



EASA Newsletter 60

September 2013



Cover photo by Roger Canals

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1. Letter from the President

Noel B. Salazar

Dear EASA member,

I hope that you have had a wonderful summer.

Despite the nice weather and the holiday atmosphere surrounding us, it has been a couple of busy months at EASA and the executive committee has been quite active. Those involved in the scientific committee of our biennial meeting in Tallinn (from 31 July until 3 August 2014) are collaborating closely with the local organizing committee in Estonia. The conference has as theme 'Collaboration, Intimacy & Revolution' and the call for panels will be launched in due course. The meeting will give us all an opportunity to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the association, a moment of reflection to look both back and forward. As already announced in the previous newsletter, the executive committee went ahead with the creation of an ad hoc open access task force, with input from across Europe and beyond. A second task force, on 'young career anthropologists', is in the making. If you are interested in actively contributing to these task forces or if you feel there are other pressing issues that need EASA's attention, do not hesitate to get in touch with us.

Our journal, *Social Anthropology/Anthropologie Sociale*, is thriving as never before and is strategically promoting its contents on various social network channels. EASA further fine-tuned its web portal and our active presence on Facebook and Twitter as a strategic diffusion point of anthropology-related news and information is generating lots of interest from colleagues worldwide. I am also very happy to announce that

we have a new EASA book series editor, in the person of Eeva Berglund. We are now collaborating with Berghahn, our book publisher, to rethink the series' promotional strategy. Several of EASA's thematic networks have held their meetings, with financial support of the association, while more are announced before the end of the year.

As your president, I continued representing the interests of EASA, and of European anthropology in general, at various international fora, including the Initiative for Science in Europe (ISE), the World Council of Anthropological Associations (WCAA) and the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences (IUAES). In Brussels, talks are underway to revive the European Alliance for Social Sciences and Humanities (EASH), in which EASA hopes to continue playing a leading role. The upcoming launch of Horizon 2020, the new EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, will require much of our attention.

What's up next? The executive is currently preparing EASA's Annual General Meeting. The AGM will be held on Friday 4 October in Brussels, Belgium, and is open to all members. The meeting will start at 1.30 and be finished by 5 PM, making it easy for colleagues from neighbouring countries to come and join us for the day, or simply stay on for the weekend and discover the many hidden gems of Europe's capital. The agenda is available online. Colleague Nigel Rapport, from the University of St. Andrews, will deliver a keynote entitled 'Towards a cosmopolitan anthropology of human capacity and individual substance'. We're also very much looking forward to the first webinar entitled 'La langue et le savoir anthropologique/language and anthropological knowledge/língua e conhecimento antropológico'. This virtual multilingual seminar, in collaboration with AAA, ABA and CASCA, will take place in October.

Over the last couple of months, I have been fortunate to meet anthropologists across Europe, particularly in Italy, Austria, Slovenia, the UK and Belgium. Many EASA members were actively involved in the recent World Congress of the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences (IUAES) in Manchester. These multiple exchanges made me realize, once again, that there are many challenges ahead of us. However, a recent encounter with colleagues from Argentina also taught me to put our challenges in a

global perspective and to be thankful for the fact that EASA plays an increasingly important role in the European landscape of anthropology in particular and the social sciences and humanities in general.

All the best,
Noel B. Salazar, your president

2. Live EASA / ABA / AAA / CASCA Webinar
La langue et le savoir anthropologique/ Language and anthropological knowledge/ Língua e conhecimento antropológico/ La lengua en el conocimiento antropológico/

Date of live event: 15th October 2013. A virtual seminar pilot project.

A collaboration of four anthropological associations, EASA/ABA/AAA/CASCA (represented by Susana Narotzky, Bela Feldman-Bianco, Monica Heller, Marie-Nathalie LeBlanc). A multi-platform multi-lingual experiment. We hope you will participate. English -- French -- Portuguese -- Spanish

Background

In 2011, three anthropological associations, EASA, ABA and AAA, agreed to try out a variety of collaborative endeavours. These are pilot projects which are not meant to create their own hegemony, but rather to open up and encourage the construction of a global anthropology in practice. The first has been a series of panels at three scholarly meetings (ABA 2012, AAA 2012, IUAES 2013) under the heading of *Desplazamientos y desigualdades/ Deslocamentos e desigualdades/ Displacements and inequalities/ Déplacements et inégalités*. We now wish to propose a different format, under a different theme.

Theme

Língua e conhecimento antropológico/ La lengua en el conocimiento antropológico/ La langue et le savoir anthropologique/ Language and anthropological knowledge

This virtual seminar aims to explore the centrality of language in the production of anthropological knowledge and its political aspects, in two different albeit connected ways:

1. Language is central to the ethnographic encounter and sets the grounds for a potentially unequal interaction in the long term. Anthropologists have choices to make about how to represent the

knowledge they produce (in what language, what communicative variety, what genre, what medium) and in what communicative spaces to engage, no matter where they do their work or with whom. These are necessarily going to be shared unequally by all stakeholders, raising issues of power, expropriation and potential misrepresentation with possibilities for important consequences in policy and practice. While these issues have emerged along with the postcolonial critique of the discipline, sustained conversation and debate on equal terms remains minimal. What are the political and epistemological consequences of directly engaging with different accounts of practice and different expressions of knowledge and, by extension, anthropological traditions?

2. The global circulation of anthropological knowledge, and the shifting relations of power that it entails, has become more and more salient to anthropologists of all kinds. The growth of international organizations such as the World Council of Anthropological Associations or the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, and the increasing attention – and excitement – they attract, are testimony to commitments to greater inclusiveness in participation in the field and to resistance to centralization and hegemony. Anthropologists have begun to pay attention to a variety of issues connected to these efforts, including the role of digitalization, new media, distributed knowledge, and innovative research methods. Apart from some local conversations, however, we have not paid sustained attention to one of the central ways in which knowledge is constructed, circulated and evaluated: language in its different expressions and traditions. We are familiar with debates over the role of English as lingua franca versus global dominator, but have rarely examined the question empirically or engaged in open, systematic debate as a way to overcome the prevailing inequalities and make way for a variety of anthropological expressions.

Format

We want to engage with the challenges of new communicative media and propose to develop this virtual seminar in various digital platforms (including a YouTube real time projection of the live event with simultaneous Twitter interaction and blog and e-mail for other moments of the event). The webinar is an experiment both in collaboration between associations and in the use of IT for

facilitating this engagement and extending the debate. It will also be an experiment in multi-lingual interaction by scholars native to different language environments (French, Portuguese and English) that understand all three languages with various degrees of proficiency but are willing to make the effort at sharing ideas from a position of linguistic equivalence.

Four scholars, from four different parts of the world, will be invited to circulate a short text on the theme in the weeks preceding the live event. These texts will be made available on a platform to which all members of the four associations can choose to have access, for a period of ten days, starting 1 October 2013. During this period viewers can comment on the papers directly through the platform or e-mail. Four additional scholars will be invited to respond to these texts during the live event which will take place on the 15th of October 2013 and will be transmitted live through YouTube. This will be a one-hour webinar discussion among all eight, with the help of a chair and a moderator serving as the link with members interacting to the papers and event. For the following week, association members can participate in an on-line written discussion (that is, not in real time). At the end of that period the seminar will be closed.

3. 14th EASA Biennial Conference, Tallinn, Estonia

EASA2014

Collaboration, Intimacy & Revolution - innovation and continuity in an interconnected world

31st July - 3rd August, 2014

Estonian Humanities Institute, Tallinn, Estonia

EASA's next biennial conference will take place in the beautiful capital of Estonia next summer. The Scientific Committee finalised the theme over the summer and this can now be viewed on the conference website: www.easaonline.org/easa2014

The Call for Panels opens in mid-October. All members are encouraged to attend and consider proposing panels or papers.

Key dates:

Website launch: 01/10/2013

CFPan: 14/10/2013-09/12/2013

Decisions on panels: 22/12/2013

CFP: 27/12/2013-27/02/2014

Registration opens: 10/04/2014

End of early-bird rate: 22/05/2014

Theme

The 2014 EASA conference, which also celebrates the 25th anniversary of EASA's inaugural meeting, coincides with a quarter-century since the end of the Cold War and the events that triggered dramatic changes around the world. The 14th EASA Biennial Conference will be held in a region that experienced first-hand the socio-political reconfigurations emerging around that time. This conference aptly revolves around the complex intimacies and collaborations at play in bringing about revolutionary change.

20th century social theory, which accounts for the majority of anthropology's professional history, was characterized, amongst other things, by the belief that anthropos was a selfish and competitive being. The new millennium has distinguished itself already by new forms of empirical data, conceptual innovation, cross-disciplinary theorising, and vanguard technologies, which acknowledge, even multiply, anthropos' potential for cooperation.

EASA 2014 is an invitation to explore new collaborative practices and data sets at various levels and in multiple directions. It is also an invitation to explore concepts of collaboration as a way out of certain theoretical and methodological deadlocks in which many anthropologists have found themselves in past decades: the iron cage of structural functionalism has been pried open, for example, by intentional and collaborating social actors, and some of the bottomless deconstructions of postmodernism have been overcome by attention to the collective and collaborative making of meaning. We also invite colleagues to think about collaboration as not just a technical affair, but as an intimate process. Approaching collaboration as relations of intimacy opens up conceptual spaces to explore the basic terms of our contemporary world, including social and political change, community, kinship, social networks, activism and digital media.

One thematic direction for this conference includes attention to the technologies of, and for, intimate collaboration, such as those proliferating on the Internet. Virtual communication has changed the flow of information and spurred new types of cooperation previously unknown or impossible, but participants are, of course, also invited to consider the many forms of intimate collaborations beyond those related to new technology. Intimacy invokes emotion and the senses. The conference will pick up on the 'sensuous re-turn' in anthropology characterised by research practises that involve contextual, reflexive, ethnological and ethnographic fieldwork, participant observation, and thick description. Narrative, memory, ways of dealing with rapid and extreme social changes, the construction of self-identity in a globalising, inter-sensuous, and trans-subjective world, are all issues that EASA 2014 might consider. Such considerations are crucial in developing the conceptual tools and research practices which will help to maintain anthropology's standing as a discipline among other disciplines—especially at a time of concern for the discipline, when cultures of audit, speed and disposability impact on funding opportunities and what is valued in scholarship which, in turn, are blocking certain academic pathways.

Thinking of the intimacy of cooperation and collaboration may also change our perspective on the place of anthropos in the world. We might direct our attention to companion species for instance, or meshes, or networks, or thought nebula as agents in the terraforming of experience – in the attention paid to the 'noosphere' or the 'anthropocene'. We might think disaggregation of humanity along human/machine lines and its recombination in 'cyborg' anthropology, for example, or in our understandings of artificial intelligence. Further examples include the emergence of aggregate political subjects like Occupy or entities such as Anonymous.

Scrutinising the simultaneously mental and material processes of collaboration, we find that such processes are never constituted by smooth flows or unanimous connections alone. Rather, social and cultural worlds come into being through various, often disharmonious and conflicting modes and spheres of collaborating. Cooperation in all its forms is also frequently shot through with hierarchies and inequalities. Thinking in terms of intimate collaborations also necessitates asking about clashes, conflicts, and collusion (both tacit and explicit),

which frequently go hand in hand with declarations of cooperation and partnership. Ethnographers, with their sharp eye for hidden dynamics, are in a unique position to highlight the complexities, nuances and contradictions of collaboration.

Politically, new forms of collaboration are especially topical in terms of recent post-colonial developments around the world, including those in West Africa and in the aftermath of the 'Arab Spring', as well as links forged, for example, between rioters in Brazil and Turkey. This conference provides an opportunity to discuss topics such as the relations between networking technologies and social change; there is also an invitation to critically analyse the 'revolutions' which they are understood to facilitate.

For our professional practice, focusing on the revolutionary dynamics of collaborative intimacies can help us rethink the production of knowledge which anthropologists are currently engaged with. As a researcher inevitably participates in creating a web of collaboration while conducting fieldwork, he or she may encounter various dilemmas related to the intimacy of these collaborations. What is the meaning of intimacy for an anthropologist in a variety of fieldwork situations? Furthermore, do different mediums such as written text, documentary film, or sound recordings enable the researcher to create a different level of collaboration with the field, producing more collaborative anthropological knowledge as a result? Who and what collaborates to produce ethnographic knowledge? With many anthropologists exploring dissemination through new media, does our networked world usher in the end of the lone ethnographer? What would be lost if it did?

It is fortuitous that a conference addressing these themes will take place in Tallinn. Along with other Baltic states, Estonia initiated the 'Singing Revolution' which has been credited a central role in the country's move towards independence and post-Soviet reformations. Today, Estonia is equally at the forefront of the digital revolution – a socio-technological complex which is likely to have impacts analogous to those of the printing press 500 years ago. Through a focus on Collaboration, Intimacy and Revolution we invite you to explore not only the manifold social, political and cultural transformations around the world, but also to rethink some of our taken-for-granted conceptual tools.

CURRENT NETWORK ACTIVITIES

EASA Network Anthropology of Law and Rights

Heike Drotbohm, heike.drotbohm@ethno.uni-freiburg.de

The EASA network “anthropology of law and rights” prepares a workshop for December this year on “Mobility within and to the Global South. Alternative histories, labour policies and citizenship regimes”, which will take place on December 6/7 at the department for Social Anthropology at University of Cologne in Germany.

EASA’s Anthropology and Mobility Network

Roger Norum, Roger.Norum@anthro.ox.ac.uk

There are now more than 60 people registered for the Anthropology and Mobility Network’s two-day workshop on new ethnographic methodologies in the study of mobility and migration, to be held 27–28 September at the University of Oxford. There are still a few places left for non-presenting attendees – for more information and to register, visit www.compas.ox.ac.uk/mobmeth.

The EASA network on ‘Peace and Conflict Studies in Anthropology’ holds bi-annual meetings every other year when EASA does not convene. The next meeting is scheduled for 2015. PACSA will also invite network members to propose panels for the EASA conference in Tallinn in 2014.

A detailed conference report will be posted on <http://www.pacsa-web.eu/>. Interested colleagues can sign up to <http://lists.easaonline.org/listinfo.cgi/pacsa-easaonline.org>.

You can also like PACSA on facebook <https://www.facebook.com/peaceandconflictstudiesinanthropology> and see tweets from the conference <https://www.rebelmouse.com/pacsa2013/>.

EASA’s Mediterraneanist Network

William Kavanagh, williamkavanagh@hotmail.com

6th EASA Mediterraneanist (MedNet) Scientific Workshop (31 Oct. – 3 Nov. 2013, Mediterranean Institute, University of Malta) with the theme: Connecting spaces, constructing places, constituting memories: Comparative approaches in the anthropology of the Mediterranean

4. EASA on Facebook and Twitter

We are delighted to announce that over the past six months we have witnessed a considerable increase in the number of people following our Facebook and Twitter accounts.

For news on EASA’s activities and Networks, as well as general anthropological reportage and information, follow us at:

<https://twitter.com/EASAinfo>

<https://www.facebook.com/EASAinfo>

5. News from the Networks

NEW NETWORKS

European Network for Queer Anthropology

Paul Boyce (University of Sussex, p.boyce@sussex.ac.uk) and Elisabeth Engebretsen (International Institute for Asian Studies/Leiden University, elengebretsen@gmail.com)

The European Network for Queer Anthropology (ENQA), established spring 2013, aims to promote communication, develop teaching materials, enhance mentoring, and to serve as a professional network for people who work on sexual and gender diversity from an anthropological perspective. ENQA serves the interests of anthropologists who self-identify in terms of non-heteronormative sexualities or genders, however defined, in offering resources, support, and community. Anyone can be an ENQA member but the primary intention is for ENQA to forge networking between those located in Europe, and/or who work on queer issues, broadly defined, in a European context.

We are currently in the process of developing a Call for Papers for a special issue of the Sexualities journal, and we will host our first business meeting and elections at the 2014 EASA Meeting in Tallinn. More info here: <http://www.easaonline.org/networks/enqa/index.shtml>

RECENT NETWORK ACTIVITIES

EASA network on ‘Peace and Conflict Studies in Anthropology’

Michael Lidauer, lidauer@rz.uni-frankfurt.de

4th Bi-Annual PACSA Meeting in collaboration with Dignity – Danish Institute against Torture and Aalborg University, 28-30 August 2013, Copenhagen
How do we conceptualize and understand different forms of crisis, and how can a focus on diverse crises enhance our anthropological understanding of peace and conflict? For its 4th bi-annual meeting, the EASA network ‘Peace and Conflict Studies in Anthropology’ (PACSA) encouraged anthropological reflections on what it means to live in a state of crisis.

Is crisis a motor of change, a catalyst for socio-cultural transformation, or is it merely a gesture intended to frame the abnormal? How do these discussions then affect our conceptualizations of peace and conflict, particularly in situations where crisis is permanent or even normalized? And finally, what happens when individual perspectives meet systemic views of peace, crisis, and conflict?

Over sixty participants sought to answer these questions with their presentations and comments. The event was organized in 9 panels. Key note addresses were held by Ilana Feldman (George Washington University) and Finn Stepputat (DIIS). The meeting was organized by Erella Grassiani (Amsterdam University), Anja Kublitz (Aalborg University), Michael Lidauer (Goethe University/Peace Research Institute Frankfurt), Henrik Rønsbo (Dignity – Danish Institute against Torture, Copenhagen) and Nerina Weiss (Fafø Institute for Applied International Studies, Oslo).

EASA Medical Anthropology Network

The network recently held a large conference in collaboration with the American Anthropological Association’s Society for Medical Anthropology (SMA), hosted by the Department of Anthropology, Philosophy and Social Work at the Universitat Rovira i Virgili (URV), Tarragona, Spain.

Read two personal accounts of of this event and the preceding Medical Anthropology Young Scholars (MAYS) network conference here:

<http://somatosphere.net/2013/07/a-report-on-the-joint-easasma-conference-encounters-and->

[engagements-creating-new-agendas-for-medical-anthropology.html](#)

and

www.alwaysresearching.com/2013/09/17/sharing-impediments-and-catalysts-notes-on-the-mays-meeting-in-tarragona-june-10-11-2013-by-livia-garofalo/

6. New Book Series Editor

We are delighted to announce that Eeva Berglund is replacing James Carrier as editor of EASA’s book series. We also want to express our warmest thanks to James for all his work and dedication to the series over the past years.

Since leaving the full-time academic life in 2002 Eeva has continued to be active in academic research alongside her activist and non-academic pursuits. She is the author of *Knowing Nature, Knowing Science: An ethnography of local environmental activism* (1998) and *Doing Things Differently: the Women’s Design Service at Twenty* (2007), as well as numerous articles and book chapters on the relationships between society and the environment, natural and built.

She edits the ‘Forum’ section for the *Journal of the Finnish Anthropological Society* and has an academic affiliation with the University of Helsinki, as docent (adjunct professor) of urban studies and environmental policy.

You can contact Eeva at: eeva.berglund@helsinki.fi