

Panel 9: Challenging Narratives and Frameworks of Knowledge in Histories of Anthropology

Tuesday, 5 December 2023 – Stream 1

[Session I: 12:00-13:45 pm CET // Session II: 14:30-16:15 pm CET]

This panel brings scholars together to critically discuss consolidated narratives and frameworks in the histories of anthropology. It focuses on alternative ways of studying and interpreting anthropological knowledge production while also offering new readings of concepts and figures from the discipline. How have histories of anthropology been written? Which frameworks, categories, and people have they included or excluded? What perspectives and sources should be included in a new, more inclusive history of anthropology? Which actors and stakeholders? Is a transnational history of anthropology possible? What roles do cultural representation, power asymmetries and hierarchies play in scientific anthropological production? How can we reconsider the established narratives and what can we learn from the past as we confront the structural inequalities that influence our current knowledge production? The panel includes cases from different national traditions and world anthropologies.

Conveners: **Robert Oppenheim** (University of Texas at Austin), **Grant Arndt** (Iowa State University)

Session I [12:00-13:45 pm CET]

Dong Ju Kim (School of Humanities and Social Sciences, KAIST, Korea)

Charisma Revisited: Forgotten North American Inspirations and Theoretical Considerations

If charisma is not an explanation of behavior but an element or datum in analysis, as Worsley(1957) argued, in which ways and in which directions can we take the concept of charisma without abusing it? Is it possible to apply charisma in secular contexts without compromising its original, biblical connotations with the sacred? Reviewing the concept of charisma and locating its genealogy firmly within ethnographic tradition, T.O. Beidelman(1971) tried to position the concept between Weberian and Durkheimian traditions. Based on Evans-Pritchard's account, Beidelman reconstructed Nuer priests and prophets as distinctive but not mutually exclusive, because prophets sought to routinize their charisma with institutional arrangements, whereas priests who inherited their position tried to justify their authority with proof of magical power. He emphasized the processual interplay between power and authority, combining a

Durkheimian perspective on the role of inherited, professional positions of Nuer priests with a Weberian notion of charisma explaining the emergence of Nuer prophets. Based on these well-known ethnographically informed theoretical discussions on charisma, this paper aims to add to the concept a link with the Boasian tradition, represented by Leslie Spier, Frank Speck, Irving Hallowell, and Anthony Wallace, focusing on their accounts on North American prophets and millenarian dance movements. In the process of doing so, this paper will also engage with discussions on worldviews and ontology, rituals and iterability, as well as imitation and innovation.

Frauke Ahrens – Christiane Schwab (Institute for European Ethnology and Cultural Analysis, Ludwig-Maximilians-University of Munich, Germany)

We have always been (trans-)national? Folklore historiography on trial, 1875–1905

The historiography of folklore studies has been traditionally influenced by national narratives. Taking into account new approaches in the history of knowledge, however, it becomes necessary to investigate how transnational factors have shaped its development as well: To what extent have transnational processes contributed to the formation, professionalization, and systematization of folkloristic knowledge and practice? Is it possible to speak of transnational folklore research in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries? These thought-provoking questions are at the core of the research project titled 'Actors – Narratives – Strategies: Constellations of Transnational Folklore Research, 1875–1905', funded by the German Research Foundation. The project examines 'transnational folklore research' as both a finding and an interpretative framework, to not only provide an initial and significant contribution to the transnational historiography of folklore studies but also reconsider the established narratives within disciplinary historiographies as well as the associated self-understandings. In our lecture, we will outline the foundational ideas and preliminary research that led to the development of this project. Additionally, we wish to discuss with other panel members the methodology and theoretical approaches we intend to employ, along with the specific questions and terminologies we plan to utilize to conceive and analyze 'transnational folklore research' from 1875 to 1905. Furthermore, we will address and explore the methodological and field-specific challenges that the project faces, offering potential solutions for overcoming them. By presenting our project, we hope to foster conversations about the transnational dimensions of folklore studies and its disciplinary history.

Dorina Arapi (Qendra e Studimeve dhe e Publikimeve për Arbëreshët, QSPA, Albania)

Anthropological insights for understanding traditional culture and its relation to the past legacies and its interpretations of the present

In my experience as an anthropologist, and during my researches about traditional culture, I have come across with two aspects that encouraged me to explore regarding the anthropology of tradition in Albania. During the socialist period in Albania (1945-1990), the political ideology impacted the communitarian collective memory, thus twisting its perception about the past and heritage. During the fieldwork, I have observed that local communities bear different points of view about their cultural past by articulating various perceptions, such as rejection, acceptance, distance or contestation. By exploring the archival records, “hidden and silent voices” (Zeitlyn: 2012) have emerged displaying unspoken realities thus leading to question what traditional culture is. On the other hand, the Albanian scholars, following the socialist politics, claimed that the study of culture and people were a matter of history, and ethnography was considered to be a historical discipline conceived under the interpretation and methodological framework of historical materialism. Various Albanian scholars defined culture with the term “popular culture”, arguing that culture emanated, used and consumed by the people. Between the terms “popular culture” and “traditional culture”, (the latter is what I stand for), it became natural and indispensable to inquire about anthropological knowledge production during Socialism in Albania, as well as on its legacy and impact on the people. Facing these two aspects, I have been focusing on inquiring about an anthropology of tradition in the Albanian case, which takes in consideration two subtopics that I intend to present in this paper: the first, the local community and cultural self-perception in front of the archival sources; and the second, the study of the traditional culture in its specific political context makes necessary an approach to a history of anthropological knowledge production. The triple perspective of anthropology as a field-based research, the archival data as a diachronic approach, and the exploration of how the anthropological knowledge is produced during totalitarian contexts, challenges the anthropologist to embrace new perspectives in analyzing culture and its relation to communities, anthropology and the role of the state in knowledge production.

Julio Andrés Camarillo Quesada (University Paris Cité, France)

Governmental Practices in Mexico: Their Anthropological Theories and Scientific Paradigms

Anthropology has found Mexico to be an intriguing fieldwork space, attracting many notable figures in the discipline. Moreover, the country has been a crucial context where anthropology became an auxiliary science for the government since the early 20th century, influencing national ideals, public and social policies. I explore the relationship between Mexican government's indigenous policies and the succession of various anthropological schools and theories throughout the 20th century. These include Franz Boas' culturalism, Bronisław Malinowski's structuralism, and Julian H. Steward and Maurice Godelier's multilineal evolutionism. The presentation aims to categorize the multitude of authors into scientific discursive blocks, or paradigms/epistemes. The first

identified paradigm is evolutionism, which provided coherence to the nascent ethnology in the late 19th century. However, as it faced criticism and scrutiny, it gave way to systemism, focused on analyzing synchronic relationships within functional sets. Within the theory and practice of the Mexican indigenous institute, this transition can be observed in the adoption of the "intercultural systems" framework in the 1950s. This framework defined indigenous peoples based on their subordination to non-indigenous centers. In the 1970s, amidst vigorous national and international debates, the thesis of the transition from caste to class was rejected, challenging a fundamental aspect of institutional evolutionism. Consequently, a less invasive governmental approach emerged, emphasizing indigenous involvement as actors through self-management to overcome subordination and later through human capital logic to align with the economic system. This presentation offers, then, a history of anthropology that connects the specific Mexican case with broader scientific paradigms.

Session II [14:30-16:15 pm CET]

Margaret Crump (Independent researcher)

When 'culture' meant 'growing things': Countering anachronistic interpretations of James Cowles Prichard's pre-paradigmatic anthropology

Historians have generally ignored or dismissed James Cowles Prichard's contributions to the development of anthropology. Rather than tracing its history through this Briton's early Victorian, discomfiting Christian monogenic, linguistic and human origin-focussed preoccupations, they have favoured tidier presentist, progressivist milestones like the first definition of culture or the promulgation of fieldwork, especially when the product of a compatriot. The bulk and range of Prichard's anthropological output; misleadingly selective and superficial sampling of his views; often anachronistic comprehension of his nomenclature; dearth of biographical material; and neglect of cultural context have inhibited an historicist, comprehensive study of Prichard. A recent lecturer at the British Library on the anthropology of R. L. Stevenson emphatically stated "there was no anthropology before Tylor." Further counting against Prichard in the realm of anachronistic historiography are: his distracting non-anthropological achievements and career as a physician connoting amateur anthropologist status; lack of university qualification or professorship in anthropology; his delegation of fieldwork to others; and his Christian bias. More subtle is assassination by linguistic anachronism. Because Prichard intended his terms 'ethnology' or the 'science of man' to comprise anthropology's future four fields and he thus avoided 'anthropology,' he is misleadingly denominated a mere ethnologist. His volumes' greater proportion of biological, geographical and linguistic over cultural and archaeological material rather reflects the formers' greater availability at that time. Prichard's failure to employ the term 'culture'

prochronistically and his parachronistic use of 'race' have also led historians astray. This paper attempts an historical relativistic outline of Prichard and his anthropology.

Shivangi Kaushik (Department of International Development, University of Oxford, UK)

Remembering and Re-Honouring Regina Gelana Twala and Ella Townsend

Regina Gelana Twala, a Zulu anthropologist was overshadowed throughout her entire life and died after a losing an arduous and brave fight with cancer. Her copious, meticulous collaborations and mediations honouring the people of Swahili were overshadowed (Cabrita 2023) by the gatekeepers of Western academia. Erna Brodber, a Jamaican author through the fictional character of Ella Townsend (Brodber, 1994) (Sharpe, 2020) tried to immortalize the contributions of Zora Neale Hurston, whose recent resurgence has redefined how anthropology positions and values ethnographic work carried out by women of colour. This paper then suggests that even though we pay homage and respect to our foremothers of anthropology, however the question that still remains is if these narratives act more than merely reminding us of structural inequalities and inhibitions that influence the production of anthropological knowledge today. How do we then untap the potential held by the narratives of our foremothers to understand gendered, racialized, sexed or ethnicized subjectivities as they emerge both within and outside of academia, today?

Lucie Rondeau du Noyer (CIRED, France)

Bridging the gap between economic anthropology and sociology of development: an overview of H el ene Legotien's work at the S ED ES (1959 – 1975)

H el ene Legotien's contribution to French social sciences is as unknown as her death is famous. While it is common knowledge that she was murdered by her husband Louis Althusser on November 16th 1980, the content of the work she produced as a researcher for the S ED ES – a private consulting firm set up by the French state in order to study and design development programs in newly-decolonized African states – has never been thoroughly investigated. Based on archival work and providing the first comprehensive bibliography of Legotien's work as a social scientist, this paper focuses on the way in which Legotien engaged in the early seventies with the work of Claude Meillassoux, Emmanuel Terray and Pierre-Philippe Rey. It especially shows that the goal of her report « on the internal and external structures of the traditional African agricultural economy » was twofold: extending young marxist and althusserian anthropologists' theories on pre-capitalist societies by paying special attention to these societies' means of reproduction and proposing concrete solutions to overcome the rural development crisis then underway in the formerly colonised

countries. By studying both the sources and the reception of Legotien's report, this paper ultimately qualifies the commonly-received view according to which, though politically radical and read by scholars worldwide, the French school of economic anthropology, did not have any impact on development policies and applied social sciences.

Ildiko Kristof (Hungarian Academy of Sciences / Eötvös Loránd Research Network, Hungary)

'The Letters of the 'Red-Skinned Man's White-Skinned Mother-In-Law' and Native American Anthropology in Austria-Hungary at the Turn of the 19th and the 20th Century

In the 1890s, newspapers in Budapest, Hungary published reports about the Pine Ridge Oglala Lakota Indian Reservation in South Dakota. These reports were in Hungarian and were written by an elderly woman from Vienna, Austria whose daughter married an Oglala Lakota. They met in 1890/91, when Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show was touring Eastern Europe. The daughter's mother accompanied the couple to the Pine Ridge Reservation in the United States and began writing personal – and far from romanticizing – reports back home for the Austro-Hungarian newspapers on the daily life of the Sioux. My presentation will analyse these reports in relation to the contexts – academic and popular – in which ethnographic-anthropological knowledge about the Native Americans could be gained in Austria-Hungary in the late 19th century. The letters of the 'Red-Skinned Man's White-Skinned Mother-In-Law' offer a particular contrast both to the late-evolutionist, dry, measuring methodology of academic discourse and to the exoticizing world of the urban circuses and Völkerschauen. The letters of the mother-in-law offer a third approach based on internal, emic, meticulous observations focusing on the social and material conditions of life on the Sioux reservation after the Wounded Knee massacre (1890) and they convey it to the East-European readership of newspapers in Vienna and Budapest. I will argue that they should become an essential part of the history of anthropology of the region, from which they are still missing.

Antoine Leveque (Université Paris Cité, France)

Racial equality in early ethnological and anthropological institutions – two case studies in 19th century France

Since the beginning of the 21st century, the idea that all humans are biologically endowed with similar intellectual abilities is a consensual stance in scientific communities. The opposite was true in 19th century “white science”. When ethnology was first established as a discipline in France, it was defined as “the science of race” and helped push various colonial agendas. In this paper, we are going to look at the French case and study how the concept of racial equality was received in early ethnological and anthropological institutions. Two case

studies will constitute the bulk of this paper. They represent some of the rare occurrences of racial equality in western science from 1750 to 1885. First, we will look at some lectures given by French abolitionist Victor Schoelcher at the Ethnological Society of Paris (ESP) during the late 1840's. After a brief analysis of Schoelcher's talks, we will see how the administrators of the ESP reacted to his thesis, according to which all 'mankind' is biologically equipped in the same way when it comes to intellectual abilities. Our second case study will focus on Anténor Firmin, a very dark-skinned Haitian intellectual and member of the Anthropological Society of Paris (ASP). Here, we will first see how he joined this learned society, which was then the most powerful exoteric center of racialist science in the world. Then, we will study how the ASP received his 1885 book titled 'Of the equality of the Human Races'.