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 *The field research in legal anthropology: a personal experience in the cross-cultural approach of law*

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**Abstract**  
  
*Norbert Rouland said in the first part the general data about the terrain in social anthropology investigation since the beginning of the twentieth century. He then studied the more specific case of the field survey in legal anthropology emphasizing the role too often ignored in the Russian and Soviet anthropology.  
In the second part, he briefly recounts his personal experiences. First of its own investigations in Greenland and the Arctic Quebec, Canada. Then the knowledge it has gained from his travels in various parts of the world, mainly Muslim countries (Morocco, Indonesia, Iran), as well as Russia and Ukraine.*  
  
  
  
  
  
                              

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**Introduction**

H. Kelsen disappeared in 1973, one of the greatest philosophers of law of our time, author of a famous book, *The Pure Theory of Law*. For him, a true science of law must avoid syncretism with other disciplines, including sociology, too infirm to make positive responses to questions raised by life standards. To say what the law is, it is necessary and sufficient to consider the product of his sources, always organized hierarchically, from a mysterious "fundamental norm", to the constitution, the law, and so on up more modest legislative sub legal acts. The interpretation plays a minimal role: Kelsen does devotes a few pages. Product of the Vienna School, this construction was naturalized in France by Carré de Malberg, who identified the state as the sole source of law. It inspires Michel Debre, who the French 1958 Constitution .. But it is not alone. In 1912, the nazi jurist Carl Schmitt criticized the abstract side of the building Kelsen: each level is a real performer, made of flesh and blood.  
  At the end of the previous century, several theories have given to interpretation a major role in the production of law. In Germany, Friedrich Miiller with  
  "Structuring theory of law": it is the law enforcement agencies who freely structure the content of legal regulation. In France, Michel Troper, who developed a "realistic" theory of law from 1974. The meaning of the law is not in the standard, but in the interpretation of the text by the judge. It is the judge, not the legislature which sets out the law. In 2001, he defined his theory as *"a doctrine that strive to build a science of law on a model derived from empirical sessions because it is not the purpose of standards, statements or facts*."  
The kelsenian approach is radically different from that of legal anthropology. Besides inherited ethnology of interest to companies called "stateless.They are not wild paradises. We will not find in the Amazon forest or on the ice the legal system that can be delivered turnkey at our borders. The temptation to compare the rights to learn was that of Comparative Law. Moreover, since 1932, legal ethnology took place in most of the international comparative law congress. These disciplines are nonetheless different. Especially because of the greater importance given to the actors by anthropology of law: it is not a question only to compare the systems.  
This is why the field survey has a special place in social and anthropology of law. Emphasize that this is not only a methodological difference, but substantial order: the law is what men make. As taught by the late Michel Alliot, anthropologist of law must order his reflection on three levels. First, as the classical jurist , *rules*: law is a particular type of rules. *Representations*: these are general ideas and mental attitudes from which is our vision of the law: for example, the "good father". *Practice:* what is law in the concrete life. And to know this practice, the field survey reveals a special tool.  
I will try to show in the first part, entitled "Lands".  
But the field of knowledge is itself marked. There are different academic and university traditions following the discipline to which the researcher belongs. Traditionally, law and lawyers (including of course the teachers) favor the abstract concepts of their discipline probably because they are more or less consciously the condition of their authority. Thus speak of the doctrine, the Settlor, the Legislator, as if it were the Platonic Ideas or universals ... Law professors often tend to emphasize the specificity of the law, which is a way of legitimizing not only the right, but their own existence. In this identity construction, the lawyer has always maintained a distance between himself and the "literary", including the sociologist or anthropologist. Many university groups evidenced. This means that there is not only the land but the territories: the lawyer who wants to carry out a field survey is not placed in the same conditions as the anthropologist or sociologist. This is what I will try to get in a second part, entitled "Territories", tracing my own experiences in their fortunes and misfortunes.

**PART I: LAND**

Whatever the discipline, the survey said field follows the same approach: concrete observation of behavior. But given the academic traditions, they look different in social anthropology and legal anthropology.

A) The field survey in Social Anthropology  
  
In his autobiographical stories, English anthropologist Nigel Barley. tells his field experiences among Dowayo, a society of the mountains of northern Cameroon. He does it in a humorous fashion, but her story is well worth abstract texts. I can resist  
  to pleasure of quote some excerpts:  
"*The profession is full of unconditional followers of fieldwork-tanned skin from hot climates, permanently clenched teeth after years spent in contact with the natives-who ultimately have nothing to say of interest as part of an academic discipline. We, ineffective "new anthropologists," our doctoral bookworms, we decided that the whole field search case was rather overrated. Of course, the elders who had served in the heyday of the empire by "making career in anthropology" had every interest in maintaining the worship of God, of which they had become the high priests. If they could indeed bear hardships and privations in the heart of the swamp and jungle, it was not to see whippersnappers take a shortcut. However, if they came during a debate to be stopped on a point of theory or metaphysics, they ended up sadly shaking his head, pulling languidly on their pipe, stroking their beards and mumble something about "true native", ignoring the pure abstractions wielded by those who "never went on the field." They showed a sincere friendship for all those unlucky fellow, but the case was heard. They had gone there, they had seen with their own eyes. There was nothing to add (...) The past of a man of the field automatically grants him the right to be a bore. His friends, like his parents, are a little disappointed if each topic addressed, laundry to the art of treating the common cold, is not full of ethnographic reminiscences. The old stories are becoming old buddies and soon there remain only the good times spent in the field, except some bulky islet inevitable sadness that refuse to be forgotten in the general euphoria. (...) They benefit from the public in a flattering image. This not is not the case for sociologists, who pass for leftists without humor, major debtors of nonsense and platitudes. But anthropologists have sat at the feet of Hindu saints; they saw the strange gods, and have witnessed filthy rites. Finally, they bravely went where no man had ventured before. They bathed in the fragrance of holiness and divine gratuity. (...) Gather facts offers little appeal. Anthropology does not lack of facts, but for lack of a pinch of intelligence to take advantage. The spirit of "butterfly collector" reigns supreme on discipline. It permeates the work of many ethnologists and interpreters of inspiration that accumulate significant examples of curious customs, classified by region, alphabetically, in order of evolution, according to popular nomenclature. (...) A fiction fashionable wants anthropologists are consumed with the desire to live among a population of this planet they believe custodian of a secret of great significance for the rest of humans. Suggest they could work the other is to assume that they might as well have married the first coming and not your soul mate. "*In the account of his experience, Nigel Barley insists that the observer is himself observed. And his very presence alters the behavior of those he observes, often inspired by material interest: the anthropologist belongs to a world where economic opportunities are incommensurate with those of the local environment. It also tells how some of his scientific intuitions proved unfounded. Errors can be sources of learning...  
More academic way, it traces the historical Malinowski turn of the growing importance of the fieldwork in anthropology. In the early twentieth century, it was anthropology in the way of history. Scholars worked on documents on travelers' tales, but they were not in the mentality to require the anthropologist that moves on the ground. Malinowski had worked second hand on Australian Aborigines when he left in 1914 in New Guinea. He was born in Krakow, a town of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. War is declared: it becomes an enemy in the British colonies. To escape confinement in a camp, he made several trips until 1918 in the Trobriand Islands, north-west of New Guinea. He lives with the natives, but does not like them really. He is a white man, served by his boys. He kept a diary, which was not published until after his death in 1967, and will reveal anxieties, weariness during his fieldwork. Anyway, Malinowski conceptualized the field survey. It is no longer just a step accumulation of data: in the way it represents them, the anthropologist does not simply record them, but it must be able to build them and put them in touch. Previously, it was mostly the anthropologist, in the silence of his office to do this work from supposedly raw data from informants, missionaries, travelers and colonial officials:  
"*Regarding the anthropological field, we require a new approach to materials collection. The anthropologist must relinquish his comfortable position in a lounge chair on the porch of a mission, a government position or the bungalow of a planter, where, armed with a notebook and a pencil (and sometimes soda whiskey), he used to take statements from informants to put in writing stories, and black sheets of paper wild texts. He has to go into the villages, and watch the natives to work in the garden, on the beach, in the jungle; he must embark with them to distant shores and foreign tribes and observe them in their overseas shipments for fishing, trade and ceremonies. The information must be received with all its flavor, its own observations of native life, and not be extorted drip-drip of recalcitrant informants* ".  
Clearly, the anthropologist must wet his shirt ...  
It was not until 1928 that the french ethnologists apply these ideas so far, they have no direct contact with distant populations they study. In 1925, the creation of the *University of Paris Institute of Ethnology* is inspired by the idea of necessity of the field survey, particularly supported by Marcel Mauss. Marcel Griaule, one of his students did in 1928 a mission in Ethiopia. In the thirties, he organized three major ethnographic expeditions in Africa. It advocates the plural observation investigators European and Aboriginal cross field observations. Between 1946 and 1956, he made long stays among the Dogon.  
But what about lawyers?  
  
B) The field survey in legal anthropology: the leadership of the Russian anthropology

I stated in another work the basic rules of the investigation in legal anthropology. Here I wish to make a quick review of the biographies of the researchers who pioneered the legal anthropology regarding the field survey.  
So there is no time, the work of Russian and Soviet scientists was virtually unknown in the Western world.  
Although he studied law, *Georges Gurvitch*, of Russian origin and became French, is best known by sociologists, not the lawyers. Yet it was he who introduced in 1935 that it was not yet called legal pluralism, by using the history of law to show that the Middle Ages knew the multiplicity of legal systems. Less known, *Pitirim Sorokin* was a sociologist of law, but has expressed an interest in legal anthropology. He was educated at the University of St. Petersburg in 1916 and obtained a PhD in Criminal Science. After the Bolshevik Revolution, being anti-Communist, he narrowly escaped death and went into exile in the United States. He is best known as a theorist of social mobility and altruism.  
  
  As recalled Anatoly Kovler, this ignorance was due to the lack of translations but also to political considerations: its researchers belonged to an American president called the Evil Empire ... thankfully things have changed .

During the Tsarist period, Russian scientists have played an innovative role in many areas of legal anthropology, including fieldwork. And well before Malinowski. As in the French and British cases, the Russian administration, during the colonization of Siberia, the Caucasus and Central Asia, met the legal cultures of peoples other than the Russians. In 1822 the charter of the Government of indigenous establishes the principle of the preservation of local law and encourages the study of customary law, which developed from field surveys among indigenous peoples, which took place from the 1840s .A detailed questionnaire was developed, which allows coordination of research in an area of several thousand kilometers. Long before legal pluralism is theorized as the unifying element of anthropologists of law in the world, several Russian authors analyzed and defended the coexistence norms of customary law and those of state law. This especially in Central Asia. The first must-researcher is *Maxime Kowalevski,* Karl Marx used his works. He was a lawyer, but also a political scientist and anthropologist. The field surveys were mainly conducted in Caucasian mountains and his fame was great in the late nineteenth century. We should also mention *Nikolai Miklukho-Maklay* (1846-1888). After studying medicine in Germany, with the support of the Russian Geographical Society, he organizes scientific expeditions to the coast of New Guinea, a few decades before Malinowski. Also before Levi-Strauss, he thinks that the savage mind is not thinking of the wild, but can also be found in modern humans, and that the "primitive" are not inferior to him. His works were not published thirty-five years after his death, by the Soviets.  
Unlike sociology and political science, anthropology and ethnography were not deleted, if only because of the persistence of the originality of indigenous peoples, and even if the rule of law of the Soviet state was clearly affirmed. The major research centers continued to accumulate data and ethnographic journals had thousands of readers. The law history teachers drew extensively in the work of their fellow anthropologists and ethnographers, attitude which is not that of French teachers in the early twenty-first century ... Which family law professor red the *Elementary Structures kinship*?  
During this period, the most notable personality *Vladimir Bogoraz* (1865-1936). He studied in St. Petersburg. Supporter of revolutionary ideas, he was exiled in 1886 in the region of Kolyma, where later was to implant the Gulag. It is the anthropologist he felt the vocation and it is from this experience that he published his first research on the language and folklore of the Chukchi people, translated into foreign languages. In 1901 and 1902, it is one of the members of the expedition organized by Franz Boas, German-born researcher based in the United States, also the precursor of the field survey. Incidentally,observe the innovative nature of the approach of *Franz Boas*. In 1883 and 1884 he traveled in the Canadian Arctic, Baffin Island, and discovered the Inuit cultures. In 1928, he published a book, *Anthropology of modern society,* in which he considers the modern society in the light of anthropology, as much later will do for France Marc Augé. This book was burned by the Nazis, which is a good sign. There are ideas which are then entirely new: it is pronounced for an equal creativity between woman and man in sex before marriage, wrote that so-called primitive societies are not fundamentally different ours and rejects racist theories. It is surprising that such a work is not more frequently cited nowadays ...  
After the Bolshevik Revolution, Bogoras was appointed professor at the University of Leningrad. In 1922, the People's Commissariat for Education entrusted the direction of a great ethnographic survey program. In 1925 he became director of the Institute of northern peoples. It does take a census of indigenous peoples, and a study of their living conditions. Although he held important positions in the Soviet regime, Bogoras was never a declared supporter of the theory of historical materialism. Prove that in the most totalitarian regimes, there are eyes of the hurricane ...  
In 1986, a few years before the collapse of the Soviet Union, the work of *Jean Carbonnier*, Legal Sociology, published in Russian sociology is no longer a guilty discipline. From the 1990s, legal anthropology is a scientific research and teaching discipline in its own right: it is now taught in twenty universities. Furthermore it has a long tradition of research, the Russian legal anthropology is also based on the existence and the official recognition of different legal cultures within the Russian state. In May 1999 stands near Moscow was the first legal anthropology school: there is among the topics customary law systems, their interaction with positive law, the discussion of academic research opportunities in the field of legal pluralism. The following summer schools were organized by the Northern Peoples Association and the Institute of Northern Peoples of St. Petersburg. Indeed, as a couple of decades ago in North America, we are faced with the problem of the protection of indigenous peoples of Siberia over the exploitation of oil and gas resources.  
  One can also note the creation in December 1999 of the Welfare Centre for the rights of indigenous peoples. It brings together many personalities (lawyers, environmentalists, representatives of northern peoples associations) and implements legal education programs of NGO activists, practical manuals on field trips.  
This is therefore a committed legal anthropology, whose concerns are inspired by the need for close collaboration between researchers and the field. As written rightly Anatoly Kovler, there is in this respect "*the ideas and traditions of militant narodnicki (populist) Russian nineteenth century that inspired the work of Maxime Kovalevsky, Vladimir Bogoras or Nicolai Mikloukho- Maklai. The circle of time is repeated.* "

The Russian and Soviet legal anthropology has benefited from the historical occurrence represented by legal diversity of the peoples of Russia and the USSR. Moreover, this diversity was recognized and legal theories of legal pluralism had become commonplace if not, at least normal. Such is not the case in France. As we know, to put things succinctly, France minorities and indigenous peoples do not exist. The researcher must resort to sophistications and analysis when he tries to study the problems of the French overseas, as do a number of us: Jean-Yves Faberon and Antoine Leca for New Caledonia, Alain Moyrand and Bruno Saura for Polynesia, Laurent Sermet at the University of La Reunion, to mention that ethnic lawyers.  
However, some "literary" anthropologists went hunting in the territories of law. Examples Bruno Latour, philosopher and anthropologist who has studied that studied the Council of State; Irene Bellier and Marc Abeles, who investigated within the European Commission to study how representatives of different European nations prepare EU laws.  
Finally, note, and not least, as sociological surveys can be conducted on the occasion of certain laws: it was so before the great reform of matrimonial sixties on matrimonial regimes, led by Jean Carbonnier ;dropoff window certain laws, especially sensitive (decriminalization of abortion), subject to a trial period.  
So much for the general considerations. Now for my personal experiences, not omitting failures.

PART II: TERRITORIES

The distant sources of my attraction to anthropology is certainly the temptation of elsewhere. My first words were "*Goodbye*". Little, I dreamed of becoming an astronomer: my dream is quickly shattered on the reefs of mathematics. We know the famous words of Margaret Mead, in which the sociologist is the one who has problems with the society in which it is located, the psychologist with his temperamental tendencies; anthropologist with both. Without seeking to investigate in too deep areas, I think I've always been curious mind. I loved, I still love the exotic, which did not become a daily basis. My first exotic experience was in the Arctic. I have occasionally practiced what a true ethnologist will be very difficult to recognize as field surveys.  
Subsequently, legal anthropology allowed me many contacts with other cultures: these were not field surveys, but it is still land that brought me a lot. Among them, Russia and Ukraine. I will speak first of the Arctic, specifically Greenland and New Québec (Québec Arctic), and then I will come to other countries.  
  
A) The temptation of Thule

Very early, I felt the call of the North. My parents, both jurists, liked large spaces and did frequent trips to Lapland, which was rare in the fifties. When I was eleven years old, they took me. I remember the majestic vastness of a fjord in southern Norway. Subsequently, I devoured the works of Paul Emile Victor, as a generation, I was very marked by the reading of the *Last Kings of Thule*, Jean Malaurie. I have a little-known Paul Emile Victor, but this meeting has not been important because it was the end of his life. However, the meeting with Jean Malaurie, with its ups and downs, was extremely important to me.  
Indeed, I had fallen in love Greenland. Specifically its landscapes. The attraction to the Arctic was first for me aesthetic, more than for human beings. I travelled in solo in Greenland in the early sixties and ten. But I had to find money ,and students has few money. By reading the Blue Guide on Greenland, I learned about in Paris of a Centre for Arctic Studies, headed by Jean Malaurie, director of studies at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales. On the academic side, I was doing my PhD in Roman law. By contacting Malaurie, I had the idea that he was going to allow me to participate in one of these great expeditions which I devoured the stories. In my introductory letter, I explained to him that I knew even skiing ... he could laugh at my naivity, but he received me very kindly in Paris. Brother of the well-known lawyer, Jean Malaurie was not familiar with the law, but intuitively understood that the legal approach was important. So it gave me a seminar at the Centre for Arctic studies, I made sure somehow every Monday by saying the word in the Faculty of Law of Aix, on which reigned constitutionalist Louis Favoreu. I tried to speak, in a very clumsy way of a legal approach to what I called no theoretical precautions "Eskimo law". Anyway, I felt good, I felt like being where I was, much more than in a law school. These initial contacts debouched on my land in the Arctic.  
It is not enough to want to travel to a mission: we must also find funding. We were in 1976. During one of my stays in Paris. J. Malaurie told me about:  
"*A treaty has been signed between Quebec and its indigenous peoples. Go see*. "  
If he gave me details, I do not remember ... anyway, he got me funding for a two-month stay in Canada, a country that I hardly knew. This was especially a boon that I had just lost my mother in dramatic circumstances: I wanted to tear my misfortune. So I went in almost total ignorance of what could be a field investigation. Arrived in Quebec, I met various personalities involved in the development and signing of the Convention of James Bay and Northern Quebec, in 1975. I was struck by the ease of these contacts: I, who was only a modest assistant, I was received without further formalities by the Minister of the new Quebec government (the Parti Québécois,leader of independence of Quebec) on Aboriginal issues. I spoke strongly advised me to go into the New Quebec to interview the protagonists to the treaty signing All Inuit communities were not in agreement with this Convention. "Dissidents" they were called. It was to them I was interested in particular. Armed with some addresses, so I took small aircraft and stopped in several villages along the Strait and Hudson Bay. He was thirty months, I was fine.  
  I was staying in a guesthouse. I immediately ran up against the problem of language: I only knew a few words of Inuktitut. So I was going through the relay informants largely supporters of dissidents. They created meetings where villagers were speaking. A picturesque detail: at this age, I was frozen with fear of flying. As I realized that my passion for travel had to overcome this phobia, I forced myself but with great difficulty. I remember one evening when the weather was particularly bad: it was the storm, visibility was zero. I fell asleep appeased, certain that the plane would not take off the next day.

I was wrong, and flight was without incident.  
After this pilgrimage, I had a file that I compared with the purely legal aspects of the problem which I had come to know through interviews with Quebec constitutionalists, who had always received me with great kindness. Back in France, I wrote a book very quickly on the Convention, which was published in Quebec and had some success in academic circles. He had the advantage of being the first, and most importantly, I enjoyed an advantageous position. As frenchman, I was not part of the problem: so I could make a figure a priori impartial observer, even if I had actually inclinations for the party dissidents. They complained to the Agreement have made too many concessions to the detriment of the indigenous in major projects harnessing the rivers of the region, for hydroelectric production.  
Malaurie did not join in this favorable: he reproached me for not having sufficient account of the indigenous perspective. Unjustified reproach, but which is explained by the fact that our relationship had deteriorated ...  
To be brief, Malaurie told me that he needed "a brilliant second" and proposed me to support my application for a lecturer position at the Ecole des Hautes études en sciences sociales.. Tempting proposition, especially since my law bosses, who participated in the events of May 68 alongside students and were not out of favor under the constitutional authority of the Faculty of Law of Aix-en -Provence ...  
  As I have never had a temptation for power, which seems to involve more inconveniences than advantages and asks some gifts, it's not about being a second that I disliked. But the fact that I would probably have more freedom of action. And there was a prohibitive obstacle ... it was in any case a fundamental misunderstanding between us, and I decided to get away. Admittedly, a few months before I finally participated in an expedition to Greenland alongside Malaurie, and I do not think my investigative skills have seemed obvious.  
The television channel Antenne 2 commanded to Malaurie a vast fresco on Inuit across the Arctic world. It remained to complete filming in Greenland. So I asked Jean Malaurie if I could join the team. He accepted without too much difficulty, rightly thinking it would be an opportunity for me to play small hands. So shooting took place, and it was an exciting experience. In Disko Bay, we had planned to take helicopters to move us over fairly long distances. Unfortunately, we came upon the first strike of Greenland helicopter pilots. So we had to rent a small fisher boat. The commander seemed quite drunk, but Malaurie judged him to understand that we wanted rent his boat for a few days. In the early morning, so we ship without encountering the captain. We thought he was already in the command post. After the first day, temperature drops and the sea was widening. Far from calming down, she became increasingly agitated as the hours and were shaken very ugly way. I saw that Malaurie sought in vain the captain it was still on the ground, trusting our raft of the Medusa to his youngest son, a teenager who seemed hardly to have control of operations. He wanted to go home. But Malaurie opposed with a firmness which I was quite unable to judge whether it was reasonable or not. In fact, I was floored by the seasick. With my classmates television, we were lying in the hold, hoping the storm would subside. Well it lasted forty-eight hours and I must pay tribute to the physical courage Malaurie. About ten persons in the small boat, it was the most active and the remaining operations showed he has reason to persevere, as we finally approach the bottom of a small all choked fjord ice. We were staying there several days, we mingling with villagers who nicknamed me *Noukapiak, "the young man alone."* I was unspeakably happy: what work of Roman law could well take me beyond myself? Aimlessly, I accompanied Malaurie and attending interviews he had with various different personalities, or simple villagers. But I had no specific objective, he reproached me quite sharply, in fact, my investigation was zero. But I did not speak the language and I had no purpose, except to be part of this team. It was therefore not investigated in the field, but in truth, I never meant to do one.  
Another memory remained very striking. We were always that this small trawler, but the sea was calm again. Under the great blue sky, we went down along the coast of Greenland, from the coast of a small village. Malaurie said, "*Rouland, you are a man of the Book. You have to go spend a year in a small village like this. You would come back changed*. "He was right, and that's one of the great regrets of my life did not follow his advice. But who would have admitted to the Faculty of Law of Aix-en-Provence an assistant, with precarious status, left for a year in Greenland? It was an insured academic suicide, especially since the atmosphere was not tolerance in my university ...

In the following years, so I had no longer used to travel to the Arctic and my relationship with Malaurie not resumed only very sporadically. After the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the height of what he thought was the support of Boris Eltsin, he founded St. Petersburg Polar Academy, a training institute for indigenous frameworks. I taught at a mission, but it did not lead to anything significant. Anyway, Malaurie had the merit of emphasizing the importance of long work of Russian anthropologists in the Arctic regions. At the time, it was very innovative to say, and not included. Rightly.  
Ultimately, that had brought me a few years?  
First, and this is fundamental refocusing my interest. While still loving transcendental beauty of Arctic landscapes, I was interested now to men, and men of the present. Without really knowing it, I was engaged in legal anthropology, what would much later lead to the drafting of a law manual of minorities and indigenous peoples, in contrast to the French tradition, since in France , indigenous and minorities not legally exist. But in parallel, I learned of a discipline was then called legal ethnology, and I was writing the first francophone manual trying to adapt the discipline to recent developments, which put in the field anthropology not only traditional societies but also modern societies. At the same time, the discovery of legal anthropology attracted me from Roman law to meet other rights: it is this historical and comparative approach that led me to write a historical introductory manual to the right, where it was also given the different legal systems of ours.  
  Another lesson: the decisive weight of academic traditions, coupled with adverse academic traditions. It is understandable that the field survey seem strange lawyers. This especially as the French tradition favors an abstract teaching of legal norms. There are of course considering the standard concrete situation, such as administrative science, political science, criminology, but these courses are a minority and generally undervalued, particularly in recruitment competitions.  
But there are other academic traditions, much less legitimate. Those which consist in introducing power relations in the discussions that should remain open. The rigidity of the university administration, which causes must be called policies, prevented me from attempting the adventure of the real terrain. Unemployment would have been the key. Nature has many personalities, of course. I had friendly relations with other constitutional Aix, the Rector Michel Henry Fabre: we did not have the same ideas, but we felt mutually and amicably discussed. And among legal historians, I have always been supported by Jean-Louis Harouel while our political options are probably not common. Tolerance and broadmindedness are probably among the least shared human qualities in college ...  
More broadly, the difficulties I encountered in the combination of anthropology and law seem to me to show how the interdisciplinary credo belongs togreat ideas which receive less general consensus, but are struggling to enter the practice when they question the territorial boundaries which we are accustomed.  
Fortunately institutions existed to transcend them. Thus, in 1999, I was recruited into the Institut Universitaire de France where I created the first chair of legal anthropology. Meanwhile, the same year, at the suggestion of Michel Alliot, I created the French Association of Anthropology of law, which was addressed not only to lawyers but to the "literary". Its first conference was held in Paris and brought the image of the judge in different cultures. He allowed including the arrival of Russian colleagues, at that time an innovation. But fifteen years later, the AFAD disappeared due to insufficient energy to lead this movement so it was ultimately a failure. I was particularly unable to recruit enough outside the middle of the right.  
  I had also been undermined by a local context (at the Faculty of Law of Aix-en-Provence) not conducive to the extraterritorial outputs. Personality differences certainly count.  
  Unlike other colleagues, Louis Favoreu did not intend to discuss with those he considered inferior (which was my case) and did not know the median position: one was with him or against him; the right had a virginity (specificity) that it was absolutely necessary to preserve, in the Kelsenian tradition. Given these factors, I might have had to go bag and baggage side anthropologists, that offered me also to my friend Jean Benoist, a doctor at the Pasteur Institute came to anthropology and teaching in our university. I have not followed this advice, and I may have been wrong. I thought it had to invest within the legal Citadel ...  
But back to the eighties.  
So I was leaving the Arctic, but legal anthropology would allow me to travel the world, at the invitation of various foreign universities. Academic tourism? Not only. Fail to make proper investigations on the ground, I made contact with other cultures, which has enriched my personal and intellectual life.  
  
B) Travels

During the thirty years which followed, so I traveled a lot, at the request of foreign universities curious to know this discipline.  
After my initial debt in Quebec, I returned infrequently in North America: legal anthropology is a relatively well-known discipline, which was not the case elsewhere.  
I was particularly influenced by my travels in the Muslim countries, and Russia.  
I was always very well received in Muslim countries that do not belie their tradition of hospitality. Starting with the countries which includes most Muslims in the world, Indonesia. I had special relationship with a great anthropologist Indonesian law, Professor Mohamed Koesnoe now disappeared. I invited him several times in Aix-en-Provence and visited with him Java and Bali. He was a devout Muslim, but of great tolerance. I remember in particular one of our conversations, which focused on religion. What fate would I know when I die, because I was raised in the Christian religion and believed him to Islam? He replied with a kindly smile he hoped his path to God would be as short as possible, whereas mine would be only slightly more curvy. Then I remembered the verse in the Qur'an that the Prophet said, discussing with jewish and christian people "*Your God is One Divinity.He is the same for you and me*”.I also had the chance to carry out several missions in Iran, in an opening period, that of the Presidency of the Kathami ayatollah. I was doing my classes in lecture halls where the gender distribution was strict: Left student, dressed in black from head to foot; right students. After each yard, I walked down from the dais and was inviting the public to come ask me questions. I noticed that it was always the girls who came first and that the question was often of great relevance. Do I know what my on legal anthropology was translated into Persian.  
  Recently, I was invited several times to Morocco at the Faculty of Law of Fez, a young privatist colleague Professor Fousi Rherrousse. Very attracted to the historical and anthropological approach to law, he told me of his ideas on the need to renovate the teaching of the history of law in Morocco.  
My contact with Russia began after the demise of the Soviet Union, even though I had been there many times before in purely tourist trips. As I wrote above, at the first international symposium of the French Association of Anthropology of law, I was able to invite Russian colleagues. Among them, Professor Vladik Nercessiants, Institute of State and Law in Moscow, a renowned specialist in the history of political ideas. He was interested in legal anthropology and he advised another Russian colleague of my generation, Professor Anatoly Kovler, who was thirteen years Judge of the European Court of Human Rights, to translate into Russian two of my books: *Legal Anthropology* and *Historic Introduction to Law*. Teaching critical areas of law is much more developed in Russia than in France, especially legal anthropology, taught in twenty universities. It resulted in the drafting of several textbooks, unfortunately not translated into English or French to date: Anatoly Kovler, *Anthropology of law*, Norma, Moscow 2002; Lion Kubel, *Political ethnography Test*, Moscow, 1988; VVBotcharov, *Anthropology of power*, two volumes, Moscow, 2006; N.Kradin, *Political Anthropology*, Moscow, 2004. Recently , in 2014, an important book was published(in russian) in Sankt Petersbourg: Prs.Nsaev and Chemnov: *Socio Cultural Anthropology of Law* .

In the next twenty years, I have built relationships with colleagues from St. Petersburg, relationships still alive (Mikhail Antonov, Sergei Akopov). I was also able to connect with the Ukrainian colleagues from the University of Kharkov. Is it necessary to clarify that in the context of relations between Ukraine and Russia, it is exciting to hear views from each of these two countries? I remember a very emotional visit the Maidan in Kiev in spring 2014. In my travels in Russia, I keep a lot of memories, but especially that of a finding. The Soviet system still had positive aspects. In particular, the education: the Russian average cultural level is incomparably higher than the French level. Simple Russian citizen knows best French culture that many French ...  
I was also invited some time in China, especially after the events in Tiananmen Square. Beijing universities were to receive me asked me to provide a list of possible conference themes. Provocatively, I had put the issue of human rights. What was my surprise at all universities chose this theme ... it therefore followed exciting discussions and the opportunity for me to learn from a Chinese literature on the subject, I tried to report in 1998. At present, the  
  Prof. Liu Phi completed a Chinese translation of my legal anthropology, which soon be published b a Chinese editor, Higher Education Press.  
At present, it is with Russia and Morocco that my bonds are strongest.  
  Regarding research, I am interested for ten years to the history of women's issues, especially the role played by women in European artistic movements. This means that the various theories of gender are to me the subject of much thought ...  
Since this is a life story, the reader will understand that a conclusion is impossible. As wrote Malaurie, i death transforms life into destiny.We will see….  
Satisfying my curiosity innate need, anthropology has taught me the meaning of the relative, which is also a history lesson. The history and anthropology rarely lead to certainties: Paul Valéry had said about the story; Lévi-Strauss said often about anthropology. But they give ideas and sometimes wonders. Should we ask for more?  
Finally, the difficulties I have encountered show that it is not always easy to locate the borders. But the minority position has not only disadvantages: it also allows to claim some originality. Still need to get lucky. It is not enough to have good ideas, you have to have them at the right time. The years post May 68 allowed the audacity to which we fall back now ...  
  In the words of Corneille: *Time is a great teacher, he well rule things*.  
  
                                                              Norbert ROULAND.