

A proposal for an special issue of the journal:

Ethnologie Française

Towards an Anthropology of Europe: The Teaching Dimension

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Abstracts:

Introduction and Presentation

By the editors, [Martine Segalen](#) and [Andrés Barrera](#)

This special issue of *Ethnologie Française* brings together a selection of papers presented at the European Science Foundation 'exploratory workshop' *Towards an Anthropology of Europe*. We have singled out papers having primarily to do with the teaching dimensions of the theme. It thus makes a coherent volume that will be useful in reflecting upon the educational challenges that lay ahead of us in the pursuit to build an Anthropology of Europe; as well as in what concerns the future of Anthropology at this particular conjuncture in Europe. It should therefore be instrumental in opening avenues for cooperation; and in providing ideas for implementing collaborative teaching-training programmes on a European wide scale. The editors will summarize the main and fundamental issues at stake in this regard. Moreover, they will present and briefly comment on each individual paper in this introductory chapter.

Social Anthropology, Ethnology and Europe

by [Martine Segalen](#), Université de Nanterre, Paris-X

Social anthropology is today placed in a classic situation, at once a so-called science, providing tools to analyze and understand the cultures and societies of Europe and also, as an actor, delineating lines for a better understanding between all of us, in peace, at last in this part of the world. The paper will briefly deal with the history of the « European anthropological endeavours » to reflect on the challenges facing our project, that for instance of constructing together a common teaching programme to understand the new Europe in the making. What are our common references nowadays, between the powerful forces of uniformisation and the also very powerful forces of differentiation? To provide some hints about the same queries in an adjacent field, it will also present shortly the projects of the Museums which are to be devoted to Europe.

Towards an Anthropology of Europe. Outline for a teaching-training agenda
by [Andrés Barrera](#), Universidad Complutense, Madrid.

The first part of the paper consists of a critical account of Anthropology's scholarly legacy in its relatively short history as an academic discipline. Along the way, some reflections are articulated on the implications of this legacy for its teaching and learning in different historic and national contexts. The second part of the paper presents and discusses a particular proposal for a course on The Anthropology of Europe, relying on the experience of the author in devising and teaching such a course at Universidad Complutense, Madrid.

This is not a 'canonical' anthropology or ethnology course, in that it is fully open to other disciplines and authors, besides anthropologists, who have written about Europe. The course is characterized by a thematic approach; it is a problem-oriented course, not avoiding the most pressing contemporary debates. We want students to learn about specific themes and topics in historic and contemporary Europe; and to this end we draw on the relevant literature available, be it ethnological, anthropological or otherwise. The course also aims explicitly at construing an Anthropology of Europe; that is, to contribute to a cultural understanding and interpretation of this historic and emerging entity we name 'Europe'.

What Are the Opportunities and Challenges of the European Higher Education and Research Areas for the Anthropology of Europe?, by [Alexandra Bitusikova](#), European University Association, Brussels

The paper deals with the development of the European Higher Education and Research Areas and their impact on social sciences, particularly on social anthropology/ ethnology in Europe. It focuses mainly on teaching programmes at Master and PhD level and describes opportunities for anthropology courses that have expanded by building two open education and research areas. The author discusses implications of the processes on anthropology/ ethnology of Europe and drafts new challenges and perspectives for the discipline. She brings examples of programmes that can be followed and good practice that can lead to strengthening cooperation among social anthropologists in Europe.

The Sussex Programme on The Anthropology of Europe
by [Jon P. Mitchell](#), University of Sussex

This paper is based on seven years' experience of teaching the Anthropology of Europe at Masters level at the University of Sussex. In exploring the development of the syllabus in the Anthropology of Europe, it argues that in teaching – but also in research – it must be considered an interdisciplinary endeavour. After a detailed discussion of the notion of interdisciplinarity, the paper focuses on key areas of Europeanist Anthropology – political and ethnic nationalism; European integration; transnational migration – demonstrating the need for an interdisciplinary approach in understanding these processes. Finally, it reflects on the position of Anthropology in relation to other Euro-focused disciplines, particularly Contemporary European

Studies, which is establishing itself as a discipline in its own right – suggesting that just as ‘we’ have much to learn from ‘them’, so too ‘we’ anthropologists have much to offer to ‘their’ discussions of European processes.

Anthropology and the Study of Circum-Alpine Societies

by P. Paolo Viazzo, University of Torino.

The first aim of this paper is to outline the basic themes in the anthropological study of the ‘Circum-Alpine area’, a cultural and geographical zone that includes most of the upland regions of Southern and Central Europe. Special attention is paid to the main phases of the development of Alpine anthropology from the few pioneering studies conducted before the Second World War through its ‘expansive moment’ between the 1950s and the 1980s up to the present day: an initial and persisting interest in social change, the adoption of cultural-ecological and ecosystemic models in the analysis of the relationships between environment, population and social structure, the study of ethnicity and the formation of identities at regional and local levels.

The paper also shows that the Circum-Alpine area has been the scene of encounters between local scholars steeped in Southern or Central European traditions of anthropological or ethnological research and ‘foreign’ anthropologists coming from North-Western Europe and the United States. In some cases, this has generated tensions and misunderstandings; in other cases, once the initial difficulties created by a mutual lack of familiarity with (and respect for) different traditions has been overcome, this has led to collaborative work and an enrichment of the research agenda. An analysis of these encounters offers interesting insights into the history of ‘Europeanist’ anthropology and offers relevant lessons for any attempt to build an Anthropology of Europe.

Teaching Through the Archives: American Anthropology in Ireland, Harvard Irish Survey (1931-1936) by Anne Byrne, National University of Ireland.

After the first decades of the twentieth century, the rural communities of Clare were objects of the visiting anthropologists’ gaze and pen, investigating rural anomie and social cohesion in the context of the rapid transformation of European rural societies. Spanning a forty year period, American anthropologists such as Arensberg and Kimball in the 1930s, Cresswell in the mid 1960s, followed by Gallaher in the late 1960s have minutely described the family, community, farm economy and kinship relations in a number of rural areas in North and West Clare. Their legacy is evident in their writings and publications on community studies and anthropological methods, providing a rich resource for teaching anthropology and for contemporary scholars providing baseline data for any future studies of the region.

This paper explores the merits and challenges of re-investigating previous anthropological studies so that more can be learned about the socio-political and intellectual context in which the research took place. Anthropologists of the period in question were spare in describing their methodological approaches and concerns. Thus historical research into the archives of these projects provide clues to the methodological frames and theoretical concerns which informed their work.

Archives also reveal how long and for what periods anthropologists remained in the field, their position in households, the range of their contacts, how they gathered and recorded data, who were their informants, about whom did they gather information and crucially how those observed responded. Additional biographical information on the visiting anthropologist themselves, their motivations, training, experience and teachers influences can also be gleaned, all of which inform practices in the field as much as in the texts produced.

In this paper I discuss the Harvard-Irish Survey of Ireland (1931-1936) and in particular the task of accessing, compiling and working with the social anthropological archives of that Survey. The location, range and content of archival material is examined revealing fieldwork approaches and methodology. Through archival research it is possible to speculate on the theoretical, methodological and other external constraints placed on publishing a range of data collected. Questions are raised concerning research relations at the site of the research (at the level of the church, state, community and household for example) as well as the relationship between the Irish study, Irish ethnography and sociology, and American social anthropology.

Teaching The Anthropology of Europe in Hungary

by [Mihály Sárkány](#), Hungarian Academy of Sciences

This paper summarises the project to carry out a re-study of the village of Vársány, in Hungary, in the context of other projects to revisit classical sociological and anthropological studies, like that of Dolní Roven, Czech Republic, carried out by Peter Skalník. Moreover I will discuss my experience in teaching a course on the Anthropology of Europe in Budapest, to draw conclusions which might be useful in pursuing a collaborative project such as outlined in the ESF workshop. I will also reflect on research carried out for several years which fits a Europeanist framework as well.

Socio-Cultural Anthropology in the Teaching Agendas of Bulgarian Universities: Development and Perspectives, by [Magdalena Elchinova](#), New Bulgarian University, Sofia.

In Bulgaria Anthropology is a young academic discipline. Its development has started in the 1990s, after the fall of state socialism. In spite of its very dynamic development during the last 15 years, sociocultural anthropology has been introduced only in a very few universities in the country. As a newly established discipline it faces a number of problems, related to gaining a regular institutional position, an indisputable identity of its own, wider public recognition, etc. This paper is an attempt at describing the major trends in the development of academic anthropology in Bulgaria throughout its short history of existence. It comments on the following issues:

1. What was the sociopolitical context, which induced the development of anthropology in Bulgaria in the early 1990s, and how did it influence the debates on the nature and orientation of anthropological studies?

2. Which national academic traditions did anthropology in Bulgaria draw upon (i.e. folklore studies, ethnography, history, philosophy, sociology) and how did each of them in particular take part in the debate about the nature of ethnographic practice?
3. What is the impact of the established anthropological traditions (British, French, German, American) upon the shaping of the identity of sociocultural anthropology in Bulgaria?

Focusing on the organization and contents of university programs of anthropology, the paper also comments on certain matters of dispute that have shaped the profile of the discipline in Bulgaria, such as: what is 'true' anthropology, is anthropology 'at home' as valuable and influential as the anthropological study of faraway societies and cultures, which pattern(s) and methods should be given preference in search for a 'true' anthropology, etc. Finally, the paper tries to outline the perspectives for the development of anthropological studies in Bulgaria as becoming more interdisciplinary and engaged in topical social issues.

European Ethnology as Intercultural Area Studies,

by [Ullrich Kockel](#), University of the West of England, Bristol.

The teaching of Area Studies has long suffered from an academic arrogance on the part of its critics who see the increasing popularity of the subject as yet another indicator of its lacking academic rigour. At the same time, with student recruitment to language programmes declining, the teaching of Area Studies has become a growing field of activity for professional language teachers not only at Anglophone universities. In the United Kingdom, where European Ethnology is virtually absent from the university curriculum, many practitioners find themselves working in Modern Languages departments that have recently been partly (or even entirely) converted to Area Studies. This raises specific problems, but it also presents new opportunities.

It takes as its starting point two case studies from the author's personal experience: the position of Irish Studies, established as interdisciplinary Area Studies *outside* the Modern Languages framework; and, the position of European Studies, arising *within* that framework. It then considers current attempts, emanating from both positions, to develop a postgraduate curriculum for European Ethnology, examining the particular issues of interdisciplinarity and interculturality. In conclusion, the author assesses the prospects for a European ethnology in and of England in the wider United Kingdom and European context.

Anthropology and Ethnology in General European Secondary Education: Some arguments and remarks by [Rajko Mursic](#), University of Ljubljana.

The author will discuss an urgent need to introduce anthropology/ethnology into European secondary education curricula. His main argument is that transnational capitalism, globalization and enlargement processes in the EU are dramatically transforming European societies. The need to become cross-culturally literate is becoming evident. Just like literacy has been important for functioning of early capitalism, as Ernest Gellner claimed, cross-cultural (or cultural) literacy is becoming a necessary condition in the working of late capitalism. Nowadays, every working age individual in Europe will have to face inter and cross-cultural diversity

at his or her working place, no matter whether he or she is an employee or an employer.

Furthermore, the knowledge of cultural diversity and Humanity's universals is essential in order that the "risk society" would not become the society of terror. The author will briefly describe the education situation in former Yugoslavia and the efforts to unify the curricula with the so-called common educational kernels – and its failure. Based on this negative example he will propose an introduction of a common European course on diversities and similarities within and outside Europe, nationalisms, ethnicities, traditions, ways of life in past and present, popular culture, etc. He will also stress benefits from such a common project for the field of ethnology/anthropology itself.

Plural Cities and Civic Ethnography: Teaching High-School Anthropology in Interactive Research Settings by [Hana Cervinková](#), University of Lower Silesia, Wrocław.

This paper is based on a pilot project undertaken by the author in collaboration with international partners at the University of Hradec Kralove in the Czech Republic, with the financial support from the International Visegrad Fund. The project, entitled Plural Cities and Civic Ethnography, is an experiment in teaching social sciences to pre-academic level students by using the city as a research laboratory for studying civil society and human diversity. The project centers on a five-month class for senior level students in two high-schools in Hradec Kralove and Wrocław, and is taught by Czech and Polish anthropologists-educators who plan and coordinate with each other. The goal of the class is to enable students to learn fundamental concepts of cultural anthropology as the science of human diversity and cultural enquiry not by memorizing facts about distant cultures, but by discovering diversity in their immediate surroundings.

The class requires students to conduct first-hand research in non-governmental organizations, religious and other community associations in their home cities. The project tests the use of qualitative research as a learner-focused method of transmitting knowledge about human society and culture. In the paper, the author reflects on the possibilities of using 'research' as a teaching tool. She argues that qualitative research, which requires the researcher to 'get involved' with the world of her subjects, fosters self-reflection, which leads to greater general involvement of the learner in the learning process. By strategically selecting civil society organizations and associations as research settings, such methodological approach can help students learn practical lessons about the struggles of active citizenship. In addition, an early exposure to cultural anthropology can stimulate continuing interest of students in this field of social enquiry.

Teaching Socio-Cultural Anthropology in the Baltic States: Lithuania's case by [Vytyis Ciubrinskas](#), Vytautas Magnus University

Anthropology in the Baltics has a very short history comparing with nationally in-rooted ethnology. The term anthropology is used in the countries of Central/East Europe without definite meaning. The distinction between anthropology and 'national anthropology' had to be made in order to promote the former into the

curriculum. ‘Group(o)logy’ rather than ‘studies of mankind’ was central for nation-state building periods. It also fulfilled the ethno-nationalistic zeal of the local intelligentsia during the Soviet regime. National past (traditions) oriented and on questionnaires and interviews with seated informants based ethnography in Volkskundian (European Ethnology) understanding, has little to do with the comparative perspective and the Malinowskian *participatory presentism*. Such a methodological standard didn’t reach the Baltic States until early 1990s; and even when it was employed, it was obscured by the post-modern *crisis of representation*. Malinowski came into the curriculum at the same time as James Clifford.

Politically speaking the discipline was challenged by the nationalist ideology of ‘singing revolution’, which prioritized the disciplines of national heritage like national history and national ethnology. Thus it was not ‘politically correct’ to teach on Africa or Oceania. New paradigms in the discipline such as ‘anthropology at home’ or ‘anthropology of the contemporary world’ or ‘anthropology of Central/East Europe’ proved themselves to be central for curriculum development.

Since the 1990’s the Scandinavian and British models made an impact onto the local curriculum development. Due to TEMPUS/SOCRATES exchanges some of Lithuanian students received their MA’s in Sweden and a couple of Latvian students defended their PhDs in Britain. In the Baltics, Lithuania took the lead: the first journal in the field *Lithuanian Ethnology: Studies in Social Anthropology and Ethnology* was founded; the First Baltic Anthropology Conference held, and recently the first MA Program in Social Anthropology was launched in the second largest university of Lithuania, Kaunas.

Teaching the Anthropology of Post-Socialist Europe

by [László Kürti](#), University of Miskolc, Hungary

In this paper several questions are raised in order to answer how far has the anthropology of Eastern Europe progressed since the collapse of the Berlin Wall. Since the past 15 years anthropologists have investigated the phenomenon, referred to as „transit” from centrally planned socialist society to a free market, multi-party democratic system. What, if any, were the consequences of the past 15 years for the people we study and for the social processes at the local level? How about the anthropological discipline we are part of? In this analysis examples are provided in order to highlight some of the more problematic aspects of the anthropology of postsocialist Europe, and how that Europe is conceived in the anthropological curricula.