

CALL FOR A EASA-NETWORK

“The anthropology of social movements”

Objective:

In his recent volume, *Social Movements. An Anthropological Reader*, June Nash (2004) states that

«(a)nthropologists who once ignored the intrusion of national and international in their field, are now among the principal observers of social movements (...). Although the potential of these movements is often underestimated, it is in these circuits once considered marginal to global processes that the major changes occurring. Because of their cultivated peripheral vision, anthropologists are in a position to asses new directions».

The network aims to take up this methodological challenge and to bring together different scholars of movements interested in accounts and experiences of ethnographic research. It wishes to discuss the specific potential of qualitative approaches for their studies, contributing to the creation of new theoretical frameworks and studies of social movements in a broad range of diverse global settings, beyond the classical focus on indigenous movements. Thus, possible questions that are central for scholars engaged in the network may be:

- ▶ How changing movements of indigenous people, women and/or the disempowered the relationship with national and international actors? How do they extend the limits of what seems "thinkable"?
- ▶ How can we extend classical fieldwork methodologies in order to understand movements situated in a complex woven field of wider flows?
- ▶ How make ethnographers sense of the cultural production of emerging forms of activism such as media- and internet activism ?
- ▶ How distinguish researchers between the "categories of practices" employed by activists, and those of academic analysis? How position scholars themselves toward activists, often caught in an ambivalent relation of academic distance and more or less open expressed sympathy for causes?
- ▶ From which reliable sources can we create common theoretical frameworks? For example, how can "new movements" theories and its reflections on cultural production be applied in ethnography?

Activities:

The network has realised between 2009 and 2010 two international conferences (University of Muenster, Germany, and University of Milan, Italy) and is currently in the process of realizing two publications on the basis of these conferences. The aim of the network members is to continue to organize workshops and panel at the biennial conferences of the EASA and increase exchange and debate in an interdisciplinary perspective.

CONTACTS:

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