



האגודה האנתרופולוגית הישראלית
ISRAELI ANTHROPOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION
الجمعية الإسرائيلية لعلم الإنسان والحضارة

Call for Papers for the 45th Annual Meeting of the Israeli Anthropological Association (IAA)

Kafr Qasem, May 17-18, 2017

Between “field” and “work”:

Rethinking the Production of Knowledge and Professional Identity in Anthropology

This year’s annual meeting will explore the praxis of ethnographic fieldwork - the emblematic research method with which anthropologists have been negotiating their professional identity for more than a century. What do contemporary anthropologists mean when they refer to “ethnography” and to “fieldwork”? How are ethnographic studies being conducted under current conditions of knowledge production? In what forms of knowledge are ethnographies grounded? How can one collect such knowledge, and where? What is the role that contemporary “ethnographies” play in establishing professional authority and disciplinary charisma within contemporary anthropology?

The methodology with which Bronisław Malinowski broke from evolutionism at the beginning of the twentieth century, emphasized the importance of long-term fieldwork, participation in everyday activities, and the development of lasting relationships with people as necessary preconditions for understanding cultural worlds. Global cultural and political changes during the second half of the twentieth century, as well as transformations in the moral economy of knowledge production, produced criticism of the colonial contexts within which the expectation that anthropologists partake in the lives of “others” became the epitome of professional authority. This classical epistemological imperative was challenged, toward the end of the 1980s, by mutual expressions of distrust between ethnographers and those they studied, crises of representation, growing awareness of power relations between researchers and subjects, and the ways in which all of these are weaved into methodologies and textual strategies to constitute professional authority.

The growing criticism of fieldwork methodology, together with globalization and the accelerated mobility of commodities, people, and culturally charged consumer products, as well as the emergence of “virtual” technologies and communities, have led many anthropologists to use other research methods, instead of or in addition to, fieldwork. Research at home, multi-site ethnography, auto-ethnography, netnography, and short-term research, while productive, have led at the same time to the blurring of disciplinary borders and boundaries.

This year’s Annual Meeting invites the anthropology community to jointly rethink the ethical, political and epistemological meanings of “ethnography” and its role in shaping the professional identity of studying local and global research scenes.

We look forward to receiving single papers and/or sessions addressing the following themes:

- “Fieldwork” practices and performances in late-modernity. What do the changing research practices teach us about current global regimes and how do they affirm or subvert/resist them?
- What possibilities and implications does classical ethnographic fieldwork face within the context of contemporary ethical regimes of the discipline?
- Whose lives are currently more (or less) accessible for “participatory ethnography” and where do they exist (with regard to both online and off-line contexts)?
- How has the blurring of boundaries between “qualitative research methods” and ethnographic research come about in both local and global contexts?
- How do local histories of colonialism and post-colonialism shape anthropologists’ research fields and professional/disciplinary identities? What lesson do local versions of fieldwork in Israel teach about the local-global political economy within which they materialize?
- What transpires in institutional, pedagogical and other sites of “fieldwork” training? How do these pedagogies shape the identities of current anthropologists?
- What are the implications of interweaving social activism and academic research with regards to the nature of the data collected and their political meanings in local and global scenes?

We are also happy to receive proposals for papers and sessions on additional topics, but we will prioritize those proposals that correspond with the themes of this year’s Annual Meeting. When proposing panels, please be sure to explicitly clarify the link between the different papers in the panel. We also encourage the submission of posters. Posters will be given special attention in the coming Annual Meeting, specifically a highly visible time slot, at which time no other activities will take place.

***For additional information and submissions please visit the Israeli Anthropological Association’s website - www.isranthro.org**

***The deadline for all submissions: panel proposals, individual papers, and posters is: 15.2.2017**



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Keynote:

Melissa L. Caldwell

UCSC

The Keynote for the 2017 meeting is Melissa L. Caldwell, Professor of Anthropology at UC Santa Cruz, Co-Director of the Multi-Campus Research Program on Studies of Food and the Body, and Editor of *Gastronomica: The Journal of Critical Food Studies*. Her research and teaching interests have focused on practice theory, consumption, and material culture, with a special focus on the material and experiential dimensions of social justice concerns in socialist and post socialist societies. Her current research and teaching focus on creativity, invention, disruptive practices (e.g, hacker cultures) and the new innovation economies in Russia and other (post)socialist societies. Her work in innovative design spans the academic and industry sectors. At UCSC, she founded and leads the anthropology department's Ethno Fab Lab, which promotes the development of new, collaborative, cross-disciplinary ethnographic methods and trains graduate students to work collaboratively across and at the intersection of the social sciences, humanities, arts, design, and engineering.

Caldwell is the author of three monographs: *Dacha Idylls: Living Organically in Russia's Countryside* (University of California Press, 2011), *Food and Everyday Life in the Post socialist World* (Indiana University Press, 2009), and *Not by Bread Alone: Social Support in the New Russia* (University of California Press, 2004), as well as numerous articles and chapters.