



Minutes of the 2019 General Assembly of the Swiss Anthropological Association

Friday, November 8, 2019,

9.30 am – 11 am

The Graduate Institute, Geneva

Maison de la Paix, Chemin Eugène-Rigot 2, 1202 Geneva, Room A2

Chair: Ellen Hertz, President of the SAA

Members present: Laura Affolter, Carole Ammann, Atak Ayaz, Nora Bardelli, Hanna Berg, Filipe Calvão, Marie de Lutz, Jérémie Forney, Christiane Girardin, Claude Grin, Ellen Hertz, Andrea Kaiser Grolimund, Moira Laffranchini Ngoenha, Esther Leemann, Tobias Marschall, Alessandro Monsutti, Susan Mossman Riva, Laura Pohl, Dennis Rodgers, Melina Rutishauser, Martina Santschi, Genevieve Sekumbo, Dominique Sewane, Livio Miles Silva-Müller, Valerio Simoni, Sabine Strasser, Lene Swetzer, Michelle von Dach, Barbara Waldis, Wiebke Wiesigel.

Members with excuses: Julia Eckert, Mareile Flitsch, Simone Gretler, Mark Goodale, Tobias Haller, Roland Kaehr, Brigit Obrist, Véronique Pache, Julie Perrin, Angela Stienen, Irina Wenk, Irène Zingg.

Guests (non-members): Aditya Bharadwaj, Nina Khamsy, Graziella Moraes Dias da Silva, Roni Sabriye Selvi, Md. Abdullah All Shakil, Patricia Spyer.

1. Approval of the Agenda, Selection of Scrutineers

The agenda is approved unanimously.

Filipe Calvão and Alessandro Monsutti volunteer to count the votes.

2. Minutes of the General Assembly 2018

The Minutes of the General Assembly 2018 are approved unanimously.

3. President's Opening Remarks

Ellen Hertz welcomes the participants and warmly thanks the Graduate Institute for hosting the GA and for the expert organization of the Annual Meetings.





4. 2018 Accounts and Auditors' Report

Christiane Girardin, SAA secretary, presents the accounts and balance for the year 2018: the year ended with a deficit of CHF 36'123.13 and virtually no reserves left on the SAA accounts. She explains that this overspending is mainly due to the fact that subsidies had been received in 2017 for activities that took place in 2017 whereas the corresponding invoices were paid only in 2018. In addition to this, she realized when she took office in September 2018 that since 2011 no comprehensive budget had been established, making proper control of expenditures impossible. This, combined with an accounting that did not respect the rule of annuality, made it impossible for the Board to have an accurate picture of the financial situation of the SAA while the association was gradually using up its reserves. She underlines that no money was misspent in this process: all money received was spent for legitimate activities of the association. The SAA simply lost sight of the fact that it was spending far more than it was bringing in.

The Association will have to reflect over the coming years on how to correct this situation. In the meantime, C. Girardin will take the measures necessary to straighten things out by:

- establishing **comprehensive** and **balanced** budgets
- making sure that the accounts present an accurate overview and allow a realistic assessment of the yearly result of operations of the SAA.

Apart from this, the accounts for 2018 have been duly audited by Günther Giovannoni and Claude Grin, who presented the auditors' report stating that the audit they carried out jointly in March 2019 went well and that the profit and loss statement and balance sheet are in accordance with the accounts. However, Claude Grin adds that this is merely a formal report, and that it is absolutely crucial for the SAA to have accounting procedures that give an accurate overview of its financial situation.

The GA unanimously approves the 2018 accounts and grants discharge to the Board.

5. SAGW/ASSH subsidies 2018-2020

Presentation of the figures of SAGW/ASSH subsidies for 2018-2020.

Ellen Hertz explains that there is less money for the 2020 meeting as the SAGW believes that there will be fewer participants because it takes place in the Ticino.

Apart from that, the figures are more or less the same as for previous years.

6. Provisional budget for 2020, and increase in membership fees

Presentation of the provisional budget for 2020. In order to balance the budget, it is necessary to raise fees. The President proposes to raise the regular membership fee for individuals, which has remained unchanged since 1994, from CHF 100 to CHF 150. A short discussion reveals a clear preference for a more differentiated scale: raise the fee to CHF 200, but only for members with an income higher than CHF 100'000 p.a.





Voting (30 members present):

1. on the principle of an increase: accepted unanimously
2. on the initial proposal to raise the regular membership fee to CHF 150 for all regular members:
9 votes in favor, clearly a minority, and thus this proposal is rejected.
3. on the second proposal to raise the regular membership fee to CHF 200, but only for members with an income higher than CHF 100'000 p.a.
accepted by 26 votes with 3 abstentions.

7. Information on the 2020 Annual Meeting (TI) and the 2021 Annual Meeting

Ellen Hertz explains that the Annual Meeting in 2020 will be organized by Andrea Jacot-Descombes and his team in Ticino. It will take place on the 10th and 11th of September at the SUPSI in Locarno. The theme turns around new forms of fieldwork – reconceptualizing fieldwork, virtual fields, actor-determined fields, and the whole question of how the boundaries of fieldwork and field practices are changing.

The calendar will be advanced by 2 months: the call for panels will be sent out in early 2020.

The GA will also be in the Ticino in September. We will plan for a longer meeting this time, to have the time to discuss various aspects of the SAA in more detail.

We do not have a location yet for the 2021 Annual Meeting. Ellen Hertz is trying to find a host institution and will inform as soon as possible.

8. Information on the Study on Data Management and Open Data

This is the first of three subjects – a) data management and the open data framework; b) precarity of career tracks for younger anthropologists in Switzerland; and c) fieldwork in “risk zones” – that Ellen Hertz would like to tackle during her presidency. Out-going vice-president Sabine Strasser has taken the lead for the first of these issues.

Sabine Strasser explains the difficulties encountered when trying to formulate the association's position regarding data management and open data, since the framework in which anthropologists must act is still being developed. As mentioned at the 2018 GA meeting, the SAA Board has invested in a study on the question of data management, open data and data security as these issues apply to anthropology/ethnology. In June 2019, the Board held a special meeting to which it invited the SAA Ethical and Deontological Think Tank (EDTT/GRED) and members of the SAA DMP working group. At this meeting, we discussed the reports that we commissioned from Martine Stoffel (on relevant legal frameworks) and Irina Wenk (on relevant methodological and deontological frameworks).

After discussion, we decided that we needed more information on these complex issues from the principal institutions governing this policy in Switzerland: the SNSF, swissuniversities, and the SAGW/ASSH. We contacted them and have received written responses. Following this, on November 5, a five-page discussion paper was sent to the membership where we





summarized the main issues, taking into account these responses, and asked for written remarks. This exchange will be used to draft a SAA position paper, including a checklist for researchers submitting Data Management Plans to the SNSF.

Ellen Hertz adds that, unfortunately, there is no time to discuss this now. We will plan enough time to discuss the position paper at the 2020 GA.

9. Tantsa: Information from the Editors

Laura Affolter, one of the three new editors-in-chief of Tsantsa, together with David Loher and Isabelle Zinn, explain that the next issue is due in May 2020, and will focus on the field and the hybridization of actions, institutions and individual experiences.

For 2021, the editors plan a special issue that will explore the interlocking processes of mediation and valuation between digital, natural and synthetic substances, coordinated by Filipe Calvão and Matthieu Bolay, both at the IHEID; the call for papers for this issue will be sent out soon.

The editors plan to change the journal's printer, which should reduce Tsantsa's costs, and they are also evaluating moving Tsantsa to another Open Access platform to make it more visible. A small working is also working on further digital projects for Tsantsa.

10. Modifications of the statutes

The President proposes a number of amendments, the main ones being

- Art. 1 Additional denominations of the discipline: Social Anthropology, Cultural Anthropology, Sociocultural Anthropology (but not European Anthropology/Ethnology);
- Art. 8 three reminders instead of "many reminders";
- Art. 9 collective members can ask for funding;
- Art. 12 keep a minimum of 7 members of the Board, but no upper limitation, to accommodate two representatives each for the students and Mittelbau, as well as representatives of the Universities of Teacher Education and Applied Sciences; representativity: also take into consideration the social-professional status (i.e. students, Mittelbau, ..., professors);
- Art. 16 (new) contains part of former version of Art. 15 on commissions, the provisions have been simplified;
- Art. 17 (new) small gift in recognition for presidents and presidents of commissions, after min. 3 years in their position;
- Art. 18 (ex-16) the secretary is paid, secretary-general is replaced by secretary throughout the document (he/she remains a member of the board *ex-officio* – cf. Art. 12 – as long as he/she acts as treasurer of the SEG-SSE);





Art. 20 (ex-18) now also contains what has been kept of the «special statute of the editing commission» (formerly an annex to the statutes of the association): it is set forth as simple as possible, with the Board and the General Assembly maintaining a say over this very special commission, e.g. the board elects the president(s) of the commission responsible for Tsantsa.

All the changes are accepted unanimously.

11. Admission of new members, resignations

Presentation of the number of members (466), resignations (18), exclusions for non-payment of membership fees (18), and new admissions for 2018 (62).

All the members who applied for membership after the 2018 GA and paid the fee are admitted unanimously; this brings the number of members to 528 as of November 8, 2019.

12. Elections

Elected unanimously to the Board:

- Filipe Calvão, Geneva (successor to Alessandro Monsutti who resigns)
- Julia Eckert, Berne, vice-president (successor to Sabine Strasser, who resigns)
- Lea Helfenstein, Lucerne, second students representative (new)
- Andrea Jacot Descombes, Locarno – rep. of Universities of Applied Sciences (new)
- Nina Khamsi, Geneva, second *Mittelbau* representative (new)
- Olivia Killias, Zurich, *Mittelbau* representative (successor to Luisa Piart who resigns)
- Sonia Mendes, Fribourg, students representative (successor to Wiebke Wiesigel, who resigns)
- Silke Oldenburg, Basel (successor to Brigit Obrist, who resigns)
- Véronique Pache, Fribourg (successor to Olaf Zenker, who resigns)
- Angela Stienen, Berne, representative of Universities of Teacher Education (new)

Also unanimously elected:

Virginia Suter Reich, Zürich, auditor (2020-2022)

The current Board 2020 thus counts seventeen members, as follows:

Ellen Hertz	president	Neuchâtel	2018-2020
Julia Eckert	vice-president	Berne	2020-2022
Christiane Girardin	secretary	Neuchâtel	since september 2018
Bettina Beer		Lucerne	2019-2021
Filipe Calvão		Geneva	2020-2022





Mareile Flitsch		Zurich	2018-2020
Jérémie Forney		Neuchâtel	2016-2018, 2019-2021
Mark Goodale		Lausanne	2016-2018, 2019-2021
Lea Helfenstein	students rep.	Lucerne	2020-2022
Andrea Jacot Descombes		Locarno	2020-2022
Nina Khamsy	<i>Mittelbau</i> rep.	Geneva	2020-2022
Olivia Killias	<i>Mittelbau</i> rep.	Zurich	2020-2022
Sonia Mendes	students rep.	Fribourg	2020-2022
Silke Oldenburg		Basel	2020-2022
Véronique Pache		Fribourg	2020-2022
Angela Stienen		Bern	2020-2022
Barbara Waldis		Sierre	2015-2017, 2018-2020

12. Miscellaneous and Communications

a) Newsletter

Ellen Hertz informs the GA that we will revive the monthly newsletter as soon as the SAA's website, which is undergoing a major makeover by the ASSH/SAGW, is functional.

Following a suggestion by Alice Aterianus-Owanga to set up a mailing list similar to the French DocPostdocEthno, she will discuss the issue with our webmaster, Wolfgang Wohlwend, and try to implement a list-serve for jobs in anthropology.

b) Interface Commission

Ellen Hertz announces that Peter Larsen (University of Geneva) has kindly offered to resuscitate the Interface Commission, a commission that deals with the relation between society and the discipline, academia, applied work and political engagements.

c) Swiss Graduate Program in Anthropology

Esther Leemann, who is the Coordinator of the Swiss Graduate Program in Anthropology (anthropology.cuso.ch), presents the critical situation this program is presently confronted with. This unique doctoral school used to be supported by **all** the Swiss universities, but gradually the German-speaking universities are breaking away. Furthermore, the CUSO (Conférence Universitaire de Suisse Orientale), which already reduced the budget by 20% in 2019, has decided to cut the funds available for coordination, leaving only CHF 10'000 per year for this task (initially there were CHF 36'000 for coordination) by 2021. This is absolutely insufficient, especially because there are eight departments involved, not the three or four CUSO departments. All the requests that program's director, Tobias Haller (Bern), has submitted to obtain more means for coordination have been rejected. Apparently, the CUSO's intention is that the universities should take this over, and the universities prefer to set up their own local doctoral schools. The program now needs a new director from a CUSO University and support to find a solution to maintain this Swiss (national) doctoral school in Anthropology.





Ellen Hertz, who back in 2006 initiated this doctoral school at the national level, assures the GA that the SAA will extend all the support and assistance imaginable to maintain the program in its present form, for instance by establishing a new SAA commission or working group to submit funding requests to the ASSH/SAGW.

End of the meeting: 11:05 am

