



A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Turns and returns

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[H]e wanted the barman to replenish his rum-glass. Crump came from behind the bar, seventyish, in a waiter's white jacket. . . . "Yes, General," he said. "Similar, sir? Very good, sir." "I'm always telling him," said an ancient with the humpty-dumpty head of Sibelius, "about that use of the word. It's common among barmen and landlords. They say you can't have the same again. But it is, in fact, precisely the same again that one wants. One doesn't want anything similar. You deal in words, Enderby. You're a writer. What's your view of the matter?"

"It is the same," agreed Enderby. "It's from the same bottle. Something similar is something different."

Anthony Burgess, *Enderby*

Two major "turns" have been allegedly affecting our discipline during the last decade or so: 1) a so-called "ontological" one, aiming to recalibrate the content of what the notion of "alterity" (of people, of concepts) entails and examining the effects of this analytical process on the very reconception of humanity, sociality, self, and non-self; 2) an "ethical" turn, which tackles anthropologists' obligations towards informants in situations of radical uncertainty and suffering, yet also questions whether society or forms of life can be conceived at all without understanding people's underlying commitments to ideas of the good, suffering, virtue, or life itself.

This issue of HAU portrays some major contributions toward a further articulation of these turns, hopefully with critical brushstrokes in HAU's best tradition.

We first showcase a series of articles enthused by HAU's foundational quote from Evans-Pritchard, namely that the most difficult task for an anthropologist is to determine the meaning of a few key words, upon an understanding of which the



whole investigation depends. We are thus thrilled to publish Mark Mosko's double-length essay *Malinowski's magical puzzles* which revisits a classic watchword in anthropology (with *hau*, *mana*, *taboo*): the *baloma* spirit and its role in Trobriand conceptions of procreation. How does the magic of kinship and procreation happen in Trobriand society today? Mosko's tour-de-force, which features a brilliant literature review of the debates on the anthropology of magic, is certainly destined to become a classic on the interface between kinship and magic. João Pina-Cabral's erudite disquisition in two parts is also likely to garner considerable attention by attending to the notion of "world" which grounds implicitly many of the past and current reflections on "cosmologies," "ontologies," and (world)view. Pina-Cabral engages with philosophical scrupulousness the argument that there exists a "plurality of ontologies" and debating around different and incommensurable ontologies is rather making a mountain out of a molehill. Joost Fontein explores the ontological and legal conundrums emerging from a crime committed in state of trance. How are criminal actions which may be justified by the pursuit cultural belief treated when carried out by people devoid of agency? Fontein's article takes us through the "ethnographic sorcery" (to use Harry West's [2008] term) involved when the anthropologist questions situations of radical uncertainty and unknowability. Returning to Lucien Lévy-Bruhl's idea of "participation," Cristóbal Bonelli tackles the notion of *mollvün*, a term the Pehuenche of Southern Chile employ to indicate "blood" that is eaten in order to constitute a person's capacity for establishing fruitful relationships, but is also an object of desire and consumption by witches. Klaus Hamberger explains how recent uses of perspectivism draw on cosmological accounts rather than ritual analysis and throws a new light on what a "perspective" is with an exemplary ethnography of ritual transformations and hunting among the Watchi and Ewe of East Africa. Amiria Salmond concludes her opus on the ontological turn's attempt to transform ethnography as a mode of translation with an introduction of sorts to all misconceptions affecting the idea of the turn as a univocal school of thought, thereby accounting for its different voices and tonalities.

In the opinion of yours truly, marking ethnography as a mode of translation is not *just* a turn but a return. To Roger Keesing's timely concerns, for example: "Ethnographers . . . often have read into other peoples' ways of talk, metaphysical beliefs or cosmologies that such talk seems to imply, but does not. Have we invented cosmologies, theologies, beliefs, constructed out of other peoples' metaphors? Have we ethnographers acted as theologians to create nonexistent theologies?" (Keesing 1985: 201). Or to a piece which eloquently predates our latest turn, where Rodney Needham (1975) warned against the blunders emerging from generating false complexes of "casuality" and conjectured the effect of nineteenth-century physics on the development of such notions as "force" in Durkheim's statements on social "facts," an imaginary trope which led Mauss to look for the "force" in a gift that compelled its return. Thus, as a sign of respect toward our intellectual history and tradition, this issue invites you to (re)think about the *hau* of the turns and asks which kind of *returns* are our turns today—which tacit or transcendental fields of historical, social, and political "imagination" indeed ground the resurgence of recent cosmological and ontological approaches? Although something similar is also something different, and a second round of rum is different from the first one, as Enderby notes in the epigraph above.

To balance the outburst of ontological concerns, this issue also hosts an authoritative special section edited by Kiven Strohm and Bob White on the epistemology of anthropology inspired by Johannes Fabian's famous notion of "coevality," the sharing of time between the anthropologist and the informant, a condition to be created for the production of ethnographic knowledge. How does anthropology know and what are the aporias of the hackneyed notion of "intersubjectivity"? I leave the guest editors to explain further the theme of this section in their preface. Suffices to say that Johannes Fabian himself has given us another masterpiece that attempts to answer this question further by tying some loose ends. Fabian is followed by Peter Pels' critical engagement with philosophy of science and the distinguished text by Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison (2007) on objectivity. The section concludes with Eric Gable's nuanced analysis of the notion of guilt and moral mutuality in the ethnographic encounter. Taken together, the contributions to this special section calls our attention to the epistemological dimensions of the ethnographic encounter and the production of knowledge through the blunders of communication arising during it.

This issue also features the most discussed and controversial panel of last year's AAA meeting in Chicago, "The ontological turn in French philosophical anthropology," originally convened by John D. Kelly and Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney. Included here are some already fabled cuts and thrusts on the limits of animism and anthropomorphisms between Philippe Descola and Marshall Sahlins (accompanied by the beautiful diagrams by Mauro William Barbosa de Almeida). Kim Fortun's critical and pungent engagement with Bruno Latour's recent work on the modes of existence is followed by a piquant reaction by Michael M. J. Fischer vs. the proponents of the French turn. Again, I leave the guest editor, John Kelly, to explain the full scope of this major Colloquium in his introduction and afterword.

The Forum joins the discussion of alterity and worlds with a multi-vocal reflection on the notion of the "remote" inspired by a masterpiece previously published in HAU: "Remote Areas" by Edwin Ardener (2012). Featuring short essays by eight different authors (Erik Harms, Shafqat Hussain, and Sara Shneiderman—who edited the contribution—and Sasha Newell, Charles Piot, Louisa Schein, Terence Turner, and Juan Zhang), this forum contrasts *remoteness* with *edginess*, addressing the first not so much as a place but as a *way of being* and arguing that the remote (and hence the object of ethnographic theory) may be present in any site of anthropological inquiry. In spirit of HAU's all-embracing *openness* and aversion for any form of factionalism, we also host Tim Ingold's fierce attack against one of the cornerstones of this journal, the very concept of ethnography. The following forum showcases contributions revolving around Jane I. Guyer's translation of the appendix to Paul Fauconnet's 1920 untranslated monograph, *La responsabilité: Étude de sociologie*, which is devoted to "The sentiment of responsibility and the sentiment of liberty." Fauconnet was a member of the famed *Année Sociologique* and his ideas were developed in conversation with Durkheim, Mauss, and other members of the group. This forum also hints at a critical perspective on some streaks of the anthropology of ethics through the lenses of *temporality* and *duration*, or what Guyer calls "durational ethics," or *steadfastness*. Fauconnet's piece is followed by John Kelly's brief rejoinder on the relation between Fauconnet's idea of responsibility to

Durkheim's sociology of ethics and its implications for what he names Durkheim's own ontological turn.

The Symposia we present in this issue are two feasts which in terms of length and depth could constitute a self-standing special issue. We feature two books that are likely to become classics in the discipline, starting with James Laidlaw's pioneering reflections that have been foundational in the constitution of the "ethical turn" in the discipline. His 2001 Malinowski Lecture "For an anthropology of ethics and freedom" forms the subtitle of *The subject of virtue*, which enthused for this symposium dazzling contributions by some of the most eminent voices in the anthropology of ethics, including Didier Fassin, James Faubion, Webb Keane, Eduardo Kohn, Michael Lempert, Cheryl Mattingly, and Veena Das. We turn then to Pierre Lemonnier's *Mundane objects: Materiality and non-verbal communication*, which is commented on by Bruno Latour, Chris Ballard, Tim Ingold, Paul Graves-Brown, and Susanne Küchler. While endorsed by Latour, this book cleverly exemplifies an alternative "turn" to one which tended to erase the caesura between things and concepts. Lemonnier returns (following the French tradition of Leroi-Gourhan) to the concept of technical—not in vapid opposition to the symbolic or germane to the criteria of efficiency, but as a way to *sublate* different materials by weaving them together. No anthropologist or archaeologist will remain unaffected by reading this text and the debate which sparked in this issue.

This towering issue (39 pieces + this notice) is completed by the reprint of a jewel of an essay by Rodney Needham which contrasts brilliantly—through the scrutiny of the image of the witch—the well-nigh meaningless and stale use of the word "imagination" in the discipline.

This issue is also about cycles and recycles, and losses. With yet another masterful management of a monumental issue, Stéphane Gros ends his glorious editorial cycle as Managing Editor. Without any doubt, I can state that HAU would not be what it is today without Stéphane's support, especially in the earlier stages of the project. Although Stéphane will remain with us an Editor-at-large, he can finally take a deserved break from the core editorial work and return full time to his scholarly endeavors. He is replaced by the equally heroic Sean Dowdy, who is now Managing Editor of both the journal and the new HAU book series, in partnership with the University of Chicago Press. In HAU's editorial foreword to the first issue, I named Stéphane Gros the backbone of the journal, "the relentless yet gentle figure working out of the spotlight, processing manuscripts with Mandarin-like efficiency." Nothing has changed since then but our reservoir of energies and our skins, scathed by the odyssey we traveled since HAU's first public announcement on May 12, 2011. Stéphane's sterling attention for detail and editorial wisdom, his comradeship and friendship, his determination, resilience, and dedication to HAU's mission have been admirable and exemplary. We wish him a return to a cleaner desk and thinking space for his future research. Thank you.



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