

SEMINÁŘ ETNOLOGICKÉHO ÚSTAVU AV ČR / SEMINAR OF THE INSTITUTE OF ETHNOLOGY CAS 6. 11. 2023

André Thiemann: Towards a New-Materialist Anthropology: Infrastructures of Value in Eastern European Food Chains

Abstract: Inspired by Marxist-Feminist anthropology and STS, I have ethnographically studied political, economic and environmental transformations across scales in South- and North-Eastern Europe. First, developing a relational anthropology of the state, I analysed how in Serbia citizen-official relations were shaped by – and shaped – politics, infrastructures and care. Second, contributing to economic anthropology, I observed how under pressure from global value chains, households disinvested from vegetable and dairy production. But some persisted: through mini-infrastructureal fixes, labour exchanges and care for children, plants and animals. Consequently, I focused on how value was produced in global value chains itself, studying the raspberry food chain in Serbia in asymmetrical comparison to that of sea buckthorn in Latvia and Eastern Germany. Combining new-materialist with historical-materialist concerns, I traced how raspberries, aka “The Red Gold of Serbia,” were historically shaped by a dynamics between two modularising infrastructures: agronomics and the cold chain. The sector underwent several “infrastructureal involutions” and recently the raspberries’ relative value deteriorated. Third, as a member of BOAR I returned to how the agency of animals – domestic and even wild pigs – has become articulated with infrastructures such as cold-chains and expert veterinary care.

Discussant: Postdoc-Ass. Mag. Dr. Christof Lammer, Bakk., Department of Science, Technology and Society Studies, University of Klagenfurth, Austria

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Velká zasedací místnost Ústavu analytické chemie AV ČR / Large meeting room of the Institute of Analytical Chemistry of the CAS

Veveří 97

602 00 Brno

Vstup / Entrance: Veveří 5. patro / 5th floor

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