.) So I studied Tongans in the time-tested and still valuable way as situated in their cultural other-ness in an historic and contemporary time space, while another transformation, another dynamic, was going on that the Tongan king in his western state could not control. The internationalizing of Tongan culture and society was, then, before the word, an apt micro case study of the larger issues that the dynamics of globalizing processes have brought to the sovereignty and role of nation-states in their major manifestations.

As a kind of swan song, or farewell, both to my first ethnographic project and to my professional *rite de passage* (and the intellectual culture of classic anthropology that informed it), I wrote an essay (Marcus 1980) from what materials I had on the internationalizing of Tongan culture and the recon-figured place of what had always been considered Tonga—the kingship, the islands, the modern mini-nation-state—in this emergent form. These are now of course the themes of global transformations, tracked most readily through migration studies for which there had been considerable research under the Cold War aegis of development, but now also through the rise of fascinating new arenas of research in information technology, biosciences, international finance, and practices of governmentality.

After leaving Tonga for other projects through the years, I have sustained a passionate curiosity about ethnography as a practice of inquiry in the human sciences, valuing most the kind of unconventional knowledge that it could produce from the intensity and intimacy of collaborative inquiry, the Malinowskian scene of research, still so powerfully evoked and instilled as emblematic method in every neophyte anthropologist. At the same time, I was concerned if this was even possible in the new sorts of settings and on the canvases in which fieldwork projects would have to be designed and carried out if they were to respond to actual globalizing situations as well as height-ened theorizing about globalization after the Cold War, across the board in academic, policy, NGO, and governmental circles.

My concern for what I then called "multilocale ethnography" (Marcus 1986) merged into the rupture-causing 1980s *Writing Culture* critique of ethno-graphy (Clifford and Marcus 1986), and more broadly of anthropology. That period, in retrospect, seemed one of interdisciplinary fervor, focused on the forms and nature of culture at present. It was driven by intellectual move-ments such as feminism and post-structuralism through a rather apolitical postmodernist movement into very politicized (and I might say, very moralis-tic) concerns with a globalizing world. The 1980s thoroughly ruptured and displaced business-as-usual practices without substituting for it any replace-ment paradigms and tropes of practice. We are definitely back to research

now, but we live in the still turbulent wake of that period. For example, anthropologists are as passionately interested in cultural difference as ever, but like many others after the turn of the century they are as equally interested in contemporary change. There is due respect for history, and for cultural patterns, yes, but also a fascination with the breaking up and morphing of things that are more anticipated or emergent than they are present and explicitly conceived. Indeed, working on and within the temporality of emergence, the anticipation of the yet unknown, has become the pervasive situating trope for anthropological research, more than the "being there" in the timeless or the historically known places and scenes of the Malinowskian ethos.

In the mid-1990s, amid many proposals and schemes for thinking about and studying globalization that continue until the present, I diagnosed the emergence of multi-sited ethnography as my contribution to the "what is globalization?" discussions (Marcus 1995). It was a seemingly methodological concern for remaining true to the intensities of ethnography while continuing to worry about whether these could be sustained. Now, most anthropological projects are at this crossroads, although investment in a Malinowskian or Geertzian kind of experience of ethnographic research in the contemporary world has perhaps waned, since each has been thoroughly critiqued and judged to be practically difficult to produce anywhere, at least in its original spirit.

The early understanding of multi-sited ethnography was simply of movement and mobility in the sites of ethnographic inquiry—doing intensive work on new relations and altered processes empirically due to changes termed globalizing. Of course it is, and was, that. Indeed, existing and changing migration studies were the exemplar at hand for multi-sited ethnography in transformation, but there were several other novel proposals of what and how to follow, how to track processes in a globalizing world. Yet, the proposal or rather diagnosis of multi-sited ethnography generated in anthropologists the anxiety that such a process would make ethnography thin, and cause a loss of the intensity of fieldwork engagement that made anthropological research and the knowledge coming from it distinctive.

My own interest in this diagnosis was different, and more in touch with my concern about the changing mise-en-scene of Malinowskian fieldwork following my Tonga research, through the critique of ethnographic writing, and into the stew of discussions of the globalizing contemporary. I was not so interested in multi-sitedness as the problem of adding sites of fieldwork research to follow processes—first here, then there, then there, etcetera—but more as the problem of the changing sensibilities and intensities within the site of focused fieldwork that inevitably would lead the ethnographer to move

to other sites within the imagination of the first, so to speak. This involves less moving around than rethinking what is at stake now, in the globalizing present, in the intensive scene of Malinowskian anthropology—it involves a rethinking of this Ur scene of knowledge-making in anthropology and its implications for what ethnography then becomes.

My concern is thus how the intensity and core of relationships of fieldwork can be retained in all of these locally present imaginaries of dispersion, movement, and dispersal of the traditional subjects of anthropology. Ethnographic projects would thus remain intensive access to parts of cultural formations and processes, but these parts themselves were inherently multi-sited and reflexive in their orientations to their relevant worlds of operation. Simply in terms of what anthropologists encounter locally anywhere they go, they are pushed by engagements with their subjects to specific "elsewheres." All subjects today are, on the one hand, reflexive paraethnographers speculating on the unknown other worlds that determine their very everyday possibilities. On the other hand, in Anna L. Tsing's (2005) terms, they are engaged in scale-making projects—and so are anthropologists in their traditional pursuits of inquiry. This affinity or identity is what creates the altered working relationships on which contemporary ethnography is founded. This is what globalizing changes have done effectively to the Ur scene of intensive ethnography.

I want to devote the rest of this essay to discussing further these changes in the intensities of fieldwork encounters which account, I believe, for the dramatic shift over the past three decades away from anthropology finding its object in a kind of pure cultural alterity. I want to evoke the scene of fieldwork today by considerations of two of its key features: the working, committed collaborations that constitute the scene of fieldwork, and the understanding of imaginaries and their consequences as the major object of ethnography.

## The Changing Nature of Ethnographic Collaboration

Collaboration has been a deeply embedded modality of the fieldwork method from its inception, but until the 1980s it led a rather shadowy existence in formal discussions of method and the norms and forms of the scholarly publication of ethnography (see Lassiter 2005). Ethnographers had informants with whom they developed "rapport," a professional term of method standing for bonding, making friends, and relating to facilitate the anthropologists purposes of inquiry. Of course in professional lore and occasional off-center publication, collaborative relationships were at the heart of tales of the field and the romantic motives for fieldwork. But research was never designed in terms

of the presumption of collaboration, nor were collaborations seen as more than facilitat data for authoritative frameworks and projects that were pursued by the individual researcher in the name of and accountable to a collective professional guild.

By critically examining the way ethnographies were written, including how they were composed from fieldwork, the 1980s *Writing Culture* critiques finally made visible the relationships through which the materials of classic ethnography came into being. Anthropologists became very, some would say excessively reflexive about the process of fieldwork, its politics, and its historic sins. The history of fieldwork as collaboration, always available in the personal archives of fieldwork notes and materials, became deeply considered. Genres of self-conscious and reflexive ethnography emerged, centered round the collaborative relationships of ethnographic knowledge-making and continue to this day as still inventive genres, despite a sense that there have been too many such works. But the point is that there could be no turning back after the 1980s. Collaboration as a moral, methodological core of fieldwork was here to stay, in full view. The language of rapport with informants would no longer be good enough, nor would easy objectification as the basic analytic language of ethnographic description. Yet, collaboration was exposed as a strategy of critical argument, not as a program of reform or reinvention of method. So there are still no norms or standard expectations about collaboration in ethnography. What is more, as indicated, the ground has shifted on which ethnography constitutes itself today. Malinowskian collaboration, even if normalized in method, would not fit with the changing conditions of ethnographic inquiry. Let me merely sketch the difference here.

Classically, the scene of collaboration in ethnography is between the anthropologist and the subject as "Other" in order to describe and elucidate the latter's enclosed cultural world as the object of mutual interest. But this interest emerges explicitly through the arrival of the anthropologist and the imposition of his research agenda, which the informant serves primarily. There might be something else in this relationship for native collaborators, but the object of study is their own culture as a lived form of life visible in locale, place, and community. Ethics in anthropology has been devoted to the power differentials of this core relationship of research. It is the outsider initiating a relationship that is exploitative or of mutual interest with an insider in relation to what the insider already knows or is in a position to be reflexive and paraethnographic about. The arrival of the outsider provides the complete rationale and terms of the collaboration. The insider makes her culture visible for the outsider according to the latter's agenda for constituting data. This is collaboration as rapport, which the critiques of the 1980s

made explicit but did not surpass. In fact, one can say that the 1980s critique instantiated a richer, more nuanced, version of what had traditionally been repressed. The genre of reflexive ethnographies is an aesthetic and theoretical fulfillment of Malinowskian collaboration—the relation of motivated outsider to insider across a boundary of cultural differences.

An alternative has arisen over the past three decades that reflects both changing thought among scholars, academics, and experts engaged in research and the changing way that most potential subjects of ethnography present themselves in relation to the idea of culture anywhere in the contemporary world. Of course these two levels of change are related—these parallel changes among observers and observed are in turn related to common vectors of globalizing change experienced from different positions. This essential affinity between observer and observed becomes the impetus for ethnography and the different kind of collaboration to which it now gives rise.

In this alternative construction of the scene of fieldwork collaboration, the anthropologist and the former "Other," now epistemic partners, ally complicitly in mutual awareness of a motivated interest in a "third" elsewhere —an object of curiosity, fear, anxiety, a speculation about agency that is elsewhere but is present in important ways in the scene of fieldwork. (This is what the Comaroffs have alluded to as the occult in the global [1999].) How cultural alterity at the boundaries that define such a relation is manifested is still a question. But this is more a question about how it is constructed situationally than one of access to the insider collaborator's culture, the traditional priority interest of the ethnographer. Now the collaboration is conceived as one between two outsiders in relation to an object of common concern that requires speculative investigation within available imaginaries. These imaginaries, as I will discuss, are the form of knowledge negotiated between the anthropologist and epistemic partner as the primary raw data of ethnography.

This is a schema of the scene of fieldwork that I tried to describe in the late 1990s, labeling the core relation as complicity, as a replacement term, for better or worse, for rapport. As I proposed then:

> Complicity, as a replacement for rapport in the frame of multi-sited ethnography, should be primarily understood as a figure that marks a shift in the kind of knowledge that the ethnographer seeks to access when conducting fieldwork. What ethnographers in this changed mise-en-scene want from subjects is not so much local knowledge as an articulation of the forms of anxiety that are generated by the awareness of being affected by what is elsewhere without knowing what the particular connections to that elsewhere might be. Complicity as a central figure in contemporary multi-sited ethnographies then should be essentially understood as a form of relationship, of affinity, that opens the possibility to parallel forms of

ethnographic knowledge while in the field. . . . The fieldworker often deals with
subjects who share his own broadly middle-class identity and fears, in which the
unspoken power issues in the relationship become far more ambiguous than they
would have been in past anthropological research. Complicity means owning up to
these circumstances and also owning up to the fact that people participate in dis-
courses that are thoroughly localized but that are not their own, and this creates
insecurity and curiosity both in the ethnographer and in her subjects. [Marcus
1997:85]

This collaboratively produced knowledge form, produced from complicity,
I have more recently termed "paraethnography" in my work with Douglas
Holmes.[1] I view it as a substitute for the classic expression of the object of
fieldwork as grasping or interpreting the "native point of view."

This view of fieldwork and its interests change dramatically the core
structure of norms that have held the Malinowskian scene in place. Most
importantly it recognizes subjects as epistemic partners, who produce in their
own terms something equivalent to ethnography, and much of the old interpre-
tive and translational skills of anthropology are dedicated to communicating
its situated and local expressions, which are, of course, about global realities
and imaginaries. This is a partnership with situated paraethnography that
orients, initiates, and designs professional ethnography with the implication
that anthropologists can no longer report results to their professional guilds
without bringing the field collaborations along. This changes everything
about the accountabilities, reception, and ultimate function of ethnographic
knowledge. But I am moving considerably beyond where things are in the
academy now (although these tendencies of shifting accountabilities and
receptions, stimulating new norms of practice, are legible in the interdiscipli-
nary engagements of anthropologists in a changing institutional environment
of research). Most explicit now, I would say, is simply the awareness that
recent changes have altered the scene of fieldwork and its central relations
—collaboration becomes explicit, a modality of method, but it does so in chan-
ging the traditional terms of the scene of fieldwork.

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1  What is paraethnography? Paraethnography is not merely a matter of identifying a new
   ethnographic subject—an accomplished autodidact. Rather, it opens far deeper questions
   about how culture operates within a continuously unfolding contemporary, and where
   everyone, directly or indirectly, is implicated in and constituted by complex technical
   systems of knowledge, power, health, politics, media, economy, and the like. What is at
   stake in the conceptualization of the paraethnographic are formations of culture that are
   not fully contingent on convention, tradition, and "the past," but rather constitute future-
   oriented cognitive practices that can generate novel configurations of meaning and
   action. This gives rise to the most radical assertion: that spontaneously generated para-
   ethnographies are built into the structure of the contemporary and give form and content
   to a continuously unfolding skein of experience (see Holmes and Marcus 2005a, 2005b).

Now, I want to shift to the second key term in my rethinking of the Malin-owskian scene of fieldwork engagement: the shape of the imaginaries that constitute the raw data, the contemporary native points of view, of contempo-rary complicitly produced ethnography, as I once termed it. However, before so doing, I want to discuss very briefly a crucial middle-term issue that I am eliding in this essay—that is, how the changed scene of fieldwork that I have described becomes multi-sited while at the same time it remains intense, focused, and still bounded in the apparent limitless complexity of globalizing circuits and connections. To think that ethnographic research begins and ends with this re-envisioned, mutually interested collaboration among epistemic partners at a particular site would very much limit its ambitions. Academic ethnography retains its identity and power by becoming independent of this orienting fieldwork where native points of view—paraethnography, as I have retermed them—are not scopes into other cultures, but collaborative resources for common objects and questions. I want to argue that ethnography becomes multi-sited when it comes to transcend and to move literally within the frames and mapping of these orienting collaborative resources to other locations. To literally move to and work inside the "elsewhere" or "third" that stimulates the collaboration of situated epistemic partners is both an impulse and imper-ative of contemporary ethnography. This is where ethnography moves from its more comfortable traditional sites in villages to, say, corporate board rooms, laboratories, and institutional venues, or, more likely today than ever, vice versa. Ethnography thus becomes multi-sited not by following known processes, but by moving within the imaginaries of its found collaborations. So, now let us turn to the shape of those imaginaries as the raw data of ethno-graphy, which animate, or mobilize it, to become multi-sited.

## The Globalizing Shape of Collaborative Imaginaries Wherever They Occur in Ethnographic Inquiry

I want to list and discuss briefly distinctive features of the kind of thinking that gets transacted within collaborative relationships between ethnographic researchers and their keenly reflexive and paraethnographic subjects as epis-temic partners. These features define the character of a distinctive globalizing imagination in these relationships. They are to be either encouraged or resist-ed depending on one's politics or ethics, and of course on the situation that is the ethnographic focus. In essence, these features (and others that could per-haps be added) define the object and shared analytic content of ethnographic inquiry in the multi-sited, linked collaborative relationship that I have de-scribed, whether situated among university scientists, policy researchers and

benchmarkers, or migrants and indigenous peoples, in their social movements and everyday politics and poetics. Anthropological ethnography has become, in effect, both the study of these collaborative formations and their imaginations, and, in a more activist sense, experiments in stimulating them.

1. There is a distinctive character of scale-making that Anna L. Tsing has emphasized in her recent book *Friction* (2005), about environmental movements, loggers, and international agencies in post-Suharto Kalimantan. Tsing writes of the content of ethnography as scale-making projects, and that the analytic tension in scenes of fieldwork are in the local clashes of such projects. As she states:

> Scale is the spatial dimensionality necessary for a particular kind of view, whether up close or from a distance, microscopic or planetary. Scale is not neutral —it must be brought into being: proposed, practiced, and evaded, as well as taken for granted . . . links among varied scale-making projects can bring each project vitality and power. The specificity of these articulations and collaborations also limits the spread and play of scale-making projects, promising them only a tentative moment in a particular history. . . .
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> In these times of heightened attention to the space and scale of human undertakings, economic projects cannot limit themselves to conjuring at different scales —they must conjure the scales themselves. In a sense, a project that makes us imagine globality in order to see how it might succeed is one kind of "scale-making project;" similarly projects that make us imagine locality, or the space of regions or nations, in order to see their success are also scale-making projects. In a world of multiple, divergent claims about scales, including multiple divergent globalism, those global worlds that most affect us are those that manage tentatively productive linkages with other scale-making projects. [Tsing 2005:36]

Tsing envisions, for example, the scale of finance capital (a program for global hegemony) in relation to that of franchise cronyism (a nation-making project) in relation to that of frontier culture (articulation of a region). Any one of these conceived as an ethnographic site requires collaborative relations of fieldwork that have at their heart an imaginary of an "elsewhere" or "elsewheres" in terms of the other two—"conjuring scale," as Tsing says, is an essential operation in constructing such an imaginary.

So from Tsing we have a way of focusing upon the spatial dimension of imaginaries and their implications in particular scenes of activity. Spatial dimension or scale is key to encompassing locales and "elsewheres" simultaneously. Tsing gives us the means to grasp this as cultural work of variant parallel dimensions, politics, and life commitment. This is how to think about "world views" today.

2. There is the powerful trend, everywhere, toward the identification of

humans and human action in virtual terms, but not just generically virtual, but virtual in terms of a universalizing model of governance that addresses the condition of life (Carrier and Miller 1998). There is a successive displacement of the beneficiaries of policy by abstracted models that come to stand in their stead. And in engaging with power, however much they may resist or suspect it, subjects are liable to develop everyday repertoires, habits of self-identification, and orientations to their material worlds as virtual. This accommodation to virtualist modes of thought is a major feature of the culture and work of NGOs that pervasively mediate the lives of peoples and agencies. NGOs are in a sense the stratum that has arisen to constitute and produce virtual subjects. Such an identification pervades even the scene of fieldwork, as anthropologists now call their informants "consultants." My construction of complicity toward working collaboration is an effort to resist this particular virtualism. Still, the tendency to self-identifications in the style of virtual thought is an increasing habit of the imagination oriented toward the social and the local that is constituted by globalizing processes. Virtualism is thus an aspect of imaginaries that suggests very specific "elsewheres" in every scene of ethnography, and shapes their multi-sited relations. They are cues and clues for the ethnographer to seek the unseen relations that shape lives locally and situationally.

3. There is a specific temporality in this collaborative thinking that, while historically informed, defines a frame of being totally engulfed in the emergent with a sense of emergency—anxiety, anticipation, and new things unfolding that hold wonder, hope, and danger. So the ethnography of the contemporary exists in a temporality of the recent past, but one most strongly oriented to a near future (Rabinow 2002)—that is, in a state of anticipation. In Marilyn Strathern's terms (2004), ethnography anticipates a future need to know something that cannot be defined in the present. The intellectual achievement of fieldwork collaborations is to clarify and articulate such anticipations and to explore them in relation to specific elsewheres. What moves ethnography literally is the stake in a specific locally imagined conception of the "possible" or of "hope" in the cultural genre of anticipation (Miyazaki 2004). For example, health policy and access to medical care—the standard topics of medical anthropology—are arenas in which this kind of imaginary is a core object of ethnographic analysis at present. The anticipatory temporality is the most subtly millenarian dimension of contemporary imaginaries at all levels of system.

4. Finally, there is that sense of movement in situated collaborative globalizing thought that instills an established condition of incompleteness and "the cause is elsewhere" into such thinking. It is this feature that gives it

its distinctive critical quality, its most authentic sense of hope, and specula-
tion, and is most paraethnographic in quality. In excess, it also has dimensions
of the imaginary of paranoid social thought, of conspiracy thinking (Marcus
1998). At its most interesting this is the aspect of paraethnographic thought on
which the ethnographic researcher feeds and designs her own plan of inquiry,
to literally carry the orienting collaboration elsewhere. Movement is not in
terms of networks—this is the already "mappable," the known—but in terms
of displacements and juxtapositions—local theories, as stories, tales, evolved
concepts, on the "thirds" that are discussed as defining the collaborative focus
of contemporary fieldwork. It is what Strathern in her study of policy arenas
(2004) calls "the creativity of the repressed," the social thought passed on in
scenarios, contrarian memos, anecdotes, dissenting memoirs, and PowerPoint
presentations (see Barnett 2004); on the local level, it is simply the social
thought, the figurative ethnography or paraethnography in narratives and
stories about travel, happenings, and experiences elsewhere that come to influ-
ence situated collective action and everyday life.

This imaginary of the social in motion, or in dislocated connection and
association, is what has become of "the native point of view" embedded in
fixed cultural contexts, in the collaborations and intellectual partnerships of
contemporary multi-sited ethnographic research. Thinking about connection,
displacement, and juxtaposition is the impetus for collaborative, situated eth-
nographic thought on our contemporary globalizing conditions elsewhere and
everywhere. For me, recent ethnography on finance capital, high and low, has
been most successful at demonstrating the power of juxtaposition and dis-
placement as techniques for making ethnography both mobile and contained,
appropriate to bounded circuits in globalizing regimes (see Ong and Collier
2005; Maurer 2005).

So, scale-making projects, virtual identities, living in a temporality of
anticipation, and connecting things by techniques of perceived juxtaposition
and displacement all characterize the grounded imaginaries in terms of which
collaborative ethnography, wherever it begins, takes shape and moves on.

In conclusion, let me simply return to the Tongan research with which
this talk and my career began. What would I be studying today? Certainly an
internationalized (globalized?) circle of Tongans in their diasporas and in
their symbolic, impoverished homeland nation-state, as flexible citizens in
Aihwa Ong's apt concept (1999). But I would not study only this. Tongans as
paraethnographers are concerned with their standings as subjects in systems
that they have learned, and which themselves are obliged to consider Tongans
and other clients in new ways. The contemporary sense of Tongan culture
exists in at least double focus, somewhere in between overlapping scale-

making projects of Tongans, states, and other agencies. Collaborations with intellectual partners at different sites, found in fieldwork and conceived in terms of scale-making, virtuality, anticipation, juxtapositions, and displacements are what makes this traditionally conceived "culture" in its contemporary state(s) available to Tongans, to diverse bureaucracies, and to anthropologists.[2]

Ultimately, the functions of ethnography are not simply to describe Tongan culture—this archival function is past or has been accomplished in an earlier era of anthropology—but to actively mediate its expressions in the collaborations forged in fieldwork, giving insights into the unintended consequences of relations among agents and subjects without contact, or in unseen contact, but in a mutual distanced awareness that globalizing processes increasingly engender.

# Epilogue

I am currently forming a modest center for contemporary ethnography with colleagues in California and elsewhere (http://www.socsci.uci.edu/~ethnog/). It includes anthropologists as well as others like planners, computer scientists, law professors, and consultants who see in the space of a reimagined ethnographic practice that I have discussed here an opportunity to rethink their own practices, to overcome the alienations of formal rational process that even now tries to incorporate a richer imaginary of the social. One key goal will be to track and follow ongoing projects of research with distinctive strategies of connectedness among multiple sites, across actors and partners, to

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[2]  I did something like this years ago—during the the 1980s—in the context of legal cases for which I served as an expert witness. I rendered opinion on the Tongan customary practice of adoption in relation to a case brought against the U.S. immigration service ruling against the entry of adopted Tongan kin into the United States. At that time such agencies were far less formally accountable or sensitive to their clients than they are now. But even then, I sensed the paraethnographic between the lines, so to speak, of bureaucratic judgment entailing a more elaborate understanding of clients than policy allowed. The legal process actually inspired explicit paraethnographic reflection, but unintentionally and without a clear sense of what its function might be. Now, more sophisticated globally sensitive thinking about such bureaucratic and legal contexts have made a space to think explicitly about, on one hand, interdisciplinary projects and their institutional collaborations, and on the other, the collaborations of contemporary fieldwork. This is the compass of an ethnography of unintended consequences. The function of contemporary ethnography is to put these related, mutually implicated, but out of touch visions in contact—the function of mediation rather than description that I posited. We as anthropologists today, in what we do and where we find ourselves, are almost there in fact and in practice, but our de facto, evolving, adapting practices are not yet being articulated or brought into discussion and normativity.

examine precisely the collaborative imaginaries they produce. We want to form a kind of suprareflexive space of observation and discussions of these organisms of inquiry, to use a very old Durkheimian metaphor of sociality, in and outside the requirements and hopes of scale-making projects all around us, near and far. For example, there is one such project, the Laboratory for the Anthropology of the Contemporary, initiated by Paul Rabinow, Stephen Collier, and Andrew Lakoff (http://anthropos-lab.net/collaborations/concept-work/), that is devoted to the kinds of intellectual work that the hyper-interest in biosecurity is generating. When it was presented by one of its researchers at a seminar recently, suspicion, fear, and some loathing were heaped on its very mention. The critical tradition of being suspicious of such projects is perhaps healthy, but as soon as the presenter began to explain the various projects being studied the harsh reaction quickly dissipated. Rather than confirming Dr. Strangelove in the Pentagon or something like it, these were projects that were familiar, in some sense normal, and reasonable. Without such projects, how can we understand what is happening to our borders, to citizenship, to our economies? The same questioning critical edge will undoubtedly reemerge with regard to them, but not without the critics recognizing their own complicities. Of course, such routine complicities with the support of powerful state and corporate patrons have never been different, but since the Cold War, in the era of outsourcing everything, complicit engagements are more ambiguous than ever before and, when ethnographically mapped, are harder to judge than one might imagine. Anyhow, the paraethnographic thought that goes on in the changing research functions of institutions of governance and rule draws on the university and its faculties more complexly than ever before. This is something that we have access to, and in terms of which of we must find often collaborative connections, for unanticipated results and for the sake of sustaining our interests in the kinds of subjects to whom we have long been and will remain committed. Research in the traditional scenes of fieldwork, transformed, pushes us in this direction, as I have argued, while never losing sight of those scenes.

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# 協力合作的圖像

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　　古典人類學田野調查工作，爲了要強化參與觀察的密度，往往長期在一個特定的地點如社群、鄰里區域或機構內進行。而正是拜這種研究上的主要風格所賜，才得以產生人類學獨特的民族誌知識。在全球化與地方和社會過程都發生顯著變化的當代，人類學的田野工作也面臨了新的挑戰：文化與社會過程的特質是流動性的、網絡式的、分散的。過去在社區內看似連貫一致、且可堪從事參與觀察的文化和社會單位，也呈現出支離破碎的現象。筆者曾以「多點民族誌」的崛起，來討論研究上現有條件的改變所引發的方法論和理論上的問題。在本文中，筆者將繼續思考：多點民族誌的特殊研究環境與方法，會如何改變人類學家和其報導人之間關鍵性情境關係的基本特質，而這正是成功的田野工作所必須倚賴的。這些傳統的研究者與報導人之間的關係，的確已經產生了細緻但卻明顯的改變。首先，筆者將關注在多點架構下從事研究時，協力合作的田野工作方法，在性質上的改變與需加強何種的重要性。其次，筆者認爲經由這些協力合作所建構出來的圖像，會同時成爲此種民族誌研究的媒介與對象。就好像早年美國人類學經典民族誌，既企圖透過「土著觀點」來進行該民族的研究，也同時將土著觀點當作是民族誌研究的對象。最後，筆者會簡要地交代四個將這些圖像界定爲民族誌探討對象的分析面向，其中將特別著眼於全球化的過程，會如何形塑這些研究者在持續的人類學田野工作之地方情境中，所能掌握到的圖像。

關鍵詞：協力合作，田野工作，多點民族誌，全球化，反思