

## **59. Philosophy and Anthropology: Border-Crossings and Transformations**

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Anthropological research is rarely reflective about its philosophical presuppositions, though anthropologists necessarily bring particular philosophical/ontological biases to their analysis. Anthropologies inspired by Durkheim are profoundly influenced by Kant; Evans-Pritchard's ideas are stamped with R. G. Collingwood's Hegelian philosophy; Gluckman was stimulated by Whitehead's process philosophy; and Bourdieu drew inspiration from Wittgenstein, Heidegger, and others. Yet the fuller implications of shifting philosophical influences in anthropology are scarcely addressed. We propose that the implications of these influences call for deep questioning of the philosophical presuppositions themselves. As a comparative inquiry into the human condition, anthropology can bring to this questioning a singular creativity. For instance, consider the current hegemonic tendency in anthropology (traceable especially to Nietzsche through Foucault) to grasp all things social solely as matters of power. This tends to result in an ethnocentric picture of ethics as simply a form of (witting or unwitting) subterfuge, and it leaves no room to consider the ethical dimension of human existence in its own right. Yet there are some current philosophical ideas (e.g., Levinas or Derrida, not to mention non-Western philosophical traditions such as Buddha and Gandhi) suggesting that this prevailing anthropo-philosophical presumption has consequential shortcomings. Addressing anthropologies through philosophies, philosophies through anthropologies, will help open to question present trajectories through which we tend to move uncritically because we incline to take them for granted. With a view to creative crossings, our workshop intends to explore historically, analytically, and inventively the borderlands of anthropology and philosophy, and the transformations that await them both.

Kant and Anthropology

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Kant's Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View had called for an anthropology which would be of use to society. He had also given primacy on self-consciousness as contrasted with a physiological model of being human. Kant's engagement with anthropology was also part of an incipient movement of practical and popular philosophy, one which is not just subordinated to metaphysical systems, and expressed in the following lines of Herder: "What fruitful new developments would not arise if only our whole philosophy would become anthropology." My paper discusses the Kantian project of anthropology and also carries out a dialogue between Kant and anthropology beyond the Kantian framework itself. It critically discusses the

Kantian roots of dualisms in anthropology and explores the possibility of a new non-dual foundation for anthropology. It explores the project of a new global anthropology that takes seriously Kant's striving for peace, global justice, moral critique of politics and cosmopolitanism. Furthermore, it seeks to deepen and widen our universe of discourse by carrying out a transcivilizational dialogue with Gandhi, especially Gandhi's emphasis on non-violence, self-cultivation and the capacity to undertake suffering for the sake of peace and justice.

Being and Others in the World

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Heidegger's Dasein seems an attractive concept for anthropologists, combining all the elements of sociality: the state of being thrown into an already existing world, a self-projecting personal existence with an open future, and the world-in-common of discourse in our personal relations and preoccupations. But Heidegger also holds that authentic Dasein is betrayed by the comforting commonality of the everyday world, which encourages us to move automatically in established routes and think of ourselves as things defined by our relations in a world of things. Inspired by Gadamer, Ricoeur, and Kewa ethnography, I seek a route back from ontology to epistemology, where rootedness in the world is not opposed to communication with others, and ethics is constitutive of both.

Rationality and Alterity

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[tforte@bgumail.bgu.ac.il](mailto:tforte@bgumail.bgu.ac.il) Anthropological research agendas in regard to theoretical questions of the moment are consistently expressed in terms of rational reasoning, which colors researchers' perception, analysis and representation of phenomena. On the one hand, we are involved in the production of alterity as we attempt to describe and explain cultural, social or political "logics other than our own." On the other, we subsume otherness within a rational frame that appears to allow for and explain alternative ways of thinking. The idea that there must be "some kind of logic" at work within sociopolitical and cultural phenomena in fact prevents us from considering theoretical alternatives. For instance, could one envision and analyze research sites where multiple logics have become amalgamated and cannot be disentangled? Alternatively, are there places where no logic is at work, and where looking for rationality prevents us from understanding? How could these be thought about? This paper will discuss specific ethnographic cases drawn from my work on the media and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in which such questions have come to light, and explore alternative ways of thinking about them.

Twins are Birds and Men are Whales: At Sea with Melville, Deleuze and the Nuer

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To obviate the rationalist implication that the Nuer declaration "twins are birds" is stupid, Evans-Pritchard, investing a symbolic anthropology, interpreted the statement as a serious-minded figure of speech. As against Evans-Pritchard's interpretation I will argue that the Nuer understand their statement in some ordinary sense. Taking a turn towards Lévy-Bruhl and Wittgenstein, my argument supposes that the Nuer's

received perception of the world differs from that of the West. And, theorizing the relative validity of the Nuer perception, the argument appeals to Melville's fictional but philosophical tale of the identity between whales and men, as well as to Deleuze and Guattari's molecularist ontology. The success of my anthropological exercise depends thus on ontology.

The Phenomenology of Embodiment and the Practice of Theory

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The paper will concentrate on perspectives on spirit and especially demonic possession. The aim will be to contrast different forms of possession and the nature of embodiment. Overall the objective will be to engage a phenomenology that breaks free of various kinds of symbolic constructionism. The materials addressed will be from Christian America, Buddhist Sri Lanka and East Africa.

Anthropology Beyond Anthropocentrism: Asian Re-Readings of Philosophical Anthropology

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The notion of philosophical anthropology has virtually disappeared from English-speaking anthropology. Philosophical anthropology, often concerned with the problem of defining human nature, fell prey to postmodernist and deconstructionist attacks on essentialism and universalism. Other strands are associated with phenomenology, and relationships between anthropology and philosophy have threaded western thought since Kant, and more recently in the work of Heidegger and Wittgenstein. This paper discusses the development of philosophical anthropology, questioning what happens to its preoccupations from a non-western perspective. This is occurring in African philosophy, and has long since happened in Japanese philosophy, particularly in the "Kyoto School", through its dialogues between modern western philosophy on the one hand and Buddhism and Shinto on the other. The paper explores the analyses of the Kyoto School and related forms of Japanese philosophical/social thought for a range of classical western issues having major implications for the understandings of the body/mind problem, humanity/nature, human suffering, and the constitution of society and culture from a Buddhist perspective.

Night

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Which phenomenon, apart from day, is as everpresent, if not night? And which of the two is least studied in anthropology? Anthropology and phenomenology are lucid disciplines, heirs of the European Enlightenment. They labor at making phenomenal worlds explicit in the clarity of their lineaments, whatever their complexity. So, is it happenstance that anthropological fieldwork and phenomenological world-building concentrate their analytical optics on the visible, generally that made visible by the light of day? That their intellectual aims are to bring worlds out of darkness into the light? And that by doing so, the night, in particular, is quite ignored in both disciplines? I argue that, when it comes into existence, an anthropology of night will

benefit greatly from phenomenology. Indeed, the two should meet in the night. Phenomenological thinking provides orientations that will enable anthropology to appreciate that night is neither an extension of day nor its contrary, but rather other dimensions of existence as yet dimly explored. Might this endeavor also have consequences for the lucid visions of anthropology and phenomenology?

Development as global responsibility : in search of a new meaning

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Development as we have come to know it in the last five to six decades has exhausted itself. Development has come to mean almost anything in global relationships. As a result perhaps nothing is left. The different policies, institutions and practices which have come about have lost a sense of direction, and move erratically. In this paper I wish to make some comments confronting development as a nihilistic enterprise, that is a process of prolonged institutional fragmentation and loss of meaning. The two go hand in hand. The manifold discourses of meaning in development emerging over time have gradually lost any sense of purpose and of authenticity. This leads to a second point which is: what can we do about it. I shall argue that we need to reinvent the core idea of development as global responsibility. What might this imply? In coping with the two issues I shall try to link some debates in development anthropology and moral philosophy.

