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*Cultures and Discourses of and in the EU: Power and Legitimacy,
Enlargement and Identity*

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Anthropologists and the study of the EU

Trends and Debates

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This paper sets out to examine the development of an ‘Anthropology of the EU’ as a unique and original field of research within the context of post-colonialism and the questioning of the nation-state. As indicated by our panel title and synopsis, it aims to engage with the potential utility of the discipline when discussing social practices, cultural forms of expression and heritage, political rituals, demos, community and identity, all key concepts in the anthropological tradition. I would argue that the main contribution of the discipline to the debates about the cultural turn in EU studies is in relation to the critical refinement of the concepts of culture and its relationship to politics as well as its methodological and constructivist contribution represented by ethnography, interpretative approach and mixed research methods.

In their introduction, ‘Defining boundaries and Identifying trends in EU studies’, to the Palgrave Advances in EU studies, Angela Bourne and Michelle Cini (2005:6) state that anthropological studies of the EU have been more visible than sociological works largely because of Maryon McDonald’s research on the EC (2005), both alone and with Marc Abélès and Irène Bellier (1995). They also cite the work of Cris Shore ‘Building Europe; the politics of cultural integration’ (2000) as a key contribution to debate about the cultural politics of European integration. Similarly, in a recent article published in the journal European Union Politics, Adrian Favell and Virginie Guiraudon (2009: 567) seeking to build an agenda for the sociology of the EU, devote a few lines to these works by recognising their use of ethnographic methods ‘to go inside EU institutions, immersing themselves in the loci of power’ defining by the same token the specificity of the anthropological project compared to the other disciplines which have traditionally shaped the study of the EU. If the works of MacDonald, Abélès, Bellier and Shore are all well known to anthropologists and EU specialists, less is known about the wide range of ethnographic studies which have been undertaken since the 1970s on Europe, and on the EU more specifically. This growing field could be described as embryonic in

terms of the theoretical debates, fragmented in the themes covered and largely defined around the tensions between national European ethnographies published in different European languages and the anthropology of the EU where the English language dominates. To illustrate the shifts which have occurred between these two broad poles of research, one has just to compare the entry for Europe in the Encyclopedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology published in 1986 by Alan Barnard and Jonathan Spencer with the recently edited Companion to the Anthropology of Europe published by Blackwell to witness the development of the field. While in the first volume, Europe is discussed as a geographic, historical, philosophical and literary concept opposing Central and Eastern Europe, to North Europe and South Europe and rooting the discussion in a cultural, political and historical framework, the second volume sets the development of EU studies as part of the Anthropology of Europe project (see index). The variety of themes covered in the latter illustrates the broadening of the field, but also the emergence of new anthropological concepts such as nationalism, ethnicity and citizenship.

What all these works have in common is not only the question of the relationship between culture and politics and how this has evolved over the last three decades, but also how the link is embedded in various theoretical and methodological shifts which have affected the discipline during the same period. The post-colonial debate and the challenge of modernity and globalisation occupy a central stage in the current debates affecting anthropology and have shaped some of the disciplinary preoccupations. The second important issue lies with the epistemological contribution of anthropologists to the study of the EU and of Europe. Is ethnography a heuristic device for the study of the EU? Does it bring an innovative and fresh perspective to the issues pertaining to the process of European integration? Where does the originality of the anthropological project lie? And is there an anthropological project as far as the EU is concerned? I will try to address some of these questions in the paper.

1. From the Anthropology of Europe to the Anthropology of the EU : A research agenda in the making

The postcolonial context, the emergence of an 'Anthropology of Europe' as opposed to 'An Anthropology in Europe' (Barrera-González 2004: 2–25), as a distinctive intellectual project and the growing institutionalisation of anthropology as a social

science has encouraged the discipline to redefine its focus. One of the most notable features of that transition is the shift from the farm or village or small unit of observation to more 'complex' social settings in which the presence of the state, bureaucracies, new social actors and markets are integrated into the study of local phenomena. Before the 1980s, anthropologists had a tendency to 'tribalise' the local society they studied and to separate its social analysis from the broader context in which it defined itself (Boissevain and Friedl 1975). In the context of Europe, great emphasis was placed upon uncovering traces of the past within agrarian societies, their traditional way of life, their resistance to modernity and the folkloric characteristics associated with the decline of pre-industrial societies in the wake of the First and the Second World Wars. This agenda was shaped earlier by the development of anthropology as a science of the colonisers and later as a science of non modern societies.

Susan Carol Rogers (2001: 487) has written that during the 1970s amongst French, British and American anthropologists there 'emerged a strong and self conscious move to broaden the purview of legitimate ethnological research to routinely include Western societies'. The move to investigate Western societies was accompanied, perhaps even prompted, by an historic shift in anthropology from studying self-contained 'communities' to questioning the construction of new geographic and political categories such as 'Europe' itself. The period corresponded precisely with that of reduced access to exotic fieldwork in the postcolonial context and the emergence of identity politics. Traditionally Western European anthropologists directed their efforts primarily towards the population of their overseas colonies and their work was often funded by the colonisers, while American anthropologists were generally concerned with the indigenous population of the Americas. From the 1960s a process approach developed, stressing the role of agents (Barth 1969) which had an impact as anthropologists started to work in situations where the colonial system was dismantling. As a result of the closure of sites of 'exotic fieldwork', a substantial number of anthropologists turned their attention to Europe. By 1975 the number of researchers was large enough for the American Anthropological Association to decide to publish a directory of North American Europeanists (ibid.: 356). Thomas M. Wilson (1998: 149) argued that 'in the 1970s and 1980s a number of other influential anthropologists made similar moves to reset the anthropological agenda in Europe, and in so doing to fuel a variety of theoretical

debates in anthropological theory and method of significance beyond Europe'. The work of Bourdieu (1977) on the Kabyles crystallised some of these debates and was also strongly inspired by the interaction between French post-structuralism, Marxism and process approach embedding as well post-colonial issues.

The Cold War context of the 1960s facilitated the expansion of funds for European research and the multiplication of programmes for development, which were later applied to the Third World as part of a modernisation process. These programmes aimed at conceptualising further notions of stability and equilibrium and were inspired by the structural-functionalist framework which served as the theoretical basis for understanding the past and for assisting modernisation in the future (Cole 1977: 356). The turn towards the study of Western complex societies made anthropology more political, and from the 1980s, state, institutions and political themes formed the trilogy of a growing number of anthropological investigations focusing on rural Europe. For example, the seminal work of Boissevain and Friedl in 1975 witnessed the attempts made to launch a comparative study of cultural forms in Europe. The anthropology of Europe drew in parallel its rationale from the developmentalist perspective. According to Cole (1977), studies of communities located in developed countries served as models of what the new nations were attempting to achieve. If parallels were established between development studies and the anthropology of communities in Europe, the discussions have remained quite separate and anchored in the dominant Anglophone literature even until today.

In the burgeoning field of studies addressing issues of Europeanisation and integration at a time of transition, social anthropologists from different national traditions have been to the fore in investigating themes pertaining to issues of culture, politics and identity. What is particularly innovative about their approach is that it aims to address the links between political processes and culture in the widest sense of the term. Most of the research conducted in this field seeks to examine whether or not Europe could become a meaningful and emotional political object by analyzing the representations and practices associated with the development of European integration and the various groups at the core of the process. Scholars have either studied the EU from inside, focusing on European institutions and the making of Europe as a tapestry of cultures, or they have engaged with the process of Europeanisation defined by Borneman and Fowler (1997: 48) as 'an accelerated process and a set of effects that

are redefining forms of identification with territory and people'. In both areas, they have generally adopted a critical stance adding layers of complexity to the analysis, trying to unpack the cultural dimension of any political process and giving more critical depth to the study of EU policy-making. It could be argued that this shift has accompanied some of the current preoccupations at the heart of the EU and has also followed the funding on offer and the possibility of collaboration around EU issues.

In their contribution to the wider debates about the concept of governance, policy-making and institutional culture, anthropologists differ radically from other social scientists in their approach to definitions of politics, identity and culture. The idea of questioning the nature of the EU and the process of European integration first appeared on the anthropologists' intellectual radar in the late 1980s at the time of the fall of the Berlin Wall. In November 1989, once the border between East and West Germany was opened, leading to the reunification of Germany in October 1990, the EU and anthropologists were presented with an challenge. The end of the Cold War transformed the geopolitical status of Europe. Leaving behind the study of French local politics, the anthropologist, Marc Abélès (1993), for example, began to study transnational politics as practised in the European Parliament. As he explained matters: 'From 1989 to 1992, I did field research on the European Parliament. I think this was the first ever anthropological study of the EU, which at that time was still known as the European Community' (Shore and Abélès, 2004: 10). A Franco-British team composed of Marc Abélès and his colleagues, Irène Bellier and the British social anthropologist, Maryon McDonald was offered the opportunity by the Delors cabinet and commission officials to conduct fieldwork inside the European Commission. The start of their mission coincided with the signing of the Maastricht Treaty and the creation of the single market, both of which were key political changes necessitating further public legitimacy and democratic support. As pointed out by political scientists such as Michelle Cini, the focus on Commission culture(s) was, to a large extent, a bi-product of the blossoming of research on the EC and more specifically on its supranational nature, over the course of the 1990s.

In the course of their research, the Franco-British team questioned the nature of Europe as a new multicultural political object, and while their respective publications went in different directions, they nevertheless all contributed to a better understanding of the EU as an institution. Key concepts such as 'virtual Europe', 'unity in diversity' and 'organisational and managerial cultures' demonstrated the

ongoing, dynamic flux of cultures attached to decision-making processes. Policy was defined as negotiated between different sets of actors transforming the political machine into a forward looking entity creating new social categories which affected the relationship between institutions and the EU's population (Bellier and Wilson, 2000: 15). They also underlined some of the values at the core of the project of European integration, questioning the absence of a common direction taken by the EU or the formation of a European elite of civil servants who could be characterised as truly European. For Abélès (2004: 1), the anthropological approach to EU institutions, which could be defined by an endless quest and a lack of reflexivity, sheds some light on to the evasive and contradictory nature of European integration. The nature of the project is itself doubtful because in wanting to link 'virtual Europe' to a sense of belonging and collective identification, elites have never fully questioned the sense of purpose of their trajectory; The same conclusions were drawn by Bellier and Wilson: 'Building Europe is a metaphor of construction in which the end product is in dispute, with the smaller feats of engineering required to get there also being contested because of a lack of agreement about the reasons, methods and functions of the building itself' (2000: 17).

The volume published in 2000 by Irène Bellier and Thomas Wilson, entitled 'An Anthropology of the EU: building, imagining and experiencing the new Europe' provides a striking example of what anthropology can bring to the study of European integration. Presenting a series of micro-studies based on the ethnographic analysis of a wide variety of political sites with the global/local articulation of issues and their effects, the editors defined the discipline's contribution to the field of European integration as the science of man and a cultural critique of politics. According to Bellier and Wilson (2000: 2), the edited volume 'seeks to delineate the ways in which culture acts to distinguish or to obscure EU institutions, policies, leaders, ideologies and values in the daily lives of people on the peripheries and localities of the EU as well as those at the centres of EU decision-making'. Unveiling the complexity of these political, economic and cultural transformations, anthropologists 'have thus far proved the European project to be a dynamic site of meaning making over which larger questions of sovereignty and identity are conveyed' (Firat, 2010: 5). Tensions between micro and macro levels or local and global scales constitute the bulk of the work undertaken.

The same sense of confusion about the precise purpose of various cultural phases designed to encourage a sense of collective European belonging was revealed by the authors of the Franco-British research team commissioned by Jacques Delors and has been repeated by more recent publications. During the 1990s, Cris Shore, for example, conducted the bulk of his fieldwork in the European Commission (EC), but his position was less compromised in the sense that his research had not been commissioned by it and was not subject to the same political constraints. The area of cultural policy, especially in relation to the communication of a European identity formed the core of his research. He argued that the Commission's cultural characteristics were a reflection of the rules, norms, and the 'system of political bargaining and networking' that pervaded the organisation (Shore, 2000: 173) and they bore the 'stamp of the ideas and practices that prevailed at the time of its creation' (2000: 177). Highly critical, Shore denies the success of the Commission in creating a European identity capable, by the uses of political symbols and traditional tools through the ingenuous use of EC-funded 'cultural actions', of underpinning future integration. The Commission's various cultural initiatives bore for him a striking resemblance to the strategies and techniques used by national elites in the formation of European nation states during the nineteenth century (Shore and Abélès, 2004: 10). Europeanness, as a cultural process, occupied most of his attention, but his overall analysis remained critical of the Commission and its culture, which according to him was deemed to 'create conditions that are ideal for encouraging practices of fraud, nepotism and corruption' (Shore, 2000: 176).

More recent studies of the EU by anthropologists have seen an emphasis put on the practices of daily engagement with the EU in political or cultural terms going beyond discourse analysis or on the anthropology of policy (following Shore and Wright 1997) defined as the study of discourses and practices produced by institutional agents in their encounter with local culture as illustrated by the forthcoming special issues of the *Anthropological Journal of European Cultures* (see 2011 issue 1 and 2 *Politicking the Farm and Instrumental Europe*) which are intended to set the future research agenda for the study of social and cultural transformations of contemporary European societies. According to its editor: 'The journal serves as an important forum for ethnographic research in and on Europe, which in this context is not defined narrowly as a geopolitical entity but rather as a meaningful cultural

construction in people's lives, which both legitimates political power and calls forth practices of resistance and subversion.'

Yet the broadening geographic scope of European integration since the fall of communism has created a new space where different national traditions articulate different conceptions of what is meant by 'An anthropology of Europe' (Skálnik 2005), and its definition and aims are still at an embryonic stage. Since the publication of Bellier and Wilson's volume on the EU, the study of European politics, policies and institutions has expanded beyond its traditional 'western' frontiers to question some of the categories and constructions of the dominant anthropological intellectual landscape, especially with the transformations of Central and Eastern European anthropology after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989. Laszlo Kürti (2008: 25), former president of the EASA, has strongly criticised the ways in which western traditions of European integration have largely ignored the research produced in the East by Central and Eastern European colleagues. Questioning the effects of the enlargement on Eastern European anthropology, Kürti (2008: 29) denounces what he sees as 'a rather unbalanced, uneven and unstable European integration process, both in the political-economic and the cultural-educational fields'. Referring to the work of the political scientist, Jan Zielonka (2007), he discusses the extent to which joining the EU has changed the nature of democracy in the new member-states and concludes that enlargement and EU membership are far from rallying the masses. As he describes matters: 'Citizens view the results of the massive economic, judicial and political transformation as a necessary headache causing high rates of unemployment, insecurity, crime, double-digit inflation, and a relatively observable second-class status in Europe' (2008: 27). Moreover, if 'both state and local governments have been enlarged, becoming more and not less bureaucratic in that process' (2008: 27), the effects of European integration might appear to be of variable and unequal benefit and might tend to further marginalise new members states (Zielonka, 2007: 173). If anthropologists studying post-communist societies in Eastern Europe have turned from analyses of the cultural practices of groups on the margins of modernising state projects to accounts of how communities are shaped by systemic changes in the political economy of states (Wolfe, 2000), the European Union has not yet become their prime object of research.

2. Objects, Methods and Trends in the Anthropology of Europe

As pointed out by our panel convenor the special issue of the Journal of Common Market Studies devoted to the EU political myths reflects the broader cultural and social constructivist turn which has recently emerged in IR, and Politics and especially the study of the EU. However, the special issue also underlines the potential fruitful contribution of anthropology to the debates on self perceptions, identity construction, myth and meaning-making. By focusing on the study of localised and ethnographically defined practices and representations, anthropology provides a new dimension into the process of European integration. In this paper, I will only focus on its contribution in terms of the links between culture and politics and on ethnography as a unique research tool of enquiry. The same underlying questioning has been common to both debates on the concept of culture and on ethnography and its distinctiveness in the anthropological tradition. In relation to Europe, the discussions have taken place around both European politics and institutions, but also European peoples and identities. The focus has also been on Europe as a set of cultural, social and political practices compared to the discourses produced around it in terms of meaning making and myth making.

Culture

Anthropologists traditionally define culture as a way of life, a simple way of talking about collective identities' (Kuper 1999: 3). The concept of culture is seen as collective rather than individual, 'a web of significance in which people interact' (Geertz 1973). Culture is therefore seen as a dimension of social interaction and not as a separate attribute or item. Culture refers to norms, values, ambitions and conventions that underpin social interaction, though giving meaning to social patterns and processes. However, in the study of culture and its relationship to EU politics, the concept of culture, central to anthropological theory, has acquired several meanings in the last three decades which could *grosso modo* historically be synthesised under four main strands:

1/Culture in the traditional Herderian sense of the word which is encapsulated in the meanings, beliefs, ideas or representations of Europe and or the EU and which occupies a central stage in the national anthropologies in and of Europe and in the anthropology of the EU. Defined by Bellier and Wilson (2000: 2) as the 'ways in which culture (synthesised through the trilogy 'Building, Imagining and Experiencing

Europe') acts to distinguish or to obscure EU institutions, policies, leaders, ideologies and values in the daily life of people who live in the peripheries and localities of the EU as well as those at the centres of the EU decision making. Culture frames perceptions of Europe of the EU and its prospects of Europeanisation. The concept is defined in the plural, wider in its delimitations and largely interpreted from empirical data. The work of Mairéad Nic Craith on Northern Ireland borders is an example of this strand. The key question is how individuals use culture in their everyday discourses and practices? And who are these individuals?

2/Another identifiable strand defines culture as an observable output which could be described and recorded and which forms part the process of an ethnographic enquiry. For example, EU policy-making could be investigated as a set of social practices rooted in a specific institutional context and negotiated by individuals to respond to a specific political agenda or scenario. EU agricultural policy making could be studied ethnographically when implemented at local level (AJEC 2011, Issue 1 for example). Contestation, Pluralism and diversity are emphasised in these works and a strong emphasis is placed on processes in the context of institutions or local communities. (e.g Marc Verlot in response to Cris Shore).

3/Culture as a product, for example cultural policy put in place by the EC to address the issue of legitimacy is another theme under scrutiny. The context is set out by the anthropology of policy agenda which has recently emerged. Culture is here defined as a set of political decisions and actions worth analysing.

4/Finally, culture as an organisational and managerial concept has also taken an important place following the work of Abélès, Bellier and MacDonald. The focus is mainly on issues of governance, systems and behaviours in the EU transnational and institutional context and there has been a great deal of cross-fertilization with other branches of the social sciences and with the discipline of management.

To conclude, the object of study remains here the culture of the Commission as a complex institutional system and as one of the actors in the European integration process as it is observed, but also includes the ways in which the participants in general construct it from EU civil servants to Portuguese fishermen. Starting from the premises that anthropology has to do with the study of mankind and 'reconstituting the totality from which one can discover the unity of the subjective consciousness that the individual has of the social system and of the objective structure of that system'

(Bourdieu 2004: 594), it is undeniable that the anthropological studies of EU adds another dimension to the debate on European integration.

Ethnography

While developmental sociologists and anthropologists were for years engaged in the study of local communities, the state was left by and large to the institutional analysis of political scientists. In recent years, the issue of political power and governance has been integrated into the study of power in ethnographic terms, while ethnographic analysis has also become fashionable amongst other social and political scientists. In political terms, the shift of the balance of power from the nation-state to the European or supra-national level has led to the reframing of specific issues from a multi-level governance perspective. By multi-level, I refer to a process of complex heterogeneous rescaling as defined by Michael Keating (2009) when discussing the political games of territorial management in Europe. The dynamics of the world system and those of the nation-states have created further complexity, which in turn have transformed both the discipline and the social object under scrutiny. When dealing with governance in the EU, the so-called normative power exercised by the EU plays a significant role in shaping current representations. How specific groups or cultural entities to respond or, embrace, the rescaling of governance and the power relations that goes with it remains one of the questions at the core of the discipline's concern.

From the variety of anthropological studies, it is clear that new actors have emerged and have sought to empower themselves in the process. Yet power seems to have become more diffuse and it is now shared by individuals organised as vertical or horizontal networks at different levels of territoriality, and power is no longer exercised by one clearly defined source. Other types of competence are required in European political affairs such as communication and negotiation skills, political knowledge, network access or other values to lobby at different levels. If most of the research locates the scale of the analysis at national and/or EU level, their respective fieldwork embraces either a specific geographic location, a DG, a region, a farm or a group of individuals with their trajectories facilitating the unfolding of the webs of significance in which the various actors under scrutiny define their social environment and engage with it. Both the unit under observation and the means deployed to empower specific groups or individuals contribute to the difficulties faced by the anthropologist when attempting to understand a specific EU issue be it the recent

health scare E.coli or the euro financial crisis. Yet they are careful in understanding who produce the discourse and in which context? And how this discourse is then negotiated and argued about?

The village or 'community' which was once the primary focus of most ethnographic studies of European societies has now given place to the interface between a group or network of individuals and a supra-national governance process. Farming in Europe, for example, is less an object of scrutiny than governance and power or the effects on the local society. Rather than questioning the bounded culture of a specific group, anthropologists are focusing now on political processes and issues of change. For example, the constellation of actors engaged with the process of EU agriculture is characterised by the fluidity of their relationship and by the issues and contexts defining their encounters and the different sets of political actions and contexts. The network of individuals raises the issue of a specific unit of observation with no clear delineation in spatial, social and cultural terms incarnated by few emblematic representative cases which will be scrutinised by the anthropologist. The cultural fluidity of these relationships challenges the ethnographic method. The EU, on the other hand, lacks itself a clear definition in political and institutional terms which in turn questions our analytical understanding of traditional political objects.

The unit of analysis has shifted from the study of specific social categories defined within a more or less stable territory to a more loose type of interpretative and deductive ethnography reconstituting what has been described by Marc Abélès as virtual political object. What units of analysis are used? How common are specific types of shared representations? and how large a number of case-studies can realistically be examined? are all key questions in methodological terms. Attempting to understand the ability of individuals, groups and communities to reinvent and imagine what these policies entail and by the same token to act upon them is a challenging task for the anthropologist. An increasing number of anthropologists have concentrated on multisited or global ethnography and on following two or three individuals, representative of a wider social reality. This in depth qualitative and inductive type of approach remains the original contribution of anthropologists who have generally combined a wide array of techniques with a strong emphasis on fieldwork, interviews and participant observation. The historical, economic, political and social contexts are often evoked as the background to these case-studies and it not only helps the contributors to make sense of the transformations, but also allows the

reader to grasp the specific aspects of the society, group, institution or phenomenon studied.

Some commentators will question if states and institutions can gain from such a selective ‘thick description’ and to what extent representations and meanings constitute a useful tool for comparative analysis and for policy-makers. Micro-analysis of specific sites and the focus on representations and social practices of *Euope* as well as the development of multi-sited ethnography of transnational groups contributing to Europeanisation reveal the increasing diversity of societies within the EU, and the tenacious ways in which they have sought to adapt to broader processes of governance and globalisation. By focusing on the understanding of the field of representations and social practices in a local context defined increasingly by external forces, anthropologists shed light on to specific power games, questioning notions of legitimacy, norms and values all of which are essential to the analysis of any given society enabling a better comprehension of what constitutes ‘winners’ and ‘losers’.

Preliminary Conclusions

The EU and its policies thus offer anthropologists a remarkable field for the study of institutions and power, interpretation and meaning, ideology, rhetoric and discourse, the politics of culture, ethnicity and identity, and interactions between the global and the local (Wright and Shore, 1997). Wedel and Feldman (2005: 1) underlined the anthropologist’s contribution to the study of governance and policy-making. Anthropology offers a distinctive approach because it constructs its object of study in a particular dynamic, contested and fluid way, it uses a multi-faceted methodology based on an array of methods such as ethnography, the ‘extended case method’ and discourse analysis. Finally, it theorizes policy processes using power relations and interactions of parties. The ability to match micro-perspectives derived from intense fieldwork, with holistic and macro-perspectives derived from inductive reasoning and comparativism (Gingrich and Fox, 2002) defines the anthropological perspective. Yet several obstacles remain because of the nature of the institutions involved in the making of Europe which necessitate full participant observation. As Verlot (2001: 351) has argued ‘It is only by participating and knowing the consequences of this kind of work that one is able to begin to understand the full

complexity of institutions and escape the trap of coming to see them as bodies characterised by unity and common function’.

The recent eastern enlargement of the EU and the possible entry of Turkey, Croatia and Macedonia provide new challenges to the anthropological approach towards European integration. Because of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the new ‘confusing geopolitical conglomeration’ (Kürti, 2008: 25) resulting from the addition of Central and Eastern Europe, European policies and institutions are facing another challenge which will add further complexity to the European project, but also will provide anthropologists with a wider range of issues to tackle, be it in terms of constituting a common worldwide research agenda (Ribiero and Escobar, 2006) or in confronting different and/or similar intellectual traditions. Most of the current work being undertaken by anthropologists remains confined to the micro-level and largely defined by ethnographic methods failing to engage with wider concerns. Trying to establish a European agenda and network for example around the anthropology of farming communities has revealed to be a challenge as most of the research remains disparate, fragmented and lacking a cohesive framework.

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