ASN

EASA Anthropology of Security Network

Security and Morality
Critical Anthropological Perspectives

Security is omnipresent in today's politics and media; we are bombarded with images and narratives of proliferating internal and external security threats, conflicts, destabilization of international relations, chaos, and disorder. Many of these striking cultural products of the current politics of fear serve to legitimize new modes of surveillance, expansions of military and other policies in the name of security. 'Anthropology's concern with global/local articulations as well as its case-study approach, cross-cultural comparative engagement, and emphasis on the intersections of discourse and practice in specific historicized contexts … uniquely position anthropology to contribute to a critical study of security' (Goldstein 2010: 489). But anthropology also has a solid track record in dealing with issues of morality and ethics, especially over the last decade and is thus well suited to critically engage with the intersections of morality and security.

Moral discourses are often mobilized to justify new security measures or legitimize increased spending on defense, while themselves predicated upon on implicit moral judgements. And yet, questions of morality have been conspicuously left out as a clear

object of analysis in respect to the study of security and securitization by anthropologists, despite the aforementioned strong tradition of 'anthropology of moralities' (Mattingly and Throop 2018). The language of morality, as much as real ethical and moral dilemmas, influences and shape the realities on ground, political rhetoric in respect to security, and international legal thinking and relations; even if we may wonder about the degree to which 'politicians may hijack the language of morality, while ceding very little, if anything, to its substance' (Fisher 2013). Therefore, it is necessary to think not only critically, but also more systematically about the relation between morality and security. No less so in our own discipline, some of which has been 'weaponized' by military and intelligence agencies and adapted to counterinsurgency and asymmetrical warfare, thus raising questions about anthropology's very own code of ethics (Price 2011).

This conference sets out to investigate (1) the significance of diverse moral legitimizations and constructions of moral authority in security discourses and practices, (2) the lived experiences of morality and ethics related to security (Feldman 2016), (3) different forms of 'securitization of moral values' (Østbø 2017), and (4) the ethical problems related to anthropologists' own involvement in security institutions and to the larger structures of funding of anthropological research for security. This conference thus brings together the critical anthropology of security (Schwell and Eisch-Angus 2018, Goldstein 2010, Maguire et al. 2014) and anthropology of moralities, while also inviting others, from neighboring disciplines such as history, cultural studies or political science working on the same questions to join into the debate.

Papers exploring the following topics, grounded in both historical and contemporary contexts are welcome:

*legitimization and justification of extraordinary security measures through moral discourses
*moral legitimacy and the logic of 'security threats'
*conflicting moralities and ethics in security practices
*moral authority in respect to security
*revolutionary (non-liberal) securitization and morality (Holbraad and Pedersen 2012)
*moral guilt, moral obligation, and security
*discourse of moral responsibility in respect to security
*securitization of national spaces and moral values
*historically informed anthropological perspectives on the politics of in/security and its moral underpinnings
*public morality and security
*public/private security, security industries and moralities
*morality and sources of fear and security
*lived experiences, moral and ethical dilemmas in different security contexts
*weaponizing anthropology and anthropological 'code of ethics'

Please send abstracts of no more than **250 words**, including a short bio (100 words) to tereza.kuldova@iakh.uio.no by **January 10, 2019**.

Anthropology of Security Network Convenors and Conference Organizers:
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References

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