April 2013 – vol 29 – no 2
every two months
print ISSN 0268-540X online ISSN 1467-8322
available online at
www.wileyonlinelibrary.com/journal/anth

at
anthropology
today

Director of the RAI: David Shankland
Editor: Gustaaf Houtman
Editorial Consultant: Sean Kingston
Reviews Editor: Hayder al-Mohammad
Copy Editor: Miranda Irving
Production Consultant: Dominique Remars
Editorial Panel: Monique Borgerhoff Mulder, Candis Callison, Richard Fardon, Alma Gottlieb, Hugh Gusterson, Ulf Hannerz, Michael Herzfeld, Thomas Hylland Eriksen, Solomon Katz, Gísli Pálsson, João de Pina-Cabral, Gustavo Lins Ribeiro, Catherine Lutz, Howard Morphy, John Postill, Alexander F. Robertson, Nancy Scheper-Hughes, Cris Shore, Michael Wesch

Editorial address: Please read Notes to Contributors before making submissions (http://www.therai.org.uk/at/). **Submissions:** http://at.edmgr.com. All articles are peer-reviewed. Editorial correspondence (except subscriptions, changes of address etc) via anthropologytoday@gmail.com. **Online debate:** http://anthropologytoday.ning.com. **Postal address:** The Editor, ANTHROPOLOGY TODAY, Royal Anthropological Institute, 50 Fitzroy Street, London W1T 5BT, UK.

Copy dates: 15th of even months

Publisher: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 9600 Garsington Road, Oxford OX4 2DQ, UK and 350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148, USA. Blackwell Publishing Ltd is now part of John Wiley & Sons.

Disclaimer: The Publisher, RAI and Editors cannot be held responsible for errors or any consequences arising from the use of information contained in this journal; the views and opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Publisher, the RAI or the Editors, neither does the publication of advertisements constitute any endorsement by the Publisher, the RAI or the Editors of the products advertised.

Copyright and photocopying: © 2013 RAI. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored or transmitted in any form or by any means without prior permission in writing from the copyright holder. Authorization to photocopy items for internal and personal use is granted by the copyright holder for libraries and other users registered with their local Reproduction Rights Organisation (RRO), e.g. Copyright Clearance Center (CCC), 222 Rosewood Drive, Danvers, MA 01923, USA (http://www.copyright.com), provided the appropriate fee is paid directly to the RRO. This consent does not extend to other kinds of copying such as copying for general distribution, for advertising or promotional purposes, for creating new collective works or for resale. Special requests should be addressed to: permissionsuk@wiley.com.

Information for subscribers: Six issues of ANTHROPOLOGY TODAY are mailed free of charge per annum to Fellows and Members of the Royal Anthropological Institute (registered charity no. 246269).

Rates for 2013: Member: €31.50, £25.20, or US$45. Single copy: £9 UK, or $21 overseas plus VAT where applicable. Visit http://www.therai.org.uk/joining. Contact: admin@therai.org.uk.

Institutional subscriptions for 2013: Premium Institutional: £101 (UK), US$168 (N. America), €127 (Europe) and $190 (Rest of the World). Prices are exclusive of tax. Asia-Pacific GST, Canadian GST and European VAT will be applied at the appropriate rates. Current tax rates: www.wileyonlinelibrary.com/tax-vat. Price includes online access to current and all online back files to 1 January 2009, where available. For other pricing options, access information and terms and conditions: www.wileyonlinelibrary.com/access.

Delivery terms and legal title: Where the subscription price includes print issues and delivery is to the recipient's address, delivery terms are Delivered at Place (DAP); the recipient is responsible for paying any import duty or taxes. Title to all issues transfers FOB our shipping point, freight prepaid. We endeavour to fulfil claims for missing or damaged copies within six months of publication, within our reasonable discretion and subject to availability.

Periodical ID: ANTHROPOLOGY TODAY (0268-540X) is published bimonthly. US mailing agent: Mercury Media Processing, LLC 1634 East Elizabeth Ave, Linden NJ 07036 USA. Periodical postage paid at Rahway NJ. Postmaster: send all address changes to ANTHROPOLOGY TODAY, Journal Customer Services, John Wiley & Sons Inc., 350 Main St., Malden, MA 02148-5020, USA.

© RAI 2013. Printed in Singapore by COS Printers Pe Ltd.

The National Academy of Sciences: Goodbye to all that

Guest Editorial by Marshall Sahlins

I was naïve. When I received the communication from the Secretary for Section 51, Anthropology, in October of last year, enlisting members of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) for research designed to improve the mission effectiveness of the US military, I thought this was something new – and inappropriate. I thought we had no business lending anthropology to the military adventures of the US, which had just demonstrated a shocking and useless disregard for the lives and well-being of the people of Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as our own citizens, in the unnecessary wars of the past decade. I didn't know that the National Research Council (NRC), which is the instrumental branch of the several national academies, and for which we were being recruited, had been established by President Wilson in 1916 in order to expand research in military preparedness.

Up to then my only NRC experience had been as a member of a group investigating certain congressionally mandated fishing rights of indigenous Alaskan and Hawaiian communities. Nor did I know that in responding to the call for research in military effectiveness of last October by saying, I've had enough, 'please accept my resignation from the Academy', my action was not unprecedented. In 1971, the eminent biologist Richard Lewontin resigned from the Academy in protest of secret military research being conducted by the NRC in connection with the Vietnam War. I find it an honour to have Lewontin as a predecessor. Perhaps there have been others.

Among the projects for which NAS anthropologists were being recruited in October 2012, was one that would: 'Recommend an agenda for U.S. Army Research Institute's (ARI) future research in order to maximize the effectiveness of US Army personnel policies and practices….This is related to contextual factors that influence individual and small unit behavior…' Another project would establish a committee charged with finding new and scientifically valid methods, including those suggested by neuroscience, for improving individual and collective performance of armed services personnel.

These research agendas, however, were not the only reason I resigned from the NAS. I also considered my membership an embarrassment when Napoleon Chagnon was elected to the Academy in May of 2012.[1] I have often been asked in recent days if there is any connection between my objection to the military research of the NAS and to Chagnon's election. There is indeed a strong anthropological connection, insofar as the one and the other would impose cognate versions of bourgeois individualism, taken as given and natural, on the rest of humanity.

On the basis of their common assumption of an avaricious human animal, intent on maximizing his own being at the cost of whom it may concern – economically, politically, and/or genetically – the social and biological proponents of this native Western folklore have been feeding off each other since the seventeenth century. If the developing science of economics socialized the contentious self-pleaser of the Hobbesian state of nature, Darwin in turn biologized the fellow, upon which the social Darwinists returned him to society, at least until the sociobiologists redefined his self-interest as reproductive success.[2] Indeed, capitalizing (pun intended) on the peculiar Western category of 'inheritance' – peculiar for its conflation of the transmission of wealth to offspring with the transmission of genes – the social Darwinian notion

Marshall Sahlins is Charles F. Grey Distinguished Service Professor of Anthropology Emeritus at the University of Chicago. His email is m-sahlins@uchicago.edu.

Chagnon, N. A.1988. Life histories, blood revenge, and warfare in a tribal population. *Science* 239: 985-992.
– 2013. *Noble savages: My life among two dangerous tribes –The Yanomamo and the anthropologists*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
McKinnon, S. 2005. *Neo-liberal genetics: The myths and moral tales of evolutionary psychology.* Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press.
Miklowska, M. et al. 2012. Natural born non-killers: A critique of the killers-have-more-kids idea. In Christie, D.D. et al. (eds). *Non-killing psychology*, 43-70. Honolulu: Center for Non-Killing Psychology.
Packer, G. 2005. *The assassins' gate: America in Iraq*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux.
Sahlins, M. 1976. *The use and abuse of biology: An anthropological critique of sociobiology.* Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.
– 2008. *The Western illusion of human nature*. Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press.
Sumner, W. G. 1883. *What social classes owe to each other*. New York: Harper & Brothers.

of the competitive accumulation of wealth could virtually become synonymous with the sociobiologists' doctrine of differential reproduction. Thus William Graham Sumner (1883: 73):

> The relation of parents and children is the only case of sacrifice in Nature….The parents…hand down to their children the return for all which they had themselves inherited from their ancestors. They ought to hand down the inheritance with increase. It is by this relation that the human race keeps up a constantly advancing contest with Nature. The penalty of ceasing an aggressive behavior toward the hardships of life on the part of Mankind is, that we go backward.[3]

Actually, the Western notion of an avaricious human nature underlying and subverting human culture is at least as old as certain Greek sophist arguments of the fifth century BC. The same sense of the human condition got a bad name as the Original Sin of Christianity. But where in Augustine's influential reading, Adam's sin condemned men to become slaves to the desires of their flesh, recent centuries of capitalist development have progressively turned around the moral value of material self-interest until, in the modern neo-liberal view, it became the best thing both for the individual and the wealth of the nation. Indeed, it became freedom itself, this right to satisfy oneself unhampered by governmental constraint – and thereby the grand mission of American global policy, military and otherwise.

Commenting on Donald Rumsfeld's notorious 'stuff happens' in response to the looting that followed upon the US conquest of Iraq, George Packer (2005: 136-37) observed that it implied a whole philosophy of the liberation of human nature from an oppressive political regime. Rumsfeld, he said, saw in such anarchy the beginnings of democracy. For the US Secretary of Defense, 'Freedom existed in divinely endowed human nature, not in man-made institutions and laws'. People everywhere want to be free to seize the main chance. If only the innate human desire to maximize the self could be relieved of its local political and cultural idiosyncrasies, as by applying the kind of force anyone can understand, then the others 'will become happy and good, just like us' (Sahlins 2008: 42). Not that this mission of making the world safe for self-interest was born yesterday. Recall the memorable line from the classic film about the Vietnam War, *Full metal jacket*: 'Inside every Gook there's an American waiting to come out'.

Who's the leader of the band that's made for you and me?

M-I-C…K-E-Y…M- O-U-S-E.

1. Indeed taking all reasons into account, I resigned three times over. The first time, in May 2012, when thus registering my disapproval of Chagnon's election, I was instructed by the Chair of Section 51 to forward my communication up the bureaucratic chain, upon which I lazily let it lapse. My second try, of October, brought no answer from the Section 51 Secretary until I inquired again in February of this year, responding to the brouhaha set off by the recent publication of Chagnon's (2013) memoirs. This time the resignation successfully passed up to the Home Secretary of the NAS. As of 25 February, I was dismissed without possibility of being reinstated for four years and then only by a vote of two thirds of the members. Not bloody likely.

2. I am rehearsing an argument from the often rubbished but seldom if ever empirically confronted *The use and abuse of biology* (Sahlins 1976). As, for example, this academic critique: 'A classic example of anthropological arrogance and cynicism about Wilson's [*Sociobiology*] was a book by Sahlins titled *The Use and Abuse of Biology*…After reading Sahlins's book I was embarrassed that he was one of my former professors' (Chagnon 2013: 382).

3. For a definitive refutation of Chagnon's (1988) contention in this vein that Yanomami killers enjoy much greater reproductive success than non-killers see Miklowska et al. (2012). See also McKinnon (2005).

Being Muslim in South Sudan

Guest Editorial by Noah Salomon

Noah Salomon is Assistant Professor of Religion at Carleton College, USA. He will be a member of the Institute for Advanced Study, School of Social Science, in Princeton, NJ for the 2013-4 academic year where he will be working on an ethnography of the Islamic state in the Republic of Sudan from 1989 to the present. His email is nsalomon@carleton.edu.

The partition of Sudan in July 2011 is all too frequently oversimplified in the international press as the drawing of a border between two irretrievably different peoples: a Muslim North vs. a Christian and animist South; Arabs vs. Africans; theocrats vs. secularists. Such portrayals ignore not only the internal cleavages that exist within each of these two new states, but also the fact that members of these groups are living on both sides of the new border. Indeed, after two years of instability, it has become clear that partition has in no way solved the 'problems' of diversity; rather, it has merely reorganized them under new political arrangements.

In the new Republic of South Sudan, where I have conducted fieldwork with Muslim communities intermittently since 2011, Muslims seem at times victim to this dichotomous way of thinking.[1] Prior to partition, especially during the most recent civil war (1983-2005), the government promoted Islam as a state religion. However, under the new republic in the South, Islamic identity has become inextricably identified with the North and thus part of a past from which South Sudan is trying to extricate itself.[2] Despite the fact that the transitional constitution guarantees southern Muslims a retinue of religious rights, commonly glossed as 'freedom of religion' (*hurriyat al-adyan*), no one wants to wear the *jallabiya* (the traditional Muslim dress for men) in public anymore. This is an identity too marked with the scars of war.

Indeed, Islam played an important role in the civil war as the idiom through which violence was often articulated and motivated, with robust calls in the North for a *jihad* against the South. This, along with the counter-militarization of Christian identities and the insertion of the war into internationalist discourses of global Christian oppression,[3] further reified for many Southern combatants an enemy called 'Islam'.

At the same time however, South Sudanese Muslims have coexisted peacefully with non-Muslims for nearly 200 years. Many of these Muslims, the descendants of conscripts in the 19th century Turco-Egyptian army, fought on the side of the South during the recent wars and see themselves as wholly distinct from the Muslims of the North. The idea of being a 'South Sudanese Muslim' is in no sense an oxymoron for them. Nor is it for those Southern Sudanese who converted to Islam in more recent years, often while displaced in the North, but who remain committed Muslims on returning to the South in spite of the significant social cost this identity carries.

* * *

The new South Sudanese state inherits a complex religious landscape that is difficult – if not impossible – to separate from the political context in which it was born. The political elite have posited state secularism as the most equitable way of managing this landscape. However, the twin arms of this secular praxis – that is, upholding the neutrality of the state towards religion[4] and cleansing the nation of the marks of Islamization acquired in the years of Islamist rule – exist in tension with one another.

The principle of state neutrality towards religion was upheld by the government officials I met at all levels in the capital, yet at the same time outside of the capital some officials upheld the notion of a triumphant 'Christian nation' in which Muslims form a minority and Christian benedic-