

4th Biennial Conference of the Czech Association for Social Anthropology (CASA)

AMBIGUITY

B3 BOOK PANEL

Saturday, October 1, 2016

Room B (Nr. 116) 2 - 3:30 PM

Presenters are highlighted in bold font

Brož, Luděk and Daniel Münster (eds.) 2015. *Suicide and agency: Anthropological perspectives on self-destruction, personhood and power*. Ashgate, Farnham Surrey UK; Burlington VT. (Studies in Death, Materiality and the Origin of Time).

Suicide and Agency offers an original and timely challenge to existing ways of understanding suicide. Through the use of rich and detailed case studies, the authors assembled in this volume explore how interplay of self-harm, suicide, personhood and agency varies markedly across site (Greenland, Siberia, India, Palestine and Mexico) and setting (self-run leprosy colony, suicide bomb attack, cash-crop farming, middle-class mothering). Rather than starting from a set definition of suicide, they empirically engage suicide fields-the wider domains of practices and of sense making, out of which realized, imaginary, or disputed suicides emerge. By drawing on ethnographic methods and approaches, a new comparative angle to understanding suicide beyond mainstream Western bio-medical and classical sociological conceptions of the act as an individual or social pathology is opened up. The book explores a number of ontological assumptions about the role of free will, power, good and evil, personhood, and intentionality in both popular and expert explanations of suicide. Suicide and Agency offers a substantial and ground-breaking contribution to the emerging field of the anthropology of suicide. It will appeal to a range of scholars and students, including those in anthropology, sociology, social psychology, cultural studies, suicidology, and social studies of death and dying.

Červinková, Hana, Michał Buchowski and **Zdeněk Uherek** (eds.) 2015. *Rethinking Ethnography in Central Europe*. Palgrave Macmillan US.

In eleven ethnographic chapters of *Rethinking Ethnography in Central Europe* examines how issues of global economic and cultural dependencies, mobilities, citizens activism, social movements, and socio-political aspects of post-socialist modernities articulate on the level of everyday discourse and practices. We present the chapters in three parts. The first part includes ethnographies that focus on different aspects of transnational mobilities as they affect people living in or coming from Central Europe. In the second part of our volume, we include ethnographies that focus on new developments in the area of activist and expert knowledge in institutions, new movements, and grassroots organizations. The last part of our book contains chapters that explicitly focus on and think through the economic, social, and political aspects of postsocialist modernities.

Rethinking Ethnography in Central Europe is literally an account of ethnography in Central Europe, but contextualized through a particular historical perspective on anthropological studies on the region and in the region.

Sidiropulu Janků, Kateřina 2015. *I was never underestimated. From Slovak settlements into Czech cities for work. After-war memories*. [Orig.: *Nikdy jsem nebyl podceňovanéj: Ze slovenských osad do českých měst za prací. Poválečné vzpomínky*.] Brno: MUNI press.

A collection of narratives of men and women who left Slovakian Roma settlements when they were children or youngsters, in order to settle down in Brno and Ostrava region, where they found work and new life. Their descendants experience completely different working and social reality. The witnesses' narratives (maintaining certain particularities, e. g. the Roma ethnolect of Czech language) describe this transition through the perspective of everyday life and point at the socialist equalization of lifestyles and its consequences for today's life. The narratives originated within the project "Memory of Roma workmen". The book contains the analytic commentary explaining the work on memory collection and editing. The book is designated to the professional as well as wider audience.

Soler, Elena and Luis Calvo (eds.) 2016. ***Cultural Transitions. Perspectives from Central and Eastern Europe.*** [Orig.: *Transiciones Culturales. Perspectivas desde Europa Central y del Este.*] Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones científicas Madrid.

Presenters: **Elena Soler** and **Peter Zvagulis**

This interdisciplinary work focuses on Central and Eastern Europe since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, and is structured around the concept of *transition*. It explores the repercussions the events of 1989 have had on different aspects such as those related to identity, national heritage, religion, politics, or transnational migration. The originality of this proposal focuses on studies that analyze those European countries which have become, since the fall of communism and the consequent transitions, liberal democracies with a global market economy, which accelerated transformation processes in all spheres of the lives of its citizens. Some transitional processes, among other aspects, were in turn increased with the accession of these countries to the European Union, which has generated high expectations for achieving prosperity and sustaining a good welfare system;_expectations, which are in most cases, far from the current reality.

The concept of transition is complex and as revealed by the different texts that make up this work, it has allowed space for ruptures, continuities and resistances. Therefore, analyzing and deepening the understanding of the phenomena that these societies showcase becomes relevant today, at a time in which Europe is experiencing a highly complex situation regarding its common project entailing the common values of rights, duties and civil liberties.