

## **EASA Mediterraneanist Network (MedNet)**

### **MedNet Annual Report 2016**

**Convenor: Jutta Lauth Bacas, Athens/Cologne**

Email: [jutta.lauth.bacas@gmail.com](mailto:jutta.lauth.bacas@gmail.com)

**MedNet**, a EASA network active since 2004, brings together social anthropologists doing research in countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea. In 2016, MedNet organized a panel and held a network meeting during the 14th EASA Conference at the **University of Milano-Bicocca, (20-23 July, 2016)**.

Convened by Jutta Lauth Bacas (MedNet) and Dorothy L. Zinn (Free University of Bozen-Bolzano), the MedNet panel with title: **Patronage-clientelism 2.0: the legacy of Mediterraneanist anthropology in contemporary corruption/anti-corruption studies** focused on current transformations in patron-client relationships in the light of the significant changes that Mediterranean societies have undergone in the past years. Starting from the observation that tough austerity measures imposed on Mediterranean countries have triggered wide-scale changes since 2008, anthropological case studies from Portugal, Italy, Greece and Bosnia-Herzegovina presented during the panel highlighted the striking continuity of patterns of clientelism-patronage in these countries despite their on-going social-economic transformations and deep political changes.

The seeming paradox of personalism and cronyism in the heart of late capitalist institutions was highlighted in other contributions to the panel, which reflected on the implications of Mediterraneanist patronage-clientelism studies for international accounting scandals. In the discussion it was stressed that the social mechanisms originally observed in an earlier anthropology of the Mediterranean can have heuristic purchase in contemporary ethnographic contexts – whether Mediterranean or not – that are globally interconnected through supranational institutions and processes, most notably those of neoliberal restructuring.

Following the EASA Conference in Milan, the convenors of the panel on Patronage-clientelism 2.0 have agreed with the editorial collective of an anthropological journal to prepare a special theme section with a number of articles engaging critically with the legacy of Mediterraneanist patron client studies.