Increasing Anthropology’s Visibility

A New Public Education Project

Leith Mullings
AAA President

Following the remarkable and continuing success of RACE: Are We So Different? the Executive Board (EB) endorsed the idea of exploring the possibility of a new public education project. To facilitate the broadest input from our members, we requested ideas through letters to all section leadership and committee chairs, an open letter in AN and at a meeting of the Section Assembly. The response was enthusiastic: we received more than 33 proposals from sections, committees, groups of colleagues and individual members.

The EB appointed a subcommittee that carefully considered each proposal with specific criteria in mind. To what extent is the topic of public significance, and is it both timely and likely to continue to be so over the years it takes such a project to come to fruition? To what degree does anthropology offer unique expertise that would be useful to non-anthropologists from a wide variety of settings? Does the topic have the potential to involve the full scientific enterprise of the four subfields and to generate interest across the breadth of the discipline? Finally, the committee considered the topic’s potential to generate funding access to the Executive Board.

Immigration/Migration

Several sections proposed immigration/migration for our next public education project, underscoring its policy significance. The ALLA proposal noted “our emphasis on the global scale of immigration and migration, the richness of our theoretical conceptualizations of movement and mobilities, and our attention to the lived experiences of immigrants and migrants.” Archeologists have explored historical and recent processes of migration and anthropological linguists have studied immigration/migration and language. The CoPP proposal also cited the contributions biological anthropologists who have analyzed the “implications of movement/stasis for... population health.” A project on immigration would take a broad historical approach, including involuntary as well as voluntary migration. As the Resource Development Committee (RDC) proposal suggests, in addition to exploring “issues of tension and conflict” it would demonstrate “positive models of inter-cultural ‘living together.’”

The People We Count on: Community, Kinship and Relationships

This topic combines ideas from several proposals. It would address many levels of inquiry, incorporating a century of anthropological research in all subfields documenting how, as one proposal put it, “diverse configurations of solidarity and responsibility, whether classified as kinship, friendship or locality, represent a priceless repertoire of social and cultural models for responding to the many present and unforeseen challenges that face humanity today....” Such a project could consider a range of questions from biological, cross-cultural and historical perspectives. What was the first hominin family? How do different groups define family, kinship and relationships? What new forms of family and solidarity are emerging? What is the role of the state in facilitating or impeding various forms of solidarity? How do we understand “family values” from a cross-cultural perspective?

Health, Happiness and Well-Being

The final topic proposed by the committee is also a synthesis of more than one proposal. By considering health, happiness and well-being in a broad historical and cross-cultural context, and drawing on the expertise of anthropologists encompassing the four fields, this project would contribute to the current conversation about health and well-being. The SANA proposal notes that this theme “allows for exploration of the complex effects of inequitable distribution of power, resources, and social and emotional support.” As Barbara Rose Johnston put it, the topic also “tackles the consequences of economic determinism by offering examples (historical current, future) of viable societies based on a different ordering of priorities.”

Next Steps

The proposals included a variety of suggested formats for each topic. Among them were interactive multimedia exhibits, web-based virtual museums, websites, films, TV shows, dissemination of narratives using the StoryCorps model and publications. Our members also encouraged us to produce K–12 initiatives and to work with departments to bring the project to campuses.

AAA staff is currently pursuing possibilities for funding in all three areas. Despite the difficulties of obtaining financial support in these times, we hope to be able to get started on one new public education project and we welcome any ideas as we move forward.

Revitalising the IUAES

Junji Koizumi
IUAES Secretary-General

Andrew “Mugsy” Spiegel
IUAES Vice-President and Treasurer

A vigorous process is presently underway to revitalise the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences (IUAES) and to put behind it the difficulties it has faced since its 2003 World Congress in Florence, Italy, and subsequently during the run-up to its World Congress in Kunming, China which had to be postponed from 2008 until 2009.

With a newly elected set of members on the IUAES Executive Committee (www.glocol.osaka-u.ac.jp/iuaes/ex_board.html), many of them experienced in world anthropologies debates, the IUAES is presently revising its statutes to bring them into line with 21st century circumstances. The revisions will increase the IUAES’s scientific commissions and will allow its individual members to direct the union’s work and determine its future activities and programs. The revised statutes will be proposed for approval prior to the elective process associated with the 2013 World Congress, thus to enable the IUAES to become ever stronger and a real force for anthropology in the world at large.

Alongside the statutes revision process, the IUAES is also now embarking on a major program to recruit new individual and corporate members (see www.glocol.osaka-u.ac.jp/iuaes/membership.html).

The IUAES, founded in 1948, is the oldest existing global organization with an explicit mission to support and advance anthropology, and all its diverse sub-disciplines of scientific and humanistic enquiry, on a worldwide scale. Its intention is to cross national and other sociocultural boundaries, providing space for often submerged anthropological voices to be heard in a world dominated by particular approaches.

To that end the union has, since its founding, orga-
nized a World Congress every five years (also known as the International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences [ICAES]). The union also sponsors smaller inter-congresses (interim conferences) in years when there is no World Congress. A common goal of such inter-congresses is to strengthen the presence and reach of anthropology in regions and countries where it has been relatively underdeveloped. Other inter-congresses are hosted by one or more of the IUAES's scientific commissions which carry the primary intellectual work of the union, sponsor many of the panels at World Congresses, and initiate a wide range of collaborative projects in research, teaching and engagement across all the major subfields and specialty areas of anthropology, theoretical and applied, scientific and humanistic.

To ensure that it can represent, in international contexts, the diversity of work and practice that constitute anthropology and ethnology, the IUAES maintains affiliations with UNESCO-linked organisations which carry the primary intellectual work of the union, sponsor many of the panels at World Congresses, and initiate a wide range of collaborative projects in research, teaching and engagement across all the major subfields and specialty areas of anthropology, theoretical and applied, scientific and humanistic.

Having recently held a very successful inter-congress in Perth, Australia (July 2011) in collaboration with the Australian Anthropological Association and the Association of Social Anthropologists of Aotearoa/ New Zealand, and with an exciting Inter-Congress on Children and Youth in a Changing World (www.kits.ac.in/iuaes) scheduled to take place in November 2012, the IUAES is now in a rapid new growth phase.

Further indication of that process of growth, renewal and re-engagement is that the next World Congress, “Evolving Humanity, Emerging Worlds,” is scheduled for August 2013 in Manchester, England (www.iuaes2013.org), marking a true turning point in the history of the IUAES in the country where the first World Congress was held in 1934; and interest is already being shown by at least two southern hemisphere countries hoping to host the 2018 World Congress.

Installation of a new Executive Committee saw the IUAES secretarial offices relocating from Europe to Japan where the union’s new website is also based. A new IUAES newsletter series is being developed for distribution to union members who obtain preferential rates at IUAES World Congresses and inter-congresses. IUAES’s membership comprises individual anthropologists and others with a professional interest in the discipline, its sub-disciplines and various cognate disciplines. Its membership also includes national and regional anthropology associations, national-states’ representative scientific bodies concerned with anthropology, and institutes, departments, museums and other institutions, both public and private, whose mission includes developing and sustaining anthropology as a disciplined mode of enquiry.

We appeal to all anthropologists to become members of the IUAES and to assist in its further revitalization for the benefit of our discipline globally: www.glocol.osaka-u.ac.jp/iuaes/membership.html.

Setha Low and Gustavo Lins Ribeiro are contributing editors of World Anthropologies, the AN column of the AAA Committee on World Anthropologies.

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**111th Annual Meeting Information**

**2012 Dates to Remember**

- **February 15**
  
  Online abstract submission system opens on AAA website

- **March 1**
  
  Decisions on executive sessions announced

- **March 15**
  
  Proposal deadline for section invited sessions and public policy forums via www.aaanet.org

- **April 4**
  
  Results of section invited session proposals announced

- **April 15**
  
  Proposal deadline for volunteered sessions, individual paper and poster presentations, media submissions and special events via www.aaanet.org. To be included in the 2012 AAA Annual Meeting program, participants must be registered by this date.

- **April 16–May 31**
  
  Section program editors review and rank proposals

- **June 1–15**
  
  AAA Executive Program Committee schedules program

- **July 1–15**
  
  - Program decisions emailed to applicants
  - Annual Meeting Program, registration and hotel information are posted online

- **November 14–18**

  2012 AAA Annual Meeting in San Francisco

**Inquiries**

Communications about the program theme should be addressed to Program Chair Carolyn Rouse at 2012aaaprogramchair@gmail.com. Please refer all other annual meeting questions to Jason G Watkins or Carla Fernandez of the AAA & Sections Meeting Department at aaameetings@aaanet.org or (+1)703/528-1902.

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