TABLE OF CONTENTS

First Contact: The Beginning of Ethnographic Filmmaking in Germany, 1900–1930
Wolfgang Fuhrmann

The Historical Study of Ethnographic Fieldwork: Margaret Mead and Reo Fortune among
the Mountain Arapesh
Ira Bashkow and Lise M. Dobrin

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Henrika Kuklick
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USA
In general, very little is known of the history of early ethnographic filmmaking. But the history of ethnographic filmmaking in Germany should be of particular interest, since it seems to be quite different from that which could be told about ethnographic film traditions in other national contexts. As Martin Taureg pointed out more than twenty years ago, German ethnographers had a strong commitment to using film cameras as research tools and films as teaching aids. Recently, Assenka Oksiloff has emphasized that historians of ethnographic filmmaking per se should find German films of special interest, arguing that ethnographic films made by German scholars are the "best documented and preserved". Nevertheless, there has been little research on the beginnings and the institutionalization of filmmaking in German ethnography. The following article gives a short overview of the work, problems and provisional first results of my historical research project, "Film and Ethnography in Germany, 1900-1930." Funded by the German Research foundation (DFG), I have been working on this project for two years, investigating the origins and establishment of ethnographic filmmaking in Germany. My point of departure has been the experiences that led Leipzig ethnologist Fritz Krause to call for the creation of an ethnological and anthropological film archive at the conference of the German Anthropological Society in August 1928.

Archives and Research

The project is based on study of primary sources in all German ethnological museum archives. It would have been impossible prior to Germany's reunification. However, I have had many problems in accessing and working in the archives, which have slowed the progress of the project; of necessity, I now plan to continue the project's archival research phase until 2008. Moreover, cultural politics in Germany have created a precarious financial situation for academic work. If current trends are sustained, anthropological/ethnological, historical and cultural research projects will soon become almost impossible. Due to extensive restoration work and safety problems, the archive of the Hamburg Museum for Ethnology (Museum für Völkerkunde) will be closed for research until at least 2009. The closing of this archive is particularly unfortunate, since the Hamburg Museum is

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2 Assenka Oksiloff. 2001. Picturing the Primitive: Visual culture, Ethnography, and Early German Cinema. New York: Palgrave. Oksiloff's remark refers to early ethnographic films that are archived at the Institut für Wissen und Medien gGmbH (henceforth IWF) in Göttingen. All early films are explained in small booklets that were written in the sixties and seventies, which supply viewers with information about the ethnographic content and the historical background.


4 Letter to the author from Prof. Dr. Wolf Köpke, director of the Museums für Völkerkunde Hamburg, May 10, 2006.
one of the biggest ethnological museums in Germany, and its archival collection is
significant; for example, it houses the files of the Hamburg South Seas expedition, one of the
first German expeditions to use film.⁵ Research in Berlin and Leipzig has also been difficult,
owing either to limited opening hours (Berlin) and/or to small staff (Berlin and Leipzig).
However, after years of extensive restoration, the Leipzig museum has been reopened and
now has a special room for research with good technical equipment. Excellent working
conditions with an extremely helpful staff can also be found at the Linden Museum in
Stuttgart and the Institut für Länderkunde in Leipzig. So far, the most valuable source for
the project has been the records of the German ethnographer Theodor Koch-Grünberg
(1872-1924) deposited at the University of Marburg. Among their features are
correspondence between Koch-Grünberg and the Freiburg film company Express Film,
which specialized in nonfiction film production.

In addition to archival work in German museums, I have systematically gone through
such primary sources as ethnological, anthropological, geographical and colonial journals, in
order to enumerate entries on the use of film in ethnographic expeditions. Finding
announcements of the intention to use film does not provide incontrovertible evidence that
expeditions realized their plans, but the number of such entries shows how significant the
new medium was thought to be for the discipline.⁶ I now estimate that roughly fifty
expeditions between 1905 and 1930 considered filming to be important.

On the basis of analysis of archival records and primary literature, I have
 provisionally concluded that two significant trends framed the emergence of ethnographic
filmmaking. One, the introduction of cinematography into ethnographic research in
Germany was much more closely related to the development of sound recording than to
photography. The first recorded instance of consideration of the significance of
cinematography as a contribution to ethnographic observation was in the discussion
following a lecture by Berlin ethnographer Felix von Luschan on the use of phonographic
recordings at a December 1903 meeting of the Berlin society for Anthropology, Ethnology
and Prehistory.⁷ The introduction of the subject of film into the discussion is important
because it is indicative of ethnographers’ aim to present themselves as modern scientists who
took advantage of all modern technology. Two, as film historian Tom Gunning has
observed, the invention of the motion picture must be viewed “in relation to a broader
attempt to recreate and capture the sensual world in several dimensions.”⁸ Gunning
understands the desire to supplement the phonograph with motion picture in the context of

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⁵ Films from this expedition are archived as “Ethnological Film Documents from the Pacific from the Years 1908-1910” at the IWF in Göttingen.

⁶ Interesting examples of this possible marketing strategy are the several film expeditions of Dr. P.A. Marx. In the late twenties, Marx was planning a new film expedition to Equatorial Africa. In order to gain support for his expedition, Marx claimed experience of filming on five out of seven expeditions in which he had participated. However, in the primary literature no evidence was found for Marx’s extensive filmmaking experience. Archiv, Ethnologisches Museum Berlin. Akten betreffend die Erwerbung ethnologischer Gegenstände aus Afrika, pars. I B: 47: Exposé über eine Film- und wissenschaftliche Expedition nach Äquatorial Afrika [File concerning the acquisition of ethnological objects from Africa, pars. IB 47: Expose about a film- and scientific expedition to Equatorial Africa].


the pronounced anxiety of the nineteenth century that the combination of modern media
could not only reproduce the human but also split up the human senses. The "obtainable
ersatz immortality" provided by the technological double corresponded therefore as much to
the modern fantasies of control as to the modern experiences of limitation. Gunning's
consideration is important for the project as it links technological innovations and
developments to a culture-historical context that also must be considered in the
ethnographic film project. As it will be shown below, the combination of sound and moving
image also played an important role in the exhibition context of ethnographic films.

In her study of the origin of ethnographic filmmaking in the United States, Alison
Griffiths has emphasized its close relation to popular entertainment. Griffiths's observation
applies to the German situation. Archival records document frequent contact between
German ethnographers and commercial film companies, which conferred important
advantages to all parties, whether in making careers, playing museum politics, or succeeding
in the commercial film business. However, understanding contact between scholars and
production companies requires close analysis of ethnographic filmmaking's relation to the
specific German context of the cinema reform movement (Kinoreformbewegung). I now turn to
providing information and provisional speculations about the production, distribution, and
exhibition contexts of early ethnographic film in Germany.

Production

The discussion of film's significance for ethnographic observation in 1903 seems to
have inspired Felix von Luschan to include cinematography as a new research tool in his
1904 edition of his research manual Anleitung für ethnographische Beobachtungen und Sammlungen in
Afrika und Ozeanien (Guide for ethnographic observations and collections in Africa and
Oceania). And Luschan's manual became compulsory reading for every professional and
amateur ethnographer. In 1905, Georg Thilenius, director of the Hamburg Museum for
Ethnology, emphasized the special role of film in a memorandum on the goals of
ethnographic research. In 1906, Karl Weule, who worked first as an assistant in and
subsequently became director of the Leipzig museum from 1907 on, used film in his
expedition to East Africa in 1906. In the following years, major expeditions would use the
movie camera to record their findings for their home audience.

The collaborations between ethnographers and commercial film companies is
documented in various collections of correspondence: Richard Thurnwald and the Berlin
Internationale Kinematographen und Lichteffekt-Gesellschaft in 1906 (South Seas Expedition 1906-
1909); Karl Weule and Ernemann in Dresden between 1906 and 1907 (East Africa

9 Ibid., 29.
10 Ibid.
12 Felix Von Luschan. 1904. Anleitung für ethnographische Beobachtungen und Sammlungen in Afrika und
am Main: Syndikat, 94.
14 On Weule, see also Wolfgang Fuhrmann. 2006. "Überlegungen für eine mögliche Geschichte des
ethnographischen Films in Deutschland." In Christian Hissmayer and Andreas Jahn-Sudmann, eds. Medien-
Expedition, 1906); Theodor Koch-Grünberg and Express Film in 1911 (Amazon Expedition, 1911-1913); and Emil Trinkler’s correspondence with his cameraman in 1926/27 (Asia Expedition, 1927/28). Collaborations were not officially supported by the museums but were private partnerships between individual ethnographers and companies. Their associations could lead to free supply of technical equipment, such as when Richard Thurnwald received camera and film stock from a company, or to the participation in an expedition of an experienced operator who shot expedition’s films, as was enjoyed by Koch-Grünberg.

Such associations conferred prestige on production companies because of ethnography’s academic reputation. As Martin Taureg observed, a major influence on German ethnographic filmmaking was the cinema reform movement and its emphasis on film as a didactic medium. Reformers emphasized cinema’s educational and informational value, warning that watching Schundfilme (trash films) was leading to the moral and ethical decay of German society, and especially of German youth. Therefore, reformers favoured non-fiction films, such as technical, geographic, folklorist and ethnographic films. Although there exists no direct evidence of intellectual exchanges between reformers and ethnographers, making ethnographic films was important for every company that sought to enlarge its film program. New spectacular films depicting unknown regions of the world gave the companies an academic and educational image in the public eye, which improved the companies’ market positions.

Distribution

The distribution of ethnographic films was crucial to their development. In the ordinary course of events, each expedition was described in a publication that addressed the broad public and was an important source of income for ethnographers. Book illustrations also drew public attention to films. The most striking example is Richard Neuhauss’s Deutsch Neu Guinea (German New Guinea), published after Neuhauss’s stay in the South Seas in 1909. The book not only included several illustrations taken from his films but also frequently mentioned how his films could be purchased, including price per meter. Similarly, Theodor Koch-Grünberg benefited from his cooperation with Express Film, which made a profit-sharing arrangement with him for the films from his Amazon expedition. The case of Koch-Grünberg is particularly interesting, since he was ambivalent about the intellectual value of films, as he indicated a year after his return from his Amazon expedition in a letter to his Leipzig colleague Fritz Krause, who would later call for the establishment of an ethnographic film archive. On the eve of World War I, both ethnographers had become doubtful about cinematography’s promise for ethnographic observation. Krause responded to Grünberg in a letter:

15 Taureg, op. cit., 24.
What you write about the Kino [movie camera] is almost identical to what I think. I would use one only if I got an offer from a company, but I do not know if they are still doing this kind of thing. There would be only few useful scientific images anyway. In most cases films remain more or less a device to illustrate and embellish lectures about our journeys. We have yet to make use of them in a scientific way. [W.F.]¹⁹

Koch-Grünberg and Krause’s opinion about the scientific use-value of ethnographic film at this stage points to an important moment in the development of ethnographic filmmaking. Following the enthusiastic use of movie cameras on expeditions in the years roughly between 1905 and 1911, critical assessments were made. Films could be used in lectures and sold to companies, but they did not fulfill ethnographers’ expectations that filmmaking itself could produce ethnographic knowledge.

Nevertheless, in subsequent years Koch-Grünberg again changed his mind about film. Before his last expedition, which took him in 1924 to the Amazon accompanied by the American geographer/ethnographer Alexander Hamilton Rice, Koch-Grünberg contacted Rice to ask about shooting films on the expedition. At the same time, he tried to contact Express Film, most likely in order to get their assistance for the expedition.²⁰ After Rice told Grünberg that he had already hired a camera operator, Grünberg asked him for half of the net profit of European film sales and distribution.²¹ Grünberg’s financial concerns can partly be explained by his personal situation. He had just resigned his secure position as a director of the Stuttgart Linden Museum and needed to be sure that his family would be supported during the time he was on the expedition with Rice. However, it seems that the commercial success of Robert Flaherty’s “Nanook of the North” (1922) made German ethnographers aware of the immense financial and promotional potential of “adventurous” ethnographic films. In a letter to Swiss ethnographer Felix Speiser, Grünberg suggested that a film like “Nanook” could easily be made in South America.²²

Films were also screened within ethnographic museums. Recent studies of the history of German ethnology have shown that it was nothing if not diverse. In his provocative and challenging Objects of Culture: Ethnology and Ethnographic Museums in Imperial Germany,²³ Glenn Penny shows “how the cultural and social as much as the intellectual interests and desires of scientists, civic associations, collectors, patrons, and visitors, as well as the force of a growing international market in material culture, shaped the science of ethnology and German ethnographic museums.”²⁴ Viewing the ethnographic scene from the perspective of the local rather than the national, Penny emphasizes the competitive situation

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¹⁹ Archive of Theodor Koch-Grünbergs in the ethnological collection of the University of Marburg: VK Mr A 14.
²⁰ 2600 feet of the Hamilton Rice expedition film are archived at the Human Studies Film Archive at the National Museum of Natural History/Smithsonian Institution. http://www.nmnh.si.edu/naa/guide/hstf_south_amerca.htm
²¹ VK, Mr A 37.
²² VK, Mr A 37.
²⁴ Ibid., 11.
among German museums, offering an important framework for discussion of the distribution of ethnographic films in Germany. In my project, “Film and Ethnography in Germany, 1900-1930,” I am obliged to ask, to what extent was film used to promote a museum’s policy?

In particular, Karl Weule’s enthusiasm for experimenting with film as a new pedagogic medium indicates that the Leipzig museum was especially interested in using film screenings to interest the local public. German museum curators contrived a new genre of exhibits—Schausammlungen, or didactic displays. These were quite different from scientific displays. As Glenn Penny observes, the personnel of the Berlin museum were distinctive in dismissing Schausammlung as “unscientific” and “inadequate”; in other museums, it seemed that the new displays were the best way to educate the broader public. Film screening could support a museum’s position in the competitive museum landscape.

Exhibition

As the correspondence between Koch-Grünberg and Fritz Krause shows, ethnographic films could not speak for themselves. In fact, film screenings and lectures were often a part of a multimedia event. Lecture notes such as those of Karl Weule show how the meaning of his films was explained through interpretations, anecdotes and allusions. Within his lecture notes were short headings such as “the prehistory of my expedition”; “acknowledgements”; “general map: research area”; “introduction to the research instruments and the goal of the research”; “my first fever”; “photo walk”; “my evening with the ladies”; and “the beginning of the ethnographic work.” Moreover, his movie-lectures had a consistent narrative structure and dramaturgy. Weule combined his texts with slides, phonographic recordings and movies. Combining sounds and images, Weule often presented a synchronized scene of dance or song and in order to portray African customs to the “non-East African” public. Finally, his movie-lectures often ended with a phono-movie representation of his expedition troop returning to the point where the expedition began. This last point in the lecture evoked the so-called apotheosis, a theatrical and cinematic element in early cinema that gave a film its distinctive final visual climax.

Conclusion

The above generalizations about early ethnographic filmmaking in Germany are only provisional. In the twenties, German ethnographers worked at the same time as exotic and proto-ethnographic feature films were enormously popular in ordinary cinemas. Moreover, because Germany lost its colonies after World War I, ethnographic research became more difficult. However, the success of Robert Flaherty’s “Nanook” influenced ethnographers’ thinking about film. Further research and analysis are required to determine how ethnographic film practice in these years led to the historical moment when Fritz Krause determined that it was important to establish an ethnographic film archive.

25 Ibid., 147.
26 Archive des Museums für Völkerkunde zu Leipzig: File C 17 AF.
Although fieldwork has long been central to the discipline of anthropology, there are very few third-person studies focusing on the fieldwork of individual ethnographers in the history of anthropology. Anthropologists have reflected richly on their own fieldwork experiences in monographs, memoirs, and novels. But apart from studies of the development of fieldwork as a disciplinary practice (e.g., Stocking 1983), the tendency is for historians of anthropology to treat fieldwork as merely one episode in a larger narrative focusing on an anthropologist's intellectual trajectory and personal and scholarly influences, taking for granted the situation that the anthropologist encountered in the field.

In this paper, we sketch a programmatic argument about the historiography of ethnographic fieldwork that begins from the premise that a field situation is not encountered but constructed by the fieldworker, in interaction with others, through the unfolding process of fieldwork itself. Normally, so many aspects of an ethnographic research situation are beyond the fieldworker's control (and the historian's grasp) that it can appear as if "the field" were a cultural given. But in many ways the situations that anthropologists experience in the field are ones that they themselves have played a role in shaping. This is manifestly true with respect to such practical and political factors as linguistic skill, the kind of lifestyle one maintains, and one's social affiliations within a community. But it is also true of more subtle psychological factors like the emotional qualities of the fieldworker's social relationships and the ways these reflect back on his or her own identity (see Devereux 1967). It is not just the fieldworker's intellect that is engaged in the collection of ethnographic material, but the entire person—heart, body, and mind—that apperceives, interprets, and shapes the situations that form the experiential basis of his or her knowledge of the culture.

Our attention was drawn to this process of construction by a remarkable conflict of ethnographic interpretation in the history of anthropology. We did fieldwork in the late 1990s in the Mountain Arapesh region of Papua New Guinea, which had been previously studied in the 1930s by Margaret Mead and Reo Fortune. Although Mead and Fortune did
their fieldwork as a married couple working as partners (as did we), the portrayals of the culture they subsequently offered differ from one another in striking ways. In her best-selling book *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies* (1935), Mead famously concluded that Mountain Arapesh culture embodies a nurturing, maternal, and peaceful ideal for both sexes. But Fortune objected to this description, and in obscure publications, manuscript fragments, and a great mass of letters he countered it with a view of Arapesh culture that emphasized the brutal politics of interlocality rivalry, adultery capers, and warfare (Fortune 1939). In effect, then, we found ourselves following in the footsteps of two trained observers who were in the same place at the same time, yet who interpreted the culture in opposing ways. How could this have happened? In inquiring into this problem, we have encountered a great deal of scholarship that approaches the matter in the way described above, that is, in terms of the anthropologists' intellectual predispositions and the personal and historical influences that directed their interpretations. Of course, the approach of sophisticated intellectual historians emphasizes that anthropologists perceive and interpret their field experiences through any number of filtering constructs, such as prior assumptions, cultural blind spots, personal inclinations, and theoretical models and aims. But in the rest of this paper, we suggest that even though this approach is highly fruitful and absolutely necessary, it still yields only partial accounts.

The Intellectual History Approach to Mead’s Arapesh Ethnography: Its Achievements and Limitations

Mead’s writings would seem to make a banner case for the utility of the intellectual history approach to understanding past ethnographic interpretations. Her interpretation of Arapesh culture in *Sex and Temperament* is part of a triad of New Guinea case studies that has a conceptual architecture remarkably parallel to the three case studies in *Patterns of Culture* (1934) by Ruth Benedict, Mead’s close friend. Mead’s triad also reflects her participation in a romantic triangle with Gregory Bateson, whose Iatmul fieldsite was near to Mead and Fortune’s Tchambuli. In particular, as we argue elsewhere, each of the three cultural case studies in Mead’s book is in key respects a “writ-large” expression of the core personality traits Mead discerned in herself and the two men as she analyzed their relationships (Bashkow 2003; Bashkow and Dobrin in prep; see also Boon 1985). Mead actually formalized these correspondences between the cultures she studied and her small circle of friends in a fourfold typology that she called the “theory of the squares” (Sullivan 2004). She used this scheme to categorize the cultures she investigated and read about, as well as various celebrities and virtually all of her friends, placing them along two axes, Northern-to-Southern and Turk-to-Fey, which she conceptualized as coordinating inborn temperaments with physiological traits (see also Mead 1972:154-158; Kretschmer 1925, 1970[1929]). Even into her old age Mead regarded “the squares” as her most original and important theoretical contribution, though she feared publishing it at the time she was developing it (in the 1930s and ‘40s) due to its similarities to Nazi race theory.

In sum, there are a number of good reasons why Mead’s interpretation of the Arapesh might be explained by appealing to factors like intellectual predisposition and influence. As for her filtering processes, it may be enough to point out that *Sex and Temperament* has been criticized since the time of its publication for the “perplexing discrepancies” that exist between numerous ethnographic details she reported and the general interpretation she gave them (Thurnwald 1936:664; see also Lohmann 2004). For example, though one of Mead’s main theses in the book is that the Arapesh are peaceful,
nurturing, and averse to aggression, in an early review Richard Thurnwald compiled an impressive list of details in Mead's book that would seem to vitiate this conclusion, including among them "quarrels over women," "man and wife attacking each other with axes," "men beating their wives," "a quarrel which followed the abduction of a woman," "a mother trying to strangle her baby and stepping on the head of another," "violent, unreasonable rages," and the regular "resort to sorcery" within a system of institutionalized hostilities (1936: 665-6; see also Fortune 1939). Such discrepancies have not been resolved with the passage of time. They are central to Paul Roscoe's 2003 argument that in dismissing the importance of violence and warfare among the Arapesh, Mead "got it wrong" (2003: 586), a view that is also supported by our own fieldwork and research on the ethnohistory of Arapesh war alliances (Dobrin and Bashkow 2006). For better or worse, we are in a strong position to criticize Mead's image of the "peaceful, nurturing Arapesh" as an interpretation that reflects her intellectual predispositions as much as it does her data.

Thus, we have no doubt that a critique of Mead's ethnography in terms of an intellectual history approach is warranted and indeed necessary. But it is not sufficient. After all, this approach disregards past anthropologists' own sense of what they were doing. What Mead was attempting to produce was a study of Arapesh culture, not an ethnographically-coded form of her own autobiography! And if she had doubted that the cultural patterns she described really existed "out there," surely she would have thought twice before publishing so much evidence contradicting her main argument. Indeed, as Roscoe notes, it is remarkable that "she made no attempt to shovel [such evidence] under the carpet" (Roscoe 2003: 585). When Mead insisted in the face of critical reviews that the ethnographic patterns she reported in her book were "actually a reflection of the form which lay in [the] cultures themselves" (Mead 1950: vi), she showed her conviction in the experiences she had had in the field. But, we argue, these were not—and could not be—unmediated engagements with Arapesh people. Rather, they were experiences of a particular field situation, the one she in part co-constructed through her relationships with Arapesh people.

The Co-Constructed Situation of Mead and Fortune's Arapesh Fieldwork

What might a constructionist historiography of fieldwork look like for Mead and Fortune among the Mountain Arapesh? Here, in summary form, are three key points that are emerging in our work on this case.3

First, by posing the question of how these two ethnographers contributed to constructing the cultural realities they experienced in their fieldwork, we learn that their interpretive conflict stemmed in part from a marked difference in the way each participated in the extended Arapesh regional network that was constituted by travel and that was the medium for interlocality competition and political/warfare alliances. Even though the two ethnographers were working together, on a day to day basis they were often apart. As is well known, Mead's bad ankle confined her to their village fieldsite of Alitoa for the full eight months of their stay among the Arapesh. Because the Arapesh mountain terrain is steep and rugged, she had to be carried into and out of the village at the start and end of her time there, and we have clear evidence that she never stepped beyond the village perimeter. By contrast, Fortune traveled widely and frequently with parties of Arapesh people, on his and Mead's own errands as well as on theirs, staying away from the village for long stretches of

3We expect to more fully develop and exemplify these arguments in subsequent publications.
time. His travels took him on pathways and past battlegrounds that elicited from his Arapesh companions stories of great alliances, rivalries, and the politics of adultery that provoked men to war. There was nothing comparable in Mead’s experience that testified to this precolonial Arapesh culture of conflict, and it found no place in her ethnography (Dobrin and Bashkow 2006).

Second, Mead and Fortune experienced Mountain Arapesh life in the form of a particular social world they partially created in interaction with the villagers through their fieldwork strategies. Here, the primary issue is the way they set up their household and conducted their local exchange relations. The villagers had to be prevailed upon to build the anthropologists a house, something they were unwilling to do until Fortune promised that they would be richly rewarded with foreign commodities they desired, such as matches and salt (MMP; Mead Bulletin Letter 1/15/32, p. 1 [N92: 5]). But the anthropologists’s relations with the villagers soon soured after the high expectations Fortune raised were shattered, no doubt unavoidably. Although the anthropologists were generous in providing food to workers during the period of active housebuilding, the villagers were disappointed by the small knives given out at the house completion feast, by the fact that many people received no gifts at all, and by the lack of any distribution of food for the housebuilders and their hosts to carry home with them. Mead recorded that as the feast was concluding, when evening was falling, the women stood up and gave a “long speech saying that they would now have to go to their distant gardens for food because all their supplies were exhausted”—clearly expressing their dissatisfaction at the visitors’ ungenerosity, which left them empty-handed (Mead 1947: 237). Every last native of the village cleared out immediately. As Mead reports: “The sun went down on our first night in the new house with Alitoa, the largest village of the Mountain Arapesh, absolutely empty, except for ourselves and our boys, all newcomers” (237).

The presence of the “boys”—young men brought from elsewhere as servants by Mead and Fortune—was a further complicating factor in their village relationships. The boys’ social status was awkward inasmuch as, being outsiders, they should have been hosted by the villagers but were instead being hosted—fed—by the whites. And it was the boys, not the villagers, who received most of the material benefits the anthropologists brought. Fearing jealousy, the boys frequently ran away; indeed, this is one of the main comedic themes in Mead’s letters (see Mead 1977, MMP). Their social awkwardness also found expression in a continuing series of petty disputes (and was further aggravated by them), such as those provoked when the boys hunted game—as Mead and Fortune charged them to do—near the village without compensating the local landowners. One of the main ways in which the villagers apparently registered their displeasure was by staying away from the village for weeks at a stretch, so that Mead’s main informants, such as the well-known Unabelin, were their boys and other outsiders—here again, the whites’ village guests. As a result of this, the contexts in which Mead found herself interacting with people were primarily ones that required them to be deferential, diplomatic, and humble. The markers of this in Arapesh discourse are gentle tone and an emphasis on agreeable themes like the importance of mutual help, nurture, and peace; and since these closely resemble core qualities of Mead’s American construction of femininity, we infer that her dominant impression of Arapesh cultural temperament was formed in significant part from observing the deferential behavior evoked in a particular village situation that she and Fortune did much to create.

Third, and finally, Mead, much more than Fortune, maintained in the field a strong orientation toward her own home frame of reference. When contemporary researchers use
the Margaret Mead Papers in the Library of Congress, they are uniformly impressed—even amazed—by the sheer volume of her output of letters from the field: hers is a truly immense archive. The conventional approach is to treat her letter writing as an activity ancillary to Mead’s fieldwork, something she did over and beyond it, and analyze it in terms of its contents and correspondents. But precisely because she did so much of it, we can also see Mead’s letter writing as a central aspect of her field experience. It was compounded by her diary-keeping, the effort she and Fortune invested in the management of their supply stores, and the multitudinous note-slips she typed and filed daily according to an anthropological system of categories, all of which served to sustain her orientation to her home frame of reference: the home plans and relationships that she maintained through her correspondence and the intellectual currents in anthropology that she kept abreast of—and even to some extent tried to direct—while remaining physically present in the New Guinea village. It is thus no accident that Mead’s portrayal of the Arapesh is so brightly illumined by the conventional intellectual history approach that makes visible the influence of relationships stemming from the anthropologist’s home culture. Indeed, the importance of those relationships is itself motivated by the particular social and material situation she constructed and experienced during her fieldwork.

The Concept of the Constructed Field Situation as a Methodological Resource for the History of Anthropology

Through these examples we wish to show two things. One is that because an anthropologist’s actions in the field are interpreted by people in the host society from their own cultural perspective, they can be consequential for the construction of the field situation, and hence for the resulting ethnography, in ways the researcher may not appreciate while in the field and so not report. Mead understood her confinement to Alitoa as a matter of areal coverage. She knew that it disadvantaged her relative to Fortune in the ability to make comparisons within the region and trace out the larger exchange system, but she did not see that it led her to minimize whole domains of cultural life. Mead’s intensive letter writing illustrates this principle as well. It is an aspect of her field situation that is evident from the nature of her archive, and she refers to it frequently in the letters themselves. But because it was something she saw as part of her informal activity in the field rather than part of her research, it did not figure in her lengthy discussion of methodology (Mead 1940: 32Sff.), even though it clearly shaped her field experience and thus her view of the culture.4

The other thing we wish to show is how the historical study of fieldwork is facilitated by an independent analysis of the ethnography and local historical context.5 When Mead reported that the Alitoans left the village after their housebuilding feast, she took at face value the village women’s statement that they were going to their gardens because they lacked food, a “datum” that contributed to her view of the Arapesh as poor and peripatetic (see, e.g., Mead 1947: 210-211). In interpreting such an example, western historians’ own commonsense is something of an aid (why would women be heading into the rainforest to hike to distant food gardens at eveningtime?). But of even greater utility is knowledge of the

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4Letters from the field do receive brief mention, but only insofar as they are “theoretical letters written to other scientists during the field period” and so potentially relevant in terms of their content (Mead 1940:331).

5The point is not to reanalyze the ethnographic record as anthropologists would in order to settle its rights and wrongs, but to apply a knowledge of the culture as historians, in reconstructing, analyzing, and narrativizing fieldwork events.
local cultural principle that a feast from which guests depart empty-handed is a failure. Since this was not apparent to Mead or Fortune, it remains for the historian to grasp that the women's speeches about food and the state of their households were, in the discursive norms of this culture, complaints about the anthropologists' conduct that would have repercussions for their fieldwork. Similarly with the example of Mead's frequent reports of her boys running away: it is for us to see beyond the colonial comedy of unreliable natives that Mead presents as embellishments to her ethnography. But in order to do this, we need to know enough about landowners' rights and Arapesh hospitality to appreciate that the boys were in an impossible situation, caught between the legitimate rights and expectations of the village landowners on the one hand, and the boys' obligations to their white employers on the other. Mead presents these events without really interpreting them because they did not make sense to her, but neither do they stand out as enigmas in her texts. What makes them noteworthy to us is our independent understanding of what they mean from an Arapesh point of view. The fact that these responses to the anthropologists' actions were ultimately significant for their descriptions of "the culture" shows the importance of developing perspectives on field events other than the fieldworker's own (see also Bashkow 1991, 2006; Dobrin and Bashkow 2006).

Looking back at an anthropological encounter from the viewpoint of those studied takes advantage of the distinctive characteristics of ethnographic fieldwork as a method for achieving cultural understanding. Fieldworkers confront their host culture not only as an object of study, but also as something they participate in in practical ways. As they do so, they become involved in particular kinds of social situations and not others, they habitually spend time in particular places to the exclusion of others, and they become enmeshed in relationships with particular individuals whose personalities, background experiences, behavioral patterns, and social positions all combine to help create the fieldworker's experience of the culture as a whole. From an intellectual history point of view, where the larger narrative frame is the biographical development of a scholar's views and ideas, the field is typically taken for granted, with the stress instead on how and why the researcher interpreted it as he or she did. But if we are to work toward a historical understanding of the process of ethnographic knowledge production itself, we cannot bracket off the field, nor the fieldworker's role in creating the evolving field situation. For it is here that, through an unfolding series of activities and relationships, the field is co-constructed by the anthropologist and those he or she studies.

Manuscript Source

MMP: Margaret Mead Papers and South Pacific Ethnographic Archives. Manuscript Division. Library of Congress. Washington, DC. Citation gives box:file numbers.

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[Occasionally, readers call our attention to errors in the entries, usually of a minor typographical character. Under the pressure of getting HAN out, some proofreading errors occasionally slip by. For these we offer a blanket apology. We call attention to the listings in the Bulletin of the History of Archaeology, the entries in the annual bibliographies of Isis, and those in the Bulletin d'information de la SFHSH (Société française pour l'histoire des sciences de l'homme)—each of which takes information from HAN, as we do from them. We welcome and encourage bibliographic suggestions from our readers.]


ANNOUNCEMENTS


John C. Burnham Early Career Award. The Forum for History of Human Science (FHHS) and the Journal of the History of the Behavioral Science (JHBS) encourage researchers early in their careers to submit unpublished manuscripts for the annual John C. Burnham Early Career Award, named in honor of this prominent historian of the human sciences and past-editor of JHBS. The journal will publish the winning paper with a notice of the award, and the publisher will provide the author of the paper an honorarium of $500. Unpublished manuscripts dealing with any aspect(s) of the history of the human sciences are welcome. Eligible scholars are those who do not hold tenured university positions (or equivalent); graduate students and independent scholars are encouraged to submit. "Early career" is interpreted to include the period up to seven years beyond the Ph.D. Since competition may be high in any given year, scholars are encourage to re-submit in subsequent years, as long as
the manuscript has not been already submitted to some other journal and the submitting scholar is still in early career. The paper submitted is the most important aspect of the competition, but since this is an “early career award,” the prize committee will also consider professional activities, including (though not limited to) participation in annual meetings of the History of Science Society and other scholarly work. The submission consists of three copies of the paper and three copies of the candidate’s c.v. The paper must meet the publishing guidelines of the JHBS; for conference papers, these guidelines generally include revision and expansion to create an article-length paper. The committee will acknowledge receipt of each submission and will promptly confirm its eligibility. The committee’s selection of the prizewinner (the nominee to JHBS editors) will be announced at the annual History of Science Society meeting (held in November). FHHS will promptly notify JHBS of its endorsement, and the manuscript will go through the regular refereeing process of the journal. After the editors of JHBS have accepted the nominated paper for publication, it will be published on their timetable, and the publisher will issue the honorarium. Although it is technically possible that someone might win the Burnham Early Career Award and not receive the honorarium, FHHS and JHBS do not expect this to happen under normal circumstances. Deadline: June 30. Send three copies of manuscript and of c.v. to Nadine Weidman, Secretary of FHHS, 138 Woburn St., Medford MA 02155. See http://fhhs.org/awardsdescription.htm (note the deadline has been extended to June 30).

FHHS Article and Dissertation Awards. The Forum for History of Human Science awards a prize (a nonmonetary honor) for the best article published recently on some aspect of the history of the human sciences. The prize alternates annually in rotation with the Forum’s prize for best doctoral dissertation. The winner of the prize is announced at the annual History of Science Society meeting, held in November. Winners are publicized in the FHHS Newsletter and in newsletters and journals of several other organizations (HSS and Cheiron, for example). Entries are encouraged from authors in any discipline, as long as the work is related to the history of the human sciences, broadly construed. To be eligible, the article must have been published within the three years previous to the year of the award. The FHHS article prize is awarded in odd-numbered years and the FHHS Dissertation Prize is awarded in even-numbered years. Deadline: June 30. Send three copies of all materials to Nadine Weidman, Secretary of FHHS, 138 Woburn St., Medford MA 02155. See http://fhhs.org/awardsdescription.htm (note the deadline has been extended to June 30).

The Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences Fellowships. The Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences (CASBS) invites scholars to apply for a 2008-09 fellowship. This sabbatical fellowship provides an opportunity for faculty to pursue priority research and expand their horizons while engaging in a diverse, interdisciplinary intellectual community. The Center offers a supportive, stimulating, and peaceful environment in which to work. A CASBS fellowship award is considered a career milestone for any scholar, and most recipients report that the year had a transformative effect on later work. The Center considers applications from scholars in a wide range of disciplines and interdisciplinary areas in the social and behavioral sciences, and humanities. Research themes are introduced for those who prefer to come with others who share similar interests. For 2008-09, these themes are “Improving Health and Health Care” and “Achieving Equality.” For more information and to apply, please go to www.casbs.org. Deadline–30 June 2007.
Call for Papers: Prophetstown Revisited: A Summit on Early Native American Studies. On the occasion of the bicentennial of the founding of Prophetstown by Tecumseh and his brother Tenskatawa (The Shawnee Prophet) in 1808, the Society of Early Americanists and the Purdue University College of Liberal Arts will host an interdisciplinary scholarly summit on early Native American Studies that will feature panel presentations, workshops, and sessions open to the public, including the keynote addresses and other exhibits, and performances. Since Purdue is only a few minutes drive from the place where the brothers brought their followers together, we plan to have off-campus events linked to the sites associated with Prophetstown. The founding of Prophetstown was an important historical moment, marking the first significant peaceful gesture on the part of indigenous North Americans to appropriate and utilize an “Indian” identity as a singular racial force of community and resistance. Pan-racial identification had been imagined and imposed by a series of European conquerors and colonizers for centuries, and pan-Indian identity would become the driving force behind the Jacksonian Policy of Indian Removal, enacted as law in 1830. The Shawnee Brothers’ efforts were the first to coalesce and mobilize “Indians” on a continental level to oppose such efforts. Its brief efflorescence notwithstanding, it effectively marked the end of the era when tribes were set against one another by whites for their own selfish purposes. While the themes and topics of the conference include Pan-Indianisms and Native/Indian history and culture in the Mississippi Valley, we welcome proposals on all aspects of Native American Studies up to 1840. Possible topics might include but are not limited to: Literary and Cultural Representations of Native Americans in Anglo Public Spheres (1600-1840); frontiers, middle grounds, contact zones, borderlands; the biologization of race in the colonies and the new nation; material culture and early Native American studies; and commemorating Prophetstown. One page abstracts and short CVs due by September 14, 2007 to Kristina Bross (kbross@purdue.edu). Visit the website at http://dev1.matrix.msu.edu/steen/Prophetstown/design.html.

New Journal: Anthropological Insights. The new journal Anthropological Insights seeks papers for its second issue. The editors interpret anthropology broadly, and encourage both established scholars and students to submit papers, which will be peer reviewed. Papers should be 15-20 pages in length. For more information, contact fsalamone@iona.edu. Send submissions to Frank A. Salamone, Iona College, New Rochelle, NY 10801.

Conference: Darwinism after Darwin: New Historical Perspectives. This conference, sponsored by the British Society for the History of Science, will meet 3-5 September 2007 at the University of Leeds. It will provide an opportunity to explore what happened with Darwinism ‘after Darwin,’ by providing new historical perspectives on evolutionary theories and ideas, experiments and practices, bodies and displays, from the late nineteenth to the early twenty-first centuries. Details can be found at http://www.darwinismafterdarwin.com.

HISTORY OF ANTHROPOLOGY ON THE WEB

Long Road (blog on indigenous social justice and intellectual property, with a focus on Australia), Kimberly Christen, ed. http://www.kimberlychristen.com
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C/o Henrika Kuklick
Logan Hall 303
249 S. 36th St
Philadelphia PA
19104