

THE PATHS OF KNOWLEDGE IN SOCIO-CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY  
AFTER THE SENSUAL AND NON-DISCURSIVE TURN IN EXPERIENCING REALITY

(Summary)

The cognitive legitimisation as well as the ways of interpreting the reality are constantly changing in anthropology. The article aims to outline the new ways of cognition in socio-cultural anthropology emphasising the shift towards experiencing socio-cultural reality. It focuses on several leads which imply the revival of the experience, the sensual and the emotional aspects in the cognitive process and which are perceived as a remedy for both the positivistic rationalism and the socio-cultural constructivism. The basic assumption of anthropology focused on the experience and the sensual is that anthropologists should approach the social concrete as closely as possible in order to be capable to describe the reality in the most “common”, “natural” and “experienced” ways. The emerging of sensual anthropology in the 1990s is usually related with the postmodern and postcolonial critique within the discipline. It shows therefore that the presupposition of this relatively new research perspective has both, the epistemological and the political character. The article, however, attempts to present the view that the principles of sensual anthropology may be observed also in the modernist anthropology, particularly in the writings of Bronisław Malinowski and Margaret Mead. In addition, the analysis of the new ways of cognition in anthropology shows the cognitive situation in historiography and allows us to introduce some analogies in the cognitive transformations of both disciplines as well as the impact of consecutive turns that reoriented them and shifted towards the language, text and the common knowledge, which is situated outside the scientific legitimisation and in the close relations to everyday cognition mediated by the body and senses.

**Key words:** anthropology of senses, emotions, experience of reality, knowledge, rationality, sensority, linguistic turn, literary turn

## MATERIAL CULTURE. A NEW PARADIGM OF ANTHROPOLOGY

(Summary)

The beginnings of modern material culture studies in anthropology are also the beginnings of modern anthropology – both should be associated with the work of Malinowski, Boas and Mauss, as well as with the holistic and multi-functional approach to culture. These theories found their continuation in the concepts of Evans-Pritchard, and in the “culture and personality” school, but with the changing scope of cultural anthropology the subject lost its importance in the postwar period. Meanwhile, it was taken up by some neighbouring disciplines, especially history, sociology and psychology (Prown, Baudrillard, Bourdieu, Csikszentmihalyi), which contributed to the appearance of a strong interdisciplinary approach in material culture studies. Last decade of the twentieth and early twenty-first century brought about a revival of the subject in cultural anthropology (Sahlins, Douglas, McCracken, Appadurai, Kopytoff, Gell). It is associated with the recognition of the growing importance of the consumer culture – a phenomenon of everyday life in the Western world, as well as the increase of cultural subjectivity and reflexivity. The growing interest in material culture is maintained by posthumanity movement (Ingold, Latour), exposing the hybrid, symbiotic nature of the relationship between human beings and things. The latest history of material culture studies and contemporary trends make it likely that the research will be developed on a macro- (global economic processes), meso- (group identification, local) and microcultural level (identity, lifestyles).

**Key words:** material culture, anthropology of things, interdisciplinarity

Grażyna Kubica

SOCIAL BIOGRAPHIES OF FIELD PHOTOGRAPHS OR VISUAL ANTHROPOLOGY  
OF ARCHIVAL PHOTOGRAPHY

(Summary)

The text deals with one of the most important issues in visual anthropology which is the analysis of archival field photographs made by ethnographers. The first part of the paper provides an overview and critical assessment of major projects in this area, and the second – an analysis of the circulation of Bronisław Malinowski's field photographs. This project is done in the theoretical frame of the studies of the materiality of photographs and social biographies of things.

The text shows what happens with the anthropological field photos, how they "present" themselves in books, albums, exhibitions, documentaries, how they change their meanings according to the context of what is "next to" them, with what they interact in new assemblages, how they are "read" by various "audiences", and how they provoke conflicts and disputes, or open up new spaces of analysis. The author also analyses the issue of moving from the private archives to public and vice versa, and the effects of digitisation.

**Key words:** visual anthropology, biographies of things, materiality of photographs, Bronisław Malinowski, field photography, photo-archive

Izabella Main, Anna Witeska-Młynarczyk

MEDICAL ANTHROPOLOGY TODAY. AN OUTLINE OF THE FIELD  
AND RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES

(Summary)

The article introduces contemporary medical anthropology. It describes the key concepts used by anthropologists to analyse practices related to health, sickness and healing. It examines the main approaches (interpretative approach, critical approach and cultural phenomenology) and follows the methodological trend of combining micro and macro levels in one analysis. The authors show both academic and applied aspects of the young subdiscipline. They examine contemporarily researched topics like: global health, medical tourism, medical trials or new medical technologies. They sketch a picture of an important and dynamically evolving area of anthropological research.

**Key words:** medical anthropology, medicalisation, medical pluralism, pharmaceuticals, biomedical technologies, medical tourism, global health

Marta Songin-Mokrzan

ENGAGED ANTHROPOLOGY IN POLAND.  
BEYOND THE POSTMODERN CONCEPT OF SCIENCE

(Summary)

The article presents a discussion on engaged anthropology, conducted since 2004 by ethnologists in Poland, which addresses the issue of the discipline's identity. The purpose of this article is to look at how researchers redefine anthropology in the spirit of commitment and responsibility, and to place these considerations in a broader social and historical context. The author argues that the reception of postmodernism had the greatest influence on the development of reflection on the engagement in Polish ethnology. Postmodern anthropology is characterised by a critical reflection on fundamental anthropological issues such as: fieldwork research methods, knowledge and modes of its legitimation, the research subject, and methodological procedures. This critical approach contributed to the emergence of a new paradigm of knowledge. At the same time it caused a lot of tension and concerns related to the status of anthropology as a science, and triggered the reflection centred on the question: how should modern anthropology be characterised? One of the answers is that anthropology should be engaged. This proposal can be seen as an attempt to break the cognitive scepticism which is associated with postmodern reflection. It is also an attempt, taken up by Polish ethnologists, to deal with the dilemma of reconstructing the discipline's identity in the face of contemporary challenges.

**Key words:** engaged anthropology, practice, ethics, the political, postmodernity

Inga B. Kuźma

ANTHROPOLOGY OVERCOMES "HERMENEUTICAL INJUSTICE".  
RESEARCH IN THE SHELTER FOR HOMELESS WOMEN

(Summary)

The article describes research and actions which the author has taken in the shelter for homeless women in Łódź. The main question is how this kind of procedure, which is applied in feministic and action research focused version of anthropology, is justified. This perspective is close to the critical science. The author analyses and describes how the shelter is functioning. She bases her observations on and relates them to Miranda Fricker's concept of the hermeneutical injustice and other related notions, such as epistemological inequality, cognitive disability and discursive disability.

The author discusses her own activities and puts emphasis on an agency, which characterises her research choices.

**Key words:** homelessness, women's studies, engaged anthropology, politics of mercy, action research

Łukasz Michoń

THE PROJECT OF ASSISTIVE ANTHROPOLOGY AS A VEHICLE  
FOR CREATING THE REALITY

(Summary)

The article aims to present the project of anthropology that refers to the well known tradition of practising ethnographic surrealism. Considering few modifications of action and qualitative research, the project rediscovers the “non-obvious” and “taken for granted” aspects of daily life and attempts to create the reality in a responsible manner. It is applied in artistic and scientific projects and may play a supportive role in the educational process and in the development of anthropological imagination.

**Key words:** surrealist ethnography, creating reality, responsibility, creative writing, cooperation, egalitarianism, interdisciplinarity, performativity

CULTURE IN LIGHT OF AMERICAN ANTHROPOLOGY OF THE CONTEMPORARY

(Summary)

The paper addresses one of the claims shared within the American anthropology of the contemporary developed by Paul Rabinow, George E. Marcus, James Faubion and Tobias Rees. The claim in question is that there is no need to appeal to culture as a bounded whole so that it vanishes as an object of study. It is possible and desirable, however, to maintain the cultural as a particular plane of the contemporary. The anthropologists in question claim to use a new way to describe the contemporary. They therefore propose the technological vocabulary including terms like “apparatus”, “assemblage” and “contraption” to present the eventful and interrelated but disjoined nature of the realm studied, where modernity clashes with other sorts of ethos. The author of the paper understands the anthropologists’ moves but guesses they are not consistent. It is not only unnecessary to do away with something that can still be useful. If one maintains the cultural while erasing culture, then how can one find the conceptual foundation of the former? And if this foundation is lost, why to stick to the cultural? He therefore formulates an original view according to which culture is a set of the propositional attitudes that is changeable and possibly abstracted from a carrier. Such an entity is free to join and disjoin one with another, and make both the groups and individuals identify themselves in motion. Such a move is to propose an alternative vocabulary which not only allows one to analyse the contemporary in a flexible way but also to save a precious tool called culture.

**Key words:** the contemporary, modernity, culture, ethos, contraption

Magdalena Lubańska, Agata Ładykowska

IS ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY A PERIPHERAL CHRISTIANITY?  
THEOLOGICAL ENTANGLEMENTS OF ANTHROPOLOGICAL THEORY,  
BIASED EPISTEMOLOGIES IN ANTHROPOLOGY OF CHRISTIANITY

(Summary)

The article focuses on underrepresentation of Orthodox Christianity in anthropological research, as well as on shortcomings of anthropological theory. Currently, anthropology is lacking analytical and theoretical tools for researching Orthodoxy as a religious doctrine in relation to its various practices of social life. The anthropology of Christianity, a relatively new subfield of anthropology of religion, develops theories based chiefly on research conducted in the Catholic and (neo)Protestant societies. In so doing, it neglects the Orthodox perspective. Anthropology, the product of a “unique Western historicity” – in Asad’s words – has been insufficiently reflexive concerning its own origins in Western social thought and (Western) Christian theology, which still presents methodological and theoretical obstacle in researching Eastern Christianity. The latter has been a periphery of anthropological interests, both as a research site and as a point from which anthropological definitions are formulated. The article seeks to deconstruct certain anthropological assumptions and premises leading to the current state of affairs, and to systematise the state-of-the-art of anthropology of Christianity and the anthropology of Orthodox Christianity.

**Key words:** anthropology of Christianity, anthropology of Orthodox Christianity, Protestant bias, theology and anthropology, postsecularism

Maria Dębińska

NATURE, CULTURE AND HYBRIDS. LEGAL CONSTRUCTIONS  
OF TRANSEXUALITY AND THE LEGAL SEX REASSIGNMENT PROCEDURES  
IN POLAND

(Summary)

This paper is an attempt to analyse the history and the working practice of the legal sex reassignment procedure in Poland within the frames of Bruno Latour's concept of "modern constitution" as explained in his works. Legal sex reassignment procedure is used by transsexual persons who want to live in their perceived gender and allows them to undergo sex reassignment surgery, which otherwise is considered illegal due to the current interpretation of §155 of Polish Criminal Code, which forbids medical procedures that permanently rid individuals of the ability to procreate, even with their consent. In order to obtain court permission for sex reassignment in their documents, transsexual individuals are required to sue their parents in the court of law.

I am analysing the current legal practice and its history using Latour's concepts of purification and mediation between the categories of nature and culture. I attempt to uncover the conceptualisations of the biological and the social which underlie legal solutions to transsexuality, and to reveal the different uses of these categories in legal theory and legal practice.

**Key words:** legal anthropology, anthropology of sex and gender, transsexuality, Bruno Latour, gender

MODERN WEDDINGS AS SEEN BY WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHERS  
AND VIDEOGRAPHERS. FIGURES OF THINKING AND AESTHETIC CATEGORIES

(Summary)

The article aims at analysing figures of thinking about modern weddings and wedding photography in Poland. It draws on ethnographic material collected in the course of research conducted by the Seweryn Udziela Ethnographic Museum in Cracow (research project *Wesela 21*). The author describes main assumptions behind the project, research methodology, and provides a brief description of the analysed materials, applied method and theoretical perspective. She reconstructs notions about the wedding photography market, which are revealed in the interviews with wedding photographers and filmmakers, and modes of creating wedding representations. The author also discusses different typologies of weddings mentioned during the interviews. The division into “country” and “urban” weddings, as the author suggests, calls for critical analysis. It seems to mark social and cultural distinctions. The attributes “country” and “urban” are rather aesthetic categories than those which describe a particular space conceived in geographical terms.

**Key words:** contemporary weddings, wedding photography, figures of thinking, research methodology

LIE, HONESTY, TRUST.  
ETHICAL DILEMMAS DURING RESEARCH ON THE LIFE OF THE BLIND

(Summary)

This article is based on research on the life of the blind which has been conducted since 2011. The main group of ethnographic consultants consists of seventeen blind people at the age of 18-40, part of whom live, work or study in Wroclaw. The attention of the researcher is generally focused on problems related to entering adulthood, building one's own independence and – most importantly – on the diversity of strategies and tactics, which help blind individuals organise their relations with material environment, groups of the blind, the sighted, public institutions, etc.

In this article the author describes the basic ethical and moral dilemmas which appeared during the research and tries to find their reasons in the specificity of the studied group, chosen methodology, as well as in the nature of ethnography in a wider sense. The article touches several important, specific issues: ethnographic intimacy and trust; instability of the borderline between the professional and private identity of the researcher; tension arising due to bringing up questions difficult for the subjects; the complexity of lying and loyalty matters during the research process.

Seeing a great chance for ethnography in practising an extensive collaboration with the people who participated in the research, the author has attached a commentary on the article made by one of his ethnographic consultants.

**Key words:** ethnographic research, collaborative ethnography, ethics, the blind, friendship, honesty, trust