SEG/SSE

Annual Meeting 2021

Re-viewing «the field»: Contemporary debates and approaches to fieldwork

FULL PROGRAM

Re-viewing «the field»: Contemporary debates and approaches to fieldwork

The birth of modern anthropology is concomitant with the invention of fieldwork. Since Malinowski's famous "tent in the middle of the village", living with "the natives" has been, and is still in many ways, the paradigmatic ethnographic method. With the passage of time, the discipline has evolved to include new themes and approaches, and yet "the field" remains its epistemological and methodological anchoring point.

It is time to take stock of the debates around the meaning and localization of "the field" that have been shaping the discipline for a number of decades. We have in mind the now frequent reference to "multi-sited ethnography", or the largely discredited use of the distinction between anthropology "abroad" and "at home", well problematized in last year's annual meeting on "The Global as Method". In practice, contemporary anthropologists avail themselves of a wide spectrum of tools, methods and concepts for going about their empirical work, raising questions about the limits and the specificities of the discipline.

Particularly with the rise of life "on-line", anthropologists have been inventing new forms of fieldwork to capture and analyze these new forms of social interaction. With the rise of the Internet 2.0, notions such as "virtual fields", "social networks", "forums", "platforms", and so forth are increasingly invoked as both objects and methods of inquiry. These new "fields" are characterized by their lack of geographic situatedness and by the fact that social interactions most often take place between people who do not "know" each other "in person".

Simultaneous to this "virtualization" of the field, we are also witness to what appears to be a countervailing movement in globalized societies: the intensification of logics of heritage and of what are roughly termed "identity politics", which celebrate specific cultural elements, often linked to a territorially rooted sense of belonging. These logics of "re-rooting/re-routing" raise new challenges for anthropological theory, traditionally critical of simplistic equations between communities, cultures and territories. Indeed, anthropologists are often solicited directly to participate in these social activities, and must ask themselves new questions about how they wish to position themselves as researchers and as social actors when their data is co-produced and restitution becomes virtually mandatory. Further complicating matters, feminist and post-colonial thinkers have thoroughly discredited the notion of scientific "neutrality", the "view from nowhere". It is now taken for granted that anthropologists must assume responsibility for their positionnality, but the forms of engagement are hotly debated, and challenge the very idea of "the field" – its composition, its boundaries, the relations it creates amongst actors, in sum, its agency as a social actor in its own right.

This meeting seeks to attract panels that examine these new fieldwork configurations. Our hope is to stimulate reflection on the convergences, alliances and conflicts produced by these new temporalities and spatialities of "the field", in resonance with neighboring disciplines from which anthropologists can borrow productively and to which they contribute. Defining "the field" calls for a multitude of approaches, that are not merely theoretical or epistemological, but also ethical and political.

15:30 - 15:45

Plenary Round Table 1   16:00 - 17:30

Welcome – Introduction

Interface Commission: Responding to COVID-19 anthropological engage-ment in times of crisis

Organizers	Peter **Larsen**	
	Susie **Riva**	
Discussants	Marco **Nardone**	Institut de recherches sociologiques, Université de Genève
	Ehler **Voss**	University of Bremen, Germany
	Janina **Kehr**	Formerly University of Bern, now University of Vienna
	Joerg **Moehrle**	Medicines for Malaria Venture, Geneva Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute and University of Basel, Basel
Moderation	Susie **Riva**	Creighton University medical anthropology program, Interface Commission
	Peter Bille **Larsen**	University of Geneva, Interface Commission

Panel 1   18:00 - 19:30

Creative Collaboration
Art and Anthropology at the Interface

Organizers	Leïla **Baracchini**	University of Neuchâtel
	Fiona **Siegenthaler**	University of Basel
	Claire **Vionnet**	University Paris 8

- **Seeing in the middle**

  Amanda **Ravetz** — Manchester School of Art, Manchester Metropolitan University

- **From participant-produced video diaries to co-creative filmmaking. Collaborative autoethnographic explorations of lived experiences during the pandemic**

  Nimal **Bourloud** — Universität Bern

- **Acoustic Perspectives of the Pandemic. Listening to COVID-19 Soundscapes and their Reverberations**

  Laura Maria Julia **Stoffel** — Institut für Sozialanthropologie, Universität Bern
  Johanna-Yasirra **Kluhs** — Co-Referentin künstlerische Kollaboration im Rahmen des Beitrags aus: Universität Bern. Institut für Sozialanthropologie

- **Creative Methodologies and Power Relations: Co-Creation and Restitution in Contexts of Artivism**

  Raphaela **von Weichs** — Université de Lausanne/ERC ARTIVISM
  Monika **Salzbrunn** — Université de Lausanne/ERC ARTIVISM
  Sara **Wiederkehr** — Université de Lausanne/ERC ARTIVISM
  Federica **Moretti** — Université de Lausanne/ERC ARTIVISM

Panel 2   18:00 - 19:30

The Opacity of Experience
Fieldwork as the Site of the Unknown

| Organizer | Marco **Motta** | University of Bern |

- **Anthropology, Literature and Small Acts of Mistranslation**

  Andrew **Brandel** — Harvard University

- **Fatigue in the Field: Drinking and Chatting with Veterans of War in Russia**

  Gregoire **Hervouet-Zeiber** — McGill University

- **"Nobody is Free": Field Notes on the Incorporation of Unresolved Negation**

  Alonso **Gamarra** — McGill University, Montreal

- **Social Robots in Elder Care in Contemporary Japan: Rethinking the Human Ethnographic Experience in Terms of the Nonhuman**

  Anne **Aronsson** — University of Zürich

Panel 3   09:00 – 10:30

PhD Meet up

Organizer   Esther **Leemann**   University of Zurich and Coordinator
                                              of the Swiss Graduate Program in Anthropology

Panel 4   09:00 – 10:30

**Empathy in the Field
Can the Affective be Transformative?**

Organizers   Dr. Eda Elif **Tibet**   University of Bern
                    Dr. Estella **Carpi**   University College London

• On Emotional Dissonance and Academic
  Excellence: The Need for Collective Learning

                    Dr. Estella **Carpi**   Migration Research Unit (Department
                                                  of Geography), University College London

• Enactive Ethnography as a Means
  of Establishing Empathetic Relationships

                    Raphael **Schapira**   PhD Candidate, The Graduate Institute Geneva

• "Feel-" and Fieldwork in Times of Crisis:
  Collective Reflections Drawing on the Case
  of the Chilean *Revuelta* Social

                    Anne **Lavanchy**   HES-SO
                    Céline **Heini**   HES-SO
                    Denisse **Sepúlveda Sánchez** HES-SO

• Affective Multimodalities: Transcending
  (in)Humanities from Transactive Field Works
  to a Justful Dream Work

                    Dr.des Eda Elif **Tibet**   Critical Sustainability Unit,
                                                  Institute of Geography, University of Bern

• On positionality in art practice,
  activism and ethnographic research

                    Konstantina **Bousmpoura**   Independent Visual Anthropologist,
                                                  Athens Ethnographic Film Festival

                    Paula **Serafini**   Research Associate, University of Leicester

Panel 5   11:00 - 12:30

Observation beyond presence – Hospital ethnography at the beginnings and ends of life (Medical Anthropology Switzerland, MAS)

Organizers   Julia **Rehsmann**   University of Applied Sciences Bern
                Veronika **Siegl**   University of Bern
Discussant   Janina **Kehr**   University of Vienna

- From 'Being There' to 'Being With':
  The Care-ful Negotiations of Ethnographic Research
  at the Beginning of Life in Bali, Indonesia

    Molly **Fitzpatrick**   University of Zurich

- Anteilnehmende Beobachtung. Präsentes
   Zurückgenommenbleiben als gebotene Haltung
  in Feldforschungen mit Sterbenden

    Mira **Menzfeld**   University of Zurich

- Things of dying – An applied design-anthropological
  exploration of the current death culture

    Bitten **Stetter**   HKB Hochschule der Künste Bern,
                                Universität Bern, ZHdK Zürich

Panel 6   11:00 - 12:30

FNS Presentation

Organizer   Ola **Söderström**

Panel 7 `14:30 - 16:00`

Working in the field

Organizers	Esther **Leemann**	University of Zurich
	Rebekka **Sutter**	Ethnographic Museum at Zurich University
	Tara **Bate**	University of Zurich

Introduction: Doing Fieldwork in a Field

| Esther **Leemann** | University of Zurich |
| Rebekka **Sutter** | Ethnographic Museum at Zurich University |

For a Bodily Ethnography: Co-labouring in Mountain Fields

Tara **Bate**	University of Zurich
Théophile **Johnson**	Laboratoire d'ethnologie et de sociologie comparative (LESC), University of Paris Nanterre
Rebekka **Sutter**	Ethnographic Museum at Zurich University

The Intimacies of the Field: Coca Fields in Bolivia as Localised Spaces for Mobility and Wealth

| Alessandra **Pellegrini Calderón** | University of Zurich |

Api-cultured Landscapes – Towards a Multispecies Approach of "the Field"

| Aline **von Atzigen** | Ethnographic Museum at Zurich University |

Disappearing Swidden Fields, Persisting Social Landscapes

| Esther **Leemann** | University of Zurich |
| Rebekka **Sutter** | Ethnographic Museum at Zurich University |

Discussion

| Shaila Seshia **Galvin** | Graduate Institute Geneva |

Panel 8 `14:30 - 16:00`

Can you do me a favour? Reciprocity and lack of reciprocity in anthropological field research

| Organizers | Clémence **Jullien** | CEIAS, CNRS, Paris |
| | Emilia **Sulek** | University of Fribourg |

Issues of reciprocity in anthropology: opening remarks

| Clémence **Jullien** | CEIAS, CNRS, Paris |
| Emilia **Sulek** | University of Fribourg |

On the dark side? – Reciprocity, loyalty, and complicity in messy fieldwork contexts

| Anne **Kukuczka** | ISEK, University of Zurich) |

Benevolent Spies. On the Role of Anthropologists in Post-conflict Regions

| Jovana **Dikovic** | ISEK, University of Zürich |

Panel 9

Doing fieldwork on/with performative arts: explorations in aesthetic, relational and creative methods

Organizers   Muriel **Bruttin**   University of Lausanne
   Anna Laura **Rodriguez Quinones**   University of Lausanne

Performing Bodies on a Screen: Researching South African Protest Aesthetics the digital way

Jeannine-Madeleine **Fischer**   University of Konstanz, Germany

Employing of Video-Essay as a Performative Strategy on Autoethnographical Research

Süleyman Kıvanç **Türkgeldi**   Cukurova University/Communication Faculty/Radio, Television and Cinema, Adana, Turkey

Dereskina, a research creation as ethnographic encounter

Claire **Vionnet**   Département Danse Paris 8, France

Filming dancing bodies: negociations between artists, ethnographer and camera in fieldwork on contemporary dance and the ballroom scene

Muriel **Bruttin**   University of Lausanne, Switzerland

"Go Training with the Others!" Surviving and Data Gathering among a Women Intercultural Theatre Company

Cristina **Balma-Tivola**   Polytechnic University of Turin, Italy

Panel 10

Autochtonie, processus d'essentialisation et posture(s) de l'anthropologue: dilemmes et enjeux méthodologiques, épistémologiques et politiques

Organizers   Leïla **Baracchini**   University of Neuchâtel
   Anahy **Gajardo**   University of Neuchâtel
Discussant   Natacha **Gagné**   Université Laval, Québec, Canada

Situating relationships. Enacting multiple identities beyond land, place and expected categories

Urpi **Saco Chung**   Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva

La nouvelle fête millénaire du Pawkar Raymi. Vers une approche pragmatique des discours et pratiques identitaires des autochtones à Otavalo (Andes équatoriennes)

Jérémie **Voirol**   Graduate Institute/Genève, University of Manchester

Guaranis, karai et anthropologues "gringos" dans le Chaco bolivien : doutes et équivoques d'une recherche ethnographique dans un contexte d'autochtonie plurivoque

Pere **Morell i Torra**   Universitat de Girona, Catalogne

«Mais dis-nous ce qui distingue les Mapuche des autres Chiliens-?». Réflexion sur les im/postures de l'anthropologue

Anne **Lavanchy**   HES-SO, Genève

Simone Abram

Professor of Anthropology at Durham University and co-director of the Durham Energy Institute

"Fields, experiments, elaboratories: relocating ethnography."

Panel 11   09:00 - 10:30

Following people:
Co-producing "the field" through mobilities

| Organizer | Joanna **Menet** | University of Neuchâtel |
| Discussant | Joris **Schapendonk** | Radboud University |

- ### Following in Time: "Staying with" and "Following up"

  | Stefan **Binder** | Department of Social Anthropology and Cultural Studies (ISEK), University of Zurich |

- ### "An anthropologist on the plane: what it means to become a reference person for the research participants, within the framework of an itinerant ethnography"

  | Carla **Vaucher** | Institut des sciences sociales, Université de Lausanne |

- ### Walking beyond the routine: On the effects of conducting walking interviews in prison

  | Irene **Marti** | Institute for Penal Law and Criminology, University of Bern |

- ### Disentangling Following: Reflections on the Practicalities of Mobile Methods

  | Markus **Breines** | London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine |

Panel 12   09:00 - 10:30

Re-viewing the field while writing ethnographies:
from experience to words to books

| Organizers | Melina **Rutishauser** | University of Basel |
| | Miriam **Badoux** | University of Basel |

- ### Introduction to the topic

  | Melina **Rutishauser** | University of Basel |
  | Miriam **Badoux** | University of Basel |

- ### (Dis)Rupture and Continuity. Translating temporalities and timeliness into ethnographic writing

  | Samira **Marty** | University of Oslo |

- ### 'The Geodataset that Never Was'

  | Dorota **Kozaczuk** | Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva |

- ### Re-creating the field - writing nearby cinematics

  | Balz **Alter** | University of Basel, University of Lucerne |

Panel 13   `11:00 - 12:30`

The social fabric of "traditional culture" in the People's Republic of China: dynamic articulation, domestic policy and soft power

| Organizer | Pierrick **Porchet** | PhD candidate, Faculty of Sciences / Confucius Institute, University of Geneva |

- **Nurturing the socialist spiritual civilization: Interplay between anthropology and politics**

  Florence **Graezer Bideau** — Institute for Area and Global Studies, College of Humanities, EPFL

- **Oral knowledge in contemporary rural China: Transmitting and negotiating farming knowledge through proverbs**

  Lena **Kaufmann** — Department of History and Department of Social Anthropology and Cultural Studies, University of Zurich

- **The weight of Ethnographic tradition: The role of writing in ethnic formation in Quanzhou. The case of the Hui of Baiqi**

  Pascale **Bugnon** — Department of East Asian Studies / Confucius Institute, University of Geneva

- **The embodied knowledge of the *jin* ability and its significance in local and national discourses on Chinese traditional Martial arts**

  Pierrick **Porchet** — PhD candidate, Faculty of Sciences / Confucius Institute, University of Geneva

Panel 14   `11:00 - 12:30`

Round Table SAA Museum Commission Ethnographic Museums and the Pandemic

| Chair | Mareile **Flitsch** | President, SAA Museum Commission |

With the closure of cultural institutions, ethnographic museums in Switzerland are facing equally unusual situations. This round table is meant as a first exchange forum to grasp where the museums currently stand: Where are we experiencing particular challenges? How have we managed to keep in touch with other museums and originator communities also experiencing the pandemic? Have we eventually evolved solutions to long overdue problems, threats to the museums, and even ideas for the near and farer future as a stimulus for funding requests, and in particular, new thematic and maybe theoretical issues?

Plenary Round Table 2   14:30 - 16:00

Vulnerability in and of the field

Organizers   ERC Artivism team
             Université de Lausanne
             Monika **Salzbrunn**
             Raphaela **von Weichs**

Discussants   Nolwenn **Buehler**   MAPS, University of Neuchâtel
             Nadja **Eggert**   CIRE, Université de Lausanne
             Anne **Lavanchy**   HES Genève
             Valerio **Simoni**   ERC BETLIV, IHEID Genève
             Monika **Salzbrunn**   ERC ARTIVISM Team,
                                    ISSR-FTSR Université de Lausanne

             Raphaela **von Weichs** ERC ARTIVISM Team,
                                    ISSR-FTSR Université de Lausanne

             Federica **Moretti**   ERC ARTIVISM Team,
                                    ISSR-FTSR Université de Lausanne

             Sara **Wiederkehr**   ERC ARTIVISM Team,
                                    ISSR-FTSR Université de Lausanne

As anthropologists, we are challenged to construct our fields of research in multiple situations of crisis in a global society. Vulnerability increases globally due to economic, ecological, political and social crises, calling conceptual divides between (Global) North, South, East, West into question. What is more apparent is the intense interconnectedness of these multiple crises in interlinked physical (sea, land, atmosphere) and virtual (cyber) spaces, on various scales (local, regional, global) and temporalities (diachronic and synchronic). Covid-19 is just one but a massive reminder of the global dimension of human action and interaction with severe consequences for our common planet. What are the specific challenges for anthropologists in the particular fields of crisis, how do we position ourselves therein, how does vulnerability affect the relationship between the researcher and the researched fields and subjects? Which constraints are limiting research in contexts of crisis and increased vulnerability? How do we take responsibility for the subjects we are studying, and for ourselves as researchers, and how are sending or receiving institutions influencing our interactions and decisions? How do ethics committees and/or charters determine the conceptualization of our projects, our actions in the field, and the way we communicate amongst us, within our fields, within the academic community and with a broader public?

Panels descriptions
Papers abstracts

In the following pages you can find detailed descriptions of all panels and abstracts of all papers.

Plenary Round Table 1

Interface Commission Round Table:
Responding to COVID-19: anthropological
engagement in times of crisis

The Interface Commission round table brings together researchers in various fields of inquiry who have actively engaged in issues related to COVID-19. This round table's goal is to show how different methods and practices have been employed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Scholar practitioners have been invited to present interdisciplinary research perspectives in relation to the Corona Virus and the societal effects that this pandemic is generating.

Ethnographic work documenting the events during the lockdown, social science research publications, emergency response programs, as well as teaching pedagogies that have been revisited to include relevant methods to address the global situation are all ways that social scientists have been contributing in the field. Our round table would like to showcase this important interface where engaged anthropologists, sociologists, and other scientists working in private and public organizations have co-constructed creative and meaningful responses during these difficult times.

Using the lens of medical anthropology, among other approaches, we can better understand how the social and cultural determinants of health are affecting not only the spread of the virus, but also healthcare systems' responses. This conversation assembles research initiatives that capture the adaptations that many experienced, sharing Cornona Diaries. We will also consider decision-making processes within the sector of public health and governance, comparing approaches. Tensions created by the pandemic have revealed fault lines within countries that are being expressed in various forms ranging from peaceful protests to riots, and even the lynching of George Floyd in the United States, adding to the distress.

In Europe, we have seen borders close and reopen, as regions are being judged for their levels of infection, resulting in travel bans with the economic consequences that follow. Debates are addressing the pros and cons of confinement, pointing to economic and mental health fallout that may be worse than the virus itself. Governments are currently overseeing economic stimulus plans, and vaccine programs. These unprecedented times have been referred to as the "Great Reset," by the World Economic Forum.

During the lockdown, or the "Great Pause", ecological changes demonstrated how cities without traffic can reexperience clean air and birdsong. As citizens were forced to home in to shelter, they discovered new ways of relating and organizing their daily routines and workspaces. This multi-layered "glocal" transformation is happening globally and locally as people connect virtually. With an increased reliance on technologies, many people working and studying from home demonstrated humanity's capacity to adapt to unforeseen circumstances like the pandemic, embracing a new "glovircal" reality, as they connected in virtual spaces.

Health workers were at first called to respond with limited access to protective equipment and no confirmed therapeutics creating much uncertainty for those working in frontline positions. Essential workers also faced increased exposition to the virus as they continued to provide services that society considered essential within the current context. Deaths due to COVID-19 continue to bring great suffering to families and communities that haven't been able to respond with funerals and other traditional rituals. History and the Spanish Flu has been our only reference, providing a compass while facing many unknowns about future waves. These evolving narratives have been woven into the fabric of our daily lives.

All of these events have been witnessed by anthropologists and social scientists that have found ways to document and analyse the happenings of 2020-2021. Collaborative initiatives have also been undertaken in response to the COVID-19 crisis. Our round table will explore the interface between the social sciences and initiatives in the field that illustrate how scholar practitioners are actively engaging within the context of the COVID-19 crisis.

Dr. Susan Mossman Riva

Department of Cultural and Social Studies,
Creighton University, Omaha, Nebraska, USA
Medical Anthropology Program

Panel 1   `18:00 – 19:30`

Creative Collaboration
Art and Anthropology at the Interface

Organizers

Leïla **Baracchini**   University of Neuchâtel

Fiona **Siegenthaler**   University of Basel

Claire **Vionnet**   University Paris 8

Description

Art and anthropology share a long history of inter- and transdisciplinary exchanges. Arts have been the subject of ethnographic studies, as well as part of the methodological tool-kit for visual documentation (such as photography, sketches and film). Conversely, ethnography has attracted the interest of artists for more than a century; the modern avant-garde in Paris being only the most prominent example. The 'ethnographic turn' in the arts in the 1990s (Foster 1995), and the increasing epistemological interest of anthropologists in art have however incited new forms of exploring the interface of art and anthropology (Lassiter 2005). Collaboration between scholars and artists have thereby moved to the centre stage. Several reasons have intensified this collaborative convergence: It promises to solve or at lease relieve the problem of uneven power balances and asymmetric relationships between researcher and researched; it aims at repurposing conventional methods and forms of representation; it appears to transmit sensorial matters more appropriately than text; and it holds out the prospect of creating new spaces of knowledge production that facilitate the reflective representation of plural and diverse realities in a globally transforming world.

As a result, experiences at the crossroads of arts and anthropology have increased these last few years, leading to heuristic, epistemological, methodological and narrative innovations in artistic and scientific productions (i.e. Marcus 2010; Schneider and Wright 2010; Ingold 2013; Schneider 2017; Pussetti 2018). Collaborations between artists and anthropologists are part of a more general trend and seek to redefine the disciplinary boundaries, to explore other forms of presence in the field, to develop new methods to generate knowledge and new ways of communicating research beyond academia. The modalities of exchange are diverse (Chapman and Sawchuk 2012; Leavy 2009), and although experimental research practices combining art and anthropology open new possibilities (i.e. research-creation), they also raise new questions, ethical issues and tensions.

This panel addresses case studies of collaborative exchange that discuss the practices, potentials and challenges at this art-anthropology interface. What dynamics are at play? What forms of expertise are shared? What tensions emerge? What kind of new experiences and knowledge are generated? What role does creativity play when different individuals, professionals and socio-cultural groups team up? Also, how is the ethnographic practice shared, shaped and framed by these collaborative processes? The questions do not only address the interfaces of anthropology and art, but also relate to the dissemination of knowledge in and to society in general. Just as anthropologists try to improve the dissemination of their knowledge to diverse communities, artists aim to improve the dialogue with their audiences and participants. This panel welcomes proposals that discuss the potentials and limits of such exchanges. It seeks to explore how these creative experimentations contribute to redefine the boundaries of the field. In accordance with the topic of this panel, we are particularly open to experimental formats of presentation (lecture-performance, video-essay, etc.).

Panel 1   **Paper 1**   18:00 - 19:30

Seeing in the middle

Author   Amanda **Ravetz**   Manchester School of Art,
Manchester Metropolitan University

Abstract

"It's not easy to see things in the middle, rather than looking down on them from above or up at them from below, or from left to right or right to left: try it you'll see that everything changes " (Deleuze and Guatarri, 1987).

What happens to the disciplinary theories, histories, practices - and tensions - of and between anthropology and art, when 'seeing things in the middle' becomes (momentarily) possible? This case study seeks to open up questions about disciplinary habits and interdisciplinary anxieties that emerge, hold fast or ask to be let go, through an account of taking up 'position of child,' an experiment in 'participant sensation' (Doerte Weig, 2020) carried out in a nursery class in South Manchester, England, as part of a larger research project funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council UK involving a visual anthropologist, educational researchers and artists, called Odd: feeling different in the world of education (PI Prof Rachel Holmes).

Panel 1   **Paper 2**   18:00 - 19:30

From participant-produced video diaries to co-creative filmmaking. Collaborative autoethnographic explorations of lived experiences during the pandemic

Author   Nimal **Bourloud**   Universität Bern

Abstract

This panel contribution discusses both the potential of video diaries as means of investigating lived experiences and their use as primary data in a collaborative autoethnographic process of research and co-creative filmmaking. Triggered by the rise of a global pandemic my two collaborators and I started to explore everyday life in our hometowns (Delhi, Prague and Bern). We did so by continuously exchanging smartphone-video diaries and by engaging in conversation over video calls from March until June 2020. Though we haven't formally conceptualized it as such, we embarked on a collaborative autoethnographic journey, investigating our lived experiences in the face of changing sociocultural contexts. Later in the year this led us to the co-creation of a multivocal essay film which itself can be understood as a reflection on the whole research process.

Lassiter (2005: 16) frames collaborative ethnography "as an approach to ethnography that deliberately and explicitly emphasizes collaboration at every point in the ethnographic process, without veiling it – from project conceptualization, to fieldwork, and, especially, through the writing process" and therefore "moves collaboration from its taken-for-granted background and positions it on center stage". Combining it with autoethnography, "a research method that enables researchers to use data from their own life stories as situated in sociocultural contexts in order to gain an understanding of society through the unique lens of self" (Chang et al. 2013: 18), leads to Collaborative Autoethnography (CAE) where multiple autoethnographers in a research team "pool their lived experiences on selected sociocultural phenomena and collaboratively analyze and interpret them for commonalities and differences" (Hernandez et al. 2017: 251). Taking CAE to the domain of visual anthropology where the use of data on the self as well as collaborative practices have been largely acknowledged over the last decades this panel contribution may provide a rich ground for discussions on adapted solutions to constrained research environments and the engagement of non-anthropologists in collaborative processes of research-creation while highlighting the democratic nature of such collaborations.

Acoustic Perspectives of the Pandemic. Listening to COVID-19 Soundscapes and their Reverberations

Authors

Laura Maria   Institut für Sozialanthropologie,
Julia **Stoffel**   Universität Bern

Johanna-Yasirra **Kluhs**   Co-Referentin künstlerische Kollaboration
im Rahmen des Beitrags aus: Universität
Bern. Institut für Sozialanthropologie

Abstract

Pausing most social, political, and economic life during Switzerland's first version of a lockdown in spring 2020, the country's soundscapes changed dramatically due to the reduction of human noise. Environmental echoes unfolded in places unheard for a long time and new sonic experiences appeared within public and private spaces. The ways in which these sounds were listened and perceived under the restraints of a national lockdown altered and transformed the hegemonic structure of everyday soundscapes.

An acousmatic mode of listening (see Brian Kane 2014) into this altered soundscape enables a multi-layered experience by the audience, allowing the heard to be identified in a personal, subjective lockdown experience. For facilitating listeners to think towards sonic possible worlds (see Salomé Voegelin 2014) and direct the act of listening to one that allows future perspectives to unfold upon the pandemic restraints, this mode needs to be transformed towards its imaginative imperative by an artist trained in sound and composition. While the acoustic work is informed by ethnographically founded content and sound elicitation dialogs (see Anna Harris 2015), the technically skilled and creative abstraction of the data is performed artistically. By installing the acoustic piece in public, this interdisciplinary collaboration bears the potential of reaching beyond the reflexive moment ethnography offers and proceeds towards an anthropological engagement that aims to have an impact beyond academia.

To expand its reflexive potential I will co-perform my contribution with Johanna-Yasirra Kluhs who participates as dramatic adviser in the sound work. We look together into different stages of the interdisciplinary collaboration to especially address the following concerns of the panel: What kind of new experiences and knowledge are generated? What dynamics are at play? What forms of expertise are shared and what tensions emerge?

Creative Methodologies and Power Relations:
Co-Creation and Restitution in Contexts of Artivism

Authors

Raphaela **von Weichs**   Université de Lausanne/ERC ARTIVISM
Monika **Salzbrunn**   Université de Lausanne/ERC ARTIVISM
Sara **Wiederkehr**   Université de Lausanne/ERC ARTIVISM
Federica **Moretti**   Université de Lausanne/ERC ARTIVISM

Abstract

In times of crisis and under oppressive conditions, art as a form of expression of political struggles has become essential for activists (Lemoine, Oardi, 2010; Malzacher, 2014; Bouchier, Dehais, 2020). By creating artistic events such as carnivals and street art, activists express their claims, negotiate the urban space and overcome dispossession (Butler and Athanasiou 2013) in an urban context. At the same time, the study of these forms of resistances, where aesthetics becomes political (Rancière 2011), calls for new forms of representation and creative methodologies of research and restitution.

The ERC funded project ARTIVISM: Art and Activism. Creativity and Performance as Subversive Forms of Political Expression in Super-Diverse Cities focuses on studying comics and street art in Douala and Yaoundé (Cameroun), mural art in Los Angeles (USA), carnivalesque performances and carnivals in Nice and Marseille (France), and in Genova and Viareggio (Italy), by adopting an urban event approach (Salzbrunn 2017), audio-visual methods (Pink 2011) and apprenticeship (Dilley 2015). During our fieldwork, we have participated as apprentices in the artistic production and discussion of the (political) events, while at the same time we have created visual materials (short films, drawings) as part of both the research's outcome and as a form of restitution to the participants. The construction and sharing of knowledge through audio-visual materials have been key in the dialogue with the research participants. These experiences made a better understanding of each other's discourses and practices possible, while at the same time helping to close the possible distances between researchers and research participants.

How do we (co-)construct and share anthropological knowledge in times of political and social crises, where the actors use creative and artistic forms of resistance? How do we represent their own artistic expressions which we co-create during the artivistic practice? And what does co-construction, sharing and representation mean and imply in these contexts? Even though uneven power balances and asymmetric relationships can evolve or be turned upside down during specific social situations (for instance, during restitution processes in the field/with the research participants), the general frame of institutionalized research remains. Nevertheless, the asymmetry of power relations is not only shaped by the role of the participants as researchers or artists, but can also be observed within the artivistic groups.

By analyzing carnivalesque art forms, mural art and comics, and engaging in audio-visual and graphic anthropology as key elements in a reflexive research practice, we came to the development of new modes of representation and restitution which allow to question and overcome asymmetries situationally.

Panel 2   18:00 - 19:30

The Opacity of Experience
Fieldwork as the Site of the Unknown

Organizer   Marco **Motta**   University of Bern

Description

The notion of "fieldwork" and what it entails in terms of personal engagement, methodology, and analysis, is undoubtedly a main concern for anthropologists. Much has been reflected upon, and practices have been largely reinvented. Above all, much consciousness about the ethical and political stakes of the different "field practices" has been raised. Yet, many questions remain open and still nourish lively debates among social scientists about what "fieldwork" actually means and entails in an ever-changing world—its modalities, locations, scales, temporalities, and so on. Moreover, questions about the fact that the sorts of "knowledge" we produce depend on our methods have received revived attention. This panel proposes to take up the challenge presented by the organizers of the conference and asks how we could rethink the notion of the "field" in light of a closer look at the related concept of "experience". Anthropologists are often asked to chart the field in advance, determine the methodology, define a schedule, assess the risks and potential mishaps, and even report beforehand on the outcomes, as if they knew ahead of time where exactly they will find, how they will proceed, what they will face, and how they will respond. These conventional expectations about how anthropology works as a scientific discipline that is expected to produce "knowledge" on society, in the wake of more robust empirical sciences' models, depend on many underlying assumptions, among which three interests us here: first, that one can know, and claims to know, in advance what one is after; second, that it is clear where to look when one is searching for something; and third, that one knows a priori where the boundaries lie of what we call the "field." Yet, as we will discuss in this panel, it might turn out that what anthropologists are looking for is unknown, and that it is not as clear as we think where exactly they should search. And, it may well be that what we call the "field," rather than being a predetermined area of inquiry, is the place where something about the world and ourselves that we do not know is to be discovered. If we take this seriously, then we also must acknowledge that what counts as anthropology cannot be fully determined or knowable a priori. Hence this entails re-examining these three related issues, and proposing alternative ways of seeing what the "field" is, and the role it plays in anthropological thinking. As an empirical science, anthropology proceeds most often inductively, rather than deductively. In this train of thought, it is conceived that through such a procedure, particular observations form the basis of more general, more or less provisory and uncertain conclusions about social facts; the "case" seems to acquire force from its reasonable generalizability. At the heart of this conception, obviously, the notion of "experience" plays a key role; there is no anthropology without "field experiences" out of which anthropological thinking can grow.

That is, we cannot "know" anything about others and reality without experiencing a life with others in reality. Yet, how exactly do we picture "field experience?" What if the empiricist conceit––that is, the reification of a divide between thought and reality, or our experience of it––relied on a misconception of the relation between thought and experience? In this panel, we would like to ask notably: What are the different ways of conceiving "experience?" Where do they derive from? To what sort of pressure, or stakes, do they respond? And what do these different conceptions imply? There is a dominant idea that one's experiential position––for instance, "having been on the field"––is one of privilege; one thinks of oneself as in a privileged position to make (faithful) claims about reality because one "has been there" and "has done that" and seen things with one's own eyes. There is no question here about the fact that indeed one draws knowledge from one's experience of having been somewhere and done something, and anthropologists are thus fully right to advocate for the importance of fieldwork. But there is a question unanswered about how we picture the relation between our experiences and the knowledge we claim to produce on its basis. Often, this idea of a privileged access to reality and one's experience, and thus the authority that arises therefrom, is not interrogated. For this reason, we would like to call into question this idea, and ask how different anthropology would look like if we took into account the opacity of others and the self. It might be that sometimes we are all too sure about what we (can) know, and place excessive reliance on our capacities for knowledge. What would it change then for anthropologists––thus anthropological knowledge––if they did not so easily give in to the idea that others and oneself are as transparent as it is sometimes assumed? Is there a way to trace a different route within this set of problems?

Panel 2   **Paper 1**   18:00 - 19:30

Anthropology, Literature and Small Acts of Mistranslation

Author   Andrew **Brandel**   Harvard University

Abstract

This paper attempts to complicate anthropological theory's conventional preoccupation with securing knowledge by foregrounding moments of mistranslation and misunderstanding. It turns in particular to the work of Berlin-based exophonus writer Yoko Tawada, and her descriptions of what she describes as "Anarchie im Mundbereich," anarchy in the region of the mouth. What Tawada's work helps us to see that translation and mistranslation are not exceptional situations to be overcome, but are rather ordinary features of life in language. Building on recent work in the philosophy of language and linguistic anthropology, I argue that the opacities that line everyday life, the words that resistant translation, are not the antithesis of translatability or intelligibility – instead they mark the fact that work of translation as always in motion. In this way, the paper also suggests anthropology stands to gain on these questions from a more considered attention to particular literary practices, rather than more usually gesturing toward regions assumed to be literary.

Panel 2   **Paper 2**   18:00 - 19:30

Fatigue in the Field: Drinking and Chatting with Veterans of War in Russia

Author   Gregoire **Hervouet-Zeiber**   McGill University

Abstract

The fatigue anthropologists feel during fieldwork often gets subsumed under the language of mental health, depression and anxiety (2009), or under the equally problematic language of "compassion" or "cultural" fatigue (1973; 2017). Fatigue emerges as the mark of dealing with "difference" or "trauma" and as needing to be remedied in order for anthropological knowledge to be produced. Here I suggest that the language of mental health and psychology might be skirting what can be learned about a world if one were to take seriously the ethical difficulty of this fatigue. In going over the field-notes I wrote while working in St. Petersburg with veterans of the Soviet-Afghan wars (1979-1989), of the Russian wars in Chechnya (1994-1996 and 1999-2009) and combatants in the ongoing war in Ukraine, I see the marks of fatigue written into them, sometimes explicitly but often indirectly: fieldnotes written the day after or taped on a dicta-phone as a voice memo because of the quantity of alcohol I had to ingurgitate with a veteran or because a conversation with other combatants had reached such an intensity I simply could not revisit it in writing immediately. Here I ask: what if we were to understand this fatigue, the pain in the joints or between the ears, the throbbing heart in the eardrums, and the constant desire to let go, not in the language of mental health, cultural difference or as an unfortunate consequence of fieldwork, but as a texture to be described, as a central characteristic of being absorbed in this specific world, in the particular set of relations which mark Russian veterans' lives?

Informed by the pressures of the work I undertook with veterans, in this paper I explore fatigue as the very texture of my fieldwork experience: of the particular lives and of the world of some of the men with whom I worked. Fatigue became a way their world lay a claim on me. In this paper, I suggest that fatigue might be the moment at which a form of knowledge comes to be produced.

"Nobody is Free": Field Notes
on the Incorporation of Unresolved Negation

Author   Alonso **Gamarra**   McGill University

Abstract

This paper addresses the relationship between the "field" and "experience" by presenting a moment of ethnographic excess (Gandolfo and Ochoa 2017), which prompted me to revisit diary entries and conversations that lay beyond the scope of my proposed project. The framework for the break that spurred this circuitous approach was my doctoral fieldwork, which took place in the southern Peruvian region of Arequipa, where I accompanied farmers, market workers and activists as they devised ways to mediate and contest the impacts of neoliberalization on their social worlds. While staying with a family of farmers in Tambo River Valley, I was invited to a cookout gathering called locally known as a "pollada", where large quantities of fried chicken are sold to cover an emergency expense. In this particular case, the funds were raised for a farmer who had been violently robbed in his own home after receiving a large cash payment for his crop of wheat. Throughout the "pollada", the farmer's family and friends discussed the break-in, hounded by the possibility that someone from their community could have been involved. The daylong conversation, however, did not arrive at an explicit answer, but instead provided a scaffold for collectively encountering a ensemble of irresolvable opacities. For me, this mode of encountering negation echoed a prior and more radical scene of doubt. In 2009, while visiting family in the region of Cusco, a friend asked me to go with her to a different "pollada". This event aimed to cover the funeral costs of one of her classmates at a dance studio. At first, my friend was told that the dancer died in an explosion, when she accidentally set off a grenade that her brother brought back from serving in the military in the mid-90s, when he was deployed in a month-long combat with Ecuador (1995). On the day of the "pollada", however, I learned that the narrative of the dancer's death had become a source of doubt. A rumour surfaced claiming that the dancer's family occasionally made money by storing dynamite for an illegal gold mining network. Both "polladas" presented scenes of shared bewilderment, which pivoted around unapproachable moments of rupture, raising unsettling questions about their implications and the constitution of the social worlds in which they were embedded. To begin cultivating a receptivity for this resonance, its dissonances and stakes, I revisited old diary entries and asked my friend— the dancer's classmate— to help me remember the day of the "pollada". In this effort, a part of the "field" emerged as a scene beyond and prior to the project I originally proposed. In parallel, the work of claiming an "experience" of this arising field meant engaging with my own capacity to imagine and describe the work of incorporating unresolved negations.

Social Robots in Elder Care in Contemporary Japan: Rethinking the Human Ethnographic Experience in Terms of the Nonhuman

Author   Anne **Aronsson**   University of Zurich

Abstract

Japan has one of the highest global life expectancies and is undergoing a demographic transition that Western nations have yet to experience. The Japanese government is encouraging robotic solutions to a labor shortage in elder care, and Japanese authorities have adopted an agenda of introducing social robots to assist in elder care. However, people are increasingly becoming emotionally attached to anthropomorphic machines such as social robots. This paper aims to contribute to the discussion that examines the opacity of experiences while conducting fieldwork by exploring human engagement with social robots within the care context, discussing different ways of conceiving experience. The author's encounter with the problem of the "other mind" and different ways of conceiving experience as a result of engaging with nonhuman agents with artificial minds, will be discussed.

Using the multispecies ethnography theoretical framework (Das 2013; Haraway 2014; Kohn 2013), this paper examines the result of the increasing and intricate entanglement of humans and their interspecies, multispecies, and quasi-species—humans, nonhuman animals, plants, and in this case, social robots—as humans' modes of being are dependent on complex interactions with animals, ecosystems, and technology. Human and nonhuman instances or mixtures of both, exceed the categories that have grounded anthropology thus far, and this work will help determine whether the sort of knowledge we produce depends on methods that make us rethink the notion of anthropology in terms of a closer examination of the concept of experience.

Separating anthropology from ethnography has allowed for the exploration of a distinct form of anthropology that does not focus on culture or society but emphasizes thought and aims to unravel the peculiarities of man. Where the classical ethnographer reduces "others to their own concepts, the philosophical approach of thought—and the human—in motion seeks to find out if, today, other possibilities of thinking the human exist or are coming into existence, possibilities that in their conceptual specificity escape the conceptual grid of our already established ways of thinking and knowing things human, that undermine their self-evidence and thereby open up new spaces of being" (Rees 2018: ch. 1). There is a way to offer different solutions as this openness will create possibility, which is important for its existence: "the possibility that new yet unknown and unanticipated spaces of thought break open that exceed and thereby undermine the established ways of thinking and knowing" (Rees 2018: ch. 2). This paper seeks to examine the understanding of humans that an anthropology of social robots would produce. In allowing reality to surpass conceptualization, there is a need to explore what emerges (what Kohn calls "emergent") when the human is separated from "the human" and reject the assumption that others and oneself are as transparent as is sometimes assumed.

Panel 4   09:00 - 10:30

Empathy in the Field
Can the Affective be Transformative?

Organizers   Dr. Eda Elif **Tibet**   University of Bern
                    Dr. Estella **Carpi**   University College London

Description

In this panel we would like to explore the interspace between academic intellectuality, research excellence and human sensitivity. In academic environments, on the basis of our own emotional experiences, the interconnection between these factors are not seen as necessary and are even unlikely. Large segments of today's knowledge production are not experience-driven, but they are rather outcome-driven.

Western scholarship, a product of an educational system based on Cartesian divisions between "rational thinking" versus "emotions" often associated with "irrationality": such binaries are being challenged in today's reformations of fieldwork particularly for those working on issues related to vulnerability.

Throughout the history of Anthropology as a discipline, un-empathic approaches to vulnerable subjects have been documented to have negative and even dangerous effects on a personal, societal and policy level. As Anthropologists instrumentalized "the ethics" and the "impact value" of the science itself for intellectual benefit, they have been criticized for being "insensible", "unemphatic", "biased", "doctrinated", "colonial", "cynical", "hostile", "discursive", "categorical", "exclusive", "racist" and "ethnocentric".

Hence, this panel intends to discuss if and how 'sentimental education', as introduced to Western Scholarship by Richard Rorty, can serve as an affective tool to sensitize scholars whose research issues relate to diverse forms of vulnerability (Eg. economic, political, and social).

In more detail, the questions we would like to explore are:
- Can 'sentimental education' help produce empathic research?
- If so, can empathic research entail fairer scientific representations and a stronger transformational potential on vulnerable people and settings?

While anthropology has long since sought to question the need of 'cleaning' theories and methods from emotionality, it has not yet approached it as a transformative tool. In this panel, we rather engage with how emotionality can transcend the road to scientific knowledge, honest intellectuality, and transformative research. We invite papers discussing their epistemological and ontological fieldwork tools from moving beyond the discursive to the affective, the apathic to the empathetic, from the colonial to the decolonial, both in terms of theory and methods. Engagements through multimodal media and auto-ethnographies are as well encouraged.

Panel 4   **Paper 1**   09:00 - 10:30

On Emotional Dissonance and Academic Excellence: The Need for Collective Learning

Author   Dr. Estella **Carpi**   Migration Research Unit (Department of Geography), University College London

Abstract

Throughout the years, I have experienced how, as academic researchers and teachers, we can develop emotional dissonance from the contents and subjects of our own research. In this framework, academic excellence and high-quality publications do not revolve around how people emotionally relate to such contents and subjects, but they rather demand structure, clarity of direction, and strategic skills to publish and boast impact. In this paper I intend to build on my reflections about how my emotional approach to research has gradually responded to unspoken invitations to de-personalization and de-empathization during my 5-year experience in a British academic institution. I will discuss how the so-called excellence standards, the academic practice of awarding strategization and clarity of direction, and productivity expectations - all typically defined as the effective instruments of 'neoliberal' academia - can affect the researcher's emotionality and intimate understandings of purposefulness.

My argument is that the 'neoliberalization' of academia is complexly interrelated with de-empathization in international research. Due to the ungenerous timeframes to conduct academic research and the institutional pressure for a large number of outputs, developing empathy during research becomes unlikely. In this context, the very idea of researching people, things, and processes often departs from the aprioristic need to publish. In turn, publishing successfully is possible only as a result of adopting standardized ways of writing and structuring knowledge. Such an intellectual standardization, importantly, is by no means the product of a universal and objective agreement on how we need to explore, analyze, and write - as it purports to be in the Global North's academic institutions - but it instead remains a subtle cultural vector of Anglo-centrism which sweeps away alternative approaches to academic work. This process of removing alternative 'writing selves', who do not comply with or even resist hegemonic standardization, generates a twofold emotional dissonance in the subjects: first, the dissonance of excelling in academic publishing without actual empathy; second, undertaking a self-initiated process of removal of our own writing selves as a road to publishing, and, consequently, producing work that less reflects the way we are.

While, in the past, I have discarded the very possibility of teaching sensitization and emotionality to people - as that is based on a paternalistic ethos of moulding ways of being and on an uninformed and colonially-flavored compassionalization of legal, political and economic issues - I here raise the question of whether such a path is instead needed to reverse de-empathization. Departing from Rorty's 'sentimental education', I will explore the possibilities to sensitize through formal educational processes and I will counter the Eurocentric educational method by advancing the idea of 'collective learning'.

The paper therefore invites colleagues, especially scholars looking at vulnerable settings, to face their own ways of approaching and thinking academic work while often losing the tangibility of the injustice, the chronic predicament, and the very potential for transformation that international research is able to voice and tackle. The increasing co-optation of emotionality as a token of scientific and ethical legitimization in research makes emotionality taken for granted in ethnography-based disciplines and beyond, thus taking us to an inattentive, rushed, and self-defensive "of-course-I-care" approach.

Panel 4	**Paper 2**	`09:00 - 10:30`

Enactive Ethnography as a Means of Establishing Empathetic Relationships

Author   Raphael **Schapira**   PhD Candidate, The Graduate Institute Geneva

Abstract

Loïc Wacquant's methodological concept of immersive ethnography termed "enactive ethnography" (Wacquant 2015) has been very influential among researchers working on embodiment in sports and martial arts. However, I am not convinced anymore that "observant participation" (Wacquant 2004) is the only way to give us a "taste of the action" as Wacquant and other "fighting scholars" (Spencer and Sánchez García 2013) propose. If the goal of "observant participation" is to make the reader understand how it feels like to box, then writing in the first-person is an excellent choice. However, this form of writing is rarely employed beyond the use of vignettes by anthropologists working on martial arts. If writing in first-person is seldom what could be the main argument for this method of doing an enactive ethnography?

In this paper, I argue that the advantage of enactive ethnography lies in developing empathy and personal relationships with our interlocutors, leading to qualitatively better research findings. Embodied or sensorial research (Pink 2009) requires the researcher to experience personal change, which happens in the form of a shift in our sensorial perception to comprehend other people's sensorial experiences better. A consequence of this apprenticeship is that personal change becomes instrumental to the researcher, allowing us to make a living or to generate symbolic capital. At the same time, our interlocutors might expect some form of reciprocity for letting us be their apprentices. The reciprocity allows us to establish more profound empathetic relationships with our interlocutors, which is especially desirable regarding engaged anthropology (Low and Merry 2010), yielding better academic outputs beyond first-person narratives.

Panel 4	**Paper 3**	`09:00 - 10:30`

"Feel-" and Fieldwork in Times of Crisis: Collective Reflections Drawing on the Case of the Chilean *Revuelta* Social

Authors
Anne **Lavanchy**   HES-SO
Céline **Heini**   HES-SO
Denisse **Sepúlveda Sánchez**   HES-SO

Abstract

La *revuelta* social, one of the most important social upheavals in Chile since the end of the dictatorship started in October 2019, and continues up to now – under other forms due to the pandemic and current sanitary restrictions.

The event affected the ethnographic fieldwork that we – as a research team working on the relations between racialization, mobility and the Nation-State – were conducting at that time in South Chile. This paper draws on the recognition that "being affected" has revealed an enduring process beyond being physically "in the field". We suggest that complex affects can be similarly experimented even while being in different geographic locations. From Switzerland as well as from Chile, we had the feeling of being overwhelmed by our emotions, which complicated our work as researchers and also partly the rest of our lives. Nevertheless, our respective positioning, in terms of national and emotional feelings of belongingness as well as physical location, created affective dissonances that raised uneasiness while at the same time opened up a productive space to think about fieldwork as an experience of "out-of-place" bodies and "out-of-place" feelings.

Drawing on feminist epistemology, we have utilized these emotional experiences as a methodological tool to spark curiosity and open up a space for reconsidering fieldwork as "feel-work". It provides a framework for taking both affects and emotions seriously, not simply as objects of inquiry, but as a methodological tool that spark curiosity and thus opens up space for renewed thinking, acting, and knowing. We argue that objectifying (our) affective experiences both documents the nature of "the event" including its effects and the scope of structural violence in shaping peoples' experiences; as well as the understanding of fieldwork as embodied feel-work that might bridge the gap in situations of remoteness.

Affective Multimodalities: Transcending (in)Humanities from Transactive Field Works to a Justful Dream Work

Author   Dr.des Eda Elif **Tibet**   Critical Sustainability Unit,
Institute of Geography, University of Bern

Abstract

Humanities is a system of thoughts, built on asymmetrical nuances of representations and expressions. It transfers decades of knowledge from one generation to the other, often times through a competitive hierarchical structure of unequal distribution of power, status and wealth. Today, under a neo-liberal occupation of its institutions; scholars are forced to accelerate funds by keeping a track record of multiple field works often times translated into inaccessible theory; addressed for an enclosed and elite readership. Hence, the neoliberal institution of transactive knowledges, rewards those who celebrate traditions (of thoughts that are deemed rational and therefore scientific; but excludes those that are deemed emotional and therefore unscientific; the so called "theoretically narrow", the "politically un-distanced", "the personal". Hence, little is acknowledged on how various modalities of the affective mind and the spirit, the conscious and the unconscious; converge in the state and act of knowing, as the under evaluated elements in redefining what intelligence is holistically and integrally made of.

This paper discusses, how all the stimulus that circulates has behavioral and internalizing processes and results. It is within an ontological conflict that "what is there" to "see" or to "look at" sits at the heart of the power-charged field of our scholarship. Leach, Scoones, and Wynne (2005:5) argue how ontological conflicts that challenge "modernity and its hegemonist scientific culture" seem almost to define our times and that this is nothing new. These kinds of conflicts have gained unprecedented visibility in part because the hegemony of the story of modernity is undergoing a crisis (Blaser 2013: 548). Hence this paper argues what modernity has brought is a crisis of an "inner sort" as a "matter of the heart" in which (in)humanities still prevail; because dreams are not allowed (to be) realized and are therefore not taken serious. Since the scientific mind overburdens us humans, with a cut from our own emotions; this paper proposes various affective multimodalities as a methodology put forward in transcending (in) humanities to shift away from transactive field works to a justful dream work. A self-reflexive paper on the author's engagements over a decade with local communities and forced migrants in Turkey, Morocco, India, France and Switzerland; the various notions of dreams and the matter of the heart is looked at through an analysis of the visual and multimodal anthropology work being co-created since 2011. Engaged in thousands of hours of transcribed conversations, the Jungian transcendent function (1957) will be looked at in exploring the unconscious and conscious perceptions in producing new perspectives and ways of seeing with the pursuit of transcending our scholarship into the co-creation of a more just humanities.

Panel 4   **Paper 5**   09:00 - 10:30

On positionality in art practice, activism and ethnographic research

Authors

Konstantina **Bousmpoura**   Independent Visual Anthropologist,
Athens Ethnographic Film Festival

Paula **Serafini**   Research Associate, University of Leicester

Abstract

This paper stems from a series of common points that have connected our work over the last three years. We both conduct research and develop our creative practice in Argentina and in Europe. We both employ ethnographic audiovisual methods and have a particular interest in performance as a political medium. And we both have conducted long-term research with and about social movements.

    Here we reflect on the common points in our work, those concerned with methodology, ontology, aesthetics, and most importantly, our positionality in the field. We challenge each other to reflectively position ourselves in relation to the conflicts and movements we are researching. How do we navigate the multiple positions of activist/artist/researcher? How do we position ourselves in relation to the conflicts and movements we are researching? What kind of impact do we have in those spaces, and how do we manage that? And what opportunities and challenges arise when research on social movements focuses on the artistic practice of such movements?

    This paper is the result of a joint reflection on such issues, a kind of exquisite corpse through which we share our thoughts on the wider issues that frame our practice.

Panel 5   11:00 - 12:30

Observation beyond presence
Hospital ethnography at the beginnings and ends of life
(Medical Anthropology Switzerland, MAS)

Organizers   Julia **Rehsmann**   University of Applied Sciences Bern
                          Veronika **Siegl**   University of Cologne

Description

In this panel, we want to re-examine the question of what it means to conduct fieldwork in a medical institution, and what can we learn from the way ethnographers were able to access, navigate and leave their respective fields. We are particularly interested in ethnographies that deal with the beginnings and ends of life, as medical institutions play an increasingly important role in defining and setting the scenes for where, when and how life begins and ends. Oftentimes, fieldwork in medical institutions requires research permits and ethics approval that other fields do not, posing particular challenges and obstacles to anthropologists and ethnographic methods. In general, there is no easy "role" for ethnographers in the hospital or clinic and often we find ourselves between stressed medical staff with too little time and vulnerable patients with too much time. Moreover, traditional understandings of what it means to conduct fieldwork seem far from feasible, and rarely ethical, in these medical settings. In the context of the beginning and end of life, the limits of "observation" become particularly evident. With this panel focusing on the beginning and end of life, we want to explore the challenges that existential and intimate moments such as giving birth or dying pose for ethnographic fieldwork. Such experiences can hardly be grasped by "observation" and "participation". How does this affect ethnographic research and analysis? Which new forms of presence and of togetherness can we create during fieldwork? How is it possible to "observe beyond presence"?

Panel 5   **Paper 1**   11:00 - 12:30

From 'Being There' to 'Being With': The Care-ful Negotiations of Ethnographic Research at the Beginning of Life in Bali, Indonesia

Author   Molly **Fitzpatrick**   University of Zurich

Abstract

As anthropologists we have long been aware that neutral observation is impossible and that it can be a harmful ideal that ignores the significance of intersubjective relations in the field and the researcher's responsibility towards the people she studies. There has therefore been an increased focus on engaging with our interlocutors in care-ful ways, even though what this entails is still under discussion. In this paper I ask: how are relationships in the field and intentions of care complicated in the intimate and intensely emotional setting of childbirth? Drawing on my experience of ethnographic research in two birthing clinics in Bali, Indonesia, I trace my own development from an uncomfortable observer to a caring participant, as I decided half-way through my research to train as a doula – a non-medically trained birth coach. This decision came after realising that the anthropological ideal of 'being there' is not enough when aiming to do care-ful research on childbirth. Standing in the corner taking notes while women went through the intense emotions and pain of labour felt more disruptive than attempting to actively engage in their care as a doula. As I will show, however, the mode of 'being with' that came to define my experience as doula was not easy either. It required a constant negotiation of my role as a researcher, as a doula, and as a person who cares.

Anteilnehmende Beobachtung. Präsentes Zurückgenommenbleiben als gebotene Haltung in Feldforschungen mit Sterbenden

Author Mira **Menzfeld** University of Zurich

Abstract

Feldforschung mit sterbenden Personen bedeutet, mit Menschen zu arbeiten, deren momentaner Existenzmodus elementar unverständlich bleiben muss – zumindest, sofern die Forschenden nicht selbst akut sterbenskrank sind. Das unterscheidet die Teilnehmende Beobachtung am Lebensende einerseits nicht wesenhaft von anderen ethnologischen Arbeitskontexten: Ethnolog*innen sind schliesslich hauptberuflich damit beschäftigt, Menschen und Umstände verstehen zu wollen, deren Sein und Tun sie oft nicht restlos nachvollziehen können. Andererseits kann während der Arbeit mit Sterbenden dieses charakteristische Rest-Aussenvorbleiben im Feld besonders drastisch erscheinen.

Auch und gerade von sterbenden Beforschten wird teils stark wahrgenommen, wie radikal ihre Situation sich von derjenigen der Forschenden unterscheidet. Möglicherweise empfinden interlocutors Wut, Neid und tiefe Ungerechtigkeitsgefühle, wenn sie sich vor Augen halten, dass sie wohl nur noch kurz zu leben haben – der*die Forschende und andere nichtsterbende Personen aber annehmen dürfen, dass ihnen weitaus mehr Zeit bleibt. Zusätzlich sind lange Phasen des bewussten Schweigens, der zumindest partiellen Kommunikationsunfähigkeit, sowie der kommunikationshemmenden Ermüdung der sterbenden interlocutors erwartbar und fordern von Forschenden, ausgehalten und in ihrer sehr eigenen Aussagekraft erkannt zu werden.

Ich werde in meiner Präsentation einige solcher Feldforschungsepisoden schildern und darlegen, dass besonders in den genannten Momenten die „anteilnehmende Beobachtung" ein sinnvoller Forschungsmodus zu sein scheint. Unter „anteilnehmender Beobachtung" verstehe ich eine bewusst eingeübte Haltung des verbal und nonverbal gestaltbaren, hochkonzentrierten Dabeiseins, die vor allem dem sterbenden Gegenüber Raum lässt und interessierten Anteil an ihm*ihr zu nehmen versucht, ohne der Interaktion den eigenen Nichtsterbenden-Rhythmus zu oktroyieren. Forschereigene Verzweiflungen, starke Äusserungsimpulse und Aktionismen werden dabei möglichst auf einen geeigneteren Moment als jenen der interlocutor-Begegnung verschoben.

Eine anteilnehmend beobachtende Person will also durchaus dringend begreifen und verschliesst sich auch einem existenziellen Leid des Gegenübers nicht. Sie vergisst aber dennoch nicht empathisch überwältigt die eigene Rolle, sondern bleibt in einer Position als vorrangig Nachvollziehende, Zuhörende und Beobachtende stabil. Letzteres entlastet potentiell vulnerable und entkräftete interlocutors – und ermöglicht zudem einen klareren Blick auf die niemals restlos verständlichen oder 'objektiv' schilderbaren, aber durchaus nah an der Beforschtenperspektive beschreibbaren Empfindungen und Seinsumstände Sterbender. Die Inspiration für diese Haltung stammt aus meiner Ausbildung als ehrenamtliche Sterbebegleiterin und hat sich in der mehrjährigen Forschung mit Sterbenden in Finnland, Deutschland und Südchina bewährt.

Things of dying – An applied design-anthropological exploration of the current death culture

Author   Bitten **Stetter**   HKB Hochschule der Künste Bern,
                                             Universität Bern, ZHdK Zürich

Abstract

The presentation will give deep insights in the practice-oriented dissertation "Things of Dying" and shows how things affect vulnerable individuals and what influence the aesthetics of products, and the presence and absence from things have on our post-mortal society. The applied design-anthropological exploration investigates with design-ethnographical methods the material culture of end-of-life-spaces. At the border of palliative, social and spiritual care, consumption, design and trend forecasting. Things of dying are being reflected under aspects of the visual, material and post-modern turn and with regard to individualization, value change, digitalization, demographical change and holistic health. The main questions are:

- How do the spirit of the age and death consciousness materialize in things of dying?
- Which roles entail things of dying in end-of-life-settings? Who are the (un-)professional designer and con- and prosumer? What support can end-of-life-design provide to improve quality of life and care of dying people, relatives and nurses?

Things of dying are irreplaceable in (un-)professional dying settings. They are non-verbal actors and aktants. They have functions and roles, construct identity and transport knowledge. They are involved in (self-)care, conversations and crisis. Things can be (dys-)functional or (un-)comforting. The (non-)human-centered design creates (in)dependence, (non-)quality of life, dignity or unworthiness. The material culture of dying represent values and moral standards of concepts of good dying. All of them are designed, produced, distributed and get consumed. They are present in dying settings, absent in our every-day life. Their sensually perceptible qualities have received less attention in cultural science and medical research.

The research through design approach allows to transfer the findings and knowledge into new products for care givers, patients and relatives. The products should act inside and outside medical and nursing worlds with the goal to improve awareness of dying, quality of life, communication and autonomy and self-empowerment (finalstudio.design).

The multisite and multiscape ethnography complemented by cultural probes and design interventions. The methodology situational analysis, based on grounded theory after the postmodern turn, understands mappings of discourses and narratives and data visualizations as an analysis as well as an knowledge transfer tool. The field research takes place at the Center for Palliative Care in the City Hospital Waid in Zurich and PalliaViva, a charitable foundation for mobile palliative care. One part of the research take part in interdisciplinary project "Settings of Dying" (2020-2023), funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation and focus on four perspectives: language, religion, care and design. It is a research cooperation between the Bern University of the Arts and Zurich University of Applied Sciences (sterbesettings.ch).

Panel 7   14:30 - 16:00

Working in the Field

Organizers   Esther **Leemann**   University of Zurich
                      Rebekka **Sutter**   Ethnographic Museum at Zurich University
                      Tara **Bate**   University of Zurich

Description

"Central to anthropology is fieldwork. This does not mean working in a field, but choosing a place to stay and going to live in it, which is known as being 'in the field'" (Delamont 1995, 6). We subscribe to this widely accepted definition of fieldwork and yet, unsettle the notion with a simple question: What if fieldwork, which remains the epistemological and methodological anchoring point of the discipline, literally means working in an actual field? What if it means doing participant observation with people making their livings from agricultural fields - farmers, landlords, campesinos, tenants, plantation workers and managers, swiddeners, bee keepers and healers? We are well aware that a focus on rural people and 'agrarian questions' is all but fashionable among our students - and among many colleagues. We argue that such a focus is not a backlash but a call for a commitment to the global half that lives off agriculture in the twenty-first century. In line with the question on „what sort of ethnography do people learn to do in the twenty-first century and how does this relate to what they write" raised in a recent editorial note in HAU (Ferme, Costa, and Durham 2019, 8) we want to reflect on our discipline's contemporary (earthy) fields and fieldwork practices.

What do we lose or gain if we prioritize a field as site over multi-sited fieldwork and if we do not follow the flows but remain in place and observe them in one site? What are the (dis-)advantages when we explore the life related to actual fields and not virtual fields enabled by the internet 2.0? Untrained eyes - very often with an urban bias - and policy makers alike often stereotype those living from fields as static and backwards. Our discipline provided a rich literature stressing the many entanglements and dynamics of those balancing on an alp (Netting 1981), eating the forest (Condominas 1977), resisting every day (Scott 1985), struggling for a field of one's own (Agarwal 1995), testing powers of exclusion (Hall, Hirsch, and Li 2011), fighting state territorialization efforts (Peluso 1992), culturing trees (Fairhead and Leach 1997), unquieting the woods (Guha 2010) and having histories of weediness (Tsing 2005). We invite contributions grounded in ethnographic research that complicate simple categorizations. We are interested in reflections on the fluidity of the very category 'field' and its temporality and spatiality: as swidden fields are only borrowed from forest and paddy fields are flooded for months during the agricultural cycle, so do great parts of seemingly rooted communities suspend working on fields and fish, hunt, gather, herd, dig gold, do wage labor on construction sites or coffee plantations, guide tourists, migrate and cross borders in search of off-season work. We invite contributions looking into the diversity of social configurations and senses of place of those living from fields. Furthermore, we are interested in research (including from visual anthropologists) that challenge common pictures of nature-culture, good and bad landscapes, the very materiality of a 'terrain', and the relations between the human and the more-than-human realm. In line with the conferences observation that 'the field' calls for a multitude of approaches, which are not merely theoretical or epistemological, but also ethical and political, we invite scholars to explore what 'the field' and doing fieldwork also entails: Dirt (in a very literal sense), noise, silence, physical proximity, loneliness, relatedness, entanglement, involvement, uncertainty, constraints, pressure, shrewdness, fertility, ruptures, improvisation, flexibility, endurance and boredom. We propose a focus on field work, which is much more than exploring mere accounts of work in the field and argue that the famous 'village studies' were not necessarily 'fields studies'. We hope for new insights for old agrarian questions and are therefore calling for sensory ethnographies, embodied research experiences and situated knowledge.

Panel 7 **Paper 1**	14:30 - 16:00	

For a Bodily Ethnography: Co-labouring in Mountain Fields

Authors   Tara **Bate**   University of Zurich

             Théophile **Johnson**   Laboratoire d'ethnologie
                                        et de sociologie comparative (LESC),
                                        University of Paris Nanterre

             Rebekka **Sutter**   Ethnographic Museum at Zurich University

Abstract

With herders in Nepal and farmers in Southwest China, we propose co-labouring as a fruitful ethnographic method to understand and account for the daily lives of farmers and herders dwelling in mountainous environments. We argue that the specificities of mountain environments shape the inextricable relationship between minds, bodies and environments and thus are crucial in understanding acquisition, transmission and life-long refinement of skilled practices situated in mountainscapes. We show how these skilled practices evolve from the daily sentient interactions with domestic and wild animals, foraged plants and cultivated crops, meteorological and topographical conditions on high altitude grasslands and steep slope cultivations - and are embedded in the sociality of communities of practice. By presenting three vignettes that illustrate different aspects of co-labouring in mountain fields, we show in what cases this method can apply and what it can look like. In so doing, we intend to remedy the fact that the body is "not yet something through which research is often done" (Crang 2005). We argue that it is not only possible but crucial to adapt our methodological resources and skills to mountain settings in order to produce more grounded ethnographies that grasp sensory and embodied ways of knowing.

Panel 7 **Paper 2**	14:30 - 16:00	

The Intimacies of the Field: Coca Fields in Bolivia as Localised Spaces for Mobility and Wealth

Author   Alessandra **Pellegrini**   University of Zurich
             Calderón

Abstract

Coca growers in Bolivia are relatively wealthy, highly mobile, and politically connected way beyond their local community; however, their livelihood is still based on a rural occupation and on "working in the coca field", which is a highly local and permanent site. Other than for most agricultural products, there are no resting seasons, and the coca field, once built and planted, lasts literally for a lifetime. Back in 1997, Ferguson and Appadurai asked why anthropologists actually do their fieldwork "in villages", and their question has caused the rise of new approaches to fieldwork by following people to their multi-sited life contexts. I suggest that in the case of studying Bolivia's coca growers, the local, old-fashioned village-type fieldwork was a necessary precondition to effectively make use and being able to engage in multi-sited forms of anthropological fieldwork. In the Bolivian Yungas, the coca field is much more than simply a local workplace to generate one's income. Rather, it is a place where meanings are created and people's personhood as members of both a local community but also as mobile and transnational citizens is articulated. In the coca field, the shared embodied and sensory experiences lay the basis for strong social networks, and working in the field is what makes high national and transnational mobility possible in the first place. Coca fields are complex social spaces, where existing hierarchies are enforced while transgressions are allowed, and where aesthetical values are permanently carved into the landscape through physical work based on local, lifelong experiences, and which are resulting in true works of art. Because of the peculiarities of coca production – a labour intensive, permanent, high-return cash crop without resting periods – it would be inconceivable to do fieldwork in a purely multi-sited form.

Panel 7   **Paper 3**   14:30 - 16:00

Api-cultured Landscapes – Towards a Multispecies Approach of "the Field"

Author   Aline **von Atzigen**   Ethnographic Museum at Zurich University

Abstract

The lavender fields are typical elements of French Provence landscape. On the one hand, these seemingly endless fields are characterized by intensive monocrop agriculture of hybrid lavender (Lavandula x intermedia). On the other hand, these fields are promoted, portrayed, and perceived as particularly aesthetic landscapes attracting many tourists during the flowering season lasting from about mid-June to mid-July. During this particular time frame these lavender fields also attract many professional beekeepers migrating their honeybees here to produce the delicious and precious lavender honey.

Drawing on anthropological research investigating beekeeping as multispecies skilled practices, in this presentation I analyze the entanglements between beekeepers, their honeybees, and the lavender flowers. I will do so by focusing on the temporal dimension with regard to the seasonal overlapping of lavender flowers and honeybees' life in a beehive and on the spatial dimension with regard to the spatial distance between the beekeepers and their honeybees.

I claim that, not only agriculture, but also apiculture – including both the beekeepers and their honeybees – is shaped by and shaping these lavender fields. And, these lavender fields are not just fields, but also referred to as landscapes because of their aesthetics, and somewhat in contrast to the industrial monocrop lavender cultivation. This prompts the question of how and why does a lavender field become a lavender landscape or, as I call them, an "api-cultured landscape"? And what characterizes these "api-cultured landscapes" temporally and spatially?

Panel 7   **Paper 4**   14:30 - 16:00

Disappearing Swidden Fields, Persisting Social Landscapes

Authors   Esther **Leemann**   University of Zurich
     Rebekka **Sutter**   Ethnographic Museum at Zurich University

Abstract

In our two case studies, we look at the transformations of swidden cultivation that have been taking place throughout Southeast Asia, involving an estimated 14 to 34 million people who depended on this form of agriculture in the 2000s (Mertz et al. 2009).

In China, since the implementation of the Sloping Land Conversion Program in 1998, swidden agriculture has been banned nationwide. The case of the Lisu, cultivating the steep slopes of the Salween valley (Yunnan), shows how swidden-specific social structures endured the rapid and radical transitions from swidden fields to state-controlled forests, fodder maize fields and walnut plantations - and are visible even in today's transformed landscape. We claim that reciprocal labour exchange within descent groups not only provides the base for flexibly securing livelihoods in precarious times, but allows for subtle, though surprisingly effective everyday resistance against governmental policies.

In Cambodia, the Bunong indigenous swiddeners lost a large part of their territory to rubber plantations and shifted in the last 10 years from rice to rubber and other perennial cash crops like coffee and pepper. Observing these fast changes, we explore in our presentation what insights we gain, when we turn our ethnographic gaze to interactions in the village, in the commune hall, in the offices of the plantation, and in actual fields. We claim that we gain a contrasting view from the climatized rooms where Bunong claims get stuck and are brought to a stand still, where on remaining Bunong fields, there are extremely dynamic processes going on as the Bunong adapt, rework but also preserve their agrarian world.

Panel 8   14:30 - 16:00

Can you do me a favour?
Reciprocity and lack of reciprocity
in anthropological field research

Organizers   Clémence **Jullien**   CEIAS, CNRS, Paris
                    Emilia **Sulek**   University of Fribourg

Description

Non-anthropologists often have difficulties in understanding why people talk to anthropologists rather than refuse their inquisitive gaze and continue their life undisturbed. Perhaps one of the answers are interests, hopes and expectations people have when interacting with anthropologists. Some of these interests are voiced directly, others remain unsaid. In many cases, people ascribe anthropologists with opinions and agendas before the actual meeting takes place. Needless to say, these expectations and interests have a direct impact on the field research process as well as the kind and quality of research data. Information which interviewees provide to anthropologists foster their careers, make them shine or shatter. Reciprocity can rightfully be expected by those who contribute their time and information to the process of anthropological knowledge production. Many tasks which ethnographers are expected to perform are part of this "reciprocity package". They can include: helping in the household, supporting it financially, advertising local products, teaching and delivering speeches in schools and other institutions, mediating in case of conflicts, providing legal assistance and medical advice, carrying illegal documents abroad and exerting pressure on higher levels of government. As some scholars (Scheper-Hugues 1990 and 1995; Clifford and Marcus 1986; Farmer 2013) observed, questions of moral integrity and reciprocity ("giving back") are increasingly raised as anthropologists continue to enjoy a privileged position in the

field. However, in many cases, anthropologists cannot or do not want to reciprocate. Against this backdrop, we will map and disentangle different types of expectations and interests which people have when interacting with anthropologists. Based on our first-hand experience from different cultural contexts we will raise three interlinked questions:

- What kind of reciprocity is – for us today – appropriate and legitimate and how did this change over time?
- How do these expectations and interests impact our research process and the quality of our data? When do they foster and when do they hinder our work?
- How do these expectations and interests relate to the scholar's nationality, age, position and gender? What other factors are in play?

It is well known that the themes of anthropological study have been evolving, following – more or less closely – processes of urbanization and globalization, as well as the advent of new infrastructures and technologies. However, the way such changes have affected the ethnographic relationship in the field requires further research. This panel will shed light on new questions of power relationship and reciprocity between anthropologists and their partners in the field. More importantly, it will show how the reflexive analysis of both the expectations of the interviewee and the researcher's trajectory in the field can help a better understanding of social and power relations in the field.

Panel 8	Paper 1	14:30 - 16:00

Issues of reciprocity in anthropology: opening remarks

Authors   Clémence **Jullien**   CEIAS, CNRS/EHESS, Paris
           Emilia **Sulek**   University of Fribourg

Abstract

As some scholars (Scheper-Hugues 1990 and 1995; Clifford and Marcus 1986; Farmer 2013) observe, questions of moral integrity and reciprocity ("giving back") are increasingly raised as anthropologists continue to enjoy a privileged position in the field and aspire to more 'responsible research' (Johnson 2020). Reciprocity is indeed expected by those who contribute to the process of the anthropological knowledge production with their time and information. Many roles which ethnographers are expected to perform are part of this "reciprocity package". The main roles which come up in our research in Asia (India, China, Russia, Kirgizstan) include acting as: an educator in different schooling projects, a guide through bureaucratic systems, a vehicle for upward mobility, but also a lobbyist and a carrier of sensitive knowledge.

Based on this experience we will raise three interlinked questions:
- What kind of reciprocity is – for us today – legitimate and where are our borders?
- How do the expectations we are faced with impact the quality of our work?
- How do they relate to the scholar's nationality, age, position and gender?

Besides these questions this paper and broadly this panel aims at showing how the reflexive analysis of both expectations and responses can help a better understanding of social and power relations in the field. By crossing different fieldworks, our goal is also to ask what the experiences of reciprocity tell us about the evolution of social anthropology.

Panel 8	Paper 2	14:30 - 16:00

Benevolent Spies. On the Role of Anthropologists in Post-conflict Regions

Author   Jovana **Dikovic**   University of Zurich

Abstract

Anthropologists are intellectual spies on a secret mission that is often not known to anthropologists themselves. The post-war entertainment industry and literature witness the exploitation of the spies' narratives, where fictitious characters of double spies take a prominent place. Although we can credibly argue that anthropologists are not fictitious, their fieldwork and experiences often grant them the role of a double spy who collects, filters, and disseminates the information. The role of a double spy anthropologist could be indeed a good plot for an action movie, but in this paper, I will rather develop the idea of how a benevolent doubly spy anthropologist's doings and not-doings might affect the development of the relationships in a post-conflict society he/she studies.

Drawing on the fieldwork among Albanian and Serbian farmers in the post-conflict rural Kosovo, I will discuss obvious and less obvious issues of the positionality of the anthropologist as a double spy. In war-torn societies where the communication among different ethnic groups is usually limited and superficial, double spies bridge not only the information gap, but they also filter the information that the "other" recipient side expects from them. How to select the right "information", remain benevolent and possibly unbiased, and meet the expectations of the sides involved in the research, are some of the questions that I attempt to answer? Finally, although answering in what ways and to what extent a double spy can affect the ongoing relationships among the sides in conflict may be speculative, such an attempt is not entirely futile as it reveals some of the limitations of anthropological fieldwork in sensitive and post-conflict regions.

Panel 9   16:30 - 18:00

Doing fieldwork on/with performative arts
Explorations in aesthetic, relational
and creative methods

Organizers   Muriel **Bruttin**   University of Lausanne
                    Ana Laura **Rodriguez**   University of Lausanne
                    Quinones

Description

Arts in general, and performative arts in particular, have been at the heart of numerous ethnographic research projects since the beginning of the twentieth century, being constitutive objects of the matter at the center of anthropological discipline: "culture." Following the disciplinary reorientation from a focus on "exotic" societies to a more complex understanding of the world and the circulations that take place in it, anthropology has changed how it understands these practices. They are not necessarily analysed as representative of a specific "culture" or through their links to other usual anthropological themes (such as rituals) anymore, but are thought today as existing as their own field of research.

Anthropology has thus developed tools in connection to other disciplines to think these practices. Sociology of the art has for example provided a framework to better understand the professional reality and the network of actors present in the worlds of arts (Becker), or the logics of distinction at stake in this field (Bourdieu). Building on these approaches, anthropologists have analysed the way in which the specificity of art is socially built (Shapiro). On the one hand, by taking art "out of its exceptionality" (Bourdieu), these analyses have allowed researchers to consider art as an object of research per se. On the other hand, by treating art as though it is an object like any other, and by focusing almost exclusively on the sociological context that surrounds art, this perspective has failed to take seriously the aesthetic aspects of art. This lack of consideration of the particularities of the art itself are even more significant with regards to performative arts – such as dance, theater, performance, etc. A purely sociological focus on these practices not only disregards their aesthetic dimension, but also ignores their creation process (beyond the infrastructural context), the embodied experiences of the artist or of the audience, and the specific effects of the ephemeral, but nevertheless affecting, nature of such practices. In recent years, anthropologists have been rethinking the links between arts and anthropology. Some have reconsidered these connections from an epistemological perspective (Ingold). Others have considered new methodological perspectives (Schneider and Wright; Elliot and Culhane), or have attempted to make connections between the sociological context and the aesthetic properties of art pieces (Majastre and Pessin). These new approaches on art and anthropology are part of a broader attempt in the discipline to nourish fieldwork methodologies with new and imaginative tools (Schäuble). By "crossing disciplinary boundaries between art and anthropology," they aim to account for the sensory, embodied and affective experiences inherent to social reality, but also to develop more collaborative and ethical ways of doing research (Elliot and Culhane, 2017: 8).

Following these innovative perspectives, the purpose of this panel is to further these reflections with a specific focus on performative arts. We would like to invite researchers to consider the specific issues and opportunities offered in doing research on this particular form of art. To capture and understand such practices requires that we creatively rethink our methodological tools and our theoretical perspectives regarding fieldwork. Therefore, questions this panel would like to address include, but are not limited to, the following: Aesthetics: How can we approach pieces of performative art on their own terms? How can we practice research that does not evacuate the content and form of the art pieces? How do we include in our considerations such things as the movement, aesthetic, sonorous, visual, or felt aspects of the piece? Relation to artists: How can we take into account the artist's own intellectual, sensuous, aesthetic and affective contributions (which are present in their work)? What kinds of intellectual and affective relationships do we create when we work with artists on their own work? What kinds of positioning might we want to adopt? Temporality: What methods are required for us to grasp practices that tend to be ephemeral, and which, unlike paintings in museums, do not sit still to allow us prolonged observation? Interconnected mediums: How do we observe the simultaneous complexly of the interconnected aspects of this art form, in which so many different things are often happening at the same time (sound, light, movement, interaction between performer and audience, etc.)? How can we analyze and render such complex interconnections? Creative writing forms: What are some novel ways in which we can do "note-taking" when we are doing fieldwork on performative arts? What forms of restitution can we use to communicate our observations? How do these forms of restitution influence our fieldwork approach and relationships? We welcome proposals from both within and outside the discipline of anthropology.

Panel 9   **Paper 1**   16:30 - 18:00

Performing Bodies on a Screen: Researching South African Protest Aesthetics the digital way

Author   Jeannine-Madeleine   University of Konstanz, Germany
                  Fischer

Abstract

South Africa's protest culture is closely tied to artistic performances such as the Toyi-toyi dance that has been widely represented as a corporeal way of resisting bodies in movement. By the collective stomping of feet and chanting of political songs and rallying cries, the Toyi-toyi creates a particular atmosphere that is often referred to as powerful, catching and intimidating. Depicted in the media as South Africa's „12th language" or activist's „weapon" against police violence, the Toyi-toyi is widely performed to articulate social grievances. For its intriguing appeal, the Toyi-Toyi has been taken from the streets to theatres, canvases and art galleries and is regarded by many as „performance art in its own right".

Being interested in the aesthetic forms of protest and, thus, the intermingling of aesthetic and political expressions and practices, I am at risk to highlight either the political or the artistic dimension while undermining the other. In the first part of my talk I will look at the entanglements and ambiguities of both dimensions, especially in terms of the disruption of normativity and the imagination of the otherwise.

The second part of my paper, however, will focus on the methodical challenges of researching collective embodied performances under pandemic conditions. Since covid-19 has been impeding participant observation on-site, I discuss potentialities of how a multisensory ethnography on embodied performances might be applied confined indoors. Conceiving of sensing as an active, social process of making sense, I explore how to creatively apply a multisensory approach in the frame of a digital ethnography.

In summary, I am going to address two interrelated questions
- How to approach unique constellations of aesthetic performances within the protest without undermining either their artistic or their political dimension?
- How can a multisensory approach be applied for a digital ethnography on collective embodied performances under covid-conditions?

Panel 9   **Paper 2**   16:30 - 18:00

Employing of Video-Essay as a Performative Strategy on Autoethnographical Research

Author   Süleyman Kıvanç   Cukurova University / Communication
                  Türkgeldi   Faculty / Radio, Television and Cinema,
                                           Adana (Turkey)

Abstract

Invention of video is an important breakthrough in many ways, including its operationalization in visual anthropology. This breakthrough, no doubt, can be expressed as the democratization of the using, producing and consuming of images. However video recordings are, as it is known, some kinds of time blocks which were taken from the linear flow of life in a more philosophical sense. And these time blocks may contain lots of emotions, thoughts, changes and information about our personal lives. Moreover using these memory images with more recent/other videos together, we can create visually-affective narratives and engage in subjective experiences through creative editing techniques. Literally this means, we can sense, grasp, empathize, and interpret the emotional, cultural and social experiences through video interactions which was edited by the creator's/researcher's own subjectivity. In this work, I discuss how video-essay can be employed as a reflexive mean of autoethnographical research through a video essay I produced.

I edited the old found video footages of my family from 90's and the recent footages that I shot in 2019 as a bricolage, especially by creating a narrative through my grandmother and grandfather after I've lost both of them in 2020. My intention was, to establish a connection between my past and the present in my memory, through a timeline of an editing tool, and to contemplate what these images, and sounds made me feel. What do all of these time blocks represent in present understanding of myself? After I finish this short experimental autobiographic documentary I try to argue how this kinds of materials such as found footage may relate an engaged researcher (myself) in a meaning making process of memory and the construction of the "family" through an autoethnographic approach.

Panel 9   **Paper 3**   16:30 - 18:00

Dereskina, a research creation as ethnographic encounter

Author   Claire **Vionnet**   Département Danse Paris 8, France

Abstract

This paper highlights epistemological questions related to the production of anthropological knowledge through artistic practice. The benefit of the dialogue between art and anthropology will be discussed departing from Dereskina, a research-creation between André Dramé, dancer and choreographer from Dakar/Bienne, and Claire Vionnet, anthropologist and dancer from Lausanne/Berne. This collaborative ethnography avoided epistemic violence inherent within ethnographic encounters: in a dance studio, bodies meet on a more egalitarian way, beyond social categories. The traditional hierarchy between researchers and informants is redefined, and fieldworks interlocutors become co-researchers (Lassiter 2005; Leavy 2009). This ethical approach allowed us to raise knowledge about artistic creation - the genesis of an artwork and the birth of movements -, questioning the value for knowledge (anthropological and artistic) when choreographic production meets ethnography.

Dereskina emerged in Switzerland during covid time, inviting us into a beautiful intercultural travel at home. The invented term "Dereskina" is composed of "der" (skin in wolof) and "skin". The dance production investigated the intimacy generated by movements, the appropriation of traditional gestures and the postcolonial exhibition of dancing bodies (beyond blackness/whiteness). The creation also revealed questions of racial discrimination, leading us to rethink togetherness and the kind of society we wish to live in. Departing from an artistic act, our "choreography-fiction" (Sjöberg 2008) expresses relevant matters of the world, questioning our engagement within society.

The method of research-creation will be presented as a creative mode of doing fieldwork, allowing sensitive and political questions to emerge. Choreographic processes intertwine fictional and ordinary dimensions, triggering intimate questions. The paper will finally discuss alternative modes of writing than ethnographic accounts, drawing on a video essay created out of the dance performance.

Panel 9   **Paper 4**   16:30 - 18:00

Filming dancing bodies: negociations between artists, ethnographer and camera in fieldwork on contemporary dance and the ballroom scene

Author   Muriel **Bruttin**   University of Lausanne

Abstract

In this paper, I explore the benefits and limitations of using (or attempting to use) visual ethnography methods in studying contemporary queer perfomrance-based art in two separate field sites. Contrasting the possibilities offered by each site enables me to further understand the relationships that are formed in these fieldwork sites between the artists present in those social worlds, myself as an ethnographer, and my camera.

In the context of my PhD research, I have been using visual ethnography as one of my research tools to explore contemporary queer performance-based art in Switzerland. I use visual ethnography in three ways: to produce analysable data (by recording performances in order to rewatch them and analyse them more precisely than if I only had access to live versions of the performances), to discuss video extracts with artists (video elicitation interviews), and to produce a film (including pre-production: planning the film and writing a treatment; production: filming – not just to record data but filming in a way that makes sense aesthetically for the film I am trying to produce; post-production: editing, creating a narrative and aesthetic structure; and finally circulation: figuring out strategies for distribution).

The two main field sites that I have been exploring are queer contemporary dance and the ballroom scene. *Queer contemporary dance* is (in the context of my research) contemporary dance produced and /or performed by queer artists, usually in projects that explicitly or implicitly work on/through queer questions. *The ballroom scene* is the underground scene created in NYC around the 1970s by black and latinx LGBT people (not the "ballroom" of partner dancing; it is the ballroom scene of runway and voguing, the ballroom scene depicted in *Paris is Burning* (1992) and *Pose* (2018), not the ballroom of foxtrot or competitive salsa). This scene, while small and relatively new in Switzerland, has recently started to emerge more visibly.

"Go Training with the Others!" Surviving and Data Gathering among a Women Intercultural Theatre Company

Author Cristina **Balma-Tivola** Polytechnic University of Turin, Italy

Abstract

Anthropology and theatre are two journeys to and inside the otherness, being the first that of the participant observation in the field and the second that of the performer's work to embody a character. However, when the ethnographic fieldwork is that of a theatre company training and rehearsing, things get more complicated: in fact, in order to fully share his subjects' lives, the ethnographer should, after gaining the classic positive and trustful relationship with them, join their lives workshops included, maybe act in first person a theatrical character, that means concentrating on his body/mind towards this task, while watching and memorize the details related to the working practise of the performers. And finally also grasp, by analogy, their feelings and thoughts while doing it. Quite a number of multiple tasks to manage at the same time.

Still, working about ten years among an intercultural theatre company of women in Italy, Almateatro, for my Ph.D. research, I tried to do it and, although I didn't always succeed, I improvised attempts and learnt quite a lot on the way.

My paper will then describe and discuss the different ways I thought up, from time to time, to solve both relational and documentary issues, and how this articulated effort became a powerful means of data gathering and understanding, not to mention the trustful and longstanding relationship it allowed to build with the subjects of my investigation.

Panel 10

16:30 - 18:00

Autochtonie, processus d'essentialisation et posture(s) de l'anthropologue
Dilemmes et enjeux méthodologiques, épistémologiques et politiques

Organizers   Leïla **Baracchini**   University of Neuchâtel
                    Anahy **Gajardo**   University of Neuchâtel

Description

Les processus identitaires autochtones suscitent depuis plusieurs années de vifs débats au sein de la discipline anthropologique (Kuper 2003; Kenrick & Lewis 2004). Suite à l'institutionnalisation et l'universalisation de cette notion par les Nations Unies et la mobilisation des autochtones pour la reconnaissance de leurs droits, de nombreux États ont définis des cadres légaux et des mesures politiques spécifiques, contribuant à la globalisation de formes inédites de cette catégorie d'appartenance collective. En ligne avec ces cadres normatifs qui définissent les frontières de l'autochtonie en des termes culturels fixes et territorialisés, nombreux sont les acteurs individuels ou collectifs autochtones qui (sur)investissent l'idée d'authenticité culturelle à des fins politiques et économiques (Comaroff & Comaroff 2009; French 2009; Gajardo 2016). Ces phénomènes de reconstruction des identités autochtones sur des bases souvent essentialisées et leurs effets contradictoires (Hale 2006; Lavanchy 2009; Sylvain 2014) ne cessent depuis de questionner la posture des chercheur-e-s sur le terrain.

Faut-il prendre le risque de déconstruire la catégorie autochtone alors que celle-ci est au coeur de luttes d'acteurs qui se battent pour un accès plus équitable à des droits et à des conditions de vie dignes? Les chercheur-e-s doivent-ils renoncer à documenter les processus d'essentialisations stratégiques (Spivak 1998), au risque de faire de la catégorie autochtone un «impensé du constructionnisme» (López Caballero & Giudicelli 2016)? Soumis d'un côté aux critiques, attentes et demandes des groupes autochtones et de l'autre aux impératifs académiques de produire une analyse critique, de plus en plus de chercheure-s font état des tensions qui structurent la recherche en milieu autochtone et des difficultés à se positionner au sein d'un champ hautement politisé. Au-delà de l'opposition classique entre posture critique ou engagée, constructionniste ou essentialiste qui a longtemps clivé les débats en anthropologie, certain-e-s chercheur-e-s soulignent l'impossibilité à sortir du politique et consécutivement la nécessité de repenser sa posture sur le terrain (Gagné 2009; Sillitoe (éd.) 2015). Comment se positionner face à ces appropriations « par le bas » (Robins 2001) des stéréotypes coloniaux? Comment analyser de manière critique ces phénomènes sans pour autant les discréditer (Jackson & Warren 2005)? Quelles formes de collaboration ou d'engagement sur le terrain sont envisageables? Et avec quel(s) apport(s)? Quelle(s) limite(s)? Et quels enjeux? A partir de ces questionnements, ce panel souhaite inviter les chercheur-e-s à partager leurs expériences de terrain, les questionnements traversés et les solutions adoptées afin d'engager un dialogue constructif sur les dilemmes et les enjeux méthodologiques, épistémologiques et politiques liés aux processus d'essentialisation des 3 identités collectives autochtones par les acteurs et actrices autochtones eux-mêmes.

Panel 10   **Paper 1**   16:30 - 18:00

Situating relationships. Enacting multiple identities beyond land, place and expected categories

Author   Urpi **Saco Chung**   Graduate Institute of International
                                                    and Development Studies

Abstract

This presentation is an invitation to expand the debate on being a 'native' anthropologist (Narayan's, 1993), and a 'native' interlocutor. From a transnational multi-sited ethnography and its encounters, I would like to share some reflections of my current research. My project looks at the participation of Latin American indigenous peoples within the United Nations system. My theoretical and methodological approach explores how enacting multiple identities/categories (especially the indigenous one) exceeds expected ways of being. The enactment of these identities responds to various situated relationships people encounter and to ongoing identity co-constitution processes.

The indigenous and the native categories in our discipline are one of the most controversial and complex categories, as they were (and are) knowingly used to differentiate 'the other(s)' from 'us'. Nowadays, in theory, this binary colonial differentiation seems to be surmounted or at least blurred and nuanced. Nevertheless, it is at the core of our discipline. We need to address it, acknowledge it, and defeat it as we do research. Therefore, after I was challenged by indigenous interlocutors about my own 'nativeness' as a South American female scholar interested in indigenous topics, I continued to pursue deeper reflections on how 'other' am I? how do I enact my 'nativeness'? how politically engaged are we (as researchers) within the (oftentimes) limited academic framework from where we do research and re-produce knowledge? how can we avoid reproducing knowledge hierarchies and instead seek epistemic justice?

La nouvelle fête millénaire du Pawkar Raymi. Vers une approche pragmatique des discours et pratiques identitaires des autochtones à Otavalo (Andes équatoriennes)

Author   Jérémie **Voirol**   Graduate Institute / Genève,
University of Manchester

Abstract

Lors de ma recherche de terrain de longue durée auprès des autochtones de la région d'Otavalo dans les Andes équatoriennes, j'ai fait face à des processus d'essentialisation identitaire autour de l'«autochtonie» («indigeneidad») et à des décalages perturbants entre les discours sur la « culture » («cultura») et les pratiques quotidiennes observées. J'en suis venu à me demander comment me positionner face à ce que je voyais comme des contradictions et comment les appréhender analytiquement.

En partant de la fête du Pawkar Raymi («Fête de la floraison») que certains autochtones qualifient de «millénaire» et qui s'organise depuis la fin du 20ème siècle dans la région, je montre l'articulation entre discours identitaires, mises en scène de la culture et pratiques ordinaires. Cette mise en perspective révèle que les processus d'essentialisation sont divers et situationnels, ce qui relativise quelque peu la dimension essentialiste de l'autochtonie otavalo. De là, différentes questions éthiques, politiques et épistémologiques émergent. Comment concevoir les processus d'essentialisation identitaire, leurs contradictions et leur diversité sans discréditer leur dimension politique? Quelle image montrer des Otavalos s'il n'y a pas de consensus à ce sujet au sein de la population? Faut-il promouvoir la vision des leaders et des intellectuels (et, par conséquent, taire celles de la population de base)? Dans quelle mesure une image essentialiste est bénéfique pour les Otavalos? Et enfin, quelles formes de collaboration et de restitution sont-elles possibles?

Mes réflexions sur ce questionnement ont été guidées en grande partie par la particularité d'Otavalo. En effet, sa population autochtone –qui se définit comme telle– a de manière générale plus de ressources que la majeure partie des autochtones des Andes et elle est constituée d'une élite d'un certain poids économique. De plus, les Otavalos ne sont pas organisés actuellement en un mouvement revendiquant des droits spécifiques.

Dans cette communication, je présente certains de mes choix éthiques, épistémologiques et théoriques, qui sont d'une certaine manière, testés par un film ethnographique, en cours de diffusion auprès de la population autochtone, que j'ai réalisé (en collaboration avec F. Mobio) de manière à refléter ces choix. Je m'arrêterai ainsi sur mon approche pragmatique qui implique une ethnographie détaillée qui présente les différents points de vue et les débats sur l'autochtonie de mes interlocuteurs. Cette approche permet de mettre en lumière les enjeux des différentes formes d'essentialisation, de façon à montrer la légitimité de leur projet identitaire. Un choix éthique et épistémologique est de mettre l'accent sur les conceptions des Otavalos «ordinaires» et d'y articuler celles de l'élite et des intellectuels (et non pas l'inverse). Cette position, qui cherche à humaniser plutôt qu'à exotiser les autochtones, m'amène à concevoir l'autochtonie comme une «éthique».

Guaranis, karai et anthropologues "gringos" dans le Chaco bolivien : doutes et équivoques d'une recherche ethnographique dans un contexte d'autochtonie plurivoque

Author   Pere **Morell i Torra**   Universitat de Girona

Abstract

En 2006, la victoire électorale d'Evo Morales, décrit comme le « premier président autochtone » des Amériques, et le processus de « refondation » de la République de Bolivie en un nouvel État « plurinational », ont suscité un regain d'intérêt international pour ce pays. Pendant les premières années du gouvernement de Morales, alors qu'un processus pour une nouvelle Constitution était impulsé avec une large participation autochtone, le pays est devenu une sorte de laboratoire où tester théories (et espoirs) autour des nouveaux horizons d'émancipation, du pluralisme, de la décolonisation et, enfin, de la mise en œuvre des transformations politiques capables de surmonter deux décennies de néolibéralisme, voire cinq siècles de colonialisme.

Parmi les raisons qui expliquent ce nouvel intérêt, il y a la force des luttes du début du siècle des peuples autochtones de la Bolivie. Cependant, l'enthousiasme extérieur pour la nouvelle Bolivie plurinationale révèle aussi des imaginaires persistants qui représentent les peuples autochtones comme radicalement Autres : porteurs d'alternatives politiques et ontologiques au capitalisme, ainsi que vis-à-vis de la déprédation écologique ou la modernité occidentale. Par ailleurs, ces imaginaires ont été habilement mobilisés par les intellectuel-le-s du « proceso de cambio » ; ils ont contribué à fixer (et à transformer en liturgie d'Etat) une certaine façon d' « être autochtone », souvent éloignée des réalités quotidiennes des peuples autochtones eux-mêmes.

Cette communication se situe dans le contexte de la Bolivie plurinationale, avant que le coup d'État de 2019 ne bouleverse complètement la scène politique. Elle vise à partager quelques dilemmes et vicissitudes de ma recherche ethnographique. Imprégné moi-même de cet imaginaire romantique - et certainement essentialiste - qui relie l'autochtonie à l'altérité radicale et transformatrice per se, je suis arrivé en Bolivie en 2012 avec l'objectif d'étudier la construction de nouvelles autonomies autochtones ; l'une des nouveautés incorporées dans la Constitution de 2009, et l'un des piliers qui soutient la nouvelle conceptualisation « plurinationale » de l'État bolivien.

Sans rien connaître de l'endroit, je me suis retrouvé à Charagua, une municipalité de la région du Chaco, où les Guarani se mobilisaient dès 2009 pour un processus de transformation d'autonomie indigène. Ce dernier rencontrait une opposition résolue des secteurs « karai » (blancs) de la municipalité, craignant que la nouvelle autonomie «autochtone» ne perturbe leurs privilèges, mais aussi leur propre conception d'eux-mêmes comme des « autochtones » en tant que descendant-e-s des « pionniers » fondateurs de la municipalité. Au milieu d'une dispute entre « autochtonies », avec des racines profondes qui révèlent la nature postcoloniale de la Bolivie, cette communication abordera les difficultés, l'impossibilité, et peut être aussi l'incohérence de se positionner comme un-e chercheur-e neutre.

«Mais dis-nous ce qui distingue les Mapuche des autres Chiliens?». Réflexion sur les im/postures de l'anthropologue

Author   Anne **Lavanchy**   HES-SO

Abstract

Cette communication revient sur deux décennies de présence anthropologique aux côtés de communautés autochtones mapuche, dans le centre-sud du Chili, pour questionner les notions d'essentialisation et d'authenticité à la lumière de diverses performances de l'identité mapuche. Son point de départ est le malaise généré par la question en exergue, alors posée par ma directrice de thèse. Elle mettait ainsi le doigt sur ma difficulté à définir en critères absolus, exclusifs et généraux ce que signifie « être Mapuche ». Cette difficulté s'est traduite par un sentiment d'imposture, que j'ai cherché à résoudre en parlant de « devenir Mapuche » pour souligne la dimension processuelle de l'identité.

Il m'importe pourtant de revenir sur cette question, et sur ce qu'elle traduit et ce qu'elle génère. Elle symbolise les tensions entre volonté d'une analyse anthropologique rigoureuse, proximité idéologique avec certaines revendications politiques autochtones et engagement affectif de longue durée avec ce qui est bien plus qu'un « terrain ». Trois éléments contribuent à la réflexion sur la posture personnelle et professionnelle dans ce champ de tensions.

En premier lieu, mon expérience ethnographique est celle d'un apprentissage de tensions entre Mapuche, lorsqu'il s'agissait justement de définir « ce qui fait les Mapuche ». Trois camps se sont rapidement dessinés : celui des « politiques », celui des « culturels » et celui des « évangéliques », avec pour chacun de ces camps des critères, valeurs, opinions et performances variables.

En deuxième lieu, au Chili, le terme de « Mapuche » renvoie à des rapports conflictuels avec l'état. L'image idéalisée des Mapuche « guerriers et indépendants » est reprise dans l'historiographie officielle de l'indépendance par rapport à la vice-royauté espagnole basée à Lima. Elle se retrouve aussi dans les symboles arborés lors de la revuelta social qui a explosé fin 2019. En même temps, l'essentialisation même de l'ethos indépendant des Mapuche est la pierre d'achoppement de leurs relations avec l'état – un état qui a été exclusivement construit sur des prémisses de blanchité raciale se traduisant par des politiques d'expulsion territoriale, et de génocide physique et culturel.

En troisième lieu, les tensions générées par l'essentialisation « stratégique » se retrouvent dans le champ académique. S'intéresser aux questions autochtones en tant qu'anthropologue européenne blanche est devenu un terrain miné. Plusieurs polémiques présentent les anthropologues autochtones comme les seul-e-s à même de produire un savoir légitime sur l'autochtonie. Souvent d'ailleurs, leur légitimité est définie de manière à les enfermer dans des champs de connaissances spécifiques liées à leur identité autochtone.

La discussion de ces trois espaces de tensions me permettra de revenir, en conclusion, sur les notions de présence et d'accompagnement comme postures anthropologiques.

Panel 11   09:00 - 10:30

Following people
Co-producing "the field" through mobilities

Organizers   Joanna **Menet**   University of Neuchâtel
                          Joris **Schapendonk**   Radboud University

Description

Debates over the localization of anthropologists' "field" have been ongoing for several decades. While earlier anthropology embraced the idea of a clearly delimited unit of analysis, current anthropologists struggle with the lack of a clear localization of their "field". At the same time, anthropologists have been using strategies of (physical) travel with their research participants for a long time. Since Marcus' (1995) suggestion of following things and people as part of multi-sited ethnography, and with the mobility turn in social sciences, methods "on the move" have been (re-)invented to study mobility experiences and grasp the complex processes that enable or hinder the mobilities of people. As a result, researchers deploy strategies of meeting research participants in various places or literally travelling with them, using participant observation or mobile methods. While different forms of following people are used as research methods, the epistemological and methodological implications are often unstated - with the implication that the boundaries of their geographically unbounded fieldwork remain unspecified and vague.

In this panel, we seek to unpack the black box of "following" to address its theoretical, methodological, and ethical implications for "the field". We invite theoretically and empirically informed papers which address one or several of the subsequent questions:

- Which methodologies do researchers use to follow mobile research participants?
- How do these methods co-produce "the field"?
- What relationships emerge between researchers and their participants through following?
- Which ethical and practical challenges do researchers face in using such methods?

To explore the spatialities and temporalities of the field, we invite papers discussing aspects of following people on different scales and in different geographical sites. This could include confined spaces (e.g. prisons), to mobile groups (e.g. market traders), to virtual social interactions (e.g. social networking sites), or transnational cross-border mobility (within a region or beyond).

Panel 11   Paper 1   09:00 - 10:30

Following in Time: "Staying with" and "Following up"

Author   Stefan **Binder**   Department of Social Anthropology and
                                                        Cultural Studies (ISEK), University of Zurich

Abstract

Despite a long tradition of both social scientific and philosophical scholarship on the entanglement of time and space, notions like "following", "mobility", or "field" as well as their problematizations remain frequently grounded [sic] in spatial metaphors and approaches—as is the concept of time itself (e.g. time as spatial movement). In this paper, I approach the methodological and ethical question of following research participants as a temporal question of staying with them or following up on them. By focusing on how the anthropological practice of repeated research visits produces "the field" as a temporally and socially heterogenous locale, I propose a complementary perspective on discussions of the spatial dissolution or pluralization of sites of ethnographic inquiry and related concepts of mobility, context, and the global.

In order to make these reflections concrete, I draw on my long-term engagement with the South Indian city of Hyderabad across three different, consecutive research projects on (1) organized atheism, (2) the public rituals of a religious minority of Shi'i Muslims, and (3) an ongoing project on queer masculinities. I argue that by staying put in one place—and with the people there—we can not only deconstruct "the field" as an epistemological artefact of anthropological practice but also profit methodologically from this very artificiality. The dependence of "the field" on concrete research agendas can accrue over time to form complex, imbricated layers of social contexts, which may both enable or disallow specific kinds of mobility or travel and effectively complicate notions of the fixity or homogeneity of "the local". Rather than naturalizing local contexts as quasi-spatial sites, they become visible as the product of social practices, which include but cannot be reduced to the privilege of anthropological travel and mobility as well as the ethical responsibilities arising from them.

"An anthropologist on the plane: what it means to become a reference person for the research participants, within the framework of an itinerant ethnography"

Author   Carla **Vaucher**   Institut des sciences sociales, Université de Lausanne

Abstract

My doctoral thesis in social sciences, more specifically in medical and health anthropology, is devoted to the experience of Beninese and Togolese children suffering from congenital heart disease as part of their care by a humanitarian medicine programme. This programme consists of welcoming children from so-called disadvantaged families from a dozen countries in West and North Africa, for surgical operations in University hospitals in Switzerland.

Within this programme, my interest relates to the way in which children, cared for within the framework of a transnational transfer for medical reasons, understand and live their trajectory, separated from their families as well as from their cultural, social, medical and linguistic contexts for several months.

More specifically, the objectives of my research consists in questioning the way in which these children -aged from a few months to eighteen years old- (i) experience their illness, their heart operation, and their travel to Switzerland for medical reasons, (ii) communicate and cohabit with the various actors who take turns with them as part of their medical and social care, including other children, (iii) develop communication strategies and adaptive behaviours in environments which, for several reasons, are not familiar to them.

In order to best capture the experience of children as part of their biographical and medical trajectory, I followed an inductive approach and conducted an itinerant ethnography, going through the various stages and spaces provided by the humanitarian programme. I have followed eighty children in total, at different stages of their trajectory in Benin, Togo and Switzerland.

This communication will address the impact that the fact that I became a "reference person" for these children had on their experience, and on their relationships with volunteers working within the programme, as well as medical and nursing staff. Indeed, the fact that I was the only person who navigated through the various (cultural and institutional) spaces and times (before, during and after their medical travel) of their trajectories led me to become a figure of reference for the children. Despite a relationship of increased trust between the children and myself, allowing me a privileged access to the experiences of children, this role has also sometimes led to distorting my observations, for example in situations where the children only accepted to interact (verbally and non-verbally) with me in the presence of other people responsible for their care, involving greater physical and emotional implication on my part. I also became a person of reference for the NGO staff in the partner countries, for medical, nursing staff and volunteers in Switzerland, turning me into an informant and mediator in the field.

Finally, this communication will also be an opportunity to address how following these children at different stages of their trajectories impacted my emotions and my implication in the field.

Panel 11   **Paper 3**   `09:00 - 10:30`

Walking beyond the routine: On the effects of conducting walking interviews in prison

Author   Irene **Marti**   Institute for Penal Law and Criminology, University of Bern

Abstract

In a context of confinement, such as the prison, everyday life is powerfully shaped by the institution's particular regime, defined by Sibley and van Hoven (2009: 201) as "a set of inflexible spatial and temporal routines which take place in strongly classified material spaces". This regime allows for little autonomy, spontaneity, and contingencies. Unexpected interruptions are rare, leading to boredom, dreariness, and stasis.

Drawing on ethnographic data generated in two secure Swiss prisons, this paper will focus on the value and effects of using mobile methods, explicitly using 'go along' or walking interviews (Kusenbach 2003; Pink 2009) in an institutional context of immobility where movement is highly regulated. Based on empirical examples, I will suggest that using these mobile methods in prisons gives particular insight into prisoners' experience of space and time. Furthermore, these examples show how this method affects the present 'field', specifically, the relationship between the researcher and research participants. This is achieved because this method allows (1) the interruption of the ordinariness of prison life (e.g., visiting places at unusual times, for a unique duration), and (2) by walking together, side by side, instead of sitting face to face as in more 'standard' interviews, to create a more informal atmosphere, characterized by openness and spontaneity. I argue that conducting walking interviews helps to 'normalize' (or maybe also humanize) the institutional context of the prison, i.e. to mitigate the effects of institutional power that shape the research site and to facilitate moments and conditions for encounters between, simply, human beings, instead of prisoners and a researcher from the outside.

Panel 11   **Paper 4**   `09:00 - 10:30`

Disentangling Following: Reflections on the Practicalities of Mobile Methods

Author   Markus **Breines**   London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine

Abstract

The increasing interest in mobilities among social scientists over the past two decades has generated new methods to deepen the understanding of people's diverse movements. These methods have been focused on capturing research participants' mobilities, but also led to new ways of thinking about researchers' mobilities as a strategy to collect data. In this paper, we clarify how mobile methods have addressed researchers' mobility and immobility during research before we explore the relationship between researchers and research participants' mobilities through the idea of 'following'. Drawing on insights from the Moving Marketplaces research project on eight markets in the Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland and the UK, we highlight the lack of beginnings and endings as well as the non-linearity of following. This leads us to a reflection on what to actually follow as well as an analysis of the doings of following. This paper examines some of the unexplored terrains in the conceptual and methodological debate around following-as-method and argues that it is essential to come to terms with the specificities and practicalities of this method to make it a valuable tool for social scientists.

Panel 12

Re-viewing the field while writing ethnographies
From experience to words to books

Organizers   Melina **Rutishauser**   University of Basel
            Miriam **Badoux**   University of Basel

Description

Against the background of new fieldwork configurations – new temporalities and new spatialities of "the field" but also new positions of the researchers and new ways of coproducing data with various actors – this panel aims to creatively re-think writing fieldnotes and ethnographies. "As ethnographers, our stock in trade is language, writing – words" (Charmaz and Mitchell 1996: 286). We would therefore like to re-view the field by focussing on the ways in which we transform fieldwork experiences into words – the "writing of the field".

While ethnographic fieldwork itself has attracted much scholarly attention since the 1980s, anthropologists have only recently started to reflect about the process of "writing the field" (Narayan 2012, Ghodsee 2016, McGranahan 2020). In this process, researchers "invent" and re-view the field in different ways, with different approaches and for varying purposes. The composition and the boundaries as well as the positionality the anthropologist assumes in the writing creates diverse relations among the field, the writer, the text and its readers. "The field" is present in ethnographies, but how each anthropologist is putting it into words varies and involves a wide spectrum of new techniques and tools to create these specific scenes. In the process of transforming fieldwork to a published text, the field is re-viewed and re-thought several times in each step of the writing process (e.g. field notes, first drafts, a final book).

Thus, this panel invites contributions that reflect on new techniques to create scenes on the pages (or on other means), on new ways of identifying threads that can be woven together to tell "a story" about some aspect or slice of the social world studied, and on new approaches to co-produce both data as well as analysis by and for a broader public. By including both theoretical reflections and already realized pieces of work that "write down the field" in a new and creative way, be it in written form or by visual means, on- or offline, this panel aims to relate current debates on fieldwork with the topic of producing contemporary ethnographies. We particularly encourage submissions by advanced PhD candidates or scholars who have recently finished their PhD and who would wish to reflect and discuss on their own strategies and challenges to "write the field".

(Dis)rupture and Continuity.
Translating temporalities into ethnographic writing

Author   Samira **Marty**   University of Oslo

Abstract

Fieldwork itself is inevitably messy, but the process of "translating" it into a coherent piece of writing brings its own unique set of challenges. During fieldwork in Nicaragua, I ended up caught in the middle of the country's insurrection in 2018; later, I worked in Berlin, Germany with members of the Nicaragua-solidarity movement and recently arrived exiles, who constituted their political identities through their interpretation of the time-scape reaching from the Nicaraguan revolution in 1979 to the outbreak and aftermath of the 2018 uprising.

When the researcher deals with such varying temporalities and geographical locations as those in which my fieldwork was embedded, the process of "translation" from experience to ethnographic text demands special methodological considerations. The timeliness of my research has also affected the shape of my thesis: Whatever stage the dissidents found themselves in is already long outdated, which leads to constant struggles to update the reader on more recent occurrences in footnotes; the words of interlocutors who have since been tortured or forced into hiding seem in retrospect to weigh more heavily in my analysis; the transnationalism embodied by my interlocutors causes perspectives to proliferate. Finally, in a constantly shifting field of research, "[t]he ethnographer—specifically situated in a particular slice of space-time, and embedded in a social situation he does not control—must take the risk and responsibility of improvisation, the creative use and perhaps remaking of the repertory" (Malkki, Liisa H., "Tradition and Improvisation in Ethnographic Research", in Cerwonka, A. and L. Malkki, Improvising Theory: Process and Temporality in Ethnographic Fieldwork, University of Chicago Press, 2008, pp. 180-1). The "creative use" Malkki alludes to in this quote does not stop with the completion of fieldwork but lasts throughout the writing process.

In writing up my thesis, I have integrated the tension between the concepts of "(dis)rupture" and "continuity" as an analytic tool as well as a structural element of the text: the main thread of the argument (i.e., chapters in succession) is interrupted with fragments of unedited fieldwork "snippets" depicting the emotional turmoil, intensity and confusion in which my fieldwork was embedded. These fragments stand in contrast to the more cohesive and traditional forms of ethnographic writing. This jumping back and forth invites the reader to question the ways I have assembled my material, and seeks to explore new forms and readings of ethnographic texts.

In my presentation, I will show excerpts of these textual forms and reflect on the boundaries of ethnographic writings—as well as the opening windows that emerging voices in our discipline invite us to consider (see Alpa Shah: "Why I write? In a climate against intellectual dissidence."

Panel 12   **Paper 2**   09:00 - 10:30

The Geodataset that Never Was

Author   Dorota **Kozaczuk**   Graduate Institute of International
                                          and Development Studies, Geneva

Abstract

On the 20th of October 2020, I wanted to consult the geographic dataset of Palestine I had studied during my fieldwork at the Palestinian Ministry of Local Government (MOLG). The website 'geomolg.ps' initially did not load. Once opened the geographic dataset only showed a blank screen on the right-hand side, in a place where I used to navigate the birds-eye view of Palestine's geography. On the left-hand side, the window featured names of layers that only 12 months ago had contained digitalised knowledge about Palestine's geography, history, infrastructure, and planned developments. Presently I could not access data contained within those layers. I looked at the digital relict, an open-source platform that no longer revealed its content.

GEOMOLG's history goes back to 1996. The Palestinian, newly instituted, Ministry of Planning (MOP) had initiated an effort in digitising their limited library of past maps of Palestine. The dataset grew since 1996 but was fragmented and spread across multiple CAD files. The MOLG (that took over the responsibilities of MOP) had its first encounter with Geographic Information System (GIS) software in 2002 but begun operating via the GIS system only in 2012. In 2019, GEOMOLG - a geographic dataset department at the MOLG contained twenty-three years of incremental inputs of its ministerial staff. The dataset also contained multiple 'layers' of information that had been 'donated' to the platform. At the time of my fieldwork in Palestine in 2019, GEO-MOLG celebrated recognition and was about to undergo further improvement to the geodesy system of the Palestinian Territories. An excerpt from my field notes: - 'Habibi. Where is GEOMOLG? I'm trying to use it now and nothing loads.' – Deeply upset, I texted Nassar, a staff member of the MOLG.

After returning from my fieldwork at the end of 2019, I had written ethnographic vignettes from the time within the MOLG. I had also reconstructed the institutional history around the dataset. When I returned to the 'online site' to analyse the content of the geographic dataset itself, I had discovered it was no longer there. My research resource had disappeared. This development was disappointing and yet instructive.

In this paper, I recount a process of writing about a digital platform that 'vanished'. The paper details en effort to reconstruct the content of this dataset from field notes, photographs, and earlier texts. I further present my study of the dataset's 'archaeology' and 'architecture': the technical georeferencing infrastructure necessary for the functioning of any alike geographical dataset. I provide reflections on how in the process of mapping the architecture of GIS, GPS, CAD etc. hardware and software, I opened onto new methodological and conceptual terrains. I propose that the writing about the 'erased' record of digital Palestine both forced me into a reflection on the fieldwork already past and generated new directions of conceptual and theoretical enquiry.

Re-creating the field - writing nearby cinematics

Author   Balz **Alter**   University of Basel, University of Lucerne

Abstract

In his PhD Alter adopted the camera as a research tool, developing an experimental cinematographic approach beyond visual anthropology, focusing on free floating storytelling and identity hustling in times of Zoom, YouTube, Instagram and TikTok. Alter's way to use the lens of the camera is similar to the use of the microscope by a natural scientist: aiming at seeing things that would otherwise rest invisible.

Things that can be revealed only by the words of a person who experienced the cinematography produced in the experiment. This presentation focuses on the process of writing nearby cinematics: What can be revealed by the lens of the camera is not the microstructural level of materials but the very processes of identification going on in between the I/eye and the world. In contrast to natural scientists who try to grab molecular structures, Alter as a social scientist zooms in on the structures of identity formation and relations between individuals and groups. By working with the camera for about 9 years with the same protagonist, he developed ways to (re)create the field through image production. In this process the pictures/images become the underlying dogma (Legendre:?) as data extractions of the field to examine.

Nearby cinematics – the inception of the extracted pictures through projection, Alter unfolds a process of ethnographic poesis: A writing and thinking alongside the perception of shoot pictures. A writing opening up a cinematographic think fabric adding up to the perspectives presented in the montage as layers of reflection of the data.

Cinematic movements in form of montages are not only shaped by the field but reshape the field. As products out of fieldwork, the cinematic pictures are data extractions of the reality experienced in the field. The observer and the observation, the observation and participation of the observer become one in form of these extractions. This is especially obvious in the setting of the cinematographic laboratory, an experimental toolbox make to be seen and to be believed in. A laboratory that invites the viewer to review the field in different but highly curated ways.

The cinematographic data build a bridge between the field and the writing process. For Alter the pictures therefor serve to establish an observable point of view, allowing the reader and researcher to have insight(s) on his own in(to) the data underlying the attempt to bridge the gap in between writing and the field. 'Writing the field' in this approach is accompanied by technological material – filmic pictures – with particular semantic logics. One does not to be literate to watch and comprehend filmic narratives. Cinematic pictures seem to be self-evident. The reviewing of the field through cinematography evokes (field) memories and the imagination of the author can be enhanced in prolific ways by cinematics. What is at stake is a transformation of the writing process or to put it in one phrase: The process of filming, resp. the cinematics inform the writing by re-creating the field through the senses.

Panel 13   11:00 – 12:30

The social fabric of "traditional culture" in the People's Republic of China Dynamic articulation, domestic policy and soft power

Organizer   Pierrick **Porchet**   PhD candidate, Faculty
                                                 of Sciences / Confucius Institute,
                                                 University of Geneva

Description

Since the reform era of the late 1970s, the People's Republic of China (PRC) has been actively promoting "Chinese traditional culture" framing cultural elements within politically acceptable forms. Some elements are encouraged while others are proscribed, leading to a specific redefinition of what is understood as traditional culture in China. This involvement not only allows state institutions to keep a close control on cultural expressions, but it also positions the Chinese government as a model for the safeguarding of traditional culture, which in turn increase its legitimacy both on national and international levels. Chinese institutions implemented a large variety of strategies to commodify cultural goods within their cultural policies. They have been invested in the selection and promotion of cultural heritage as defined by UNESCO conventions (Bugnon 2018, Maags and Svensson 2018), becoming a leading nation in UNESCO's lists of world heritage. (Bodelec 2014) Beside this formal framework, authorities also collected and rearranged so-called "folkloric" practices such as oral literature, visual arts, dances and calisthenics. (Graezer 2012, Palmer 2007, Wyss 2017) In addition, state institutions also reclaimed Confucianism as Chinese most genuine intellectual tradition, integrating the Confucian vocabulary within their political rhetoric. (Zlotea 2015) and fostering global cultural dissemination through a worldwide network of Confucius Institutes.

This political leadership over "culture" does not consist in a linear top-down process. State discourses are re-articulated – sometimes even contested – by grassroots actors. How do various cultural stakeholders (state institutions, civil associations, practitioners, researchers) negotiate the meanings and narratives associated with traditional culture? Moreover, through its involvement in international projects, the PRC is crafting a soft power strategy with an emphasis on the universal significance of Chinese culture. What are the multiscalar dynamics underpinning this development? As an object of study, "Chinese traditional culture" and its multiple dialogical processes open up for a large variety of theoretical reflections. It highlights how the notion of "culture" is primary contingent: cultural forms are identified as "traditional" then re-articulated and repurposed according to social actors' needs. It raises issues of spatiality and scale as the practices are often conceptualized in their locality and re-mapped within larger narratives. (Bortolotto 2017) Finally, the role of researchers – and academia at large - should be reflect on.

Whether being formally enrolled in governmental projects or affiliated with universities' departments, researchers often participate in the ideological constructions related to traditional culture. How do they engage with the actors "in the field"? How do their research outcomes participate to the common understanding of traditional culture? This panel will address the broad question of traditional culture in the context of contemporary China. It will explore how this notion is defined and appropriated (2 by various actors where cultural expressions appear as ideological constructions which meanings are constantly renegotiated. Moreover, it will reflect on the dynamics of the instrumentalization of culture through the domestic cultural policy as well as the soft power strategies of the PRC and how scholars are engaging these polymorphous "fields".

Panel 13	**Paper 1**	11:00 - 12:30

Nurturing the socialist spiritual civilization: Interplay between anthropology and politics

Author   Florence **Graezer Bideau**   Institute for Area and Global Studies, College of Humanities, EPFL

Abstract

Since the 1940s, rural traditional dance of the North-West region plays a pivotal part in the making of cultural policy in RPC. Transformed and politicized by cultural cadres at Yan'an, social and recreational practices such as yangge dance became propaganda tools for communicating revolutionary ideas among the local population. As a compulsory supervised activity in work-units, the dance embodied the New China promoted by Mao Zedong until the Cultural Revolution in 1966. In the 1990s, yangge reappeared in the form of daily urban carnivals. Groups of neighborhood dancers, so-called spontaneous or religious/traditional, revive this tradition of gathering for ritual or profane occasions.

A Yangge fever took hold in society and such dancing practices were gradually recuperated to support an official narrative: the Chinese socialist spiritual civilization (jingshen wenming) and material civilization (wuzhi wenming) promoted by Deng Xiaoping. Major surveys on folkloric practices carried out by cultural cadres across the country in the 1980s paved the way for the revival of inventorying projects on cultural heritage alongside the interests for Chinese presence and visibility on the international UNESCO arena.

The paper builds on empirical case studies from Beijing and Shaanxi Province that reveal conflictual modalities of the interplay between various stakeholders involved in the promotion of such dancing activities. Issues related to transmission modes and legitimate recognition of "authentic" practices are discussed to better understand the selection criteria that endorsed a new "healthy" civilized lifestyle within the Chinese population at the turn of the 21st century. This also includes the role played by anthropologists on the ground as both as sustainers and disrupters of the performative meaning assigned by the cultural authorities.

Panel 13	**Paper 2**	11:00 - 12:30

Oral knowledge in contemporary rural China: Transmitting and negotiating farming knowledge through proverbs

Author   Lena **Kaufmann**   Department of History and Department of Social Anthropology and Cultural Studies, University of Zurich

Abstract

This paper focuses on a specific verbal medium of knowledge transmission, farming proverbs, suggesting that earlier state-supported collection efforts deserve renewed attention in the current context of rural-urban migration and agro-technological transformation in China. Drawing on fieldwork and two anthologies of oral literature, it discusses the role these proverbs play in transmitting, negotiating and retaining paddy field knowledge. More generally, the paper contributes to showing the value of oral literature for ethnographic fieldwork and gaining insights into our interlocutors' knowledge.

Being a stock of more or less fixed language constructions, the strength and resilience of Chinese farming proverbs lies precisely in their flexibility to change and adapt, whilst remaining a medium that enjoys a certain authority, because it is easily depicted as a form of tradition. I argue that, due to this flexibility, proverbs are a complex medium that may also be used to negotiate knowledge, political and moral values. Aware of their potential, the Chinese Communist Party has undertaken considerable efforts to document proverbs. It has used this form of communication that farmers are familiar with, to communicate new scientific and political knowledge. Thus, proverbs have also become a political medium, serving as a platform for negotiation between state scientific and farmers' knowledge.

At the same time, these proverbs are part of the knowledge repertoires that farmers can draw on. They have the potential to give farmers specific advice, or act as resource to fall back on. Nevertheless, farmers are not passive adopters of the encoded knowledge promoted by the government. Just as they adopt and adapt the farming technologies introduced by the state strategically, they also adopt and adapt the knowledge encoded in the proverbs, incorporating their own experiences with these new technologies into their available repertoire of knowledge.

Panel 13	**Paper 3**	11:00 - 12:30

The weight of Ethnographic tradition: The role of writing in ethnic formation in Quanzhou. The case of the Hui of Baiqi

Author   Pascale **Bugnon**   Department of East Asian Studies / Confucius Institute, University of Geneva

Abstract

My interlocutor handed me a worn and dog-eared book and said: "Read this book, you will find all the answers to your questions". And this experience was not an isolated one. I was regularly and tirelessly referred to ethnographic writings to make intelligible the ethnic "renaissance" in Baiqi. Since the 1970s, the members of the Guo lineage, settled in this village near the municipality of Quanzhou (Fujian Province), have recently been recognised as "Hui" (Huizu), a Muslim minority group, despite the abandonment of Islamic practices and a total ignorance of this status by the group in question. Indeed, while these "new" Hui have lost much of the cultural and religious distinctiveness normally associated with the Hui ethnicity, i.e. religious, their identity has become socially relevant again in the context of new state policies that allow the expression of the ethnic identity associated with the Maritime Silk Roads. However, this process has essentially been formalised on a "scholarly" basis, i.e. based on official histories or contemporary research rather than on living memory.

My paper will focus not only on ethnographic writing and its role in the construction of ethnicity in China, but also on the symbolism at its core. Having become an absolute reference, the textual inscription carried out by recognised scientists is enough to make the explanation unimpeachable and serves as a support for ongoing research, thus becoming a "tradition" itself.

Panel 13	**Paper 4**	11:00 - 12:30

The embodied knowledge of the *jin* ability and its significance in local and national discourses on Chinese traditional Martial arts

Author   Pierrick **Porchet**   PhD candidate, Faculty of Sciences / Confucius Institute, University of Geneva

Abstract

In Hebei Province's Guangfu "Taiji" Township, a central aspect of taijiquan's technical training is the development of the ability to perform a specific body mechanical power, called jin, that can be used by the practitioner for combat purposes. In this local transmission framework, the jin is considered the key aptitude to develop actual combat skills.

As state institutions are appropriating traditional practices and framing them into nationalist narratives, taijiquan has been rebranded as a "traditional sport" focusing on esthetic criteria and health benefits while aspects of combat efficiency are relegated to the side. However, the taijiquan's combat efficiency and the jin it derives from has recently been brought back in the middle of institutional discourses as various actors - including grass roots practitioners, academics and others - have voiced out their concerns about an increasing discrepancy between practices as promoted by state institutions and those who are actually transmitted in the population. This development opened up an unexpected and precarious space of freedom where civil activists can compete with state institutions for the definition of traditional culture and the values it should convey.

This paper will focus on the notion of jin conceived as an embodied knowledge that taijiquan practitioners train themselves to acquire in order to develop combat skills. From the ethnographic description of jin's training to the national context in which it is categorized, this paper will shed light on how different representations of traditional culture are articulated within today's PRC ideological landscape. More broadly, it will reflect on issues related to power relations between state and society and what is the role of the anthropologist in this ongoing process.

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