

Practical archiving in a time of covid

The closure of most academic libraries due to the Covid pandemic has put great emphasis on the provision of digital versions of texts for students and other researchers. As a practical response to this the Vestiges editors have been working to make available once again some of the pioneering initiatives in electronic publishing in anthropology which because of staff and hardware changes had become no longer available at their original addresses online. We note that many – but not all – of these have been archived in the Internet Archive so are accessible via the Wayback Machine – however it turns out sometimes only the contents pages were archived so a headline search result saying a copy is accessible from the Wayback Machine can be misleading. We are also working to make available online some material important that has never been digitised such as the Abbia archive announced in Vestiges V. 5 (2019).

Other cases are the inclusion for the first time online of the material originally published on CD Rom in English and Italian by Tullia Magrini: ‘Teatro popolare in Emilia. Il Maggio drammatico’ and the revival of some key essays on anthropological multimedia by Marks Banks.

A summary URL for all these initiatives is <http://www.vestiges-journal.info/rescue.html>

The largest body of work that we have re-enabled comes from the Centre for Social Anthropology and Computing (CSAC) at the University of Kent. This was set up by John Davis and Mike Fischer at almost the same time as the World Wide Web was invented. Indeed CSAC had an internet presence before the WWW protocols were developed. It also published monographs on paper. Some of these texts were later made available online, but in part only. In 2021 these are being made available on the Vestiges website with the support of Mike Fischer and, in some cases, the active collaboration of the surviving authors.

The URL <http://www.vestiges-journal.info/CSACMonog/> contains a full list of the CSAC monographs and other online publications. In its time CSAC also digitised some early, relatively obscure pieces to make them more available. These include (to name but a few examples) Victor Uzanne’s article “The end of books”, Gilbert Ryle’s original account of ‘thick description’ (as later used by Clifford Geertz) and Greg Acciaoli’s guide to reading Bourdieu.

As of April 2021 we have been able to make available complete versions of the early volumes (by scanning in some cases) and some of the later ones too, restoring from archive discs.

- Jerry Eades and Caroline Schwaller (eds.) [Transitional Agendas: Working papers from the Summer School for Soviet Sociologists](#), 1991
- C. W. Watson [Kinship, Property and Inheritance in Kerinci, Central Sumatra](#), 1992 ISBN 090 4938 19 0
- Roy Ellen [Nuauulu Ethnozoology: A systematic inventory](#), 1993 ISBN 090 4938 204

- Birgit Muller [Power and Institutional Change in Post-Communist Eastern Europe](#), 1999 ISBN 090 4938 867
- [Herman Gufler, Affliction and Moral Order: Conversations in Yambaland, 2003](#)
- [Kevin Waldie](#) *Cattle and Concrete*, 2001
- [David Zeitlyn](#) *Reading in the modern world. Writing and the virtual world Anthropological perspectives on computers and the internet*, 2001
- [Ma`Angels Trias i Valls.](#) *Ritual Prestations and Social Obligations in Contemporary Japan*, 2001

We hope that the restored access will be useful to a new generation of readers. We are working to enable access to other similar material from other sources than CSAC such as the early Visual Anthropology discussions from the “cvs newsletter”. Some of these will become available on the Vestiges website over the coming months and years.

David Zeitlyn for the Vestiges editors

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