

Deborah E. Tooker

Educational History

Ph.D. Anthropology 1988

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

A.M. Anthropology

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

A.B. Anthropology, *summa cum laude*

BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

Academic Appointments

- 2012 – Current **Professor of Anthropology**; *Director*, Anthropology Program
Dept. of Anthropology, Criminology, & Sociology
LE MOYNE COLLEGE, Syracuse, N.Y.
- 2015 – 2018 **Joseph C. Georg Endowed Professor**
LE MOYNE COLLEGE
- 2001 – Current **Faculty Associate in Research**, Southeast Asia Program
CORNELL UNIVERSITY
- 2012 – 2015 **Department Chair**, Dept. of Anthropology, Criminology, & Sociology
LE MOYNE COLLEGE
- 2002 (Jan – Dec) **Visiting Fellow**, Southeast Asia Program
CORNELL UNIVERSITY
- 2000 – 2012 **Associate Professor of Anthropology**; *Director*, Anthropology
Program, Dept. of Anthropology, Criminology, & Sociology
LE MOYNE COLLEGE
- 1994 – 1996 **Research Fellow and Programme Director**,
Postdoctoral Collaborative Research Programme on
"Cultural Traditions of Endangered Minorities in South & Southeast Asia"
(on leave from *LE MOYNE COLLEGE*)
INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR ASIAN STUDIES
LEIDEN UNIVERSITY, The Netherlands
- 1993 – 2000 **Assistant Professor of Anthropology**; *Director*, Anthropology
Program, Dept. of Sociology and Anthropology
LE MOYNE COLLEGE
- 1991 – 1992 **Rockefeller Resident Fellow in the Humanities**,
Southeast Asia Program
CORNELL UNIVERSITY

- 1990 – 1991 **Lecturer on Anthropology and Lecturer on Social Studies,**
Department of Anthropology, Committee on Degrees in Social Studies
HARVARD UNIVERSITY
- 1988 – 1990 **Lecturer on Social Studies,** Committee on Degrees in Social Studies
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Research Areas

- Psychological Anthropology and emotional practices
- Anthropology of Space and Place
- Upland Southeast Asia/Southwest China minority groups (especially Akha)
- Identity Politics
- Ethnicity and Collective Identity
- Glocalization and “Modernity”
- Essentialist Concepts and Interiority Discourses
- Multiplicities in Southeast Asia

Teaching

- Introduction to Anthropology (4 field)
- Peoples and Cultures of Southeast Asia
- Anthropological Linguistics
- Social Theory
- Critical Ethnography
- Field Methods

Publications, Refereed

Book and Edited Volume

2012. *Space and the Production of Cultural Difference among the Akha Prior to Globalization: Channeling the Flow of Life*, Amsterdam University Press, 338 pages. Distributed in the U.S. by the University of Chicago Press.

2020. (Co-editor with Erik de Maaker). *Special Forum: Agrarian Change in Zomia*, In *Asian Ethnology*, Vol. 79 Issue 2.

Articles, Refereed

2020. First author with Ian Baird as second author. “Agrarian Change in ‘Zomia’: Social, Religious, and Cosmological Dimensions of Swidden Cultivation and Upland Livelihoods in the Consolidation of the ‘Modern’ State: Introduction to the Special Forum” in *Special Forum: Agrarian Change in Zomia*, in *Asian Ethnology* Vol. 79 Issue 2, pp. 301-310.

2019. “Rethinking Depth Metaphors with a Cosmocentric Self: The ‘Steep’ and the

'Level' in Akha Emotional Practices", in *Ethos* Vol. 47, Issue 3, pp. 346–366.

2004. "Modular Modern: Shifting Forms of Collective Identity among the Akha of Northern Thailand", in *Anthropological Quarterly*, vol. 77, no. 2, pp. 243-288.

1996. "Putting the Mandala in Its Place: A practice-based approach to the spatialization of power on the Southeast Asian 'periphery'-- the case of the Akha", *The Journal of Asian Studies* 55:2 (May), pp. 323-358.

1992. "Identity Systems of Highland Burma: 'Belief', Akha *zán*, and a critique of interiorized notions of ethno-religious identity", *Man* [currently *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*], vol. 27, no.4, pp. 799-819.

1979. "Some Basic Trobriand Attitudes about Sex as Expressed in the *Kula* Trade", in *The Cambridge Journal of Anthropology*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (January 1979), pp. 44-65. Cambridge University, Great Britain. [1986 revised and updated as "When Gender Moves Around: The Sexual Nature of *Kula*", Special Paper, Harvard University].

Articles, Non-Refereed

1999. "From Culture to Ethnic Group: The Compartmentalization of Group Identity in Northern Thailand", working paper published in *Multiculturalism: Modes of Coexistence and Conflict in Asia*. Washington, D.C.: Sasakawa Peace Foundation, pp. 358-401.

1995. "The Aini zu of the Hani Minority Nationality: Comparative Thoughts on Akha in China, Thailand and Myanmar (Burma)", in *Yearbook of the International Institute of Asian Studies I, 1994*, pp. 27-34. Leiden.

1993. "Response to Rhum", in "Comment" section, in *Man*, vol. 28, no. 4, December.

1993. "The Hani of China", in *State of the Peoples*, ed. by Marc S. Miller, pp.118-119. Cultural Survival. Boston: Beacon Press.

1990. "Some Continuities in the Communication of Hierarchy in Tai (Dai) and non-Tai (Akha/Hani) Groups", in *Proceedings of the 4th International Conference on Thai Studies, 11-13 May, 1990, vol. III*, pp.83-94, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Kunming, China.

Work in Progress

Border Emotions: Akha Emotional Style on the Margins of Modernity. Book Manuscript in progress.

Reviews and Invitations

Peer Reviewer for: *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, *Anthropological Quarterly*, *Sojourn* (a journal on Southeast Asia), *Ethnography*, *Critical Sociology*, *Asian Ethnicity*, and others.

Invited proposal reviewer for the National Science Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and others.

Invited book reviewer for the Alpha Sigma Nu Jesuit Colleges and Universities Book Prize.

Reviewer for the textbook, *Anthropological Theory*, McGee/Warms (McGraw-Hill).

Reviewer for the textbook *Anthropology: A Global Perspective*. Pearson.

Review of *Lisu Religion* (E.P. Durrenberger), *The Journal of Asian Studies*, vol. 49, #1 (Feb. 1990), pp.205-206.

Grants and Honors (Selected)

The Joseph C. Georg Endowed Professorship, Le Moyne College, 2015-2018.

ASIANetwork Freeman Foundation Student-Faculty Grant for research project "Continuing the Flow of Life (*gylàn*) in a Global World: Cultural Sustainability across the Generation Gap"; \$24,650. Grant covered all expenses for 4 students to carry out individual research projects in Thailand under my mentorship in summer 2013.

Social Science Research Council (SSRC)/Association for Asian Studies (AAS) grant; Selected as Faculty Mentor for Workshop for 12 graduate students writing dissertations on the topic of generational change in Asia, San Diego, March 18-21, 2013 (travel grant and stipend) (24 faculty applied, 4 accepted).

Space and the Production of Cultural Difference Book nominated for ICAS International Book Prize, 2012.

National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Stipend (2006) for work on book manuscript (10% acceptance rate).

Howard Foundation Fellowship Finalist (top 25%) for the project *Space and the Production of Cultural Difference among the Akha of Northern Thailand*, 2006.

"Scholar of the Year" Award, Le Moyne College, Syracuse, NY, 1998.

International Centre for Ethnic Studies, Colombo, Sri Lanka, awarded Research Grant for Individual Project on "Inter-ethnic Relations on the Periphery of the Thai State", as part of the Sasakawa Peace Foundation (Japan) research programme on "Culture and Identity: Ethnic Coexistence in Asia"; awarded December, 1995.

International Institute for Asian Studies, Leiden, the Netherlands, Research Fellowship (2 years), 1994-96.

Committee on Scholarly Communication with the People's Republic of China, National Academy of Sciences: China Conference Travel Grant (for International Conference on Hani Culture, 1993, Yunnan, P.R.C.).

Rockefeller Resident Fellow in the Humanities, Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, 1991-92.

Harvard University Innovative Teaching Funds Award for Cambodian community study course, 1990-91.

American Council of Learned Societies Travel Grant (to May, 1990 International Conference on Thai Studies, Kunming, Yunnan, P.R.C.).

Social Science Dissertation Fellowship (1986-87), Harvard University.

Charlotte Newcombe Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship, 1984-85.

Institute for Intercultural Studies Research Grant 1983-84.

Department of Anthropology Research Grant, Harvard University, 1983-4.

Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad Fellowship: for Thailand, 1982-83.

Peter Livingston research grant (Harvard Medical School), 1982.

Frederick Sheldon Traveling Fellowship, Harvard University, 1981-82.

National Science Foundation Graduate Fellowship, 1977-80.

PLUS: Various research grants from the Le Moyne College Research and Development Committee and the O'Leary International Fund at Le Moyne College.

Conferences and Selected Talks

2021 (2020 conference postponed to 2021 due to COVID-19). “The multiple valences of western psychology among the Akha of Northern Thailand” for the panel I organized titled “Predatory Psychologies East and West”, for the First Biennial Meeting of the European Network for Psychological Anthropology, June 1-3, 2021, University of Helsinki (Virtual).

2019. “Unfeeling Facebook: Social Media Usage in an Akha Community in Thailand and the Foucauldian Confessional of Modernity” for the panel “Making known: co-presences with persons and their media” organized by Narmala Halstead, University of Sussex, U.K. for the Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Vancouver, November, 2019.

2019. “The ‘indigenization’ of psychological interiority and the indexing of ‘modernity’ among a minority group in the Sino—sphere” presented at the Invited Workshop on “‘Indigenous’ Psychology and Mental Health in China”, organized by Prof. Jie Yang at Simon Fraser University, Nov. 23-24, 2019

2019. “Understanding Social Media in Cross-cultural Contexts: Emotional Expression and the Sense of Self among the Akha of Thailand”, presented in Le Moyne College’s Core 400 class. Nov. 14, 2019.

2019. “Alternative Constructions of the Interiority Discourse with Incorporation in a Market Economy among the Akha of Northern Thailand” in the panel “The Inner State of Others: Psychological Attribution in Institutional Context”, at the Biennial Meeting of the Society for Psychological Anthropology, Santa Ana Pueblo, New Mexico, April 4-7, 2019.

2018. “‘We do it for each other’: Akha ‘other’ inclusiveness in subsistence and capitalist contexts”, paper presented in the panel “Moving between self and other: Navigating hierarchy and alterity in cosmopolitical encounters”, Theodoros Kyriakides, Convenor (The Open University UK), at the European Association of Social Anthropology Biennial Conference, Stockholm, August 14-17, 2018.

2018. Two talks (February and August) at book clubs (Syracuse and Thousand Island Park Library, New York) on *The Tea Girl of Hummingbird Lane* by Lisa See. Novel takes place among the Akha people.

2017f. “Affective dimensions of the self in the turn to a market economy among the Akha of Northern Thailand: is the ‘soft skills’ discourse relevant?”, paper (accepted) to be presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Washington, D.C., November 29-December 3, 2017 in the panel titled: “Soft Skills in Changing Societies”.

2017e. “‘My Heart is Too Steep’: Emotional Moderation and the ‘Level’ Self Among the Akha of Thailand and Burma”, presented at the Social Science Seminar Series, Le Moyne College, September 19, 2017.

2017d. “Collective desire and moral-spiritual resistance to individual emotional interiority in the rising market economy among the Akha”, presented at the 10th International Convention of Asian Scholars, 7/20-7/23/17, Chiang Mai, Thailand; Organized panel (3 panelists) and served as Chair for panel titled: “Emotional and Intimate Variations: Historicizing and Contextualizing Affect Amid Changing Political Economies”.

2017c. “Contradictions in Emotion Worlds Among Entrepreneurial Akha in the Thai Border Regions”, paper presented at the 13th International Conference on Thai Studies, 7/15-7/18/17, Chiang Mai, Thailand, in panel titled: “Neo-Liberalizing Border: State, Market, Religion, and Identity in Motion”.

2017b. “Collective desire and moral-spiritual resistance to individual emotional interiority in the rising market economy among the Akha”, presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies, March 16-19, 2017 in Toronto. This was the Thailand/Laos/Cambodia Studies Group Sponsored Panel at Association for Asian Studies Annual Meeting; Organized double panel (8 panelists and 2 discussants/Chairs) titled: “Emotional and Intimate Variations: Historicizing and Contextualizing Affect Amid Changing Political Economies in Mainland Southeast Asia”.

2017a. “Collective desire and moral-spiritual resistance to individual emotional interiority in the rising market economy among the Akha”, presented at the Biennial Meeting of the Society for Psychological Anthropology, March 9-12, 2017 in New Orleans. Organized and served as Chair for panel (7 panelists) titled: “Emotional and Intimate Variations: Historicizing and Contextualizing Affect Amid Changing Political Economies”.

2016. “Changing Concepts of Self, Psyche, and Emotion among the Akha”, presented at Research Center for Sustainable Development (RCSD) and Center for Ethnic Studies and Development (CESD), Chiang Mai University, March 25, 2016.

2014c. “Shifting Agriculturalists and Modernities at the Borderlands”, Discussion paper presented in the panel “Who Owns the Hills? Cosmologies, Claims and Resources of the South and South East Asian Uplands”, as part of the 4th Asian Borderlands conference, Hong Kong, December 8-10. Also served as panel Chair.

2014b. “Emotional Scripts of Modernity”, paper presented (in absentia) at the inaugural Association for Asian Studies in Asia conference in the panel “Multiple and Shifting Akha Engagements with Modernity amidst a Transforming Upper Mekong Region”, July 17-18, 2014 National University of Singapore.

2014a. “Emotional Diversity among the Akha of Northern Thailand”, paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the AsiaNetwork in the panel “Emotional Dimensions of Asian Minority Identities” (panel organizer), April 11-13, Bloomington, IL.

“Continuing the Flow of Life (*gylà*) in a Global World: Cultural Sustainability across the Generation Gap” collaborative student project; Introductory talk and Final Discussion presentation, Center for Ethnic Studies and Development (CESD) and Research Center for Sustainable Development (RCSD), Chiang Mai University, Thailand, July 5, 2013.

“Border Emotions”, paper presented at the 2nd Asian Borderlands conference, November 5-7, 2010, Chiang Mai University, Thailand.

“Space and Emotional Practices among the Akha of Northern Thailand”, paper presented in the panel “Practice and Emotional Geographies” at the Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers, April 13-18, 2010, Washington, D.C.

Panel Co-organizer along with Saipin Suputtamongkol, Felicity Aulino and Prista Ratanapruck for **Invited Panel** (AES/APLA) entitled “Different and Unequal: Violence and the Scope of Rationality in the Work of Stanley J. Tambiah”, Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, November 28-December 2, 2007, Washington, D.C. Also served as Panel Discussant with discussion paper entitled: “Decolonizing Anthropology: power and knowledge in the work of Stanley J. Tambiah”.

Invited paper entitled “The Soul Market and the Other in Akha ‘Tradition’ presented at the international conference “Imagined Centers, Diverse Peripheries”, Institute of Ethnology, Academia Sinica, Taiwan, December 11-13, 2006.

“The Language of Rice in Akha Healing Rituals”, presented to the Social Empirical Analysis Laboratory seminar series, Le Moyne College, February 22, 2006.

“Modular Modern: Shifting Forms of Collective Identity among the Akha of Northern Thailand” lecture presented at the Brooks Museum, SUNY, Cortland, NY, March 24, 2004.

“Modular Modern: Changing Forms of Collective Identity among the Akha of Northern Thailand”, presented to the Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, March 7, 2002. “Cultural and Sociological Translation: Akha Spatial Practices and the Structure of Meaning”, **invited** paper presented at “Translationes--Conference on Intercultural Understanding”, the University of Leipzig, Germany, September 28-30, 2000.

“Modular Modern: the Compartmentalization of Group Identity among the Akha of Northern Thailand”, paper presented at the 7th International Conference on Thai Studies, July 4-8, 1999, Amsterdam, the Netherlands in the panel entitled “Ethnicity and Nation-State”. **Invited** co-Chair of this panel which consisted of seven sessions.

“The Location of Conflict, Accommodation and Ethnicity: Notes from the field”, **invited** paper presented at the Workshop on “Models of Ethnic Accommodation in South and Southeast Asia”, 9-10 January, 1998, Oxford University, U.K.; sponsored by the International Center for Ethnic Studies, Colombo, Sri Lanka.

“Inter-ethnic Relations on the Periphery of the Thai State”, **Invited** report presented to the Collaborative Project on “Culture and Identity: Ethnic Co-existence in Asia”, International Center for Ethnic Studies, Colombo; Cochin, India, March 28-30, 1997.

“Technologies of Political Penetration: Indigenous Southeast Asian Constructions of ‘Insiders’ and ‘Outsiders’-- the Case of the Akha”, invited paper presented at the Conference on “Asian Minority Cultures in Transition: Diversity, Identities, Encounters”, University of Munster, Germany, December 12-15, 1996.

“Akha Curing Practices and the Politics of Identity”, invited paper presented at the Workshop on “Poverty, the Politics of Marginality and Cultures of Resistance”, Department of Anthropology, London School of Economics, September 27-29, 1996.

“Current Research in the Anthropology of Southeast Asia”, invited lecture at Institut für Ethnologie, Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität, Münster, Germany, June 27, 1996.

Co-Organizer: “The Second International Conference on Hani-Akha Culture”, May 12-18, 1996, Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai, Thailand.

“Irrigation Systems in the Ideology and Ritual Practices of Akha Shifting Agriculturalists” (Akha title: *àkházáη-ə ýxhè hə dò*), paper presented (in English and Akha) at the Second International Conference on Hani-Akha Culture, May 12-18, 1996, Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai, Thailand.

“Between Two (or More) Worlds: the Ethnography of a Tribal society after the Post-modern Turn”, Luncheon Lecture series, International Institute for Asian Studies, Leiden, the Netherlands, June 8, 1995.

“Tribal Mandalas? The Case of the Akha of Northern Thailand”, paper presented at the International Institute of Asian Studies conference on “Space and Identities in Southeast Asia”, December 2, 1994, Leiden, The Netherlands; conference co-organizer.

“Akha Cosmography and the ‘Individual’”, invited paper presented at the Research Centre for Religion and Society, University of Amsterdam, November 9, 1994.

“The Space of the Akha Body”, invited talk presented to the ‘Indonesia Circle’ of the Department of Cultural Anthropology and Sociology of Non-western Societies, Leiden University, October 25, 1994.

“The Aini zu of the Hani Minority Nationality: Comparative Thoughts on Akha in China, Thailand and Myanmar (Burma)”, paper presented at the International Conference on Hani Culture, Yunnan, P.R.C., Feb. 28-Mar.5, 1993.

“Akha Oral Tradition”, invited talk presented to the Faculty Research Circle, Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, May 1, 1992.

“Explaining Cultural Differences: the Case of Akha Twin Infanticide”, invited talk presented at Le Moyne College, Syracuse, NY, April 21, 1992.

“Asymmetric Alliance in a Non-Stratified Society: Mechanisms of Egalitarianism among the Akha”, paper presented at the American Anthropological Association annual meetings, November, 1991, Chicago, in the panel titled "Non-evolutionary approaches to egalitarianism" for which I was organizer and chair.

“A non-western perspective on ‘belief’ in spirits”, invited paper presented at the Institute on Religion in an Age of Science annual conference on “The ‘God’ Question in an Age of Science”, Star Island, New Hampshire, August 2, 1991.

“Some Continuities in the Communication of Hierarchy in Tai (Dai) and non-Tai (Akha/Hani) Groups”, paper presented at the 4th International Conference on Thai Studies held in Kunming, Yunnan, People's Republic of China, May, 1990.

Field Research

Recurring fieldwork among Akha and Tai peoples of Northern Thailand (1982-2018).
Brief fieldwork among Akha peoples of China and Laos.

Languages

- English: native
- Akha: proficient speaking and writing (emergent script)
- Thai: conversational
- French: reading and speaking (with acclimatization)
- Dutch, Indonesian, Latin: studied in the past, currently little proficiency

Other Positions

2018 – 2022, 2012 – 2014, 1999 – 2001

Elected Member of the Executive Board of the Thailand/Laos/Cambodia Studies Group, Association for Asian Studies.

1994

Research Consultant to National Geographic Television, for the film, "Mountain Sculptors" on the Hani of China, aired on U.S. TV, December 25, 1994 in the *Explorer* series.

Dec. 23, 1989 – Jan. 3, 1990

Guest Expert Lecturer on Southeast Asia for Cunard Line cruise in Indonesia and Malaysia.

1980

Research Assistant, Prof. Stanley J. Tambiah; -translated selections from French to English for Prof. Tambiah's research on his book, *The Buddhist saints of the forest and the cult of amulets*.