

EDITORIAL NOTE

by the Joint Editors-in-Chief

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As joint editors-in-chief of *Ethnologia Europaea* we would like to conclude this exchange between Joadja Verrips, Oscar Salemink and Peter Jan Margry concerning the publication of Margry's article "On Scholarly Misconduct and Fraud, and What We Can Learn from It" published in *Ethnologia Europaea* vol. 49(2), 2019, with a brief statement from our point of view. We do this not only to bring closure to a heated debate but also to direct attention to a very important lesson we think we can all learn as scholars of the fields of anthropology and ethnology: that scholarly misconduct is one of the hardest issues to deal with, not only on an administrative level but especially among peers.

As we explain in our editorial in vol. 49(2), we invited Margry to write an article on his experience of discovering the scholarly misconduct of Bax to accompany the editorial decision to retract the seven articles published by Bax in *Ethnologia Europaea* during the years 1988–2000. The more technical evaluation by the VU university commission had already been published in 2013, so we were looking for a more personal recollection explaining the events as they were seen from the perspective of a scholar whose work and expertise were in some of the same fields as Bax's.

Verrips and Salemink submitted their critique to *Ethnologia Europaea* because, as they put it, the Bax articles deserved "a better burial speech". Their

narrative is very different from Margry's on several points. As is often the case at a funeral and/or the wake that follows, new perspectives and different perceptions of the past are brought to the table. In the end, sadness shared at the ritual serves to bring a community together, possibly also to make amends, let bygones be bygones. That, of course, we cannot do in the case of the fraudulent scientific work published in this journal, but we do hope that this exchange will be understood as a scholarly ritual of critical readings, exchange of viewpoints, and spirited discussion.

Reading these two pieces together, we feel that they complement each other well: Both articles have not only the same mission of bringing forward the violation of collegial trust and scientific rigour; both articles also bear witness to how difficult it is to expose a colleague's misconduct. Both have something important to say about hesitancy in the face of dreadful suspicion, that it is not unusual to feel reluctant about getting involved in scandals outside of one's own field (or regional competence), to be in doubt or afraid of being wrong about one's accusation, and finally, how methodological questions specific to our fields complicate the matter. We thank all three of these authors for their willingness to write about this thorny issue and together provide an even better reflection on the removal of the Bax articles from *Ethnologia Europaea*.