This book is dedicated to Daisy Borduk and Geoffrey MacDonald. They reached across cultures, believing in the value--despite having experienced the hazards—of an interconnected world.

Indigenous Cultures in an Interconnected World

EDITED BY
Claire Smith
AND
Graeme K. Ward

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It is a matter of fact that we live in an ever-shrinking world due to the rapid pace of technological change and the advent of mass tourism. Increasing globalisation is inevitable. In the face of this, Indigenous peoples across the globe are having to fight harder and harder on an increasing number of fronts to secure their cultural survival and to find new means of asserting their rights and autonomy. But they are also harnessing the new technologies to sustain and strengthen their communities. So, in effect, globalisation presents both a threat and a challenge.

This volume draws attention to some of the myriad ways in which this phenomenon will affect the lives of Indigenous peoples in both the positive and the negative. On reading the papers it becomes clear, in the words of some of the authors, that this is a time of great opportunity, uncertainty and risk, creating the potential for cultural change at an unprecedented rate and scale. The papers highlight not only the new possibilities for Indigenous peoples that are emerging from the development of global communication networks but also the strategies Indigenous peoples are using to deal with the pressures.

While its primary focus was on Australia and America, the symposium also stimulated wider debate on these issues and outlined strategies for action in order to guide and inform both Indigenous and non-Indigenous policy-makers in all parts of our interconnected world.

I am confident this book will help foster a deeper understanding among non-Indigenous people of Indigenous views, concerns and aspirations. I commend it to academic and general readers around the world.

Gatjil Djerrkura
Chair, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, 1996–99

Contents

Figures and Illustrations

Ainu performance by Masahiro Nomoto (photo: *Northern Territory News*)

1

Globalisation and Indigenous Peoples: Threat or Empowerment?

CLAIRE SMITH, HEATHER BURKE AND GRAEME K. WARD

The unchecked expansion of European nations since the sixteenth century has signalled over 400 years of significant change for the world's Indigenous[1] peoples. This process of colonisation did not end with the arrival of European people but persisted as European goods, European technology and European beliefs perpetuated the process of invasion. Globalisation threatens to accelerate this process of colonisation. Networks that were once restricted to individual communities, nations or continents are becoming globalised through the latest innovations in communication technologies. With the advent of these technologies and the extreme mobility of modern peoples, the geographic boundaries that formerly shaped a people's understandings of themselves and the world are collapsing. In the rhetoric of transnational corporations and markets, globalisation entails the removal of limitations, allowing the exchange of ideas across boundaries by people from all walks of life. In reality, mass tourism is shrinking the world, bringing once-distant peoples quite literally face

to face. Telecommunications technologies such as the Internet are providing worldwide access to identical information and entertainment, while consumers from opposite corners of the globe can purchase the same products from the same multinational corporations. Just as the introduction of cheaper, faster air travel since the 1950s has permitted younger, less wealthy travellers to reach once distant lands (Bankes 1995: 7), so too are modern communication technologies allowing many more peoples access to one another across the gulf between cultures. The Internet is the single fastest-growing medium of communication in the world. It took 75 years for 50 million people to be connected to the telephone—it took only ten years for the same number of people to be connected using the Internet (Nathan 1997). As cultural boundaries dissolve and fundamentally Western understandings and attitudes become dominant, more and more people are conversing in the universal language of popular culture.

While the mass changes that attend these developments are commonly censured in terms of very real social problems such as the increasing commodification of culture, the entrenchment of inequality, growing feelings of insecurity and a loss of identity, Indigenous peoples are seldom considered in discussions of the 'globalisation juggernaut'. While there are approximately 350 million Indigenous persons across the world, they comprise only 6 per cent of the world's population. The process of globalisation began in the West and has mainly fostered the expansion of Western ideas, values, lifestyles and technology. Globalisation creates unprecedented opportunities for people to see, hear, visit and experience, with an ease previously unimaginable. For Indigenous peoples, globalisation threatens to extend the process of colonisation begun 400 years ago, giving rise to the possibility of a new invasion. For many non-Indigenous peoples, globalisation is merely a means of opening up new markets and finding new ways of 'selling' Indigenous culture. For some it provides access to a smorgasbord of cultural practices that are seen as public property to be 'borrowed' at will. Certainly, globalisation makes Indigenous cultures available to a wider audience, often without that audience ever having to leave home. It deliberately invites the outsiders in. The result is that

Indigenous peoples are having to fight harder on a variety of fronts to ensure their cultural survival and to find new means for asserting their rights and autonomy in the face of the new threats posed by globalisation.

The key issue here is control—control over land, control over knowledge, control over the past, present and future. The object of the struggle is not only Indigenous cultural and intellectual property but the continued future of Indigenous societies themselves. This conflict establishes an arena for radical change in the social and political environments of Indigenous peoples. At the forefront is an emerging process of decolonisation, which involves not only the deconstruction of colonial processes and the many assumptions on which colonialism is based but also, as a result, the transformation of social and political orders. The value of this to Indigenous peoples lies with the empowerment that comes from identifying common goals, many of which arise from the lived experiences of colonialism, and from being active agents in the process of decolonisation; as Daryle Rigney (1996: vi) has said: 'My research is a commitment to exposing the systematic de-powering, silencing and exclusion of Nunga [Indigenous] behaviours, consciousness, culture, ideology and social formations. It is time for the Invader Dreaming to end.'

There is the potential for Indigenous peoples from those countries with colonial histories to find a sense of unity and common purpose arising from their colonial experiences. Indeed, one of the core concerns that emerge from this volume is the overwhelming extent to which Indigenous agendas are transformative, concerned with 'change in and transformation of the roles and structures which control [them]' (Daryle Rigney 1996: 2). The formation of global economic, social and political networks will no doubt be a focus of Indigenous empowerment.

Indigenous struggles for recognition and self-determination are shaped by changes in their apprehension of the world as much as by the changing ways in which the world understands them. In this vein, increasing public awareness of the diversity of Indigenous lifeways and raising concern for Indigenous issues and rights is one means to empower Indigenous communities on a scale never before possible.

Contemporary forms of communication, particularly expressive media such as film, video and the Internet, thus become not only a way of sustaining and strengthening Indigenous communities but also a means of transforming them. On the one hand, the creation of new kinds of cultural forms is a means of revivifying local languages, traditions and histories, and articulating community identity and concerns. On the other hand, these new forms are also used to further social and political transformations of dominant hegemonies, as Faye Ginsburg emphasises in Chapter 2.

In this book we draw attention to some of the myriad ways in which globalisation is likely to affect the lives of Indigenous peoples, both positively and negatively. For Indigenous peoples this is a time of great opportunity, uncertainty and risk, creating the potential for cultural change at an unprecedented rate and scale. On the one hand, there are areas of serious conflict that need to be addressed. What are the implications of these new ways of knowing and new modes of access for Indigenous systems of knowledge and authority? What are culturally appropriate methods for sharing Indigenous knowledge? What protocols should be developed for its curation? On the other hand, globalisation provides the chance for Indigenous peoples to advance recognition and acceptance of their cultural values in innovative and effective ways and to empower themselves by harnessing the power of public opinion and by becoming familiar with each other's problems, solutions and successful strategies. The authors in this volume are concerned not only with the opportunities for Indigenous peoples that emerge from the development of global communication networks but also with the strategies by which Indigenous peoples are dealing with the pressures that arise from being part of an interconnected world.

COMMUNICATING IDENTITY

Fundamental to this struggle is the issue of Indigenous identity and its articulation with place. Indigenous peoples inherit rights and responsibilities to particular tracts of land. These rights to land cannot be bought, sold or reinvented. They were established in the ancestral pasts of Indigenous peoples around the world and are reiterated in the present through conceptualisations of spirituality. Thus land is central to the definition of self, is expressed in a variety of media, and is crucial to the survival of Indigenous identities.

Globalisation can involve a redefinition of identity on many levels. Integral to this is the complex interplay of forces tending towards nationalism and/or the emphasis of local Indigenous identity on the one hand, and those of globalisation and broader notions of identity on the other. Kahn (1995) has highlighted the paradoxical nature of stressing the former at a time when a 'borderless world' of communications and universal trade and investment is developing, along with a concomitant apparent cultural uniformity. This applies not only to the nation-states that Kahn discusses, but also to ethnic minorities—often defined by invasions and colonisations—of Indigenous peoples within nation-states, such as the Native Americans and Indigenous Australians, whose reactions to the pressures of, and use of the opportunities provided by, this process of 'globalisation' are the subject of this book.

The process of creating ethnic identity is a core concern of many of the chapters. Ethnicity is a phenomenon only found in complex societies, where several different communities with different cultures have to interact since they belong to a single society (Chapter 3). Within an ethnic group there is some recognition of a shared history, language, culture or religion, though this may arise as much from an external process of lumping together people with shared characteristics as from self-definition (Chapter 4). As Zimmerman and his co-authors point out, 'it is not necessarily the common culture of a group that makes them think of themselves as related, but the other way around. Once considered to be related, those so identified develop rules, or at least understandings, about who they are and who is or is not a part of the group'.

Thus for ethnic identity to emerge in Indigenous societies, the people in these societies first had to suffer incorporation into a complex society,

after which an often diverse series of distinct populations commonly became combined into a single category, such as 'Indian', or 'Aboriginal'. It is possible to view Indigenous ethnicity as an artefact of colonisation, since it was colonisation that created a sense of Indigenous peoples as Other. This movement from independent Indigenous societies to ethnic minorities embedded in modern culture is at once a powerful description of the loss of identity that occurred as a result of invasion and an illustration of the power of colonialism to collapse boundaries and redefine a dwindling world. Just as colonisation demanded new expressions of Indigenous identity to combat dispossession (for example, Chapter 3), globalisation also will demand this.

Global communication technologies are clearly used by some to maintain and reinforce ethnic identity as a specific entity, while also being used to explore a broader sense of pan-identity. In Chapter 4, Zimmerman, Zimmerman and Bruguier identify two principal ways in which communication technologies are used by Native Americans: first, to emphasise the unique characteristics of particular tribes, and second, to key into a pan-Indian or even a global Indigenous identity. Likewise, in Chapter 3, Layton highlights some of the tensions involved in this process as reflected in paintings by the late Melbourne artist Lin Onus Barinja, in which he used clan designs from northern Australia (to which he did not have a birthright) in order to assert his Aboriginality in a more general, pan-Australian sense. Although this is in itself problematic, colonisation and globalisation can be viewed as two moments around which the expression of new forms of ethnic Indigenous identity crystallised in different ways. On another level, in countries such as the United States, Canada, Mexico and Australia, important facets of identity are founded on aspects of Indigenous cultures, often appropriating Indigenous imagery as a marker of a more generalised national identity (Chapter 6). It follows that any rethinking of Indigenous identities will affect conceptualisations of regional, national and global identities.

Morris-Suzuki has developed similar ideas in the context of a study of the development of modern Japan. She uses the term 'formatting' to describe the basic process of creating a 'single underlying common framework or set of rules' used to coordinate local sub-regimes (1998: 164). In discussing the development of scientific endeavour in Japan, for example, she stresses the 'importance of the distinction between the *global format* of methods, theories and taxonomies of knowledge (defined almost entirely in the West) and *local content* [as] important... for early Japanese scientific researchers' (1998: 165).

Thus for nation-states, the process of incorporation into the global system—globalisation—tends to be one of adoption and adaptation of a framework—formatting—that can be varied to meet particular circumstances, while retaining a universal familiarity. We are able to identify a comparable process happening in Indigenous communities that are, in turn, sub-sets of modern nation-states, themselves sub-regimes within a global system. In this light, the papers in this volume document the emergence of a global sense of Indigeneity that coexists with a strong sense of Indigeneity at a local level.

Histories of connectedness

Having said this, it is important to recognise that this interconnectedness between forms of identity articulated at different scales is not necessarily a new phenomenon. One of the strongest contributions that many of the papers in this volume make to the debates surrounding globalisation is one that is unique to the disciplines of archaeology and anthropology. Our very description of the problems associated with globalisation could be taken to allude to the earlier Western notion of insular and isolated 'pristine cultures', unsullied by, and therefore needing to be protected from, contact with a wider world. As the many archaeologists and anthropologists in this book point out, however, this stereotype is not, and has never been, the case: many groups of Indigenous peoples have experienced considerable and extended contact with outside 'others' for centuries.

Individual histories of contact, of course, vary widely. Since at least the eleventh century, when Greenland Vikings arrived in northeastern Canada, the Innu people, for example, have had to adjust repeatedly

to the challenges posed by contact with non-Innu peoples (Chapter 9). Contacts between the Innu and Thule and Dorset Eskimo groups, or with Inuit people, were common over the last 8000 years, though the pace of contact increased as the nations of Europe began to take advantage of the rich potential offered by Innu territory. French, English and Basque fishers and fur-traders first arrived in Labrador in the sixteenth century, eventually establishing series of trading posts along the northern coast and, by the eighteenth century, the expanding nations of France and England were both vying to dominate and exploit the resources of Labrador. In describing the Innu people's range of responses, both past and present, to such contact, Loring and Ashini highlight an aspect of Indigenous cultures that is central to understanding both their survival and their potential: the dynamism of cultures that repeatedly have had to adjust to the challenges posed by other peoples in competition for their resource base.

Similarly, Layton (Chapter 3) explores the original 'connected world' of the Indigenous Australians, who, before White invasion, commonly moved through landscapes of regional communities, each of which contained between 250 and 500 people. Layton examines the creation of human cultural identity and the long tradition of Aboriginal people in emphasising difference through language and symbolism, while still maintaining connectedness through a regional network of relationships. In addition, many Aboriginal groups maintained generations of contact with eastern Indonesian and Papuan peoples, contacts that influenced their social networks through art and trade (Chapter 7). Both Dransart (Chapter 8) and Zimmerman and colleagues (Chapter 4) draw attention to similar histories of connectedness among the people with whom they work, reminding us that Indigenous communities have always maintained mechanisms for cross-cultural communication.

This history of connectedness should not be underestimated in understanding the potential of Indigenous communities to take advantage of the new technologies for communication. The papers in this volume make it clear that there can be no doubt that Indigenous peoples understand the importance of communication. Indeed, exchange of information has always been imperative for survival, not

least because it was essential that people knew where water and food could be found. Travel, in particular, has always been a means of acquiring status and collecting information, as a way to acquire knowledge about resources and other people (Chapter 9). Indeed, one can argue for the existence of an Indigenous imperative to communicate that arises from oral traditions that invest their energies in complex social structures, rather than in technologies. After their colonisation, Indigenous peoples have taken advantage of any means to help them keep in touch with one another. The goods that many Indigenous peoples value most highly are those to do with communication: telephones, televisions, videos, radios, cars, technologies that are often used by Indigenous peoples to restore and facilitate traditional information exchanges such as ceremonies (Michaels 1986: 5; Langton 1993: 63). This imperative to communicate places Indigenous peoples in a powerful position to take advantage of the many possibilities provided by globalisation. Through radio, film, video, recorded music and now the Internet, there is the potential for Indigenous peoples to tackle the problems posed by globalisation and to transform its technology in unique ways.

Each of these chapters challenges the stereotype that Indigenous societies 'live in the past' and are unable to shape their culture to adjust to new challenges and situations. Indigenous societies before Contact were both dynamic and flexible, possessing a creative strand that both then and now 'repeatedly generates new variants of cultural practices and...transforms the cultural structure itself' (Layton, page 66; see also Chapters 5 and 7). This raises another core issue underlying much of the discussion in this book: the notion of authenticity. As many others have pointed out, authenticity does not reside in a past that is unchanging, lacking any internal dynamic (Edwards 1997: 63). By proliferating and perpetuating stereotypes of Indigenous peoples as pristine and unchanging, globalisation may become a tool for disempowering Indigenous peoples on the ground that the practices of a contemporary present may not be the same as those of an idealised (and unrealistic) past. The creation of influential images of what constitutes 'authentic' Indigeneity can constrain Indigenous peoples in real and material ways,

limiting their social, economic, and political capacities. That process is made manifest in the statement by Jimmie Durham (cited by Gough in Chapter 5) that 'none of us feel that we are real Indians...for the most part we feel guilty, and try to measure up to the white man's definition of ourselves'. On the other hand, authentic representation can also become an important aspect of Indigenous empowerment. In particular, as both Morphy and Layton demonstrate in Chapters 7 and 3 for the northern Australian Yolngu and Alawa people respectively, and as Dransart makes clear in Chapter 8 for the Aymara people of Chile, the notion of authenticity is central to the production of Indigenous art, the negotiation of Indigenous identity through art, and the explicit assertion of rights that can flow from this.

Stereotyping Indigenous cultures as static 'voices from the past' lies at the heart of many cultural property issues, particularly the misuse of Indigenous images, designs or sounds by non-Indigenous peoples. This form of cultural appropriation is akin to theft and denies the complex reality of Indigenous societies where rights to land, and to the stories, music and designs that connect people to place, cannot be separated from Indigenous peoples' identity. As Julie Gough (page 106) argues: 'The selective borrowing of aspects of the religious and spiritual belief systems of Indigenous cultures by Western civilisation has been an ongoing practice for over 400 years and is an irreverent external corruption of the truths of Indigenous connections to land, nature and the hidden forces governing it.' Under such a system, to claim falsely the rights of another is a serious offence, and traditional power structures have always been concerned with ensuring that designs, stories, ceremonies, dances and songs are only employed by those with an ancestral right to practise them. In Kalimantan in Indonesia, for example, Iban people who wish to use a design that belongs to another must pay for it, and the right to use it is officially bequeathed in a formal ceremony (C. Smith pers. comm.). Such a system, with its attendant rights and responsibilities, imparts a profound respect for the cultural property rights of others. For Indigenous peoples, cultural property and intellectual property are parts of the same integrated system. They are both aspects of a living heritage.

INDIGENOUS SYSTEMS OF KNOWLEDGE

Nowhere is the gulf of misunderstanding that frames the clash between Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultures more apparent than over the issue of cultural and intellectual property rights. This is mainly a clash between divergent knowledge systems, as there are numerous significant differences in the ways in which Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples formulate knowledge. While this can be simplified into dichotomies between oral and written, narrative and definitive, practical and canonical, fluid and fixed, the reality is far more complex. Merlan (1997), for example, distinguished between Indigenous and non-Indigenous representations of the significance of place in terms of a 'narrative' or 'definitive' character. The former is concerned with what happened at a place, while the focus of the latter is the essence of what the place 'is'. She interprets this Indigenous 'lack of definitiveness' as part of a tradition in which the meanings associated with a place are subject to ongoing negotiation and reformulation as people continue to visit and interact with the place (Merlan 1997: 10): 'Understanding is a grasping of what things mean and knowing how to interpret them and how to respond in the course of events, and is not about giving a definitive representation of them as an independent reality.'

This process is one aspect of the Indigenous practice of revealing knowledge in a gradual manner and at different levels according to what is considered appropriate for the interpreter to know. Information in Indigenous systems of knowledge is rarely definitive. Instead, this knowledge, grounded in oral traditions, is multivalent, ambiguous and open to alternative renditions according to the context of interpretation. In contrast, the search by non-Indigenous peoples for absolute forms of representation is steeped in the essentialism of written traditions. In an interconnected world one issue that arises is how to transmit the fluidity of Indigenous understandings to a public whose education is grounded in written traditions. Is it possible to present the fluid and multivalent characteristics of Indigenous systems of knowledge in an authentic manner, one that is not canonical but that is open to the subtle formulations that are part of living practice

and traditional cultural values? Particularly within cultural tourism enterprises, which often aim to fix Indigenous meanings in definitive interpretative materials, the problem lies in attempting to render Indigenous culture as a product, such that 'the' Indigenous meaning of a place or a thing becomes extended beyond the capacity of the individual person/informant to define it (Merlan 1997). Indigenous peoples are continually frustrated by the expectation that they are speaking on behalf of a community or a cultural experience, rather than simply expressing their own individual, contextualised views on the world (Meekison, Chapter 6).

As a result, Indigenous activism is focusing increasingly on the ownership, control and protection of Indigenous cultural and intellectual property. While this is not accommodated adequately by existing legislation, we are at a turning point (Golvan 1996). In countries with Indigenous peoples, legislative changes are being considered in order to accommodate Indigenous ways of knowing and curating knowledge. Such changes include revising patent legislation to recognise the contribution made by Indigenous knowledge to the development of new medicines; changing copyright legislation to recognise the communal and multi-level ownership of designs and cultural knowledge; and changing legislation relating to performer's rights so as to recognise the secret and restricted nature of certain Indigenous performances (see, for example, Janke 1997). Significant within the context of globalisation is that these changes not only incorporate the recognition of Indigenous rights of ownership over, and control of, Indigenous intellectual and cultural property in accordance with traditional customary laws, but that they also recognise the right of Indigenous peoples to benefit commercially from the authorised use of this property (cf. Golvan 1996; Janke 1997).

This need not be a matter of compromising Indigenous systems of ownership for commercial profit; once again, an anthropological and archaeological understanding of how Indigenous societies functioned in the past can be instructive. Many Indigenous groups before colonisation were accustomed to producing objects whose purpose was to be traded across boundaries as part of extensive trading networks 'in

which the intention was to produce something that the market required and to which people responded' (Morphy, page 140). Thus the contemporary production of Indigenous art, textiles and other artefacts for consumption by tourists is part of a long tradition of creating objects explicitly designed to be traded across boundaries and thus to serve as mechanisms for cross-cultural communication:

> The objects that were traded were often problematic, posed questions, and forced the development of categories that were not always pre-existing parts of the recipient culture. While concepts like fetish or totemic object were inadequate and tended to be overused to the point of becoming meaningless, they were part of a process of widening European conceptions of the world, and Indigenous peoples were often consciously trying to get their ideas across and to affect global understanding. (page 140)

Morphy uses these 'acts of persuasion' to illustrate the fact that the consequences of transformation through such cross-cultural representational processes depend both on the nature of the discourse involved and the aims of the respective parties (also Morphy and Banks 1997: 28). He intends it as a reminder of the dangers inherent in reducing difference (in this instance between art in Aboriginal society and art in Western society) to a dualistic opposition that fails to recognise fundamental areas of compatibility. These 'acts of persuasion' were of mutual benefit and suggest some of the motivations of Indigenous peoples.

Focusing on areas of compatibility is particularly relevant when one considers the potential for the celebration of things Indigenous to contribute towards the commodification of Indigeneity, a process that some have argued has become a central feature in the creation of global, particularly tourist, markets (McConaghy 1997). Acknowledging the process of commodification returns us directly to the problem of Indigenous cultural and intellectual property rights as they are articulated through the central issue of control over Indigenous culture. There can be little doubt that the use of Indigenous identity as a

marketing tool may have adverse effects, in spite of good intentions. Such marketing can reinforce negative stereotypes of a passive or subdued people, or of Indigenous people as children of nature, either unable or unwilling to modify the world around them. Moreover, it can fail to recognise the richness, complexity and diversity of Indigenous societies; or it can serve to sanitise the marginalisation of Indigenous peoples into a familiar social and political reality that is not questioned and open to reformulation (Chapter 6). The potential positive rewards, such as expressing the health and vitality of Indigenous cultures as living societies, and the provision of basic information to those who know little of Indigenous cultures, can only be achieved if conducted in an appropriate manner that ensures rewards for Indigenous peoples. Many would argue that an 'appropriate manner' in this sense could only be one that is managed for and by Indigenous peoples. As the Tasmanian artist Julie Gough states (Chapter 5), the current debate on the representation of Indigenous cultures is an acknowledgment that representation is no longer the unquestionable right of the colonial majority. Like many Indigenous artists, Gough's work has the avowed intention of using Indigenous voices to present an alternative interpretation of the past. For her, her art-practice 'centres on recontextualising historical stories and the cultural meanings of objects by retelling documented events from an alternative perspective, one differing from that of the Western historical "record". My intent is to challenge the recorded past by subversively reworking it from my personal viewpoint of the "invisible Aboriginal"' (page 106).

Of course, to recognise the agency of Indigenous peoples is also to recognise that they are not only entitled to, but may also desire to, make their products available to a non-Indigenous audience. Most of the contributors to this volume hold a position that makes this very clear: for many Indigenous communities, cultural tourism and art production offer a way to achieve economic empowerment. This is not an arena into which Indigenous peoples have been unwillingly dragged, but rather one to which Indigenous peoples who have been unwillingly colonised have turned as a means of asserting their rights and

autonomy (Chapter 7; Chapter 8). The arts are particularly suited to increasing acceptance of differences among peoples since they are a major route through which many obtain an understanding of other peoples. Not only do visual images provide the most readily accessible representations of other cultures, but the often small size of many items of cultural expression make them an ideal medium to sell to tourists. In addition, cultural tourism is widely recognised as an area with significant potential for growth in all regions inhabited by Indigenous peoples. In some regions this potential has only begun to be realised in the last few years. Yet the possible benefits to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples are great.

Representation is particularly problematic within the relatively new and comparatively unrestricted context of the Internet, which actively seeks to operate free from control and censorship. However, this freedom can be both a blessing and a curse for Indigenous peoples, who may find they have no control over how others choose to represent them, or over the use of their music, designs or stories. There are numerous instances of Native American and Australian Aboriginal images and music being used without permission on the Internet and elsewhere (for example, Johnson 1996; Morphy 1998). As Zimmerman and colleagues (Chapter 4) point out, 'such theft is virtually impossible to control, and for Indians, who the dominant society already has a tendency to see as an artefact of the past, their voice against such usurpation seems mostly lost'.

There are other crucial issues for the Internet relating to access and equity and how these will affect traditional social relations. How will communication technologies impact upon traditional knowledge systems? Traditionally, one waited until knowledge was given. Conversely, in Western, written societies, knowledge can be readily accessed without older people acting as intermediaries or gatekeepers; and in the information age one actively 'searches' for and 'takes' knowledge. Certainly, the movement from oral to written practice contains risks for traditional ideologies. Oral societies are structured so that old people have high status as the custodians of knowledge, which they restrict and distribute at their discretion. In these traditions power is

related directly to knowledge that is acquired with age, with plateaus at particular rites of passage (Figure 1.1). For women, plateaus might happen at the onset of menstruation, at marriage and with the bearing of children; for men, they might mark various stages of formal initiation, as well as marriage and the advent of parenthood. One implication of global communication technologies is a predominance of young Indigenous voices, which could seriously undermine the structural position and power held by elders.

Furthermore, the Internet as it is currently configured is limited in terms of the needs of some Indigenous peoples. In Australia, for instance, Indigenous participation in online services is limited and the rate of individual computer ownership is extremely low (Aspinall and Hobson 1997). This is due in part to the high costs involved for individuals, many of whom live well below the poverty line. Use of the Internet is also largely dependent on the user having literacy skills that

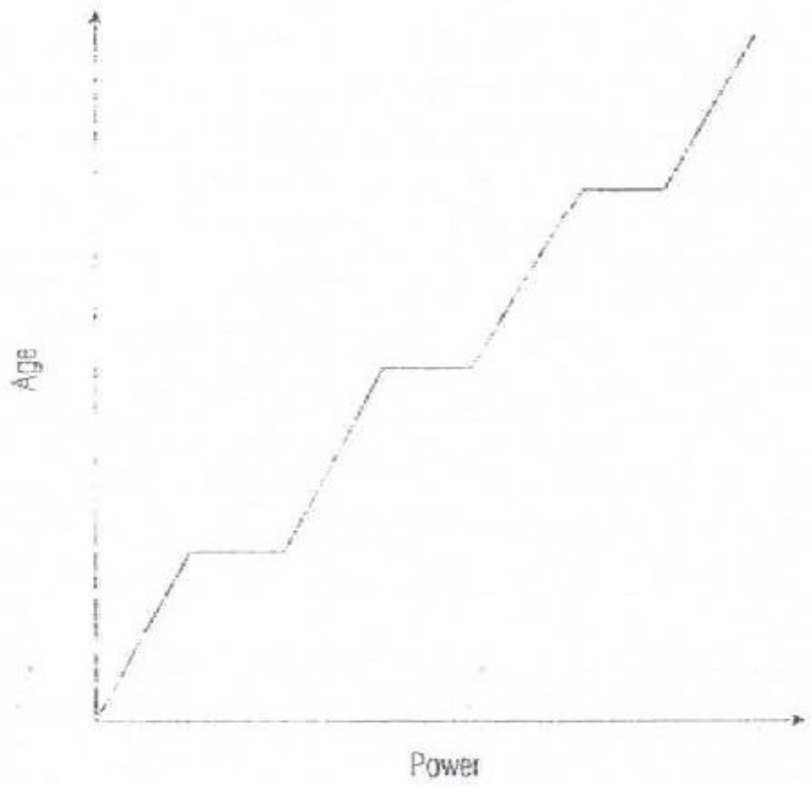

Figure 1.1 The relationship between age and power in societies based on oral traditions

are not necessarily present among older people in remote communities, some of which have undergone extended contact only in the last 50 years, or in remote areas of Asia and South America, which are undergoing extended contact at the present time.

Despite this, while the Internet is perceived by some as a potential vehicle for American cultural imperialism (for example, Gates 1995) and an all-encompassing 'One World, One Culture' homogeneity, this is contrary to the manner in which it operates. The Internet is different from other media in that individuals have a high degree of control over the material they access, actively searching for the information they require. This 'democratic' aspect of the Internet encourages the development of networks of people with particular interests, rather than cultural imperialism per se. Native American broadcaster John Belindo (1997: 4) has argued that the formation of new alliances for sharing information creates new possibilities for informed decision-making and the attainment of Indigenous rights:

> This new communications network will lead to the development of regional and global networks enabling people world-wide to share information and ideas on the issues important to cultural survival. Indigenous broadcasters will employ strategies for maintaining and strengthening their culture and ensuring that they have legacies to pass on to future generations.

This dovetails with both global and local Indigenous struggles for control over their cultural and intellectual property, and concomitant empowerment in political and economic spheres.

As many of the writers in this book reiterate, however, the use of synthetic forms of communication by Indigenous peoples to establish and broaden cross-cultural awareness is not a new phenomenon. In this sense, the Internet is merely another form of communication, much like the sign language used on the Great Plains of North America to signal the location of bison herds or mutual enemies, or the smoke signals from smudge-fires used in the American Southwest to exchange information across great distances (Chapter 4). The nature of the

Internet, with its particular reliance on visual imagery to be effective, is such that it is not so far removed from traditional forms of Indigenous communication—the sense of community is immediate, given without interpretation by non-Indigenous peoples, except as technicians and facilitators where needed. This may well be one of its main strengths, and the imperative to communicate, grounded in traditions of oral and visual forms of communication may, in fact, be one thing underlying the rapidity with which Indigenous peoples in First World nations have adopted the new technologies. In this vein, Gough (Chapter 5) argues that Indigenous peoples have a distinct advantage in the process of globalisation, which she sees as extending processes inherent in colonialism. While those in the West have to deal with the new challenges that arise from the dislocations involved with contact and a loss of cultural insularity, those who have already been colonised have long been in transit and transformation, and merely have to adapt their tools of cultural survival to suit the new situation.

Gough's process of adaptation is highlighted in the chapters by Ginsburg, Zimmerman and his co-authors, and Loring and Ashini, all of which demonstrate the ways in which Indigenous peoples are using new technologies to challenge their places in colonial histories and the power relations on which these are based. Certainly, many Indigenous peoples are well aware of the potential value of the Internet for promoting political agendas. Examples in Australia and North America have been provided by ATSIC (1999), Aboriginal Australia (1999), the Northern Land Council (1999), Tribal Voice (1998), Yothu Yindi (1999), and those sites mentioned by Giese (1995, 1997a) and Tafler (1997) and by Loring and Ashini and Zimmerman and colleagues in this volume.

In this way, greater use of information technologies by Indigenous peoples increases the viability of physical separation from non-Indigenous peoples as an option. New technologies allow communities to increase their profile in the mainstream without the infringement of autonomy that is inherent in much direct or extended contact with non-Indigenous peoples. This has the potential to provide greater security for Indigenous values and plays an important part in enabling

Indigenous peoples to position themselves outside colonial nation-states. In the not too distant future, it could emerge that Indigenous peoples have more in common with each other at a global level than they do with the non-Indigenous peoples who share the countries they live in. At the same time, this is unlikely to occur at the expense of Indigenous peoples' local identities, or of their core relationships to culture. The development of a pan-Indigenous identity need not entail a loss of local cultural integrity. As Morphy's research shows (1991; this volume Chapter 7), Aboriginal peoples have long been adept at operating in different arenas in which the same objects can have very different meanings. These traditional systems of knowledge make Indigenous peoples socially and intellectually well placed to take advantage of new systems of interconnectedness.

A point to stress here is that much of the material in this volume is the product of research into Indigenous cultures by non-Indigenous people. Many Indigenous persons, especially those educated within Western traditions of scholarship and aware of the potential political significances of research, value the increasing opportunities to control research endeavour as it relates to their own cultures, either by conducting their own projects or somehow directing the research of outsiders. The contributions to this volume of Gough (Chapter 5) and Loring and Ashini (Chapter 9) are eloquent on this topic. In some quarters, any research relating to cultural matters by outsiders might not be welcomed by Indigenous peoples. In part this may be the manifestation of a desire by these communities to take stock, to hold off the onslaught of researchers until Indigenous peoples themselves are better able to identify the benefits they will obtain through research. It is in the hands of researchers themselves to adjust their methods so that the communities they work with do benefit. This adjustment is likely to entail engagement in the Indigenous struggle to gain control over their past, present and future. Lester Rigney (1997) has presented the view that:

> Indigenous peoples have the fundamental right to expect research and its epistemologies to address the issues and racialising practices

> that have been part and parcel of post-invasion history... What must be emphasised here is that from an Indigenous perspective, my people's interests, experiences and knowledges must be at the centre of research methodologies and the construction of knowledge about us.

Scott (1994: 15) has pointed out that we may have only the slightest inkling of the questions that minority groups might have about their past. While this is true for many ethnic groups, it is particularly true for Indigenous peoples, whose voices have been stifled by what Rowse (1994: 129) identified as 'the currency and academic prestige of the "Aboriginality" expounded by experts'. Overwhelmingly, these experts have been drawn from another class as well as from another culture. Indeed, one wonders how we could ever have thought that middle-class, non-Indigenous researchers could have represented adequately the views, interests and needs of economically and socially marginalised Indigenous peoples.

This is not to say that there is no role for non-Indigenous researchers in collaborative research endeavours.[2] One of the most important things that has to be defined in the immediate future is the role of non-Indigenous peoples in these endeavours. To some extent this may require the reinvention of disciplinary practice, as Loring and Ashini (Chapter 9) contend. For them, the most interesting and dynamic aspect of archaeology in the Labrador region lies in the alliance between archaeology and Innu politicisation:

> It confronts the colonialist assumption that the 'expertise' of an academically trained 'scientist', supported by materialist 'evidence' in the form of ancient stone tools and radiocarbon dates, has more validity than the testimony of Innu elders with their legacy of oral traditions, history and personal experiences... The research did not so much seek a concordance of the past...as it sought to empower people with the relevance and authority that control of the past conveys, especially in light of the usurpation of Innu control over their land by government.

The collaborative research conducted by Innu people and the Smithsonian Institution in the Pathways Project shows that academic and Indigenous interests need not be in opposition, and demonstrates the substantial benefits that can be gained by researchers working in tandem with Indigenous peoples. Times of new opportunities, though, are also times of uncertainty and unrest. Collaborative research projects not only have the potential to engender new and more productive research agendas but may also change radically conventional ways of establishing identity by questioning hitherto unchallenged assumptions, themselves contingent on colonial power relations.

A TRADITIONAL FUTURE

Globalisation constitutes an unprecedented threat to the autonomy of Indigenous cultures as well as an unprecedented opportunity for Indigenous empowerment. The papers presented in this volume highlight not only the new possibilities for Indigenous peoples that are emerging from the development of global communication networks but also the strategies Indigenous peoples are using to deal with the pressures of globalisation.

Taken together, the various chapters document a number of distinctly Indigenous views and ways of thinking and interacting that have endured the colonial process. First, there are Indigenous notions of time, in which an ancestral past might be seen to hold up the immediate past, which in turn imbues the present. This is in contrast to the linear notion of time held by most non-Indigenous peoples. An Indigenous notion of time is manifest in Gough's reworking of colonial history, which is based on the assertion that there can be no closure of the past. The view that the past imbues the present is common among Indigenous peoples from rural, urban and remote locations in various parts of the world. It can be argued that it underlies what Zimmerman and his colleagues call the 'remnant anger' of American Indians about their colonial pasts. As Loring and Ashini point out, the past 'is an integral feature of the present, not a distinct abstraction'.

Second, Indigenous peoples take a more contextual view of the

world than do non-Indigenous peoples. Loring and Ashini, for instance, contrast the 'cyclical aspect of northern worlds' with the 'linear approach of [non-Indigenous] archaeological and governmental administrative logic'. This complements the distinction drawn by Merlan (1997) between 'narrative' and 'definitive' characterisations of place in northern Australia. Indigenous, contextualised ways of knowing contrast with the linear, compartmentalised ways of thinking that are integral to societies with written traditions.

Third, Indigenous peoples retain hereditary links to particular tracts of land, the topographic features of which serve as a mnemonic for a community's history. It's not new in itself. One can identify a dichotomy in Indigenous strategies, one that articulates the affirmation of rights and responsibilities to specific homelands with the development of global networks of Indigeneity. Those Indigenous peoples who develop an identity as global citizens are unlikely to do so at the expense of their local identities, which are securely tied to place.

Fourth, Indigenous peoples have a particular and profound respect for the intellectual and cultural property of others. One manifestation of this is a reluctance to speak on behalf of other Indigenous peoples, evident in all of the papers in this volume that are written by Indigenous people. This profound respect for each other's property is grounded in cultural systems in which this property constitutes an important facet of land ownership, and in traditions of restricted knowledges with the severe penalties that can attend the infringement of rights in these cultures.

Of course, none of this is intended to imply that Indigenous peoples have 'natural' affinities with each other, or that they are in any sense homogeneous. They do not and they are not. Lester Rigney (1997) has commented that an 'automatic or natural rapport' among Indigenous peoples does not exist within a single continent, as there are many cultural barriers and diversities. This observation is even more applicable to Indigenous peoples globally. There is, however, the possibility of common interests and goals. Clearly evident in the papers in this volume is the potential for Indigenous peoples from First World

countries to find a sense of unity and common purpose arising from their shared colonial histories.

At issue, perhaps, is the degree to which the outlooks and interests of Indigenous peoples in First World countries key in to those of Indigenous peoples in Third World countries. As Indigenous global networks expand, will they include Indigenous peoples in those regions of the world that do not have ready access to the Internet and other modern communication devices? There are notable silences in this book, as well as in other First World writings, on this subject. At present we know little of the views and priorities of Indigenous peoples from Third World countries. Certainly, the issues under debate in these countries are likely to be essentially different—but there are also unifying features, such as the grounding in oral traditions and philosophies that are based on hereditary and inalienable rights to land.

It would be a mistake, however, for either Indigenous or non-Indigenous peoples to construe their relations in terms of essentialised binaries of Them and Us. It is important to recognise that both Them and Us are complex and multivalent constructs and that individuals are situated in specific historical contexts. Such essentialism is overturned by exploring the manner in which historical constructions of Indigeneity and non-Indigeneity have been contingent on colonial power relations, thus revealing the fluid and shifting natures of these identities. As Attwood and Arnold (1992: xv) have pointed out, this involves a new object of study—Ourselves: 'These new praxes and knowledges radically destabilise conventional ways of establishing identity or the existential conditions of being [for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples]...but they also have the potential for offering new means for a mutual becoming.' In terms of Indigenous art, Morphy (1998: 420) has extended this line of thinking to argue that one possible development would be 'to include within the category of "Aboriginal art" other art that has influenced Aboriginal artists. The boundaries between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal art history would be dissolved, but in such a way that world art history would be rewritten in relation to present Aboriginal art practice'.

As Indigenous peoples reposition themselves in their struggle for

recognition and self-determination, so too must others in an interconnected world. The players in the struggle are Indigenous peoples on the one hand and the embedded social and political constructs of colonialism on the other. Researchers (both Indigenous and non-Indigenous) are often the scribes and intermediaries, but the audience is global. The Indigenous Ainu people of Japan have a word, *ureshipamoshiri*, to describe the world as an interrelated community of all living things (Anon. 1996: 10). Changes in any part of this community cause ripples and adjustments throughout. Moreover, as Trigger (1997: x) has commented, change is not a violation of culture but the realisation of a potential.