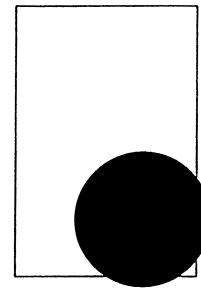
Anthropological Theory

Vol 3(4): 403–415
[1463-4996(200312)3:4;403–415;038653]



Anthropology as cosmopolitan practice?

Joel S. Kahn
La Trobe University, Australia

Abstract

This article advances the case for both an anthropology of cosmopolitanism and, at the same time, a cosmopolitan anthropology. Illustrated by means of a case study of apparently traditional Minangkabau domestic authority structure, the article seeks to sketch in the parameters of an anthropological contribution to the recent attempts to recover a notion of cosmopolitanism, mainly by social and political theorists. One anthropologist who has made out a case for a cosmopolitan anthropology has been Adam Kuper. But unlike Kuper's piece, this article argues that we need to locate all such arguments more firmly within the modern intellectual tradition within which they are formed. This means also that we must seriously engage with those critiques of that tradition that suggest that all such universalizing logics are Eurocentric, based on highly problematic notions of universal human reason, and thereby exclusionary of other races and other cultures.

Key Words

anthropology • cosmopolitanism • Eurocentrism • Indonesia • Minangkabau • universalism

In this article I want to offer some thoughts on the discipline of anthropology, and on the anthropology of Asia in particular. My limited goal is to sketch out an argument for the proposition that the doing of anthropology is best thought of, and assessed (whether positively or negatively), as a kind of cosmopolitan practice. The argument presented here then is part of a project to recover cosmopolitanism in recent social and political theory,[1] a project to which, perhaps surprisingly, few anthropologists have so far contributed.[2] An exception to this absence of anthropological voices in recent discussions of cosmopolitanism is Adam Kuper's, who has defended what he calls the 'project of a cosmopolitan anthropology' by contrasting it with the discipline's interest in, even obsession with, culture and identity, particularly during the 1990s (Kuper, 1994). However, apart from contrasting a (desirable) universalism with a (in his view) problematic relativism, Kuper does not tell us precisely what he means by cosmopolitanism, makes no attempt to locate himself within the particular intellectual tradition(s) that

have given rise to it, nor does he make any serious attempt to engage with the telling critiques that have been made in recent decades of all such universalizing discourses.

At least to begin with, I will use the term 'cosmopolitan' in the sense given to it by the German philosopher Immanuel Kant. This is to take the view that to speak of cosmopolitanism within any social science discipline, at least in the West, means inevitably to recognize its embeddedness in a mode of thinking that, however problematic, has its origins in the philosophy of the (European) Enlightenment. And there is little doubt that for better or worse Kant's was probably its most rigorous formulation.[3]

The appeal to anthropologists of a return to Kantian universalism is perhaps self-evident given the ethical, political and methodological obstacles to the doing of anthropology posed recently by culturalist, multicultural, feminist and postcolonial critics of the discipline. But merely asserting that such critiques threaten an end to the doing of anthropology, indeed of all forms of (western) thought and practice construed in some sense as 'intercultural', should not in itself be sufficient to dismiss them out of hand. After all, maybe anthropology along with other western 'cosmopolitan' practices *are* actually impossible, and therefore best abandoned. In fact on the face of things, there would appear to be fundamental problems with any simple recovery of a Kantian anthropology, objections sharpened in recent decades as a consequence of the pervasive impact of poststructuralism, feminism, multiculturalism and postcolonialism in the field of Kant studies just as elsewhere in the humanities and social sciences.[4] To name just three:

1. First, there are clearly those who would argue that the idea of a 'cosmopolitan' anthropology could well be seen as anachronistic, given the different understandings of the term that have come to prevail in the period since the European Enlightenment.
2. Second, in a rather different vein, we must acknowledge the force of Michel Foucault's argument, first sketched out in *The Order of Things* (1970), about the problematic nature of the conceptualization of 'man' on which the modern 'human sciences' are based. Specifically the suggestion here is that Kant is unable to demonstrate the independence (to thought) of the category 'humanity', which is none the less crucial to the foundation of his whole project.
3. Third, and closely related to this, there is the contention that Kant's project is fatally flawed because of what can be called the exclusionary assumptions underpinning his concept of 'man', namely that it is so heavily inflected by particular assumptions about the nature of mature human reason that it inevitably judges women, non-Europeans, and even the European masses as in some sense incompletely human. (In short Kant's racism, sexism and classism completely undermine the claim to universalism upon which his philosophical/anthropological system is based.)

Unlike Kuper, I take these to be important objections. But I do not propose to tackle them directly at the outset. Instead, to try to illustrate the idea of a cosmopolitan anthropology that I am concerned to defend here, I will begin in typical anthropological fashion with an 'ethnographic example' that comes from the area where I carried out my first ethnographic research, namely the Indonesian Province of West Sumatra, homeland of the Minangkabau people.[5] I returned briefly to West Sumatra in late 2001 for the first time in 20 years, and this example comes from that more recent visit. I cite it here

not because I think it is all that unusual in itself, nor because I was able to collect detailed information in such a relatively short visit. Instead it seems to me to raise a number of the key issues about both cultural and social circumstances in contemporary Southeast Asia, and the practice of an anthropology that might be appropriate to their study and analysis.

THE CASE OF A *RUMAH GADANG* IN SOLOK

The case involves a *Rumah Gadang* (Big House) or *Rumah Bagonjong* (Horned House) in a village in the Solok district in the highlands of West Sumatra (in the region known as the *Darek* or cultural heartland of the Minangkabau people). The house is of the type normally associated with 'traditional' patterns of residence, sociality and authority in Minangkabau. It is a large house with a curved roof said to resemble the horns of a water buffalo, occupied by a matrilineage or matriclan segment (variously termed *suku*, *kaum*, and *pamilie*), with separate rooms leading off a large front gallery each occupied by a married woman and her children. The core of the *Rumah Gadang* therefore is a group of female matrikin. Young unmarried men of the village will typically sleep in a men's house or in a prayer house, while on marriage (which is matrikin group exogamous) they become 'visitors' (*urang sumando*) in their wives' houses.

Authority in the realm of *adat* (custom) is generally determined by seniority within the kin group at the level of the *Rumah Gadang* or beyond. Kin group 'chiefs' (*panghulu*) are chosen from among the senior males in the matrilineage, and in some villages the head of the senior lineage in the village is designated Paramount Chief (*Panghulu Pucuak*, *Panghulu Andiko*). This system operates from the lowest levels of kin group segmentation, so that certain types of authority over children in matters pertaining to *adat* are in the hands of their mother's brother (*Mamak)*, and so on up the line.

There is some debate in the literature over whether women did or did not also hold formal positions of authority within the *suku*.[6] But the *Rumah Gadang* we visited in Solok, the grandest *Rumah* in the village, was presided over by the senior woman in the matriclan segment that occupied it. I will call her, a woman of about 90, Nenek. Nenek described herself, and was referred to by others, as the *Bundo Kanduang* (Female Elder) of the household, the matriclan segment and even of the village, and we were told she was a key authority when it came to matters of *adat*. It certainly appeared that she was responsible for the upkeep of the beautifully preserved house, and was treated as the repository of *adat* knowledge as well as the unofficial historian for the village, among other things. Nenek had a remarkable memory, and recounted for us stories of major events in the province going back to the communist uprising in neighbouring Silungkang in 1927.

Many of Nenek's children and grandchildren had emigrated (*marantau*) from the village, having been educated in the provincial capital or elsewhere. And most now appeared to hold decent jobs in urban areas, although they return to the village and the *Rumah* periodically, and are at least in Nenek's reckoning very much part of the kin group. Indeed we were introduced to Nenek by one of her (classificatory) granddaughters, a Lecturer in Anthropology at Andalas University in Padang. The house appeared to be otherwise occupied only by one of Nenek's daughters and her children.

Nenek was an extraordinary woman, with a keen memory, a sharp intelligence and a genuine presence. But there is only one aspect of the story she told us that there is space

to discuss here, and that concerns her main source of income. Typically in Minangkabau villages, matriclan segments have property rights in land (mainly irrigated rice land), houses, granaries and other property classified as *harto pusako* (ancestral property). Although use rights to such property may be exercised by individual clan members (female and male), what Dutch jurists and ethnologists called 'rights of disposal' are vested in the kin groups under the trusteeship of the clan elders. And as trustees of clan property they may receive a share of clan property, or of the income that it might generate (for example a share of the rice harvest).

When I asked Nenek about the elegant rice barns in front of the *Rumah* she told me they were empty, and that most of the rice land bordering the Padang-Solok highway formerly owned by the kin group had been 'taken' by a senior male kinsman some years before. Already wealthy, and with influential friends in the provincial government, he had used the land to construct a large hotel with a swimming pool and restaurant which he now operates as an upmarket 'homestay' for foreign tourists visiting West Sumatra. As a result the kin group had been deprived of its main property and income-earning resource.

How, then, was Nenek able to afford the upkeep of the *Rumah*, maintain herself and those who lived with her and, apparently, accept the material responsibilities that an authority figure such as herself has towards her matriclan members (*kamanakan*)? Typically this was accomplished partly from remittances sent back to the village from the more successful of her *kamanakan*. But it also transpires that the *Rumah Gadang* itself was operated in part as a sort of business. Through a connection with a travel agency in Padang, Nenek welcomed homestay tourists. Unlike the business operated by her wealthy 'brother', the *Rumah* catered to those searching for a more 'authentic' Minangkabau village experience.

It was clear that Nenek did not think of this as a business in the strict sense. Instead she talked about it as a kind of project for educating young visitors, many of whom apparently come from Japan, in the ways of Minangkabau village life. It is significant in this regard that the *Rumah* was also a regular destination for foreign anthropologists visiting West Sumatra, a number of whom, like ourselves, were introduced to Nenek by staff in the Anthropology Department at Andalas University. Nenek urged me to stay with her when I was next in West Sumatra so I could experience life in a Minangkabau village first hand, and I might well take her up on her invitation.

As indicated, the example of the *Rumah Gadang* in Solok, while obviously distinctive in many ways, is important not just for its unique features, but because it is in another sense broadly typical of the kinds of situations encountered by many anthropologists in the field today as well as of most anthropological encounters themselves. At a general level such encounters increasingly generate an anthropological engagement, however critical, with both 'modernity' and modernist metanarratives, thus leading to a rupture with the anthropological project as it was classically conceived (Kahn, 2001b). More specifically this case forces an engagement with (modern) cosmopolitanism in two interrelated senses of the term.

First, if the encounter just described is typical of modernist ethnography, then it reminds us that the world which anthropologists seek to study is a world not of discrete and isolatable other cultures and societies, but a world of 'intercultural' or 'intercommunal' relationships. The 'Minangkabau' in this example do not stand alone, but exist

only in relationship to 'other' cultures and societies – both within Indonesia and beyond. I shall suggest later, therefore, that modernist anthropology must perforce be an anthropology *of* cosmopolitanism, and indeed that it might make distinctive contributions to current attempts to recover both the concept and the phenomenon of cosmopolitanism.

But at the same time as the case draws our attention to the cosmopolitan character of the modern anthropological 'object', it also brings home the degree to which the doing of anthropology is itself located within that same world of cosmopolitan relations and practices that it seeks to objectify. For among those relations out of which 'Minangkabau' is constituted as a distinctive identity within a cosmopolitan world are relationships between 'eastern' and 'western' subjects, including anthropological ones. Nenek's case may be unusual in the degree to which her relationships with anthropologists have become formalized over time (although perhaps not as unusual as we might think). But the difference between Nenek and other modern anthropological 'informants' (the preferred term these days seems to be 'interlocutors') is in this sense only one of degree rather than kind.

The conclusions that we must draw from this are, therefore, not only that modern anthropology is more often than not an anthropology *of* cosmopolitanism, but that anthropology itself – embedded in precisely those cosmopolitan relations and practices that it seeks to study – is itself a kind of cosmopolitan practice. If this is granted, then the case can be used to consider the implications of such situations not just for what we might call the 'state of the world', but for the practice of anthropology itself. As my title suggests I also want to explore whether anthropologists might not therefore be advised to adopt something resembling Kant's methodological ideals as their own.

TOWARDS AN ANTHROPOLOGY OF COSMOPOLITANISM

Much of the renewed interest in the concept of cosmopolitanism can be seen to stem from Kant's own concern to discover a new mode of global integration beyond the existing Westphalian state system, a concern now most often understood in terms of the problematic of 'global governance'.[7] As it was for Kant, the revived interest in global governance emerges from the perception of a world in conflict as a consequence of the clash of particularistic loyalties, and an absolute aversion to any solution that would posit the need for a global state. The search is on, then, for new forms and practices of global political integration that go beyond both empire and nation states, indeed that go beyond a global system conceived even as a set of international relations between and among nation states.

Of course Kant's description of the conflict between (European) nations at the end of the 18th century needs modifications before we could begin to assert its usefulness in the current global climate. The internationalization of the nation-state system in the period of decolonization doubtless changes the parameters of the problem, although it might be argued that these make the Kantian problematic more rather than less pertinent. Kant almost certainly failed to appreciate the depth of influence of cultural factors and cultural identities although he did take some such affiliations (national, but even subnational) as significant.[8] But neo-Kantians have attempted to rectify this by building on Kant's insights to examine the implications of the presence within the global system of what they call competing doctrines of the good embedded in what at least appear to be irreducibly different 'cultures'.[9]

It must also be recognized that what is sometimes rather loosely termed cultural globalization has involved a progressive detachment of the links between 'culture' and 'territory' (in Appadurai's terms 'blood' and 'soil') – phenomena that were in Kant's time firmly conjoined in the early modern system of nation states. Recent attempts to recover and revise classical understandings of a cosmopolitan political order now need to take account of the fact that far more typically identity politics are 'deterritorialized', something that a global confederation of republics clearly does not address.[10]

But while such revisions of the Kantian paradigm can and have been advanced, at the risk of overgeneralizing it can be argued that few of the recent defenders of a notion of cosmopolitanism take seriously the proposition that the concept may be irretrievably Eurocentric. Indeed I would suggest that the late 20th-century advocates of a universalizing cosmopolitanism may be more guilty than was Kant himself of propagating racially – and culturally – exclusionary categories of universal human reason. Perhaps because students of international jurisprudence and political theory – most of whom seem still to envisage the possibility of culturally neutral (and thereby truly universal) practices, institutions and values – dominate the debate, the current normative discourse on global governance may be serving to blind us to the possibility that culturally embedded, and hence particularistic, forms of cosmopolitanism are already in existence outside, and indeed within, the so-called western world.

In *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* Kant wrote:

> Man was not meant to belong to a herd, like cattle, but to a hive, like bees . . . The simplest, least artificial way of establishing a civil society is to have one sage in this hive (monarchy). But when there are many such hives near one another, they soon attack one another, as robber bees (make war), not, however, as men do, to strengthen their own group by uniting the other with it – here the comparison ends – but only to use the *other's* hard work *themselves* by cunning or force. Each people tries to strengthen itself by subjugating neighboring peoples, whether from a desire for aggrandizement or from fear of being swallowed up by others unless it steals a march on them. . . .
>
> The character of the species, as it is indicated by the experience of all ages and all peoples, is this: that, taken collectively (the human race as one whole), it is a multitude of persons, existing successively and side by side, who cannot *do without* associating peacefully and yet cannot *avoid* constantly offending one another. Hence they feel destined by nature to [form], through mutual compulsion under laws that proceed from themselves, a coalition in a *cosmopolitan* society . . . a coalition that, though constantly threatened by dissension, makes progress on the whole. (Kant, 1974: 190–1)

Is it possible to read into this not a justification for global government imposed from above – by means of the 'benevolent' might of the United States, or existing international or transnational organizations, NGOs for example – but instead for the fact that cosmopolitanism, understood as practice towards 'coalition in a cosmopolitan society', may arise as much from human individuals and groups who already 'exist successively side by side', who cannot avoid 'constantly offending one another' and yet who recognize also that they 'cannot do without associating peacefully'?

Take the case of Minangkabau. The Minangkabau are not especially exemplary in the ways they think about insiders and outsiders living in the territory of West Sumatra or outside it. West Sumatra is certainly not a monocultural society given the presence there of other ethnic and religious groups – Javanese, Chinese, Mentwaian, Batak, European (residents or agents of western political and economic interests), Christians and others – about whom the Minangkabau are perhaps as apt as anyone else to voice 'racist' sentiments. Moreover Minangkabau constantly hold each other up to idealized standards of what it means to be Minangkabau and Muslim, and judge both others and each other lacking, thereby at different times excluding those who do not conform to idealized gender roles, children and other groups perceived as 'marginal' to village society.

At the same time West Sumatra is *relatively* peaceful, relatively free of the sometimes horrendous conflicts that beset other regions of Indonesia – Timor, West Papau, Aceh, the Moluccas and other places – about which we hear a great deal more. This is, of course, not only the case for West Sumatra, but for many other regions of modern Indonesia. In spite of the many stories that find their way into the global media – and indeed these days into the anthropological discourse on Indonesia which currently appears to share the world's fascination for suffering and death – in the majority of cases in Indonesia a diversity of races, religions and so on live side-by-side in relative harmony even as they may be 'constantly offending one another'.

Is this 'relative peace' (perhaps a better term than Kant's idea of 'perpetual peace' in such circumstances) the result of the imposition by the nation state or external powers or international institutions of the 'rule of law' the principles of good 'global governance' based on republican principles? Hardly. Instead I would suggest that a certain cosmopolitanism governs the practices of localized individuals and institutions, everyday interactions between individuals and groups, popular cultural activities, forms of economic relations, and institutions of village government. In other words, at the level of the 'popular'[11] something like genuine cosmopolitan practice takes place, even though it may be 'contaminated' by the particularities of time, place and culture. In this sense even Nenek is engaged in an authentic kind of cosmopolitan practice – forced to live 'side-by-side' with others (no matter how temporary their stay as tourists in West Sumatra) she is a significant agent of a 'coalition' based on a cosmopolitan form of sociality.

Could one go further to argue that in instances where a breakdown of such cosmopolitan coalitions has taken place – in Aceh, West Papua, Kalimantan, the Moluccas – more often than not this has been precisely a result of the imposition from above (by the Indonesian state, outside powers and institutions) of disembedded, supposedly universal, culturally neutral forms of power, jurisprudence and so on (that is, of liberal versions of the cosmopolitan ideal)?

ANTHROPOLOGY AS COSMOPOLITAN PRACTICE?

This brings me finally to the question of the nature of anthropological practice, and how we should assess that practice in the modern world. Having cleared away some of the background issues, I can now only indicate the steps in an argument that anthropological practice is best thought of (and assessed, for better or worse) as cosmopolitan. This involves, I maintain, a significant change in prevailing conceptualizations of the role played by anthropological knowledge and practice in the modern world.

The classical understanding of anthropological practice, one that developed alongside the discipline in Europe and particularly North America in the years between the two World Wars, was that it aimed to produce knowledge of 'other cultures'. In this understanding, then, the sum total of anthropological knowledge consisted of the totality of the unmediated 'facts' about other cultures and societies provided in the ethnographies produced by anthropological practitioners. 'Theory' could be developed only inductively, through comparison and abstraction out of the concrete world of ethnographic fact.[12]

The goals of anthropology, insofar as these were ever explicitly stated, were conceived by some as purely 'scientific', by others as more 'humanistic' (enabling a cultural critique of modernity). 'Good' anthropological knowledge, therefore, was based on 'good' ethnography, that is, accurate ethnographic reporting which meant not just 'complete' but as far as possible 'relativistic' i.e. free of 'ethnocentric' assumption, from the 'native' point of view and so on.

Over the years various problems have been identified in this classical formulation, many of which have had the effect of questioning the 'innocence' of the anthropologist as producer of unmediated knowledge about other cultures. Increasingly it has come to be accepted, at least by some in the discipline, that anthropological accounts of 'other cultures' are as much, if not more, the product of the anthropologist's own goals, agendas and presuppositions as they are of those people previously thought of merely as 'objects of ethnographic investigation'. In the 1980s many therefore shifted their understanding of the practice of anthropology in response to this recognition of the end of anthropological innocence. Among the different notions to emerge at this time was that of anthropological practice as a kind of 'dialogue' between ethnographer and ethnographic subject, and more generally attempts were made both in the development of ethical codes and styles of ethnographic writing to give both ethical protection and 'speaking rights' to what are now called the subjects (or even 'interlocutors') of ethnography. Many went further to argue that the traditional 'speaking position' of anthropologists qua anthropologists was so implicated in colonialism or other regimes of racial-cultural domination and patriarchy, that it would be impossible for white, western, male anthropologists ever genuinely to grant real speaking rights to the subjects of ethnography.

In these circumstances, the goals of anthropology, insofar as these are ever explicitly stated, have changed. Some may well retain notions of anthropology as 'cultural critique' (see Marcus and Fisher, 1985). Few cultural anthropologists would any longer defend a notion of anthropology as science. And many conceive of their project as more explicitly moral/political – giving voice to previously silenced cultural minorities, supporting 'resistance' to colonialism, globalization, patriarchy and so on.

But the debates have tended to leave untouched the classical conception of anthropological knowledge. Strategies designed to 'give voice' to 'natives' – while they may diverge from the classical conception of a (single/unified) native point of view (the talk is now of multivocality, resistance and contestation) – did not change very much the goal of producing a better understood as more accurate/complete account of otherness, less ethnocentric than even classical anthropologists were able to achieve. Anthropologists continue to call for a purging of our accounts of 'ethnocentrism', now seen as the byproduct of too much flirtation with western metanarratives of modernity.

What seem to have been lost in all this are the implications of the recognition of the

'constructedness' of anthropological knowledge. There are two implications in particular that I would suggest have been neglected, but need to be more carefully considered, and both, I would suggest, lead us now to reconfigure anthropology as a form of cosmopolitan practice.

First, if anthropological knowledge is a construction, ideally one involving ethnographers and their (diverse) interlocutors (subjects of ethnography) but also a whole range of others in the business of anthropology – journalists, local intellectuals, theologians, advertising copy-writers, artists – then anthropological knowledge cannot be considered to be knowledge of other cultures as classically conceived at all. In other words, it is not knowledge that could conceivably have pre-existed the ethnographic encounter. It is, therefore, also inevitably cosmopolitan knowledge; that is a construction that emerges out of the encounter between representatives of different cultures, a form of communication constructed by people, to quote Kant once again, 'existing successively and side by side, who cannot *do without* associating peacefully and yet cannot *avoid* constantly offending one another. Hence they feel destined by nature to [form] . . . a coalition in a *cosmopolitan* society . . . a coalition that, though constantly threatened by dissension, makes progress on the whole' (Kant, 1974: 190–1). Suffice it here to say this should at least be the goal of anthropology, a 'cosmopolitan ideal'.

Second, I expect the standard postcolonial objection here, that this cosmopolitanism is not truly 'cosmopolitan' because of the vast power differences between ethnographer and ethnographic subject. I think this is only partially true. It is evident that all forms of cosmopolitan thought – those that following Kant aspire to treat a diverse humanity for 'what they have in common' – will inevitably begin with culturally-inflected presuppositions about what it is that constitutes that common humanity (a human essence, whether defined biologically or otherwise). At the same time in practice cosmopolitan ideas will also inevitably generate notions of radical alterity, as those presuppositions come under the challenge of human diversity. Perhaps unchallenged, there is no reason for the cosmopolitan to revise his or her notion of human essence, no reason not to proceed with the assumption that diversity is evidence of 'perversity' in one form or another – as evidence that the bearers of difference are either redeemably or irredeemably not, or not yet, fully capable of human reason.

Yet precisely because all such universalist ideals are informed by particular, culturally-inflected notions of human essence, they are not in principle immutable. There is in other words no logical reason why they should take the form that they do. A colonial narrative that constitutes the Minangkabau as perverse forms of humanity, incapable (or not yet capable) of reason, hard work and responsibility could be transformed into a more inclusive narrative in which Minangkabau are now defined as possessors of fully mature human rational powers. The question is how such changes come about, how an exclusionary narrative becomes inclusionary (while doubtless now in turn defining new exclusions). And it seems equally clear that the answer does not lie at the level of will. The resolution in other words is not a philosophical one. Nor, no matter how attentive he/she is to the 'dialogical' character of ethnography, is the resolution likely to come at the level of the individual act of ethnographic research, at least in classical settings, where the differences in the power-to-represent between ethnographer and subject are likely to be too great for even the best-intentioned ethnographer to overcome.[13]

But for reasons that deserve more careful scrutiny than they normally receive, there

are increasingly those who would challenge the authority of western academic anthropologists to represent otherness, and thereby to appropriate other rationalities to their own. Given this shift in the balance of the power to represent other cultures and societies, it is precisely these other voices to which we must now listen. Whether we like what they are telling us or not, only they are capable of really shifting us away from the particularistic presuppositions that inform existing cosmopolitan practices. Finding ways therefore of establishing cosmopolitan modes of interacting with our new interlocutors – no matter how fraught, difficult, even conflictual such relations might be – seems to be the only way in which anthropology can genuinely achieve the goal of becoming a cosmopolitan practice in the modern world.

Acknowledgements

This was originally delivered as a seminar paper to the Department of Anthropology at Seoul National University. I would like to thank those who attended the seminar for their comments, and especially Professor Myung Seok Oh, who made the seminar possible. I am also grateful to Jon Mitchell and other members of the panel he organized at the AAA meetings in Washington DC in November 2001 who helped me to think about ways in which the notion of cosmopolitanism might be resurrected in contemporary anthropology.

Notes

1 See for example Held, 1995; Nussbaum, 1996; Pagden, 1998; and the various contributors to Pollack et al., 2000; Featherstone et al., 2000; Vertovec and Cohen, 2002.

2 Although see Kuper, 1994. Kuper, however, fails to specify his use of the term except by contrasting universalizing and culturally particularizing approaches in anthropology.

3 This is by no means to deny that Enlightenment cosmopolitanism has its roots in earlier traditions of western thought. Particularly intriguing is Toulmin's suggestion that the abstract universalism of the Enlightenment marked the loss of more embedded or contextualized Renaissance 'anthropological' traditions (see Toulmin, 1990).

4 For examples of such critiques see Mendes (1992), Waters (1994), Hermann (1997), Harvey (2000), and Melville (2002). That all such critiques cannot be dismissed as merely anachronistic is demonstrated clearly in an important new study of Kant that shows that at least a version of the feminist critique was made by contemporaries of Kant (see Zamitto, 2002).

5 Doctoral research was carried out in West Sumatra from 1970–1972 and supported with a grant from the London-Cornell Project in Southeast Asian Studies (see Kahn, 1980). Subsequent archival work in the Netherlands and Indonesia had financial support from the British Academy, the British Institute in Southeast Asia and Monash University (see Kahn, 1993). On the 2001 visit I was accompanied by my partner and co-worker, Associate Professor Maila Stivens of the University of Melbourne, and my participation was made possible by a grant from La Trobe University. Thanks to the anthropology staff at Universitas Andalas for their assistance.

6 For a good discussion of such issues see Blackwood, 2000.

7 The argument that the problematic of global governance represents a resurrection of the central themes of Kantian cosmopolitanism is made most elegantly by Anthony Pagden (see Pagden, 1998).

8 Hill, for example, argues that Kant's views need to be modified, but without any essential refutation, by acknowledging that respect for someone as a human being includes respecting that what they value is partly a product of their embededdness in 'intertwining networks of cultures and subcultures' as well as 'cross-currents of contrary social influences'. Kant's views clearly manifest an overemphasis on the autonomy of individuals that was characteristic of his times. Hill goes on to argue that as a modern Kantian one 'should not overestimate the irresistibility of these cultural bonds by assuming that reflective persons can never see good reason to set aside a part of their heritage' (Hill, 2000: 73).

9 I am thinking here particularly of the debate over the possibility of intercultural communication joined most notably by Rawls, Rorty, Habermas and others (see for example various contributions in Richard Kearney and Mark Dooley (eds), 1999).

10 For examples see the chapters by Ulrich Beck, Stuart Hall and Rainer Bauböck in Vertovec and Cohen (eds), 2002.

11 Popular is used here in a distinctive sense to distinguish this kind of practice from both 'exemplary' or 'high' modernism and so-called 'subaltern' consciousness (see Kahn, 2001a). I am not therefore suggesting that intercommunal relations in West Sumatra are governed by 'traditional' institutions and practices, since as the case of the Solok household shows, such relations have emerged as part of modern processes of migration, global tourism, commodification, the rule of a modern state and so on.

12 One of the best and most succinct statements on the parameters of classical disciplinary anthropology is provided in Stocking (1995).

13 Ethnographers, especially of poor rural communities in the Third World, are in my view guilty of naivety if they think that they can treat their 'informants' as 'interlocutors' in any real sense, even presuming that such informants had any real interest in how they are portrayed in academic texts.

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JOEL S. KAHN holds a Chair in Anthropology and Sociology at La Trobe University, and is currently Head of La Trobe's School of Social Sciences. He was made a Fellow of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia in 1995. He has published four monographs, three edited collections, numerous articles and book chapters on development issues in Indonesia and Malaysia, and on race, culture, identity and multiculturalism in Asia, Europe and North America. His most recent book is *Modernity and Exclusion* (London: Sage, 2001). He has carried out research in Indonesia (West Sumatra, East Kalimantan), Malaysia (rural Negeri Sembilan, Seremban, Penang and Kuala Lumpur), the UK and the USA. His current research involves the investigation of cosmopolitanism in the Asia Pacific region. *Address*: School of Social Sciences, La Trobe University, Victoria 3086, Australia. [email: j.kahn@latrobe.edu.au]