Subscribe | Past Issues | Translate | RSS

View this email in your browser

# NEWSLETTER 2019/3 DECEMBER

## NETWORK ANNOUNCEMENT

**EASA2020 Panels with AoE Network Endorsement**

We are very pleased to have received great proposals for submission with the Anthropology of Economy network affiliation for the EASA conference in Lisbon in 2020. We would very much like to thank all panel proposers who submitted with us for contributing to the visibility, popularity, and success of economic anthropology within the EASA framework. Due to the very high volume of panel applications to the conference overall, the Scientific Committee could not accommodate about half of all panel proposals, including some excellent proposals submitted with the AoE network affiliation. Last but not least, we are delighted to announce that two panels sponsored by the AoE network were selected for EASA2020.

**P076 Brutal Economies: the political economy of authoritarianism**
Conveners: Jon Schubert (Brunel University London) and Fabio Mattioli (The University of Melbourne)

**P129 Rural livelihood strategies and public policies in Europe. What is going on with self-sufficiency?**
Conveners: Agata Hummel (University of Warsaw) and Paula Escribano (Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona)

To learn more about these two and other panels, or to submit a paper to one of them, visit:
https://easaonline.org/conferences/easa2020/cfp

## RECENT EVENTS

**Economic Anthropology working group at the German Anthropological Association: Election of a new board and directions for future activities**

The working group Economic Anthropology was founded in 2017 and held a first workshop in 2018 in Cologne, organized by Thomas Widlok, Deniz Seebacher and Mario Schmidt. At the last conference of the German Anthropological Association in 2019, three new spokespeople have been elected:

Stefan Leins, University of Konstanz (stefan.leins@uni-konstanz.de),
Katharina Bodirsky, University of Konstanz (katharina.bodirsky@uni-konstanz.de)
Tobias Köllner, Witten/Herdecke University (tobias.koellner@uni-wh.de)

Among the first activities of the new spokespeople is the organization of the next working group workshop. **It will take place on 1-2 October 2020 in Konstanz** and will include a "thematic session" on the topic of the Call for Papers on the first day and an "open session" (not limited to the Call for Papers) on the second day. The first day will be held in English, the second primarily in German. The Call for Papers will be circulated shortly.

If you are interested in the activities of the working group and want to receive the Call for Papers, please subscribe to the mailing list here or contact one of the spokespeople.

**Workshop "Senses of injustice, senses of crisis: conceptual tensions and ethnographic approaches" at the University of Barcelona**

On the 28th and 29th November 2019 the workshop "Senses of injustice, senses of crisis: conceptual tensions and ethnographic approaches" took place at the University of Barcelona, hosted by the *Grup de Recerca sobre Reciprocitat* (Research Group on Reciprocity). It was the concluding activity of the CONJUST project ("Popular conceptions of social justice in front of the crisis and austerity policies"), funded by the Spanish Ministry for the Economy and Competition, and by the European Fund for Regional Development. The project has been under the direction of PIs Sílvia Bofill and Mikel Aramburu (Social Anthropology Department, University of Barcelona). Members of the local research group and some invited scholars discussed the main results of the project around three thematic axes: 1) the moral economy of the economic crisis, 2) the tensions and entanglements between redistributive justice and justice as recognition, and 3) the relationship between senses of justice and the notion of deservingness. Each session was preceded by an invited conference: Jaume Franquesa (University of Buffalo) on "Political affects in times of crisis: on morality and non-synchrony", Dolors Comas d'Argemir (Universitat Rovira i Virgili, Tarragona) on "Care, rights and justice", and Andreas Streinzer (Institute for Social Research, Frankfurt) on "Common senses of distribution. Un/deservingness as conceptual tool for understanding inequality." Several researchers, some of them based in Barcelona and some others coming from abroad, attended the workshop and thus contributed to ongoing discussions across the fields of economic, political and legal anthropology.

## FORTHCOMING EVENT

**Work, Ethics and Freedom**
Conference

**Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, 11-13 December 2019**

Organisers: Chris Hann and Johannes Lenhard (for the Max Planck – Cambridge Centre for Ethics, Economy and Social Change)

Explorations of the possibilities and perils of work in the twenty-first century are often animated by morally-charged ideas of human freedom. While such discussions oscillate between "soaring" conceptions of liberation from all constraints and abject evocations of any constraint as "subjection", anthropologists have generally sought to investigate how freedom is variably constituted through social relations and cultural values. In societies dominated by labour markets based on a principle of formally "free" wage labour, anthropologists have built on Karl Polanyi's approach to economy as "instituted process" to investigate comparatively how the exercise of freedom is shaped. Polanyi was worried about the implications of the "machine age" for democracy. What would he make of the gig economy that now flourishes alongside flexibilization and precaritization?

The programme for the event is available here:
https://www.eth.mpg.de/4909074/events_rwd_hann

## IN FOCUS

In October **Dr. Marek Mikuš** started implementing the research group project "**Peripheral Debt: Money, Risk and Politics in Eastern Europe**" at the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology in Halle (Saale), Germany. The project has received an Emmy Noether grant from the German Research Foundation (DFG) and is expected to run over a period of six years. The aim is to conduct the first comparative ethnographic and historical anthropological study of the specifically Eastern European experience of household debt and financialization, with a particular focus on the roles of money as a special kind of commodity, the implications of debt for experiences and practices vis-a-vis risk, and the politics of and over debt ranging from social movements to party politics to government policies. The countries under study – Croatia, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia – share experiences of household debt and housing booms, high-risk and high-cost forms of credit, and the politicization of particular lending and debt collection practices and finance more broadly. A project subsite will soon become operational on the website of the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology. Two vacancies for PhD students to carry out their individual research projects in Hungary and Poland, respectively, are expected to be advertised in early April 2020 with October 2020 as the starting date.

https://www.eth.mpg.de/peripheral-debt

## RECENT PUBLICATIONS

### BOOKS, EDITED VOLUMES, AND SPECIAL ISSUES

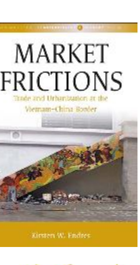
Bonnecase, Vincent. 2019. Les prix de la colère. Une histoire de la vie chère au Burkina Faso. Paris, EHESS Editions.
ISBN EHESS: 978-2-7132-2806-3

http://editions.ehess.fr/nos-auteurs/bibliographie/vincent-bonnecase/

Bruckermann, Charlotte. 2020. *Claiming Homes. Confronting Domicide in Rural China*. New York: Berghahn Books.
ISBN 978-1-78920-357-8
eISBN 978-1-78920-358-5 (eBook)

Enter the discount code (BRU578) on the Berghahn website until December 31st 2019, for a 50% discount!

https://www.berghahnbooks.com/title/BruckermannClaiming



Endres, Kirsten W. 2019. *Market Frictions. Trade and Urbanization at the Vietnam-China Border*. New York: Berghahn Books.
ISBN 978-1-78920-244-1
eISBN 978-1-78920-245-8 (eBook)

https://www.berghahnbooks.com/title/EndresMarket/



Sandoval-Hernández, E., M. Rosenfeld et M. Peraldi (dir.). 2019. *La fripe du Nord au Sud. Production globale, commerce transfrontalier et marchés informels de vêtements usagés*. Paris, Pétra.
ISBN: 978-2-84743-260-2

https://www.editionspetra.fr/livres/la-fripe-du-nord-au-sud-production-globale-commerce-transfrontalier-et-marches-informels-de

Schmidt, Mario and Sandy Ross (eds.). *Money Counts: Revisiting Economic Calculation*. London: Berghahn Books. (Forthcoming in January 2020)

ISBN 978-1-78920-684-5
Use the coupon to get a 25 % discount!

https://www.berghahnbooks.com/title/SchmidtMoney

Journal of Business Anthropology:

https://rauli.cbs.dk/index.php/jba/issue/current

## PERSPECTIVES, NOTES AND QUERIES

**No Fun in Anthropology**

Anthropology has long been focused on resistance and survival, the depredations of colonialism and capitalism, what Ortner calls 'ethnographic refusal'. As she suggests, the anthropology of tragedy and suffering is replete. It is easy to see how, for example, our long obsession with kinship was an implicit critique of the erosive effects of modernity. I can interpret the formalist–substantivist debate in economic anthropology as questioning the cultural vacuum at the heart of industrial capitalism and a critique of the crass materialism of consumer society. If these are the intellectual promontories of anthropology, the canyons are the abyss of missed opportunities and collective silence on obvious issues.
This is why it is worth questioning the absence of anthropological attention to entertainment, leisure, enjoyment and the everyday rewards of social life. We have thoroughly explored every contour of human cruelty and conflict, at least from the standpoint of the victims. We have even been willing to portray perfectly contented people as unwitting victims who do not recognise their own oppression, perhaps as a counter to the colonial image of the Happy Native.
In the meantime, entertainment has become one of the most profitable and ubiquitous commodities of global capitalism, the object of huge industries and the driver of many new technologies. People are willing to sacrifice their physical well-being, their jobs, even their lives, for entertainment, the sensation of 'flow'. They watch videos of near fatal accidents, climb deadly buildings, cliffs and mountains, race cars, airplanes and even lawnmowers, shoot at each other with lasers and paintball guns and collect everything from Egyptian antiquities to beanie babies and teaspoons, mostly free from the attention of anthropologists. Our broad-minded intellectual stance has a parochial and intolerant counterpart which continually drives away promising and open-minded students. One of my most brilliant chose to do a dissertation on the paparazzi of Hollywood and the economy of fame in the entertainment business. Her grant proposals got scathing reviews and she was turned down for every postdoc and academic job, but is now the vice president of a market research firm.
There are no well-articulated theories of entertainment in anthropology, for it lies somewhere between structure and agency, work and leisure. Even psychologists and economists have started to think about pleasure and entertainment, albeit in the stunted fields of positive psychology and the economics of happiness. Of course, we have not completely ignored entertainment; there are elements of it in work as diverse as 'The original affluent society', *A theory of shopping* and Peter Stromberg's *Caught in play*. But it remains an outlier; we have an anthropology of mining but not of jewellery. We are still mostly a Greek chorus on the side-lines of contemporary life, moaning about neoliberalism and the struggles of marginalised groups and the poor, blind to the pleasures and joys of contemporary life and the infinite ability of people to find fun and entertainment in even the most squalid and oppressed conditions.

Richard Wilk
Indiana University and the Open Anthropology Institute
wilkr@indiana.edu

If you want to reply to this column, or if you want to write a column or have an idea for one, please communicate with James G. Carrier:
jgc@jgcarrier.demon.co.uk

## CALLS FOR PAPERS, APPLICATIONS AND SIMILAR

Conference Call
**Society and Morality in Eurasia: from Prehistory to the Present Day**
**Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle (Saale), 2–5 December, 2020**
This will be the final conference of the International Max Planck Research School for the Anthropology, Archaeology and History of Eurasia (IMPRS ANARCHIE). The main focus will be on the moral/ethical/normative dimension of human social life but economic issues are also likely to feature prominently. The potential range extends from prehistoric bands to postsocialist deindustrialization. We are interested in how notions of "the good" are expressed by citizens and subjects in everyday life; and in their implications for political hierarchies, economic exchange and provisioning, and the reciprocal obligations of kinship and friendship. Possible topics might include:
• morality in prehistory (archaeobiology, archaeogenetics, etc)
• religion, salvation, legitimacy
• moral dimensions of economic life
• migration and transfer of ethical values
• moral dimensions of social movements and revolutions
The deadline for submitting proposals has been extended to 15th January, 2020. A fuller version of the call can be found at:
https://web.eth.mpg.de/data_export/events/8069/CfP-Society_and_Morality_in_Eurasia.pdf

Call for Papers
Civil Society Review, *Social Science for Change, Lebanon Support* is seeking submissions for the issue:
**Political economy of research in social sciences in the Arab world**
Issue edited by: Dr. Candice Raymond, Dr. Sbeih Sbeih, and Dr. Marie-Noëlle AbiYaghi
Social sciences research – which we broadly define as any form of research that uses scientific approaches and tools in order to produce empirical-based knowledge about society - is a social activity that faces multiple constraints. While some of these challenges are related to epistemological and methodological factors, others lie in the weakening of the research field's autonomy in the neoliberal era. In most western countries, social sciences research is going through important mutations as a result of reforms that, within the "new spirit of capitalism" (Boltanski et Chiapello, 1999), demonstrate the hegemony of economic and political spheres. Research policies of neoliberal inspiration, implemented as early as the 1980s in the United States and one to two decades later in Europe (Duval et Heilbron, 2006), deeply transform the institutional and social conditions of scientific activity. Thus, the decline of public funding for the social sciences and the concomitant increase in private funding, as well as the systematisation of project-funding, are leading to greater precariousness of established research teams, and of individual researchers' careers.

**Read more at:** https://civilsociety-centre.org/content/political-economy-research-social-sciences-arab-world-en-fr-ar

The Anthropology of Economy network was launched at the 2012 conference of the European Association of Social Anthropologists. The Network unites EASA members who share an interest in the anthropology of economy.
**Further information on the AoE Network**: https://www.easaonline.org/networks/economy/
**Contact for Newsletter inquiries and submissions:**
Detelina Tocheva, tocheva.detelina@gmail.com

AoE Network Newsletter 2019/3 was set by Ognjen Kojanić.

*Copyright © Anthropology of Economy network, EASA*

**Join the mailing list:**
http://lists.easaonline.org/listinfo.cgi/anthecon-easaonline.org

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can update your preferences or unsubscribe from this list.

mailchimp