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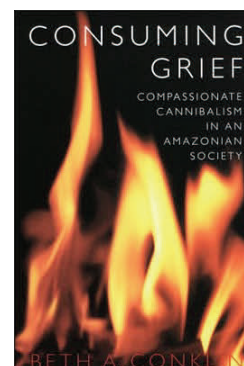
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“Ethnoprise,” Authenticity, and Selective Engagement: Heritage Tourism in Hoi An, Vietnam



**2011 Undergraduate
Student Paper
Competition
Winner**

Ursula James

Southwestern University

Introduction

Hoi An is a seaside city in central Vietnam with an economy almost entirely based on tourism as a result of being declared a UNESCO World Heritage site. Ancient Town Hoi An is a district within the city with renovated sixteenth and seventeenth century buildings and dirt roads, all preserved by the local tourism authority to look and feel like the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries when Ancient Town was built. Many local people also dress and sometimes act the part of what officials imagine that era was like. Beginning in the early 1990s, the heritage tourism industry, or tourism based on cultural, natural, or built environments, focused on the Ancient Town as a World Heritage site, and became key to Hoi An's economy (Hitchcock, et al. 2010).

Beneath the image of a simpler past recreated in the present, in the middle of a vibrant and growing country, there are complex dynamics at work in the maintenance of Hoi An's heritage tourism industry. The maintenance of heritage tourism requires balancing financial concerns with political and social concerns. The idea of authenticity, an idea closely tied to heritage tourism, becomes negotiable, as tourism-planning officials strike a balance between constructing an image consistent with the collective imaginary of quintessential Hoi An culture and sometimes re-imagining this image for the sake of tourism. For local workers in the tourism

industry, there is a tension between going along with the image of Hoi An that officials want to project and the desire to engage with the global market for personal material gain.

In this paper, I examine the creation of the heritage tourism industry in Hoi An and how differently positioned locals articulate with global forces and influences associated with this industry. I argue that while Hoi An's heritage tourism industry has much in common with other World Heritage sites, its location within a communist state sets it apart in a number of ways. Hoi An officials attempt to create an environment in Old Town that is historically faithful but commercially marketable, balancing the desire for increased material standard of living with cultural and political desire to prevent certain changes associated with the influx of international, largely Western, tourists. Using the Comaroff's idea of "ethnoprise" (2009) and Gow and Hathaway's (2008) idea of selective engagement with globalization, I assert that local tourism officials have a strong role in molding the image of Ancient Town, re-creating "authenticity", to attract tourism while also rejecting and attempting to avoid the licentious behaviors often associated with beach town tourism. Furthermore, local workers also selectively engage in globalization by playing out the roles stipulated by employment in Ancient Town, largely with the intent of interacting with the global transnational economy for the sake of material and personal gain rather than an attachment to Hoi Anian history and imagined tradition.

My analysis contributes to scholarship on globalization, joining theorists who are attempting to move away from a simplistic notion of global and local as dualistic and mutually exclusive. Such work includes Ritzer's idea of "McDonaldization" (2004), in which the global swallows up the local and scholarship inspired by Scott's work on resistance and domination (Scott 1985, 1990) in which the local is seen as resisting the global. I attempt to position my

paper within a body of work that regards globalization in more complex ways, such as Tsing's idea of friction (2005) and Gow and Hathaway's selective engagement (2008) in order to show a more nuanced way in which differently positioned cultures, economies, and peoples come into contact and shape one another.

Methodology

In the spring of 2010, I set off for Vietnam with the School for International Training (SIT) study abroad program called "Vietnam: National Development and Globalization". I spent three months living, studying, and traveling with 11 other students from the United States and Canada, and in the last month, we all separated to do independent study projects in locations of our choice. I chose to focus on tourism in Hoi An, where I lived alone in several small hotels and conducted ethnographic research.

My research was both facilitated and obstructed by the project advisors assigned to me. Both Hien, an employee of the Hoi An Department of Commerce and Tourism, and Minh, his assistant who took over the job of advisor shortly after my arrival, served as liaisons to the government and helped me to navigate the often-frustrating bureaucracy of Vietnam, which does not particularly support Western researchers. For example, Hien, the head tourism authority in Hoi An, arranged for a special pass of introduction to be made for me that explained my background and research purpose in Vietnamese. This pass allowed me free and unlimited access into all tourist exhibits and made it much easier for me to talk to local workers and mid-level officials. At the same time, though, both advisors often also served as roadblocks themselves, requiring that I produce numerous forms of documentation in order to conduct research, sending me back and forth between their respective office buildings on several occasions within the first week, both claiming that the other man would help me with certain re-

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quests.

I conducted informal and semi-structured interviews with local workers, preservation officials, tourism officials, and tourists. None were recorded, but I took notes during the interviews, with permission. All names have been changed to protect confidentiality. I also participated in tours on foot, bike, boat, and swimming (on a snorkel trip). I attended two monthly lunar festivals created for tourists, visited museums, temples, and workshops, attended performances, and spent time in restaurants and bars to interact with the servers and tourists. I became close with two young mothers who worked in a tailoring shop and would visit them daily to talk, relax, and eat. They provided me much insight into the life of a worker in the heritage tourism industry. Another young woman who worked in one of the foreign-owned businesses in town also became my close confidante—she was eager to help with my research, providing transportation, some translation due to her strong language skills, and her own insights.

Hoi An History

Hoi An is home to approximately 80,000 people and is located roughly 30 kilometers from Da Nang, a major city with an airport. From the time of settlement by the Dai Viet, the main Vietnamese ethnic group hailing from what is now north and north-central Vietnam, Hoi An was an agricultural and fishing village. It eventually also began to specialize in handicrafts for trade with other villages, which ultimately led to foreign trade. Hoi An was historically the site of a deep-water port that facilitated trade from around the world in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. As a result of this global contact, the architecture and demographics of the town shifted from almost exclusively Viet to a mixture of Viet with Chinese, Japanese, and European influence. Chinese sailors would wait out the monsoon season before setting sail back to China, sometimes intermarrying with Vietnamese women. Many Chinese and Japanese stayed in the area, which is still reflected in the Japanese bridge, which is the symbol of Hoi An, and Chinese family temples and meeting halls. As a result, there is much Chinese and Japanese influence on the

architecture, cuisine, and festivals of Hoi An (UNESCO 2008).

Hoi An's craft industries expanded to meet the demands of the constant influx of traders. Craft villages formed on the outskirts of Hoi An to supply the town with lacquerware, wooden carvings, lanterns, straw hats, ceramics, and other items for export. The tailoring industry also flourished to cater to the needs of visitors. Thus, Hoi An has been enmeshed in transnational networks for several centuries (UNESCO 2008).

In the late eighteenth century, due to political changes and the shallowing of the port, trade moved away from Hoi An to Da Nang, and the town's industry shifted back to mainly agriculture and fishing. War with France and the United States throughout much of the twentieth century deeply impacted the people and livelihoods of Hoi An, as it did throughout Vietnam, but the city itself managed to avoid significant damage from bombing throughout the decades of warfare. As a result, the built landscape of architecturally diverse sixteenth and seventeenth century buildings remained largely intact. The people, however, sank deeply into poverty during and directly after the Vietnamese-American war (UNESCO 2008). With the victory of the Communist North, socialism swept over the nation, and the government took control of industry. In an attempt to boost the economy, the Communist Party invested in heavy industry, some light industry, and attempted to collectivize agriculture (Gainsborough 2010).

By 1979, it was apparent that these policies failed to improve the economy, leading instead to weak output, widespread starvation, and inflation of up to 500 percent. In 1986, the sixth Party Congress was convened, and economic reformers within the Communist Party managed to lead the Party away from central planning, thus kicking off the period known as *Doi Moi*, which translates to "changing to something new". A new kind of land reform allowed farmers more control of their fields, and agricultural output drastically increased as a result. Foreign direct investment and export-oriented trade were encouraged (Gainsborough 2010).

By the late 1980s to early 1990s, as a direct impact of more open

markets, more investment in infrastructure, and more open policy toward the outside world, tourism began to comprise an increasingly significant portion of the Vietnamese economy. The architecture, landscape, and history (especially war history) of Vietnam drew adventurous tourists willing to visit the country despite its weak infrastructure. The lack of hotels, airports, service workers, and the poor quality of roads gave Vietnamese tourism a slow start. Following the normalization of relations with the United States in the mid-1990s, more foreign investment came to Vietnam, however, and as infrastructure improved, tourist numbers steadily climbed (Mok and Lam 2000).

The first spark for the heritage tourism industry in Hoi An came in 1982 when Kazimierz Kwiatkowsky, a Polish historian fascinated with the idea of preserving Vietnamese built heritage, urged the Ha Noi government to make efforts toward preservation. In 1985, Hoi An became a national heritage site (interview with Minh, April 28, 2010). In 1990, as Vietnam made market reforms and opened up to the world, a trickle of tourists began making its way to Hoi An to see the historical structures that were still largely intact despite decades of war and to visit the pristine white sand beach just four kilometers from the center of town. At the time, Hoi An had only one hotel with eight rooms (interview with Minh, April 28, 2010). The number of tourists slowly increased, with accommodations following suit as foreign money began to flow into Hoi An. By 1995, there were eight hotels with 100 total rooms. Tourists began to be turned away for lack of room, or they had to sleep outside (interview with Minh, April 28, 2010).

In the mid-1990s, a Vietnamese government task force began scouting sites throughout Viet Nam to nominate for UNESCO World Heritage status. The royal citadel complex in Hue, a city in Central Vietnam located north of Hoi An, was a project that Kwiatkowsky was also involved in and was the first location in Vietnam to be awarded World Heritage status in 1993 (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/vn>, UNESCO 2008). Hoi An became the

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subject of several international conferences concerning architectural preservation and both Vietnamese government funding and international investment focused on building preservation and restoration. In 1999, Hoi An was granted World Heritage site status on the grounds of being “an outstanding material manifestation of the fusion of cultures over time in an international commercial port” and “an exceptionally well preserved example of a traditional Asian trading port” (UNESCO 2008:2).

Since 1999, the number of tourists coming to Hoi An has continued to grow every year, nearly exponentially beginning in 2003, eventually topping one million visitors in 2007. The last five years have seen an average yearly increase of tourists of 19% (Nguyen 2010). Simultaneously, thousands of jobs have been created for local people, and the economy has shifted dramatically toward the hospitality industry. Hoi An is now marked by a rather robust economy and is considered a leading example of the Vietnamese tourism industry.

The Layout of Hoi An Tourism

When I first arrived in Hoi An for my research period in April 2010, I was taken by taxi to the Ancient Town district, the area of the city considered to be the World Heritage site. Ancient Town was a stark contrast to the hulking, partially constructed resorts and casinos that lined the highway along the coast from the Da Nang airport to Hoi An, the first signs of a massive plan by the Da Nang government to become a tourist capital of Vietnam. Ancient Town has dirt roads, with old renovated shop-houses and residences turned into commercial shops painted warm yellows and browns, on either side. There was very little traffic except for pedestrians and bicycles, which I would come to find out, was the result of a ban on motorbikes in town four days per week.

Vendors called out in English from their shops—“Three scarf, one dollar, you!” and “Come see our menu!”—at passing tourists, including myself. The shops all sold souvenir trinkets, some supplied by the revived craft villages, originally formed in the sixteenth century to make souvenirs for sailors, which themselves are also advertised as tourist

attractions. There were also t-shirts, hats, jewelry, and chopsticks, among many other items. At the end of Nguyen Thi Minh Khai street, where I stayed for the first ten days of my research, was the ancient Japanese bridge, which served in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as a barrier between Chinese and Japanese settlements in Hoi An, and is today a tourist attraction and marketing symbol. The bridge, also called the Pagoda Bridge, was built in the sixteenth century by Japanese living in Hoi An. Legend states that the bridge is located on the spine of a dragon that stretches from Vietnam to Japan. By building the bridge on the spine, the Japanese prevented the dragon from moving and causing earthquakes in Japan. The bridge has been restored several times throughout history and now bears marks of Japanese, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Western architecture. It also houses a small temple as a place of worship, as well as sixteenth century relics (UNESCO 2008). The bridge marks a barrier between the outskirts of town and the parts of Old Town that tourists must pay to enter. Ticket checkers are stationed on both sides to ensure that tourists have purchased their tickets, which cost approximately \$4.50 and allow entry into an allotted number of museums and other attractions in town.

Across the bridge in Ancient Town are many restaurants that serve both Vietnamese and Western food. Many of the shops on this side of the bridge also have mannequins displaying the types of garments tailored inside. There are 180 tailor shops in Hoi An, all competing to supply to the same pool of international tourists. Tailoring, like the craft villages, was revived for the sake of tourism. The industry was strong in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and remained important, as many local people worked in government textile factories in the post-war, pre-*Doi Moi* period as part of the communist distribution of work (UNESCO 2008). These shops cater almost exclusively to Western tourists and to a small population of wealthy Vietnamese. As one local woman who worked in a tailor shop explained to me, Vietnamese tourists very rarely buy from these shops, as they know that the prices are elevated for foreign tourists whose

money is much stronger than the Vietnamese *dong*.

Ancient Town is also home to restaurants and a museum that advertises live shows of “traditional” singing, dancing, and theater. The performers in these shows dressed in “traditional” costumes and were often carefully selected as children through competitions to be trained in the arts for the sake of these public performances and to teach the art forms in primary schools to ensure that they are not “lost” over time (interview with Anh, May 8, 2010). Many employees of museums, restaurants, and hotels in Ancient Town or the immediate surrounding area—notably, almost exclusively women—also dress in traditional costumes of either peasant garb or the *ao dai*, or long dress, an outfit that is supposed to embody beauty and delicacy in Vietnamese women.

Authenticity, Globalization, and Ethnic Commodification

When I first arrived in Hoi An, I spent much of my time exploring the city and trying to ask locals what they thought about the authenticity of Ancient Town.⁽¹⁾ Efforts to preserve Hoi An’s tangible and intangible heritage, as UNESCO identifies the two types of heritage, made Ancient Town seem to be something like a theme park. Attempts at “preserving” intangible heritage such as dress, music, and handicrafts, to match the era of the preserved tangible heritage—renovated to resemble the era in which it was built—were commodified for Hoi An’s marketability as a tourism destination and World Heritage site rather than for the inherent sake of preservation for continuity. Officials carefully calculated every detail, and the local workers who played the roles of performers and vendors were not invested in the image of Hoi An that was being presented.

Furthermore, what I found after many interviews, by participating in tourist attractions, and by observing the personal lives of Hoi Anians, was that preservation efforts were not necessarily always designed to be authentic. Government officials and tourist workers in Hoi An have a strong sense of pride in Hoi An and a desire to maintain a distinctive culture, but they also have a strong desire

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to improve their material standard of living and to be involved in the global economy and are willing to re-imagine Hoi Anese culture to meet these goals. Essentially, the people of Hoi An selectively engage with transnational processes while still maintaining what they deem to be the essence of Hoi An culture.

Authenticity, in its broadest definition, is the idea of what is “genuine” versus what is “fake” or “invented”. Despite my attempts to find a concrete definition of Hoi An culture, I instead found that authenticity is ultimately an elusive term. Based on Cohen’s research among Thai hill tribes from the 1970s to the 1990s, King deemed authenticity a negotiable idea and asserted that due to this nature, over the course of time, something considered inauthentic may eventually be generally accepted as authentic (King 2009). In Hoi An, for example, the monthly Legendary Night celebration, loosely based on the monthly Buddhist lunar celebration, was designed specifically for tourists in the mid-1990s as a showcase of Hoi An’s crafts and arts. Whenever I asked locals about what festivals they celebrate, they would mention this festival as frequently as they mentioned more long-lived local and national festivals such as the Children’s Festival and few were able to recall when the festival actually began.⁽²⁾ Such is the nature of authenticity in Hoi An. Two of the questions that I continually pushed to answer were whether the festivals and other cultural events were “true” to “tradition”, and, if they were not, whether the local people felt connected to them. The overall sentiment was that some festivals still have elements of tradition in them, but that the presence of tourists has changed them and that most festivals no longer have particularly deep meaning to many locals.

Chinh was a middle-aged man who worked in a history museum painting and selling calligraphy and tutoring younger employees in English in his spare time. I met him in the Folklore Museum in which he worked, and he and his young coworkers ended up becoming some of my favorite people to visit in Hoi An for their openness and eagerness to talk to me and try to answer my ques-

tions, though our mutual language difficulties were sometimes challenging to overcome. We had several conversations during my time in Hoi An, sharing English and Vietnamese and talking about tourism. Chinh’s answer to my constant questions of “What is authentic Hoi An?” or “What is real Hoi An culture?” was one that I heard reflected by other people in his age range.

Ahh authenticity. Hoi An is affected by China culture. My custom and thinking about our ancestor. The son and daughter respect and love their parent, grandfather, grandmother. They are thinking of their ancestors. (interview with Chinh, May 8, 2010)⁽³⁾

Chinh’s take on Hoi An culture spoke more to “traditional” social relations and customs than to anything tangible. When he elaborated, he cited simple and peaceful living, Confucian filial piety, and ancestor worship. These customs are not directly addressed by any UNESCO effort to preserve buildings or even efforts to preserve intangible culture. He did say, however, that he also missed the days prior to the War when people rode bicycles instead of motorbikes, farmed, youth dressed less Western and did not listen to “the hip hop music”, and, something that particularly struck me, when local people lived in the old houses in Ancient Town before foreigners bought them to open restaurants and other shops, forcing locals to move towards the outskirts of the town.

The first three comments could be seen as a middle-aged man’s reaction to technological and generational changes, but also as a critique leveled at globalization, especially with his pointed and repeated lament about hip hop music. The last comment is both a critique of globalization, as foreign companies pushed local people out of their homes and made the cost of living in Ancient Town rise, and an example of the discrepancy between some locals’ interpretations of “real” Hoi An culture and what is presented as such by tourism officials. If people were forced by economics to move out of the homes their families had lived in and maintained for centuries in order to open souvenir shops and museums, then an obvious alteration of Hoi

An custom has taken place. These comments show that Chinh felt that Hoi Anese culture and authenticity had been compromised by the switch from multi-generational families living in and operating shop-houses to these restored buildings serving primarily as commercial storefronts.

When I asked Chinh his feelings about the influx of tourism in Hoi An in his lifetime, however, he showed the same ambivalence that I found in many other Hoi Anians. He was distraught by the number of people who now constantly flow through the formerly quiet town and the behavior and dress of tourists—i.e., bikinis worn in the city limits and lewd comments—as well as the noise level that the growing number of inhabitants of the city as well as tourists bring to festivals, and the changes he saw in the youth, from marrying foreigners to dressing differently. He did, however, appreciate the increase of standard of living, as he hoped to be able to send his children to college and enthusiastically practiced English with foreigners (interview with Chinh, May 8, 2010).

Other workers in the tourism industry expressed similar ambivalence toward the affects of globalization but also a disconnect with the government’s aims of heritage preservation. Tam was a 29-year-old seamstress who has worked for nearly a decade in tailor shops in Ancient Town. She was one of the women that I visited everyday and with whom I developed a friendship. When I met her, she was eight months pregnant with her first child and working twelve-hour days, seven days per week, with only one day off per month. When I asked her questions about how the culture had changed in her lifetime in Hoi An, she actually expressed excitement for most of the changes wrought by globalization.

Before it was so small and so...quiet. Not many things around and not so much people. [Makes a face] Not so much to do. Just old, traditional. [Points to buildings] (interview with Tam, April 27, 2010)

As a seamstress, she enjoyed keeping up with new Western fashions and said that she enjoyed learning Eng-

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lish from daily interactions with tourists. Whenever I brought up the subject of preservation, however, she had very little to say on the subject other than to complain that property values were too high in Ancient Town now. In fact, after we had established a strong rapport, she confided in me that she felt trapped in her job.⁽⁴⁾ Tam's job made enough money to support her family, more money than could be made as a waitress or a hostess in a small hotel. The long hours she was required to work, however, took a toll on her physically and emotionally. She stuck with the job, though, because it provided security, financial independence, and a decent standard of living. She expressed pride in Hoi An and the strong family networks that are so important there but little interest in the UNESCO-oriented heritage preservation, which highlights her ambivalence regarding these preservation efforts (interview with Tam, April 27, 2010). She is just one example of a worker in the tourism industry, but I found that other workers, mostly those under the age of 40, felt a similar sense of detachment from the government's UNESCO-fueled preservation work as manifest in the buildings of Ancient Town and the outlying "handicraft villages", but great pride in the customs that they feel comprise being Hoi Anian and interest in the economic opportunities afforded by the tourism industry. Thus, these workers selectively engage with the global on their own terms, as well.

Ly, who works in the Center for Monument Preservation, a local government office in charge of coordinating the physical preservation of buildings and other tangible heritage, took much pride in the preservation of buildings, as that was her area of expertise; but she, like most everyone else I interviewed, had a much less tangible description of what comprises the spirit of Hoi An culture.

The culture of Hoi An is very rich...Many international merchants come here—Europeans, Asians, Southeast Asians, especially Chinese and Japanese...The diversity of cultures spread to the architectural style, traditional style, some rituals until now. Traditional

culture has been kept until now (interview with Ly, April 29, 2010).

As a mid-level official who devotes much of her time to courting financing for physical heritage preservation, she expressed that her main focus was "protecting ancestors' properties", which reflects even in her wording the underlying importance of maintaining Confucian ideals such as respect for ancestors. When I asked her more specifically if certain aspects of traditional culture have been maintained, she replied vigorously that they have, which is contradictory to Chinh's opinion. This discrepancy highlights yet again the fluidity of the idea of authenticity.

What about music and dancing?

Not change! We preserve traditional culture like songs, folklore—you know?—handicraft village. We hold festivals, rituals.

How else is culture preserved?

In pottery village have festivals to celebrate the founders of the village. Springtime festival... Traditional way to produce goods, teaching young generation how to carry good, how to build traditional houses (interview with Ly, April 29, 2010).

However, she also explicitly stated how local officials carefully decide which parts of "traditional" culture to preserve.

Authenticity of Hoi An is original situation of built heritage and intangible heritage. If possible we will rebuild, renew—when we...we will preserve and help this intangible. There are two things to preserve. If the intangible heritage have useful for local life, we will preserve and maintain but there are some traditional heritage not useful for our life, we will give up. (interview with Ly, April 29, 2010)

She articulated the same ambivalence as other Hoi Anians regarding the impacts of globalization on the community. She cited economic development opportunities and the subsequent im-

provement in material living standards, infrastructure improvements, increased educational opportunities, and urbanization of the town outside of Ancient Town as positive aspects of inviting foreign tourists into Hoi An. However, she expressed concern over the challenges of allowing local people to modernize their houses and shops with appliances such as flush toilets and air conditioners while also preserving the integrity of the sixteenth-seventeenth century image of the town. She was worried, as well, about tourist influences on "traditional lifestyles", and pollution both of the land and from noise. She summed up the challenges of balancing the demands of UNESCO, local people's needs, and economic expansion faced by local tourism and preservation planning officials rather eloquently.

Preservation is very important, but tourism development is also important. If we develop tourism, we have to preserve. If we preserve, we have the opportunity to develop the economy. The authorities understand this and do their best to harmonize development and tourism and facilitate conditions (interview with Ly, April 29, 2010).

Ly's complex and sometimes contradictory opinions on preservation and authenticity in Hoi An suggest several important ideas about the Hoi An heritage tourism industry. Though she claims that Hoi Anians have managed to maintain their "traditional" culture, as best embodied by the carefully crafted sixteenth-seventeenth century image of Ancient Town, she also says that pieces of "traditional" culture are edited, as she puts it "to be useful for our life", likely to meet the economic agenda of tourism planning officials. In this sense, officials enact the Comaroff's idea of ethno-commodification, taking the culture and identity of a population and turning it into a marketing tool or a product (2009). Officials capitalize on particular stereotypes of Vietnamese and specifically Hoi Anian culture, such as delicate women in *ao dais* singing folk songs and fifth generation master carvers chipping away at wooden Buddha statues. By commodify-

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ing these stereotypes, they attempt to construct an image that they believe will not only please UNESCO and thereby keep Ancient Town in the condition that won it the title of a World Heritage site, but also create an ambiance that will entice tourists. By the nature of their jobs, which were created by local government and tourism planning officials; the identities of the local people who come into daily contact with tourists are synthesized into a cultural ideal that essentially “incorporates” a popular conception of their ethnic identities.

Therefore, like many other communities that participate in heritage tourism, Hoi An participates in an identity economy, capitalizing in part on ethnicity. Furthermore, this “ethnoprise” of heritage commodification must maintain “a delicate balance between exoticism and banalization—an equation that often requires ‘natives’ to perform themselves in such a way as to make their indigeneity legible to the consumer of otherness” (Comaroff and Comaroff 2009). With this idea in mind, the heritage of Hoi An is quintessentially unauthentic as defined by the local people (whose ideas of authenticity focus more on family relations and ancestor worship), but certain Hoi Anese customs are highlighted so as to be “legible” to tourists and to entertain them.

In relation to Hoi An, this ethnoprise equation means that officials attempt to keep tourists within the zone of the carefully created and maintained “traditional” cultural areas of the city. All tourist attractions, with the exception of a bicycle tour through the countryside—which billed itself as a look at the “real Hoi An”—are housed within the Ancient Town district or are located on or near the beach, which is one of the main tourist draws. Tourists can participate in certain aspects of what is presented as daily life, such as helping farmers or fishermen in the craft villages, cooking classes in the restaurants, and festivals that have been altered with an eye toward entertaining the tourist. Most local people, however, live outside of Ancient Town, and the festivals and rituals that they take part in, such as weddings, ancestor worship, and religious ceremonies, are off limits to tourists and

take place outside of Ancient Town. In this way, officials manage how the local articulates with the global by catering to tourists while essentially hiding those aspects of Hoi An culture that are deemed too modern, such as air conditioning units and flush toilets, and thus inconsistent with the imagery of Ancient Town.

Another example of this selective editing is the ban on motorbikes in Ancient Town that was put into effect several years ago, which both caters to the tourist economy and fits the image of a quaint, traditional Hoi An. According to my advisor and tourism planning official Minh, he and his staff had received many complaints from tourists that motorbike traffic in Ancient Town made them uncomfortable; so in 2004, after speaking with the local people who were reluctant to give up motorbikes for their commute to work, a law was passed to ban motorbikes in the Town one day per week. Gradually, more days were added and motorized vehicles are now banned in Ancient Town on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday, and during important festivals (interview with Minh, April 28, 2010). A loudspeaker announces in both Vietnamese and English when the ban is going into effect on a given day, and anyone caught on a motorbike after the ban has started will be stopped by the police, something I witnessed several times while walking through Ancient Town.

This selective editing does come across in a way that feels somewhat akin to a theme park, such as one of the cultural zones at Disney World. As is articulated in Ritzer and Liska’s “McDisneyfication” concept, tourists are encouraged to stay on the beaten path through choreographed and neatly packaged tours (1997). More independent travelers, such as the many backpackers who come through Hoi An, may not take part in these tours, but they do not wander far beyond the tailor shops of Ancient Town or the beaches. Critically, officials do make exceptions to the sixteenth-seventeenth century façade by allowing in several foreign-owned and operated snorkel and scuba businesses, as well as large beachside resorts with many Western amenities and activities such as jet skiing. However, there are only two

bars in town, and they are the only businesses that stay open past 9:00 pm. Both Ly, the preservation official, and Minh, the local tourism planning official, emphasized how carefully the government guarded against the “contaminating” presence of karaoke bars, night clubs, and other forms of entertainment deemed to be too licentious and not appropriate to the quiet setting of Ancient Town or of Hoi An in general.

This balance between “traditional” and “modern” tourist offerings only serves to further emphasize the complexities of Hoi An’s selective engagement with globalization. The town caters to Western tourists’ desires to nurture economic prosperity, but in ways that harmonize as much as possible with the goals of heritage preservation and, as will be discussed in the next section, Communist Party ideals.

Communism, Morality, and the Global

Hoi An is not alone in its selective engagement with global processes, but I argue that tourism officials in Hoi An have a greater amount of control over the city’s level of engagement with these processes because of the political and economic situation of Vietnam as a whole. Other heritage and cultural tourism sites often cater toward tourism, sometimes fully commodifying their cultures in the process. In places as diverse as Kenya (Bruner 2001) and the Czech Republic (Simpson 1999), researchers express concern that this level of catering to tourist desires threatens to swallow up cultural identity—the ultimate peril of ethnoprise (Comaroff and Comaroff 2009).

While Hoi An does partake in some degree of cultural editing for tourism, it also rather harmoniously integrates certain aspects of globalization into everyday life, with the Communist Party carefully determining which social and economic phenomena are acceptable and managing their effects. The ban on businesses deemed too licentious—karaoke bars, nightclubs, and anything involving sex, drinking, or drugs—is one example of direct management. This policy is an extension of Party policy throughout Vietnam. In 1995, the Party released decrees 87/CP and 88/CP to reign in cultural activities and “serious

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social evils". This term came to represent sexual behaviors deemed deviant, such as sex work and pornography, licentious behavior such as partying at discotheques, drinking, and gambling, as well as drug use (Templer 1998). The Communist Party, and in the case of Hoi An, local officials, have used their power of cultural creation to mold the social life of citizens for many decades, something the citizens accept, internalize, and appreciate. Furthermore, some of these ideas, such as the restrictions on "social evils", mesh well with Confucian-based values of respect and modesty (Malarney 2002).

Though some tourists that I met expressed their disappointment at the lack of nightlife in Hoi An, many locals were concerned about loud, disruptive, or licentious activity, and only one young local tour guide said that he would like to see more nightlife (interview with Phat, April 29, 2010). Tam, the tailor shop worker, expressed disdain in one conversation for styles of dance inspired by Westerners (interview with Tam, April 29, 2010). Minh expressed his concern that youth might be inspired by "Western behavior" to "go out whenever they want" (interview with Minh, April 28, 2010). Chinh repeatedly complained of the noise level that tourists bring with them and of their clothing styles (interview with Chinh, May 8, 2010).

Minh told me in one conversation that we had in his office that government officials visit various secondary schools and instruct the youth on how to appropriately interact with tourists and what "good" and "bad" behaviors these (Western) tourists may display. He cited some of the list of social evils, as well as some rather specific behaviors such as not using the appropriate level of respect in addressing elders. He also cited some "good" behaviors such as showing confidence and displaying independent problem solving as behaviors that officials encourage students to emulate (interview with Minh, April 29, 2010). In this way, the government attempts to control, in its traditional Communist style of disseminating Party edicts and ideals through the education system, how the younger generation interacts with global forces.

I was surprised that Minh did not mention anything about style of dress

or popular music, but from all of my conversations with officials, these aspects of globalization seeping into local culture were concerns, but seemed low on the priority list of behaviors to manage. This somewhat counterintuitive selectivity is also characteristic of Vietnamese Communism, however. After the cautious liberalization of social, political, and economic policies following *Doi Moi*, the Party became more concerned with improving the economy and standard of living and less preoccupied with controlling many of the social aspects of everyday life. This same attitude seems to be in place in Hoi An. One local preservation official told me, "You can't allow people not to have modern things." In a socialist town that prides itself on its quaint, historic feel, this statement shows a paradoxically high level of openness and tolerance for the discrepancies and frictions (Tsing 2005) that come along with maintaining a heritage tourism industry.

Conclusion

Hoi An convenes a disparate set of ideas regarding tourism, authenticity, identity, and globalization. As a UNESCO site, Hoi An is subject to UNESCO stipulations, and as a significant tourist site, hosting over one million tourists per year, Hoi An and its residents come into contact with a steady stream of "foreign" ideas, behaviors, and cultural mores. To a certain extent, the locals and even the government embrace this flow, adapting to certain features of globalization and welcoming the financial benefits, but rejecting behaviors, customs, and other influences that go against communist, Confucian, Vietnamese and Hoi An values. Local people re-imagine pieces of their history and culture in an attempt to entertain tourists and achieve notoriety for their version of heritage preservation, showing a cultural flexibility that is characteristic of Vietnam over the past century as economic and political conditions have changed. Authenticity is negotiable in Hoi An, as many people have different ideas of what defines authentic Hoi An culture—and more often than not, those definitions have little to do with the preservation work that officials so carefully manage. This discrepancy at times generates ambivalence within the community and a sense

of disconnect for many individuals, but it also allows for flexibility in how much or how little people want to engage in the commodification of Hoi An culture for economic gain.

While globalization processes certainly shape the heritage tourism industry and the lives of citizens, the people of Hoi An—both officials and non-officials—also reject certain global flows that come along with globalization, both subtly by maintaining private spheres of ritual and family life away from tourist eyes and by such direct actions as restricting the types of venues and tourist behaviors allowed in town. As such, Hoi An selectively engages with global processes, cautiously incorporating them into local practices. In this way, the people of Hoi An manage how globalization impacts the community rather than being consumed by it.

Footnotes

(1) I ended up translating the word "authenticity" to "real culture," which was problematic in itself.

(2) I was able to get a more definitive answer from an official in the Center for Monument Management and Preservation, but even she hesitated before deciding on 1997.

(3) All interviews took place in English. While many Hoi Anians do speak English, as it is considered vital to the tourism industry, the fact that my Vietnamese was so basic did limit my pool of interviewees and caused some difficulties in communication. It also excluded the possibility of talking to domestic tourists, especially since I could not find a translator.

(4) For her to confide in me in this way was actually a move of great trust on her part. When I brought up the idea of worker satisfaction to Minh, he claimed that workers were highly satisfied, according to surveys done by the government. When I suggested that perhaps people were afraid to share their real opinions, he became visibly angry, I presume because he thought that I was suggesting that people were secretly complaining about the government.

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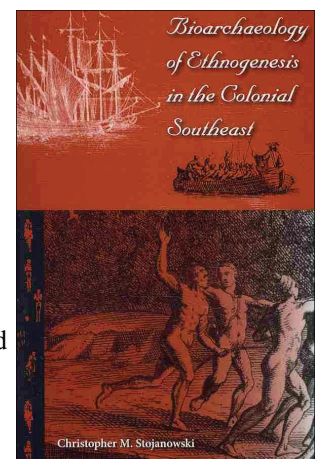
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James Mooney Committee Activities and Announcements

Committee members, Betty Duggan (New York State Museum; Chairperson) and new members, Kate Ingersoll (St. Mary's College, emeritus) and Jennifer Nourse (University of Richmond), are hard at work reviewing fifteen recently published books nominated for the 2011 James Mooney Prize; the winner will be announced at the Birmingham SAS meeting in March. The Mooney Prize is awarded annually for the best new book about the South or Southern peoples and cultures (past or present) in, of, or from the region. Nomination criteria, instructions, and deadline for the Mooney award are posted on the SAS website. Daryl White (Spelman College; Coordinator), facilitates each year with presses and distributing books and information to the Mooney Committee members.

Although the two most recent Mooney Prize winners cover distinctly different anthropological topics and subfields, they share the distinction of being broadly intradisciplinary in their approaches and methodologies, and, thus, provide rich reading for many audiences. These are: 2010 James Mooney winner Christopher M. Stojanowski's book, *Bioarchaeology of Ethnogenesis of the Colonial Southeast* (University of Florida Press, pictured right); and 2009 Mooney winner Shepard Krech's book, *Spirits of the Air: Birds and American Indians in the South* (University of Georgia Press).





**Robbie Ethridge,
President-Elect**

The SAS is requesting submissions for the 2012 SAS Student Paper Competition, and will announce the winner at the 2012 meetings in Birmingham, Alabama, next March. The deadline for submitting papers is **February 10, 2012**. For details on the submission process, please consult the SAS website, or contact Vincent Melomo at vmelomo@peace.edu.

Dear SAS Membership,

I am honored to have been chosen as President-elect for SAS. I have been a member of SAS since being a graduate student, and I have always appreciated the organization for its continued advocacy for anthropologists working in and/or studying the American South. The members of SAS are an outstanding group in so many regards—among other things, they excel in scholarship, public anthropology, outreach, and

mentoring. Our student membership is exceptional, and I am particularly proud of the welcome and support SAS gives to undergraduate and graduate students. Thanks to the work of outgoing president Heidi Altman, the executive committee, and the organizers of this year's meeting, the upcoming year looks exciting for the organization. The meeting in Birmingham is shaping up nicely and we expect a great turnout. We

also have secured a publisher for the *SAS Proceedings* as well as a committed web manager. The SAS continues as a vibrant, healthy regional organization of anthropologists, students, and interested others. I look forward to my tenure as your president.

-Robbie Ethridge
SAS President-Elect
Professor of Anthropology
University of Mississippi

2011 SAS Student Paper Competition

The SAS Student Paper Competition Committee completed its work in preparation for the 2011 meetings in Richmond last March. The committee members included Vincent Melomo, Chair, of William Peace University in Raleigh, NC; Matthew Richard of Valdosta State University, Valdosta, GA; and Scott London of Randolph-

Macon College, Ashland, VA. The committee reviewed fifteen undergraduate entries and one graduate student entry. This was the largest number of papers submitted to the competition in recent years, and the committee felt that this was the best overall collection of student papers they had reviewed. The committee was unanimous in selecting

Ursula James' (Southwestern University) paper as the winner, titled "'Ethnoprise,' Authenticity, and Selective Engagement: Heritage Tourism in Hoi An, Vietnam". James won a cash prize of \$200 and a collection of books donated to SAS by the University of Alabama Press. (The committee elected not to offer a graduate student paper award due to the single entry.)

SAS Website

We've expanded the SAS website somewhat over the past three years. Besides the constantly updated page about the "Annual Meeting", new or expanded sections to check out include the "Archives and Photos", and the "Publications". In the

first, you will find information about past meetings, lists of former officers of the SAS, and a list of the winners of the Mooney Prize. Our "Publications" page has links to recent and current issues of the *Southern Anthropologist* and a list of SAS *Proceedings* volumes from 1967. Infor-

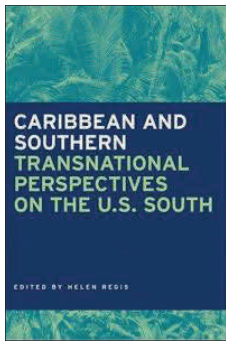
mation about the Mooney Prize and the Zora Neale Hurston award can be found here too.

-Margaret Huber
SAS Website
Distinguished Professor of
Anthropology Emeritus
University of Mary Wash-
ington



**SAS Business Meeting,
Richmond, VA, 2011**

SAS Proceedings



Over the past few years, the *SAS Proceedings* have fallen behind schedule, but recently they have found a new home at New Found Press (New Found Press, <http://www.newfoundpress.utk.edu/>) and the University of Tennessee Press. New Found Press is open access, but volumes will also be available by means of print on demand. We are presently at work on several volumes including *Memory and Museums* edited by Margaret Williamson Huber and *Building Bridges in Anthropology: Understanding, Acting, Teaching, and Theorizing*, which I have edited. As in the past, our aim is to make these volumes cohesive, high-quality works that focus on a particular theme.



-Robert Shanafelt
 SAS Proceedings General Editor
 Associate Professor of Anthropology
 Georgia Southern University

“We are also considering the formation of an editorial board of five to seven people who can help coordinate the review of articles across the subdisciplines.”

News from the *Southern Anthropologist*

 Southern Anthropologist Journal of the Southern Anthropological Society	
Volume 35, Number 2	Winter 2010
ARTICLES	
Disrupted but Not Destroyed: Fictive-Kinship Networks Among Black Educators in Post-Katrina New Orleans <i>Daniella Ann Cook</i>	1
“I Know You!” Understanding Racial Experience and Racial Practice within the Lumbee Indian Community <i>David S. Lowry</i>	26
“You Have to go North to Find the South”: Situating Central Florida in the South for Birth Research <i>Erica Gibson</i>	52
A Chinese Case Study in Using Psychoanalysis for Ethnography <i>Maris Boyd Gillette</i>	69
FROM THE FIELD	
Memory-Keeper: An Ethnographic Look at Female Agency among Italian-Americans <i>Hannah Burgwyn</i>	84
How Memory Affects Sense of Self: Stories of Traumatic Brain Injury <i>Leah Smith</i>	98
Book Review: Tacos and Tacquerias in North Cackalacky <i>Katie Case</i>	117

As noted on the website, the new journal editors are Julian Murchison of Millsaps College (murchjm@millsaps.edu) and Matt Samson of Davidson College (masamson@davidsonl.edu). A final issue from the previous editors will be out in the next couple of months, and we are actively soliciting articles for the coming year. Submissions from any field of anthropology are welcome, and they should be between 6,000 and 9,000 words in Word format. They should also conform to the *AAA Style Guide* (2009) accessible at http://www.aaanet.org/publications/style_guide.pdf. Book and film reviews are also welcome. Current and previous editions of the journal are available at <http://southernanthro.org/publications/southern-anthropologist/>.

We are also considering the formation of an editorial board of five to seven people who can help coordinate the review of articles across the subdisciplines. If you would like to serve in this capacity or nominate a friend or colleague, please let us know.

Finally, we are investigating the possibility of having the journal published in digital format by Newfound Press of the University of Tennessee Libraries. This is the direction the Society is moving for the publication of the proceedings from our annual

meeting, and the hope is that such a move would add some consistency and stability to our publications.

SAS Endowment Fund

To: Southern Anthropological Society Members and Friends
From: Max E. White, Endowment Treasurer

Greetings everyone. As we move into the new year (and tax time), please consider donating to the SAS Endowment Fund. All contributions are tax deductible and will help us attain our goal of creating an endowment to be used to promote Anthropology and anthropological research in the American South.

You may make the check out to **SAS Endowment Fund** and mail to:

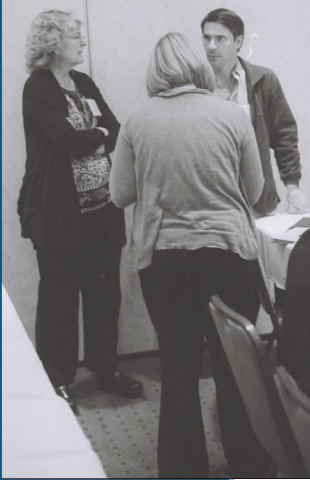
Max E. White
SAS Endowment Treasurer
Department of Social Sciences
Piedmont College
Demorest, GA 30535

You will receive a letter of acknowledgement in return mail. Thank you in advance for your support, and I look forward to seeing you at the meeting in Alabama in March.

Sincerely,

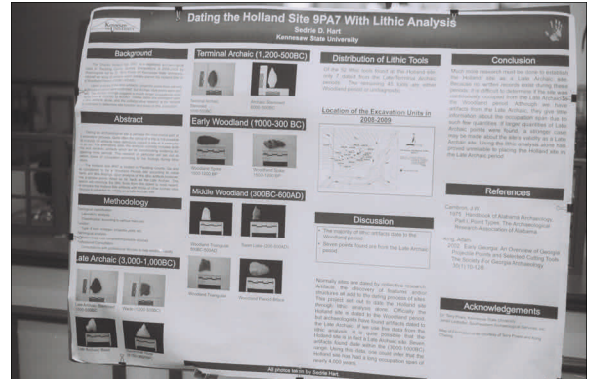
Max E. White, Ph.D.

Photo Credit: David M. Johnson



Carrie B. Douglas (left) and Vincent Melomo (right)

Donate to the SAS Endowment Fund. It is tax deductible!



Eric Gable (left), Margaret Huber (center), and the 2011 Keynote Speaker, Paul Stoller (right)



Photos Credit: David M. Johnson



SAS Secretary-Treasurer's report 2012

Southern Anthropological Society

Summary Financial Statement

Prepared 31 December 2011

Brandon D. Lundy, Secretary-Treasurer

Checking Account Balance, 31 December 2011	\$10,380.90
Certificate of Deposit (renewed 5 November 2011)	\$10,050.38 (projected value at maturity, 5 Aug. 2012)

Total Assets **\$20,431.28**

When I took over the SAS accounts as Treasurer in June 2011, we spent \$21.00 on checks. The second expense was to renew our website management with Delmain IT for \$125.00. As of 30 June 2011, the Primary Business Checking was \$5,878.42. That same month our Business Money Market account was at \$4,006.80. By November 2011, this account had earned \$2.63 in interest. In that same month, the \$10,000.00 CD was renewed for an additional 10 months. In anticipation of the Spring meetings, the Business Money Market account was consolidated into the Primary Business Checking account in December 2011 these accounts were combined along with the addition of \$495.00 in advanced dues and registration for the 2012 meeting in Birmingham, Alabama.

Highlights from the 25 March 2011 meeting minutes in Richmond, Virginia.

- Betty Duggan reported that the Mooney Award Committee had 12 nominations from Harvard, Nebraska, Alabama, and Florida presses. The winner this year is *Bioarchaeology of Ethnogenesis in the Colonial Southeast*, by Christopher M. Stojanowski.
- Max White reported on the SAS Endowment. At present, the Endowment stands at \$22,307.13. Despite email solicitations and information on the website about how to contribute, we received only one contribution, for \$100, this year.
- Heidi announced the results of recent elections/appointments for officers and Board members.
 - Brandon Lundy (Kennesaw State University) will be taking over as Secretary-Treasurer on 1st April.
 - Robbie Ethridge (Ole Miss), will be taking over as President-Elect in 2012.
 - We have three new Councillors: Aaron Bowman (Surry CC), Vinnie Melomo (Peace College), and Laura Mentore (U Mary Washington).
- The editors of the *Southern Anthropologist*, Fuji Lozada and Jennifer Patico, have both decided to turn the responsibility over to others, after years of good work. They are replaced by Julian Murchison (Millsaps) and Matt Samson (Davidson).
- Bob Shanafelt reported on the SAS Proceedings. Our long-standing contract with the University of Georgia lapsed, and we are now five years behind schedule with our volumes. We could make the Proceedings an on-line publication, perhaps through University of Tennessee's Newfound Press, which allows print-on-demand. Alabama has also expressed interest in publishing at least two of the volumes.
- Lists of anthropology faculty in all the Southern states except Texas were updated last November. We do not have names or addresses for anthropologists working in government or private-sector agencies; nor have we been keeping lists of graduate students.
- SAS does have a Facebook page set up by Matthew Richards. Our Outreach officer should send the Facebook link out to the membership, and we should post it on our website.
- Dan Ingersoll and Carrie Douglass reported on the Archival Project. Out-of-date/print Proceedings, Mooney Prizes, and *Southern Anthropologist* have been digitized and sent to Margaret for posting on the SAS Website. They need to be tagged by author and title so that they are searchable.
- David Johnson has been documenting our meetings in photographs since 1968. He is willing to digitize these.
- Next year's meeting will be in Birmingham, Alabama; the year after (2013), University of Arkansas (in Fayetteville, AR, Justin Nolan). For the 2014 meeting, Lindsey King and Melissa Schrifft have offered to host the meeting at East Tennessee State University in Johnson City, TN.



Photo Credit: David M. Johnson




Southern Anthropological Society

For more information, contact:

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Dr. Christina Beard-Moose
Outreach Coordinator
Assistant Professor of Anthropology and
Sociology
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Suffolk County Community College
Southampton Building 205
533 College Road
Selden, New York 11784-2899


SOUTHERN ANTHROPOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

REGISTRATION AND DUES
Year: 20

Every person planning to attend the annual meeting must pay **both** membership dues and a registration fee.

You may pay fees in advance or at the meeting. If you pay in advance, please send checks, made out to the Southern Anthropological Society, to
Brandon Lundy, SAS Secretary-Treasurer
Department of Geography and Anthropology
Social Science Building (SO), Suite 4042
Kennesaw State University
1000 Chastain Road
Kennesaw, Georgia 30144-5591

Please also include this form with your payment.

Do not send your abstract to this address. Abstracts should be sent to the Program Chair, Lori Cormier, lcormier@uab.edu.

Membership category (please indicate one):

Professional	\$ 75.00
Student/retired	\$ 35.00
Joint	\$100.00

(for couples who want to join together)

Registration fees (please indicate one):

Professional	\$ 75.00
Student/Retired	\$ 35.00
Joint	\$100.00

(for couples who want to attend the meeting together)

Total amount \$ _____

Name(s): _____
Institutional Affiliation(s): _____
Address: _____
Email address: _____



Heidi Altman
SAS President

SAS Presidential Update

Dear SAS Colleagues,

I hope that this message finds you all well and happily settling into the new year! As I look forward to the meeting in Birmingham, which will be my last as an officer with SAS, I look back over the last ten years of my involvement with fondness and pride. We have worked hard as an organization to professionalize our Society and as a result, we have developed an online journal, found a new publisher for the proceedings while clearing the backlog of unpublished manuscripts, constructed a new professionally designed website, and amassed a solid bank account balance that allows us to operate in the black. We have increased outreach efforts, scheduled meetings three years out, and built an engaged and tireless board that includes some new positions including an archivist. While there are still some things left to do, I am immensely proud of the advances that have been made, and deeply appreciative of everyone's hard work. As we move into the new year and as our new president and secretary-treasurer take the reins, I look forward to the continued growth of the SAS for many years to come. Thanks to the Board for their hard work, and to everyone for your interest and support of the Southern Anthropological Society.

-Heidi M. Altman
SAS President
Associate Professor of Anthropology
Georgia Southern University