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"When Indians Play Indian" Symposium Report

Ethan Schmidt

his beloved Leepa, it seems, in an interesting situation.

Doodnath Tewarry has doubtless had his reward, ere this, in a free pardon; and certainly we owe him something for one of the most curious and entertaining narrations that ever yet got into a Blue-book.

CONFERENCE REPORTS

"When Indians Play Indian" Symposium Report, by Ethan Schmidt

The symposium, held on the campus of Texas Tech University in Lubbock, Texas on November 6, 2009, focused on specific situations in which Native People consciously acceded to white cultural expectations of what constituted a "real Indian" for the sake of advancing their own objectives. Organized by Ronald McCoy (Oklahoma State University) and Ethan Schmidt (Texas Tech University), the symposium was a forum for papers that took exception to the previous scholarship that has looked at occasions when Native People "played Indian" as products of colonial domination and subjugation. Jointly sponsored by the Texas Tech Department of History, the Museum of Texas Tech University, and the Texas Tech Cross-Cultural Academic Advancement Center, the symposium brought together scholars in several academic disciplines, including History, Art History, Anthropology and Ethnic Studies.

Schmidt offered the first paper of the day, in which he argued that Native Americans who visited England on diplomatic errands during the seventeenth and (especially) the eighteenth centuries sought to satisfy the expectations of both the British government and the British public about "real Indian" character. They were well aware of British views, and knew that their ability to embody them could do much to further their purposes. He examined various Indian missions, including, for example, those of Joseph Brant, the Mohawk/Mahican delegation of 1709, and the so-called "Seven Cherokee Kings" of the 1730s.

McCoy brought the symposium into the nineteenth-century American West with a paper detailing his discovery that a war shirt labeled as belonging to the Sioux leader Red Cloud in a museum collection is really a prop that belonged to a Washington D.C. photographer. This was a consequence of a standard experience for delegations of Plains Indians who came to Washington D.C. to negotiate with the government (and were willing to do what they thought they had to do to bring the US government to the negotiating table): they made obligatory trips to photographers' studios, donned their Native Costumes (often times over the suits and ties they were wearing), and posed for photos of "real Indians." When staff of a museum found a picture of Red Cloud wearing a shirt that they decided to put on display, they assumed that it was his war shirt without further investigation. McCoy's painstaking detective work led him to identify many North American museum artifacts mistakenly labeled as authentically Native American, which had been authenticated many years ago entirely on the basis of photographic evidence. Jim Cloninger (Texas Tech University) followed with a fresh look at the Sand Creek Massacre in which he asserted that the Cheyenne and Arapaho thought they did everything within their power to meet the expectations of the territorial government of Colorado. In essence, the Indians believed that they were playing the role that the government wanted them to play, hoping that by doing so they could guarantee peace

and stability for their tribes. Ultimately and tragically, peace and stability did not result. Travis Nygard (University of Pittsburgh) followed with a presentation on the research that he and Pamela Simpson (Washington and Lee University) have conducted on corn palaces in the Midwest. At first glance, it might seem that the history of the grain palaces is only a story of stereotypes that celebrated unjust policies of cultural assimilation and physical displacement. Some of the imagery that adorned these buildings, as well as events that took place around them does indeed do this. Examining the history of these places from 1887, when the first of them was erected in Sioux City, Iowa, to the present day, Nygard and Simpson examined why Native American people voluntarily became involved with these institutions, and showed how the buildings also served as sites of empowerment.

Andrew Holman (Bridgewater State College) offered the next paper, which described the Cree and Ojibwa Hockey Tour of 1928. He argued that sportswriters created three different narratives to tell the story of the Cree-Ojibwa hockey games. First, the tour was cast as a clever exercise in modern enterprise. The natives (all of them apparently summer fishing guides in northern Ontario resorts) used new communications technology to sell their "products"--hockey, and northern tourism. A second narrative described ice hockey as an authentically indigenous game, a sport first played by northern Indians that was now being re-appropriated in this colorful tour. Finally, some sportswriters saw the tour as what some of the players must have believed it to be -- a subversive self-parody; a northern, wintry version of blackface minstrelsy. In other words, the Cree-Ojibwa tour was a drama of racial mockery and power inversion. Kathrin Dodds (Texas Tech University) presented the final symposium paper, examining Native Americans in professional wrestling. She argued that whether they are portraying the stereotype of the "Noble Savage" or of the "Savage Indian," Native American performers are knowingly enacting the caricatured version of themselves as a means to entertain the non-native masses, as well as pursuing their own ends, financial or (in some cases) cultural.

Three projected participants were unable to attend the symposium, but their papers will still be included in the edited volume that will be published in 2011. These essays are: Peter Nabokov (UCLA), "Becoming and Embodying Big Snake: Case Study of a Pueblo-Plains Performer"; Cheryl Wells, (University of Wyoming) on the concept of "Indian Time"; and C. Richard King (Washington State University), "Playing with Play: Enactments of Indianness by Indigenous Peoples."

"Workshop on the History of Ethnology and Anthropology," Symposium Report by Han F. Vermeulen

Convened by Han F. Vermeulen (Halle) and Udo Mischek (Göttingen), this workshop was held at the biannual conference of the German Ethnological Society (DGV), held in Frankfurt am Main, September 30-October 3, 2009.

In the first session, on ethnology in Cologne and Vienna, Ingrid Kreide-Damani (Köln-Bonn) and Volker Harms (Tübingen) discussed ethnology and politics from the Weimar period to the post-World War II era. Kreide-Damani described a forthcoming edited volume that portrays Julius Lips, Martin Heydrich and the DGV against the shifting background of West and East German politics. Harms analyzed the work Lips did while he was teaching at Howard University in

Washington, DC, before he became professor at Leipzig in 1948, concentrating on his autobiographical-ethnographic novel, *Forschungsreise in die Dämmerung* (1950). Gottfried Schürholz and David Mihola discussed the Viennese Christoph Fürer-Haimendorf, who avoided political engagement in the late 1930s, doing fieldwork in India and making his career in London at the School of Oriental and African Studies. Anita Dick and Verena Loidl focussed on Walter Hirschberg, whose active political involvement aided his career in the Nazi period, but who was punished severely after the war, losing his permission to teach (1945-53); later, however, he became professor of ethnology and director of the ethnological institute in Vienna (1962-75).

In the second session, "Relationships between Ethnology and Anthropology in the Twentieth Century," Bernhard Streck (Leipzig) described the separation of cultural and biological anthropology, which has a long history and endures today, focusing on several research institutes and the ethnological museum in Leipzig. Katja Geisenhainer (Leipzig) examined the work of Otto Reche and Fritz Krause in Leipzig from 1927 to 1945. Reche combined ethnology and anthropology in one institute, taking a racist viewpoint, and instigated several physical anthropological expeditions that incorporated ethnography. Krause founded the DGV in 1929 with the objective of separating ethnology from anthropology, though few German ethnologists then disregarded physical anthropological questions. Uwe Wolfradt (Halle) discussed the structuralism Fritz Krause developed in the 1920s; unrelated to the structuralism developed in Leiden during this period, and preceding the work of Lévi-Strauss by two decades, Krause's *ethnologische Strukturlehre* built on the psychological theories of Bastian, Wundt and Felix Krueger and rejected the culture area approach of Graebner and Schmidt, as well as the evolutionism of Morgan and Frazer. Han Vermeulen focused on the relations between anthropology and ethnology from the eighteenth century onward, arguing that they developed in separate intellectual domains—those of anatomy and natural history versus cultural history and comparative linguistics, respectively—withstanding widespread ideas about associations of races and peoples.

The last session discussed "Classical Approaches in Antiquity and the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," including papers by Martin Henking (Munich) on Tacitus's ethnology of "Germania"; by Wolbert Smidt (Hamburg) on Kant as a theorist of pre-institutional ethnology and his appropriation by pro-colonial 19th century anthropologists; by Wilfried van Damme (Leiden/Gent) on Ernst Grosse and his 1889 plea for a global and multidisciplinary approach to the study of art and aesthetics; and by Florian Eisheuer (Berlin) on anti-Semitic strains in ethnology and the conception of the Jews as a "non-national nation" (*Scheinvolk*) in the work of G. Teich, W.F. Mühlmann (1943-44) and Leo Frobenius.

Members of the DGV-Work Group "Geschichte der Ethnologie/ History of Anthropology" plan further discussions of the diverse German tradition. There will be a website and two future meetings: in October 2010 in either Halle or Leipzig; and in October 2011 in Vienna at the next DGV conference. For information, contact vermeulen@eth.mpg.de.