

DPDF Program, June 2014, UC Berkeley

Modernity and Autochthony: The Question of Land-Based Group Identity

Activities, Exercises, Assignments

Spring Session

The goal of the spring workshop is to explore current debates on the question of autochthony and indigeneity, the viability of the standard historical narrative that moves inexorably from pre-modern belonging to the land toward modern detachment from it, and the role of new, globalized economies in stimulating, for good and ill, a resurgence of political claims based on autochthony. Our main objectives in the spring session are both to unsettle the presuppositions about the origins, development, and global significance of such claims, and to begin to suggest some new ways forward. As such, the session will combine responses to the existing literature on autochthony with individual discussions of the fellows' intended projects.

June 4

By June 4, all fellows must have a description of their summer projects posted on SSRC Workspace. We suggest that for this you update and partly summarize the research proposal you submitted for the DPDF program (about 5 pages, single spaced). Start with a summary of the project and be aware that this time you are not writing for a panel of experts, but to a range of other fellows in the social sciences and humanities who may have little engagement with your area of research. The project description and in particular the summary should provide the following information (though not necessarily in this order):

1. Central question and primary claims you wish to make about your topic.
2. Some background to the scholarly conversation into which you are entering and, if applicable, indication of social relevance (link to societal issues) .
3. The sorts of materials and methods you wish to employ in your dissertation.

June 5

Morning: Introduction to the Field

Thinking about the notion of autochthony properly takes us from the ancients to the moderns, from Greek antiquity to present day Europe and Africa. We will need to confine our discussion to intellectual snapshots, as it were, of this history. Our first session will consider some permutations of the question by looking at two recent attempts at such a snapshot:

1. Peter Geschiere, "Autochthony, Citizenship, and Exclusion—Paradoxes in the Politics of Belonging in Africa and Europe," in *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies* 18: 1 (2011), 321-339.

2. Vincent P. Pecora, “A Political Theology of the Land: the Case of Otto Brunner,” typescript chapter of a book in progress; a shorter version has appeared as “Political Theology and the Case of Otto Brunner” in *Race and Political Theology*, ed. Vincent W. Lloyd (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012), 22-53.

Key Questions: How do claims of autochthony function today as issues for the social sciences and the humanities? How does the disciplinary difference between, for example, an anthropological and a historical or literary approach affect the meaning of autochthony or indigeneity? How does our approach today toward claims to autochthony map onto claims about modernity and modernization, about traditional and/or religious community, about the lingering effects of empire, and about global economic imperatives? Is autochthony as a response to the history of Western colonial power different from the development of modern claims to autochthony *within* Western nation-states? Is autochthony today primarily a response to capitalism or a version of it? Is it a rejection of the nation-state, or simply the “primordial” form of all nation-states? How do our assumptions about the history (or antique myths) of autochthony and indigeneity manifest themselves in our scholarly work? To what extent does the ‘global conjuncture of belonging’ that seems to emerge as the flipside of intensified processes of globalization in the Post-Cold War context give rise to new versions of autochthony—specifically ‘modern’ ones that are distinct from earlier versions? Does the problem of an autochthonous (and ethnically driven) modernity evaporate, as some have claimed, if we are simply more attentive to the details of local sociological, political, and historical circumstances, that is, if we “disaggregate” the entire notion of autochthonous identity?

Afternoon: Introduction to the Field, continued

1. Continuation of morning discussion
2. Brief informal introduction of prospective dissertation topics to be discussed more fully in the days to come. These introductions should present the sorts of problems and prospective solutions you have already addressed in your summaries.

In the more formal presentation of your prospective theses during the coming sessions, you will have the opportunity to elaborate your ideas in more detail. Assuming that we have all read your five-page summaries and heard your introductions, you should plan on making an oral presentation of approximately 7 minutes. In this presentation, you should make three things abundantly clear to the group:

- *Interest of the project*
- *Main line of argument*
- *Operationalization of these general ideas for your summer research*

At the end of the afternoon we will program discussants for the fellows’ presentations over the next days.

June 6 and 7

Each fellow presents her/his project

The following days will be mainly used for the more substantial fellow presentations followed by a discussion with the group. Each presentation will be 15 minutes, followed by a 5 minute intervention by another fellow who acts as discussant. After this we will have 20 minutes discussion. We suggest that in your presentation you will further develop the three points mentioned above.

First, tell us why the project you are proposing needs to be done. Why is it important? Why will what you want to say matter? To whom will it matter? How will it change received wisdom? In the most traditional form of this question, what will be your contribution to knowledge?

Second, tell us the argument you wish to make. This involves not so much telling us the details of your analysis, but rather the way that analysis will come together. Who are your intended readers? What will you assume in terms of expectations from those readers, and how will you approach those expectations? What are the steps in your argument? How will you organize your material to suit that argument? Will you depend primarily on empirical data and the research to support it, or are you more interested in making a theoretical claim reinterpreting information that already exists? If your argument is primarily in the social sciences, what sorts of sociological or anthropological frameworks will you be using? If your argument is primarily historical or literary, what ideas about historiography or literary analysis will you be invoking?

Third, tell us how you plan to use your summer research to test the ideas with which you are beginning. What will be your methods? If you plan to do some field research, what will be its nature, and how will it be organized? If you plan to do archival research, what archives will be most useful, and how do you expect to find the relevant documents? We will be returning to this last issue throughout the workshop, and will address it in further detail in our final session.

June 6

Morning: Presentation of Prospective Theses (4)

- Seraje Assi
- Samuel Kigar
- Nisrin Abdelrahman
- Emily Hong

Afternoon: Presentation by Professor of Anthropology Liisa Malkki, Stanford University

June 7**Morning:** Presentation of Prospective Theses (4)

--Keith Budner
--Kelly Presutti
--Kyle McAuley
--Anoush Suni

Afternoon: Presentation of Prospective Theses (4)

--Kai Bosworth
--Miggie Cramblit
--Tomonori Sugimoto
--Andrea Marston

June 8**Morning**

In this final session we will reflect more pointedly on the pragmatic connections between the research proposed for the summer and the critical issues raised by the workshop.

Individual consultation

Both directors will be available for informal individual consultation if a fellow so desires. Small group consultations are also possible. We will make time for this at the end of the day, before and (if necessary) after dinner. Fellows can contact us about this during the three days and we will work out a schedule.

**SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH COUNCIL
DISSERTATION PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT FELLOWSHIP
Hyatt Arlington, Arlington, Virginia
Wednesday, September 17th to Sunday, September 21st, 2014
FALL 2014 WORKSHOP AGENDA**

Modernity and Authochthony: The Question of Land-Based Group Identity

Research Director: Vincent Pecora [v.pecora@utah.edu]
Research Director: Peter Geschiere [P.L.Geschiere@uva.nl]

This is the second of two annual DPDF workshops designed to help graduate student fellows prepare cogent and fundable dissertation proposals in their chosen field. The two goals of the second workshop are 1) to help fellows synthesize their summer research; and 2) to develop revised drafts of dissertation proposals, either for committee or funding purposes. The workshop challenges fellows to consider their summer research and proposal development within the context of contributions to their research fields. In this, the goals of the fall workshop are closely related to the project of mapping a research field that began during the spring workshop.

Fellows will come out of the second workshop with clear courses of action to revise drafts into intellectually mature dissertation proposals, as well as supportive networks of mentors and cohorts of new scholars within the research field.

WORKSHOP READINGS AND RESOURCES

Any new readings and other resources will be placed on the section of the DPDF online workspace devoted to this field.

WORKSHOP ASSIGNMENTS

All assignments should be uploaded on the DPDF online workspace unless otherwise noted:

- **Deadline, Sep. 10, 2014:** Proposal draft of dissertation prospectus due to be uploaded on DPDF workspace site. The proposal should be no longer than 5 single-spaced pages.
- **Deadline, Sep. 17, 2014:** Read all proposals and compile brief written comments on each in preparation for workshop discussions.
- **Deadline, Sep. 20, 2014:** Using student and faculty feedback you have received from this workshop, submit a list of detailed tasks you need to complete after the workshop to revise your current proposals, along with a timeline for completing these tasks.

WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

Wednesday, September 17th

6 p.m.: **Registration and welcome reception**
Workshop materials will be distributed at registration.
Dinner on your own

Thursday, September 18th

9 a.m. to 12 p.m.: Workshop Session #1: Summer Research - Successes and Challenges

For this session, we will focus on connecting what you *wanted to* find with what you actually *did* find, and on how your experience meshed with your original research questions and proposals, as fleshed out during the spring workshop.

2 to 5 p.m.: Plenary Session on Proposal Writing and Applying for Dissertation Research Funding

All fellows from the research fields at this workshop will attend this session. In this session, DPDF staff, in conjunction with some of the research directors, will discuss the genre of proposal writing for research funding. Topics to be discussed will include:

- Writing for disciplinary vs. interdisciplinary audiences
- Finding an appropriate tone and style
- Ways to write about your pre-dissertation research as preparation for long-term research
- Best practices for preparing a research budget
- Pulling back the curtain on general review processes

In the second part of the plenary, students will break out into small groups to role play a review committee and discuss the merits of two short proposals that have been assigned to read prior to the workshop. Following the exercise, students will reconvene and debrief.

Friday, September 19th

9 a.m. to 12 p.m.: Workshop Session #2: Reviewing Proposals

The following sessions will be devoted to providing significant and equal time for feedback on your proposals. We will discuss 4 proposals per session.

When providing feedback, it may be helpful for us to recognize any differences in feedback for a committee proposal versus a funding proposal. Also, given many fellows' comments after the spring workshop about wanting more discussions on research design and methodological choices, we will consider how these issues can be effectively addressed through discussions of each fellow's proposal.

We will also make time for directors to meet individually with the fellows when appropriate.

We will discuss four proposals during this session and during the two sessions to follow. We will also assign respondents for each fellow on Thursday morning.

2 to 5 p.m.: Workshop Session #3: Reviewing Proposals

Continuation of proposal reviews.

Saturday, September 20th

9 a.m. to 12 p.m.: Workshop Session #4: Reviewing Proposals

Continuation of proposal reviews.

2 to 5 p.m.: Workshop Session #5: Debriefing Proposal Reviews

This session will focus on discussion of common issues or challenges that have arisen in your ability to develop proposals. More specifically, we hope to pinpoint and address your current anxieties about the process. We will ask you to upload a list of detailed tasks you need to complete after the workshop to revise your current proposals, along with a timeline for completing these tasks, before the next morning's session.

Sunday, September 21st

9 a.m. to 12 p.m.: Workshop Session #6: Wrapping Up and Next Steps

In our last session, we will focus on the next steps you should take following the conclusion of the program, whether it's sorting issues out with your advisors, calling funding agencies for clarifications, or not losing sight of the work you did in the program as you prepare for qualifying exams.

We will also devote some time to discussion of "field-building" going forward—that is, the future of something that might be called "the study of modern autochthony"—and how the group might continue the dialogue, and possibly expand the network, after the program ends (e.g., via conferences, discussion boards, and so forth).

12 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. Farewell lunch at hotel