

WUN AGM, Dublin, May 19th to 24th 2019

UCG workshop: Sunday 19th and Monday 20th May 2019

The discussion on “Decolonization” of research, education and dissemination has been ongoing for many years. It is a complex and multi-layered discussion. But, as last years “Understanding Cultures” seminar in Perth showed, it is a necessary, challenging and important discussion to engage in.

The notion that science, social science and humanities, are products of and are seen and presented from a “western standpoint and with western ideas and values” has been advocated, particularly by colleagues and students in Africa and to some degree Asia. In the UK, Black Studies programmes and the work of Andrews (2018) and others question whether decolonisation of the universities is even possible. The sciences of anthropology, archaeology, ethnology and other sciences studying “culture” from different angles have been seen as deeply rooted in Western ideas of the “exotic others” still rooted in a colonial legacy. At many African universities disciplines and research agendas are being challenged by both established researchers and students as well as groups representing ethnic groups and “traditional” knowledge. In 1988 the “African renaissance” movement, re-invoked by the South African president Thabo Mbeki, but with roots to the liberation movements, advocated for a political, moral and philosophical programme to unify Africa and rid itself of colonial and post-colonial history. To what extent is African feminism a decolonising force? (Coetzee, Azille Alta, 2017) What are the implications for our disciplines?

In Mbeki’s version the Renaissance was a political, pro-globalization programme, but among many African intellectuals the concept led to discussions on the uniqueness of African mind, morality, heritage and culture. The western idea of “Heritage” and not least “world heritage” is questioned and challenged. Questions are raised if outsiders, non-Africans, can ever study African people, heritage or knowledge and represent it in a non-biased way.

Many researchers within culture and migration work internationally and closely with material and cultural studies of “others”. Since Edward Said’s seminal book on orientalism, the thoughts have been developed further and especially in Asia and Africa there is a feeling that the very idea of research and the knowledge produced by research done by non-African, often European or Western based scholars, must be challenged. The discussion is not unique to Africa, it is also emerging in other societies, including the Arctic and the Polynesian islands.

How should WUN’s ‘Understanding Cultures’ Global Challenge partners engage with these questions and what should the role of WUN be? Is it even possible for WUN not to reproduce relations and knowledge rooted in colonialism? We want this to be a workshop with ample time to discuss and find a useful way to take the theme forward and to discuss how UCG can be a useful engagement for us all.

¹ <http://scholar.sun.ac.za/handle/10019.1/102695>

WORKSHOP PROGRAMME

SUNDAY, MAY 19TH

08:30 —● REGISTRATION

09.00 —● OPENING/WELCOME

WUN leadership
Chair - Tore Saetersdal

09.10 —● **Welcome – setting the agenda. Where do we pick up from Perth?**

Tore Saetersdal and Ann Singleton - Chair and co-chair of
Understanding Cultures Group

09.30 —● **Keynote address on Migration**

Frank Laczko, IOM

10.30 —● TEA/COFFEE

11.00 —● **COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION**

Ann Singleton, University of Bristol

11.30 —● **EU Migration policies in Africa – re-colonizing and forms of resistance?**

Katie Kuschminder, Maastricht University

12.15 —● LUNCH

13.15 —● **Memorializing deaths during migration: an international network and framework**

Elizabeth Brabec, University of Massachusetts
Chair - Anne Bang

14.00 —● **Presentation via skype**

Foluke Adebisi, University of Bristol, Via skype

14.45 —● TEA/COFFEE

15.10 —● **Anthropological Film “Making Rain”. Comments from the Filmmaker**

Frode Storaas, University of Bergen

16.30 —● **END OF DAY**

09.00 —● **Seminar continues. Recap of Day 1**

Ann Singleton
Chair - Tore Saetersdal

09.15 —● **Keynote address: "The Decolonization of Heritage Policies and Landscapes in Southern Africa"**

Albino Jopela - African World Heritage Fund, Johannesburg

10.15 —● **TEA/COFFEE**

10.45 —● **Swahili heritage decolonized**

Anne Bang, University of Bergen

11.30 —● **The history of Social Anthropology in South Africa**

Fiona Ross, University of Cape Town

12.30 —● **LUNCH**

13.30 —● **Disseminating Archaeology in Rural Mozambique**

Tore Saetersdal, University of Bergen
Chair - Ann Singleton

14.20 —● **COMMENTS**

Ancila Nhamo, University of Zimbabwe, via skype

14.30 —● **TEA/COFFEE**

15.00 —● **DISCUSSION TIME - decolonization of the Agenda - what are the implications for the UC agenda, research and education?**

Plenary discussion on decolonization as a theme

16.00 —● **UCG – Way forward?**

How can we develop closer collaboration within the group – and to other GC groups within WUN?

16.30 —● **END OF WORKSHOP**

19.00 —● **INFORMAL VOLUNTARY DINNER**