

Хроника Currents Actualité

IUAES 2020 Congress “Coming of Age on Earth: Legacies and Next Generation Anthropology”. Šibenik, Croatia. March 9–14, 2021.

The 2020 IUAES Congress, entitled “Coming of Age on Earth: Legacies and Next Generation Anthropology”, took place in Šibenik, Croatia. The Congress was organized by the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences (IUAES), and hosted by the Institute for Anthropological Research, Zagreb, Croatia. The Chair of the Local Organizing Committee was Saša Missoni, the Director of the Institute. The Local Committee, comprising fourteen members, was coordinated by Morana Jarec and Ivan Dolanc. The Scientific Committee included five members of the IUAES Executive Committee, headed by Junji Koizumi, President, and Noel Salazar, Secretary-General, as well as seven anthropologists from Croatia and other countries. The technical staff and student-volunteers enabled the smooth realization of the conference. The Congress website and other activities were managed by Conventus Credo.

The Congress took place from March 9 to 14, and was attended by 470 anthropologists from 54 countries of all settled continents. The conference featured 5 plenaries, 56 thematic panels with 350 papers, and 11 ethnographic films. (The link to the program is: <https://iuaes2020.conventuscredo.hr/program/>).

The IUAES Šibenik Congress, initially scheduled for 2020, had to be moved to 2021 due to the Covid 19 pandemic. The plan for its realization changed from physical to hybrid, and finally to online format.

The Congress Opening started in the afternoon of March 9, with the first plenary session featuring the welcome addresses by Saša Missoni and Junji Koizumi, and the keynote lecture by Senka Božić Vrbančić, entitled “Precarity in a Time of Historical Present”.

The Congress went on for five full days with a variety of plenary and parallel sessions. The second plenary session presented keynote lectures by Thomas Hylland Eriksen, entitled “Anthropology in the Shadow of Anthropocene Overheating,” and by Renée van Kessel, named “International Science Council – The Global Voice for Science”. Two other academic plenary sessions also drew considerable attention. One was “Roundtable on Empowering Anthropology in the Face of Crises – sponsored by the World Anthropological Union, WAU” and the other was Roundtable “Not Quite the End of Nomadism?”

The 56 parallel panels, within which most of the papers were presented, followed a large number of themes. Many of them were organized by the IUAES commissions, but also by two or three individual co-organizers from different countries.

Beside the sessions with intellectual content, the conference included numerous meetings. Firstly, there were business meetings of the two organizations comprising the World Anthropological Union (WAU) – World Council of Anthropological Associations (WCAA) and IUAES, which came together under one umbrella organization in 2017. They held independent and joint membership meetings, the executives' meetings, the WAU Steering Committee meeting, and the WAU Constituency Meeting. The IUAES bodies also organized their own events, such as the IUAES commissions meetings, the Council of Commissions meeting, and the IUAES General Assembly.

The IUAES General Assembly (held on March 13) reported on all the major activities since the World Congress in Brazil, including the much-improved financial status of IUAES. It also confirmed that the preparations for the upcoming IUAES Congress in Merida, Mexico, on the theme “Heritages, Global Interactions in a Possible World”, to be held online on November 9–13, 2021, are underway. In addition, it announced that the 2022 IUAES Congress themed “World on the Move: Migration and Communication” will be held in St. Petersburg, Russia on May 25–31, 2022.

The World Council of Anthropological Associations (WCAA) took part in the Congress in two major ways, namely by co-sponsoring a major WAU event and two panels. On March 11, the WAU Steering Committee organized a plenary roundtable named “Empowering Anthropology in the Face of Crises”. Organized by Junji Koizumi and Carmen Rial, the speakers were Akhil Gupta (President of American Anthropological Association), Michal Buchowski (President of Polish

Ethnological Society), Vesna Vučinić Nešković (WCAA Global Cultural Policies Task Force Chair), Subhadra Channa (IUAES Senior Vice President), and Divine Fuh (Director of Institute for Humanities of Africa).

This panel started with noting the crisis anthropology and other human and social sciences are facing today. At the same time, it pointed to cases in which anthropology shows its strengths, i.e. where it becomes evident that it can make valuable contributions in the contemporary globalized world. The panel addressed some of the following central questions: What exactly is the nature of these crises and what are the real threats we are facing? Should we theorize the general contexts in which they arise, or we should understand each and specific situation in order to cope with them better? What WAU can do as a newly established global organization based on the integration of IUAES and WCAA, and what are the new resources we obtained through this integration? How, after all, can we effectively empower anthropology in general and anthropologies in specific as WAU, IUAES and WCAA, and what are anthropology's unique strengths in contributing to a global public good?

WCAA Global Cultural Policies Task Force also co-organized two events with the IUAES commissions. The first event was Panel 25. “Looking for New Analytical Frameworks in the Study of Cultural Heritage and Modernization”, co-organized by Zhang Jijiao, the Chair of the IUAES Commission on Enterprise Anthropology, and Vesna Vučinić Nešković, the Chair of the WCAA Global Cultural Policies Task Force. The 16 submitted papers were presented within three sessions

by scholars from China, Indonesia, Japan, and Serbia.

This panel invited scholars from around the world to search for new analytical frameworks for studying the dynamic interaction between cultural heritage, social change and development. It discussed the explanatory potentials of different analytical frameworks that address the following two major questions. The first question was do different modern societies and their state institutions determine the boundary between the traditional and the modern when they define cultural heritage? The second question was how can traditional cultural heritage and modernization be understood in a theoretically more integrated way than they seem to be at present, which would lead to more consistent and balanced policy and practice?

In addition, WCAA Global Cultural Policies Task Force, in collaboration with IUAES Commission on Anthropology and Education, co-sponsored Panel 54 entitled “What Can Anthropology Offer and What Can it Receive from the New Generation?”

How to Set Up a Bottom-Up Teaching and a Bidirectional Relationship”. Giovanna Guslini and Sabine Klocke-Daffa were panel organizers, while Vesna Vučinić Nešković was the discussant. The papers were presented by eight participants from around the world, namely from Argentina, Brazil, Germany, Italy, Trinidad and Tobago, UK, and USA.

The panel started with questions: How can we establish an educational dialogue with the new generations in and outside schools at any level? How to communicate anthropology to young people and at the same time grasp the value of the cultural experiences and researches they themselves produce in the world of edu-

cation? The panel analyzed experimental cases that have set up a bottom-up teaching and a bidirectional relationship, where listening is reciprocal. The discussion focused on the possibility of the young people, educators and anthropology experts seeking together new answers for the common future, while involving schools and institutions from different countries.

The major event for WCAA at this Congress was the WCAA Biennial Delegates Meeting, with the focus on the outcome of elections for the new members of the WCAA Organizing Committee held electronically preceding the Biennial Meeting. Ending her term, Carmen Rial (Brasil) stepped down as the WCAA Chair, while Isaac Nyamongo (Kenya), who previously served as the WCAA Deputy Chair, stepped in as the new WCAA Chair. The WCAA membership voted in Gordon Mathews (Hong Kong and USA) as the new Deputy Chair, as well as the two new Organizing Committee members, namely Lia Ferrero (Argentina) and Bela Feldman (Brasil).

It may be concluded that the IUAES 2021 Congress in Šibenik was a dynamic and well-organized event. Despite the online mode of communication, the organizers succeeded in creating a pleasant space for paper and film presentations as well as lively discussions at the panels and business meetings of different WAU bodies.

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