ANNOUNCEMENTS

Annual Conference
Commission on Urban Anthropology (CUA), International Urban Symposium (IUS) and Centre for Social Anthropology and Computing (CSAC)

Purposeful Agency and Governance: A Bridgeable Gap

Venue & Date: University of Kent, Canterbury, U.K. Wed. 15th – Fri. 17th June 2016

Convenors: Giuliana B. Prato, Italo Pardo and Michael Fischer

With specific reference to urban settings, this Conference aims to contribute to increasing our capacity to understand important processes of agency in a worldwide context marked by a growing gap between citizenship and governance.

The Conference will stimulate reflection on the interplay between personal morality and civic responsibility, and between value and action. Anthropologists, and ethnographers more generally, have demonstrated the moral and cultural complexity of individual action and the ways in which misplaced or instrumentally selective moralities in policy and in the production and enforcement of the law encourage exclusion and widen the gap between governance and the governed across the world. They have demonstrated the impact of rules and regulations inspired by concepts that are ambiguous, elusive, biased towards those in power, or badly defined or impossible to apply, thus compounding the perceived weak legitimacy of governance and the law in the broader society.

Ethnographic research has a unique contribution to make to our capacity to understand important processes of agency and the ways in which agency is capable of influencing the system (Philip Abrams) and encouraging good governance that takes into account the needs and expectations of agency. Anthropological analysis of diverse ethnographies has brought to light the significance in people's life and to society more broadly of a *strong continuous interaction* between the material and the non-material (Pardo). Parallel to this, new anthropological research over the past decade has focused on the properties of the 'digital society' with respect to how people experience external changes, how they organize themselves and, in turn, enact new change (Fischer).

We propose that it is important to document how governance is evolving and to understand the extent to which public policies might pose obstacles to agents' full participation in society. Entrepreneurialism — intended in the broad sense of an agent's capacity to evaluate and access the available resources — makes one example of the many ways in which people may deal with these obstacles, motivating many simply to 'work around' them by becoming or remaining a part of 'informal' areas and relations; that is, identifying 'gaps' in policy and working within the gaps.

The conference welcomes ethnographically-based contributions that identify the main gaps and obstacles related to the development of purposeful

agency and the normative changes needed to encourage, rather than frustrate, agency and good governance, intended as governance that promotes and makes the best of the local resources and styles of citizenship.

Abstracts of 250 words should be submitted by 8th January 2016 to the Convenors:
i.pardo@kent.ac.uk: g.b.prato@kent.ac.uk; m.d.fischer@kent.ac.uk.

Abstracts must be sent as a Word Document. Proposals must also include a short (100 word) Bio including affiliation and relevant publications, as well as e-mail addresses of all author/s. Authors will be notified of acceptance of their abstract for presentation by 5th February 2016.

Selected papers will be considered for publication in a Special Volume of the Series Palgrave Studies in Urban Anthropology and in the peer-reviewed journal Urbanities.

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Inheriting the City: Advancing Understandings of Urban Heritage
Taipei, Taiwan
31 March – 4 April, 2016
www.inheritingthecity.wordpress.com

The Conference will bring together academics, policy makers and practitioners from across the globe.

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Association of Critical Heritage Studies
Third Biennial Conference:
What Does Heritage Change?
Montreal, Canada, 6-10 June 2016

Panel OS100: *L'imaginaire paradoxal des villes occidentales : patrimoine, gentrification et résistances*
(Convenors : Michel Rautenber & Sandra Trigano)

For further details and updates, see:
http://achs2016.uqam.ca/en/

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IUAES Inter-congress 2016:
World anthropologies and privatization of knowledge: engaging anthropology in public
Dubrovnik, Croatia, 4-9 May 2016
http://iuaes2016.com/

Panels convened under the auspices of the Commission on Urban Anthropology:

Panel 346 - *Women's reproductive illness: creating life on the plateau.*
(Convenors: Amlan Kanti Ray & Pramathes Dasmahapatra)

Panel 385 - *Changing Scenario of Urban Poor: Emerging Economic Opportunities.*
(Convenor: Sumita Chaudhuri)