

## Annual Report 2019



### Medical Anthropology Young Scholars

A network of EASA – European Association of Social Anthropologists

On July 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> the 10<sup>th</sup> annual MAYS meeting “Beeing there. Medical Anthropology in action” took place at the University of Turin (Italy). The meeting was organized by Francesca Cancelliere (University of Lisbon) and Ursula Probst (Freie Universität Berlin) with support from the Department of Cultures Politics and Society from the University of Turin.

The 10<sup>th</sup> Annual meeting was attended by 41 participants from different Institutions around Europe. Attendees were asked to present their work for ten minutes followed by five minutes comments from a discussant and a fifteen minutes group discussion. Participant were previously divided in four different groups and papers of their group members were previously circulated among participants.

As in previous meetings, the program consisted of different presentation formats to better engage participants in discussion and exchange.

On the first day of the meeting participants received a very warm welcome from Roberto Beneduce and Simona Taliani from the Department for Culture, Politics and Society of the University of Turin that hosted the meeting.

On Thursday afternoon we had the pleasure to have a keynote by professor Gilles Bibeau, from the University of Montreal. In his keynote, he addressed the theoretical challenges for junior medical anthropologists today and pointed out the need to speak of medical anthropologies in plural, as different theoretical, methodological and epistemological traditions in this field exist in different parts of the academic world. On Thursday and Friday afternoon, two parallel workshops were run by (medical) anthropologists working in different contexts. Thursday’s workshops included the workshop “On healing and religion again: on the manifold aspects of making research in these two competing and converging fields” by Francesco Vacchiano (ICS, University of Lisbon) and Ambra Formenti (Cria-FCSH/nova University, Lisbon) and “Islamic Militancy, War on Terror, and Forced migration in Contemporary Sahel: What methodological implications for Anthropology?” by Souleymane Diallo (Dept. of Cultural & Social Anthropology, University of Münster). Friday workshop included “Doing research on violence in a political transition context: Intrigues and commitment” by Zakaria Rhani (Mohamed V University, Rabat). Unfortunately, due to technical reason, the second workshop of the day was cancelled.

The meeting provided an opportunity for young scholars at different stages in their academic career (MA and PhD students as well as postdocs) to discuss their work among peers and in a friendly and constructive atmosphere. In informal and formal feedback on the MAYS meeting, participants reported that they enjoyed the discussions within their parallel groups, but also those had over lunch, dinner and workshops. Many reported that these groups and workshops provided helpful and specific feedback on their own work and project proposals, but also opened up broader questions about the application methods and ethnography in Medical Anthropology.

Taking into account the interesting contributions presented during the conference, we are working

with Berghahn journals *Anthropology in Action* to publish the special issue proposed by the MAYS coordinators “Being there. Medical Anthropology in Action. Junior Scholars’ perspectives on contemporary challenges in the field”.

Beyond these activities, Ursula Probst also coordinate the regional liaisons a platform that can provide information about Medical Anthropology programs at various Universities in different regions or countries.

After the annual meeting, a call for coordinator applications was sent out as Ursula Probst is stepping down from her MAYS coordinator role in August 2019. Members of the network then voted for one of five candidates that applied with a short academic CV and a statement about their qualifications and ideas for MAYS in the next two years. Anthony Rizk from the Graduate Institute of Geneva was elected new coordinator for a two-year term.

The aim, as in previous years, is to have coordinators serve two-year terms, with new coordinators being elected each year. This way, a more senior coordinator who has already planned a MAYS annual meeting will be on hand to help the new coordinator as they take the lead planning the next MAYS conference at their institution.

Following the coordinator elections Francesca Cancelliere and Anthony Rizk, started working on the next annual MAYS meeting that will take place in Geneva in the beginning of June 2020.