

Programs in Anthropology

Teachers College, Columbia University

What's up, Doc?



Dr. Hervé Varenne

Puzzling Corona in his blog (linked below!)



Dr. Nicholas Limerick

Two new publications! Linked below.



Dr. Amina Tawasil

Currently working on two projects - one in NM.



A Great Loss: Professor Comitاس Passes at 92

After 53 years of service, Professor Comitاس passed away on March 5, 2020. For a beautiful tribute, *Ithaca on His Mind*, visit our [website](#). You can also support the *Anthropology Research Fund in Honor of Lambros Comitاس* [here](#).

Recommended Reading

1

MIGRATION NARRATIVES:
DIVERGING STORIES IN
SCHOOLS, CHURCHES, AND CIVIC
INSTITUTIONS
BY WORTHAM, NICHOLAS,
CLONAL-ROY, AND RHODES

2

LOOKING LIKE A LANGUAGE,
SOUNDING LIKE A RACE:
RACIOLINGUISTIC IDEOLOGIES
AND THE LEARNING OF
LATINIDAD
BY JONATHAN ROSA

3

FORGING THE IDEAL EDUCATED
GIRL: THE PRODUCTION OF
DESIRABLE SUBJECTS IN
MUSLIM SOUTH ASIA
BY SHENILA KHOJA-MOOLJI

A Greeting To You All

Dear Alumni,

It has been quite a year for our programs. One many of us hope will not repeat.

First, there was the passing of Professor Comitas, a major figure for many if not most of you. His was the last link to beginnings which were very much not in the past for him. We mourn him and will try to preserve the truly rich inheritance he built with Professors Bond and Harrington: a strong program grounded both in the most powerful of anthropologies, and the real concerns of our contemporaries. As you can see reading about the work of those who joined you as our new alumni, that which was started more than half-a-century ago is still fully alive.

And then there was the shift to "distanced teaching and advising" There is not much else for us to do than try to make the best of it. It is reassuring to me that we did welcome a new doctoral cohort of three whom we are all sure will join your ranks in the not so distant future. While "summer fieldwork" was not quite what we hope it can be for those who are now in their second year, the constraints do allow for us to think more deeply about what exactly is "ethnography." As I wrote to a message to our current students last April, we must also see the current epoch as another occasion to demonstrate what anthropology can do to help understand what happens when populations are stressed. In 1997, Professor Bond, along with John Kreniske, Ida Susser and Joan Vincent put together an edited volume about AIDS in Africa (Westview 1997). I encourage all of you to get involved in proposing and conducting research about what has been happening since March. As I

like to say in my [blog](#) about what I call the "Corona epoch," the virus can kill you but it cannot close a restaurant. What happens when restaurants get closed is what anthropologists should document.

We do have good news to announce.

Most importantly, Professor Grey Gundaker is joining us. This year she is the Tisch Lecturer at Teachers College. She will then join us as Senior Lecturer. She has now been associated with the program in various ways for several years and she is a great favorite among those who have had the privilege of getting to know her.

Interestingly enough, I was asked by the administration of Teachers College to conduct a small study triggered by the growing number of students from China seeking and gaining admissions to many parts of the College. I am glad that Dr. Michelle Zhang, the latest of our alumni and now a postdoctoral fellow in our program, has accepted to be co-Principal Investigator and to conduct the ethnography. Dr. Zhang has just completed her dissertation on the lives of young adults in Beijing. It is encouraging that the College is thereby recognizing the value of anthropology. As I wrote in the proposal: anthropology is particularly well suited to the discovery of what questions to ask when we are faced with something we have never quite experienced before.

-Professor Varenne
Programs in Anthropology
Coordinator
ITS Department Chair



**End of the Year
Hangout
May 2020**

New Publications from Our Faculty

Limerick, N. (2020). What's the Linguistic Variety of Audit Culture? Administering an Indigenous Language Proficiency Exam in Ecuador's Intercultural Bilingual Education. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 51(3), 282-303.

Limerick, N. (2020). Speaking for a State: Standardized Kichwa Greetings and Conundrums of Commensuration in Intercultural Ecuador. *Signs and Society*, 8(2), 185-219.

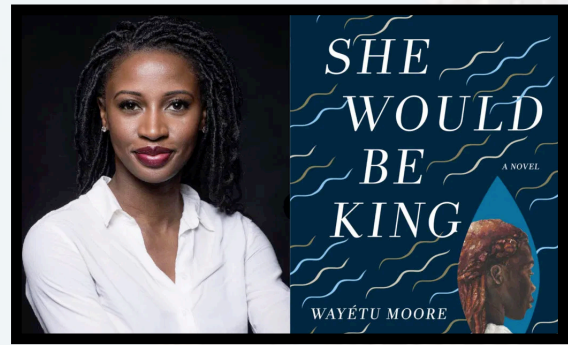
Current Research Projects

Amina Tawasil: (1) Ethnographic research on Filipino guest workers teaching in New Mexico. (2) Collecting oral histories from 25 families of those who have been executed in the U.S.

Hervé Varenne & Michelle Zhang: Conducting a small pilot study on the students from China who are attending Teachers College and Columbia.

Michelle Zhang: Investigating how new and old networks become transnational as young people leave China to study abroad.

Recent Alumni Publication



Wayétu Moore, MA

"She Would Be King" is a spectacular blend of history and magical realism that follows three extraordinary characters: in the West African village of Lai, red-haired Gbessa is cursed with immortality at birth and lives in exile under suspicion of being a witch; on a plantation in Virginia, June Dey hides his unusual strength until a confrontation with the overseer forces him to flee; and in the Blue Mountains of Jamaica, Norman Aragon, the child of a white British colonizer and a Maroon slave, learns to fade from sight at will. When the three of them meet in the colony of Monrovia, it isn't long before they realize that they are all cursed—or, perhaps, uniquely gifted. Together they protect the weak and vulnerable amid rising tensions between the American settlers, French slave traders, and indigenous tribes.

In her transcendent debut, Wayétu Moore reimagines the tumultuous and dramatic story of Liberia, a country whose past and present are inextricably bound to the United States. With great poise and lyricism, she captures the epic excitement of a nation's founding and explores themes of community, loyalty, and the complex ties that bind the African diaspora. *She Would Be King* resonates deeply with our current moment and, as Edwidge Danticat observes, "boldly announces the arrival of a remarkable novelist and storyteller."

—Publisher's description

2019 - 2020 Graduates

Afaf Al-Khoshman, MA - Socialization and Societal Change: Families Negotiating Changing Education Environment- Examples from Al-Rawda Jordan

Chelsea Abbas, PhD - "Conflict, Change, and Social Relations in a Costa Rican Border Village: An Ethnographic Study of Delta, Costa Rica."

Raphaelle Ayach, MA - "Taking a fish from the lake and putting it on the land: The impact of grades and grade placement on migrant students' school experiences in Nairobi, Kenya"

Myles Bittner, MA - "Making Connections Without Words: Three Case-Studies of U.S. Preservice Teachers in Linguistically Challenging Environments"

Sarah Brennan, PhD - "Shifting Selves: Queer Muslim Asylum Seekers in the Netherlands."

Zhiyun Guan, MA - "Peer Relationships in Inclusive Education"

Luis Rodrigo Mayorga, PhD - "Between Hope and Hopelessness: Citizenship Education and Student Mobilization in a Chilean Public High School."

Wayétu Moore, MA - "What is culture in a Liberian Educational Context?"

Emma Wilson, MA - "Responsive or Requiring?: Family Involvement in New York State's Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework"

Nicholas Welna, MA - Personalized Learning Technology Flexible Accumulation and the Frictionless Labor Market

Dissertations - In - Progress

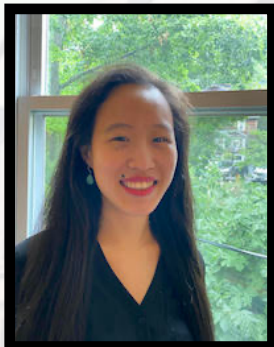


NEW APPOINTMENTS



Dr. Grey Gundaker (left) joins us as our Tisch Lecturer this year! She will join our faculty as Senior Lecturer in Fall 2021.

Dr. Michelle Zhang (right) joins us as a post-doctoral fellow. She recently finished writing her dissertation on youth, play, and social networks in China.



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OUR BLOG



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