INFRASTRUCTURE, MORALITY, FOOD AND CLOTHING, AND NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN LATIN AMERICA

Edited by Donald C. Wood

RESEARCH IN ECONOMIC ANTHROPOLOGY

VOLUME 41

INFRASTRUCTURE, MORALITY, FOOD AND CLOTHING, AND NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN LATIN AMERICA

RESEARCH IN ECONOMIC ANTHROPOLOGY

Volume 20: *Research in Economic Anthropology* – Edited by B. L. Isaac

Volume 21: *Social Dimensions in the Economic Process* – Edited by N. Dannhaeuser and C. Werner

Volume 22: *Anthropological Perspectives on Economic Development and Integration* – Edited by N. Dannhaeuser and C. Werner

Volume 23: *Socioeconomic Aspects of Human Behavioral Ecology* – Edited by M. Alvard

Volume 24: *Markets and Market Liberalization: Ethnographic Reflections* – Edited by N. Dannhaeuser and C. Werner

Volume 25: *Choice in Economic Contexts: Ethnographic and Theoretical Enquiries* – Edited by Donald C. Wood

Volume 26: *The Economics of Health and Wellness: Anthropological Perspectives* – Edited by Donald C. Wood

Volume 27: *Dimension of Ritual Economy* – Edited by P. McAnany and E. C. Wells

Volume 28: *Hidden Hands in the Market: Ethnographies of Fair Trade, Ethical Consumption and Corporate Social Responsibility* – Edited by Geert De Neve, Peter Luetchford, Jeffrey Pratt, and Donald C. Wood

Volume 29: *Economic Development, Integration, and Morality in Asia and the Americas* – Edited by Donald C. Wood

Volume 30: *Economic Action in Theory and Practice: Anthropological Investigations* – Edited by Donald C. Wood

Volume 31: *The Economics of Religion: Anthropological Approaches* – Edited by Lionel Obadia and Donald C. Wood

Volume 32: *Political Economy, Neoliberalism, and the Prehistoric Economies of Latin America* – Edited by Ty Matejowsky and Donald C. Wood

Volume 33: *Engaging with Capitalism: Cases from Oceania* – Edited by Fiona McCormack and Kate Barclay

Volume 34: *Production, Consumption, Business and the Economy: Structural Ideals and Moral Realities* – Edited by Donald C. Wood

Volume 35: *Climate Change, Culture, and Economics* – Edited by Donald C. Wood

Volume 36: *The Economics of Ecology, Exchange, and Adaptation: Anthropological Explorations* – Edited by Donald C. Wood

Volume 37: *Anthropological Considerations of Production, Exchange, Vending and Tourism* – Edited by Donald C. Wood

Volume 38: *Individual and Social Adaptations to Human Vulnerability* – Edited by Donald C. Wood

Volume 39: *The Politics and Ethics of the Just Price: Ethnographies of Market Exchange* – Edited by Peter Luetchford and Giovanni Orlando

Volume 40: *Anthropological Enquiries into Policy, Debt, Business and Capitalism* – Edited by Donald C. Wood

This page intentionally left blank

EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD

This page intentionally left blank

RESEARCH IN ECONOMIC ANTHROPOLOGY VOLUME 41

INFRASTRUCTURE, MORALITY, FOOD AND CLOTHING, AND NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN LATIN AMERICA

EDITED BY

DONALD C. WOOD

Akita University Graduate School of Medicine, Japan

United Kingdom – North America – Japan
India – Malaysia – China

Emerald Publishing Limited
Howard House, Wagon Lane, Bingley BD16 1WA, UK

First edition 2022

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 978-1-80117-435-0 (Print)
ISBN: 978-1-80117-434-3 (Online)
ISBN: 978-1-80117-436-7 (Epub)

ISSN: 0190-1281 (Series)

CONTENTS

PART II
FOOD AND CLOTHING

PART III
NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN LATIN AMERICA

ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

Kate Bayliss is a Senior Research Fellow at the University of Sussex and Research Associate at SOAS and University of Leeds. Since completing her PhD in Development Economics at SOAS, she has worked on issues relating to social equity and the provision of infrastructure and essential services in the United Kingdom and the Global South. Her particular research interests are on the changing paradigms surrounding private sector engagement in meeting basic needs and on the distributional outcomes from such interventions. She has worked in academia as well as consultancy for civil society organizations, trade unions, and UN agencies. She has published articles in *World Development*, *Competition and Change* and the *Journal of Development Studies*. Her recent research focus is on the role of systemic issues in the provisioning of economic and social infrastructure. In 2020, she published *A Guide to the Systems of Provision Approach: Who Gets What, How and Why*, co-authored with Ben Fine.

Robert Birnbauer is a Lecturer at the Department of European Ethnology at Humboldt University of Berlin. He has taught numerous classes on Economic Anthropology, Qualitative Methods, and Digitalization at Humboldt University, from where he received his PhD, and at Technische Universität Chemnitz, Germany, where he has been a research associate. He has been visiting scholar at the Department of Anthropology at Harvard University. Robert has published about discourses and practices that evolve around the so-called "ethnic economy" concept and on the economic situation of homeless people in Berlin during the COVID-19 pandemic. For several years, he has been researching different markets, both virtual and local, in, around, and beyond Berlin. His main interests are economic anthropology, particularly the economic anthropology of markets, as well as political anthropology and digitalization.

Benjamin O.L. Bowles is a Lecturer in Social Anthropology at SOAS University of London and a Research Fellow at the Open University. His PhD research at Brunel University examined the lives of itinerant boat-dwellers on the canal and rivers of London and the South East of England. Following this, he worked as a Research Assistant to Professor Laura Bear at the LSE, examining the changing face of global maritime infrastructure financing practices. In 2018 he was Principle Investigator on the CRUISSE Network project *Flexible and Reflexive Standards: Constructing Resilient Infrastructure in Uncertainty*, working with the UK Government's Cabinet Office to assess the resilience of infrastructure systems. Between 2019 and 2020, he was CO-I on the project *Trajectories of Infrastructure Finance* at SOAS, where he examined the future of private

financing in the UK after the end of PFI, its infrastructure private financing initiative. Most recently, he has been working on *Policing Uncertainty: Decisions and Actions in a National Emergency* at the Open University, a project that investigates the decision making of senior police decision makers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

You-Kyung Byun is an Associate Researcher at the Free University of Berlin and teaching at the Humboldt University of Berlin, Germany. She earned her PhD in Social and Cultural Anthropology at the Free University of Berlin with a particular focus on the economic anthropological topic: gift and money. Her research interests include topics such as gifts, money, value, social network, migration, and work. Her research projects consider both German and Korean societies through migrant minorities (Korean food entrepreneurs in Berlin) and economic practices and value structures in comparative perspectives. She is currently looking for opportunities to combine data science and anthropology. She can be reached at byun.youkyung@gmail.com.

Maria Denisova is a PhD candidate at the Department Health, Ethics & Society, Care and Public Health Research Institute, Maastricht University. She is a sociologist by training. Her main research interests include science and technology studies, economic sociology, and studies of health care and human reproduction.

Heike Derwanz is a Professor of Material Culture in educational settings at the University of Oldenburg in Germany. As a cultural anthropologist and art historian specializing in metropolitan culture and lifestyle, she researches the role of economics in urban textile practices in households, and their embeddedness in city infrastructures, in her current projects. She was a member of the DFG research group *Automatisms: The Emergence of Structures Beyond Planned Processes in Information Technology, Media and Culture* at the University of Paderborn, where she conducted her PhD research on the art market. In 2016 and 2017, she was a guest professor for anthropology at the University of Bremen. She is currently preparing a book entitled *Clothes in Affluence*: *Material Culture Studies and the Anthropology of Economics.*

Olga Doletskaya is a PhD student at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies at the University Collage London. Her research focuses on queer parenthood in Russia. Her other research interests include assisted reproduction, surrogacy, and post-Soviet sociality.

Oksana Dorofeeva is a Junior Teacher at the University of Amsterdam, where she obtained her MSc in Social Sciences. Her research interests include cultural and economic sociology, Internet studies, and sociology of mothering.

Sidney M. Greenfield is a Professor of Anthropology Emeritus at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and Co-chair of the Columbia University Seminars on Brazil, Studies in Religion and Contents and Methods in the Social Sciences. He has conducted ethnographic research in Barbados and New Bedford,

Massachusetts, but mostly in Brazil, and ethnohistorical and historical research in Portugal and the Atlantic Islands on problems ranging from family and kinship, patronage and politics, the history of plantations and plantation slavery, and entrepreneurship to Spiritist surgery and healing, syncretized Brazilian religions such as Candomblé, Umbanda and Kardecist Spiritism, and evangelical Protestants in Brazilian politics. He is author and/or editor of 9 books, producer, director, and author of 5 video documentaries and has published some 150 articles and reviews in books and professional journals. His most recent books include *Evangelicos na Politica: Por Debaixo dos Panos* (Evangelicals in Politics: What Happens Under the Sheets) – in Portuguese with Antonio Mourão Cavalcante – Editora Universidade Federal do Ceará (2016); a second edition of *Dr Argeu: A Construção de um Santo Popular* (*Dr Argeu: The Construction of a Popular Saint*) – also in Portuguese with Antonio Mourão Cavalcante – Editora Universide Federal do Ceará (2016); and *Spirits With Scalpels: The Cultrual Biology of Spirit Healing in Brazil*. San Francisco, CA: Left Coast Press, 2008 (2012 Available as an e-book.)

Dr Muhammad Salman Khan is a Postdoctoral Research Associate at the Department of Geography, School of Social Science and Public Policy, King's College London. Salman is an economic and institutional sociologist, working on informal markets, decentralization and local governance, institutional analysis, and borderland studies. Currently, Salman is simultaneously working on women markets in the northwest of Pakistan and illegal antiquities markets in Pakistan-Afghanistan's borderland. Salman can be reached at Muhammad_salman.-khan@kcl.ac.uk.

Sarah Lyon is a Professor of Anthropology and Associate Dean of Faculty Studies in the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Kentucky. Sarah teaches courses in Economic and Business Anthropology. She has conducted long-term research on how alternative food networks such as fair trade work to create and sustain diverse economies in the United States and Latin America.

Jessica Mannette earned her MA degree in Anthropology from the University of Ottawa in 2020. Her research interests and fieldwork experience include community-level food security in urban areas as it relates to policy and community-led food aid programs. She is currently collaborating with the Department of Applied Human Nutrition at Mount Saint Vincent University to conduct a community-based nutritional needs assessment as it relates to food security for people living with HIV/AIDS in Nova Scotia, Canada.

Colleen Alena O'Brien is a Postdoctoral Researcher at the Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg and is also affiliated with the Jena Center for Reconciliation Studies. She received her PhD in Linguistics at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. Her dissertation was about the language and culture of the Kamsa, an Indigenous community in southern Colombia. She is producing a documentary film called *Strangers to Peace* about the process of reintegration of ex-guerrillas of the FARC into Colombian society. She has also conducted

research in Indonesia, funded by Fulbright, and is now working on a discourse analysis project of FARC rhetoric.

Olubukola Olayiwola, a Wadsworth International Fellow (Wenner-Gren Foundation), has a bachelor's and master's degrees in Anthropology (University of Ibadan, Nigeria) and a PhD in Applied Anthropology (University of South Florida, USA). His training as an applied anthropologist has led him to focus on research that critically analyzes microfinancialization, the informal economic sector, women entrepreneurs, and gender issues with a regional focus on West Africa. His dissertation explores the lived experiences of women entrepreneurs and borrowers – petty commodity producers and traders in Ibadan, Nigeria, and their involvement in government-sponsored and private sector microfinance schemes. After completing his PhD, he was offered an adjunct faculty position at the Judy Genshaft Honors College, University of South Florida, where he taught IDH2010 (Acquisition of Knowledge) and IDH 4200-005/011 (Financialization: Cross-Cultural perspectives). He is currently working on academic publications including a book prospectus and consultancy project (Women and Agricultural Labor) with the World Bank.

Elisa Van Waeyenberge is a Senior Lecturer and (co-)Head of the Department of Economics, SOAS University of London. She has an interest in the political economy of macroeconomic policies, including the financing of infrastructure provision, and has recently collaborated on an interdisciplinary research project analyzing the shifting contours of infrastructure financing policy in the United Kingdom. This ties in with her long-standing interest in examining the way in which the policy space of countries in the Global South is affected by specific paradigms as promoted by International Financial Institutions. She has authored numerous publications on this topic; see https://www.soas.ac.uk/staff/staff47581.php. This includes a recent article (Dimakou et al., 2020; https://doi.org/10.1080/02255189.2020.1839394) in the Canadian Journal of Development Studies examining the response of the World Bank to COVID-19 and what this reveals in terms of the commitment of the institution to the role of private finance at the heart of development and infrastructure provision.

Donald C. Wood is an Associate Professor in the Graduate School of Medicine, Akita University, Akita, Japan, where he has worked since completing a doctoral degree in Cultural Anthropology at the University of Tokyo in 2004. Prior to that, he studied Anthropology under Norbert Dannhaeuser and Jeff Cohen at Texas A&M University. He spent more than 15 years researching social conditions at the Hachirogata reclaimed land area in Akita Prefecture, which culminated in the publication of *Ogata-Mura*: *Sowing Dissent and Reclaiming Identity in a Japanese Farming Village*, by Berghahn Books (NY) in 2012 (released in paperback in 2015). He has also investigated tourism and the effects of depopulation in the Akita region and was a contributor to the multi-authored book *Japan's Shrinking Regions in the 21st Century* (Cambria, 2011). Recently he has been conducting ethnohistorical research in northeastern Japan and contributing articles to Kyoto Journal, Sapiens, and New Politics.

INTRODUCTION: ANTHROPOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS INTO INFRASTRUCTURE, MONEY, COMMUNITY AND MORALITY, FOOD AND CLOTHING, AND NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN LATIN AMERICA

Donald C. Wood

This volume of Research in Economic Anthropology (REA) was initially expected to be published in early 2021, but the COVID-19 pandemic caused a number of delays, mostly by making it hard for researchers to conduct fieldwork, to secure enough time for – and even to concentrate adequately on – writing, and also to serve as referees for peer review. Indeed, the peer review process for this volume was more difficult and took longer than that for any REA volume since I began editing the series in 2005. Nevertheless, despite the many hurdles and delays, Volume 41 of REA is finally here.

Before introducing the contents of the present volume, I would like to take a moment to thank all the researchers and other experts who kindly took time out of their busy schedules to serve as referees during the last several years – specifically, for Volumes 37, 38, and 40.[1] They are: Stephen Acabado, Sara Alexander, Aaron Ansell, Laura Bear, Kathleen Bennallack, Arne Cato Berg, Maya Berry, Alison Betts, Lauren Bonilla, John Brett, Brian Burke, Brian Byrd, Koray Caliskan, Kevin Carrico, Nestor Castro, Jessica Cattelino, Mike Chibnik, John Collins, Nicole Constable, Thomas Conte, Luiz Costa, John Cox, Andrew

Infrastructure, Morality, Food and Clothing, and New Developments in Latin America
Research in Economic Anthropology, Volume 41, 1–4

ISSN: 0190-1281/doi:10.1108/S0190-128120210000041017

Curley, Thea de Wet, Susan Dewey, Felicite Fairer-Wessels, Gary Feinman, Edward Fischer, Elke Gaugele, Simone Ghezzi, Laura Graham, Christopher Gregory, Joshua Hall, Frida Hastrup, Lauren Hayes, Jon Holtzman, Jennifer Huberman, Linda Hulin, Byambabaatar Ichinkhorloo, Jane M. Jensen, Hanno Jentzsch, Yuson Jung, Dip Kapoor, Maria Kastrinou, John Kleinen, Ko Koens, Marcel Korth, Dan Malkinson, Jeffrey Mantz, Lisa Markowitz, Alexander Martin, Charles Masquelier, Ty Matejowsky, Bill Maurer, Kenneth McGill, Lynne Milgram, Stephen C. Miller, Sean Mitchell, Mark Moberg, Bhaskar Mukhopadhyay, Lucy Norris, Lionel Obadia, Laurie Occhipinti, Anthony Oliver-Smith, Dipak Raj Pant, Italo Pardo, Gustav Peebles, Pauline Peters, Jonathan Rigg, Knut M. Rio, Bruce Roberts, Lorecia Kaifa-Aliya Roland, Robert Rosenswig, Frans Schryer, Caroline Schuster, Valerio Simoni, Edward Simpson, Hugh Sinclair, Griet Steel, Ben Steere, Andreas Streinzer, Sarah Swider, Amy Todd, Mikah Trapp, Catherine Tucker, Sarah Turner, Gabriela Vargas-Cetina, Nadine Wagener-Böck, Richard Wallace, Susan Watkins, Naomi Weiner, Ronald Weitzer, and Jörg Wiegratz.

This volume opens with a paper by Benjamin Bowles, Kate Bayliss, and Elisa Van Waeyenberge that represents a novel, joint anthropologist-economist effort to analyze a large-scale infrastructure project – London's Thames Tideway Tunnel. "Project" is a key term here, for the authors' approach centers about the creation of a public asset as a convergence of people and ideas (and, of course, capital), which also leads to new ideas and values, rather than concentrating merely on the position or role of a completed resource. The paper might have been comfortable in Part I of this volume, in that it calls attention to "a morally loaded relationship with water supply" and the Thames, which involves both money and community. However, it also represents many of the epistemological concerns and empirical goals of the volume's papers – and of economic anthropology in general – with its unique interdisciplinary approach to the analysis of large-scale infrastructural development in one of the world's leading industrial and financial capitalist democracies. Therefore, the paper has been selected to stand alone and lead the volume.

Part I consists of four papers which are tied together to different degrees by two common threads: the roles of money in social ties between people, and moral concerns regarding these and other roles and uses of money in society. The first paper, like the volume's leading paper, represents an interdisciplinary team effort. Here, Olga Doletskaya, Maria Denisova, and Oksana Dorofeeva analyze commercial surrogacy in Russia, where the institution is both sanctioned and regulated by the government. Importantly, the authors view – and present – surrogacy as a form of "gendered care work," which may be said to occupy a theoretical territory somewhere between gift and commodity. The authors' novel fieldwork approach, which relied heavily on online interviews and social media platforms, is also worth mentioning. In the second paper in Part I, Muhammad Salman Khan takes a close look at the role of charities in the provision of welfare in Pakistan, where the author identifies a distrust in formal organizations which steers individuals toward utilization of social connections for charitable donation. Readers will notice immediately that this paper, like the previous one, is concerned with

"gift" as a theoretical construct and will also recognize the connections between Khan's analysis and the "substantivist" approach in economic anthropology, which remains strong to this day (not to enter into a discussion of old debates). Notably, the author takes a novel approach in considering the roles of both Islamic and Sikh duties of giving. The third paper in Part I continues with the theme of social relationships and giving. Here, You-Kyung Byun offers a study of a high school alumni association in South Korea, in which social ties and mutual respect – and seemingly selfless giving – take the moral high ground over self-interested, calculated exchanges. Long-term membership in such an association might bring a person certain quantifiable benefits, but the members instead tend to give and receive according to a value system that defies profit-oriented capitalist logic. Byun's paper is also notable for its ethnographic approach – although interviews were conducted with association members, much of the analysis is based on an examination of the association's accounting records. Finally, Part I closes with a paper by Olubukola Olayiwola that contrasts with Khan's paper on *giving* in that it concentrates on *receiving* – cash loans that must be repaid, in this case. The focus here is on a situation involving women borrowers in Ibadan, Nigeria. Olayiwola calls attention to a microcredit paradox – that which has been heavily touted as good and helpful to people in states of great vulnerability, and even having the power to help pull them out of poverty, may in some cases actually further shackle them. Stress, anxiety, and violence often accompany indebtedness in such instances. State policy is shown to play an important role.

There is a Japanese proverb which says that a person can pay mind to politeness and etiquette only if the person has clothing and food – two of the three generally accepted basic necessities of human life (the other, of course, being shelter). Part II of this volume consists of three papers which are, collectively, concerned with these two basic needs. First, Jessica Mannette examines a food security initiative in Wellington, New Zealand, which seeks to turn what might otherwise be wasted into nutrition. Mannette calls attention to the multiple values that food may hold for individuals connected through social networks. Indeed, as the paper shows, providing nutrition to people in the form of food is more than a matter of biological need; it is also a social action which is grounded in society and also has the potential to build new social associations and communities. Reconsideration of the conception and organization of food systems is called for. The second paper of Part II takes a look at another case of the recycling and consumption of a basic necessity that might otherwise be discarded: secondhand clothing. Here, Heike Derwanz analyzes a recycling-marketing system, through ethnographic research conducted in Hamburg, Germany, which is not only said to save a considerable amount of energy, but which has taken off in new directions recently due to the digitalization of the trade. Derwanz, through detailed ethnographic research – on the ground as well as in cyberspace – and with an intimate understanding of the subject matter, painstakingly documents change in the market over time and points to future trends and the emergence of new business models. Rounding out Part II is Robert Birnbauer's study of Islamic fashion marketing and selling in Berlin. Shop owners are shown to walk a line between capitalism and tradition (although these are not necessarily mutually

exclusive) as they engage in the performance of a market, creating "difference." Culture, ethnicity, and integration are important underlying currents in the very interesting market situation Birnbauer carefully dissects here.

Part III of the volume also consists of three papers. Although it might seem somewhat artificial to lump anthropology papers into geographic groups, the three papers of Part III fit together well in this sense in that they address issues of "classic" interest for Latin America scholars and also because they share the common theme of focusing on new developments in the region, with the added bonus theme of Latin America's relationship with the North. First, Sarah Lyon takes a critical look at fair trade and coffee production in Oaxaca, Mexico, going well beyond a simplistic view of the former as something imposed upon the producers of the region by the North. Fair trade is shown to encompass business practices of concern to producers, who adapt and resist in different ways. Of note is a trend within fair trade – the incursion of neoliberal policies at the expense of the movement's originally strong concern with social justice. Next, Colleen O'Brien analyzes the reintegration of ex-combatants in Colombia, a country that has seen more than its fair share of internal strife and warfare over the last seven decades, due in no small part to external involvement and the international drug trade. O'Brien's primary focus here is with evaluating the cost-effectiveness of government-led reintegration through an approach that considers research on individual ex-combatants as well as the technical particulars of reintegration programs. Mixed success is identified, through an examination of several different key factors, and a call is made for improvement in a number of specific areas. Finally, this part of the volume (and the volume itself) closes with an intriguing paper by Sidney Greenfield that provides an in-depth look at a well-known, tenacious, and often denigrated Brazilian cultural institution – dyadic "patron and clientage" exchange relationships. Greenfield argues that the practice has been vilified, and alternative institutions proposed and initiated, based on misunderstandings about the cultural meanings and the importance of the practice – misunderstandings perpetuated partly by foreign "specialists" who have even managed to influence the minds of Brazilian scholars. The paper's reflexive look at changes in anthropology over time with respect to the problem at hand is remarkable – anthropology's lens is turned back on itself, and the discipline's true devotion to cultural relativism is questioned, making for a very appropriate wrap-up for a particularly diverse and international volume of REA.

NOTE

1. Although I cannot thank those who served as referees for Volume 39 by name because it was a guest-edited volume, I would like to extend my appreciation to them for helping to maintain the quality of the series.

LONDON'S 'SUPER SEWER': A CASE STUDY FOR THE INTERDISCIPLINARY POSSIBILITIES OF ANTHROPOLOGISTS AND ECONOMISTS INVESTIGATING INFRASTRUCTURE TOGETHER

Benjamin O.L. Bowles, Kate Bayliss
and Elisa Van Waeyenberge

ABSTRACT

Despite the fact that recent anthropological interest in infrastructure has done much to illuminate the infrastructure asset *as an assemblage of actors, technologies and ideas, an interdisciplinary approach is required to unpack how the infrastructure* project *comes together as an assemblage and to define the role that financial technologies and discourses play in shaping it. Here, an interdisciplinary approach is applied to a novel infrastructure asset, London's Thames Tideway Tunnel, in order to show how multiple actors and visions of the world are brought together to make the infrastructure asset come to fruition. The paper concludes that this interdisciplinary approach to infrastructure can allow us to keep multiple sides of the infrastructure project in sight simultaneously. This includes both the creation of a rhetorical vision and spectacle around the asset, and the underlying financial arrangements that bind it together. If we do so, we can understand how new infrastructural forms utilise particular financial technologies and ideas to change the relationship between the public and the private, and between consumers and providers, and act towards the creation of a new 'public good' that normalises private provision.*

Infrastructure, Morality, Food and Clothing, and New Developments in Latin America
Research in Economic Anthropology, Volume 41, 5–30

ISSN: 0190-1281/doi:10.1108/S0190-128120210000041001

Keywords: Infrastructure; finance; London; ewerage; financialisation; interdisciplinarity; sewerage

SECTION 1: INTERDISCIPLINARY ENCOUNTERS

Anthropology has gained much, in recent years, from turning to consider infrastructures as assemblages – as coming together of actors, ideas, regimes of expertise and technologies (see Larkin, 2013, p. 330). Penny Harvey and Hannah Knox's (2015) ethnography of road building in Peru is an instructive example of the benefits of this approach as, in their analysis, infrastructure does not simply appear, where present, as some kind of state-imposed monolith or, where absent, as representative of state neglect. Infrastructures, rather, are emergent forms created by unstable agglomerations of financiers, politicians, engineers and publics, all with rather different (and possibly competing) visions of the world. Furthermore, infrastructures are an important way in which the public good is (re)formulated (see also Bear & Mathur, 2015) and the morality of different forms of provision is debated.

In their work, Harvey and Knox describe infrastructure as 'sociotechnical [*sic*] assemblages through which it is possible to tease out the arrangements of people and things and ideas and materials that make up larger technological systems' (Harvey & Knox, 2015, p. 5). Their approach, therefore:

> …attends to the imaginative and material processes that contribute to the emergence – the coming into being – of infrastructures as open-ended structural forms. Included in this are multiple and often incompatible aspirations, technical procedures, organisational dynamics, employment relations, health and safety regulations, property regimes, and understandings of the 'public good'. (Harvey & Knox, 2015, p. 6)

Such a focus on infrastructure from a number of complementary angles, in terms of a *project* as a coming together of actors and ideas (and the way in which it draws people together and creates new imaginaries) and not just on the *asset* as it exists on the ground, allows us to understand not just *what* infrastructure is, what it means or what it does to people but also *why* it is there in the first place, who has driven a particular infrastructure intervention and to what ends.

There are, however, gaps and unexplored spaces even in these recent anthropological approaches to infrastructure. Specifically, the financing story and the particular power of financiers and financial logics has not yet been widely explored through deep engagement with investors and financial elites. Bear's ethnography of infrastructure in the Port of Kolkata deals with changes in infrastructure through an analysis of debt and austerity logics and their effects (Bear, 2015), Simpson aims to track the financial flows through road infrastructure projects in South East Asia (Simpson, forthcoming; see also The Roads Project, n.d) and Harvey and Knox mention global financiers, specifically stating that 'infrastructural engineering projects are supported by international flows of capital' (Harvey & Knox, 2015, p. 168) and that 'projects are funded through a mix of public funds and private capital' (Harvey & Knox, 2015, p. 168). None of the above, however, push these understandings into a thorough articulation of the structure and internal logics of international capital, investors and financiers.

This relative lacuna in the literature has been recognised by authors who have called for a critical anthropology of the economy, focused on actors at all levels of power (see Bear, Ho, Tsing, & Yanagisako, 2015). There have been some excellent recent interventions where anthropology has approached global financial elites (Ho, 2009; Ouroussoff, 2010), particularly looking at how these (re) shape the world through their understanding of risk and uncertainty. The infrastructure 'ecosystem' of pension companies, insurers, private equity firms, raters, investment managers and lawyers is highly complex, with each of these groups having their own distinct understandings and perspectives. All of this means that the finance angle of infrastructure (given that the ideas, expertise and governance angles are well described) is an area that remains yet to be fully explored through interdisciplinary engagement with the political economy. Political economists have expertise in excavating financial relationships and understanding the logics through which financial actors approach the world and, as such, have the potential to offer to anthropology a fresh perspective on questions of infrastructure provision.

This is not to say that anthropologists have not begun the important work of tying together finance, capital and infrastructure in their ethnographies. A number of studies of infrastructures have begun to conceptualise infrastructures as both things in and of themselves and also as conditions of possibility for other relations and effects to come into being. A key prompt to this is Susan Leigh Star's call for us to attend to the 'when' of infrastructure: why this project at this particular time? and who benefits from a project and what, crucially, is transformed by its imposition on the environment (Star, 1999)? We, therefore, consider our work to be continuing the productive and novel approach of anthropologists such as Hannah Appel who, based on her fieldwork projects in the energy sector in Equatorial Guinea, argues for an ethnography of 'the national economy' that reveals how such a concept as the economy itself is produced through deliberately constructed imaginaries, the power and logics of international capital, and the imposition of spectacular infrastructure projects and other power-laded spending interventions. She suggests that 'to take the economy seriously in part means to take seriously people's fantasies about it' (Appel, 2017, p. 312) – an approach that underpins the ethnographic sections of this paper. Another pivotal figure is Brenda Chalfin, whose ethnography of neoliberal restructuring in Ghana demonstrates how the demands and logics of finance, as experienced in her fieldwork within Ghana's Customs Office, transformed the material world of the nation, its state apparatuses as well as its position in global politics (Chalfin, 2010). However, more work is still needed, generated from other field sites and spaces, to better explore the complicated interplay between states, infrastructure projects and capital.

Thus, it is here contended that the study of infrastructure finance benefits from an interdisciplinary engagement. Concepts drawn from economics and political economy can help us to understand not just how meaning emerges and is attributed to particular economic and infrastructural interventions but also how specific infrastructural interventions change relationships between individuals, communities, collectivities, states, corporations and other private agents, with

attendant redistributions of power and resources. The distributional effects of infrastructure – not just what does a road or a water tap do for people, but how does the way in which it is financed affect their lives, maybe outside of their immediate understanding – can be assumed by some as being outside of anthropology's remit, but with frames taken from political economy, we can add these distributional effects into our ethnographies of infrastructure. Infrastructures appear as more than *physical* or even *physical and ideological* interventions, and they are also *financial interventions*, tying people's money, through taxes or charges, into global relationships of exchange and redistribution, as the ethnographies of infrastructure, capital and the state as discussed by Appel (2017), Bear (2015) and Chalfin (2010) make abundantly clear.

Anthropology, in turn, adds depth to political economy to unpack the narratives and meanings associated with infrastructure and how these may differ between actors; be they actors in finance, construction companies, the state, end users or taxpayers. Similarly, economics (or political economy) provides anthropology an attention to financial and fiscal flows, so that anthropology can gain appreciation of the distributional impacts and wider issues that result from infrastructure provision, such as on labour effects and effects on regional development. This will result in a richer understanding of what infrastructure is, what its effects are and who are the winners and losers in an enfolding set of relationships.

It is, therefore, important to combine anthropological conceptualisations of infrastructure as sites 'through which politics is translated from a rationality to a practice in all its social, material and political complexity' (Appel, Anand, & Gupta, 2018, p. 20) with a political economy analysis that draws attention to underlying economic and financial realities (understood as structured and with systemic features), so that we can account for the way in which specific infrastructure projects take form, are implemented and produce particular outcomes.

The paper deploys a practice of interdisciplinarity that does not simply ask what anthropological perspectives add to an economist's explanatory framework (as in other projects on which I have worked where the perspective from outside of anthropology is that the ethnographer is best used ad hoc to 'add the people in' instead of contributing to the heart of the analysis), nor does it rest in anthropology and try to add a few economic concepts to the social anthropologist's traditional mix, another fault that I have observed in some projects that claim interdisciplinary credentials. Rather, it seeks to use a set of heuristic tools, with their origins in both disciplines to investigate an emergent form such as an infrastructure project from a number of complementary angles. It seeks to approach the infrastructure from both the public facing front stage and the organisational backstage (spaces that require more detailed excavation such as interviews with stakeholders and rooting through company accounts). In the words of Barthes:

> Interdisciplinary work, so much discussed these days, is not about confronting already constituted disciplines… To do something interdisciplinary it's not enough to choose a 'subject' (a theme) and gather around it two or three sciences. Interdisciplinarity consists in