

Philip Carl Salzman, CNP Chair from 1978-1993

Philip Carl Salzman, Ph.D. (Chicago) is Professor of Anthropology at McGill University in Canada. In recent years he has served as Houtan Senior Research Fellow at the University of St. Andrews, Open Society International Scholar at the American University of Central Asia, Erasmus Mundus International Fellow at the University of Catania, and Visiting Professor at the University of Sydney. He is a long time student of nomadic and pastoral peoples, and founded the Commission on Nomadic Peoples of the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, and the international journal *Nomadic Peoples*. Extensive ethnographic field research in Baluchistan (Iran), Gujarat and Rajasthan (India), and Sardinia (Italy) provided the foundation for such publications as *The Anthropology of Real Life: Events in Human Experience* (1999), *Black Tents of Baluchistan* (2000), *Pastoralists: Equality, Hierarchy, and the State* (2004), and *Culture and Conflict in the Middle East* (2008). His latest publication is *Classic Comparative Anthropology: Studies from the Tradition* (2012). Recent explorations in Kyrgyzstan have led to his current interests in the nomadic and pastoral peoples of Central and East Asia, with particular attention to Tibet, Inner Mongolia, Outer Mongolia, and Turkistan.

Final Report on the Working of the Commission

Professor Philip Carl Salzman, former CNP Chair (1978-1993)

In 1978, I read a notice, probably in CURRENT ANTHROPOLOGY, about Commissions of the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences. These Commissions were meant to be the academic working groups of the Union, and were organized around a topic or theme. One was the Commission on Urgent Anthropology. Some mention was made of a Commission on nomadic peoples, and this caught my attention. I had done fieldwork among nomadic, pastoral tribes in Iranian Baluchistan in 1967-68, 1972-73, and 1976, and had organized or participated in a number of symposiums on nomads at American Anthropological Association meetings. Mostly, until then, the specialists on nomads with whom I had collaborated had been Americans, except for a couple of senior colleagues by origin from England. I was drawn to the possibility of meeting and collaborating with a broader, international range of researchers on nomadic peoples.

I contacted Cyril Belshaw, the President of the IUAES, and asked about the Commission on nomadic peoples. He replied that the idea had been suggested, but that no such commission had yet been organized. And he invited me to organize a new Commission on Nomadic Peoples. With perhaps more enthusiasm than prudence, I accepted his offer and began organizing the Commission. Now the Union has always imagined commissions as working groups of a dozen or two dozen members who organize and pursue various activities, including holding conferences, publishing, and perhaps carrying out research. But from the beginning I operate with a different model, that of an large network which would include a broad range of interested parties. I wrote to specialists all around the world to see who might be interested in participating. The result was a list in the hundreds. So we had a broad base with which to work.

One of my intentions--perhaps vague at first, and more deliberate as I continued--was to be inclusive (as we say these days), drawing in as many interested parties as possible. I hoped that the Commission could act as a bridge across boundaries between academic disciplines (such as anthropology, rural sociology, geography, range science, etc.), between academics and non-academics (planners, development project workers, government officials, governmental and non-governmental agency workers, etc.), between language spheres (e.g. English and French, not only among native speakers, but in English-speaking Africa and French-speaking Africa), and above all between those regions and countries with nomadic and pastoral populations and those without, from which many of the interested academics came. Organizing conferences was one way in which we brought people from different spheres together. For a number of years John G. Galaty acted as Secretary of the CNP, and we worked together organizing conferences and proceedings. We had independent CNP conferences in London in 1978 (NOMADS IN A CHANGING WORLD, Salzman and Galaty, eds., Naples, 1990), Nairobi in 1980 (THE FUTURE OF PASTORAL PEOPLES, Galaty, Aronson, and Salzman, eds., Ottawa, 1981; L'AVENIR DES PEUPLES PASTEURS, Ottawa, 1983), Montreal in 1985 (LOCAL PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENT DECISIONS, NOMADIC PEOPLES No. 18, 1985), and Pavia in 1992 (THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF TRIBAL AND PEASANT PASTORAL SOCIETIES/ANTHROPOLOGIA DELLE SOCIETA' PASTORALI TRIBALI E CONTADINE, Fabietti and Salzman, eds., Como, 1996), and we organized major sessions at International Congresses and Intercongresses of the IUAES, such as New Delhi in 1978 (CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT IN NOMADIC AND PASTORAL SOCIETIES, Galaty and Salzman, Leiden, 1981), Amsterdam in 1981 (CONTEMPORARY NOMADIC AND PASTORAL PEOPLES, Salzman, editor, no. 18 & 19, STUDIES IN THIRD WORLD SOCIETIES, Williamsburg), Alexandria, Egypt in 1986 (CONTROL AND ALIENATION OF TERRITORY AMONG NOMADIC PEOPLES/LES PEUPLES NOMADES: OCCUPATION SPATIALE ET ALIENATION TERRITORIALE, NOMADIC PEOPLES No. 20, 1986), Zagreb in 1988, Mexico City in 1993 (THE PASTORAL LAND CRISIS: TENURE AND DISPOSSESSION IN EASTERN AFRICA, Galaty, Hjort, Lane and Ndagala, NOMADIC PEOPLES No. 34/35, 1994). The Commission also provided sponsorship for other conferences and publications (e.g. WOMEN IN PASTORAL PRODUCTION, ETHNOS 52:1-2, 1987). (Further conferences and publications have resulted from CNP activities since I stepped down as chair in 1993).

In these meetings and publications we benefited from contributions by colleagues from a variety of disciplines, specialties, geographic origins, and language sectors. For example, we were able regularly to have some contributions in French, and on some occasions strong representations of other languages, e.g. Italian. We made special efforts to include colleagues from countries with nomadic and pastoral populations, and their contributions have repeatedly been an important part of CNP conferences and publications.

Early in the life of the CNP, I began sending out a newsletter, called the BULLETIN, which after a couple of years began to take the form of an academic journal, including a name change to NOMADIC PEOPLES. During the 1980s, my efforts were increasingly devoted to NOMADIC PEOPLES. It was published, in an inexpensive format and with largely volunteer labor, out of my office at McGill University. I wanted to keep production costs down, so that I could send copies without charge to colleagues in Africa and Asia and the Soviet block. Letters and reports from recipients indicated that the journal did serve some purpose. Small grants from Wenner-Gren, International Development Research Centre in Ottawa, and Social Science and Humanities Research Council in Ottawa, and ongoing support from McGill

University, allowed me to keep our "shoe-string" publishing operation going until 1990, when a new editor and new policy was established.

Through the latter part of the 1980s NOMADIC PEOPLES became the venue for publication of the proceedings of some CNP conferences. This allowed us to avoid the arduous search for publishers and to insure the widespread dissemination of conference proceedings. This tradition has continued among subsequent editors.