



History of Anthropology Newsletter

Volume 25
Issue 2 *December 1998*

Article 6

1-1-1998

The History of Antrhopology in the Netherlands Since the 1970s

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Walter Zenner (Anthropology, SUNY-Albany) is undertaking an historical study of the development in American anthropology of concepts dealing with inter-ethnic and inter-cultural relations, such as acculturation, ethnicity, diaspora, hybridization

BIBLIOGRAPHICA ARCANA

I. The History of Anthropology in the Netherlands Since the 1970s

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In the first part of this review (HAN XXV:1) some of the older Dutch contributions to the history of anthropology were listed. In this concluding part, we shall see how the subdiscipline evolved since the 1970s at the hands of the students of these initiators. Apart from the volumes by Claessen and Kloos (1975, 1981) already mentioned, standard sources are the volume Toen en Thans edited by Bovenkerk et al. (1978); a volume on non-western sociology edited by Hüsken et al. (1984) and a booklet by van den Muijzenberg and Wolters (1988); a special issue of the journal Antropologische Verkenningen edited by Hovens and Triebels (1988); and the recent history of 'organised' anthropology by Jan de Wolf (1998). In addition, a dozen doctoral dissertations were submitted at the universities of Nijmegen, Utrecht, Amsterdam, and Leiden.

Historiography of anthropology (part 2)

The first dissertations on the history of anthropology were defended at the relatively new university of Nijmegen, where Leo Triebels included the subject in his introductory courses (1969-70), and in 1976 Anton Blok, who had studied at Amsterdam, introduced a course in 'history and theory of anthropology'. A year later Ton Lemaire, a critical anthropologist and philosopher, gave a course on Marxist anthropology, followed by Albert Trouwborst who gave lectures on British social anthropology and on comparative traditions of research in Southeast-Asia and Eastern Africa (Trouwborst & Kommers 1988). The first dissertation was by Dirk Lettens, a Belgian philologist, on the ethnographic work of Griaule (1971). Lettens was followed by Jean Kommers (1979), on early sources of ethnographic knowledge about the Dutch East Indies in the period 1800-1830, emphasizing writings of colonial civil servants as a pre-scientific form of ethnography before its academic institutionalization as an academic discipline—a position advocated also in later publications (e.g. 1982, 1996a). Other students who gained their doctorates at Nijmegen were Gerlof Verwey (1980, in philosophy), Raymond Corbey (1988, in philosophy), Pieter Hovens (1989), and Sjoerd Jaarsma (1990); there is also a dissertation currently in progress (cf. Willemsen 1998). Hovens was co-editor, with Triebels, of the special issue of Antropologische Verkenningen (1988). More recently, Peter Meurkens has published a history of anthropology at Nijmegen (1998).

At Utrecht, the first theoretical dissertations were submitted by Hans Tennekes (1970) on cultural relativism in American anthropology (Engl. edn. 1971) and by Arie de Ruijter on Lévi-Strauss' structuralism (1977). In the late 1980s Diederick Raven joined the staff, primarily to work on the anthropological study of science (1988, 1992). In 1990, Peter Mason received a doctorate for a dissertation on textual and visual representations of the Other, concentrating on Europeans ideas about American tribes and races since the fifteenth century. That same year Sjoerd Jaarsma and Jan de Wolf attempted unsuccessfully to establish at Utrecht an archival and documentation center for the history of anthropology in the Netherlands (ADCHAN). In 1995, Raven, de Wolf and Karin Geuijen edited an important volume on Post-Modernism and Anthropology (1995).

At Amsterdam, as in Leiden, teaching was divided between non-western sociology and cultural anthropology. Wim Wertheim, André Köbben, Jeremy Boissevain, and Bob Scholte, later Johannes Fabian, stimulated students into critically evaluating past research with the intent to carry out modern fieldwork studies. Wertheim wrote on the counter-insurgency tactics of C. Snouck Hurgronje during the colonial war in Aceh (1972—on Hurgronje see also van Koningsveld 1988, Kommers 1996b and Trouwborst 1993). With Scholte, Wertheim was a formidable factor in internationalizing Amsterdam anthropology into a critically reflexive discipline. Two of his students, Otto van den Muijzenberg and Willem Wolters, wrote a synopsis of non-western sociology, which they dubbed 'historical sociology' (1988; see also Wertheim 1995). Efforts at Amsterdam to combine historiographical analysis with fieldwork were undertaken by Peter Pels, whose dissertation (1993) studied the interaction between Dutch missionaries and anthropologists in colonial Tanganyika from 1930 to 1961, and by Oscar Salemink, whose master's thesis on the relationship between ethnography and colonialism in Vietnam between 1850 and 1954 (1987) was summarized in a lengthy article in Stocking's volume Colonial Situations (1991). Pels and Salemink organized an international seminar on 'colonial ethnographies' held at Amsterdam in June 1993, which resulted in a special four-issue volume of History and Anthropology (1994). Earlier, Pels had published in The Ambiguity of Rapprochement, a volume resulting from a conference on the interaction between missionaries and anthropologists held at Nijmegen (Bonsen et al. 1990). At Amsterdam, Rob van Ginkel is focussing on 'endo-ethnography' of Europe (1995, 1997). A historian of Enlightenment anthropology is Remco Ensel, who works on morals and ethnology in the work of Martinus Stuart (1994, 1997). A thesis on early collectors for the Tropical Museum at Amsterdam was written by Susan Legêne (1998).

At Leiden, introductory courses on the 'development of ethnological theories' were given in the 1970s, while advanced students could follow courses on 'anthropological centers' by P.E. de Josselin de Jong and on 'historical understanding' by G.W. Locher. By 1975 Henri Claessen and Peter Kloos had started their publishing efforts to make Dutch anthropology better known abroad, but neither of them gave a special course on history of anthropology. The dominant paradigms held at the time (structuralism, evolutionism) allowed for historical reflection, but led few to specialize in the history of anthropology itself. The general outlook was presentist, to the extent that the department would have missed the centennial of its first chair (instituted in 1877), if the occasion had not been pointed out by Adam Kuper, recently appointed to the Africa chair. The anniversary lecture was held by Locher (1978c). Kuper had already taken an interest in the new subdiscipline and continued to publish on the subject while working in Leiden (1976-85). Apart from the university's historian Willem Otterspeer (1992) and the historian Paul van der Velde, who specialized in Jacob Haafner and P.J. Veth (1992-8), five anthropologists at Leiden are now working on the subject: Han Vermeulen, specializing in the history of anthropology in the Netherlands (1989, 1997) and the formation of ethnography in Germany and Eastern Europe during the eighteenth century (1988, 1995, 1996, 1999); Ger van Wengen, now completing a book on the history of the National Ethnological Museum at Leiden (founded in 1837); F.R. Effert, working for a doctorate on the early history of the same museum, after writing about the early career of J.P.B. de Josselin de Jong (1992); "Guita Winkel, working on a doctoral dissertation on early ethnography in Japan (1999);" and Jan van Bremen, originally from Amsterdam, who is concentrating on (colonial) anthropology in Japan (1999).

In addition, scholars from abroad specializing in Indonesia or having an interest in structuralism have been studying aspects of the history of Leiden anthropology, among them de Ruijter (1979, 1981), Moyer (1989, 1981), Chlenov (1979, 1989), Prager (1994, 1996, 1999), Gray (1995) and Beaufile (1997). Urton (1996) has written on Zuidema as an Andeanist offshoot of Leiden. The best of this series is the dissertation of Michael Prager at Heidelberg (1996), who analysed Leiden structuralism in terms of T.S. Kuhn's paradigms.

These are only some of the available sources for study. Anthropology in the Netherlands has a strong regional focus, but surveys of work done in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Oceania cannot be mentioned here for lack of space. However, a few words must be said about the history of ethnographical museums in the Netherlands. There are now nine such museums, which, apart from a rapprochement in the 1950s and 1960s, developed in relative isolation of academic anthropology at the six (now five) university departments. The history of these museums has been scantily discussed and the primary source is still Duparc (1975). Case histories are mostly presented in expensive volumes on 'masterpieces' (van Dongen et al. 1987; Faber et al. 1987; Greub 1988; van Duuren 1992; van Brakel et al. 1998), with some exceptions (Avé 1980; van Leur 1987; van Duuren 1990; van Dijk 1992; Corbey 1993). Recently, a trend to study collectors has become apparent (Arnoldus-Schröder 1998; van Brakel et al. 1996; Legêne 1998; Schefold & Vermeulen forthcoming).

While financial and institutional conditions for research are not favourable in the Netherlands (none of the people mentioned holds a position in the subject as such, and there are no specialized research institutes) interest in the history of anthropology is considerable. At the recent conference held at Amsterdam to celebrate the centenary of the Netherlands Anthropological Association, 32 of 94 papers (in three panels) dealt with the history of anthropology in the Low Countries. There was also a festival of historic ethnographic films, a special exhibition on 'one hundred years of studying culture' at the Tropical Museum, and a book published on a century of associational activities (de Wolf 1998).

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[Because of space limitations, it has not been possible to include entries for all of the sources mentioned. When our website is operational at <http://anthro.spc.uchicago.edu/~gwsjr/han/>, we plan to include a full bibliography, including the entries from the first installment of this essay, which appeared in HAN XXV:1]

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II. Recent Dissertations (Ph.D. except where otherwise indicated)

Richard Delisle (University of Witwatersrand, 1998), "The field of human evolution within evolutionary biology and anthropology: Historical and epistemological analyses since inception"—consisting of nine papers published or in press.

Sarah Froning [Deleporte] (perio2@aol.com) completed a masters' thesis entitled "The exhibition of Native North Americana in France, 1492-1992, from the royal Cabinet de Singularitez to 'A la reconte des Amériques at the Musée de l'Homme in Paris'" (Sorbonne, 1995)

III. Recent Work by Subscribers

[Except in the case of new subscribers, for whom we will include one or two orienting items, "recent" is taken to mean within the last two years. Please note that we do not list "forthcoming" items. To be certain of dates and page numbers, please wait until your works have actually appeared before sending offprints (preferably) or citations in the style used in History of Anthropology and most anthropological journals]