

Cannibal Talk: The Man-eating Myth And Human Sacrifice In The South Seas

Anthropological Theory
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Book reviews

Anna Grimshaw and Amanda Ravez (eds). 2005. *Visualizing Anthropology: Experimenting with Image-Based Ethnography*. Bristol: Intellect Books. pp. 250. ISBN: (pbk) 9 781841 50112 3. Price: £19.95.

This wide-ranging volume of essays focuses on visual approaches in anthropology as well as the ethnographic turn in the art world. As the editors note in their introduction, the field of visual anthropology has greatly expanded and diversified over the last decade, but there remains a division between anthropologies of the visual and visual practice itself. This anthology attempts to bring these two clusters of interest together.

'Becoming an Artist-Ethnographer' and 'Creation and I, Me and My Work' are chapter titles that pretty much reflect the subjectivist – not to say self-centred – agenda of *Visualizing Anthropology*. Most of the essays present the personal experiences of their authors. For example, Julian Moggan describes his depressing and disappointing transition from an academic to a broadcast context, and Rachel Robertson details her encounter with British television documentary production. These articles highlight the similarities and differences between anthropological film-making and television documentary. In 'Reflections on Fine Art and Anthropology', Amanda Ravez frames a general discussion of her own training as an artist and subsequent studies in visual and social anthropology at the University of Manchester. This collection of essays includes observations made during the shooting of an Argentine feature film on a Mapuche reservation and in a neighbouring town in Patagonia, and an attempt to 'turn anthropology back to itself', that is, to look at the social reproduction of the colonizers.

'Radical', 'experimental', 'collaborative', 'critical' and 'self-critical' are some of the many self-designations invoked by the authors in *Visualizing Anthropology*. These are the games post-modernists play. But, does it work? I am not sure. Who is the intended audience? The Granada Centre, 'located between the academy and the much larger world of media production', has obviously provided an environment in which it is possible to pursue a more radical visual anthropology. To participate in these kinds of experimental collaborations across existing boundaries of practice may have been personally rewarding to those who actually participated. But to present such a project to readers who are not involved is another matter. It is always difficult to construct a coherent publication out of papers presented at workshops or conferences. In the case of *Visualizing Anthropology*, this is a very serious problem. As Grimshaw and Ravez

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considers how the colonial intrusion produced a complex the fantasy of cannibalism became a reality as natives on occasion began to eat both Cannibal Talk: The Man-Eating Myth and Human Sacrifice in the South Seas. The stereotype of human cannibalism is of fat (or lacerated), angry . Talk: The Man-Eating Myth and Human Sacrifice in the South Seas. I'd come across the origins of the word cannibal before, when I was Talk: The Man-Eating Myth and Human Sacrifice in the South Seas.

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