Introduction

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The introduction contextualizes the historical, ethnographic, and theoretical accounts of wind in the following papers, all of which deal with how wind the 'natural' phenomenon relates to human life and culture. It draws attention to the diversity of relationships with wind whilst also addressing why it is that similar patterns of ideas surrounding wind exist across cultures. It explores the notion that human/wind relationships are tightly bound to the sensuous qualities of wind, which in turn reflect the embedded unfolding of human life as an aspect of environment, and drawing on phenomenology as a particularly apposite hermeneutic approach to understanding the relationship.

Wind, on first consideration, may be thought of as a 'natural phenomenon': 'air in motion'. Our different words for wind, including breezes, wafts, squalls, whirlwinds, hurricanes, and cyclones, tell us something about the origins, scale, and implications of the phenomenon. Cyclically or erratically winds appear and dissipate across the landscape as one of the primordial rhythms of unfolding life and part of the backdrop of life in the open. Yet wind is also experienced indoors, in the form of 'drafts' and 'currents of air', and if it is not reduced to a phenomenon of modern meteorology and the natural sciences, wind can also be thought to manifest in breathing and in the internal body winds that circulate in veins or appear in the form of sneezes and coughs. Or winds can be deities and spirits.

Wind takes on different guises when it works its way into different aspects of people's lives. It becomes a power when the sailor hoists his sail, a friend when it cools an overheating body, an enemy when the rhinoceros that you did not see, just behind the bush, picks up your scent in a capricious flirt of the breeze. It becomes an illness from a bitter relative or an offended ancestor. The English phrases 'winds of change', 'winds of war', 'to get wind of something', 'throw it to the wind', or 'three sheets to the wind' all point to different relationships with wind. The different ways in which winds interact with people lend them different identities.

In this volume, we begin with the ubiquitous external 'wind' phenomenon, which more often than not is linked to the internal experience of 'breathing', and explore the enormously rich range of ideas about wind and ways of being in wind, negotiating

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with, controlling and 'binding', inhaling and expulsing the winds. The volume discusses both meteorological winds and embodied experiences of wind in social and historical context, by drawing out local nuances of understanding. It presents a detailed study of intimate relationships with wind which hold the life-giving sensual phenomenon in a profound relationship with ways of conceptualizing life and death, sickness and healing.

Consideration of wind forces a return to the big questions of life that have occupied philosophers since the earliest documented records. Wind could arguably be used as a conceptual tool to inform a fundamental set of core dichotomies, often perceived as a legacy of Greek thought, through which the conundrum of life continues to be explored: being and becoming, reality and appearance, subject and object, nature and culture, mind and body. This potential capacity of wind stems from it being recruited across cultures as a way of thinking about a host of phenomena that define fundamental aspects of the physical and spiritual world. Wind is both felt and tangible, and thus physical and elusive, as is the spiritual. It comes as no surprise, therefore, that ideas of wind persistently overlap with notions of spirit, divinity, breath, smell, and shadow. These concepts work together in a family of resemblances to inform ontology and epistemology.

Wind envelops people within their environment and breathing is the basis of life. In this volume, which takes those fundamental experiences of 'nature' as a starting point for discussing their resurfacing in core concepts of 'culture', we provide a further anthropological critique of the nature-culture dichotomy that has long entrenched Western thought. At its heart is the identification of, and meaning attributed to, wind as it moves between nature and culture, body and mind. While building on Ingold, Descola, Ellen, and Rival, who since the 1990s have provided a sociological reformulation of nature that directly challenges the nature-culture dualism (Franklin 2002), this volume's interrogation of how wind moves between the domains of the perceptual, symbolic, and metaphorical owes, furthermore, a particular intellectual debt to the phenomenology of perception and the anthropology of the senses.

The strength of the ethnographic accounts in our endeavour lies in exploring, in vivid sensual terms, how wind, the environmental phenomenon, becomes socialized through practice and belief. The papers begin with Ingold's analysis of wind, which takes up his theme of 'dwelling', that is, the recursive relationship between people and landscape laid out in earlier works (e.g. Ingold 1993; 2000), and explores wind as an aspect of landscape. Parkin, Roseman, Pandya, and Low similarly develop themes of how wind, as an aspect of the sensual experience of being in a certain place with certain sorts of winds, at a certain time, informs social practice. These papers postulate, in the vein of Rival (1993; 1996), that perceptual knowledge of the landscape affects cultural choices, ideas, and practices.

Another theme intrinsic to all papers in this volume, which is not explicitly dealt with in any single one, concerns the apparent cross-cultural similarity of wind ideas. Thematic clusters can be observed in the above-mentioned ethnographic papers, in those on ancient and medieval India, China, and Greece by Zysk, Hsu, and Lloyd, and those on modern Europe by Jankovic and Strauss. The question that these apparent similarities pose concerns, ultimately, issues of biological parity in people's participation in the environment, and how this feeds into a biologically mediated set of similar ideas. Ellen (1996) pushed for an underlying 'cognitive geometry' that allows some realist crossover between different cultural conceptions of nature. Descola (1992; 1996),

who works with totemism and animism as two principal agents in his discussion of how people construct continuity between the natural and the cultural, acknowledged the existence of cognitive universals but emphasized that these fuzzy templates or patterns are heavily mediated by the local environment and the types of practices through which the environment is socialized. However, as evident from the recurrent themes of wind in this volume, which resurface in disparate literate and oral, contemporary and ancient settings, the question is perhaps best answered with less geometry and more allowances for ambiguity.

Although ethnography would appear better suited to bringing out the contribution of the personal to societal ideas of wind, individual voices necessarily underpin the distillations of history, as is evident from the contributions by Lloyd, Hsu, Jankovic, and Zysk. When the textual sources are returned to, the clean historical generalizations that have fed Western popular imagination soon break down in the face of real discrepancies and inconsistencies, both within the work of one author and across authors. Such inconsistency is generally not associated with received textual knowledge, but as the authors in this volume show, who all are attending to primary source material, it is intrinsic not only to oral but also to literate transmission; the texts in question contain as much contradiction, ambivalence, and flexibility of knowledge as anthropologists have identified in contemporary settings. Regardless of previous orality-literacy debates, these studies demonstrate how wind as an overarching term holds different ways of being known that can be called upon in different contexts, making knowledge of wind seem variable, precise and imprecise at the same time.

Whilst taking a broad historical and ethnographic approach, it is hoped that this comparative exercise, with its focus on the phenomenology of wind, goes further towards a profound understanding of the relationship between the natural-turned-cultural phenomenon of wind and its role in the foundation of life. Questions posed include: who experiences wind, and how? What is the relationship of outside wind to inside wind? Who has an interest in wind and in controlling and binding the winds – doctors, priests, farmers, or ascetics – and why? What are the ways in which such binding is conceptualized and operated? This collection of essays seeks to find a meaningful way of talking about human/wind relationships more broadly.

The experience of wind

Wind as breath of life reflects a basic daily experience as much as a mythological truth. Breathing generates and ensures the continuation of life, and this has consistently been taken as evidence of divine presence, or the gift of life, by all manner of cultures, including our own. Wind touches and is felt, inside out. While there is considerable variation in the experience and the expression of wind ideas as a concept, it is hard not to be struck by the remarkable congruence in relationships understood to exist between wind, breath, and variously framed notions of life-force. Equally remarkable is the way such themes reveal themselves at work in webs of different sorts of cultural contexts.

The Navajo, for example, perceive life to have emerged from two winds in the lower worlds, a white wind and a dark blue wind, which existed in Earth's veins or roots. Male white wind lay on top of female dark wind, intermingled in the manner of sexual intercourse, and thereby generated Earth, Sky, and the plants, animals and peoples of the lower world. The two winds gave these forms the breath of life and the powers of behaviour and thought. At a later period these manifestations of life moved up to the

earth's surface accompanied by the winds. These winds were placed in the east and south, and the two further cardinal winds were placed alongside them (J.K. McNeley, pers. comm., June 2005).

Cross-culturally, considerations of wind very quickly lead to overlapping ideas of breath, spirit, smell, song, sentiment and shadow. Whilst this web of relations may at first appear unfamiliar to contemporary Western intellectual traditions, similar ways of thinking have a long pedigree in Western thought and continue to operate in more everyday contexts of living in wind. In ancient Greece, Aristotle thought that life-engendering 'vital heat' was present in all *pneuma* (Lloyd, this volume). Through the early modern period and into the present, different theories of 'vitalism' or 'vital principle' have persistently associated breath and life-force. Moreover, the Western Christian theological tradition has provided an ongoing arena in which notions of wind are articulated in a distinctly un-meteorological manner. In the Bible the word *ruach* has been translated variously as air, breath, wind, divine power, and Holy Spirit. In Genesis we find: 'Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being' (Genesis 2:7); in Job 'the Spirit of God has made me, the breath of the Almighty gives me life' (Job 33:4); and from Ezekiel (37) we learn that human bones become alive as the four winds blow on them.

In addition to links made between wind, breath, and life-force by ancient science and theology, as Jankovic identifies in nineteenth-century Britain, there has long been a parallel thrust from more mainstream corners of science, medical topography, and geography. These various research contexts have looked more towards measurable physical and mental effects of wind on people. Strauss, who combines anthropological, literary, and scientific data to explore the relationship between the inhabitants of alpine Leukerbad and the Foehn, demonstrates how a folk idiom and knowledge of wind continue to interact with modern contexts of scientific analysis. The Foehn is a down-slope katabatic wind, like the Chinook or Sant Ana. They all are hot and strong, and known to cause strange behaviour, migraines, and even fits of madness, and are a determinant of living patterns and of regional identity.

That wind affects feelings highlights the fact that wind penetrates the body at both a physical and a mental level. The ecological psychologist James Gibson, who had observed that air is insubstantial and proposed that life or activity takes place at its boundaries or points of interaction with objects, ascribed wind as *medium* and its manifestations as the result of contact with *substance*. His approach usefully draws our attention to what wind does at a macro level and where and how this might relate to biological and evolutionary development. His emphasis of surfaces is important in relation to how wind contact shapes the gross physical environment, such as sand dunes, mountains, or wind-beaten hedgerows. It is also at this level that wind feeds into human technological and economic relationships through, for example, sailing ships or building designs. Additionally, Gibson's exploration has some particularly useful insights into how animals relate to wind as the holder of tracks of smell, light, and sound (Gibson 1979: 17). Informative as his approach is, however, he does not seem adequately to take into account the penetration of wind.

In this volume, Ingold engages with feelings in his contestation of Gibson's polarization of wind and substance. He envisages that people 'mingle' with 'wind, rain, sunshine and earth'. Life, he suggests, is lived in a zone in which substance and medium are brought together. As he forefronts issues of 'immersion' and the 'environmental relationship', feelings emerge as a consciousness of connection and interaction. This

conflation of mental and bodily processes, and the consolidation of humans within the world, reflects life-views of many indigenous peoples. In very different intellectual contexts, not entirely unrelated links have similarly been made by two pillars of New Age philosophy Joseph Campbell (1991: 18), the comparative mythologist, and James Lovelock (1979), the atmospheric geochemist. We live in a dynamic relationship with our surroundings, and the experience of wind lends itself well to accounting for subtle atmospheric change, regardless of whether it is seasonal, climatic, or emotionally felt. With Ingold in mind, feelings can usefully be thought of as evidence and means of participation.

From a loosely conceived co-evolutionary perspective, what seems emergent from this research is an acknowledgement that the receptivity to nature evident amongst many indigenous peoples is tied to what Bird-David (1990) termed the 'giving environment'. Within such worldviews the world reveals itself in a regular manner. Events that happen together or phenomena that are experienced in a like manner are connected and likely to recur in a similar pattern as the world continues to unfold, regenerate, and provide. A particular example of how such attention to the environment might relate to wind is the observation that the inhabitants around Lake Titicaca, in Peru, connect the colours of the lake to the strength of the wind (Orlove 2002: 35, 144-5). A further impressive awareness of such connections is also evident in the ability of Polynesian navigators to read ocean swells as indicators of the direction of and distance from land (Lewis 1973). Through a skilful reading of this patterned and revealing environment, humans are enabled to make predictions and act in ways that are beneficial to survival.

In his study of nomadic spirituality, Berman (2000) observed that when many Native Americans refer to the Great Spirit, they are talking about wind. He notes that spirit refers, in this sense, to the creation itself: 'Water coming off a leaf, the smell of the forest after rain, the warm blood of a deer' (Berman 2000: 11). His observation is linked to the wider-held ties between wind and breath as life-creator, but the Native American beliefs clearly take the understanding further. What seems to be referred to is a notion of a universal flowing force that is particularly evident in the discernible patterns of life, although it is thought to be at work in all things. Historically, such beliefs have been referred to as 'animism'. Ingold (this volume) sheds some light on what this animistic label actually deals with in his assessment that what distinguishes so-called 'animists' is their receptivity to life and their awareness of living within a current of continual generation. His recognition of the importance of such awareness confirms findings of other anthropologists, from Paul Radin and Robin Riddington working amongst Native Americans to George Silberbauer amongst southern African Bushmen.

When an awareness that all life by definition has the breath or wind of life within it is combined with this notion of connection, it becomes possible to conceive of life being underpinned by wind relationships, in which each phenomenon possesses its own wind whilst partaking in the general or divine wind. In many indigenous perspectives wind and breath stand for both the medium of connection and the marker of power and identity. While experienced as weaving a binding pattern through life, wind has an undeniably felt presence, and perhaps it is such a relationship between divine breath and materialized breath that holds wind, breath, and spirit in such a tight conceptual overlap. In this sense humans may stage themselves as participating in divine breath, the same but less powerful. Wind and breath provide both the triggering spark and the materiality that make possible this process.

Parkin (this volume) discusses the prevalence of the breath, wind, and spirit in as diverse contexts as classical Greek, Sanskrit, and Semitic thought and that of recent Australian Aborigines. In his analysis, he highlights not so much air or wind as a marker of spirit identity but smell. When one considers that wind or smell may stand for certain characteristics of an entity, and hence certain abilities, coupled with an awareness that wind and smell are fluid, the notion that wind can be channelled and used by humans to achieve powerful desired ends seems a small step. Similarly the notion that one entity can transform into another by sharing wind or smell becomes a possibility. Parkin suggests that smell, and associated smoke and fumes, is a key medium through which humans attempt to physicalize and de-physicalize spirits. The Swahili speakers he studies hold no rigid conceptual line between substance and non-substance. In a cycle of spiritual and material transformation, smell contributes to the identity of a spirit.

Roseman (this volume) outlines a Malay Temiar worldview which is congruent with the notion of wind as an all-pervasive phenomenon that coalesces in distinctive forms whilst at the same time remaining bound to a discernible chain of connection. The Temiar world, she suggests, is underwritten by a 'poetic economy' interlinking winds of landscape, winds of spirits, voices of mediums, and movements of dancers. Roseman seems to perceive a tie between an accumulation or 'density' of wind and the essence of an organism or object. '[A]ll entities', she observes, 'exhibit the potential to take shape at various levels of density best viewed as points along a continuum'. Her explorations place the smell aspect of wind, as privileged by Parkin, within a wider sensuous world, including sound and movement, and provide a sense of how wind is drawn into culture. Roseman relates how the shuddering of light and rustling sound in the foliage of tree leaves or in plastic strips hanging from the ceiling allow spirits to descend on people, become present, and in an instant, barely perceptible, vanish. In other contexts, the voice serves as much as a spirit conduit as do blowing and sucking, which affect the movements of spirit and soul components. Roseman notes that there is significant resonance with the fluidity of the world conceived by the Temiar and that of the East Africans described by Parkin. The significance of the sound of wind in leaves, plastic strips, or voices reminds us how the aural manifestation of wind through its roaring or rustling, singing or chiming instruments, widens the life-like repertoire of wind's being.

Whilst in many contexts wind and spirits seem inextricably bound, other contexts emphasize wind more as carrier than the actual spirits themselves. Whence winds blow and what they carry often relates to seasonal change. In his account of the Andaman Islanders, Pandya links experiential knowledge of the cyclical appearance of winds with the changes they bring to food resources and life-ways. Winds blowing from a certain direction cause seasonal change and thereby regulate patterns of movement, seed-sowing, food-gathering, fishing, and hunting. Pandya (this volume), in a way that modifies slightly his earlier schema of the seasons (Pandya 1993), ties the seasonal oscillation of the Ongee and Jarwas between inland and coastal camps to the consumption of food and the manipulation of smells that impinge on the movements of the spirits. In his analysis, human beings chase away the winds, and thereby create man-made windless seasons during which the islanders can eat the food of the spirits, honey and cicada grubs.

In many cultures thinking of winds in a wilful manner replete with certain characteristics has led to the association of the winds with specific sorts of spirits, or to the

personification of wind. The ancient Greeks mythologized the winds into the four (sometimes eight) *anemoi*: Zephyros, Boreas, Notos, and Euros. Amongst some Bushmen, an inchoate link is made between destructive whirlwinds and sickness-causing spirits of the dead. Biblical authors singled out the east wind as the fruit-drying (Ezk. 19:12), locust-bringing (Exo. 14:21), drought-inducing (Ezk. 17:10) ship-breaker (Psa. 48:7). Perhaps, they worked a specific experience of wind in the Holy Land into a cultural trope and personified it. In contrast to Eastern understandings that associated the east wind with springtime and with the source of life through the idea of the rising sun (the west and the dying sun being associated with death), the perceived properties of the biblical east wind served as the hand of God's retribution and became symbolic of moral worthlessness (Hos. 12:1).

One recurrently encounters the link people make between wind type, landscape source, and a particular sort of spiritual encounter. Amongst the Temiar, it seems, the moist characteristics of the local mountain winds are central to their conceptions of the cool watery essence of the spirits that visit from the landscape in dreams and ceremonies. The Navajo, who identified a sacred mountain at each cardinal point, tied specific landscape features to different winds that manifested in the human body in different functional capacities. From the four cardinal mountains the Holy People sent winds that provided guidance, instruction, and strength. Wind was linked with personal spirits, in the sense that personality is made up of what enables people to do things, what inspires and motivates them. Thus, the 'Holy Wind' among the Navajo, called *Nilch'i*, which unites external nature with the internal natural human body, contributed to the powers of thought, speech, and the power of motion (McNeley 1981: 1). These various links that the Navajo made between wind and human motivation again bear strong resemblance to ideas found in many other cultures.

Similarly to the Navajo, the Khoisan associate life-wind with the power of motion (Low, this volume). As amongst the ancient Greeks, Chinese, and Indians, they link motion to the blood flow, and ideas of blood overlap significantly with wind. As the heart is recognized as a primary reservoir of blood amongst the Khoisan, so too is it the home of wind. As motivation is linked to purposeful spirit, the heart also becomes conceptualized as a seat of thought, both good and bad. The Namibian Damara accordingly massage a 'displaced' heart to realign it and treat the negative thoughts that the diseased organ sends to the head. Low emphasizes wind as an overarching concept with great explanatory power. It can explain as varied phenomena as those of Bushmen who have been reported to point at a springbok and freeze it in its path; a dog's stare which has the power to terminate a pregnancy; or a Nama patient who unknowingly 'arrows' a person while performing a massage.The wind of illness passes through the arrows to the healer, as the wind passes to the springbok and from the dog. Wind conceptualized in this manner explains not only Khoisan relations to powers of thought and speech but also ideas lying behind 'action at a distance' and witchcraft.

If wind is identified with bodily functions, it is perhaps not surprising that aberrations of wind are recognized and techniques developed which address wind pathologies or seek to enhance bodily and mental function through controlling the winds by binding them. Zysk examines the very sophisticated development of such techniques in Sanskrit texts of the Ayurvedic and Yogic traditions. In ancient India, ascetic practices of harnessing the cosmic winds comprised inhalation, exhalation, and breath retention, which in turn were subdivided into seven types each. The Yogic tradition of breath control was distinctive from medical traditions in that it involved also a meditative

process for stabilizing the mind. Although the highly elaborate relationships of wind and breath in these scholarly texts stand in contrast with the more inchoate relationships of many hunter-gatherers, Zysk points out that these sophisticated practices of breath control, much like those techniques Roseman describes among the Temiar hunter-gatherers, are ultimately performed with the aim of anchoring winds in the body.

Laderman (1991) furthermore observed that among the contemporary Temiar, the inner winds, *angin*, which make possible imagination, feeling, and thinking, constitute a key component of a Malay person. Temiar shamanic ritual is directed at modulating the state of inner winds. As among the contemporary Temiar, the ancient Chinese seem to have spoken of cognitive and emotional dynamics in terms of inner winds when in the feudal Zhou they discovered the interiority of personhood (Hsu, this volume). The body was then conceived as having a form (*xing*) that was outwardly visible and could be firmed up with gymnastics and breathing techniques, and that lodged within it one's thoughts and feelings, and *qi*. When the Chinese physicians who worked in the social strata of the nobility realized that psychological states can cause illness and became interested in regulating their clientele's psychology and internal emotional processes, they made *qi* into a central concept of their medicine. While early medicine distinguished between *qi*-breath and *feng*-winds as inner and outer winds, the medicine of systematic correspondences that became well established in Han China referred to *qi* as the unifying medium that permeated the universe.

It is difficult to summarize what makes wind so salient across cultures. The repeatedly observed ways in which similar ideas and actions coalesce around the climatic wind phenomenon and couple it with the experience of breathing strongly suggest commonality in the way wind is known. More precisely, they hint at a common phenomenology of experiencing wind and breath. It appears as though the body as generative principle has worked the experience of wind-cum-breath into recurring cultural tropes. Scrutinizing these and their provenance may contribute to the growing body of literature interested in the biological constitution of culture (Lewis-Williams & Pearce 2004; Maturana & Varela 1998; Mithen 2006; Pinker 2002).

Brief reflection on a possible evolutionary benefit of being aware of the wind reminds us why we might be so receptive to it. It is often cited that in hunting, wind serves both quarry and prey by laying tracks of smell. But it is less considered, for example, that the over-exciting or, aptly termed, 'spooking' effect of a sharp skittish breeze or gale on horses, dogs, and children could well be related to the inherent vulnerability such vicarious winds place on a potential prey animal. Similarly, smell is often highlighted as an aspect of hunting knowledge, but it clearly plays a far wider role. Smell informs us of the familiar, the foreign and dangerous, the edible and drinkable, and the noxious. As any indigenous person will tell you, these aspects of wind, which do not begin to explore what wind might tell indigenous people, are not trite reminders of a hypothetical evolutionary past, but day-to-day realities. However, this acknowledgement of wind's evolutionary role raises the question why it leads to the sort of ideas of divinity, spirits, and shadows so often encountered in this volume. Precisely their allusion to the divine and to spirits, rather than evolutionary survival functions, may have led wind ideas to persist in stratified societies.

In his evolutionary analysis of religious ideas, Pascal Boyer proposed that it is the way that the mind has evolved that lies behind the recurrence of certain religious ideas and particularly the 'set of ideas concerning non-observable, extra-natural agencies and

processes' (1994: 5). He has spirits primarily in mind, although wind could easily be substituted. Boyer identifies that the mind is attuned by natural selection to picking up relevant information. Of the ideas that evolve in the mind, those that are 'acquired' more easily are those that are found more widely (Boyer 2001: 4). Whilst wind ideas are not substantive universals, they are significantly consistent and widespread. Boyer's analysis suggests both that wind ideas are easy to acquire and that being attuned to wind serves an evolutionary role. However, his discussion concerns 'the mental' as an independent entity in interaction with 'natural' processes, while the family of wind ideas discussed in this volume arises from the prime experience of a body that is mingling with its environment (often a pervious body thought to be dotted with orifices).

Without further treading the slippery grounds of whether and how commonly evolutionary processes determine cultural ones, we point out here that the ubiquitous social practice surrounding wind hints at links between biological predisposition and cultural elaboration. Partly, it is the recurrent conflation of climatic outer winds with internal breathing that allows the wind experience of a mingling body to be applied in a multitude of cultural contexts. Partly, it is wind's ability to cross boundaries that makes it such a rich hermeneutic tool. Wind connects the wilderness to the hearth. It moves from beyond the body to within the body, from the dead to the living, from the quotidian to the divine. Wind connects people with people, and people with the environment, near and far. It is a connective force, causes change, triggers events, and can be attributed with all sorts of effects inside and outside of the body. It can be accumulated, passed around, pulled about, and manipulated. With these properties it becomes a means of regulating the body, treating disease, engineering wider social events, and, ultimately, a way of understanding life.

The anthropology of the senses and the phenomenology of wind

Since the development of phenomenology by the philosopher Edmund Husserl in the mid-1890s, many proponents of the phenomenological approach have brought their own nuances to the discipline. Interest in existential phenomenology has continued in recent contexts from, amongst others, Maurice Natanson, Michael Henry, and John Compton. Of all contributors, the most widely known has undoubtedly been the philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty and especially his *Phenomenology of perception* (1962 [1945]). Husserl sought to bring science to a point where it acknowledged that it is rooted in the same world encountered by everyday people through unaided sensory modalities. From seeking to place a scientific way of knowing the world back into the realms of feelings, he moved towards the body as the locus of self but stumbled on the self as an ultimately disembodied transcendental ego. Merleau-Ponty, by contrast, elevated the body to a generative principle through which the world is known by experience. In a sweeping resolution of Descartes's lingering separation of mind and self from the body, Merleau-Ponty asserted that without the body there is no relationship with the external world and there is no self. Every thought, every motivation, is a response of body as it participates in a sensuous world (Abram 1997).

Csordas's (e.g. 2002) writings on 'embodiment' have combined Merleau-Ponty's philosophy with Bourdieu's (e.g. 1977 [1972]) practice theory, which defined *habitus* as a disposition, as internalized history, a structured structuring device for future practice. This allows Csordas to account for the body as a generative principle of social practice in interaction with the world. As the body is immersed in the world and in wind, the

notion of 'embodiment' provides a means of encompassing processes of the mental within those of perception and participation. Wind can be remembered in the body and its perceived effects transformed and reproduced.

Wind provides an exceptional sensory experience. The feeling of mingling is evoked as it is felt both on the body surface and inside the body. It can be smelt, heard and felt, if not touched, and its effects are visible. As wind, including smell and sound, sometimes in combination, is often felt but not seen, it is also a readily available causal concept for events that can be felt to occur but are not seen to occur. If we tie this appreciation of wind to the sort of understanding of the world known as 'animism', in which all things are linked and events happen for a reason, we begin to see how wind could serve as the unseeable connective medium or the invisible force that drives the action. If we make a final connection between breathing and breath as the self-evident manifestation of life, wind begins to look like the ultimate explanation for life in all its diverse unfolding.

In the following papers, immediate sensory experience has served as an entry point for the discussion of the spirit world in that all authors have related ideas about the spirit world, and practices for manipulating it, to immediate experiences of wind. In other words, their discussion of spirits and the divine is inspired by the phenomenology of perception. Some authors have also worked wind into an anthropology of the senses at a number of levels, including most conspicuously smell and sound, and to a lesser extent touch and temperature. Sound, like smell, is invisible, and hence it lends itself particularly well to relationships with the invisible and powerful. Music modulates emotion. While it is thought to nourish the soul in some cultural contexts, it chases away spirits in others. Song and music, like the odours of incense, can entice spirits or draw groups together, enclosing them in a particular kind of atmosphere.

The song-lines of Australian Aborigines map out how the landscape was sung into being by the ancestors. The Word of God spoke the earth into being. Singing and words have the creative power of breath and spirit. In parts of Polynesia there is a condition known as *fooee*. It is a state of abject listlessness induced by the noise of relentless days of rustling sun-baked palm leaves endlessly accompanied by the lapping of a gleaming sea on a sandy shore. Who is listening to the rustle of leaves or the swishing of breeze-kissed grasslands depends on who has been taught to attend to certain sounds.

Smell as smell-threads, smell-scapes, or wind-threads maps the seeable and unseeable worlds. Amongst numerous peoples, including the southern African Bushmen and Andamese islanders, the idea of wind potency overlaps strongly with understandings of smell. In these contexts, smell is envisaged as holding the essence or the personality or windspirit of an organism. It holds the attributes that make an entity what it is, or, reframing the concept, smell holds the essence of how an organism is known. The smell embedded in wind indicates where animals, people, and spirits have been and, consequently, where they are now.

Classen has observed that 'the most powerful animals also have the strongest odour' (1993: 86). Amongst Khoekhoegowab speakers of northern Namibia there is a direct overlap between the dangerous smell of 'strong people', be they healers, menstruating women, excessively sweaty men, or sick people, and their ≠*oab* (*b*) or wind. Yet not merely the living but also the dead exude smells, be it the smell of corpses, mixed with that of sweet perfume among Swahili-speaking peoples, or the smell of the ancestors' bones among the Ongee and Jarwa. As spirits are guided by smells, Khoisan people endowed with witchcraft utilize directed threads of connection between the potent and

the victim. To envisage that the footprint of a victim has direct access to the victim is to recruit tracks of relationships between spirits, potency, smell, and wind.

Being immersed in wind and air as a medium can also have an egalitarian aspect, regardless of the political system in which wind immersion occurs. Thus, healing potency, sometimes conceived as wind, plays a role in the binding of Kalahari Bushmen communities and contributes to what has been perceived as egalitarian behaviour. Wind potency is drawn in by Bushman healers and shared amongst the group in acts of community healing. In Han China, promulgating the notion of *qi* as a medium that permeates the universe had an equalizing effect insofar as it affected everyone. As a concept that gained in currency as a strong state administration, which produced great inequalities, established itself, *qi* proved powerful and convincing precisely because of its equalizing and unifying character, which simultaneously could be used to express the moods of locality. Among Arabs in the Middle East, the sharing of the same air can be a sign of trust and intimacy as they stand so closely to one another when speaking as to share in the often strong smell of the other's breath (Hall 1982 [1966]: 45-9). The Arabic association between intimacy and breath speaks of the overlap between smell, breath, and life. To share the breath is to share something of intimate value, to forge a bond between selves.

This aspect of wind as both an equalizing medium and a force that can explain 'action at a distance' is taken up in scholarly medical learning. Wind retains its transformative and ever-elusive qualities in that it is known to take on many different forms, dependent on particular locality and time, but it tends to be stripped of its ephemeral sensorial properties of scent, its roaring sound or listless rustling. Scholarly medical reasoning in terms of the hot and cold can be interpreted to allude ultimately to the tactile qualities of wind, which emphasize its materiality, constancy, and omnipresence. Although scholarly medical terminology may appear abstract and far removed from immediate sensory experience, once scrutinized, a case has been made that early Chinese terminology was steeped in a language of tactility (Hsu 2005). As scholarly medicines elaborate on different types of inner winds, their pathologies and treatment, the phenomenology of wind and its multi-sensorial experience promises to open up new avenues of thinking about complex medical theorizing.

Situating the field: environmental history, medical geography, and medical anthropology

There has been considerable interest in human relationships with nature over recent decades from both academic and popular authors, not least because of impending climate change. Accounts of wind from a more general stable point to the welter of ways in which wind features in human and animal life. Among this popular but none the less highly informative literature belong *Heaven's breath: a natural history of the wind* by Watson (1985), *Wind: how the flow of air has shaped life, myth, and the land* by DeBlieu (1998), and *Encyclopedia of air* by Newton (2003).

A striking theme from Watson and DeBlieu concerns parallels they draw between biological adaptations of animals and human technological relationships with wind. Watson (1985: 90) contrasts human sailing knowledge with the sailing ability of the Portuguese man-of-war jellyfish, which hoist part of their structure above the surface of the sea to take advantage of wind currents. DeBlieu (1998: 92) compares wind funnels of Near Eastern buildings with wind-channelling termite mounds and the silk-lined

entrance burrows of turret spiders that provide a reservoir of distilled moisture. Both highlight how essential properties of wind become built into environmental adaptations and human behaviour.

Writing about wind and people is, of course, far from a new undertaking. In the occidental tradition, rudimentary roots of the topic can be traced back to the ancient Greeks. *On airs, waters and places* in the Hippocratic corpus from around 400 BCE accounted for the seasons and weather and their impact on the health of people, and the seven books on the *Epidemics* contain long sections entitled 'Constitutions' that record general weather conditions, followed by individual case records of pathological conditions (Chadwick & Mann 1983). Classical architectural building practices relied heavily on ideas surrounding *pneuma* (Kenda 2006), and also Aristotle took consideration of the influences of sunlight and prevailing winds as he drew up rules for the siting of cities (Illich 1986: 45).

In Enlightenment Europe, following this classical legacy, weather and people were an aspect of the landscape as it was linked to medicine and politics. The opening up of the colonial world, from the late fifteenth century onwards, played a key factor in these changing attitudes to place. Until the eighteenth century the sort of accounts that arose from new geographical and travel experiences reported people relative to places very much within the older classical idiom. In the spirit of natural history inquiry and curiosity, accuracy and first-hand experience replaced the superficial observations, epitomes, and epithets that characterized older accounts of the foreign. So too from the eighteenth century the landscape of home became subject to a new kind of attention. Out of this collective new interest, 'medical topography' emerged as a distinctive descriptive study of the conditions of health and disease of particular places, at home and abroad.

By the late eighteenth century, imperial expansion encouraged a change in the scale of the already tight binding of imperialism to medicine. As vistas and ambitions grew, 'medical geography' emerged as a complementary discipline that concerned large-scale distribution patterns of human disease in relation to environmental conditions. The pillar of imperialism, the Royal Navy, played a particularly key role in knowledge of climatic wind, both through the systematic observing of nature that was intrinsic to the new habit of ships' logs and the 1805 introduction of the first wind-scale by Sir Francis Beaufort. In colonial contexts, characteristics of local winds fed images of colonial spaces and legitimized colonial occupation as environments that needed curing (Bewell 1996: 780). Indicative of the importance attributed to climate in medicine, James Ranald Martin's various editions of *The influence of tropical climates on European constitutions* (1813-55) is conspicuous as what Bewell determines 'the most influential text on colonial medicine of the Victorian period' (1996: 779).

From the later eighteenth century, scholarly works exist concerning health, nature, and life beliefs from such diverse backgrounds as mythological, folklore, theological, etymological, and philological studies to the occultist Blavatsky's influential 1895 theosophical musings. Wind in the non-Western sciences was discussed within this rich corpus of inquiry, particularly in the work of the members of the various incarnations of the Asiatick Society of Bengal, founded in 1784 (Stocking 1987: 22), and, in the early twentieth century, Frazer's *The Golden Bough* (1993 [1922]: 80-3) includes references to wind ranging from beliefs of African Hottentots and Bedouins to those of classical mythology. In the 1930s, the historians Garrison and Sigerist both emphasized the importance of the role of climate in the European history of health. But in spite of this, climate, and wind, in particular, remained a neglected topic.

Recent interest has come largely within contexts of social history and the expanding fields of environmental history and medical anthropology. In the context of social history, interest in weather and health has persisted since the 1980s (Burton 1990; Dolan 2002; Sargent 1982). Within this arena water has received particularly perceptive attention (Illich 1986; Porter 1990), and insights concerning the study of water lend themselves to the study of wind. Illich's *H_2O and the waters of forgetfulness* draws our attention to the elusive qualities of water – where we might substitute the word 'wind' – rendering it with an almost unlimited ability to carry metaphors. Adapting Illich, wind is like 'a shifting mirror'; what it says reflects 'the fashion of the age'. Wind, like water, 'remains a chaos until a creative story interprets its seeming equivocation as being the quivering ambiguity of life' (Illich 1986: 24-5).

Simultaneously, historians of science began focusing on medical alternatives, looking beyond the historical foundations of contemporary biomedicine (Cooter 1988; Porter 1989). Historians of medicine have subsequently developed a keen sense of pre-bacteriological theories of disease and illness, including miasmata and other early theories of contagion (Bynum 1994; Cipolla 1992; Hannaway 1993; Rosenberg & Golden 1992). With ongoing interest in colonial deconstruction, social historians have equally turned to considering health in the colonies (Arnold 1988; MacLeod & Lewis 1988). Whilst earlier work tended more to concern the health of colonials and the rise of colonial medicine (Gelfand 1984; Worboys 1976), later studies examined the impact of colonialism on the well-being of local populations, including indigenous responses, medical and other, to colonial settlement, war, and dispossession (Greenough 1995; Marks & Worboys 1997; Pati & Harrison 2001; Vaughan 1991). A select group of historians have additionally sought to go beyond the colonial paradigm to identify 'indigenous' histories, some of which concern theories of illness (Low 2004; Prins 1992; Waite 1992).

One of the most remarkable testaments to the currency of 'wind' in the last few years is Strauss and Orlove's *Weather, climate, culture* (2003), which frames wind within a broad range of public, institutional, political, private, oral, and literate discourses of weather, both historical and recent, and examines how weather is described and felt on an everyday level, both within conversation and in recent, more technical discourses. There has since been a flourishing history of meteorology (Anderson 2005; Corbin 2005; Fleming 2005), and Jankovic's (2004 and this volume) contributions in particular have drawn attention to how weather might affect health.

The scholarly medical traditions have in common that they are framed as wind physiologies and pathologies. New impetus for thinking about *prana*-breath and *vatu*-wind in Ayurveda, *feng*-wind and *qi*-breath in Chinese medicine, *ki*-breath in Japanese *kanpo*, *rlung*-wind and *bla*-soul in Tibetan medicine, and other impersonal all-pervasive life-forces is found in recent medical anthropological research. These studies have detailed the different conceptualizations of wind, explored the social practices within which wind ideas are prominent, and also attempted some general theoretical hypotheses in the search for an underlying rationale of these pre-modern sciences.

The concepts *prana* (breath) and *vatu* (wind) in Ayurveda have been extensively discussed by Langford (2002), Obeyesekere (1992), Trawick (1992), and by the philologist Zysk (1993), as has *ki* in the discussion of *kanpo* in contemporary Japan (Lock 1980; Ohnuki-Tierney 1984), and *qi* in Chinese medicine (e.g. Farquhar 1994; Hsu 1999; Porkert 1974; Sivin 1987; Unschuld 1985). Mental disorders that pertain to the notion of *rlung* (wind) have been the focus of studies on Tibetan medicine (Gutschow 1997; Janes

1999) and *feng*-wind disorders of more recent research on madness in Chinese medical history (Chen 2002; Messner 2000). Kuriyama's (1994; 1999) study of wind, which is much wider in its conception, has made major inroads into the history of the body. However, it celebrates the cultural imagination of the ancient Chinese and Greeks rather than elaborating on the aspects of wind as a prime experience of a mingling body in its environment.

Zimmermann's (1987 [1982]) study on the fundamentals of Ayurvedic theory and its *materia medica* in the light of the geographic distribution of different animal and plant species on the Indian subcontinent deserves particular attention here as it represents an early recent attempt at relating in sophisticated ways the ecological to the cultural. While overlooked by general theorists like Franklin (2002), it has inspired cross-culturally relevant findings in Chinese medical circles. In her exploration of local *qi* resonating with local bodies in the bustling commercial and urbanized region Jiangnan of late imperial China, Hanson (1998) highlights how ecology was used for formulating a territorial politics of locality. And in her outline of the 'body ecologic' as an analytical medical anthropological concept, Hsu (1999: 78-83; in press) builds heavily on Zimmermann when she uses a genealogical approach for interpreting the contemporary medical terminology that relates to the ecological environment (like the hot and cold or the 'five agents').

This volume draws out the often unspoken aspects of wind relationships in scholarly medical learning and among hunter-gatherers, agriculturalists, and urbanites, and examines ancient and medieval as well as early modern and contemporary wind ideas and techniques for manipulating its manifestations in the body. It brings together approaches inspired by the history of science, medical history, philology, ethnomusicology, medical anthropology, and anthropology more generally that, with few exceptions, draw on the phenomenology of perception and the anthropology of the senses. The bodily experience of breathing, smelling, hearing, seeing, touching, and feeling is intrinsic to a body constitutive of, penetrated by, and intermingling with its environment. With its focus on the body, its being in the world and mingling with its environment, this volume aims to lead to a deeper understanding of ways in which the experience of the wind, as natural phenomenon, has shaped social practice and become intrinsic to core cultural concepts.

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Introduction

Résumé

La présente introduction replace dans leur contexte les exposés historiques, ethnographiques et théoriques relatifs au vent regroupés dans ce volume, qui ont tous trait à la manière dont le phénomène « naturel » du vent est lié à la vie et à la culture humaines. Elle attire l'attention sur la diversité des relations avec le vent, tout en expliquant pourquoi les différentes cultures partagent des modes de penser similaires à propos du vent. Elle explore l'idée que les relations entre les humains et le vent sont étroitement liées aux qualités sensuelles de ce dernier, qui reflètent à leur tour le déroulement caché de la vie humaine en tant qu'aspect de l'environnement, tout en mettant en lumière la phénoménologie comme une approche herméneutique particulièrement pertinente pour comprendre cette relation.

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