

Report on the History of Anthropology Network (HOAN) business meeting

The business meeting of HOAN took place on Monday 20 July 2020 14:00-16:00 (Lisbon/London time) on the Shindig platform. Chaired by the network's convenors, Han F. Vermeulen (HFV) and Frederico Delgado Rosa (FDR), the online meeting was attended by over 70 network members.

1. Welcome

HFV welcomed the meeting's attendees and sent his best wishes to the convenors and the participants of history of anthropology related panels and roundtable convened by HOAN members at the virtual EASA2020 conference. He also welcomed and thanked the representatives of HOAN's partner organizations, later to be introduced during the open access HOAN meeting.

2. HOAN Report 2018-2020

HFV presented the HOAN Report 2018-2020. He reminded that, since its reactivation in December 2016, following the EASA conference in Milan, HOAN has experienced a steady expansion in its global connections, number of members, and the activities in which they participate. This is related to the rising interest in the subject in Europe and worldwide, as the history of anthropology passes from the margins to the centre. The Network was set up to facilitate research among and communication between anthropologists, historians and other scholars interested in the history of anthropology. In principle, this subject has no boundaries, in scope, era, or regions covered. **HFV** added that the network has performed well in the past four years. He evoked the two panels on "Themes in the History of Anthropology" convened by David Shankland (Royal Anthropological Institute, London, UK) and Aleksandar Boskovic (University of Belgrade/Institute of Social Sciences, Belgrade, Serbia) and by Andrés Barrera-González (Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Spain) and **HFV** at Milan (2016), which led to the re-founding of HOAN; and also the four panels on the history of anthropology as well as one session of a fifth panel (a total of 38 papers) presenting different aspects of the field's history in Stockholm (2018). EASA2020 in Lisboa sets a record of 7 HoA panels and 1 roundtable convened by HOAN members(see below). By 2020, the network has over 200 members, as well an [Advisory Board](#) and a [Circle of Correspondents](#) in nine European countries and in the USA, Canada, Latin America, Asia, Australia, and New Zealand.

3. History of Anthropology panels at EASA 2020

FDR presented the History of Anthropology panels taking place during the EASA 2020 conference in Lisbon. He thanked the NomadIT team for the tremendous effort to accommodate all panels in Shindig. Taking into account some inevitable overlaps in the timetable, as regards the History of Anthropology panels at EASA Lisboa 2020, **FDR** presented the History of Anthropology panels in the following way:

TUESDAY 21 JULY

11:00-12:45
14:00-15:45

P001: “Ethnographers before Malinowski [History of Anthropology Network]”
Convenors:
Christine Laurière,
Frederico D. Rosa;
Han F. Vermeulen
(Discussant)

WEDNESDAY 22 JULY

8:30-10:15 / 11:00-12:45

P049: “Uncomfortable Ancestors: Anthropology (not) Dealing with Totalitarian Regimes.” Convenors: Fabiana Dimpflmeier, Reinhard Johler

P179: “Curating the (Post)Colonial in Europe and Beyond.” Convenors: Chiara De Cesari, Wayne Modest

14:00-15:45

R001: “Anthropological Perspectives: Past, Present and Future [Roundtable]” Convenors: Aleksandar Boskovic, Virginia Dominguez; Salma Siddique (Chair); Thomas Hylland Eriksen (Discussant)

THURSDAY 23 JULY

8:30-10:15 / 11:00-12:45

P003: “World Fairs, Exhibitions, and Anthropology: Revisiting Contexts of Post/Colonialism [Europeanist Network]” Convenors: Hande A. Birkalan-Gedik, Patricia Ferraz de Matos, Andrés Barrera-González

P176: “Engaged Anthropology at Times of Nationalistic Enhancement in the XX Century.” Convenors: Grazyna Kubica-Heller, and Anna Engelking

P120: The Futures of Visual Restitution. Convenors: Rodrigo Lacerda, Renato Athias

FRIDAY 24 JULY

11:00-12:45
14:00-15:45

P030: “Making and Remaking Anthropology Museums: Provenance and Restitution.”
Convenors: Adam Kuper,
Han F. Vermeulen|

The logo for EASA 2020 Lisboa, featuring the acronym 'EASA' in a stylized, bold, sans-serif font with a horizontal line through the middle of the letters. Below the acronym, the text '2020 Lisboa' is written in a smaller, simpler font.

FDR also called attention to the importance of attending the opening session and keynote address by Marilyn Strathern, entitled “Terms of Engagement,” on 21 July at 5 PM (Lisbon/London time).

4. HOAN Newsletters and Subpage within EASA Website

HFV recalled that, since December 2016, sixteen HOAN Newsletters with almost 70 attached resources have been shared with members of HOAN by e-mail. With their resources, these newsletters represent a vital, collective effort of network convenors, correspondents, and members in terms of collecting and sharing relevant and updated information on developments in the sub-disciplinary field of the history of anthropology not only in Europe but also in other continents. Particularly interesting are items on recent publications, recent and upcoming conferences and workshops, calls for panels or calls for papers. The newsletters are also online on HOAN’s subpage and, thanks to EASA’s IT department, are uploaded as soon as they have been distributed, at: <https://www.easaonline.org/networks/hoan/newsletters>

FDR then presented the portraits that have been chosen as logos for the HOAN Newsletters, most of which are inspired by some event or publication contained in the HOAN Newsletters. He highlighted Beninese ethnologist and museum curator, **Alexandre Sènou Adandé**, whose name was given to Porto-Novo Ethnographic Museum since 1993, and Haitian anthropologist **Anténor Firmin**, a pioneer of our discipline, whose masterpiece, *De l’égalité des races humaines*, published in Paris in 1885, contradicted the racist theories of his time by refuting any causal link between language, race and culture. A victim of prejudice because of the colour of his skin, Firmin was rediscovered at the turn of the 21st century by the international anthropological community, while his legacy has never ceased to inspire the black movements. **FDR** also explained that the choice of **Franz Boas**’s portrait as the logo of the last Newsletter followed the recent debate in the United States, pro- and against the anthropological and political legacy of Boas and the Boasians.

5. Partner organizations: BEROSE, HAR, HoAIG, and HACA (SIEF)

HFV: The following item consisted in focusing on four partner organizations that are important for HOAN, namely the online encyclopaedia **BEROSE**, the *History of Anthropology Review* (**HAR**), the History of Anthropology Interest Group (**HoAIG**), and the “Historical Approaches in Cultural Analysis” (**HACA**) Working Group of SIEF, the International Society for Ethnology and Folklore.

5.1. The online encyclopaedia BEROSE was represented by one of its directors, Christine Laurière (CL) in the following way:

BEROSE is an online encyclopaedia of worldwide scope, claiming a renewed practice and writing of the history of anthropology, in the wake of the World Anthropologies paradigm. With an international scientific committee, sixteen research teams and a constantly expanding network of contributors from all continents, BEROSE is an open access digital humanities project that promotes high-quality open scholarship. It regularly publishes new encyclopaedic articles in several languages (English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian) throughout the year. Its website can be browsed in English and French.

As its title suggests, BEROSE International Encyclopaedia of the Histories of Anthropology reflects the diversity of the scholarly traditions concerned. This includes designations as diverse as ethnology or folklore, *Völkerkunde* and *Volkskunde* in the Germanic countries, the Italian word *demologia* or the Greek *laographia*. All national anthropological traditions and all theoretical currents, be they hegemonic or pushed to the margins, are concerned with this expansion. In BEROSE, the foreground is shared; no selection criteria exclude the creation of new entries devoted to “minor” anthropologists who may have difficulty finding their place in a stricter, more conventional encyclopaedia or dictionary published on paper. The awareness of these plural histories is also based on the fact that they are written by researchers from various disciplinary backgrounds, with complementary, sometimes divergent and conflicting ambitions and approaches: whether social and cultural anthropologists or Indigenous researchers; whether representatives of influential traditions or marginalized ones, along with philosophers, historians of science, historians of art and photography, museum curators, etc.

The articles in the encyclopaedia also cover anthropological journals and institutions, as well as a new category created in 2019: anthropological themes, concepts and traditions. Each biographical or historical article appears in a topical dossier comprising complementary articles or digital resources on the same subject, such as PDF’s from primary and secondary sources, iconographic documents, links to other platforms, etc. The philosophy of the BEROSE website combines the simplicity of its structure and navigation with the richness of its contents.

CL thanked the HOAN convenors for the opportunity to present BEROSE and invited all attendees to subscribe to its quarterly Newsletter through the following link: <https://listes.humanum.fr/sympa/subscribe/newsletter-berose>

Her powerpoint presentation is attached herewith.

5.2. The *History of Anthropology Review* (HAR, also online, formerly History of Anthropology Newsletter), was represented by its editor-in-chief, John Tresch (JT) in the following way:

The *History of Anthropology Review* is an online journal for publication and conversation on the many histories of anthropology, as well as a place for news, announcements, and debate. It was founded in 1973 as the *History of Anthropology Newsletter* (HAN). For the next thirty years it was produced primarily by George W. Stocking, Jr. at the University of Chicago; in 2004 Henrika

Kuklick at the University of Pennsylvania became editor. After both Stocking and Kuklick died in 2013, a new editorial collective was formed to make all the back issues available online. This editorial collective relaunched the *Newsletter* as an open access web publication in 2016, with John Tresch as editor-in-chief, a former student of Stocking's in Anthropology at Chicago, and colleague of Kuklick's in History and Sociology of Science at the University of Pennsylvania. In 2019, to reflect the new medium, its commitment to book reviews, revisions of the field, and reflective essays and research articles, the *History of Anthropology Newsletter* was renamed *History of Anthropology Review*. HAR is now maintained by approximately 30 editors in institutions worldwide, assisted by a Board of Advisers, many of whom have been involved in the journal (and the field) for decades. Readers are invited to subscribe (on the site's front page) to receive weekly updates of publications. Submissions from anthropologists, historians, archivists, and independent scholars are warmly welcomed at any time, to any of HAR's departments: essays (Field Notes), reviews, news, bibliographical updates, reports on conferences and exhibits, and archival discoveries (Clio's Fancy). HAR has recently begun a partnership with BEROSE and is delighted to work with members of both EASA's HOAN and the AAA's HoA Interest Group. Visit the site at: histanthro.org

His powerpoint presentation is attached herewith.

5.3. The History of Anthropology Interest Group (HoAIG) of the American Anthropological Association was represented by its former convenor, Ira Bashkow (IB), as follows:

The History of Anthropology Interest Group (HoAIG) provides a gathering place within the American Anthropological Association (AAA) for scholars interested in the history of anthropology. We organize conference sessions and hold a convivial lunch and business meeting during the AAA's annual conference. We look forward to resuming these traditional in-person gatherings in future years! HoAIG was founded in the 1990s as an Interest Group within AAA's largest section, the [General Anthropology Division](#) (GAD). GAD has been a steady supporter of HoAIG over many years, earmarking an annual slot on the AAA Meeting program for the George Stocking Symposium in History of Anthropology, and welcoming additional proposals for history of anthropology themed conference events. HoAIG maintains an email mailing list (listserv) with 250 subscribers. Anyone may subscribe to this list at <https://lists.virginia.edu/sympa/info/history-of-anthropology> (click on the "subscribe" link on the left). To prevent spam, the list is moderated. This listserv is mostly used to plan and announce AAA conference panels but also sporadically for informal discussion of issues of moment. HoAIG's current chair is Mindy Morgan <morgan37@msu.edu> and the chair-elect is Grant Arndt <gparndt@iastate.edu>. We are glad to join with HOAN and HAR to welcome and support scholars interested in the history of anthropology and the human sciences broadly.

5.4. A fourth organization that is becoming important is the Working Group "Historical Approaches in Cultural Analysis" (HACA) of SIEF, the International Society for Ethnology and Folklore. A member of both HOAN and HACA, Hande Birkalan-Gedik (HBG) presented a proposal to link our network and this working group more formally in the following way:

SIEF, International Society for Ethnology and Folklore/Internationale Gesellschaft für Ethnologie und Folklore/Société Internationale d'Ethnologie et de Folklore, is an international organization that provides a platform for cooperation among scholars working within European Ethnology, Folklore Studies, Cultural Anthropology, and related fields. SIEF is a sister organization of EASA, WCAA (The World Council of Anthropological Associations), and AFS (American Folklore Society).

Historical Approaches to Cultural Analysis (HACA) is one of SIEF's working groups (similar to EASA's networks); it currently has 59 members and is chaired by Katre Kikas (Estonian Literary Museum, Tartu) and by Konrad Kuhn (University of Innsbruck). HBG's proposed liaison tasks between HOAN and HACA include reporting on pertinent events (meetings, publications, conferences, and summer schools), bilaterally; strengthening the collaboration among colleagues working on similar issues; inviting colleagues as reviewers or collaborating with them on common projects. HBG underlined that in the long-run, joint meetings between HOAN and HACA can be planned. The HACA working group's strategic aims include the promotion of historical and cultural studies; the encouragement of young researchers to contribute to the historical approaches in cultural analysis; the strengthening of exchange between the field of contemporary and historical research within Ethnology and Folklore Studies in a more systematic manner. HBG expressed her hope that linking HACA and HOAN would be beneficial by enhancing visibility, expanding scholarly networks, and by assisting interdisciplinary exchanges.

The proposal to appoint Hande Birkalan-Gedik as liaison between EASA's HOAN and SIEF's HACA was unanimously accepted.

HGB thanked HOAN convenors and members for the opportunity and informed them that the 2021 SIEF meeting is planned to take place in Helsinki on the theme "Breaking the Rules? Power, Participation, Transgression." (The call for panels is open until 21 September 2020.)

Her powerpoint presentation is attached herewith.

6. New HOAN convenors 2020 2022

HFV explained that under the rules of EASA, network convenors may only function during two terms. Functioning as co-convenor of HOAN since the EASA conference in Milan (2016), he felt a formal need to be replaced. A Call for Convenors was published in HOAN circular newsletter no. 16 (June 2020) and an offer by a volunteer was received.

The candidate, Fabiana Dimpflmeier (FD), was invited on stage to introduce herself and her views on the History of Anthropology, in the following terms:

FD: *"I think that reconstructing the events, experiences, lives of 'others' far away in time, trying to interpret their voices and listen to the stories they have to tell, frame them in their spatial and temporal contexts, has an extraordinary beauty. Above all because the past is always unpredictable, making clear that our historiographic syntheses, our interpretative imaginations of a century or a period are never complete, closed, because beneath them a swarm of a thousand different lives call them into question and always invites new interpretations, new answers. On the other hand, these voices are rooted in specific stories and territories which today, in the general panorama of the main stream history of anthropology can and must be enhanced, as an essential operation for the renewal and future of our discipline. This is why I endorse the development of academically trained profiles capable of producing a scientifically grounded critical reflection on the histories of our discipline; we are in the need of scholars familiar with the methods, orientations, research techniques and expressive language of historiography, capable to carry out in-depth research using different types of sources. Our role, as historians of anthropology, is to support a reflective perspective on the history and object of our discipline in academia: that is, to support the awareness of working within a field that is historically and politically established. In doing that, I think we need to practice the history of anthropology not only from an 'internal' perspective (i.e., as a succession of works, authors, theories, and researches), but also from an 'external' one, aiming at reconstructing the way in which intellectual groups socially position themselves, how they*

relate to institutions and power, how they manage strategies of ethical and aesthetic distinction. Eventually, in a healthy dynamic of scientific growth it is essential for anthropology to identify and reassess its past choices and endeavours in order to stimulate their acknowledgment and re-elaboration.”

HFV then explained that **FDR** has been HOAN convenor since 2018 and volunteered to stay for two more years. The candidate, **FDR**, was invited on stage to introduce himself and his views on the History of Anthropology, in the following terms:

FDR: *“I am particularly attentive to reconstructive approaches. In spite of the current decolonizing fervour, I believe that a post-critique tendency is also set in motion. To give one or two examples, I’ll evoke Karl-Heinz Kohl’s article “The Future of the Anthropology Lies in its Past” (2003), in which he makes a plea for the ethnographic archive and claims that both professional and amateur ethnographies can be “veritable treasure troves,” not a mere byproduct of a bygone ideology. More recently, in “A Joyful History of Anthropology” (2016), Bhrigupati Singh and Jane Guyer defend the right to reconnect to the anthropological archive with a positive attitude, implying some level of “companionship” with dead anthropologists and ethnographers as fellow human beings and interlocutors for the 21st century. Some other titles might be evoked, such as Ira Bashkow’s “Voicing the Ancestors” (2019), my own “Exhuming the Ancestors” (2019), or “Acknowledging Ancestors” (Dureau 2014). Expressing any deep form of empathy towards the anthropological past may be a romantic taboo in our subdisciplinary field, but the main drive for me as a historian of anthropology is falling in love with dead people, discovering this or that extraordinary anthropologist, ethnographer or Indigenous collaborator and bring their work back to life through my own emotions.”*

The candidates were elected unanimously, by acclaim.

7. Any other business and prospects

Open podiums were enabled and several attendees presented their views on HOAN and the History of Anthropology. The positive, constructive attitude of all participants was acknowledged by several attendees as quite rare in anthropology. Others intervened in support of HOAN, expressing that HOAN has become a reference to historians of anthropology and other scholars dedicated to this disciplinary subfield in Europe, as well as an appealing partner for various associations. Attendees joining open podiums also expressed the import of strengthening these alliances in the near future, as these stakeholders can help expand HOAN’s network of members beyond its actual numbers, while enhancing scientific collaborations and developing new ideas from which the History of Anthropology may benefit. The main characteristics and goals of HOAN were highlighted in the following way: (1) the flow of information between its members on what is going on in the history of anthropology is fundamental; (2) its members are committed to preserve a climate of passion and positive exchange; (3) there is consensus about strengthening alliances, particularly with HoAIG, HAR, BEROSE and SIEF; and (4) promoting exchange with other EASA networks.

FDR joined the stage to pay tribute to HFV in the following terms:

“It has been my privilege to work with Han Vermeulen since EASA Stockholm 2018 as co-convenors of the History of Anthropology Network. During these two years, I had the opportunity of witnessing Han’s profound dedication to EASA and to our network. Han’s behind-the-scene work, as a facilitator of personal and institutional dialogues, of scientific encounters and exchanges, is

tireless, only comparable to the thoroughness of his activity as a historian of anthropology. “Mauss sait tout”, “Marcel Mauss knows everything”, his students used to say. The same applies to our esteemed colleague. I dare say (even if he would not agree), that Han Vermeulen sait tout about everything and everyone related to our subdisciplinary field. As a midget before a giant, I must add that Han’s dedication to our network actually predates its existence. Indeed HOAN has itself a pre-history that goes back to 1990, when the first EASA Conference took place in Coimbra. During these 30 years, the various History of Anthropology panels, workshops, roundtables and papers - many of which were the doing of Han Vermeulen or had him involved in one way or another - were like bricks that laid the foundations of our network. If I am allowed a more personal note, I will add this: working with you, Han, has been a wonderful combination of intellectual strictness, emotion and fun. Your sense of humour is priceless, and I’ll keep cherishing your private jokes as a treasure. I don’t need to talk about Han’s contribution to our field, everybody knows his Before Boas. The Genesis of Ethnography and Ethnology in the German Enlightenment (2015). This wonderful book is dedicated to Han’s parents in memory of their parents. And it is a similar respect for the past, for our ancestors, from Gerhard Friedrich Müller to Franz Boas, that we find in every single page of Han’s magnum opus. In the troubled times we are living in, the History of Anthropology keeps us company in many ways. And if our network’s place within EASA contributes to the consolidation of History of Anthropology itself, as a powerful subdisciplinary field, this is something that we owe, in great measure, to Han Vermeulen. So I am sure I speak for all, when I say: Thank you, Han!”

HFV expressed his appreciation for these kind words and stated that he himself had been inspired by the work of both George W. Stocking, Jr. in Chicago and Adam Kuper, who was a professor of the social anthropology of Africa at Leiden, The Netherlands from 1976 to 1985. Kuper’s interest in the history of anthropology was early (*Anthropology and Anthropologists: The British School, 1922-1972*. London: Allen Lane, 1973) and enduring. He liberally lend **HFV** his own set of the first ten volumes of Stocking’s *History of Anthropology Newsletter* (1973-1983), which Han photocopied before subscribing to the Newsletter in 1984. Kuper remained a stimulating force after EASA had been founded at Castel Gandolfo, Italy in January 1989 and encouraged the founding of HOAN’s predecessor, the History of European Anthropology Network (HEAN), at EASA’s second biennial conference in Prague in August 1992. After the EASA conference in Milan (2016), Kuper supported the reactivation of the network, prophesying that it “will work well.”

FDR presented images of his hometown Lisbon, where the conference had been planned to take place before the corona pandemic broke out, and of Sintra on the Portuguese Riviera, while hoping that HOAN members would some day meet in Portugal for a History of Anthropology encounter.

HFV closed the meeting at 4 PM and wished good luck to all during the online conference.

The PowerPoint presentation of the HOAN Business Meeting is attached herewith.