

World Anthropologies

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For a long time period the self-critical attitude within anthropology has been an essential element for the development of the discipline. Nonetheless, the conditions for the international dissemination of anthropological knowledge have not been consistently discussed yet. Especially in the present era of globalization where new possibilities for cooperation and knowledge exchange are consistently being opened, it is important to ask oneself: How much do we know about the variety of perspectives that have been developed in the anthropological field worldwide?

For the last years anthropologists from various regions of the world have been working hard to improve the international exchange between colleges and to show the great plurality of visions within anthropology on a global level. Part of their efforts can be seen in the book *World Anthropologies: Disciplinary Transformations Within Systems of Power*, published this year in April.

After some years of exchange with different colleges, the editors Gustavo Lins Ribeiro, (*Universidade de Brasília*) and Arturo Escobar (*University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*) organized an international symposium on World Anthropologies in the spring of 2003 in Pordenone, Italy. For this project they counted on the support of the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research. The origin of their efforts was the realization that a broader knowledge about the anthropological production outside the North Atlantic region was needed and that the international communication between anthropologists needed to be fostered. The book resulted from the contributions of the participants of the symposium, that is, anthropologists working in Australia, Brazil, England, Holland, India, Japan, Canada, Cameroon, Mexico, Norway, Russia, Spain, and the USA. The book should be regarded as a contribution to the creation of a transnational community of anthropologists. Over the past few years the editors have also become increasingly involved in the development of an international cooperative movement called *World Anthropologies Network* (WAN), which has been growing consistently. Essential for the project is the belief that anthropological practices will get richer if we consider the great diversity of anthropological perspectives worldwide. Among other factors, utilizing the possibilities offered by information and communication technologies is a very important step to disseminating these varied

perspectives. Therefore, the articles of the book are also on the website of the World

Anthropologies Network: www.ram-wan.net

Alongside numerous other issues, many articles discuss the role of national and transnational processes in the development of anthropology in various countries as well as the relation between the discipline and systems of power. Discussed subjects are for example the impact of the relation between Russia and the western world upon the development of Russian anthropology, the connection between the discipline and the search for national identity in Mexico, as also the conditions for the development of a new anthropological community in post-colonial Africa.¹ Such examples clearly show how various anthropologies have been developed worldwide, each with methodological, epistemological, and theoretical particularities. Furthermore, the articles analyze the international dissemination of anthropology and different aspects for the creation of a new transnational cooperative anthropological community. Thus, the book provides a very good basis for further discussions on new ways for the exchange of knowledge.

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¹ Articles respectively written by: Nikolai Vakhtin, Esteban Krotz und Paul Nchoji Nkwi.

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