

Anthropological
Reflections:1959-2019
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From Social Anthropology to Anthropology: 1959-2019

- The great Teachers
- Persistence of the 'social'
- What kinds of continuity over the sixty years?
- Diversification of many 'anthropologies' **versus** 'Closed Systems and Open Minds' (Gluckman 1964)?
- The 'Visceral' tradition of Anthropology. An outrageous claim.
- ASA: RAI :: social anthropology: anthropology :: SOAS : Oxford

Continuous Incorporation and expansion

- An on-going project of continuous incorporation within the expanding subject of Anthropology
- The paradox of Holistic Anthropology (centrifugal) and Specialist Anthropologies (centripetal)
- Meeting the challenges of the current global episteme
The fate of methodological basics: long-term, locally intensive, population-specific, in the local language, inductive, comparison leading to generalisation.

The Self-Assessing Anthropocene

- Reflexivity: feminist and post-Marxist influence. Two senses.
- 1) Personal Reflections from fieldwork to self-fashioning Rabinow 1977, Poewe 1982)
- 2) Halliday ‘This sentence is six words long’. Language/society talking about itself
- Recursivity: “...ethnographic concepts (which) feed back and affect analytical ones” (Heywood). Experience and not just perceptions.
- Or, distrusting the ‘intuitive’ but not the ‘counter-intuitive. But how to make comparisons leading to generalisation?
- Problem of ‘meaning’ and whether epistemology presupposes ontology.

Post-WW2 Rethinking and Rescue 1950s-70s

The Big Picture (Macro)

- 'Thought' Structuralism (Levi-Strauss)

Marxism (Althusser, Asad 1973) et al

Rescuing 'Universalism/Common Humanity' from Fascist abuse of Boas's cultural egalitarianism. (See also Merleau-Ponty and Sartre-de Beauvoir). Phenomenology and Existentialism.

The Kaleidoscope (Micro)

- Methodological Individualism (Firth 1951)

• Transactionalism (Barth 1966)

• More Weber than Marx

The Manchester School

- “Analysis of a Social Situation” Gluckman 1940 as Micro Method into Macro Marxist (Marxist?) analysis.
- Abner Cohen: reconciling micro and macro (Symbolism and Power). Echoes of Durkheim.
- Early Manchester: Strongly Marx > Weber via political economy (Rhodes-Livingstone Institute) Gordon Wilson, Gluckman, Epstein, Mitchell, Early Turner, Watson, Worsely, Van Velsen et al.
- Later Manchester: Equal Marx > < Weber via ‘situational analysis’, ‘situational selection’ and social networks and transactionalism

Communication, Language and Meaning

- Questioning the Big Picture and the Kaleidoscope. How to keep diasporic populations cohesive and distinctive through common modes of communication: i.e. individual networks instantiating corporate and geographically dispersed identities.

Edwin Ardener. Neo-Saussurian langue and parole as “master exemplar.”

ASA conferences: 1969, 1982, 1984, 1985 on cross-cultural semantics. Semantic Anthropology 1982 . Meaning presupposing Experience.

- Post-structuralism? Post-modernism? Not all nonsense, e.g. ‘political correctness’.
- Hymes, Gumperze, Searle –speech acts. Kenya Luo 1978. Words making Politics and the materiality of language via 1) Sapir-Whorf and 2) semiosis via the five bodily senses

Evolution of a Discipline

- A chronology of -isms, 'turns' and incremental 'was-ms'.
- Polythetic threads of continuity
- Polythetic concept drawn from evolutionary classification.
- So, will Anthropology sixty years from now be unrecognisable to us?

Meanwhile, East Africa to East Asia and back again via SOAS and Oxford.