

Editorial

Ina-Maria Greverus, AJEC and the Anthropology of Europe

Ullrich Kockel and Elisabeth Timm

About a year ago – some of us had just met at the Göttingen congress of the International Society for Ethnology and Folklore (SIEF) and discussed the idea of a *Festschrift* for her ninetieth birthday – we heard of the sudden death of Ina-Maria Greverus, founder-editor of this journal. In his contribution to the twenty-fifth anniversary issue of AJEC, Ullrich Kockel had recounted how the founders of AJEC had ‘set out to bridge the various real and imagined gulfs between disciplines and approaches’ and how ‘successive editorial teams have, in different ways, tried to continue that original project while negotiating contemporary pressures’, noting that ‘[a]long the way, the founding spirit may sometimes have appeared ousted by the hegemonic criteria of academic respectability’ but proved resilient in the face of such pressures (Kockel 2012: 58). With this in mind, the editorial board discussed the idea of a special issue featuring contributions by members of the board past and present as well as others whose paths had crossed with Ina-Maria’s, and we decided to issue an ‘open-format’ call, encouraging a variety of reflexive, reminiscent, or otherwise discursive engagement with Ina-Maria, her work, and her influence – both academic and personal – on so many of us, of her own as well as of younger generations. The outcome is a collection of texts that we hope she would have enjoyed – not a traditional *Festschrift* or memorial so much as what, in the cultures of the ‘Celtic Fringe’, would be referred to as a *ceilidh*: a gathering of friends close and distant, casting back their hearts and minds and telling stories about the pasts, presents and futures of their however imagined community. It is in the nature of such gatherings that their proceedings contain pieces that are longer or shorter, formal or informal, subjectively felt or objectively analytical, referencing Ina-Maria’s work and life extensively or not at all, and sometimes a mixture of these.

Francisco Martínez opens our collection as someone who encountered Ina-Maria’s work only from the distance of the academic reader but has drawn inspiration from her approach on his own voyages of anthropological discovery.



Two contributions by colleagues from Graz – a city and university with which Ina-Maria had strong connections – follow, both shaped by personal encounters. Judith Laister, of the same academic generation as Francisco, makes a plea for an alternative aesthetic of anthropological practice, taking Ina-Maria's work as the starting point for contemporary engagement with anthropological challenges. While Johanna Rolshoven, of an intermediate generation and who experienced Ina-Maria at various key points in her own career, reflects on a woman scholar driven by not only insatiable curiosity but also outstanding courage in the context of a male-dominated establishment, methodological paradigms and disciplinary canon, whose obstinacy enabled her to 'speed ahead', exploring new pathways for anthropological research, not just on European cultures.

Christian Giordano founded AJEC with Ina-Maria and remained a co-editor for many years. His reflections on Sicily as theatre of fieldwork and arena of anthropological encounter not only offer insights into the human ecological 'placed-ness' of Ina-Maria's work but also evoke memories, for Ullrich Kockel, of our first encounter in Llangollen, Wales, where the launch of AJEC was planned in the late 1980s and a young post-doc was invited to be a 'fly-on-the-wall' at some of those discussions (and, subsequently, a passenger in the back of a VW minibus driven to the airport by Franz-Josef Stummann, at the time director of the European Centre for Traditional and Regional Cultures, who supported the first issue of the journal).

AJEC's first official editorial assistant and later co-editor, Regina Römhild, takes up one of Ina-Maria's key concerns, *Heimat*, a theme reflecting both an ontological tenet of the traditional *Volkskunde* protagonists with whom Ina-Maria 'locked horns' more than once in the course of her long and active life as well as the life history of a scholar expelled from her home in her mid-teens who remained *Auf der Suche nach Heimat* (Greverus 1979). The distinctive perspective Ina-Maria developed on this controversial concept is illustrated with reference to student projects carried out at her institute in Frankfurt/M. Another student of Ina-Maria's who succeeded her to the Chair at that institute, Gisela Welz, analyses this concern with place and belonging in the broader sense of 'environmental orientations', highlighting the human ecological dimensions of an anthropology of the Anthropocene.

Helena Wulff, who, as the spokesperson of the editorial board, invited Ullrich Kockel at the EASA congress in Bristol 2006 to take on the role of editor following the transition of the journal to Berghahn,

remembers Ina-Maria as a pioneer woman academic and unusually generous mentor, especially of younger women colleagues, a characteristic she relates crucially to Ina-Maria's interest in the arts and aesthetics and traces this also with reference to AJEC.

The journal's evolution is mapped further in the contribution by Gabriela Kiliánová and Tatiana Podolinská, who investigate the progress of AJEC as an intercultural exercise in building bridges between academic disciplines and, in the process, different parts of Europe. Their conclusion, that AJEC has been fulfilling Ina-Maria's aspiration of establishing a journal that crosses boundaries and expands the field of anthropological engagement with European cultures (and beyond), points towards the final two contributions, which assess the project of an 'anthropology of Europe' in the early twenty-first century.

Given the importance of the Mediterranean frontier in the currently widely diagnosed 'crisis of the European project', it is not surprising that both of these contributions focus on southern Europe. Jon Mitchell uses an ethnographic vignette of contemporary Malta to show why anthropologists of Europe may need to reconsider their ideas about political culture, how to distinguish the universal and the particular, and how to approach mobility and territoriality conceptually. Finally, Sally Raudon and Cris Shore, through their anthropological reflections on the course and impact of 'austerity' in the EU, highlight the increasing political challenges facing anthropological research on European cultures. Their analysis provides a sobering but necessary counterpoint to the emphasis on aesthetic, rhetoric and the arts – an emphasis needed today perhaps more than ever but also harder to maintain in the face of varied existential threats confronting contemporary societies.

We were deeply impressed by the range and depth of the homage articles that have been sent to AJEC in honour of Ina-Maria Greverus. However, the contributions featured here are not encompassing but rather an outcome of a much broader feedback we received while working on this issue. There are many more colleagues who have been inspired by Ina-Maria Greverus' work, be it via personal contact during an academic career or on the basis of her publications. Thus, because their authors are committed to and engaged deeply with the project of an emancipative and critical anthropology of Europe in a global perspective, we consider not only this issue but also all the homages that remained unwritten as a dispersed and vivid monument of a scholar's legacy.

References

Greverus, I.-M. (1979), *Auf der Suche nach Heimat* (München: Beck).

Kockel, U. (2012), 'Crossing Boundaries, Exploring the Frontier: Recollections of an Intercultural Wanderer', *Anthropological Journal of European Cultures* 21, no. 1: 43–64.