COLLECTING CULTURE AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Had lunch with Ralph Maurer today. He researches organizational behavior and is interested in how people get attached to what they make, the ideas they have and such, and how this attachment may lead them to manage work and intellectual property without reference to economic gain.

Economic relationships are embedded in all sorts of cultural values, of course. And this applies to institutions as well as individuals.

So we talked about property and identity, about creativity and its relationship to other than economic value, and how these work their way through organizations and institutions. A key concept is surely alienation – that making things that have some life and connection with the maker – work that is not alienated – is gratifying. Especially if such experience is in the midst of so many other thoroughly alienated experiences and things.

Marcel Mauss had to come up too – how gift giving is so much more than an economic transaction and is all about making relaytionships with others – people and things, things that sometimes take on an intimate life of their own.

This morning Philip put me on to a collectorand swap/trade/exchange site in the UK – “Tony’s Trading”

The site is all about media collectables, souvenirs and such – miniatures mostly – and making collections through swapping with others rather than selling and buying.

“My Collections” – @Tony’s Trading

What struck me was that at the end of a scroll down through Ton’y numerous collections comes a photo of Tony himself – the man behind the goods.

His collections are curiously antiseptic though – and especially the way they are displayed around his home. Super clean, dusted, neatly ordered as in an environmentally controlled museum. The collections dominate his home.

Curiously an-archaeological.