



TRANSPARENCY in PoLAR

Allegra

September, 2013

Has the modern world become more transparent? Or is transparency simply a lure? Bureaucratic procedures such as audits and performance monitoring mechanisms may conceal more than they reveal...

This [virtual issue](#) of [Political and Legal Anthropology Review \(PoLAR\)](#) published in November 2012 analyzes transparency as a governance principle in practice and illuminates the legalistic and political contours that inform expectations of transparency. In addition to articles published in PoLAR, all of which are free to access through August 15th, this issue includes an open-access essay on the politics of transparency in Guatemala by 2012 APLA Student Paper Prize winner Rachel Dotson and postscripts written by authors reflecting on developments since the original publication of their articles in PoLAR. [Andrea Ballestero](#) offers an [introduction](#) to the issue, while Gregg Hetherington provides a critical [commentary](#).

Human Rights in Asia in Asian Studies Review

Allegra

September, 2013

The last issue of *Asian Studies Review*, Volume 37 (3), 2013 is dedicated to Human Rights in Asia.



This issue, edited by [Vera Mackie](#), can be consulted [here](#).

Trouillot (2001)

Allegra
September, 2013



A classic that I enjoy every time! It feels that the past ten (plus some) years have only made this article more topical. It is certainly recommended reading for all interested in making anthropological sense of what is going on in the 'now'.

[Trouillot M-R \(2001\) The anthropology of the state in the age of globalization: Close encounters of the deceptive kind. Current Anthropology 42\(1\): 125-138.](#)

Trouillot passed away in 2012. His passing was noted, among others, by the Boston Review with a piece titled ['Remembering Trouillot'](#) soon after his death. A special issue celebrating his legacy is planned for the [Journal of Haitian Studies](#)



(call for papers closed in March 2013; [click here for call & Trouillot's biography](#)).

Fielding challenges, challenging the field: The methodologies of mobility

Allegra
September, 2013



27-28 September 2013



Where: University of Oxford, UK ([for more info, click here](#))

Who: The workshop is jointly organised by the [Centre on Migration, Policy and Society \(COMPAS\)](#) with the [Anthropology and Mobility Network](#) of the [European Association of Social Anthropologists \(EASA\)](#), and [The Qualitative Methods Hub for the Social Sciences Division \(OxQualHub\)](#), University of Oxford, [Cultural Mobilities Research \(CuMoRe\)](#), University of Leuven

Co-convened by [Jamie Coates](#) (Australian National University), [Alice Elliot](#) (University of Leuven) and [Roger Norum](#) (University of Oxford).

Background

Ethnography has long been the hallmark of anthropology, and most social science disciplines now routinely employ qualitative ethnographic research methods. Primarily qualitative, and historically focused on small-scale geographic areas, this methodological focus has demonstrated its importance in understanding human social life. Necessarily malleable, the ethnographic method has adapted to shifts within the discipline, such as the emphasis on participant-observation following Malinowski, a textual and interpretive approach since feminist scholars and Geertz (among others) and the increased use of audio-visual materials by social scientists in the 1980s and 1990s, among other innovations. Anthropology's diligently methodological foundations have demonstrated a stoic commitment to careful and holistic ethnography while broadening the ethnographic approach with new methodologies.

The methodologies in anthropological research have, however, occasionally encountered obstacles in multiple scales and geographic locations, features of modern scholarship which are being increasingly problematised by anthropologists. On the level of theory, much has been explored to this end, with differing approaches converging around the concept of mobility. Over the past several years academics have worked to develop the theoretical underpinnings of



a mobility paradigm, which challenges assumptions within the social sciences such as the static, bounded concepts of culture and society as a unit of analysis, the assumed centre-periphery nature of movement of peoples from developing to developed areas of the world, and the association of mobility with freedom (and immobility with oppression).

Such challenges are decreasingly seen as novel and are becoming more and more accepted within anthropology. However, the specific (and at times unique) methodological issues raised by carrying out ethnography through the mobility lens have yet to be fully developed, theorised or spelled out. Because research into mobility comprises a wide range of area specialisations, theoretical interests and methodological approaches, exactly what constitutes the field can mean different things to different scholars in different disciplines. For some, it refers to the study of those who move, encompassing ethnographies of migrants, tourists and other mobile agents. Others employ the term mobility to emphasize the changing and dynamic nature of modern human life. Many ethnographers fall somewhere between these commitments.

Beyond the difficulties of sharing a clear picture of what we might mean when we speak of mobility, mobility researchers also face other obstacles. The mobilities we study are rapidly changing, with new technologies, materialities and political imperatives altering our fields as we study them. At the same time these changes and the growing interest in mobility-related research prompts new methodological questions in the field(s) of anthropology. Novel ethnographic spaces that comprise multiple scales, diverse geographies, extremely mobile actors and disembodied information and communication technologies (ICTs) are providing fodder for new anthropological horizons, as well as spawning new challenges and obstacles engendered by such fresh forms of scholarly enquiry. Such diversity in research approaches, problems and contexts can at times hinder the development of a coherent shared research approach among mobility researchers.



Looking for the Afghan State in Abu-Dhabi

Julie Billaud
September, 2013



Huge skyscrapers in the middle of the desert. The city looks like a mega shopping mall. On my way from the airport (through which I passed only 4 months ago on my way to Australia) to the Five stars Sheraton hotel where we are accommodated, we pass by Shaykh Zayed Grand Mosque, one of the world's largest mosques that can host 41000 worshipers and has one of the heaviest chandeliers as well as the largest hand made carpet in the entire world (at least, so the website visitabudhabi claims). In this city state, size does seem to matter.



Unfortunately, I won't have time to visit anything in Abu Dhabi except luxury hotels and restaurants. Highways, 6 by 6. Who lives here? My Indian cab driver has welcomed me with these words: "Welcome to Abu Dhabi, the best place in the world!". He has left his 2 kids and his wife in India to work and make money in this glass town. He says money is better in Abu Dhabi than in India. He returns to India once a year, for a couple of months, and he skypes with his kids the rest of the time. Here he is the majority as 83% of the population comes from outside of the Emirates. Also, he will remain the majority as no one can become Emirati: nationality is exclusively reserved to those born here. "It's easy to get a work permit, but don't ask for any rights. Either you like it or you leave it!"

I have been shipped over to this strange place to give a 2-day course on gender and development to 20 Afghan civil servants from the Ministry of Finance. This course is part of an Executive Master's Program on Development Policies and Practices provided by the Graduate Institute in Geneva and funded by the UN Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) . It is quite ironic that after having written on the [absurdity of trainings on gender](#) given by Western 'experts' to Afghans over the past 10 years as a part of US-NATO military occupation, I find myself in the position of participating in this business too. I guess I have accepted this invitation because I thought I could provide a different sort of training and because 'money is good', as my cab driver insists. I also thought it would be an opportunity for me to catch up with Afghanistan, where I have not returned since the time of my fieldwork in 2007. I was curious to capture the Afghans' feelings on the evolution of their country's situation. In a couple of months, NATO troops will withdraw and most of the donors that currently support the (almost non-existent) state apparatus will do the same. How do Afghans feel about that? How do my students as state representatives envision their future and that of their country in general? With the quasi 'state of emergency' that has increasingly become the norm in Afghanistan with every passing day, how do these civil servants feel about receiving training on 'gender and development' in a five stars hotel in Abu Dhabi? From the dust of Kabul to the bling of Abu Dhabi...in only a few hours' flight.



I have been told that the location of the training has been chosen by UNITAR, which had preferred that the training take place outside of Afghanistan for “security reasons”. I wonder how this reassures civil servants about the future of their state when even a small training raises security concerns.

So here I am now, in a 5 stars hotel with view over the sea and a magnificent swimming pool, wondering how I will introduce these questions about gender and development that have more to do with international governance than with real demands ‘on the ground’. My colleagues from the Graduate Institute tell me that the minister had personally insisted for ‘gender’ to be included in the program. How can this be, and why, when only a handful of women work in this ministry and only one woman has been selected to attend this program?

Once I arrive, I learn that the Afghans are being accommodated by a different hotel than the persons doing the trainings. The logic behind this is, according to my colleagues from the Graduate Institute, that the privacy of the trainers should be maintained. Yet the practical outcome remains that, like in Kabul, a separative wall exists between the Afghans and the expats not allowing for any genuine encounters to occur.

With all these contradictions in mind, I direct myself towards the private beach of the hotel called the “blue lagoon”. The name seems somewhat exaggerated as in reality the lagoon consists of a few square meters of white sand over a small sea pool with a view on skyscrapers under construction. Thus, while the rich are sunbathing and drinking fancy cocktails, the migrant workers from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh doing their 8 hours shift can watch them from the scaffoldings overlooking the beach and the pool. But there is no need to feel bad about it, because - the hotel informs me - it sponsors a charity specialised in the protection of the environment, and guests can easily contribute to the charity’s efforts should they feel guilty for having eaten too much at the outrageous offerings of the breakfast buffet.

Now the speakers disposed on the beach are playing *Lambada*. The hotel staff



carries frozen smile stuck on their faces and asks each guest they encounter in a mechanical manner: “How are you today, M’am?”

Gender Expertise

There is only one female participant in the room. Her name is Khatera. She told me that she managed to continue her studies during the Taliban thanks to relatives who lived in Nooristan and accommodated her so that she could go to school. The province was not under Taliban control and schools still functioned. When she returned to Kabul after the regime fell, she passed the entrance exam of Kabul University and was granted a place to study economics. She is now working in the budget department of the Ministry. She says that there are very few female employees because finance is perceived as a technical, and therefore, a masculine discipline. Khatera is not married: “I want to find the right person”, she explains.

The other participants are mostly department directors (internal audit, customs, budget, revenue, policy, human resources, IT etc). They are in their thirties or forties. Some have graduated from Indian or Pakistani universities. One of them studied in Australia. Very few of them have a beard. They all wear Western style costumes with ties.

The course on gender and development has been designed by the ‘gender studies department’ of the Geneva Graduate Institute. However, I have been able to suggest readings and was left completely free of the lectures’ content. I have prepared an introduction to ‘gender and development’, in order to place historically the apparition of gender in the global development agenda.

I have designed a course that emphasises on the contradictions and ambiguities of projects for gender justice in Afghanistan, imposed by external actors and presented as non political. I have given them a text by Chandra Mohanty as an introduction. I was careful to highlight the underlying assumptions of such



projects and I thought it was necessary to start from there so that none of us would have to play the 'good consultant' or the 'good civil servant'. To my surprise, they seemed unimpressed by such precautions. They seemed to be willing to get standard guidelines for integrating gender concerns into their work. So my attempt at deconstructing and criticizing the gender and development nexus was not what they really expected.

Phantom State

In the Hilton hotel of Abu Dhabi, Afghan civil servants were longing for the state and to a great extent, the workshop was a way to make the state exist, a way to concretise the state. They acknowledged that institutions were weak, that state institutions enjoyed little legitimacy, that corruption was widespread and diminished the already very limited trust people had in the state...but still, they believed in the necessity to have a state to run the country. "I am very optimistic", the director of the audit department told me at lunch. "We have made progress already and when the international community will withdraw, we will be ready to take over". But to take over what? A few computers and some buildings?

How ironic that the training, as a form of governance and performance of the state, was held outside of Afghanistan. This contradiction powerfully illustrates the fact that the Afghan state is an external business. That Afghans do not have ownership of the state.

There is an inherent contradiction between Afghans' desire for a state and the ironical comments they make when referring to it. The comments participants made during the training illustrated this tension. This made me think of Navaro-Yashin's writings on Northern Cyprus where the non-recognition of the state by the international community has created this affective tension among Turkish Cypriots who wish to get a job in a public administration in spite of their absence of trust in the state.



Another civil servant from the department of audit explained to me that the length of administrative procedures in Afghan institutions was the legacy of the Communist regime. For instance, to have one's school diplomas validated by the state can take several months, sometimes years, people being forced to run from one administration to another, to collect all the stamps that are necessary for their diploma to become officially recognised. He also explained that these procedures are means to 'make the state exist'...in other words, make the state real in a context where the sovereignty of the state is constantly challenged: by international organisations, NGOs and citizens who do not trust the state because of the corruption they experience on an everyday basis. In the meantime, these lengthy procedures are, in his view, an effective means to avoid the circulation of 'fake diplomas' which have become a widespread business.

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Anthropologists Engaging Violence, 1980-2012, in American Anthropologist

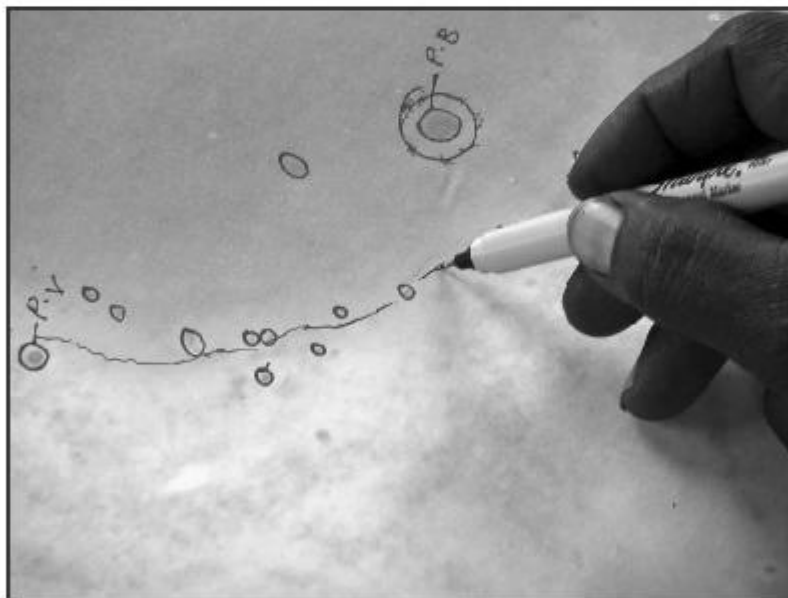
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Virtual Issue edited by [Virginia R. Dominguez](#)

Full content available: [here](#)



Introduction

Violence takes many forms and anthropologists have long explored it and addressed it. In this Virtual Issue, I draw on 59 articles that frame their topic at least partly in terms of violence and that were published in *American Anthropologist* between 1980 and 2012.

An internal search of AnthroSource (explicitly focusing on the term violence) generated over 100 items published in AA during this period. A later manual search brought that total to over 200. That most of these items were book reviews is telling. It indicates a serious and high level of attention to matters of violence not just among the anthropologists who wrote the books but also among the publishers who published their books, the editors of AA (at least the book review editors) who chose to get these books reviewed, and the anthropologists (from various parts of the profession) who agreed to review the books themselves. While many Virtual Issues just include full-fledged articles that address a topic, I believe it is important to highlight here both the full-length articles published in AA between 1980 and 2012 and framed by the authors as about violence, and the books explicitly addressing violence that the journal reviewed. Hence, this Virtual Issue includes links to the full-fledged articles themselves (and some thoughts here about ways to group them, juxtapose them, or reflect on them) but also the titles of books on some aspect of violence that the AA reviewed during this period.

Topically there is, of course, overlap but interestingly there is also a bit of a difference in coverage or emphasis. For example, **human rights, torture, ethics, and sexual violence** definitely feature among the regular articles the AA published during this period (e.g. articles included here by Deal; Fry; Fuentes; Handwerker; Hayden; Linke; Schwenkel; and Weiss), but these topics appear even more in the books reviewed and debated by the AA on this general topic over the same period of time (at least 200). These include a few dozen books to which I want to call special attention here. Interestingly I have identified nearly none appearing in the 1980s (although 20 books explicitly deal with war and warfare or other explicit forms of violence during this period). Closest to this subset on



human rights, torture, ethics, and sexual violence were books by Maurice Bloch, Wauthier de Mahieu, Bruce Kapferer, and Robert Carmack. Many more, however, were reviewed in the 1990s and an even larger number between 2000 and 2012. Clearly the topic of violence, its framing as about violence, and its special emphasis on human rights, including the right to be free from sexual violence, grew substantially in visibility, if the AA is any indication of the attention anthropologists are giving to this topic. To cover both the research articles and the book reviews, in this Virtual Issue, I separate them out here, first addressing ways of reading the full-fledged articles and later offering ways of reading the book reviews as well.

There is, however, an interesting conundrum in all this. In addition to examining what AnthroSource's own Search engine identified (from words in an article's title, its subtitle, its abstract, and its keywords), I have also explored the Tables of Contents of all the AA issues between March 1980 and December 2012. That separate search generated a good number of other articles and many book reviews not initially "caught" by AnthroSource's internal Search engine. Two patterns emerged. The first concerned topics that were not framed as about "violence" (or analytically in terms of "violence") at the time they were published but that, in all likelihood, would be now, given the great discursive presence of *violence* in more recent anthropological work. The second concerned topics in which killing, massacre, torture, homicide, terrorism, war, murder, suicide, or genocide appear prominently displayed in the articles' titles or subtitles but that were not picked up by my original AnthroSource Search under "violence."

I choose here to handle the two patterns differently. In the former the frame of reference is not *violence* even if many readers might now want to look up these articles, mine them for their data, and subsequently frame their analyses as concerning violence. I therefore mention them here but do not include them in the various groupings I offer as ways to read the articles included in this Virtual Issue. In the latter I am not convinced that the frame of reference isn't violence, even if the articles' titles, subtitles, abstracts, and keywords did not include the term violence itself. I therefore choose to include these articles here in the



various groupings I created for this Virtual Issue and that appear in the Tables of Content.

One excellent example of the former is hunting, a topic amply included in AA issues in the 1980s but not framed by the authors as about violence and, hence, not appearing in my original Search results. Indeed I (manually) found 7 articles on hunting, or hunting and gathering (or foraging) societies, and these appeared in March 1981 (by David Frayer), June 1983 (by Carol R. Ember), March 1986 (by Pat Shipman), September 1987 (by Kent H. Redford and John G. Robinson), March 1988 (by Robin Ridington), June 1988 (by Odell), and March 1989 (by Robert C. Bailey et al.). While more recent anthropologists of human-animal relations might frame hunting as human activities entailing the killing of animals (and, hence, entailing outright violence to animals), the authors of these 1980s articles debated the nature and extent of hunting relative to foraging, farming, weapon use, body size, the archaeological record, and habitat.

Good examples of the second type of article not initially identified by AS as concerning *violence* but very hard to exclude from this Virtual Issue are those concerning homicide (June 1982 and June 2000), suicide (Sept. 2002 and March 2006), massacres (Dec. 1994), war (Sept. 2002, Sept. 2007, and March 2011), warfare (Sept. 1982 and Dec. 1988), killing (Dec. 1993), genocide (Dec. 1996), and terrorism (Sept. 2002). Articles naming Abu Ghraib (March 2006), Operation Iraqi Freedom (Dec. 2008), the U.S. military (June 2008), U.N. peacekeeping (Sept. 2010), or simply September 11 (Sept. 2002) also fit here. Many colleagues would also include an article on female genital cutting and the politics of intervention (by Bettina Shell-Duncan in June 2008). And it is the content of the article by Barbara A. Purdy (“American Indians after A.D. 1492: A Case Study of Forced Culture Change” in the September 1988 AA) that warrants inclusion here as well. “Forced culture change” entailed many of the kinds of acts against bodies and persons otherwise included in the many AA articles that frame themselves as addressing *violence* to persons and their communities. Of course, readers may want to go further and include in their readings even more articles addressing systemic injustice, ideologies that support them, and practices that reproduce



them including those more typically framed differently but that contribute to the systematic undermining of specific segments of a society's population (or the world's population) and the individuals categorized as belonging to those segments.

THE RESEARCH ARTICLES/FULL-LENGTH ARTICLES

To look at the articles I have selected for inclusion in this Virtual Issue is to look at anthropologists as authors, researchers, teachers, advocates, and practitioners engaging questions of violence. The articles, of course, vary in content, and even in approach but I also see, in the whole set, areas of special attention over this period of time. Intellectual communities and sub-communities clearly exist, influence each other, tend to try to examine and develop topics not always noticed by others, and at times frame those topics using language that is novel or indicative of the paradigms within which they are working. But there are always some surprises, some people using fairly different terms but addressing topics that bear more relation to each other than many readers (or researchers) might frequently realize. ***It is in that spirit that I have created groupings here. Rather than present the Virtual Issue's main contents chronologically, I seek to invite readers to read across (and perhaps even outside) their more familiar circles.***

Nonetheless, to take full advantage of possibilities offered by Virtual Issues, I also offer alternative groupings. In this sense, I do not offer a typical Table of Contents. Each of the 9 groupings here could be read as a separate Table of Contents of a separate edited book or special issue of a journal (published in the conventional sense). A number of articles appear in more than one category, because their topic, approach, or analysis warrants it, and it is possible—and compelling—to present them in relation to other articles in this Virtual Issue.

For example, several articles address questions concerning Islam and Muslims, and the historical context in which they do so is relevant. The AA, after all, is a U.S. journal, and the Muslim world has garnered much attention in the U.S. since



the mid-1970s with the oil crisis followed by the Iran hostage crisis in the late 1970s, the first Gulf War in 1991, bombs going off in a variety of countries (including the U.S.) and correctly or incorrectly assumed to be the work of Islamic extremists, and then, of course, the events of September 11, 2001, followed by the immediate war in Afghanistan against the Taliban, and the March 2003 invasion of Iraq in search of Saddam Hussein, his military, and his presumed weapons of mass destruction. That the U.S. continues today to have hundreds of thousands of troops and military advisors in multiple countries in the Middle East—in countries with majority Muslim populations—and that this military involvement is now the longest military engagement in U.S. history is, of course, a topic of high concern and attention among anthropologists of many sorts. So, it is not surprising that several of the full-fledged articles appearing in the AA between 1980 and 2012 frame the issue in one way or another as concerning Muslims and Islam. Yet, it would be a missed opportunity to just group those articles as about Muslims and Islam and not also as analytically or thematically elucidating anthropological contributions of different sorts.

Therefore, I am asking readers to make the most of what the digital world now offers us and contemplate the alternative juxtapositions I offer here. These groupings concern (a) torture and trauma, (b) human rights, individual rights, and collective rights, (c) state structures and non-state organizations, (d) display, performance, and social reproduction, (e) Muslims, Islam, and approaches to Islam, (f) war and warfare, (g) nations and their spaces of violence, (h) murder, homicide, suicide, genocide, and (i) challenging anthropological practices. Most of these terms are used by specialists and well as non-specialists. They carry meanings in different contexts, and some of them might seem more contested than others.

My goal here is to lead readers to contemplate the issues from the points, messages, analyses, research, and arguments presented by anthropologists in the AA since 1980. It is to show the *range* of those discussions and explorations, in order to foster better understanding of the issues from within the world of anthropology. All authors will not appear to agree on a point any more than all



readers would, but that so many anthropologists have been asking questions of certain sorts and framing the issues in particular ways is noteworthy, and I seek to highlight this part of anthropological life and anthropological practice. Let me put it bluntly. I seek to highlight anthropological research, thinking, and writing on violence and not on culture. The general public may automatically think of anthropologists as students of culture and cultural difference (especially those in social, cultural, or linguistic anthropology), and anthropologists are indeed heavily trained to contemplate those issues, but anthropologists also work intensely and in depth on other issues, highlighting them and framing them as central to their explorations—and one of them is violence.

I could say that some of the terms I have used in creating the 9 groupings of articles that appear here are more controversial than others—for example, *torture*, *collective rights*, *Islam*, and *spaces of violence*. But I think *all* the terms I use in grouping articles, like the terms used in the articles themselves and the concepts they address, are best seen as open for discussion and contestation. If there is one thing anthropologists have long stressed, done, and been known for, it is the close examination of ideas that one or another society takes for granted. At times this leads to people thinking that anthropologists always look at things with too much emphasis on variety and complexity, but I always wonder if those readings do not have more to do with people becoming uncomfortable calling into question cherished ways of thinking or habits of understanding.

In Grouping A, for example, Christina Schwenkel clearly thinks of the contemporary U.S. as an empire, and relates this to the “tortured bodies” at Abu Ghraib, and Carlina de la Cova clearly sees in U.S. cadaver collections evidence of trauma among 19th century males, and asks hard questions about what race and racism might have to do with it. The idea of the U.S. as an empire might not sit well with some readers any more than the idea that a racial hierarchy could produce trauma to bodies that can still be spotted in cadavers over a century later. But both authors offer serious, research-based food for thought and, in including them in the same grouping here, I admit to seeking even more discomfort on the part of readers, admittedly a productive discomfort when



juxtaposing the handling of prisoners across time and space but by agents of the same society (in this case the United States).

The same goes for thinking of children subjected to corporal punishment in domestic settings alongside children functioning as soldiers in war zones. Is there one, and only one, ethical position to take? No. But the juxtapositions highlight our conceptual “comfort zones” and the advantages of moving into “zones of discomfort,” as I argued in my November 2011 Presidential Address to the American Anthropological Association (later published in the *AA* in September 2012 as “Comfort Zones and Their Dangers: Who Are We, Qui sommes-nous?”).

Much the same approach guides the content of the other 8 “groupings” of articles here. In Grouping B, critics of widespread notions of “human rights” appear alongside advocates of them, and articles critiquing state policies and practices that favor some sectors of the population over others appear side by side leading one to wonder whether some look more easily like cases of state violence than cases of competing rights. In Grouping C, I include articles on militarization (both state-led and non-state-led) alongside several focusing on urban fears and gated communities that on the surface look much more like comments on class and race in the contemporary U.S. Interestingly I am not sure which is likely to generate more discomfort. In Grouping D, it is the highlighting of display and performance that is likely to raise eyebrows, especially when we are not talking about the kinds of things long associated with “primitive” people and “primitive warfare.” In Grouping E, I deliberately include articles on the Israeli and U.S. militaries in a set that focuses on Muslims, Islam, and the contemporary non-Muslim world engaging with Islam. And I include articles that focus on the perpetrators-of various sorts—as well as on imagined or actual victims.

Groupings F, G, and H address “war and warfare,” “nations and their spaces of violence,” and “murder, homicide, suicide, genocide.” To some readers, the surprise might be that I include an article using the phrase “primitive warfare” but what would it mean to exclude such an article? It is a part of our collective exploration of warfare even in the later 20th century. Rape and other forms of



gender violence loom large in the grouping I made of “nations and their spaces of violence.” Clearly these issues are present in many settings, and deserve to be seen in the broader context I offer here. The same goes for consequential and systemic poverty, or what Paul Farmer prefers to call “structural violence,” that which entails deep and traumatic differentials in the life chances of members of nations, countries, and societies. While every anthropologist does not frame work on poverty, discrimination, crime, and differential life chances using the rubric of violence, many increasingly do and we see in this grouping a good mix of their approaches.

That the last grouping I created (grouping H called “challenges to and within anthropological practice”) is the shortest one troubled me in creating this Virtual Issue. I have absolutely no intention of suggesting that the few articles I include in that grouping are the only ones that aim to challenge anthropologists’ (and others’) ways of seeing, thinking, and doing. Indeed a different search focusing on fieldwork and ethics would no doubt include many more articles and comments—from those authored by Lawrence Rosen, Joan Cassell, Dorothy Willner, and Raymond Firth in the March 1980 issue of *AA* (the oldest of those examined for this Virtual Issue) to articles on Margaret Mead (June 1980), public archaeology (Sept. 1980), and gender in fieldwork (June 1984). But I consider the ones I do include in my grouping to front the issue and, hence, to ensure that this Virtual Issue visibly compels readers/users to think about those ethical, evidentiary, and performative challenges any time the topic is framed in terms of violence—macro or micro-violence, violence close to home or far away from it, blatant violence or more latent forms of violence.

[Read the Articles Here](#)

THE BOOK REVIEWS (AND BOOKS REVIEWED)

There is some very real merit in looking at the book reviews both thematically and chronologically. There has been an enormous increase in the topic in the past 30 years and it is useful to see some of the shifts around the topic. In fact, the



growth in the number of books published on acts of violence and forms of violence—and reviewed in the *American Anthropologist*— is striking. Restricting my count to books explicitly dealing with war, warfare, homicide, terrorism, violence, militaries, and capital punishment, I found no more than 25 between 1980 and 1990 (out of over 2000), but by the 1990s that number exceeds 60 and it exceeds 100 since the year 2000. Let me add that the numbers would clearly be greater if I were also regularly including books in and on political economy, systemic injustice, sexism, racism, and inequalities of many sorts. The list of book reviews I offer in the Appendix to this Virtual Issue is obviously indicative of both an anthropological concern now garnering a great deal of attention and a chosen frame of interpretation, research, and analysis. I consider all these books to address the topic of violence and the engagement of anthropologists with violence. A different editor, of course, might have excluded a few and added others, but the great majority of books would appear on any editor's list.

In the next few paragraphs, I discuss some thematic patterns I find in the set of books published and reviewed by the *American Anthropologist* between 1980 and 2012. In the Appendix, however, I present them chronologically but by half-decade in order to make the growth even easier to spot.

War and Warfare/Military and Militarization

Perhaps most obvious as books on violence are those books explicitly dealing with war and warfare. They have appeared throughout the decades since 1980, although the terminology has shifted somewhat and differs to some extent by subfield. For example, warfare is less common now and a focus on the U.S. military more common now than in the 1980s. The earliest book review I found on this topic appeared in June 1981 and concerned Irenaus Eibl-Eibesfeldt's book, The Biology of Peace and War. Other 1980s reviews appeared in 1983 (one), 1986 (one), 1987 (one), 1988 (two), and 1989 (two). Twelve (12) more appeared in the 1990s, sixteen (16) between 2000 and 2009, and 3 more between 2010 and 2012. But these numbers do not include books framing their topic in slightly different terms. The first I noted to do so was in a review appearing in September 1987 but



7 reviews in the mid-1990s did so along with 2 more between 2010 and 2012.

Some used slightly different frames of analysis—such as crisis or revolution or massacre—but dealt with places at war or recently emerging from war or near-war. Here I include the following from the 1980s through the late 1990s: the June 1981 review of Michael Fischer’s book (Iran: From Religious Dispute to Revolution) on Iran; the March 1989 review of Bruce Kapferer’s book (Legends of People, Myths of State) concerning Sri Lanka and Australia; the June 1989 review of Robert Carmack’s edited volume (Harvest of Violence) concerning Guatemala; the December 1992 review of Allen Feldman’s book (Formations of Violence) on Northern Ireland; the September 1994 Review (Essay) by Judy Ledgerwood titled “Surviving Shattered Worlds: Vietnam and Cambodia”; the September 1994 review of David Stoll’s book (Between Two Armies in the Ixil Towns of Guatemala) on Guatemala; the December 1995 review of Ricardo Falla’s book (Massacres in the Jungle; Ixcan, Guatemala 1975-1982) also on Guatemala; the December 1997 double review of books on Sikhs and Sikh militants in South India (Joyce J. M. Pettigrew’s The Sikhs of the Punjab and Cynthia Keppley Mahmood’s Fighting for Faith and Nation); and the December 1999 review of Philip Gourevitch’s book (We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will Be Killed with Our Families) on Rwanda.

Here I would also place more recent books and their reviews—including the June 2004 review of Victoria Sanford’s book (Buried Secrets), another book dealing with violence in Guatemala; the September 2004 review of Franz Husken and Huub de Jonge’s edited book (Violence and Vengeance) on Indonesia; the September 2004 review of Daniel Wilkinson’s book (Silence on the Mountain) on Guatemala; the March 2005 review of James Ron’s book (Frontiers and Ghettos) on Serbia and Israel; the March 2005 review of Johan Pottier’s book (Re-Imagining Rwanda) on Rwanda; the September 2005 review of William R. Kelleher’s book (The Troubles in Ballybogoin) on Northern Ireland; the September 2005 review of Emma Tarlo’s book (Unsettling Memories) on Delhi; the June 2006 Review Essay (titled “Sense and Sense-Making in the Caucasus”) by Bruce Grant on three books dealing with the war-torn Caucasus; the September 2006 review



of Paul Sant Cassia's book (Bodies of Evidence) on Cyprus; the September 2006 review of Antonius Robben's book (Political Violence and Trauma in Argentina) on Argentina; the March 2008 review of Alexander Hinton's book (Why Did They Kill?) on Cambodia; the March 2010 review of David Vine's book (Island of Shame) on Diego Garcia; the June 2010 review of C. Sarah Soh's book (The Comfort Women) on Korea and Japan; the December 2010 review of Rudi Colloredo-Mansfeld's book (Fighting Like a Community) on Andean civil society; the September 2011 review of Brigittine French's book (Maya Ethnolinguistic Identity) on highland Guatemala; and the December 2011 review of Erica Caple James' book (Democratic Insecurities) on Haiti.

Memory (in Relation to Violence)

A number of books explicitly frame their topic in relation to memory, and it is useful to identify the more obvious here. They include: (1) Liisa H. Malkki's Purity and Exile: Violence, Memory, and National Cosmology among Hutu Refugees in Tanzania (reviewed by Marc Sommers in March 1997); (2) Michael Gilsenan's Lords of the Lebanese Marclies: Violence and Narrative in an Arab Society and Ted Swedenburg's Memories of Revolt: The 1936-1939 Rebellion and the Palestinian National Past (reviewed jointly by Stephen Caton in September 1997 under "Political Violence, Narrative, and Memory"); (3) Ussama Makdisi and Paul A. Silverstein's edited volume, Memory and Violence (reviewed by James Peacock in September 2002); (4) David E. Lorey. and William H. Beezley's edited volume, Genocide, Collective Violence, and Popular Memory: The Politics of Remembrance in the Twentieth Century (reviewed by Alexander L. Hinton in June 2004); (5) Rosalind Shaw's Memories of the Slave Trade: Ritual and the Historical Imagination in Sierra Leone (reviewed by Martin Klein in September 2004); (6) Daniel Wilkinson's Silence on the Mountain: Stories of Terror, Betrayal, and Forgetting in Guatemala (reviewed by W. George Lovell in September 2004); (7) Thomas A. Vogler's Witness and Memory: The Discourse of Trauma (reviewed by Kelly McKinney in March 2005); (8) Ussama Makdisi and Paul A. Silverstein's edited volume, Memory and Violence in the Middle East and North Africa (reviewed by Richard U. Moench in June 2007); (9) Edna G. Bay and Donald L.



Donham's edited volume, States of Violence: Politics, Youth, and Memory in Contemporary Africa (reviewed by Wendi A. Haugh in March 2008). and (10) C. Sarah Soh's The Comfort Women: Sexual Violence and Postcolonial Memory in Korea and Japan (reviewed by Haeng-Ja Chung in June 2010).

Torture, Trauma, Terror, Abuse

Likewise it may be useful to select some of the more obvious examples of anthropological works engaging with torture, trauma, terror, and abuse in situations otherwise deemed times of peace (or at least not of outright war). Some are explicitly sexual and some not. Among those I choose to note (and some appear above as well) are: (1) Jean La Fontaine's Child Sexual Abuse (reviewed by Jill Korbin in December 1992); (2) Jacquelyn C. Campbell's Sanctions and Sanctuary: Cultural Perspectives on the Beating of Wives (reviewed by Dorothy Ayers Counts in September 1993); (3) Gregory M. Matoesian's Reproducing Rape: Domination through Talk in the Courtroom (reviewed by Mary Bucholtz in December 1994); (4) Frances E. Mascia-Lees' Tattoo, Torture, Mutilation and Adornment: The Denaturalization of the Body in Culture and Text (reviewed by Gilbert Herdt in June 1996); (5) Darius M. Rejali's Torture and Modernity: Self, Society and State in Modern Iran (reviewed by William Beeman in December 1996); (6) Jeffrey A. Sluka's Death Squad: The Anthropology of State Terror (reviewed by Avram Bornstein in March 2001); (7) Cara E. Richards' The Loss of Innocents: Child Killers and Their Victims (reviewed by Jill Korbin in June 2001); (8) Catherine Weinberger-Thomas' Ashes of Immortality: Widow-Burning in India (reviewed by Martha Ann Selby in December 2001); and (9) Brian Keith Axel's The Nation's Tortured Body: Violence, Representation and the Formation of a Sikh "Diaspora." (reviewed by Verne A. Dusenbery in March 2004).

Despite reaching a bit farther here than others might, I would also include in this category (1) Martha Oehmke Loustaunnau and Mary Sanchez-Bane's Life, Death and In-Between on the U.S.-Mexico Border: Asi es la vida (reviewed by Robert R. Alvarez in December 2001); (2) Carel P. van Schaik and Charles H. Janson's Infanticide by Males and Its Implications (reviewed by Agustin Fuentes in June



2002); (3) Kathleen M. Blee's Inside Organized Racism: Women in the Hate Movement (reviewed by Chip Berlet in March 2004); (4) Thomas A. Vogler's Witness and Memory: The Discourse of Trauma (reviewed by Kelly McKinney in March 2005); (5) Lorna A. Rhodes' Total Confinement: Madness and Reason in the Maximum Security Prison (reviewed by Dylan Rodriguez in March 2005); (6) Paul Farmer's Pathologies of Power: Health, Human Rights, and the New War on the Poor (reviewed by Jeff Maskovsky in June 2005); (7) Gretchen E. Schafft's From Racism to Genocide: Anthropology in the Third Reich (reviewed by Bernhard Streck in March 2006); (8) David M. Rosen's Armies of the Young: Child Soldiers in War and Terrorism (reviewed by Ilene Cohn in June 2006); (9) Jonina Einarsdottir's Tired of Weeping: Mother Love, Child Death, and Poverty in Guinea-Bissau (reviewed by Dorothy D. Wills in September 2006); (10) Andrea Parrot and Nina Cummings' Forsaken Females: The Global Brutalization of Women (reviewed by Marcia Mikulak in September 2007); (11) Arnold Arluke's Just a Dog: Understanding Animal Cruelty and Ourselves (reviewed by Molly Mullin in March 2009); and (12) Ellen Moodie's El Salvador in the Aftermath of Peace: Crime, Uncertainty, and the Transition to Democracy (reviewed by Kimberly Theidon in December 2011).

Concluding Thoughts

It may be worth contemplating how and why this great increase in explicit attention to violence among anthropologists has occurred. Both in the articles published and the books reviewed in the *American Anthropologist* since 1980 there is ample evidence of this "explosion." To those who think of anthropology (especially social, cultural, and linguistic anthropology) as a field defined by a notion of culture, this "explosion" in attention to distress, war, terror, human rights, and multiple forms of physical, social, and psychological violence should be an eye-opener. Anthropologists may not have abandoned a sense of culture or of social, ideological, and cognitive diversity among humans on this planet, but clearly something else looms large for many in the field of anthropology (and across a number of its subfields).



I try to document this in this Virtual Issue, and to make much of that work readily available. I also try to provoke readers to go beyond their comfort zones in reading across time periods, spaces, and even interpretive orientations. Each of the sets I have created here can work well to point to our “comfort zones” and to imply or even create our “zones of discomfort,” and it is this possibility that makes this Virtual Issue on Violence (and specifically on anthropologists engaging questions of violence) so compelling. Clearly the concerns with human rights, cultural rights, gender violence, political violence, and state violence that I identify here emerged very palpably on the scene from the late 1980s through the first decade of the 21st century, but they also clearly continue. Indeed I think they grow as anthropologists build on each other’s earlier work and apply those frames for “looking” and thinking to a great deal of social, economic, military, and political life around the world.

AAA 2013 Panel - Where are values? Exploring the ‘genuine’ within the law

Allegra
September, 2013

Friday, November 22, 2013

Chicago Hilton



1:45 PM-3:30 PM

Organised by [Miia Halme-Tuomisaari](#) and [Julie Billaud](#)

Chaired by [Sally Engle-Merry](#)

Sponsored by the [Association for Political and Legal Anthropology \(APLA\)](#)

See program: [here](#)

Session Abstract: Recent anthropological work on the 'law' has often focused on the formal settings where norms, rules and values are produced and mobilised. Most of this literature has strived to describe the ways in which actors maneuver the plurality of normative orders available in their immediate environment, insisting on "strategies", "tactics" and "calculations" as means to articulate Self-ethical positioning. Whereas this scholarship has diversified structuralist understandings of the law 'as a major instrument of domination', it has simultaneously depicted engaged actors as cynical strategists driven by rational costs/benefits evaluations. This workshop aims to enrich this scholarship by focusing on values. In tapping into both ongoing philosophical discussions on values as well as the emerging anthropology of morality, it traces how values are historically and sociologically conceptualized and what they mean for different actors, how they appear in the world, how they circulate, become visible (or on the contrary, get marginalized) and how they transform social and political discourses, practices and subjectivities. Thus this workshop forms a new entry into recent legal anthropological work on transnational bureaucracies and the influential scholarship on audit cultures by focusing on the 'genuine' (and not so genuine) ways in which actors create and shape their moral universe by actively engaging with values. Further, it seeks to understand how the subjectivities of the engaged actors are shaped and influenced by the various normative forces that inform their systems and modes of action in an increasingly interconnected and globalized world. In this workshop we wish to examine these questions through ethnographic accounts of the international human rights regime - understood



broadly to incorporate also 'humanitarianism', discussions on 'Corporate Social Responsibility', and legal interventions in post-war/reconstruction or 'democratization' processes.

Presentation 1: Ethical "Scripts": Analyzing the Normative of Human Rights Indicators and Alternatives Toward Social Justice in Ecuador

[Johannes M. Waldmueller](#) (The Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva)

Presentation 2: Justice As a Moral Dilemma. Judicial Practice and the Poetic of Compromise in Kabul

[Antonio De Lauri](#) (Forum Transregionale Studien - Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin)

Presentation 3: Keepers of the 'Truth': Producing 'transparent' Documents for the UN Universal Periodic Review

[Julie Billaud](#) (Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology)

Presentation 4: Engagement, Detachment and Personal 'space': Exploring 'values' in UN Treaty Body Proceedings

[Miia Halme-Tuomisaari](#) (Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology)

Presentation 5: Towards a Cosmayapolitan Ethics: the Pan-Maya Construction of Rights From a Transnational Perspective



[Genner De Jesus Llanes-Ortiz](#) (Royal Holloway University of London)

Presentation 6: “The Feeling of Pursuing An Ideal”: Minorities Section Bureaucrats At the League of Nations Reflect On Their Work

[Jane K Cowan](#) (University of Sussex and University of Sussex)

SAVE THE RECHTSKULTUREN PROGRAM IN BERLIN

Allegra
September, 2013



It is with dismay that we take note of the recent announcement by the Berlin Senate to cut the funding for the Forum Transregionale Studien from 2014 onwards.

This threatens the very existence of the research program **Rechtskulturen** - a development that we not only regret but feel has strongly negative implications



for Berlin as a location of excellent research, as well as for the legal academy in Germany.

Rechtskulturen...

... is - so far - a unique program in the German legal academy. In the past three years of its existence it has been an important stimulus in the Berlin academic landscape and beyond.

... pursues two objectives, the relevance of which the Wissenschaftsrat highlighted emphatically in its recent recommendations to the German legal academy („Perspektiven der Rechtswissenschaft in Deutschland“, November 2012): an openness to the international academy as well as a stronger cross-linkage between disciplines (and there by reflexive disciplinarity - “reflexive Disziplinarität”) within the legal academy in Germany.

... promotes innovative research questions and every year brings scholars of the highest caliber from all over the world together in Berlin.

... is internationally visible and transregionally networked. The program is recognized within the field of legal research in Germany and internationally as an exemplary initiative, by which faculties and extra-university research institutions can orientate themselves in their efforts to advance research and teaching in legal studies as an academic discipline geared towards specific professions (“Professionsfakultät”).

... signals courage and curiosity as it experiments with new academic formats and opens up multiple opportunities of interaction and exchange.

If the program **Rechtskulturen** is suspended in 2014 as a consequence of the intended budgetary cuts, all the gains that have been generated so far will be lost. The co-operations and initiatives that have been designed for sustainability will be demolished. The suspension of the program will be a bitter loss for innovative legally-oriented and legally-inspired research, as well as for Berlin as an



increasingly internationalized academic location. As academics who highly value and identify with the program **Rechtskulturen** and with the promotion of the interdisciplinary and transregional enrichment of the German legal academy, we beg you to reconsider your decision.

Sign the petition: [here](#)

The Fantastic and the Banal: Rethinking Bureaucratic Authority

Allegra
September, 2013



September 27-28, 2013, University of Colorado, Boulder.

A Graduate Student Conference

Do only masochists relish the thought of dealing with bureaucracies and bureaucrats? Facing the seemingly endless waiting and run-arounds so frequently associated with phone calls and visits to bureaucratic offices, sometimes it seems so. Yet despite - or perhaps because of - the seeming indifference and alienating power of such experiences, bureaucracy can reach into the most intimate spaces of life, from before birth to after death. Human lives are measured at least in part by paper trails and material traces—documents, forms, certificates, photographs, signatures, stamps, and thumb prints. If, as Latour contended, bureaucratic



documents are the ‘most despised of all ethnographic objects,’ then in promoting their significance we risk fetishizing them. Yet that risk—along with the risk of boredom—is one we invite you to take with us as we ask, How can we both understand and challenge the contours of bureaucratic authority? What can bureaucracies tell us about contemporary life? What is at stake in identifying intimacy in bureaucracy?

Bureaucracy is mundane and absurd, blasé and infuriating, orderly and convoluted. Weber recognized the paradoxical qualities of bureaucracy, heralding it as the hallmark of modern social organization – one that promises routinization, standardization, and rationality, but also delivers tedium and disenchantment. Bureaucracy is clarity-meets-opacity par excellence with a dash of the superfluous, the ridiculous, and the impossibly kind thrown in as well. In this conference, we aim to rethink bureaucracy by attending to its iterations and contradictions, from the banal to the fantastic. We contend that bureaucratic authority is crucial for understanding contemporary issues across the humanities and social sciences, including, but not limited to, various forms of governmentality; humanitarianism; development projects and neoliberal reforms; issues of sovereignty, citizenship and human rights; affect; social movements; and the movements of peoples and goods across and within borders. In highlighting the breadth of social scientific research and theorizing on bureaucracy, we welcome papers from all disciplines on topics speaking to our theme.

The Fantastic and the Banal: Rethinking Bureaucratic Authority is a two-day interdisciplinary conference organized by graduate students in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Colorado at Boulder. Events are free and open to the public. The conference will be held Friday, September 27 and Saturday, September 28 and will include panels moderated by University of Colorado faculty. Matthew Hull, associate professor of anthropology at the University of



Michigan, will give the keynote address.

For more information and for conference updates, please visit our website at <http://rethinkingbureaucracy.tumblr.com/>. While we cannot provide funds for travel, most meals will be included, and free housing may be available with anthropology graduate students.

The Legalization of Culture and the Enculturation of Law

Allegra

September, 2013

McGill Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism, Montreal, Canada.

February 21, 2014,

This one-day conference will explore the potential of legal pluralism to account for the varied and dynamic roles of culture within legal discourse. Can legal pluralism create a richer model of legal knowledge, one that reflects plural cultural narratives, while still offering a normative foundation for formal legal processes? Or does it entail abandoning a distinctively legal discourse in favour of an assemblage of anthropological and legal knowledge or “centaur discipline”?

In short, can legal pluralism bring culture within the domain of law? Four panels will explore these questions from a multidisciplinary perspective in the context of international law, aboriginal law, alternative dispute resolution, and the recognition/accommodation of minority cultural practices. A fuller description of



the Centaur Jurisprudence Project is available [here](#).

The closing date for abstract submissions was **15 July 2013**. We will notify successful applicants by early August 2013.

Parliaments and Methodology: Anthropological, Discourse- Oriented and Digital Approaches to Parliamentary History

Allegra

September, 2013

12-14 June 2014, Helsinki & Department of History and Ethnology, University of
Jyväskylä, Finland.

DEADLINE closed

The 3rd International Conference of the European Information and Research
Network on Parliamentary History

The 9th Annual Jyväskylä Symposium on Political Thought and Conceptual History

**Parliaments and Methodology: Anthropological, Discourse-Oriented and
Digital Approaches to Parliamentary History**

12-14 June 2014, Helsinki & Department of History and Ethnology, University of
Jyväskylä, Finland



Organised by the Department of History and Ethnology of the University of Jyväskylä, the European Information and Research Network on Parliamentary History (EuParl.net) and the Finnish Historical Society

Scientific Committee: Prof. Carla van Baalen (Radboud University Nijmegen, Centrum voor Parlementaire Geschiedenis), Prof. Jean Garrigues (Université d'Orléans, Centre d'Histoire Parlementaire et Politique, Paris), Dr. Adéla Gjurinová (Institute of Contemporary History, Czech Academy of Sciences, Prague, Czech Republic), Prof. Pasi Ihalainen (University of Jyväskylä), Dr. Paul Seaward (History of Parliament Trust, London), Dr. Andreas Schulz (Kommission für Geschichte des Parlamentarismus und der politischen Parteien, Berlin)

The European Information and Research Network on Parliamentary History (EuParl.net) has previously organized international conferences on 'The Europe of Parliaments' in Paris in 2012 and on 'The Ideal Parliament' in The Hague in 2013 (see <https://euparl.net>). In its third international conference, EuParl.net invites experts on European parliamentary studies from various academic fields to present, discuss and rethink their latest methodological approaches. Special attention will be paid to anthropological, discourse analytical and oral approaches to parliamentary institutions as well as to the implications of the digitization of parliamentary records for research on parliaments. While individual papers may focus on one national parliament and on a limited historical period, comparative and transnational approaches are encouraged, and most papers are likely to address the common European tradition of parliamentary government, or government by discussion, in a way or another. This evolving tradition will play a key role also when European societies face future challenges as democratic, participatory, deliberating and innovative societies.

While providing an update on current approaches to anthropological, discourse-oriented, oral and digital parliamentary research, the conference aims at developing these methods further so that they could to better serve academic research in parliamentary history and related fields. It is expected to give rise to a collected volume on current methodologies in parliamentary studies.



Furthermore, the conference and EuParl.net at large aim at increasing understanding of the significance of parliamentary traditions among the European publics at national and international levels.

The invited and confirmed speakers include several leading anthropologists, linguists, historians and political theorists: Marc Abeles (Paris), Emma Crewe (London), Shirin Rai (Warwick), Henk te Velde (Leiden), Ton van Haften (Leiden), Marnix Beyen (Antwerp) and Kari Palonen (Jyväskylä).

Proposals on methodological papers of no more than 20 minutes addressing the following questions are invited:

- How do anthropologists analyse social relations, rituals and ceremonies in parliaments and what can historians learn from these methods?
- How should oral history of parliaments be recorded and written?
- How do alternative linguistically and rhetorically oriented strategies to analyse parliamentary history relate to each other?
- How can political theorists make use of historical analyses of parliamentary discourse?
- What are the methodological implications and future possibilities for parliamentary history opened by the digitization of parliamentary records?

Please send an abstract of no more than 300 words to pasi.t.ihalainen@jyu.fi by 15 September 2013. The speakers will be informed about the acceptance of their papers by 15 October. The conference fee is expected to be 200 euros and will include charter coach transport from Helsinki to Jyväskylä and back, all meals and refreshments during the conference as well as an excursion.



Change policies that have led to the resignation of Marshall Sahlins

Allegra
September, 2013



Campaign launched in March 2013.

The recent extraordinary act of Marshall Sahlins in resigning from the National Academy of Sciences is an exemplary expression of the critical function of Anthropology: at once for its advocacy of the rights of indigenous and minority peoples, and for its defiance, in the cause of scientific integrity, of an unwelcome



collusion between the scholarly community and the powers-that-be.

In withdrawing from the most prestigious American scientific institution in protest of its support of research designed to improve the mission-efficiency of the U.S. military, Sahlins reaffirms his personal history of opposition to the neocolonial wars of recent decades, beginning with his leading role in the student and university movement against the war in Vietnam.

Motivated as well by the election of Napoleon Chagnon to the National Academy of Sciences, Sahlins' protest reflects his long-standing criticism of biological reductionism in the human sciences, in Chagnon's case amplified by an anthropology of the Yanomami people of Amazonia worthy of tabloid journalism for its combination of ethnocentrism and scientific incompetence.

Simultaneously protesting against the militarization of scholarship and the consecration of prejudice, Sahlins offers a moral and intellectual example that deserves to be followed not only by anthropologists but in the academy at large.

First signatories:

-Mauro Barbosa de Almeida, Professor, departamento de Antropologia, Universidade Estadual de Campinas

-Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, Professor, Museu Nacional, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro

-Manuela Carneiro da Cunha, Professor emerita, departamento de Antropologia, University of Chicago

Sign the petition: [here](#)