Behind the Scenes:

Transversality of Invisible Lines and Knowledges

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Abstract

This special issue draws on ideas from two international meetings of the TransOceanik Associated International Laboratory (LIA). One was held in Paris at the Collège de France in 2014, and the other in Brazil at the Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Florianopolis, in 2013. The meetings explored the themes 'Behind the scenes' (L'envers du décor) and 'Blurred Interfaces' (Interfaces troubles).

The papers and filmed discussions presented here show the emergence of lines between transoceanic scenes which have been rendered invisible by colonial history. These threads begin to appear in various forms, including through resistance and Kriolisation in Indigenous North-Western Australia (Préaud); or through the tracing of political histories of colonial territories and slavery across the Pacific, Indian and Atlantic oceans, and their connection with the contemporary neoliberal order and slavery (Vergès). Also analysed are different forms of performance of historical invisibility: the Carnival of Martinique, for instance, is a stage for the interstitial spaces of French colonialism in the Caribbean islands (Bruneteaux); while the Umbanda Afro-Brazilian cult is encouraging the emergence of indigenous entities alongside the African Orixas in Manaus, Brazil (Montardo). The voice of indigenous people is also coming out from invisibility through different political scenes such as the cosmopolitical discourse of a Yanomami Association in Brazil (Araujo). Despite discrimination and violence faced by many indigenous peoples, Brazil encourages lines of connection and difference through various initiatives, such as a film festival residency programme in Recife that brought together two indigenous film makers, one from Brazil and one from Australia (Athias). Included in this collection is a filmed discussion (Vimeo and Transcript) between four indigenous scholars – three from Brazil (Antunes, Narciso & Tschucambang) and one from Australia (Lenoy) – as they share experiences of the political struggles involved in bringing their cultural heritages into visibility.

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This special edition of *Etropic* seeks to sketch these cartographies of lines of existence and their translocal connections that, although 'invisibilised' by history and the current economic and political stage, are threading their way to the front, or working to make a better life in the back stage.

Keywords: tropics, rhizomatics, cosmopolitics, cartography, indigenous knowledges, Deleuze, Guattari, Australia, Brazil, Caribbean

Introduction: Emerging Scenes

This paper sets the context of our search for the emergence of forms and assemblages of existence that arise when we seek to peer 'behind the scenes' of dominance to where resistance is created, especially by indigenous and colonised peoples. It outlines theoretical ideas behind two meetings organised by the TransOceanik Associated International Laboratory (LIA), a research partnership between the French CNRS (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique/National Centre for Scientific Research) in association with the Laboratoire d'Anthropologie Sociale (LAS) of the Collège de France and The Cairns Institute at James Cook University (JCU) in Australia. 'Behind the scenes' (L'envers du décor) was held at the Collège de France, Paris in January 2014, while 'Blurred Interfaces' (Interfaces troubles) was hosted by the Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Florianopolis, Brazil, in May 2013. These two international conferences brought together scholars in anthropology, philosophy, literature, art, political science, psychoanalysis and sociology, concerned with peoples and societies of the tropics. The specific focus of each conference was on the power of image behind words, or rather, behind dualisms and fixed categories. The French expression interfaces troubles questions the opposition of such binary interfaces as male/female, human/non-human, life/death; in other words, it refers to liminal qualities - the blur in gender, notions of continuity of life after death, and the living in non-human things. Similarly the phrase *l'envers du décor* suggests in French more than the spatial notion of 'behind the scenes'. It evokes the reverse of the decorum, the stage or scene - like the reverse of the mirror understood not merely as a thing and its representation, reflection or inversion; but as a multiplicity that unfolds behind observed actions, events, or spaces in movement.

Behind the Scenes

We are faced with a methodological challenge of how to recognise the emergence of forms: old ones that we have failed to see, or new ones that are arising, emerging, coming out. We are simultaneously faced with the intersecting challenge of how to understand the modes of existence that are made invisible because of our categories of thinking, seeing, hearing, feeling. There is a need to sketch the cartographies of 'invisibilised' lines as well as to detect traits of singularity that resonate with each other and allow solidarities across boundaries, while affirming their heterogeneity.

'Behind the Scenes: emergence of forms and assemblages of difference' was the full title of the colloquium organised by Barbara Glowczewski and Florence Brunois (CNRS-LAS). At stake was the proposal to sketch a map of that which has been made invisible - forgotten, hidden, unknown or underestimated - yet remains essential to the sustainability of life and resistance to dominance. Researchers congregated from Australia, Brazil, France and Singapore for this TransOceanik meeting and their sites of research extended to Papua New

Guinea, South East Asia, Amazonia, Brazil, Angola, Mozambique, Colombia, France, Senegal, New Caledonia and Australia – as well as sites of film and cyberspace.

The TransOceanik network was created in 2010 between France's CNRS and Australia's James Cook University (JCU) to enable the comparison of such traits of singularity of modes of existence and strategies of expression – including those of resistance – of people caught in globalisation, especially around the tropical belt of the planet. This region, which has the largest biodiversity as well as cultural and linguistic diversity in the world, is particularly sensitive to climate change, ocean and air pollution, and the movements of populations – humans, animals, plants. In these constant flows, alternatives thrive but often come up against economical, political and ecological blockages. The tropical-global network of TransOceanik, and the need for such scholarly links, has been described by Glowczewski, Henry & Otto (2013), as well as spatially and theoretically mapped in a previous special edition of *Etropic* by Lundberg (2013). The LIA TransOceanik became formally recognized as a laboratoire for cooperation in research between the CNRS France and JCU Australia and its campus in Singapore at the beginning of 2012. It has continued to bring together scholars to search for the assemblages of existence that are being built today, and to reflect upon the means of their dissemination - particularly through images and the use of digital devices.

The January 2014 'Behind the Scenes' colloquium invited participants to question categories and language by investigating perceptions and ontologies and the strength of transformation and creativity emerging behind minor roles and hidden clues in an anthropological debate open to interdisciplinary and, indeed, 'undisciplined' actors of thought. This was a continuation of an interrogation of thought and conversation held at the previous meetings organised by the LIA TransOceanik network.

Blurred Interfaces

In May 2013 the Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina (UFSC), Brazil, hosted a three-day gathering of 50 speakers. The theme 'Blurred Interfaces: questioning norms, classifications and the primacy of language' intended to interrogate the cultural and existential porosity present in three categories: male/female, human/non-human and dead/alive. This international conference of the LIA TransOceanik was coordinated by Barbara Glowczewski (LAS-CNRS), with Miriam Pillar Grossi and Felipe Bruno Martens Fernandes (PPGAS/UFSC). PPGAS is the postgraduate program of social anthropology at the Federal University of Santa Catarina, located in Florianopolis, Southern Brazil. The meeting also involved the Centro de Filosofia e Ciências Humanas (Center of Philosophy and Human Sciences, CFH), the Nucleo de Identidades de Gênero e Subjetividades (Centre for the study of gender identities and subjectivities, NIGS), as well as the Associação Brasileira de Antropologia (Brazilian Association of Anthropology, ABA). (The programme can be viewed on the link: http://transoceanik.paginas.ufsc.br/programme/)

As noted by Lundberg in the previous TransOceanik special issue of *Etropic* (2013), the conference was explicitly concerned with questioning dualisms. It did this by drawing together two quotations to amplify the resonances between them. One quote was from the famous anthropologist of structuralism, Claude Lévi-Strauss, where he notes that the study of dualistic structures simultaneously reveals anomalies and contradictions. Importantly, he proposes that it would be interesting to treat forms of dualism as surface distortions of structures whose real nature is other, and much more complicated:

...l'étude des organisations dites dualistes révélait tant d'anomalies et de contradictions, par rapport à la théorie en vigueur, que l'on aurait intérêt à renoncer à cette dernière et à traiter les formes apparentes de dualisme comme des distorsions superficielles de structures dont la nature réelle est autre, et beaucoup plus compliquée. (Lévi-Strauss, 1956).

Significantly, these words of Lévi-Strauss, who redefined a typology of "dual societies", were, for the purposes of the conference, placed beside notes from a seminar by Gilles Deleuze who opposes the notion of "classifications" (of genre, essences and homogeneous objects) through the term "classements" - a French word to be understood here not as ranking or evaluation, but as a typology of various heterogeneous processes from a subjective point of view.

Trouver le point de vue c'est à dire le point de vue subjectif sous lequel des choses hétérogènes se laissent ranger, au lieu de trouver le point objectif, c'est à dire le genre, qui en se divisant, me donne une classification des choses en fonction de leur homogénéité. (...) quand j'emploie non pas des classifications, mais des classements c'est que je me propose autre chose. Je me propose de ranger des modes d'existence. (Deleuze, 1983)

Find the point of view, that is the subjective point of view under which heterogeneous things can be arranged, instead of finding the objective point, that is the genre, which when divided, gives me a classification of things according to their homogeneity. (...) when I use not classifications, but *classements* (classifying without ranking), I propose something else to myself. I propose to arrange modes of existence.

Deleuze is encouraging vectors, lines of disconnection and connection, as stimulated by a subjective point of view according to which heterogeneous modes of existence can be arranged – and, of theoretical importance – de-arranged, deranged; not ranked. Rather than seeking the objective view, the kind that by dividing/subdividing/cutting gives a classification of things according to their homogeneity (or lack of), he proposes to use not classification, but something else: arranging modes of existence, not according to common elements (essences), but on the basis of 'alternants' or the possibility of alternatives.

Moving away from dualisms of male/female, human/animal, alive/dead, human/machine to notions of becoming, the LIA TransOceanik conference held in Brazil encountered transitioning spaces, involving: liminal spaces transitioning between dual categories, transdisciplinary thinking, and transitions between fields of study. It created a matrixial weave between anthropology, indigenous studies, philosophy, psychoanalysis, shamanism, spirits, politics, history, feminism, gender studies, transgender, experimental film, sign language, technologies, science studies, material culture, ritual, ruins, art, memory, death, radio, sacrifice, race, neuroscience and psychotropic substances. These spaces transected with scenes of research and study carried out in Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Cuba, Europe, France, Italy, Mesoamerica and Mexico, with a specific input from Indigenous scholars invited to the conference (Lundberg, 2013).

Scenes and Interfaces

The effect of bringing anthropologists, interdisciplinary and 'undisciplined' scholars together in these spaces of ideas and ideation opened an interstice to further discussions, to other

scenes and interfaces. Thus the collection of papers brought together in this special edition is, itself, undisciplined. It re-presents neither the space of the colloquium held at the Amphithéâtre Lévi-Strauss at the Collège de France (2014), nor that of the conference at the Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Brazil (2013); rather it draws together papers, images and audio-visual productions from both these spaces and the further spaces of network connections that they create, especially from indigenous points of view. These papers, by being brought into contact, into collectivity in this special edition, offer an emergence of forms and assemblages of difference.³

In 'Indigeneity behind the scenes' Martin Préaud examines invasion and kriolisation in Aboriginal Australia. The paper is based on his doctoral research (joint JCU/EHESS) with the Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Council (KALACC) that federates some 30 North-West Indigenous language groups and a recent postdoctoral survey for SOGIP (a European programme on Scales of Governance, The UN and Indigenous Peoples). As discussed by anthropologist Tassadit Yacine, Director of Studies at the School of Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences (EHESS) during the session at the Collège de France, Paris:

Far from being completely passive and submissive, these different populations oppose, each in its own way, a resistance based on a culture assumed to be destroyed by history and its consequences over their modes of perpetuation. The emergence of resistance is precisely inscribed in the process of transmission of their learnings among Indigenous peoples and other dominated people. The Australian Aboriginal example as described by Martin Préaud is here paradigmatic because resistance (which is also emblematic) operates on the basis of instruments given by the dominator and his language, such as the concept of Law and Culture used in English. However these words only have the appearance of English, their exterior coating, in reality they belong to a Kriol terminology - a tongue constructed on this relation, which was born from an imbalance of power. According to Préaud, the concept of Law and Culture expressed in Kriol is decisive for the intelligibility of their actions and what is meaningful to them; it also informs Australian and/or colonial categories.

In a way these categories – law and order on one side, arts and culture on the other– are diverted to impose an indigenous and transversal vision of activities defined as cultural but which deeply depend on politics, especially through ritual. Such a strategy is known elsewhere in other political situations, "same but different" as was mentioned during discussions around the struggles against French colonisation in Algeria and other parts of Africa and the planet, from the XIX^e till the 1960s. (Yacine, 2013)

The paper by Françoise Vergès, a French political scientist holding the Global South(s) chair at the College of World Studies (FMSH, Paris), presents 'A Cartography of Invisible Lives' based on the history of European colonisation which criss-crosses the tropics and includes French overseas territories like New Caledonia and Tahiti in the Pacific, Martinique and Guadeloupe in the Caribbean seascape, or Mayotte and the island of La Reunion in the Indian

³ Another link in the TransOceanik network that is of interest here was The Cairns Institute/TransOceanik research workshop 'Difference and Domination: The Power of Narrative in Ritual, Performance and Image' convened by Rosita Henry and Michael Wood (July, 2014). A selection of papers from this meeting are included in a forthcoming special issue edited by Estelle Castro and Géraldine Leroux on 'Visual Creativity and Narrative Research in Oceania' Anthrovision http://anthrovision.revues.org/. Further papers on the anthropology of Brazil can be found in Baines et al. (2015).

Ocean, where Vergès, herself, comes from. She also insists on the fact that not only are the effects of colonisation still operating in the neoliberal post-Fordist global economy, but that they also accompany new forms of slavery which remain widespread today – and in this neocolonial era, women are being affected more then men.

In the 'Grey Zone in Caribbean Islands', Patrick Bruneteaux, researcher in sociology with the CNRS at the Centre Européen de Sociologie et de Science Politique (CESSP) at the Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, explains the interstice of socio-racial struggles around the space of the Martinican carnival. He argues that the ideology of the carnival as bringing together all the constituents of the society is an illusion, while the socio-racial structure of divided carnival groups of action reflects the neocolonial structure of the society. Far from being a social invention/intervention, the carnival is a continuation. It remains enmeshed within the logic of the colonial plantation world and its tripartide Black, White and 'Free Colours' (Mulattos) as intermediate buffer groups – a grey zone which Bruneteaux argues is evident today in the gentrification of the carnival of Martinique.

Three papers focus on various regions of Brazil where both indigenous peoples and the descendants of the slave traffic have developed original forms of resistance over the centuries. The development of indigenous entities in Afro-Brazilian cults in Manaus is the field where Deise Lucy Oliveira Montardo, a Professor with the Federal University of Amazonas and the Graduate Programme of Anthropology, looks for 'activated relations' between the African divine entities (Orixas), brought by Black ancestors deported as slaves from Africa, and the spirits of dead Indians (Caboclos) from Brazil. Both come to "incorporate" or "embody" the members of the Umbanda cults all across Brazil together with other "families of spirits", such as Preto Velhos, "old black" spirits of Black people who died in Brazil. Montardo shows that in Manaus, a town on the border of the Amazon rainforest, the Indians reclaim the presence of indian spirits in such cults and in the past decades since this form of cult emerged the term "caboclo" has been used, not only for indigenous spirits, but also for the spirits of people of mixed descent (who are not counted as indigenous in Brazil) as well as some European settlers who live in the outback.

The development of cosmological elements as present in indigenous interethnic political discourse in Yanomami association practices is the focus of the paper by Felipe Nascimanto Araujo, a student from the Post-Graduate Programme at the University of Brasilia who we invited to submit a paper to this collection. Focusing on the Hutukara Yanomami Association, he argues that the practice of interethnic political discourse can be thought of as a practice of cosmopolitics, and the practice of cosmopolitics can be seen as the creation of a praxis in which cosmological elements and political elements are developed based on historical factors. Importantly, in the dialogue between Indigenous Associations and 'Indigenist' organisations, Environmentalist organisations, and the State, there is a change of perspective: from the elaboration of the *other* to us, there is a shift to the elaboration of us to the other.

Renato Athias, Brazilian anthropologist and curator from the Joaquim Nabuco Foundation in Recife, has contributed a paper to this issue about indigenous cinema and the meeting he organized between two Indigenous filmmakers, one from Brazil and one from Australia. The Indigenous filmmaker, Alexandre Pankararu, from the Pankararu village in the interior hinterlands of the River São Francisco region of the state of Pernambuco in Brazil was the

host to a young Martu Australian film maker, and contributes to the photographic essay in the paper by Attias. The Martu Indigenous film maker, Curtis Taylor, grew up in the Western desert of Australia, has filmed extensively with his community, and has participated in many projects of contemporary art in Australia, France, and the United States. A film he made about the use of telephone booths in the desert was the material for the multiscreen installation he presented with another Australian artist, Lily Hilberg, in Australia and France.⁴ In the paper included in this special issue, Attias gives a background to ethnographic film and outlines the Festival Internacional do Filme Etnográfico do Recife - FIFER (International Ethnographic Film Festival Recife) and its associated residency programme.

Both in Brazil and Australia there is long history of film making by indigenous peoples (De Largy Healy, 2013; Morgado, 2014). Indigenous culture and the appropriation of heritage through film, as well as strategies for cultural and political recognition, were discussed by Max Lenoy, an Indigenous Australian scholar in education and new technologies from James Cook University and three Indigenous Brazilian community leaders (caciques), Eunice Antunes (Aldeia indígena Guarani de Morro dos Cavalos), Getúlio Narciso (Cacique Kaingang), and Copacam Tschucambang (Cacique Xokleng/Laklano) who were then training in the intercultural Licentiatura program organised by the Federal University of Santa Catarina (UFSC) in Brazil. In the two-hour film of the debate presented here, Max Lenov speaks in English, while the three Brazilian scholars and community leaders (caciques) speak in Portuguese. The presentations were chaired by the anthropologist Rafael Devos (UFSC) and the discussant was A. C. de Souza Lima (MN-UFRJ, National Museum, Rio de Janeiro). Their contribution and the discussion with the audience are transcribed on the vimeo link https://vimeo.com/132532631. This event took place on the second day of the Blurred Interface TransOceanik conference held at UFSC in Brazil (May, 2013).⁵

Many common traits between the situations of Indigenous Australians and Brazilians were noted at the conference and during the week of the intercultural *licentiatura* to which Max Lenoy was invited. Glowczewski describes her observations of the filmed debate in her new book Totemic Becomings (2015), during which Copacam Tschucambang,

...suggested that Brazil's indigenous peoples (povos indígenas) should have a "Tent embassy" like the one Aboriginal people erected in front of the parliament building in Canberra, in 1972, under the flag created by an Aboriginal artist to politically unite all of Australia's hundreds of indigenous languages. A non-indigenous student asked him why they needed an embassy when the Indians have the Funai to represent them. The cacique answered that the Funai is mostly for land issues, whereas the indigenous peoples of Brazil need a political agency to help assert their sovereignty. The Funai has various local Indian councils, but its director is not indigenous. I was surprised to meet a number of Brazilians, including anthropologists, for whom it was inconceivable for an Amerindian to be the Funai director, citing the excuse that such an individual could not "represent" the interests of other Indian groups. It is natural for this question to arise in

⁴ Curated at the Musée d'Aquitaine, Bordeaux, France, by a member of the TransOceanik network. See Arnaud Morvan (2013), Vivid memories, Mémoires vives, une histoire de l'art aborigène, Paris, Editions de la Martinière. The film of the exhibition with other Australian artists, including Brook Andrew, can be viewed at: http://www.musee-aquitaine-bordeaux.fr/fr/evenement/exposition-memoires-vives-une-histoire-de-lartaborigene.

⁵ Max Lenoy further developed his analysis of Indigenous Australian film making at the Paris TransOceanik meeting 2014, Behind the scene, through a video conference link with JCU, Townsville campus.

a democracy if an elected official unfairly promotes his "own people" through nepotism or corruption. But it is strangely paternalistic to assume that Indigenous peoples would be unable to delegate political responsibilities among themselves, considering that they have demonstrated their ability to do so, for instance, in the long process that involved, since 1980, regular meetings of indigenous delegates from all over the world to draft the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which was adopted by the UN on September 13, 2007. It is true that a process of delegation or election is not an ideal solution for people who have experienced other forms of political organization, but once such groups became forcibly part of a nation-state (Brazil, Australia or France for the indigenous peoples of French Guyana, New Caledonia and so on), new political strategies became necessary. Some of these initiatives were stifled before they came to fruition, while others failed because of colonial and contemporary violence—Indians continue to be killed. Economic exploitation that destroys forests and other resources critical to survival, with various pressures from international companies, also continues to be a source of distress and internal conflict. But history also shows that a large number of creative and highly effective indigenous movements have succeeded in the past. (Glowczewski, 2015, pp.20-21).

We would like to conclude this introduction with two quotes from our TransOceanik public discussions during the 'Behind the Scenes' colloquium at the Collège de France. French anthropologist Tassadit Yacine insisted on the political issue at stake in who decides what is front page or backstage:

L'envers du décor/Behind the scenes, for whom? I would like to be provocative. I could say that this "other side" also represents the invisible, the non-defined, the "unspeakable", but only for the dominant, who believe that they hold the truth on the world. For the people who are supposed to be "invisible", obviously, the "other side" is maybe their "right side". To reach his/her objective, one has to get around, divert the way.' (Yacine, 2014)

French philosopher, Anne Sauvagnargues, concluded with the political implications of the "Ecology of Image", a concept she developed on the basis of Félix Guattari's ecosophical project (2008) that entangles three ecologies - the environmental, the social and the mental:

Image is not only visual: it is audio-visual.... Some images are only visual, others only audio, but there is also the synaesthetic audiovisual. It's not just the eyes and ears, but my thumb, my index finger, like yours, is part of the audiovisual; there is a corporeality of social modes that has become interesting, like being on the fracture line, the tectonic plates slip between a society that is disappearing - it is exciting to think that disjunctive interaction. The question put is "what behind the scenes"? That's how I understand L'envers du décor/Behind the scenes: not to stand in the middle of a territory that would be to the left and to the right, but to bring to the floor those who created these scenes, but remain unnoticed because they are at the fracture, at the border, at the limit; that is to say, the mode of emergence of a new problematic of image.

Behind the scenes it is the same as reality. (Sauvagnargues, 2014)

The papers selected for this issue of *Etropic* all propose to analyse the emergence of new modes of imaging and expression to enhance what Deleuze and Guattari (2004, p. 345) called

"people to come" (le people qui manque) - a world made and seen from the point of view of those who, to protect the earth and the sea, especially in the tropics, try to resist the dominant dehumanising global order.

Deleuze and Guattari use the exemplary nature of singular expression to argue that even the most ostensibly personal expression may be directly political, in that it envelops a potential collective. For example, the subject of literary expression, to the extent that it is effectively creative, is not the individual author but a "people to come."... The atypical expression emits the potential for an unlimited series of further (collective) expressions by individuals who will retrospectively be assigned by a propositional system of capture to membership in a group (psychosocial type, class, ethnicity, nation). An order of allowable designations, manifestations, and significations will settle around their type-casting. A complementary order of conventional performative expressions will help manage this new form of content. The force of collective, expressive emergence will be streamed into stratified functions of power. Unless: the collectivity in the making resists pick-up by an established stratum, insisting on defining its own traits, in a self-capture of its own anomaly. In this case, they will retain a shade of the unclassifiable and a margin of unpredictability in the eyes (or net) of existing systems of reference, no matter how hard those systems try fully to contain them. (Massumi, 2002, pp.22-23)

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