

## **REPORT ON NETWORK ACTIVITIES**

### **October 2014**

#### **Anthropology of Economy Network**

Convenors: Patty A. Gray (patty.gray@nuim.ie) & Hugo Valenzuela García (hugo.valenzuela@uab.es)

The Anthropology of Economy network was launched at EASA 2012 in Nanterre. We are a young and growing network, with about 140 subscribers to our listserve so far. We have a friendly association with the Society of Economic Anthropology of the American Anthropological Association, and some cross-membership.

The network held its first workshop at U. Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain in February 2014, organized by Hugo Valenzuela and Peter Simonič with the assistance of Marta Lobato. The theme of the workshop was 'Solidarity, reciprocity, and economy in times of downturn: Understanding and articulating the logics of old and new values in late capitalism'. There were 15 participants, many of them PhD students, and 8 papers were presented on a variety of topics: microcredit and solidarity finance in Brazil; social entrepreneurship; 'low-budget urbanity'; mortgage over-indebtedness; food cooperatives in Catalonia; Swiss dairy farming in the face of neoliberalization; and Slovenian squats as sites of emerging commons. Several of the papers from the workshop were subsequently published as part of a special issue in the journal *Ars & Humanitas*, under the guest editorship of Peter Simonič (<http://revije.ff.uni-lj.si/arshumanitas/issue/view/237>). Writes Simonič in his introduction, "the number of doctoral students in anthropology present at the seminar gave the impression that the theme speaks to the generational turn in a time of crisis in the social welfare state, and that anthropological theory of economy pragmatically is shifting into activism among young and unemployed anthropologists".

The Anthropology of Economy Network also organized a panel at the 2014 EASA conference in Tallinn. Convened by Hugo Valenzuela, Allen Batteau of Wayne State University, USA, and Carmen Bueno of Universidad Iberoamericana, Mexico, the theme of the panel was 'Local entrepreneurial responses to global forces: new and alternative enterprise re-configurations in times of crisis and economic hardship'. The panel was global in scope, with 7 papers presenting research on topics ranging from a family jewelry company in Hong Kong, women in Japanese management, music entrepreneurship in Yucatan, and the new Italian working class, to the transformation of Moroccan argan oil into a global commodity.

Our second network meeting was held in Tallinn in August 2014. In attendance were 24 people, 12 of whom were signing on as new members. Research interests among the group are both diverse and strongly resonant with one another; we range from work on rural economies and agriculture to household and informal economies to energy technologies, from local money lenders and micro-credit schemes to international development projects, from local experiences of economic crisis to studies of multi-national corporations,

taxation and investment practices. Plans for the next two years include an 'off-year' network conference in summer or autumn 2015 (to be held again in Barcelona – and we encourage volunteers to step forward to sponsor future conferences), and the organization of an 'official' network panel at EASA 2016 (while the network is only guaranteed acceptance of one network-sponsored panel, we encourage submission of relevant-themed panels to the convenors for network endorsement/affiliation). We always encourage new members to join us – the network is open, inclusive, and evolving according to members' interests.