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NEWSMAIL | DECEMBER 2023

Research projects, publications and events

Dear Members and Friends,

Although these are difficult times, I hope this newsletter finds you and your loved ones in good health. I also hope that the coming winter break can be an opportunity for reflection to pave the way for more constructive discussions in our academic communities.

At least from our small community, I am happy to be able to share some good news. Sofia Ugarte and Julia Malik have been able to embark on new research projects, while Ilona Grabmaier has successfully concluded hers. Meanwhile, Christof Lammer, Ilona Grabmaier, Nina Haberland, Quirin Rieder and Vincent Dubois have published some interesting contributions to our field of interest. You will find the details and more announcements below.

I wish you all a good winter break and transition to 2024, hopefully with new research and publications on care and state!

Please send any comments and suggestions or announcements you would like to share to cast.ksa@univie.ac.at

Tatjana Thelen

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tatjana Thelen'.

AWARDS



Ilona Grabmaier has successfully defended her PhD thesis "Stayed at home: Re/Configuring Care in Rural Ukraine" - congratulations!



Cast congratulates Julia Malik on being awarded a Marietta Blau-Grant! With this scholarship, she is able to continue her fieldwork for her PhD project "Classifying Citizens, Updating the State: How Practicing Digital Welfare Shapes Statehood in Colombia" and to connect with researchers at the Universidad del Rosario in Bogotá (Colombia).



We're pleased to announce that Anna Žabicka has been awarded the 2023-2024 Dissertation Grant for Graduate Students by the Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies.

PROJECTS





Congratulations to [Sofia Ugarte](#) who started a new research project at the London School of Economics as a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellow!

Social (In)Securities will explore theoretically and empirically the intersections between care, intimacy, and politico-economic crises. Concretely, Sofia will analyze the effects and affects of retirement insecurity among older adults and their impact on household economies in urban Chile. Drawing on

ethnographic research with multigenerational households and audio-visual storytelling practices, she will examine how pensions and retirement schemes shape the complex intersections between aging, care, and capital. By doing so, Sofia will seek new understandings for how intimate experiences, financial uncertainty, and imagined futures become navigation tools for aging societies living through the cost-of-living crisis.

EVENTS

18th EASA Biennial Conference | Barcelona, Spain | 23-26 July 2024

Panel "The Gender of State"

[Letizia Bonanno](#) (University of Kent) and [Rosa Sansone](#) (University of Manchester) are organising a panel on "The Gender of the State" at next year's EASA conference *Doing and Undoing with Anthropology* in Barcelona.

This panel seeks to explore gendered experiences of the state. We invite contributions exploring how gender ideologies, and the power relations they hide or manifest, have historically been naturalised and reproduced in various statehood processes and gendered state practices.

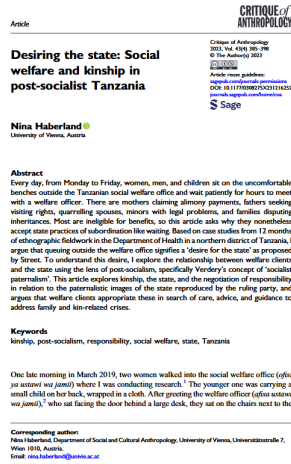
For more information [click here](#).

PUBLICATIONS

Nina Haberland: Desiring the state. Social welfare and kinship in post-socialist Tanzania

In: *Critique of Anthropology* 43(4), 385–398.

Every day, from Monday to Friday, women, men, and children sit on the uncomfortable benches outside the Tanzanian social welfare office and wait patiently for hours to meet with a welfare officer. There are mothers claiming alimony payments, fathers seeking visiting rights, quarrelling spouses, minors with legal problems, and families disputing inheritances. Most are ineligible for benefits, so this article asks why they nonetheless accept state practices of subordination like waiting. Based on



case studies from 12 months of ethnographic fieldwork in the Department of Health in a northern district of Tanzania, I argue that queuing outside the welfare office signifies a ‘desire for the state’ as proposed by Street. To understand this desire, I explore the relationship between welfare clients and the state using the lens of post-socialism, specifically Verdery’s concept of ‘socialist paternalism’. This article explores kinship, the state, and the negotiation of responsibility in relation to the paternalistic images of the state reproduced by the ruling party, and argues that welfare clients appropriate these in search of care, advice, and guidance to address family and kin-related crises.

Ilona Grabmaier (Universität Wien)

Die Grenzen gegenseitiger Unterstützung: geschlechtsspezifische Konstruktionen von (un)deservingness in der ländlichen Ukraine¹

Abstract

This article is concerned with the question of how it is negotiated whether a person is – or not – eligible for help, support and care within the specific context of female labor migration from Western Ukraine. As will be shown, access to specific resources depends less on formal entitlements and criteria, than on moral views and beliefs about who actually deserves different forms of care. Decisions about the (un)deservingness of a person are established based on concurrently existing logics of legitimization, in which normative notions of reciprocity, kinship, gender, and personality/life course do play a crucial role. These factors determine decisively whether people in Western Ukraine live in secure or insecure environments, especially in old age. Taking as an example the case of Vasył¹, a man in his late sixties who himself claims to be needy, but is classified as undeserving by others, I suggest that not only negative reciprocity within different relationships of mutual support, but especially gendered constructions of care and need contribute significantly to the exclusion of (particularly single) men from these relationships. Thereby, the boundaries between kinship and the state, as well as according (moral) obligations are situationally reworked and (re)negotiated. Failure is evoked as a trope to justify the exclusion of some, so that disregard for the needs of others can be portrayed as the individual failure of those that are excluded. This, in return, serves as a means for claiming inclusion to the ‘moral center’ of the local community by those desiring others care and support which, somehow surprisingly, helps elderly women to considerably gaining power and authority within their communities.

Keywords: Care, (Gendered) Need, Kinship, Kinship-State-Relation, Labor Migration, Reciprocity, (Un)deservingness, Poverty, Women Ukraine.

¹ Ich möchte mich herzlich bei meinen Kolleginnen der Schwabacher Ethnografie am Institut für Kultur- und Gesellschaftswissenschaften der Universität Wien, meinen Kolleginnen in der Galizien, bei den TeilnehmerInnen des Herbstseminars am Max-Planck-Institut für Ethnologie/Forschung in Felderstraße sowie bei den Gutachtern für ihre früheren Mithosen und konstruktiven Kommentare und Anregungen zu diesem Beitrag bedanken.

Ilona Grabmaier: Die Grenzen gegenseitiger Unterstützung. Geschlechtsspezifische Konstruktionen von (un)deservingness in der ländlichen Ukraine.

In: D. Lushaj, J. Rozmus, and Y. Remestwenski (eds.) *Was bleibt von Galizien? Kontinuitäten – Brüche – Perspektiven (= Wiener Galizien-Studien*, Bd. 7). V&R unipress, 145–170. [in German]

This article is concerned with the moralized distribution of care and scarce resources among senior citizens in Western Ukraine within the context of female labor migration. As will be shown, access to specific resources depends less on formal entitlements and criteria, than on moral views and beliefs

about who actually deserves different forms of care. Decisions about the (un)deservingness of a person are established based on concurrently existing logics of legitimization, in which normative notions of reciprocity, kinship, gender, and personality/life course do play a crucial role. These factors determine decisively whether people in Western Ukraine live in secure or insecure environments, especially in old age. Taking as an example the case of Vasył¹, a man in his late sixties who himself claims to be needy, but is classified as undeserving by others, I suggest that not only negative reciprocity within different relationships of mutual support, but especially gendered constructions of care and need contribute significantly to the exclusion of (particularly single) men from these relationships. This, somehow surprisingly, helps elderly women in considerably gaining power and authority within their communities.

Power to which people?

Energiegerechtigkeit und ownership-Strukturen in Energiegenossenschaften

Quirin Rieder, Konstantin Veit, Nikolaj Moretti, Luis Peters & Celine Li

1. Einleitung

Um das Ziel des Pariser Klimaabkommens von 2016 zu erreichen, die Erderwärmung auf deutlich unter 2°C über dem vorindustriellen Niveau zu beschränken, sind in Deutschland umfassende Schritte zur Dekarbonisierung von Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft notwendig. Das Klimaschutzgesetz schreibt vor, dass die nationalen Treibhausgasemissionen bis 2030 um mindestens 65 % im Vergleich zum Jahr 1990 gesenkt werden müssen. Im CO₂-intensivsten Energiektor sollen die Emissionen prozentual zu anderen Sektoren am stärksten gesenkt werden (BNEF 2020). Nach dem Beschluss der Bundesregierung aus dem Jahr 2021, alle Kernkraftwerke bis 2033 vom Netz zu nehmen, ist die dezentrale Stromerzeugung aus erneuerbaren Energiequellen essenziell für eine erfolgreiche Energiewende. Darüber hinaus hat der russische Angriffskrieg auf die Ukraine der von Klimapolitikern diskutierten breiteren Debatte eine geopolitische Dimension hinzugefügt. In den Worten Robert Habeck, der Bundesministers für Wirtschaft und Klimaschutz: „Wer darum kämpft, sich von den fossilen Energien freizumachen, der kämpft für die Freiheit.“ (Deutscher Bundestag 2022: 8.) Zahlreiche zivilgesellschaftliche Akteure setzen in den vergangenen Jahren einen bedeutenden Beitrag zum Erreichen dieser Ziele, insbesondere durch den Aufbau und Einsatz erneuerbarer Energien. So waren im Jahr 2019 gut 60 % der in Deutschland installierten Erzeugungskapazität erneuerbare Energien in Bürger:innenhand (trendresearch 2020 und 6,8 % gingen auf Energiegenossenschaften (EG) zurück (DGfV 2020). Genossenschaften haben den Anspruch, wirtschaftlicher Handel auf demokratischer Art und Weise zu organisieren. So sind

Quirin Rieder: Power to Which People? Energiegerechtigkeit und ownership-Strukturen in Energiegenossenschaften

In: Silja Klepp and Jonas Hein (eds.) *Umweltgerechtigkeit und sozialökologische Transformation: Konflikte um Nachhaltigkeit im deutschsprachigen Raum*. Bielefeld: transcript, 117–143. – coauthored with Konstantin Veit, Nikolaj Moretti, Luis Peters and Celine Li. [in German]

This co-authored chapter uses an energy justice perspective to show how energy cooperatives in Germany formulate a multi-level critique of large energy corporations and state forms of energy production and grid

operation. Comparing two energy cooperatives, we highlight their political work in the wider energy landscape, especially regarding unevenly distributed ownership of the means of production and a lack of participation opportunities. Internally, cooperatives are trying to practice energy-just forms of ownership by creating opportunities for co-ownership and participatory decision-making in infrastructure, while taking energy transition and climate protection in their own hands. However, the chapter also shows that these ideals are not achieved easily, and especially class, financial hurdles, individual time capacities and expertise stand in the way of fully realizing energy-just ownership.

13 Living along infrastructural lines Following electricity in Hunza

Quirin Rieder

Karim waved at me and invited me into his house for *chai*. I met him some minutes earlier on a street in Hunza, northern Pakistan, and we chatted for a while in English before he offered me to have tea. Pleased, I said yes, we took off our shoes and he led me into his living room. Karim lit the light switch, stared at the ceiling for a split second and smiled as the headlight went on. "There isn't much electricity these days", he said while he also turned on a small TV and started boiling water on a gas stove. With a hint of anger, he looked through the window towards another house some hundred metres away and said: "But he has a special line, and he is doing it openly. He has electricity all day". This neighbour is the son of an influential politician with good connections to the local Water and Power Department. Therefore, Karim explained, this man somehow managed to get a "special" transmission line carrying electricity 24 hours that were originally designed for health units and government buildings only.

In this chapter, I demonstrate the value of Tim Ingold's work on lines for anthropological studies of 'infrastructure'. If we take infrastructure as a knot in Ingold's sense in which flows of materials and practices mingle, we start seeing the everyday entanglements happening around and with us. In this perspective, infrastructure arises as a form of those flows in which we participate, and along which the lines of life run. As such, it is neither a pre-existing and passive thing ready to use for political purposes, nor does it contain any intrinsic agency. Rather, infrastructure emerges as a fluid shape in the flows of materials and lives.

After a brief discussion of recent anthropological studies of infrastructure, the chapter focuses on Ingold's notions of lines and corresponding materials. Then, based on two short periods of ethnographic fieldwork in the years 2017 and 2018 in Hunza, Pakistan, I will point out how approaching phenomena like electricity with Ingold's writings might widen our understanding of life-along infrastructure.

DOI: 10.4324/9781003162773-18

Quirin Rieder: Living Along Infrastructural Lines. Following Electricity in Hunza, Pakistan

In: Martin Porr and Niels Weidtmann (eds.) *One World Anthropology and Beyond: A Multidisciplinary Engagement with the Work of Tim Ingold*. London: Routledge, 171–184.

Tim Ingold's work on lines and the correspondence of materials can contribute to a significant shift of perspectives in the study of infrastructure and built environment. This brief chapter argues for an anthropology of infrastructure that frames its object of analysis neither as a technological manifestation of social action, nor as agency-loaded entity but as a relational everyday phenomenon of experience; a knot, heavily

enmeshed in various lines of becoming. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork in Northern Pakistan, I test Ingold's concept of lines for studying unequal access to energy. In a context where electricity provision directly relates to a changing environment, the experience of everyday load-shedding (scheduled blackouts) makes melting glaciers as well as failed development schemes very tangible. Here, Ingold's work may therefore be useful to better understand the (unequal) dimensions of infrastructure development and climate change.

Check for updates

Special Issue – Labour and Welfare

Social policy as knowledge process: How its sociotechnical links to labour reconfigure the social question

Christof Lammer
University of Klagenfurt, Austria

Abstract
The relationship between labour and social policy is at the heart of the social question. Scholars often treat this link as either a causal relation out there or a conceptual connection in policy makers' minds. This article examines its sociotechnical materiality instead. It follows anthropologist who ask how bureaucrats practice policy and scholars of science and technology studies who explore how social and technical aspects are interrelated in knowledge processes. China studies has suggested that the minimum livelihood guarantee (*dibao*) was originally designed as a market-oriented response to transformations of labour such as mass layoffs, peasant proletarianisation and associated unrest but later reworked to only combat extreme poverty. Ethnographic insights into *dibao* policy in a village in Sichuan show how its designed links to labour were erased and transformed through different methods of bureaucratic targeting, as well as expectations about the bureaucratic ability to know. For a time, *dibao* was even integrated into alternative rural development projects aimed at decommodification. Studying social policy as a knowledge process uncovers how its sociotechnical links to labour reconfigure it as an answer to the social question.

Keywords
Bureaucracy, labour, materiality, poverty knowledge, quantification, social policy, sociotechnical discretion

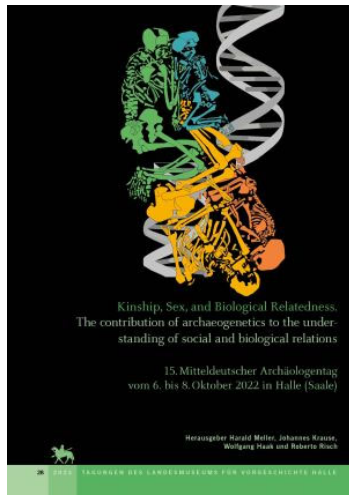
Corresponding author:
Christof Lammer, Department of Science, Technology and Society Studies, University of Klagenfurt,
Universitätsstraße 65-67, 9020 Klagenfurt, Austria.
Email: christof.lammer@univk.at

Christof Lammer: Social policy as knowledge process. How its sociotechnical links to labour reconfigure the social question

In: *Global Social Policy. Special Issue – Labour and Welfare*.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/14680181231210158>

The relationship between labour and social policy is at the heart of the social question. Scholars often treat this link as either a causal relation out there or a conceptual connection in policy makers' minds. This article examines its sociotechnical materiality instead. It follows anthropologists who ask how bureaucrats practice policy and scholars of science and technology studies who explore how social and technical aspects are interrelated in knowledge processes. China studies has suggested that the minimum livelihood guarantee (*dibao*) was originally designed as a market-oriented response to

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Tatjana Thelen: Kinship. Old problems and new prospects in the conversation between archaeology and social anthropology

In: Harald Meller, Johannes Krause, Wolfgang Haak and Roberto Risch (eds.): *Kinship, Sex, and Biological Relatedness. The contribution of archaeogenetics to the understanding of social and biological relations*. Heidelberg:

Propylaeum, 29–34. <https://doi.org/10.11588/propy...>

Collaboration between social anthropology and archaeological sciences has a long and productive history. More recent results from archäogenetics challenge ideas about the significance of consanguinity in structuring human societies in the past. Pointing potentially to care as more important for creating relations, these findings open the possibility for a new chapter in the interdisciplinary conversation.

CLASSES SUBALTERNAS E INSTITUIÇÕES PÚBLICAS: UM PROGRAMA DE PESQUISA INTERNACIONAL E SUA APLICAÇÃO NO BRASIL

Vincent Dubois

INTRODUÇÃO

Daniel Blake é um jovem de 59 anos que trabalha como carpinteiro. Após ter um infarto, ele precisa interromper suas atividades, mas é declarado apto a trabalhar pela perícia. Consequentemente, não tem direito a uma pensão por invalidez e precisa se candidatar a empregos que não pode aceitar, pois aguarda o processo de concessão do seguro-desemprego. A degradação simbólica soma-se então à dificuldade material: a vergonha de não ser mais um trabalhador ativo, o não reconhecimento de sua doença, a humilhação de ser visto como um preguioso. A obrigação de conduzir a busca incessante de solicitação dos benefícios torna difícil ainda mais a sua experiência com a burocracia. Apesar do desânimo, no entanto, e graças ao trabalho de grupo, mesmo com os meses que também ficaram para trás, ele não desiste. Ele recorre à decisão do médico pouco e dos encaminhamentos da agência de emprego e se ocupa buscando um nome e o motivo de recusa na ficha da perícia. Ele finalmente ganha um caso, embora ainda demais para evitar o estágio final resultante de meses de pressão burocrática e social.

Sociologicamente falando, Daniel Blake é um membro das classes subalternas, definidas segundo o referencial proposto por Bourdieu (2007) como o grupo dominado do espaço social, ocupando posições subalternas na divisão do trabalho e possuindo baixo nível de capital econômico e cultural. O filme de Ken Loach *J. Daniel Blake*, de 2016 – misto de ficção e gênero de protesto artístico – apresenta as questões vividas que motivam o desenvolvimento deste programa de pesquisa: como as instituições reformadas na era neoliberal impactam tanto as condições materiais de vida quanto os status simbólicos de pessoas com problemas socioeconômicos? Como essas pessoas lidam com as instituições, navegam por elas e as resistem?

O programa de pesquisa Classes Subalternas e Instituições Públicas (Lower Classes and Public Institutions – Loci) expande esse questionar por meio de uma abordagem sociológica qualitativa, partindo do ponto de vista dos membros das classes subalternas. O programa Loci propõe uma abordagem centrada nas pessoas (*people-centred approach*), destinada a comparar, em vários contextos nacionais, transformados pela vida neoliberal, as diversas e muitas vezes papéis que as instituições públicas desempenham na vida dos membros das classes subalternas e na reestruturação dessas classes como um grupo social.

Desde a década de 1980, grandes dificuldades sociais e econômicas – que assumiram formas e intensidades específicas em cada país no momento – afetaram não apenas as sociedades capitalistas (Hassard & Thelen, 2016), mas, também, aquelas em desenvolvimento. As classes subalternas

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Vincent Dubois: Classes subalternas e instituições públicas. Um programa de pesquisa internacional e sua aplicação no Brasil.

In: *Boletim de Análise Político-Institucional* 35, 9–19.

This paper introduces to a special issue presenting the first results of three fieldworks on the relationship between members of the lower classes and public institutions in Brazil. These researches are part of the international research program LoCI.

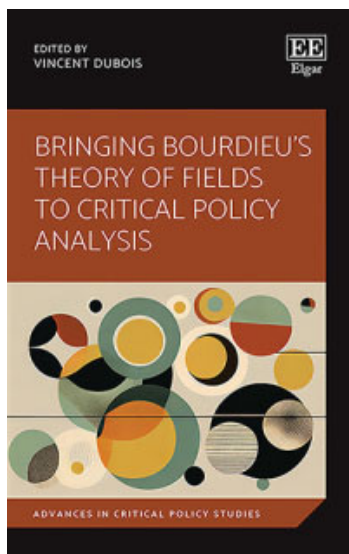


Vincent Dubois: A vida no guichê. Administrar a miséria.

Lisboa: Etnográfica Press. (Issue date: December 2023)

This is the new Portuguese translation of *The Bureaucrat and the Poor*, which analyzes from an ethnographic point of view

the relationships at the desk of welfare offices in France.



Vincent Dubois: Bringing Bourdieu's Theory of Fields to Critical Policy Analysis.

Cheltenham: E. Elgar. (Forthcoming, January 2024)

Laying down the foundations of a critical sociological approach to the interdisciplinary domain of public policy, this insightful book presents the first systematic reflection on the use of Bourdieu's theory of social fields to analyse policy processes. Engaging with theoretical dimensions, it provides innovative methodological tools, both quantitative and qualitative in nature. Bringing together an array of eminent contributors and case studies from across the globe, it presents theoretical and methodological insights, as well as empirical information on national cases and policy sectors.

CaSt - Care and State

Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology Universitätsstraße 7,
1010 Vienna
Austria

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