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NEWSLETTER 2021/2 JUNE

IN FOCUS

SAVE THE DATE

Global Meeting on Economic Anthropology (June 30 and July 1)

Dear colleagues,

We are pleased to announce a virtual event on June 30 and July 1 from 2.15 – 4.45 pm CEST to showcase, network, and to share experiences, themes, and knowledge in and about economic anthropology.

The global meeting for economic anthropology is an attempt to make visible the breadth and depth of research in the sub-discipline today.

The events are intended as exploration and those programmed to speak provide lead-ins into regional knowledge and contemporary themes to spark conversation amongst the audience, in a spirit of sharing and exploring together.

Associations, Networks, Trajectories

June 30th, 2.15 – 4.45 p.m. CEST

Keynote:

- Xiang Biao, Max-Planck-Institute for Social Anthropology in Halle

- Federico Neiburg, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro
- Mariya Ivancheva, University of Liverpool, and Dan Hirsland, Københavns Universitet
- Cynthia Isenhour, University of Maine
- Mengqi Wang, Duke Kunshan University
- Jovia Salifu, University of Ghana
- Patrick Neveling, Bournemouth University

Themes, Societies, Scholarship

July 1st, 2.15 – 4.45 p.m. CEST

Lead-Ins:

- Tomás Undurraga, Universidad Alberto Hurtado, Santiago de Chile
- Aditi Saraf, Ashoka University, New Delhi
- Keisha-Khan Perry, Brown University
- Verónica Gago, Universidad de Buenos Aires
- Jiazhi Fengjiang, University of Edinburgh
- Ivan Rajković, University of Vienna

We warmly welcome all who consider themselves a part of or interested in economic anthropology to join the meetings and share their perspective on the sub-discipline. Please consider spreading the word about the meetings to increase the chances that those interested in the sub-discipline can join!

If you want to join, please register at <https://easaonline.org/gmea> to register and receive the Zoom-link.

Many thanks to the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of St. Gallen and the EASA for supporting the event.

Thanks and hope to see you at the event,
Charlotte, Juliane and Andreas

MEET UP

The Global Meeting for Economic Anthropology is an attempt to make visible the breadth and depth of research in the sub-discipline today. Economic anthropologists make contributions to a wide range of contemporary scholarship in and beyond anthropology. Since the global financial crisis of 2007/08, the sub-discipline has gathered momentum, making critical interventions in academia, and in the world. The critical energy of *Black Lives Matter*, *Ni Una Menos*, and other powerful movements has led to increased collaboration between economic anthropologists across the globe. However, for many of us the scale and shape of the sub-discipline seems difficult to grasp.

Hence, as convenors of the EASA Network Anthropology of Economy, we hereby provide a platform for exploring contemporary economic anthropology. On June 30th and July 1st, we will host two virtual events to showcase, network, and to share experiences, themes, and knowledge in and about the sub-discipline. These meetings are intended as an exploration. Those asked to speak will provide lead-ins into regional knowledges and contemporary themes, intended to spark conversation amongst the audience in a spirit of exploring, engaging, and sharing.

We warmly welcome all those who consider themselves a part of (or interested in) economic anthropology to join the meetings and to share their perspectives of the sub-discipline. Please consider spreading the word about this event to increase the chances of those interested in economic anthropology joining in!

Thanks.

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ECONOMIC ANTHROPOLOGY

GLOBAL MEET-UP

REGISTER VIA:

[HTTPS://EASAOONLINE.ORG/GMEA](https://easaonline.org/gmea)



Universität St.Gallen

School of Management and
Social Sciences (SMS-MSG)



30th June
& 1st July
2021

30th JUNE "Associations, Networks, Trajectories"

Keynote: BIAO XIANG

Max-Planck-Institute for Social Anthropology
Halle

Lead-Ins:

CYNTHIA ISENHOUR

University of Maine

MARIYA IVANCHEVA & DAN HIRSLUND
University of Liverpool & Københavns Universitet

FEDERICO NEIBURG
Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro

PATRICK NEVELING
Bournemouth University

JOVIA SALIFU
University of Ghana

MENGQI WANG
Duke Kunshan University

1st JULY "Themes, Moves, Possibilities"

Lead-Ins:

JIAZHI FENGJIANG

University of Edinburgh

VERÓNICA GAGO
Universidad de Buenos Aires

KEISHA-KHAN PERRY
Brown University
Providence

IVAN RAJKOVIĆ
University of Vienna

ADITI SARAF
Ashoka University
New Delhi

TOMÁS UNDURRAGA
Universidad Alberto Hurtado
Santiago de Chile

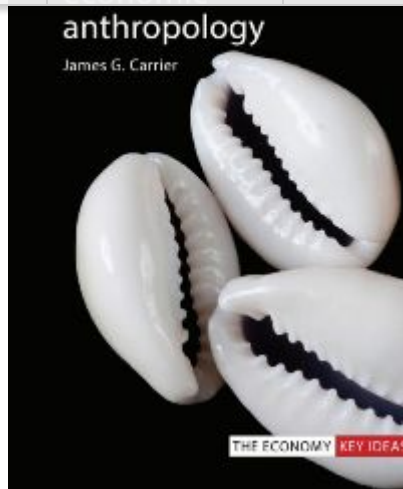
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RECENT PUBLICATIONS

BOOKS, EDITED VOLUMES, AND SPECIAL ISSUES

Carrier, J. G. 2021. *Economic Anthropology*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Agenda Publishing.

Conventional economic thought sees the economy as the sum of market transactions carried out by rational individuals deciding how to allocate their resources among the various



anthropologists see things differently. For them, the focus is the activities, relationships and systems through which objects are produced, circulate among people and ultimately are consumed, which take different forms in different societies and even in different parts of the same society. In this way, economic anthropology takes the rational market actors of conventional economic thought and places them in the world of people, relationships, systems, beliefs and values that begins with production and ends with consumption. This accessible and authoritative introduction to the field of economic anthropology offers students a fresh and fascinating way of looking at the economic world.

ISBN 9781788212526

www.agendapub.com/books/114/economic-anthropology



de Matos, P. A. (2021). *Disciplined agency. Neoliberal precarity, generational dispossession and call centre labour in Portugal*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

This book describes the emergence of a regime of disciplined agency in the Portuguese call centre sector. Examining the ascendancy of call centres as icons of precarity in contemporary Portugal, this book argues that call centre labour

subject. De Matos argues that call centres represent an advanced system of non-manual labour power exploitation, due to the underestimation of human creativity that lies at the centre of the regimented structures of call centre labour. Call centres can only guarantee profit maintenance through the commodification of the human agency arising from the operators' moral, relational and social embedded agentive linguistic interventions of creative improvisation, decision-making, problem-solving and ethical evaluation.

ISBN: 978-1-5261-3498-1

<https://manchesteruniversitypress.co.uk/9781526134981/>

ARTICLES

Prato, G.B. (2020). "Pandemic Emergency, Solidarity and Brutus Tactics". *Urbanities-Journal of Urban Ethnography*, 10 (S4): 3-13.

<https://www.anthrojournal-urbanities.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/4-Introduction.pdf>

Müller, Juliane. (2021). "The Limits of Corporate Chains and Brand Management: 'Loyalty' and the Efficacy of Vernacular Markets in the Andes". *Cultural Anthropology* 36 (2): 252-281. DOI: [10.14506/ca36.2.04](https://doi.org/10.14506/ca36.2.04)

PERSPECTIVES, NOTES AND QUERIES

Thinking about disruption

headquarters are not far from the Queen's palace. Today this impressive building houses Maritime Disruptor's Academy, a group of tech entrepreneurs, people from shipping companies and government officials undergoing a training session to make them 'face up to the reality of digitalisation'. And the reality of digitalisation is that it increases at an exponential rate. According to the seminar speakers, digital transformation is imminent and radical, but I can't help a feeling of dissonance listening to talk of disruption in a room with plaster ceilings and crystal chandeliers.

The speakers follow a well-known script: tell people that they have an urgent problem; offer a solution. They invite us to imagine that we sit in the top row of a gigantic stadium. Each minute water is released into the stadium, increasing at an exponential rate. The first minute one drop, the next minute two, then four, eight et cetera, and we are asked how many days would pass before we drown. The speaker lets the question hang in the air for a moment, and then says that it would take just 44 minutes! The message was that companies were likely to end in the corporate graveyard if they do not embrace the possibilities in AI, robots, the internet of things, virtual reality, 3-D printing and block chains.

'Disruption' conjures up hopes and fears, and it shapes political and business agendas much as 'globalisation' did a decade or two ago. In 2005 the Danish government set up a 'globalisation council'; in 2017 they appointed a 'disruption council' of business leaders, tech experts and representatives from unions and youth organisations to advise about the 'digital transition'.

'Disruption' looks like a turbo-charged version of 'innovation', a word that seems to have lost its punch through over-use. Joseph Schumpeter famously used 'creative destruction' to describe innovation, and his vision of prospering and perishing seems multiplied by the idea of 'exponential development', which is key to the digital transformation. Indeed, examples of disruption caused by digital-platform companies are well known: the disappearance of video-rental shops due to the rise of streaming services like Netflix; the rise of platform companies like Amazon, Uber and Deliveroo in transport and logistics.

When anthropologists study economic spheres dominated by concepts like disruption and digitalisation, they need to acknowledge their significance without taking them at face value. The rhetoric and examples portray digitalisation as destiny, an irresistible force that upsets business and work

affect people and businesses in uniform ways.

To avoid falling prey to an epochalist description and technological solutionism, we might recall some old questions posed by Neil Postman in the 1980s and 1990s:

1. What is the problem that the technology claims to solve?
2. Whose problem is it?
3. What new problems will be created by solving the old one?
4. Which people and institutions will be most harmed by the new technology?
5. What changes in the language are being promoted by it, what changes in meaning, tone and metaphor?
6. What shifts in economic and political power are likely to result from the new technology?
7. What alternative ways might the technology be used?

Adding another ethnographic question:

8. How is the technology actually used?

Jakob Krause Jensen

Email: jakj@edu.au.dk

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:

Michele Filippo Fontefrancesco, m.fontefrancesco@unisg.it

AoE Network Newsletter 2021/2 was set by Ognjen Kojanić.



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Past Issues

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