

# Seminar "Indigenous media" 2015

MA Program in Visual & Media Anthropology,  
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# Schedule

- 5<sup>th</sup> Assignment
- Discussion of Indigenous media production  
→ 4<sup>th</sup> Assignment

# 5<sup>th</sup> Assignment

- Read Wilson and Stewart's introductory chapter “Indigeneity and Indigenous media on the global stage” (UNIT 6) and discuss “the problem of defining Indigeneity in the era of globalization” in 300 words.
- Submit assignment via e-mail till Tuesday 16 June, 17:00!
- **There is no seminar on the 10<sup>th</sup> of June!**

# Discussion of Indigenous media production 1

- **Worth & Adair** (1970) → one of the first anthropological texts on indigenous media production
  - project at Navajo reservation (Arizona, USA)
  - documentation & investigation:
    - (1) how **Navajo appropriate & use film cameras** for their own films
    - (2) the **characteristics** of the films
    - (3) how the films were **received by audience**
  - does (indigenous) film making practices & patterns reflect specifics of Navajo culture & cognition? → “relationships between linguistics, cognitive, cultural, and visual phenomena” (Worth & Adair 1970:12).
- **(cultural) differences:**
  - (1) context (film makers' learning situations & working methods)
  - (2) code (narrative styles & cultural & cognitive taboos)
- “the Navajo on first using film, in an endeavour to communicate their view of their world, chose to create forms that were fulfilling, ..., to them in traditional Navajo style”. (Worth & Adair 1970:33)

# Discussion of Indigenous media production 2

- **Flores** (2004) analyzes **collaborative video & film making** initiatives between anthropologists/ethnographers & Maya Q`eqchi' media producers
  - “applied visual anthropology”, roots in the “shared anthropology” tradition
  - shift from an objective to an (inter)subjective approach in visual anthropology: (1) what is the benefit of research for (indigenous) communities & (2) what is the role of the anthropologists in a collaborative project
  - video project also allows sociocultural reconstruction & healing of the community
  - necessary to produce meaningful processes & outcomes for the communities
- anthropologists/ethnographers & the research partners/activists can be **mutually empowered**

# Discussion of Indigenous media production 3

- **Turner** (1992) introduces the Kayapo Video Project
  - how **Kayapo utilize video technologies** to document political events, discussions & meetings
  - Kayapo continue their **tradition of the objectification** of modes of representation
  - video recording to establish (political) facts & (social) reality
  - Indigenous media as mediators of social & political activities, empowerment, “self-conscientization”
    - (1) **objectification** of indigenous people's culture for political struggle
    - (2) **hybridization** of cultures through the indigenous integration of techniques of dominating culture
- Kayapo are very much interested in “new media technologies” to transform their culture & the conceptions of themselves

# Discussion of Indigenous media production 4

- **Indigenous media production** is about the **empowerment of social actors** by producing “their own cultural mediations” (Turner 2002:80)
- Visual media technologies allow indigenous people with no writing tradition to **construct own social reality**
- Video production in Kayapo case has contributed to “**transformation of Kayapo social consciousness**, both by promoting a more objectified notion of social reality and by heightening their sense of control over the process of objectification itself” (Turner 2002:88).

# Discussion of Indigenous media production 5

- What does the self-authored creation of media & their content mean for indigenous people?
- How do media practices change social structure & power relationships within indigenous communities?
- Is an equal exchange between indigenous & dominating society possible?
- How do indigenous media contribute to processes of identity construction, representation & empowerment?



# Discussion of indigenous media production 6

## Issues & Arguments:

- information
- mediation
- power
- social structure
- appropriation
- tradition
- self-representation
- change
- sociality
- translation
- identities
- politics
- modernity
- struggle