

'CAPITALISM FOR ANTHROPOLOGISTS'
University of Bergen
26-28 June 2017

***Launching "Frontlines of Value: Class and Social Transformation
in 21st Century Capitalism"***

This is an invitation to a workshop on anthropologies of capitalism at the University of Bergen, an invitation, in fact, to 'friends of the project'. The workshop is meant to be an informal launch of the "Frontlines of Value" research program, funded by the Bergen Foundation, the University of Bergen, and the Norwegian Government.

The workshop is intended to be a setting for discussing recent research on capitalism in anthropology as instantiated in several larger research groups in Europe. We cannot strive of course to be comprehensive when it comes to capitalism, and indeed at this occasion there will be a bias toward recent research in and on Europe, though not exclusively so. The workshop will take the form of a brainstorming effort around issues of value, class, capitalism, and finance. Scholars from Susana Narotzky's GRECO project in Barcelona, Chris Hann and Don Kalb's 'Financialization project' in Halle, and from projects at the University of Bergen and elsewhere in Scandinavia, in particular also Bruce Kapferer's 'Egalitarianism' project are invited to join, as will some 'friends of the project' who have been involved in discussions over a longer time.

The emphasis will be on brainstorming rather than on formal research papers. We want speakers to reflect upon how the initial theoretical assumptions and empirical expectations of their research met with new data and insights and how those new empirical insights led to shifts, modification, extension, specification or perhaps even full out transformation of their initial ideas – the proverbial abductive logic of the extended case study. In other words, we would like to see a dynamic dialogue between theory, empirical realities in our sites, and the big questions of contemporary history and politics. We would also like to hear explicit reflections or speculations about where our recent research seems to be leading? Are there new theoretical programs or empirical questions on the horizon, emerging from our data, insights, conceptual innovations, discussions, are there altogether new questions and problems, new framings? In presentations of some 20 minutes we will ask our speakers to reflect upon their recent discovery-trajectories and speculate about where they might be leading and why.

The workshop will simultaneously serve as a course for a small number of Phd's in Norway and Scandinavia who are interested in getting familiar with the latest research in anthropology on capitalism as developed within the represented programs. In other words, apart from senior scholars and postdocs who will be brainstorming about their work, there will be phd's around who are interested

to learn something from the discussion of this research for their own projects and who will be asked to participate actively as interlocutors. Speakers may be asked later to comment on short draft papers by these attending phd students who will get formal credits for their participation in the workshop plus their papers (not more than one or two small 3000 word papers per 'supervisor').

The 'Frontlines' project seeks to occupy the space for anthropological class driven research on global capitalism and inequality left vacated in between Piketty's 'Capital' (2013) and Graeber's 'Debt' (2011). Both books are still powerful landmarks in the intellectual climate and reflect on as well as prefigure the ongoing stagnation in global capitalism, including the associated political polarization that this stagnation/crisis generates. It is notable however that both books also evade the question of class, are indeed ritual dances around it. They can be seen as respectively a social democratic and a Left-libertarian effort to run circles around the Marxian concepts of capitalism, class, and value. They hardly deal with a transforming, uneven, and increasingly turbulent – that is 'dangerously blind-in-the-aggregate' - global capitalism that is bent on financialization, fictitious accumulation, high-tech driven social disruption, and ecological destruction. Moreover, this hyper-real combination of secular stagnation and turbulence also generates the ongoing urban rebellions and a politics of confrontational volatility – the overhyped 'populisms' - that is currently transforming geopolitics, national political systems, and popular expectations and sensibilities everywhere. Anthropologists have been good at making the cross connections of class, value, and politics visible in intimate forms of research combined with conceptual creativity.

This is, among other perspectives, the background against which the workshop will take place.

Monday 26 June: Literaturhuset

10.00-11.00

Don Kalb

"Capitalism for Anthropologists: Towards the Frontlines of Value"

11.00-12.00

Susana Narotzky

"The 'Grassroots Economics project': A preliminary analysis of how the financial crisis and austerity policies transform expectations and the location of conflict in Southern Europe"

12.00-13.00

Chris Hann,
"Rethinking Eurasia in the era of Trump"

13.00-14.30 Lunch

14.30-15.15

Elisabeth Schober
"Infrastructures of Capitalism and the Worlds of Work Around Them"

15.15-16.00

Theo Rakopoulos
"The Faceless Cooperative: When our informants go capitalist"

16.00 – 16.45

Luisa Steur
"Capitalism and the 'late socialist conjuncture' in the global south: reflections from the overlapping histories of Marxist and anti-racist practice."

17.00 – 17.45

Anette Fagertun,
"Waves of dispossession: the conversion of land and labor in Bali's recent history"

17.45 – 18.30

Patrick Neveling
"The Birth of the Otherwise Neoliberal. Expanding Sidney Mintz' Global Historical Anthropology towards an Analytical Model of World-Historical Change"

20.00 Dinner

Tuesday 27 June

9.30 – 10.15

Hadas Weiss,
“What Capitalism Means for Anthropology: Lessons from Germany”

10.15 -11.00

Marek Mikus,
“Debating, contesting and (re-) regulating household debt in post-credit boom Croatia: toward a historical anthropology of peripheral financialization”

11.15 -12.00

Natalia Buier,
“Anatomies of malfunction: Spanish high-speed rail, mutations of Keynesianism and finance in contemporary capitalism?”

12.00 – 12.45

Charlotte Bruckermann,
“Carbon governance in China: Green finance, emissions exchanges, and the social credit system.”

13.00-14.00 Lunch

14.00- 14.45

Tristram Barrett
“Framing Baku: Thoughts on petro-capitalism, authoritarianism, and urbanism”.

14.45 – 15.30

Dimitra Kofti,
“Where has the money gone? Reflections on moral and political debates in/on Greece”

15.30 – 16.15

Patricia Matos,
"The needs of capital and the needs of the people: charity, welfare and
distribution in austerity Portugal"

16.30 – 17.15

Antonio Pusceddu,
"A matter of class? Reflections on 'environmentalism', dispossession and politics
in southern Italy"

17.15 – 18.15

Chris Hann, Don Kalb, Susana Narotzky: The next agenda

(short overall comments, each ten minutes; general discussion)

20.00 Dinner

22.00 Walk from restaurant to closest mountaintop to enjoy the nightly sun and
the gorgeous sights over Bergen and the Fjord (if weather good enough)

**Wednesday 28 June (in Department of Anthropology – seminar room BT-
building)**

9.30 – 11.15

Phd students presentations plus a discussion round.

11.30 – 12.30 Meeting of the MPI group

12.30 – 13.30 Small Lunch