

Report of the 2nd coordination meeting in Zagreb, Croatia
Moving Anthropology Student Network
07.- 09. April 2006

Authors:

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day I (Friday, 07. April 2006.), morning session

- topics: introduction, motivation, last conference
- moderators: Ana Rajner, Iza Kavedžija

The national coordinator for Croatia, Ana Rajner, welcomed everyone and all the participants introduced themselves.

List of participants:

Elisabeth Tratnik (Malta) Jeffrey Romano (Malta) Rachel Scicluna (Malta) Marta Olejnik (Poland) Krzysztof Sadowski (Poland) Aleksandra Migalska (Poland) Agnieszka Pasięka (Poland) Kerstin Tiefenbacher (Austria) Gregor Jakob (Austria) Niko Reinberg (Austria) Benjamin Hirschfeld (Germany) Clemens Sayer (Germany) Urška Vižintin (Slovenia) Dijana Lukić (Slovenia)	Gordana Jovetić Sartori (Austria) Duška Vranješ (Germany) Steffi Giesel (Germany) Ana Rajner (Croatia) Iza Kavedžija (Croatia) Danijel Lončar (Croatia) Barbara Šarić (Croatia) Uroš Živanović (Croatia) Danijela Mazar (Croatia) Zdravko Popović (Croatia) Iva Harandi (Croatia) Tena Šarić (Croatia) Jelena Šarac (Croatia)
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the seating plan:

	Jelena (Cro)	Aga (Pl)	Krzysztof (Pl)	Ola (Pl)	Kerstin (Aut)	Niko (Aut)	Gregor (Aut)		Tena (Cro) Iva (Cro)
Dijana (Slo)									Marta (Pol)
Urška (Slo)									Benni (De)
Danijel (Cro)									Duška (De)
Rachel (M)									Steffi (De)
Elisabeth (M)									
	Jeffrey (M)	Danijela (Cro)	Uroš (Cro)	Gordana (Aut)	Zdravko (Cro)	Iza (Cro)	Ana (Cro)	Clemens (De)	

The first, morning part of the program was dedicated to MASN in general and the experiences from the last conference held in Ottenstein, Austria. The organisers of the last conference, the Austrian team (Kerstin, Gregor, Niko) explained the idea of MASN, its purpose, aim and development and informed the others of the way they organized the coordination meeting and the conference last year. Every participant who took part in last year's conference shared his experiences.

Niko (A):

after the participation at the «Roaming anthropology» student meeting in Slovenia, the Austrian students wanted to do something similar in their country. They came up with an idea to create a network which would connect the students that are finishing their studies.

Gregor (A):

the idea was to bring students from as many countries as possible together, to learn new skills, open up new spaces beyond the university, become active and create a working context. One of the main conclusions of the first conference was that most students of anthropology share the same problem and that is the lack of perspectives and job opportunities. MASN should help us to do something about it.

Clemens (D):

besides the organisation itself, there exists a well established virtual communication also. The reasons for the creation of the website were to spread the message of the network and to have a place for discussions, for giving and receiving of information.

Benni (D):

the general idea was to find out how anthropology is seen, used, learned and taught in other countries and to exchange experiences and gain new information. An important focus should also be the countries that are financially weaker, because they have problems with small libraries, lack of options and possibilities for interested and motivated students, no fieldwork etc. Other countries should help them solve these problems, because solidarity is very important.

The discussion about the aim of the network followed – a wider aim or a more specific one? The most of the participants agree that the meetings itself are a well defined aim already, because they include the opportunity to exchange experiences and informations with other anthropology students, to learn and practice foreign languages and find out what to do after they finish their studies within the professional sector.

Participants then talked about their motivation - why they became part of MASN? what will they get from it? What did the former participants get from the meetings so far?

Iza (C):

was not sure what to expect, found out that similar problems are connecting us all (how to build our anthropological identity, how to motivate the younger colleagues etc.).

Zdravko (C):

besides meeting new people, wants to share experiences with other student and to see how we can all work together on a project or at fieldwork.

Goga (A):

asked herself «what can I do with anthropology?», has been searching for a long time and can't find a job in this field.

Uroš (C):

dissatisfied with the study of anthropology in Zagreb, sees the exchange of information as the most important thing. He thinks the main aim of MASN is that one day we can all cooperate.

Danijela (C):

wants to find space to do anthropology outside of the faculty.

Jeffrey, Elisabeth, Rachel (M):

Are freshmen, wanted to meet new anthropology students and see what MASN is. There are no limits and with enough energy we can make something happen - the energy lies in small countries, like us!

Danijel (C):

had a need to find his anthropological identity and with each meeting he is closer to that goal.

Urška and Dijana (S):

knew nothing about it, didn't expect anything, wanted to see how other anthropology students work with anthropology. Their anthropology is more focused on Ethnology, there are more chances for a professional career in Slovenia in that field.

Aga (P):

the most important thing was the contact with others and to find out about the situation of anthropology in other countries.

Jelena (C):

wants to find out what are the opportunities for a professional career in anthropology outside of Croatia, especially in Germany or Austria, since she studies German language besides anthropology. There are not many possibilities to work with it in Croatia, there is an Institute for anthropology, but it is not very interested in students.

Ola (P):

it is her first time to be a part of something like that, she's open to new ideas and wants to discover what inspires others in anthropology.

Kerstin (A):

the first time she participated, she wanted to use the space to present her thesis, to learn how to organize such a large conference and to get to know people at the end of their studies. Now she finished her study and all three of her goals are fulfilled.

Gregor (A):

wanted to step out of being only a student, to do something with other amateurs, to get new insights and experiences. Together with his Vienna group (a group of 14 people) he learned a lot and gained confidence, because he got the opportunity to do something by himself and for himself. That is the reason why MASN was created - to be a space to do something within the field of anthropology.

Marta (P):

her main motivation was to meet people by talking and discussing matters about Anthropology and to present her paper that she was working on. She got a strong feedback and it was a very strong experience for her, because she didn't get such a chance back home. The conference was also important for her as a sociologist - people from different fields came and worked together.

Benni (D):

wanted to learn how to talk to a large audience and discuss topics with interested students that have different views as their motivation. It was great to learn how other people do their fieldwork also.

Ana (C):

saw the paper about the conference after her experience with « Roaming anthropology» and thought of MASN as a step forward. It was hugher than she expected, but most of her questions she had before were answered.

Duška (D):

found out that in Germany the system is completely different, but at the end they also don't know what to do with it. She thinks becoming confident with what we are doing is great.

Steffi (D):

wanted to know other people and their work, thinks it's interesting to get to know other perspectives, has experience with meetings.

Clemens (D):

the social side was the most important thing for him, the coming together and discussing.

Benni (D):

it's interesting that students have similar problems, like the ethics in anthropology, how to work with fieldnotes etc. He got more answers to his questions on meetings like this than from talking to professors.

During the «motivation-roundes» a few interesting topics popped out as important or problematic for some participants:

1. the freshmen

The question of freshmen was brought up, because for some students the exchange of the work is most important at conferences like this and they don't have the impression that they can get that kind of experience from the younger generations. But all agreed that freshmen are important because of the spread of the network, the input of new ideas and the motivation for action they bring with them. The older students need them to keep up their work when they leave and the younger ones need to hear experiences from the higher generations to motivate them and help in their studies.

2. the metalevel

Although we are all afraid of unemployment, we mostly talk about the form, the structure (the MASN itself) and not about the subject, some student commented. Too much attention was being given to the metalevel and the practical part was being neglected. But, as some participants stressed out, this metalevel is also very important, especially at the beginning of the meeting and since there are always newcomers that don't really know anything about the network, they have a need to understand and discuss it, which is necessary and shouldn't be left out.

3. other countries

The nonparticipation of other (mainly western) European countries was also commented and the explanation for it was that they are not very motivated to be part of MASN, because the anthropological field is well developed in those countries and MASN was created out of necessity, because of the lack of opportunities.

4. applied anthropology

Some participants see the fieldwork as an especially important part of anthropological practice and they emphasize the opportunity of joint fieldwork that is given to us through MASN. The

suggestion was made to make some special place for such applied anthropology on the forum of the network. Others are a bit suspicious of this idea, because they don't see that as the aim of the network, they think about it as just a positive sideeffect.

5. widening of the network

The possibility of the spread of the network, of cooperation with other fields, other academics and professors was also discussed. Some see it as a bigger aim of MASN and a necessity and others are not for this intergenerational approach and would like MASN to stay limited to students.

day I (Friday, 07. April 2006.), afternoon session

- topic: future of the network- MASN as a «student» or a «social» network?, decision making

The second part of the Friday program began with the question of the Austrian team – how should we move on? They expressed a need to connect students with other non-students that are using anthropological skills in their work in a new, creative way. In this context they see MASN as a roof-organisation under which different fields and generations could cooperate and do projects together. Emphasis was stressed on the fact that it is important that MASN remains primarily as a student organisation. The only change would be the incorporation of new perspectives and the widening of the network, the original structure and idea wouldn't be affected by it. The most obvious change would be a slightly different name – the «s» in MASN would no longer stand for «students», but for «social» and it would then be «Moving Anthropology Social Network». In that way, MASN would be defined more widely, as a group in which people that are not connected to the university but have anthropological interests could take part. The arguments they proposed for this suggestion were:

- lots of interests of MASN members lead outside of the university, beyond it (we have more opportunities if we don't define ourselves just as students)
- it would include every project possible and it would make the financing part easier (more projects and funds to apply for, with MASN as just a student organisation are limited)
- what is going to be with the students that are finishing their studies? MASN should also help them find work and connect them with the right people and institutions outside university
- the idea is to instrumentalize the network and be able to benefit from it, have more credits
- younger students also want to have a connection with the people outside of the university or the ones that just finished their studies, they have nothing against the widening of the network
- the word «student» brings a lot of stereotypes with it
- postgraduates and professors often don't want to collaborate with student organisations

A lot of participants were surprised to hear this news and had lots of comments and contraarguments:

- this organisation has just been created and it's too soon to make such changes, because matters are not yet stabilized
- if we want to be bigger, we disperse – that means more quantity than quality
- this change would instrumentalize the work of all people and MASN shouldn't be just about getting jobs
- the focus is important and if students are the focus, then the name should reflect so
- we as students are neglected everywhere and we would have to put an accent on that
- the "social" aspect should be an additive, something extra
- the value of last years conference was laid in the fact that it was a students conference without hierarchy, where we were all the same and weren't afraid to talk
- the idea of MASN is the idea of students organizing their work by themselves and for themselves
- the communication between students, PHDs and professors is not a problem in some countries (e.g. Germany), lots of academics and postgraduates want to participate in the work of student organisations
- there should be some doors and new perspectives, but also clear boundaries

As it was very hard to make a decision at such a roundtable discussion, we continued to discuss it in groups, divided by countries and tried to come up with a unified opinion on the subject. The question was: one organisation or two?

1. SLOVENIA

They already have two similar organisations there – a student one and a new one, with a wider concept which also has professors as members, so they think it's not a problem to have two organisations but they also have nothing against the changing of the name of the whole network.

2. MALTA

They want to change the name, because they think equality should be promoted and this widening would help student get feedback from eachother and have more opportunities. At their University in Malta they have a great relationship with professors outside of the classroom - they help them out and support them in their motivation to connect with other students on an international level. They think that students and student organisations are too closely related to the university and this change, this widening would be a step further in gaining more independence.

3. POLAND

They have no problems with the changing of the name, because they will also finish their studies soon and would still want to participate in the work of the organisation. But, they think there could exists a danger of neglectance of this student aspect when MASN would become opened to a wider audience. Their suggestion is to maybe take this half year and try it as an experiment and than come together and share our experiences.

4. CROATIA

They are not for the changing of the name, because they think MASN should stay a student organisation as it was, but a new, wider association would be a good idea, especially if it would cooperate with the student one. So, they are for two organisations that would work closely together.

5. GERMANY

They think the name should stay and that there is always a possibility to build a new organisation and link it to the current MASN. If that is not an option, then it should stay a student organisation, because they know out of their own experiences that there is a big difference between beginners and PHDs, so this should stay as is.

6. AUSTRIA

They want MASN as an umbrella organisation, through which they would be able to establish strong links with the professionals outside of the university and therefore want to change the name.

Because of the fact that participants could not agree upon this question, there was also a discussion about decision making and consensus. Some suggested an additional conference should be organized (e.g., in Poland) about the decision making itself, some wanted to put this problem on the website and be democratic, so other members of MASN could also be informed and take part in this debate. Others wanted to leave it for a discussion at the conference or discuss it now, at the coordination meeting.

At the end, the conclusion was made that it would be best to have an entire networking-day at the conference to talk about the organisation and its future.

day II (Saturday, 08. April 2006.), morning session
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- topics: anthropology today, next conference
- moderators: Barbara Šarić, Danijel Lončar

The main question which started the roundtable discussion was «Anthropology as a discipline in your country - how is it taught, what are the main concerns etc.? ».

Slovenia (Urška, Dijana):

most recent anthropological research is about asylum seekers and in the field of medical anthropology about the birdflu. Concerning the difference between anthropology and ethnology at their university, there is no sharp distinction between these two fields.

Germany

Clemens: in Germany there are around 26 different institutes with different regional focuses. They have problems with the Bologna process, because small departments can't form a degree themselves and have to combine with other disciplines. There is a distinction between anthropology and Ethnology in Germany and sometimes this leads to convergency, but usually both try to defend their separate identities and methods.

Steffi: the fieldwork usually concerns topics like migration, with the focus on political institutions, public communication between immigrants and German society etc.

Benni: there exists different regional specialisation among the departments, like Central Asia or the Mediterranean.

Malta (Jeffrey, Rachel, Elizabeth):

the institute is around 13 years old and has very wide interests, but the focus is on Mediterranean and current issues like illegal immigration and refugees. It's mostly sociocultural anthropology with just a bit of human biology.

Austria

Goga: at first they had Institute for Ethnology and later it became Institute for Cultural and Social Anthropology. They focus mostly on contemporary issues like migration, gender issues, medical anthropology, youth, business etc. There are four modules: cross cultural organisation, museology, medical anthropology, international relations and NGO-s.

Gregor: there are also regional focuses e.g. SE Asia. It is a very big institute with a teaching staff of more than 60 people.

Niko: we don't have a four-field approach – we have no archaeology, linguistics or human biology, although it is important as it's connected. Before, just noneuropean issues were the focus, and the «Institut für Volkskunde» did the European ones, but now it changed because it all became connected through the processes of globalisation. The drop-out rate is 80%..

Poland (Krzysztof, Aleksandra):

there is a Faculty of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology in Krakow, but it's more folkloristic. They study at the small department within the Institute of Sociology and altogether there are around ten bigger departments of Anthropology in Poland. Also, there are quite a lot of cultural studies connected with filologies of political studies.

Croatia (Iza):

the study at the Faculty of Philosophy was established by Institute of Anthropology (it's a research institution, includes no teaching) and the Faculty together and it incorporates both sociocultural and biological anthropology.

The discussion «situation of anthropology in five years? » followed.

Then date and the location of the conference were discussed and it was decided that the conference will take part from Wednesday till Friday, 08. -12. November 2006. The location is left opened (Dubrovnik, the islands...).

The name of the conference and the themes were also discussed. The participants said which topics are of interest for them (applied anthropology, activism, social movements,

powersystems, medical anthropology, status and definition of the profession, migration etc.) and all agreed that there should be a regional day, when the hosts (Croatian team) would decide about the topics for that day and a networking day, dedicated to the future of MASN.

In order to decide about the topics and the name for the conference, we went outside, sat in the sun and brainstormed about it in four groups.

day II (Saturday, 08. April 2006.), afternoon session

■ topic: next conference

1. FIRST GROUP (Kerstin, Marta)

- Thursday - some topics + an event devoted to MASN
- Friday – topic day (e.g. countries in transition - papers and workshops)
- Saturday - networking day + few hours just for relaxation
- Sunday - something interesting until noon to make people stay (no papers, just workshops), e.g. applied anthropology
- best topics: activism and social movements
- the title of the conference: ACTING UPON REALITY (it needs a subtitle, it's not complete without it)

2. SECOND GROUP (Gregor, Duška)

- didn't think about the name of the conference
- thematic topics: ■ *"Powerful systems? Culture, media, law and medicine"*
 - *"People in action - anthropological concepts in motion, activism, revolutionary and social movements"*
 - *"Anthropology and other fields" - interdisciplinary work"*

3. THIRD GROUP (Benni, Krzysztof)

- one local, regional day (Croatia)
- one day on applied anthropology
- one day for specific topics (e.g. Bologna - future of anthropology, teaching)
- one day - reflections on some problems, no papers, more wider processes and discussions
- a suggestion for a topic: *"Different similarities and similar differences"*
- the networking part of the program - already on Wednesday (a formal speech about the network)
- title for the conference: HORIZONS OF ANTHROPOLOGY

4. FOURTH GROUP (Barbara, Goga)

- first day - arrival
- second day – regional, Croatian day (applied anthropology)
- third day - topic day
- fourth day - network day
- three proposals: ■ *"Anthropological perspectives on conflict and transformation in contemporary societies" (political anthropology, power relations, activism)*

- *"Medical anthropology in different contemporary approaches"*
 - *"Facing differences - anthropological perspectives on cultural encounter"*
- title: something active (to play with words, with a double meaning, but to keep it short)

Discussion about the schedule such as when to put the networking day and the day of applied anthropology? What to do on the first and the last day?

We concluded that it would be best to split the networking day and put the first half as an introduction on the first day (in the evening) and the second half on Sunday, maybe together with applied anthropology.

All the suggested titles and topics were then put on the board and discussed, related to each other or erased as not relevant at the moment. A title for an interesting topic was discussed – powerful systems? powersystems? systems of power? manifestations of power?

At the end we had three topics to choose the two main ones from:

- ▶ ***"Powerful systems? Culture, media, law and medicine"***
- ▶ ***"Anthropological perspectives on conflict and transformation in contemporary societies"***
- ▶ ***"People in action - anthropological concepts in motion, activism, revolutionary and social movements"***

All the participants voted for two topics and the results were:

- 18/26 votes for the first suggestion
- 12/26 votes for the second suggestion
- 14/26 votes for the third suggestion,

but no final decision has been made. It was agreed that it is maybe too soon for it and that we will all continue to communicate and discuss the topics further via internet.

The need to organize, find financial support and think about decision making was once again highlighted and stressed out. The suggestion to elect an international committee, who would consist of national coordinators and would get to read the applications and vote for/against them, was greeted and with this decision the coordination meeting came to an end.

Appendix

List of participants:

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