Minutes of the EASA Media Anthropology Network's 2nd meeting, 19th September 2006, Bristol

Taken by Monika Rulfs

19 September 2006
20:15-21:30
25 participants
Chair: John Postill

1. Purpose of Network

John Postill surveyed the development of the network. The network was set up at the EASA conference in Vienna in 2004. On the mailing list there are now some 260 people from over 30 countries. The aim of the network is:

- find out what research is carried out by other media anthropologists
- have easy access to media anthropologists' biographical profiles
- organise electronic seminars through the mailing list and discuss working papers (usually for the time of one week), which creates space for discussion and debate
- look at ways of further theorising this research area
- plan media anthropology workshops, summer schools etc.

John Postill was asked of who could join the list. He replied that anyone can join as long as they can demonstrate a legitimate interest in media research. Most participants are media anthropologists, but there are also many others from sociology, communications, cultural studies, etc. The network is meant to be open, because openness creates new interesting connections. Everybody is encouraged to write directly to the mailing list.

2. Technology of network

Philipp Budka (ph.budka@philbu.net) created the website. A wiki-system, weblog(s) and the possibility to post news and events in a chronological order could be added. Using a Content Management System would help reduce the work for one person, because several people could work with it. Philipp would appreciate support from volunteers on the technical side. Daniel Taghioff offered to help.

It was agreed that it is important to have a user-friendly system. A wiki was regarded as very social and allowing for change, collaborations and networking, but it was also found to be more complicated than a blog. The discussion is supposed to be continued through the mailing list. People mentioned the Savage Mind Blog and Erkan Saka's blog.

3. Summer School

Attendants would like to have a Media Anthropology summer school organized. Istanbul would be a good place (as proposed by Erkan Saka), but funding has to be found. Several possibilities were mentioned. Ursula Rao (rao@ethnologie.uni-halle.de) volunteered to organize the summer school.

4. Online Bibliography

Anna Horolets (labusia_xl@wp.pl) runs the online media anthropology bibliography. Possibilities of improving the list (e.g. using endnote) were discussed. It was felt the list should be easy to handle and easy to access. People are encouraged to review non-English books. Anna is asking all to contribute to the list and to add key words to future annotated references.

A related new project could be to launch a book review webpage following the Cybercultures model (http://www.com.washington.edu/rccs/booklist.asp). EASA is discussing possibilities to create a database for European PhD theses, an idea proposed by Adam Kuper.

5. Workshop at the next EASA conference

People think it is very good to have a media anthropology workshop at the next conference in 2008. Cora Bender (cbender@uni-bremen.de) volunteered to organize the workshop. Elisenda Ardèvol proposed to have an interim workshop at Barcelona on a topic to be decided.

Monika Rulfs