

# Report

## WCAA Symposium and Business Meeting

Kunming, China

July 2009

Posted to members: 27 August 2009

### 1. WCAA Symposium

Monday, 27 July 2009, Yunnan University, Kunming, China.

***Funded by:***

The Wenner-Gren Foundation, New York (US \$15,000), and a range of local sources of funding for individual participants.

***Title:***

Opportunities and Challenges for International Cooperation and Participation in Anthropology: Toward an Agenda for World Anthropology

***Conveners:***

Thomas Reuter (WCAA/Monash Univ. & Gustavo Lins Ribeiro (WCAA/ Brasília Univ.)

***Theme:***

This symposium was an open forum at which cooperative efforts to facilitate international communication and collaboration among anthropologists and anthropological associations were discussed. Representatives of all WCAA member associations present at the 2009 IUAES World Congress were invited to contribute to the meeting, together with key representatives of the IUAES. The discussion focused on the different roles of the WCAA, IUAES, regional and national associations, asking what each can accomplish and how we can support one another's endeavours. Individual presentations focused on specific tasks within the overall goal of advancing cooperation and participation within the discipline globally. The discussion explored how such important tasks may be accomplished through existing institutional resources and collaborations. Each representative at the meeting was asked to report back to their governing board and membership on our ideas and proposals for collaboration.

***Participants and Presentations:***

Session 1

- Introduction, Thomas Reuter

- **HILARY CALLAN**, Director, Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland. ENGAGING WITH OUR PUBLICS

- **SETHA LOW**, President, American Anthropological Association (AAA) and Organizing Committee/WCAA. INCLUSION, COLLABORATION AND ENGAGEMENT FOR A GLOBAL ANTHROPOLOGY

- **PAUL NCHOJI NKWI**, Cameroon, Pan African Anthropology Association (PAAA).  
DOING ANTHROPOLOGY IN AFRICA

- **MICHAEL GOLDSMITH**, Delegate / Former President, Association of Social  
Anthropologists of Aotearoa New Zealand. LIMINAL SPACES IN WORLD  
ANTHROPOLOGY

- **MARIA GUADALUPE SERNA**, Vice-president, Mexican Association of Ethnologists  
and Social Anthropologists (CEAS). STRENGTHENING GLOBAL COOPERATION  
AND PARTICIPATION IN ANTHROPOLOGY: A MEXICAN PERSPECTIVE

- **MATORI YAMAMOTO**, President, Japanese Society of Cultural Anthropology.  
ROLE OF JAPANESE ANTHROPOLOGY IN THE WORLD SYSTEM OF  
ANTHROPOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE

- **SOHEILA SHAHSHAHANI**, Shahid Beheshti University, Tehran and Senior Vice-  
President of IUAES. IRANIAN ANTHROPOLOGY AND WORLD  
ANTHROPOLOGIES.

Discussant: **MUGSY SPIEGEL**, vice-president of IUAES

BRIEF DISCUSSION ON INSTITUTIONAL ROLES, CAPACITIES AND SCOPE  
FOR COLLABORATION AND SUMMARY OF TASKS PROPOSED.

Focus on: 1. Issues of Marginality, Inclusion and Heterodoxy (Africa, New Zealand, US,  
Japan, Iran); 2. Engaging the Public and the State (UK, Mexico)

#### Session 2

- **GORDON MATHEWS**, Vice-Chairperson, Hong Kong Anthropological Society  
(HKAS). THE PROMISE OF WORLD ANTHROPOLOGY AND THE PERILS OF  
RUNNING AN INTERNATIONAL ANTHROPOLOGY JOURNAL

- **JUNJI KOIZUMI**, Chair, World Council of Anthropological Associations; Vice-  
President, Osaka University. LINKING ANTHROPOLOGIES

- **GREGORY ACCIAIOLI**, Former Delegate, Australian Anthropological Association  
(AAS) and WCAA Advisory Council Member. ASSESSING THE CHANGING ROLE  
OF ANTHROPOLOGICAL ASSOCIATIONS: A 30-YEAR PERSPECTIVE ON THE  
WORLD ANTHROPOLOGY PROJECT

- **LUÍS CARDOSO DE OLIVEIRA**, WCAA Advisory Committee & former President, Brazilian Anthropological Association, ABA. DIALOGUE AND INTEREST IN ANTHROPOLOGICAL EXCHANGES

- **THOMAS REUTER**, Deputy-Chair, World Council of Anthropological Associations, Former President, AAS. DEFINING THE PRACTICAL TASKS OF A GLOBAL ANTHROPOLOGY, AND THE ROLE OF DEMOCRACY IN THEIR ACCOMPLISHMENT

- **GUSTAVO LINS RIBEIRO**, member of the Organizing Committee/WCAA, University of Brasilia. INCREASING COLLABORATION AND DIVERSITY IN WORLD ANTHROPOLOGIES

- **PETR SKALNÍK**, University of Pardubice, Czech Republic; IUAES. IUAES-WCAA AS AN AXIS OF EMANCIPATION OF ANTHROPOLOGY WORLDWIDE (cancelled)

Discussant – **Laurent Bazin**, President, French Anthropological Association (FAA)

CONCLUDING DISCUSSION ON INSTITUTIONAL ROLES, CAPACITIES AND SCOPE FOR GLOBAL COLLABORATION IN ANTHROPOLOGY

**Outcomes:**

- Papers from the symposium have been collected and will be revised and edited for peer reviewed publication. Several publishing options are being considered. Papers will also be made available on the WCAA website.
- Discussants (Laurent Bazin & Mugsy Spiegel) will summarize proposals for collaboration that are actionable, for consideration and implementation by the IUAES, WCAA and member associations.
- Discussants will collaborate to plan the next major meeting and symposium of the WCAA at the EASA conference in Ireland 2010, to ensure the agenda developed in this symposium can be carried forward in profitable directions, building on our achievements to-date.

## **2. WCAA Business Meeting**

Kai Wah Plaza Hotel, Kunming, China

Tuesday, July 28, 2009; 10:15 AM – 12:03 PM

***In attendance:*** (16 member associations represented)

Junji Koizumi, Chair

Thomas Reuter, Deputy Chair

Gustavo Lins Ribeiro, ABA, Organizing Committee Member

Setha Low, AAA, Organizing Committee Member

Laurent Bazin, FAA

Paul Nwiki, PAAA

Maria Guadalupe Serna, CEAS

Michael Goldsmith, ASAA/NZ

Hilary Callan, RAI

John Gledhill, ASA

Matori Yamamoto, JASCA

Greg Acciaioli, AAS

Gordon Matthews, Anthropological Society of Hong Kong

Michal Buchowski, EASA/Polish Ethnological Association

Andrew Mugsy Spiegel, ASnA, IUAES

Yuri Chistov, RAAE

Luis R. Cardoso de Oliveira, ABA

***Welcome by Junji Koizumi***

### ***Report by Mugsy Spiegel on IUAES Election Procedures***

Half of the present IUAES Executive would continue in their positions for one more term, joined by Chinese Association President and ICAES host Jing Jun. Faye Harrison did not win the nomination for the presidency (elected by the IUAES executive only). Peter Nas would be put forward as the sole Presidential candidate at the Permanent Council meeting, replacing Luis Vargas. The position of Secretary General is left open for contestation, with the candidates being Koizumi vs. Cerroni-Long. The incoming treasurer would be appointed by the Secretary General and President. John Gledhill, as host of ICAES 2013 in Manchester would assume one new vice-presidential position. Two candidates had been listed for each of the remaining Executive vacancies, including Gustavo as a Vice presidential candidate and Thomas as a member at large.

WCAA members then discussed the possibility of attending the Permanent Council meeting to represent their respective countries. Every country has one vote in the Permanent Council. We agreed it was important to reform the IUAES to make it more democratic and transparent. A motion was passed that we attend the permanent Council and support our preferred candidates. Delegates agreed we would make adjustments to the WCAA executive if we were successful in the IUAES election. Thomas would become chair of WCAA if Junji won the Secretary General position, and a member of the Organizing Committee would need to assume the deputy chair position (See below for details on the outcome of the IUAES election and the implications for WCAA).

### ***Discussion of WCAA session activities***

We discussed a series of possible meeting venues.

There will be a WCAA session at Mercosur in Buenos Aires in 2009. We could consider a joint CWA/WCAA session in Philadelphia at the AAA 2009, otherwise a separate session will be held.

Our main event in 2010 and the location for holding the WCAA election scheduled that year, will be at the EASA conference in Maynooth, Ireland. Michal Buchowski and Shalini Randeria will liaise with EASA and the organizers. We may also hold a WCAA workshop at ABA 2010 in Belem (July).

The major 2011 WCAA meeting will be in Perth, Australia. Greg Acciaioli is organizing a joint conference of ASA, ASAA/NZ and the IUAES inter-congress in Perth in 2011. It was noted that possibilities for such international link-ups are greatly enhanced by closer relations among national presidents and delegates within the WCAA community.

### ***Producing outcomes from the WCAA Symposium in Kunming (previous day)***

Thomas will collect all the papers in order to place them on the website. He requests that draft papers be sent to him within one week after the meeting. It is also planned to publish a volume based on the papers presented.

Original receipts are required for reimbursement from the Wenner-Gren grant. Those who require supplementary funding should contact Thomas with their receipts and requests, which will be met subject to availability of funds.

Laurent and Mugsy were discussants of yesterday's symposium and charged with summarizing the results. Thomas will send copies of the papers to Laurent and Mugsy so they can read them and provide editorial advice for revision. Laurent is to look into options for publication in France. Greg also suggested *Anthropological Forum* (based in Perth), as a possible option given that a special edition would be produced in time for, and marketed aggressively at, the combined conference in Perth in 2011.

### ***Developing the WCAA website***

The website is our highest priority at this point in time.

We need money to update our website, and have an offer from Wenner-Gren, providing we can secure support for future maintenance. Junji is conducting some changes to the website with the help of his technicians in Osaka. He is also paying the registration of the website currently, and previous chairs also have been paying for it personally. We need regular income to support regular expenses, the more so if we are to engage a part-time webmaster as well. In short, Wenner-Gren's stipulation to secure maintenance funds is reasonable enough but we urgently need to think about a stable solution that is financially viable.

John Gledhill and others suggest negotiating with Rohan, who has done a great job for the ASA and EASA, and has comparatively modest rates. John intimated that ASA should be able to help with maintenance funding.

Yuri could also support the website because he has two computer departments at the St Petersburg museum. The problem is that there are different software packages to set up a website and the one that is currently being used may not be widely available in Russia. There are technical implications for whatever program we use. Yuri's team uses Russian software that in his view has proved to be excellent.

However, we must nominate someone to monitor and maintain the WCAA website. Thomas suggested the website would be better off having a permanent home (i.e. a webmaster) somewhere rather than moving with the chair, and that this requires independent long-term maintenance support. Thomas is to follow up on the offers received.

#### **The next WCAA delegates meeting**

The next WCAA meeting will be with EASA in Maynooth, Ireland, August 23-26, 2010. There was a discussion of possible topics and funding applications. Thomas noted that we need to show 'intellectual progress' if we wished to have continuing support from Wenner Gren. Setha suggested that it could be based on her paper and the continuum of types of engagement, on Junji's model of how different anthropological associations accept or reject globalization, or based on an analysis of the relationship of each national anthropological association in relationship to the politics of the nation/state. For instance, how the AAA is consumed with issues of ethics and anthropology and the military reflects the US concern with war and terrorism. Laurent Bazin volunteered to organize the Ireland session in consultation with Mugsy.

#### **Financing WCAA activities through donation or by other means**

Major associations suggested a willingness to make donations, however, a decision was made not to ask for money or donations from the member national associations at this time. Setha brought up that it seemed important to have some way to ask the national associations to support their members' travel to the WCAA meeting. Maria Guadalupe offered to write a letter requesting that each association support their delegate and organizing committee members. Thomas suggested we approach major foundations, preferably through personal meetings with donors in our respective countries.

#### **Changing roster of presidents / international delegates**

Junji noted that there are many changes of the roster and it can be difficult to keep up because not all presidents adequately inform their successors about WCAA. A better way may be to ask member associations to update their delegate's name and contact information directly on our website. Thomas says that it is unrealistic to think that members will do this without prompting. Thomas has been keeping the roster up to date for the time being.

#### **Constitution**

The vote on the new WCAA constitution, developed in and after Osaka, is now complete. There was one amendment proposed so we agreed to the amendment and finalized its acceptance. Thomas and Junji will let everyone know about its acceptance. The vote of admission of the Chilean Association has also been concluded and it is to be announced that Chilean Association has been admitted.

Junji noted that the current situation of mutually waiving fees for heads of other member associations at meetings of some associations was proving to be a complicated system. There was a practical problem in identifying at any time just who the president or WCAA delegate of another member association was, but the renewed WCAA website should resolve this issue. It was noted that another article in the WCAA constitution also stated

that any member of any association belonging to the WCAA should get a partial reduction of registration fees based on the registration fee accorded to members of the association hosting the meeting. However, some associations would not accept this, as it was simply unviable. For example, CASCA could not simply accord a reduced registration fee to all members of the AAA to attend their national meeting, as they would not be able to pay for the meeting. This was truly a complex problem, as certainly members of associations from low income countries could not afford to pay full registration fees at meetings of associations from more developed countries. At present it seemed best to retain an 'as appropriate' clause to allow meeting organizers discretion in this matter. The AAA, EASA, ASA and IUAES regularly specified reduced membership fees for members from less developed countries, but this would not work for all associations hosting meetings. The principle would have to be that one should be generous in promoting international cooperation unless financially unviable/problematic damaging to one's own association. Issues such as whether the RAI film festival should be considered under the same terms as the annual meeting of an association would have to be treated on a case-by-case basis.

### ***Other matters***

Setha suggests bringing in more organizations by invitations from individual members. Delegates are asked to recruit new members and view themselves as ambassadors of the WCAA community. Michael Buchowski presented an argument for inclusion. We should be more open about who we might include, but it is still good to have some policy. Openness should allow us to include new constituencies. Should we therefore be thinking beyond the nation state for including associations? There was a discussion of who should be included, and the need to have some principles for admission. Mugsy noted the need to move away from the UN's association with nation-states model formed in the post-WWII decolonization period. The admission of the Catalonian association was taken as an example that the WCAA did not strictly adhere to the UN system. It is difficult to set up a single standard for membership because every case is different, and it may be best for members to retain the right to decide every case in a vote. We should be honest with each other when we have reservations about a particular application. John raised the vexed problem of associations that are state dependent. Knowing that some delegates among us would have to report back to their government would make it more difficult to make a political statement.

Greg brought up the possibility of issuing a statement decrying the effects of rankings of universities by such instruments as the Jiao Tong Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU). Thomas agreed that such instruments were used in a hegemonic manner to control knowledge production and circulation and were thus opposed to the aim of anthropology to provide spaces for marginal voices, for example through journals in developing and non-English speaking countries. John noted that the UK audit system has backtracked on bibliometric forms of assessing "research output" (as an alternative to peer review) and with that, the ranking of journals and publishers as a further "metric", but that ranking of universities across all kinds of other measures is still an ongoing industry. Although its perverse effects are under constant critique, "business model" driven university managers happily collaborate in this. It was queried whether a statement against such tendencies would be effective. Who was behind such rankings? It was

agreed that Greg would draft a preliminary statement that would be circulated and revised before being circulated to national ministries and departments of education, foundations, the International Social Science Council (ISSC) in UNESCO, and other relevant parties, as well as media that might publish it, such as the Times Higher Education Supplement. Questions also remain as to what might be the most important organizations to receive such a statement in each of the countries with association members. This led to a more general concluding discussion concerning the need for the WCAA to make international statements and to adopt an activist stance on some issues. Setha noted how the issue of political statements had been problematic for the executive board of the AAA. There was the possibility of being sued for such statements. This raised the issue of whether the WCAA should move to becoming an incorporated entity.

Thomas noted the need for WCAA to gain UN recognition. Paul offered to help Junji to facilitate this, but noted that it required money to mount a campaign to join ISSC.

Delegates agreed the WCAA is growing and making progress toward a more stable internal structure. Thomas noted that no structure was foolproof. Rather, the WCAA needed its members to be active in keeping our democratic spirit alive, because it is a good thing indeed, and worth defending. With that the meeting was brought to a close at 12:03 pm Kunming time.

*Special thanks, to Setha Low and Greg Acciaioli, for taking the minutes of this meeting.*

### **3. Results of the IUAES Permanent Council meeting and elections and implications for WCAA (refer to page 4 for background information)**

The elections of new members of the IUAES executive were held on Thursday 30 July 2009. Junji, Gustavo and Thomas were elected to the IUAES positions that they were nominated for. Yuri has been proposed as treasurer (formal decision pending). John was appointed as well, as the confirmed host of ICAES 2013. Overall, the majority of the new IUAES Executive is firmly committed to substantial internal reform and international cooperation.

Suggestions were made and intensely discussed among WCAA members before and after the IUAES election on how we could maintain as much stability in the WCAA Executive as possible, avoid making new appointments by email vote in advance of our scheduled election in Ireland in 2010. The final proposal is as follows: for Junji to resign from his position as chair in order to take up his new and demanding role as Secretary General of IUAES but to remain on the OC as an ordinary member until the end of his term (until Ireland), for Thomas (current deputy chair and hence chair-elect) to become the new chair (10 months ahead of schedule), for Shalini Randeria (ex-President of EASA and current OC member) to become acting deputy chair until elections can be held in Ireland, and for Gustavo to remain on the OC until the end of his term, which is also at the Ireland meeting. Then in Ireland, with all the delegates present, we would hold our 2-yearly election to chose a new Deputy Chair and two new regular members of the Organizing Committee from among the WCAA delegates (to replace Junji, Gustavo and Henk who are all rotating off), exactly as scheduled and as stipulated in our constitution. This proposal is designed to minimize mid-term disruption to the Organizing Committee of the WCAA and avoid the difficulties and inadequacies entailed in holding an extraordinary election by email.

This proposal is being circulated to all WCAA members to ask whether there are any objections to taking this course of action. Delegates are invited to raise any objections they may have with the chair within 14 days.