



# FIELDWORK: Doing Anthropology Around the World



Produced by the Royal Anthropological Institute's Discover Anthropology Outreach Programme

[www.discoveranthropology.org.uk](http://www.discoveranthropology.org.uk)

# Welcome

For many anthropologists fieldwork is one of the most interesting, challenging and transformative aspects of their roles as social scientists. Whether undertaking research in a global corporation in their own city or exploring trade in a small village abroad, their (often long-term) engagement with the community/subject they study leads to unique insights and innovative research built on collaboration and critical analysis of comprehensive data collection.

This brochure aims to give a non-specialist audience a brief opportunity to explore the diverse geographical regions, topics of research and means by which anthropologists conduct fieldwork. Through the use of photography, film and RAI archives, we hope to show the dynamic nature of fieldwork, how it has evolved alongside the discipline since the 19<sup>th</sup> century and how it continues to develop with increased technological advancements and local to global interconnectivity. We hope this brochure inspires you to learn more about anthropology and the wonderful opportunities that exist within the discipline to challenge your assumptions, push yourself beyond your comfort-zones and motivates you to undertake life-changing experiences.

Nafisa Fera

EDITOR

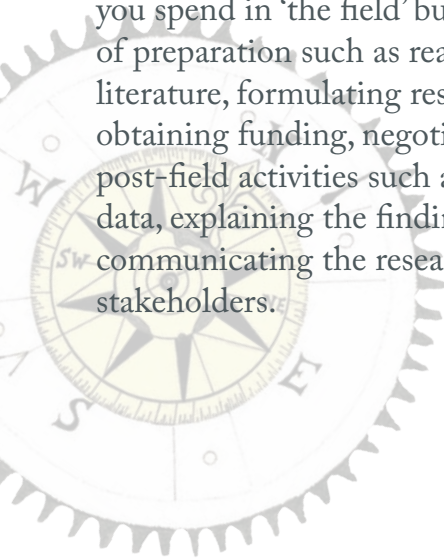
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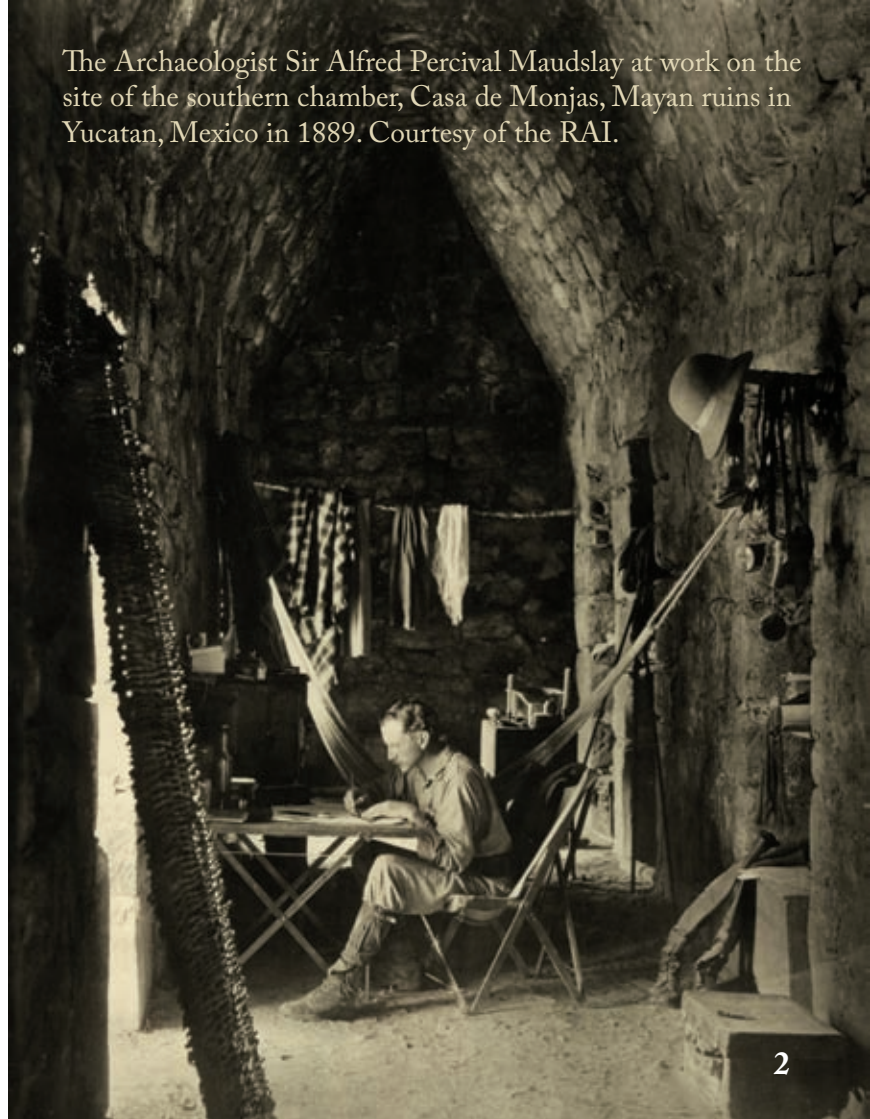
The information found in this brochure showcases a selection of the material and resources we have on our website: [www.discoveranthropology.org.uk](http://www.discoveranthropology.org.uk)

# What is Fieldwork?

The term 'fieldwork' is used to describe research anthropologists undertake in all areas of the discipline from social and cultural anthropology to medical or biological anthropology. Fieldwork can be practiced in a variety of settings such as an urban or virtual environment, a small tribal community, cultural institution, business, or a primate conservation area. Fieldwork encompasses not only the time you spend in 'the field' but also processes of preparation such as reading relevant literature, formulating research questions, obtaining funding, negotiating access and post-field activities such as analysing the data, explaining the findings and communicating the research to various stakeholders.



The Archaeologist Sir Alfred Percival Maudslay at work on the site of the southern chamber, Casa de Monjas, Mayan ruins in Yucatan, Mexico in 1889. Courtesy of the RAI.



# Fieldwork: A short history

The rich history and tradition of fieldwork in anthropology can be viewed on a continuum from relatively little direct involvement to increased immersion, between the anthropologist and the subject/community of study.

During the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, anthropologists often conducted research without going into 'the field' but rather through reading and analysing second-hand accounts from missionaries, travellers and explorers. These 'armchair anthropologists' very rarely had any direct experience with the people or places they were researching.

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, many anthropologists were employed by European colonial governments to act as administrators in countries where they would go and live near (but not with) the people they were studying. Anthropologists recorded in detail genealogical systems, languages, songs, material culture, customs and aspects of social life which are of great value to the cultural heritage of these communities today.



The way in which data was collected was an approach called ‘verandah anthropology’, whereby an anthropologist living in his colonial house would bring ‘natives’ to his verandah for interviewing or re-enacting a particular ritual or custom.



There is a general consensus amongst anthropologists today that the turning point in anthropological research came with the innovative approach called *participant observation* developed by Bronislaw Malinowski, whilst he was in the Trobriand Islands in the South Pacific during World War I. For two years, he lived in a tent with the local community eating their food, learning their language, taking part in ordinary activities, ceremonies and rituals. By immersing himself in the everyday realities of people’s lives he was able to gain a deep understanding for what people said and did and the context through which they established meaning for their activities and customs.

***“The final goal ... is to grasp the native’s point of view, his relation to life, to realise his vision of his world.”*** (Bronislaw Malinowski, *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*, 1922)



# Doing Fieldwork

Doing fieldwork in the 'traditional' Malinowskian sense (living and engaging in a community's way of life, doing participant observation and recording 'the minutiae of life' in rich detail) is still seen by many anthropologists as an essential and distinguishing aspect of anthropological research. Anthropological fieldwork also encompasses a wide range of qualitative and quantitative research methods shaped by factors such as: the topic of investigation, questions guiding the research, where the research will be carried out, who is funding it, external political or economic factors, as well as the age, sex and ethnicity of the anthropologist. Newer formats for research, such as the study of large-scale centres of power and multiple field-sites that often cross local, regional and national boundaries are becoming increasingly common.

# A Process of Collaboration and Transformation

Fieldwork can often be a positive and transformative process for both the anthropologist and those involved in the research. Depending on a wide range of personal, political, socioeconomic and geographical factors, undertaking fieldwork also presents certain challenges for an anthropologist such as adjusting to unfamiliar environments, customs, food and beliefs, addressing logistical issues, dealing with restrictions of access, or even personal threats (in the case of working on sensitive issues such as drug or organ trafficking).

As a means of overcoming some of these obstacles and building trust with the individuals they are studying, anthropologists form relationships with certain members who often act as 'gate-keepers' to the community and have particular positions of power, privilege, or in-depth knowledge of the subject of research. In many cases anthropologists will have local assistants who help to facilitate the research process and collaborate with other members of the community to collect, analyse, translate and interpret the data.

With technological advances in distribution of information, and new channels of communication, some anthropologists are posting aspects of their research online, forming a more transparent and open means of sharing knowledge. Anthropologists are continually working to find better ways of sharing the benefits of research with the people and places they study.



# Fieldwork Methods

Participant observation is still very much a cornerstone of the techniques anthropologists use when undertaking research. Participant observation enables social and cultural anthropologist to build up progressive knowledge and understanding of a community by undertaking detailed, lengthy and often complex observations of social life.

A variant of participant observation also exists within biological anthropology, where primatologists may analyse the social dynamics of a monkey or ape society, by spending long periods observing them and to some extent becoming part of the group.

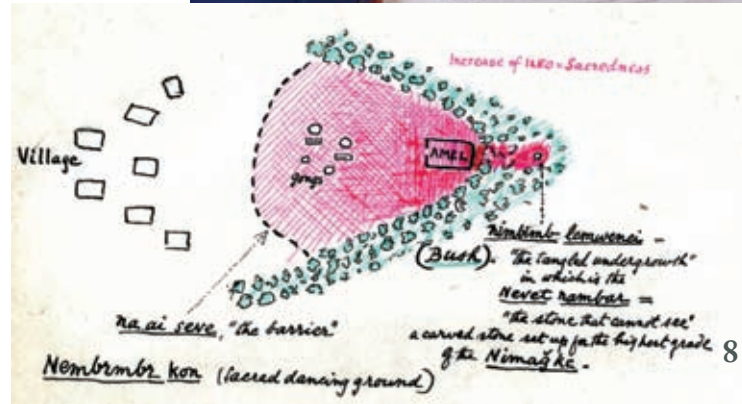
In addition to participant observation, anthropologists use a variety of other research methods during fieldwork. The majority of social and cultural anthropologists will collect qualitative data by conducting individual and group interviews, oral histories, mapping, collecting genealogies, as well as demographic data and ethnographic objects and artefacts.



Many also gather quantitative information by conducting surveys or analysing records such as historical archives, government reports and censuses. Quantitative data is often useful for biological anthropologists in mapping physical traits within a population, or making cross-population comparisons.

## Fieldwork Toolkit

Anthropologists use different tools to collect their data. Many still use notebooks as an unobtrusive means of writing their field notes, but they also rely on laptops, digital cameras, smartphones, recorders and other electronic equipment to help create a more comprehensive account of their research. As anthropologists organise and interpret their data, they also seek feedback whenever possible from the community they work with.



# Ethics and Outcomes

Anthropologists are accountable to certain international ethical standards and are responsible to stakeholders both directly and indirectly involved with their research. First and foremost, anthropologists have a responsibility to the people they are studying, not to harm the safety, dignity or privacy of anyone and must honestly explain their role as anthropologist/researcher to those involved in the research. Anthropologists also have responsibilities to other groups such as the academic community, funding bodies, and host governments. Anthropological fieldwork projects often have to go through rigorous ethical clearances, visa applications, government permissions, etc. for the research to go ahead.

Ethical issues also extend to the production, communication and representation of the research material. Anthropologists have a responsibility to share the outcomes of their research with those involved and their affiliated networks. Anthropologists may write up their data in reports, articles, or journal contributions. Where the project is interdisciplinary or team-based, these may be co-authored. Alternatively, they may describe their experiences and findings in the form of an ethnography or ethnographic film.

Ethnography is the recording and analysis of a culture or society, usually based on participant-observation and resulting in a written account of a people, place or institution.

Traditionally, ethnographies have focused on a definable group of people such as the Nuer, or a particular North Indian village. Today, they are just as likely to focus on any aspect of social life, such as new reproductive technologies, the meanings of the veil, virtual communication, or being an Arsenal football fan.

Ethnographic texts and films offer excellent insight into how anthropologists undertake their fieldwork, what it is like to experience daily life in an environment that may be initially unfamiliar, and the political, economic and social dynamics involved in collecting 'data'. By providing specific, in-depth case studies, they can serve as excellent means for teaching about global issues such as climate change, migration and globalisation. Even where ethnographies focus on a particular practice - such as a religious ceremony, or a culinary ritual - the anthropologist will typically place the practice in its full context to give a holistic, rich and multi-faceted account.

# Short-term fieldwork ideas for students in secondary school



© Andy Day

There are a growing number of students in the UK and internationally who are studying anthropology at secondary school either as part of the A-level Anthropology course, International Baccalaureate Programme, or as an option offered by their educational institution. The majority of these courses provide students with an opportunity to engage in short-term fieldwork, allowing students the ability to apply their anthropological knowledge to a research topic and give them direct experience (albeit on a small scale) of the conditions of fieldwork, research methods and an opportunity to analyse, and communicate their project.

For many students the active fieldwork component, (or as it is called in A-level Anthropology, *personal investigation*) is one of the distinguishing aspects that influenced their decision to take the course.

Some examples of possible research areas include:

- Consumption preferences: an investigation, conducted within a defined group, of choices made with regard to (for example) food, dress, leisure, technology; use of findings to derive conclusions/hypotheses about how and why these preferences may differ along gender, ethnic, age and/or generation lines.
- A small-scale study of an individual business or work environment (such as a family-run corner shop, street market or rural workplace).
- A study of rites of passage as practised locally within the student's own religious or other community, with comparisons drawn with other traditions where feasible.
- A museum/material culture-based study: this could take a variety of forms including study of an object collection in its social and cultural context; or a comparison between museums with respect to history, development and visitor catchments.

These and other examples can be found on AQA's website <http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/anthropology>

# Visual

# Storytelling



The following photographs have been taken in ‘the field’ by anthropologists working on a variety of research topics around the world, showing their unique relationships with the people, animals or subjects they work with and sharing their stories.

These photographs formed part of a photographic exhibition held at the Royal Anthropological Institute from 1<sup>st</sup> May -30<sup>th</sup> September 2013 curated by Nafisa Fera and Antony Leigh. Twenty-three images were selected from hundreds submitted to the RAI from anthropologists around the world. To view these and other fieldwork photographs visit: [www.flickr.com/photos/raieducation](http://www.flickr.com/photos/raieducation)

## WIN, PLACE, SHOW

Grisha Mikheev, Uil'ta reindeer herder, spurs his reindeer on to victory in the reindeer race, part of the festivities in celebration of the ‘Day of the Reindeer Herders’ on 29<sup>th</sup> August 2009. The Uil'ta (also referred to as Orochon), are officially recognized as ‘indigenous small-numbered people of the Russian Federation’. Their principal traditional economic activity, reindeer herding, hangs in a precarious balance, threatened by official state policies that favour the development of the oil and gas industry on Sakhalin Island and lead to the destruction of reindeer pastures, but at the same time dependent upon subsidies provided by the oil and gas industry.

By: Brian Donahoe

Location: Kharkuta, Sakhalin Island, Russian Federation





## THE ART OF ALLOTMENT

There are one million allotment gardens in Poland. They create a space where balance can be retained in an atmosphere which is disrupted by urban haste, omnipresent concrete, and a consumerist norm. The gardens make one feel 'at home'.

Aleksander Duraj, a photographer and anthropologist who took the pictures in Kraków, was part of the research team in a project called "The art of the allotment" which was conducted from 2009–2011 by the Ethnographic Museum in Kraków. The project focused on the social life of these gardens. Several outcomes of the project were: an exhibition, a book based on the research, and a new collection of objects retrieved from the allotments.

By: Magdalena Zych  
Photograph by: Aleksander Duraj  
Location: Poland



## AFTERNOON REST

The production of anthropological knowledge during fieldwork depends on the researcher's capacity to develop close relationships and mutual trust with the people he or she wishes to collaborate with. Making portraits formed part of my process of establishing trust among women in Tamil Nadu, India, whose daily practice of drawing *kolam* designs constituted the research topic. *Kolams* are made outside homes and at places of worship to increase auspiciousness and well-being. Along with descriptive and analytical texts, the photographs have extended the possibility to convey some of the sensuous aspects of being immersed in fieldwork.

By: Anna Laine

Location: Tiruvannamalai district, Tamil Nadu, India



## FIGHTING COCKS (NYABUNG)

76-year-old Ringgit gently handles his prime fighting cock after dressing its wounds from a recent cockfight. For several months Ringgit's clan had been in conflict with a neighboring clan over ownership to a piece of forest. It was decided that the dispute should be solved through a cockfight with the winning party gaining control of the disputed piece of forest. Besides being important arenas for recreational and ritual activity, cockfights are often used by the Iban to settle internal disagreement and disputes. In this remote part of Indonesia where state institutions are weak, customary law still plays a crucial role in conflict settlement.

By: Michael Eilenberg  
Location: West Kalimantan, Indonesian Borneo



## DON LLARO

Don Llaro, is a bonesetter and herbalist. At 80 years of age, he is one of the few remaining medical authorities in Chugurpampa. High in the northern Peruvian Andes, a changing climate is putting pressure on a peasant agricultural community already living close the margins. In recent years plagues, drought, and hail have destroyed harvests. Many families, unable to cope with these calamities, have abandoned their lands for opportunities on the coast. Whereas 25 years ago traditional healers were abundant, few now enter healing roles. The future of an ancient medical tradition is in peril, a situation that we, as a team of anthropologists are currently assessing.

By: Kathryn Oths  
Photograph by: Adam Booher  
Location: Chugurpampa, Peru



## DISCOVERY

A team of archaeologists and biological anthropologists excavate a woman who had been buried alongside a small cow around about AD 500. This find is unique, no other cow grave has been found from early Medieval Europe and these archaeologists became headline news on the BBC website in a story that was, for a brief moment, more popular than tales about footballers and celebrity Big Brother. This excavation was run by UCLan and took place at Oakington in 2012.

By: Duncan Sayer  
Location: England

## PICTURE OF MARIA AND FRANCESC FABREGE MIERES



Francesc Fabrege and his sister Maria, bachelor and spinster (solteros) in Mieres, the village in Catalonia in which I have been working since 1989. Francesc is known as 'escaloper', the clog maker, his original profession. Here he is holding a picture of the family in their workshop. I went to Mieres to study the predicament of older people in an era of rural depopulation, but discovered very soon that the village was coming alive again, regenerated by the movement of younger people – 'neorurals' – from the towns and cities into the countryside. Francesc says that during his lifetime the village has experienced a shift 'from wretchedness to abundance, from absolutely poor to almost rich', a process I have described in my book *Mieres Reborn*. Since Adidas and Nike displaced his trade, Francesc, has made his niche negotiating property sales to newcomers. In 1990, I recorded his self-introduction: 'My name is Francesc, I work in the countryside, am 63 years old, I live in Mieres and am happy to live here, and am Catalan – truly Catalan'. He continues to thrive but the frugal, generous, and deeply pious Maria died a few years ago.

By: Sandy Robertson  
Location: Spain



## ENTER THE VILLAGE

A man and his daughter approach a *sagali* exchange ceremony taking place in the *baku* central area of Tukwaukwa village. A large *liku* chiefly yam house dominates the *baku*.

My fieldwork in the Trobriands is mainly devoted to learning how Trobrianders (young and old) continuously receive, revalue, re-imagine, resist and/or redeploy the past in the present, with an eye towards the future. This is done through storytelling, performance, exchange, material arts, gardening, and through interactions between community, local landscape, memory, and the outside world.

By: Andrew Connelly  
Location: Trobriand Islands



## MAMA TORETO

Mama Toreto helps with the transcription of a song I recorded, twenty-seven years before, in which she commemorates the birth of her granddaughter. She is overwhelmed by the memories that her singing evokes. “I had no idea what you were doing then,” she told me. Her co-wife sits behind.

With generous help from many people in Mama Toreto’s home-  
stead, I have transcribed hours of  
conversations and dozens of songs.  
The close memories that the  
transcriptions allow me to keep of  
events that took place decades ago  
has often astonished my Maasai  
friends. I ask them, “How were  
you feeling then?” Their answers,  
prefaced by “Well, I don’t exactly  
remember,” give better evidence of  
who they are now, and what they  
feel now.

By: Peter Biella  
Location: Tanzania



## BUTONESE WOMAN GATHERING SEA URCHINS

I conducted ethnographic field work in the Bajo (sea gypsy) fishing village of Wuring Laut which is located in Flores Island, eastern Indonesia. My field work included in-depth interviews, focus group interviews and informal observations and was conducted over 12 months spent living in the village and participating in local life. The aims of the research were to conduct a critical enquiry into fishing livelihoods and factors contributing to vulnerability to poverty and food insecurity; and to explore ways of improving existing circumstances and encouraging economic diversity.

By: Frances Every  
Location: Indonesia

## BABY GIRL AND HER MOTHER



Having left my own one-year-old twin daughters behind in Canada to resume fieldwork with the Mursi, I could not help but sit in admiration as I watched this woman adoringly wash her baby girl. That day she had walked for four hours in mountainous terrain to a mission clinic to pick up iodine to treat her baby's thrush. The day was also marked by a period of mourning the death of a young Mursi boy. Despite the somber mood at the cattle camp where I was staying, this new mother had a way of "cooling"—a Mursi term also related to well-being—more than just her new born. Her doting behavior would prompt the other women to playfully tease her for always bathing her baby and buttering her skin so that it would shine. As we collectively mourned the departure of a son, a brother, a nephew and a friend, it was through this playful teasing that the women also celebrated a new arrival.

By: Shauna La Tosky  
Location: Southern Ethiopia

## DISTRIBUTING BLESSED SEEDS



My doctoral research on the Dinka area of Gogrial, in South Sudan, explores the everyday ways that people understand and discuss history and the violence of recent civil wars. It looks particularly at the many methods people have used to reclaim and restore land that was ‘ruined’ (*ci riak* in Dinka language) by conflict. As well as living in Gogrial for a year, I have done extensive research on archives in the UK, South Sudan and read unpublished notes by an anthropologist working in Gogrial from 1947-1950 to show how contemporary ideas have developed from historical understandings of landscape in Gogrial. This photograph was taken at the end of the seed blessing, when the seeds were being distributed among the women who had come from nearby villages. They will take the seeds back home and plant them.

By: Zoe Cormack  
Location: South Sudan



## KITCHEN STORIES

During 2011-2012, I conducted my doctoral research in the little town of Ayacucho, in the heart of the Peruvian Andes. As a visual anthropologist I was interested in the expressions of personal and collective memories of the Peruvian internal conflict (1980-2000) on the surface of everyday life. My informants had very different ideas about me, but the one I remember the most was from a 98 year old lady I have only met once who said “She is here to listen to the disappeared who follow us in our dreams”.

By: Martha-Cecilia Dietrich Ortega  
Photograph by: Andy Lawrence  
Location: Peru



## SHAMAN SHOW

A row of shamans chant in unison at the opening of a *tailgan*, a public sacrifice and festival performed annually or seasonally at a sacred site to renew solidarity between a community and its local spirits. This *tailgan*, organized at Bukha-Noyon, a sacred site in Tunkinskii District, Buriatia (Russia) as part of the symposium and festival 'Psychophysiology and Social Adaptation of (Neo)Shamans in the Past and Present', attracted artists, shamans, scholars and tourists from around the world and offered participants the opportunity to 'address shamans channelling the spirits of the ancestors with your questions and problems'.

By: Brian Donahoe  
Location: Tunkinskii District, Buriatia,  
Russian Federation

## THE OWL MONKEY PROJECT



The Owl Monkey Project is a multi-disciplinary programme on the owl monkeys of the Argentinean Chaco. Studies are conducted on population biology, demography, behaviour, genetics, endocrinology and conservation in collaboration with numerous institutions and colleagues and with the support of international and Argentinean funding agencies.

I started the project because I believe in studying living primates as an approach to understanding the evolution of human behaviour. I am particularly interested in male-female relationships, pair bonding and paternal care in humans and non-human primates. Owl monkeys live in social groups that include one pair of reproducing adults and between one and four young. Owl monkeys' relatively large eye orbits are unequivocal evidence of their nocturnal habits. They are the only primates in the Neotropics adapted to a nocturnal lifestyle.

By: Eduardo Fernandez-Duque  
Location: Argentina

## BAYAKA PYGMIES TESTING MONITORING SOFTWARE

Facilitated by anthropologist Jerome Lewis, non-literate Mbendjele hunter-gatherers in Congo-Brazzaville have helped design iconic software to enable them to map the activities of commercial poachers on hacked smartphones so that conservationists can more effectively control their destructive activities. Here they are testing the first prototype of the software built by the ExCiteS research group at University College London. It includes the option of geo-tagging poaching activities observed in the forest, recording accounts of violence or abuses against the hunter-gatherers, and the means to send the data that has been collected by text message to the office of the Eco-guards enforcing wildlife laws. The system includes a novel technique for producing electricity using wood fire to keep the phones charged while in the forest.

By: Jerome Lewis  
Location: Republic of Congo



## Exploring Fieldwork through Ethnographic Film



### Koriam's Law and the Dead who Govern

By: Gary Kildea, Andrea Simon  
Australia, USA 2005 | 110 mins

In 'Koriam's Law' Australian anthropologist Andrew Lattas meets his match in philosopher-informant Peter Avarea of Matong village, Pomio, Papua New Guinea. Driven by their feisty dialogue and with access to sacred ceremonies, the film patiently goes about making sense of that most misconstrued cultural phenomenon: the Melanesian 'cargo-cult'.

Location: Papua New Guinea, New Britain • Ethnic Group: Pomio  
Language: English Winner 2005 RAI Film Prize



### Duka's Dilemma

By: Jean Lydall, Kaira Strecker  
Germany 2001 | 87 mins

Filmmaker and anthropologist Jean Lydall has been doing fieldwork and making films with the Hamar community of southern Ethiopia since the 1970s. In 2001 she returned with her daughter and grandson to follow the continuing life story of Duka. Candid interviews reveal the complex family dynamics when Duka's husband, Sago, takes a second wife, Boro. This film provides an intimate and personal family portrait that captures Duka's ambivalence at sharing her home and husband. The quiet suspense is only heightened when Duka's mother-in-law starts stirring up trouble. The high points of the film include the birth of the new wife's child, and heated dispute between the mother-in-law and her son, which leads to the building of a new house.

Location: Ethiopia / Africa • Ethnic Group: Hamar  
Language(s): Hamar & English • Winner 2003 RAI Film Prize



### Sermiligaq 65°54'N, 36°22'W

By: Anni Seitz, Sophie Elixhauser  
Germany, UK 2008 | 64 mins

The people of East Greenland inhabit a small string of coastal land at the edge of the biggest island of the world. Long winters have always shaped daily life here, a life that has gone within a few generations from earth house to modernity, complete with helicopters, satellite TV and alcohol. This documentary shows East Greenland today, the village in summer and winter, the family between seal hunting and computer games. It lets us experience in clear and poetical scenes normality in an extraordinary world, quietly observing events, faces, gestures that combine to form a portrait that is at the same time strange and strangely familiar.

Location: East Greenland • Ethnic Group: Inuit  
Language(s): Inuktitut (English sub) • Winner 2009 Wiley-Blackwell Student Film Prize



### Every Good Marriage Begins With Tears

By: Simon Chambers, Delwar Hussain  
UK 2007 | 63 mins

East London Muslim girl Shahanara is changing from pink hot pants into a sari to meet her husband at the airport. She has met him only once before, when she was married in a union arranged by her Bangladeshi family. Shahanara only agreed to the marriage to try and heal old wounds with her father, who had banished her from her family for her Western ways. Meanwhile her devout Muslim sister Hashnara is being groomed for her own arranged marriage, something for which at 19, she does not feel at all ready. Simon Chambers started as a social worker and became a close friend of the family- his film explores universal themes of love and the conflicts between first and second generations of a British Bangladeshi family.

Location: London/Bangladesh • Ethnic Group: London Bangladeshis  
Language(s): English, Bengali  
Winner 2007 RAI Film Prize



## In Search of the Hamat'sa: A Tale of Headhunting

By: Aaron Glass

USA/ Canada 2004 | 33 mins

The Hamat'sa (or "Cannibal Dance") is the most important and highly represented ceremony of the Kwakwaka'wakw (Kwakiutl) people of British Columbia. This film traces the history of anthropological depictions of the dance and, through the return of archival materials of Franz Boas to a First Nations community, presents some of the ways in which diverse attitudes toward this history inform current performances of the Hamat'sa. With a focus on the filmmaker's fieldwork experience, the film attends specifically to the ethics of ethnographic representation and to the renegotiation of relationships between anthropologists and their research subjects.

Location: America • Ethnic Group: Kwakiutl  
Language(s): English Commendation 2005 Blackwell Student Video Prize



## Strangers Abroad Series

By: André Singer, Bruce Dukowski  
England 1985 | 52 mins/6-part series

This major documentary series documents the link between the "armchair anthropologist" and the modern field worker/scholar by presenting footage of 'pioneering' ethnographers who lived among the people they studied. Retracing the steps of anthropologists including Sir Walter Baldwin Spencer, Willam Rivers, Franz Boas, Bronislaw Malinowski, Margaret Mead and Sir Edward Evans-Pritchard, the series goes back to the countries where they worked and, through their stories, explains how their fieldwork and research has contributed to our understanding of social life and current socioeconomic debates.

This BBC Series includes : Sir Walter Baldwin Spencer: Fieldwork | Franz Boas: The Shackles of Tradition | William Rivers: Everything Is Relatives | Bronislaw Malinowski: Off the Veranda | Margaret Mead: Coming of Age | Sir Edward Evans-Pritchard: Strange Beliefs



## Ngat is Dead - Studying Mortuary Traditions

By: Christian Suhr, Ton Otto and Steffen Dalsgaard

Denmark 2007 | 59 mins

What does it mean when anthropologists claim to study the cultural traditions of others by participating in them? This film follows the Dutch anthropologist Ton Otto, who has been adopted by a family on the island of Baluan in the South Pacific. Due to the death of his adoptive father he has to take part in mortuary ceremonies whose form and content are however forcefully contested by different groups of relatives. Through the ensuing negotiations Ton learns how Baluan people perform and develop their traditions and not least what role he plays himself. The film is part of long-term fieldwork in which filmmaking has become integrated in the ongoing dialogue and exchange relations between the islanders and the anthropologist.

Location: Papua New Guinea • Ethnic Group: Baluan  
Language(s): Tok Baluan, Tok Pisin, English (Eng sub)



## The Poet's Salary

By: Eric Wittersheim, Alexandre Francois

France 2008 | 59 mins

For the first time in many years, on the little island of Motalava in Vanuatu, a new song will be composed in the island's ancestors' language, the language of god Quat, and become part of the island's repertoire. The Poet's Salary tells of the daily life of ethnographers while doing fieldwork, through a vivid and colourful account of the mutual exchanges between the people of Motalava and ethnologist Alexandre Francois and ethnomusicologist Monika Stern.

Location: Vanuatu, Melanesia • Ethnic Group: Mwotlap  
Language(s): Mwotlap, Bislama, French (English sub)

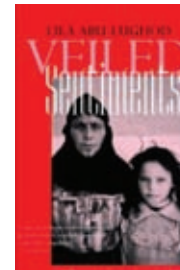
**These films are selected from the RAI's extensive international film collection. For more information visit [www.therai.org.uk](http://www.therai.org.uk) or contact the RAI's Film Officer Susanne Hammacher at [film@therai.org.uk](mailto:film@therai.org.uk)**

# Recommended Readings



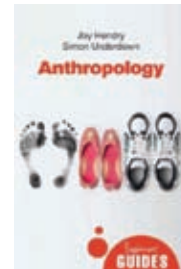
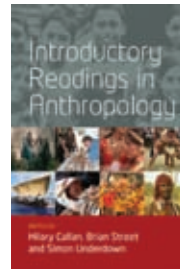
## Doing Fieldwork

- *Anthropological Practice: Fieldwork and the Ethnographic Method*  
By: Judith Okely Berg Publishers, 2012
- *Doing Anthropological Research: A Practical Guide*  
Edited by: Natalie Konopinski  
Routledge, 2013
- *Tales of the Field: On Writing Ethnography*  
By: John Van Maanen  
University of Chicago Press; 2nd ed., 2011



## Ethnographies

- *Reflections on Fieldwork in Morocco*  
By: Paul Rabinow  
University of California Press; 30<sup>th</sup> ed., 2007
- *In Search of Respect: Selling Crack in El Barrio*  
By: Philippe Bourgois  
Cambridge University Press, 2nd ed. 2002
- *Veiled Sentiments: Honor and Poetry in a Bedouin Society*  
By: Lila Abu-Lughod  
University of California Press, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 2000



## Anthropology

- *Introductory Readings in Anthropology*  
Edited by: Hilary Callan, Brian Street and Simon Underdown  
Berghahn Books, 2013
- *Anthropology: A Beginner's Guide*  
By: Joy Hendry and Simon Underdown  
Oneworld Publications, 2013
- *Anthropology Today* bimonthly magazine  
Produced by the RAI, published by Wiley

These are a few examples of the wide selection of fantastic anthropology books that can be found at the British Museum's Anthropology Library and Research Centre. Further resources including Web links, films, books, articles, courses and more can be found on [www.discoveranthropology.org.uk](http://www.discoveranthropology.org.uk)

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## About the RAI's Discover Anthropology Outreach Programme

Discover Anthropology is the RAI's outreach programme managed by its Education Department. The programme aims to raise awareness and understanding of anthropology through diverse education and communication activities such as:

- Organising public engagement activities and events, including the annual London Anthropology Day at the British Museum
- Producing online and printed educational material
- Supporting the study of anthropology in schools, colleges and universities
- Publicising anthropological research and the work of anthropologists in different career sectors

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