A Note on Anthropology *in* Europe or Anthropology *of* Europe?

... Some Trends

After Susan Parman, *Europe in the Anthropological Imagination*, pp. 11 - 14

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in the 1970s anthropologists became caught up in a surge of interest in world systems, processes that could be described independent of particular “culture areas”

– urbanism
– transnationalism
– gender issues
– migration

• these were *universal processes*, and anthropology was conceived of as a universal science of humankind

– not just of the exotic, non-Western, savage “Other”

as Caroline B. Brettell notes, **urban anthropology** began to appear as a distinct subdiscipline in the early 1970s, as indicated by the appearance of a new journal in 1972, and the publication of edited collections

another topic of interest was migration

• William A. Douglass argues that despite the appearance of the isolated peasant community as the typical focus of early Europeanist anthropology, the theme of migration was a constant thread . . .

• Caroline Brettell notes that the 1970s also saw the beginning not only of urban anthropology but also of *gender studies*
  
  • e.g., Rosaldo and Lamphere 1974

today issues of gender in Europe vary from

- honor and shame in the Mediterranean to . . .
  - general issues of the status of women
  - their power
  - their role in migration
  - the construction of gender identity
  - the poetics of genders

• processes were universal

• where they took place was of interest only in providing additional evidence about the nature of the processes themselves

• on the other hand, going to Europe was essential in the “anthropological imagination” because it validated the universality of anthropological models – thus separating it from its image as a discipline relevant only to the study of the exotic, the “primitive,” and the non-West.

• in choosing to go to Europe, Susanna Hoffman, producer of the film *Kypseli*, was testing the question of universality of anthropological models

• the “point of anthropology,” she said, was “to roll like a juggernaut across all landscapes toward the goal of describing the cross-cultural process of humankind”

• according to Mark T. Shutes, this same motivation lay behind George Peter Murdock attempting to add more European material to the Human Relations Area Files, so as to expand the scope of ethnographic examples

You will read more about this in Ch. 12 “The Place of Europe in George P. Murdock's Anthropological Theory” by Mark T. Shutes, pp. 157-168. Which is on the reading schedule for Tuesday 20 April 2010.
we sometimes include Europe in anthropology as a “Culture Area” specifically because we want
to test the universality of anthropological models

• Hoffman
• Shutes

Human Relations Area Files (HRAF)

World Ethnographic Sample (WES)

Related Materials

Google Search: "Human Relations Area Files"

Human Relations Area Files -- Wikipedia

search Human Relations Area Files on JSTOR

"A collection of full-text primary source materials on ca. 400 different cultural, ethnic, religious and national groups in the following regions of the world: Asia, Europe, Africa, Middle East, North America, Oceania, Eurasia and South America. Access is via keyword, as well as through geographic (OWC) codes and a topical (OCM) classification scheme."
Ethnographic Atlas by George P. Murdock

The Ethnographic Atlas was created by George P. Murdock over a 25-year period, based on an earlier journal ETHNOLOGICAL CONTEXTS which published geographical data on 862 of the better-described societies in the atlas, classified in 150 more linguistically-based clusters.

http://eclectic.ss.uci.edu/~drwhite/worldcul/atlas.htm
MODERN POLITICAL MOVEMENTS IN SOMALILAND

chiefs and a new elite—although there is something of this especially among the Sab of Somalia. The real struggle is between the ideal of national unity as opposed to the reality of the values of clanship and sectional kinship interests in the lineage system.

As a whole, the Somalilands, because of their poverty in natural resources, have been little affected economically by European colonization. Pastoral nomadism remains the basic economy, carrying with it for the majority of the population the traditional political structure and kinship values described above. There has been no general local industrial revolution and correspondingly little large-scale urbanization. The main towns in the Somali territories are tabulated here for comparison with estimates of their population.

French Somaliland
British Protectorate
Hazar Province of Ethiopia
Somalia

Jibuti, new town, population c. 30,000 (15,000 Somali).¹
Hargeisa, new town, population c. 30,000 Somali.
Harar, ancient city, population c. 60,000 (4,000? Somali).
Mogadishu, ancient city,² population c. 110,000.
Ethnographic Atlas Crosstabulations

Select Row Category
- Gathering
- Fishing
- Fishing
- Hunting

Select Column Category
- Hunting
- Hunting
- Hunting
- Hunting

Browse categories
Browse Groups
Browse Cultural Summaries
Merge Categories
Submit Query
Reset

http://lucy.ukc.ac.uk/cgi-bin/uncgi/Ethnoatlas/atlas.vopts
## Ethnographic Atlas Crosstabulations

Crosstabulation for: 
**HUNTING [Proportion of economic activity]** 
by 
**AREA**

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<tr>
<th>AREA</th>
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http://lucy.ukc.ac.uk/cgi-bin/uncgi/Ethnoatlas/atlas.vopts
### Ethnographic Atlas Crosstabulations

**Crosstabulation for:**
HUNTING [Proportion of economic activity] 
by 
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[http://lucy.ukc.ac.uk/cgi-bin/uncgi/Ethnoatlas/atlas.vopts](http://lucy.ukc.ac.uk/cgi-bin/uncgi/Ethnoatlas/atlas.vopts)
eHRAF Collection of Ethnography: Web

Cultures Covered

Click an area of the world.

If you have comments or corrections please send them to us at hraf@yale.edu. To see a list by CD-ROM installment, click here.

- Asia
- Europe
- Middle America and the Caribbean
  - Middle East
  - North America
  - Oceania
  - South America

http://www.yale.edu/hraf/collections.htm
**Europe**

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bosnian Muslims EF09</td>
<td>Montenegrins EF05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croats EF04</td>
<td>Saami EP04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Icelanders EQ02</td>
<td>Scots, Highland (see Highland Scots)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greeks EH01</td>
<td>Serbs EF06</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Slovenes EF07</td>
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**Middle America and the Caribbean**

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<td>Dominicans ST04</td>
<td>Tarahumara NU33</td>
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<td>Huichol NU19</td>
<td>Tzeltal NV09</td>
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<td>Jamaicans SY01</td>
<td>Zapotec NU44</td>
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<td>Kuna SB05</td>
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**Middle East**

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Cultural Summaries in the Database

Africa
Amhara Azande Bemba Dogon Gencla Hausa Kanuri Lozi Masai Pygmies Shiluh Somali Try Tryi (Ashanti) Wolof

Middle East
Kurd Libyan Bedouin

North America
Blackfoot Copper Eskimo Hopi Iroquois Klamath Ojibwa Pawnee Tarahumara Tingit Tzeltal

Asia
Andamans Central Thai Chukchee Garo Iban (Judeo Khasi) Korea Santal Sinhalese Taiwan Hokkien Toraja Yakut

Oceania
Aranda Kanak Lao Tahiti Trobriands Truk

Europe
Highland Scots Lapps Selibs

South America
Aymara Bolio Quechua Bororo Bush Negroes Cacaba Cuna Guaraní Matsco One Tucano Yanomami

Mesoamerica

http://lucy.ukc.ac.uk/cgi-bin/uncgi/Ethnoatlas/atlas.vopts
• on the other hand, going to Europe was essential in the “anthropological imagination” because it validated the universality of anthropological models – thus separating it from its image as a discipline relevant only to the study of the exotic, the “primitive,” and the non-West

according to Mark T. Shutes, this same motivation lay behind George Peter Murdock attempting to add more European material to the Human Relations Area Files, so as to expand the scope of ethnographic examples.

one can argue that studying Europe was a byproduct of the expanding interest of anthropologists in all cultures, including those of the West.

• but it is also important to point out that the very fact of studying Europe made it easier to ask certain kinds of questions . . .

• for example, given assumptions about Westerners, it may be easier to pose research problems emphasizing decision-making individuals . . .

it is also possible that new areas of interest can be more easily explored in Europe, as an acceptable, fully authentic, legitimate place for an anthropologist to do anthropological fieldwork …

therefore, if an anthropologist works in Europe, it is more likely that s/he would borrow from other disciplines

• through their work on Europe, anthropologists have become more interdisciplinary, drawing on …

  – **history** (Brettell, Rogers; Kertzer ...)

  – **political economy** (Brettell, Kertzer)

  – **political science** (Wilson)

  – **demography** (Douglass)

many of the authors make a good case for anthropology to move out of the exotic margins and into the familiar centers of power, complexity, and hugeness – to use Rogers’s example, to ‘move from Vasilika to Versailles’

... many of the authors make a good case for anthropology to move out of the exotic margins and into the familiar centers of power, complexity, and hugeness

– to use Rogers’s example,

to ‘move from Vasilika to Versailles’

• Susan Parman, however, suggests that “wherever we pitch our tents (in small island peasant communities or in the back offices of high-powered Eurocrats), we should do our best to preserve the sense of the strange in the heart of the familiar — to disorient (not to Orient)” . . .

Susan Parman, Europe in the Anthropological Imagination, pp. 14 - 16
“The ability of anthropologists to . . .

. . . is what will make or break a successful anthropology of Europe”

“The ability of anthropologists to . . .
  – apply a cross-cultural perspective
  – turn the familiar on edge
  – develop a sense of distance from and cultural critique of what we take for granted
  . . . is what will make or break a successful anthropology of Europe”

“... by studying Europe, anthropologists are in a position to dissolve the binary opposition of “Us” / “Other” with which anthropology has been engaged as part of its cultural heritage”

Anthropology in Europe or Anthropology of Europe? ... Some Trends ... Noted

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