

Introduction

Chris Hann and the Anthropological Study of Economic Life

Kirsten W. Endres and Deema Kaneff

In an era of rising global precarity and social inequality, the field of economic anthropology is pertinent in terms of the questions it raises, the debates it engenders and the solutions it offers through in-depth ethnographic studies of local and contextualized economic practices. Chris Hann's published work has substantially contributed not only to shaping the subdiscipline, but also to raising awareness of what anthropology can contribute to broader debates on economic transformations and their social consequences. This book honours his achievements with a collection of chapters authored by leading scholars in the field of (economic) anthropology, as well as related disciplines such as sociology and history. It is organized around three interrelated research areas, each engaging with issues central to Hann's own investigations over the past decades. Before moving on to these three areas, which highlight both key issues and critical reflections in economic anthropology, it seems appropriate to begin this introduction with a short account of Chris Hann's academic life and work.

From Cardiff to Halle: Reflections on an Academic Journey

Schooled in Wales, where he was raised, Chris Hann embarked on his undergraduate studies in 1971, in 'Philosophy, Politics and Economics' at Jesus College, Oxford University. Travelling through continental Europe

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during the summer vacation months sparked a curiosity about Eastern Europe that would have a lasting impression. It influenced Hann's choice for an area specialization that would later distinguish him as an anthropologist of (post)socialism. After graduating with a first-class degree in 1974, he decided to continue his academic education by taking a course in social anthropology at Cambridge University. It was here that he met the distinguished anthropologist and historian Jack Goody, who would eventually become his Ph.D. supervisor and a lifelong intellectual mentor. Goody encouraged Hann to undertake ethnographic field research in Eastern Europe for his Ph.D. dissertation, an idea Hann found attractive because he thought that 'the anthropologist, using the methods of participant observation, could generate fresh kinds of knowledge about what was really going on in those societies that would go beyond the stereotypes of totalitarianism' (Hann 2010). Hann completed his dissertation in 1979, which came out as a book the following year with the title *Tázlár: A Village in Hungary*. It was the first published monograph on rural Eastern Europe by a British anthropologist.

In 1978–79, Hann started new fieldwork in the Carpathian mountain village of Wisłok Wielki in southeastern Poland. In contrast to other Soviet Bloc countries, peasant farming in Poland had not been collectivized and appeared 'extremely unproductive' in comparison to Hann's previous experience in Hungary (Hann 2016a). Hann's fieldwork took place in the midst of Poland's national political and economic crisis in the early 1980s. The resulting monograph, *A Village without Solidarity: Polish Peasants in Years of Crisis*, came out in 1985. By this time, Hann had already opened up a third fieldsite, this time in Turkey, with the aim of expanding his comparisons 'to include developing countries of the capitalist world' (Hann 1985: vii). This provided an important counterbalance to the previous two (post)socialist fieldsites.

After more than a decade in Cambridge, where he lectured in the Department of Social Anthropology and was a Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Hann took up a Professorship of Social Anthropology at the University of Kent in 1992. His teaching commitments and administrative tasks did not prevent him from publishing extensively over these years, but he nevertheless welcomed the opportunity to prioritize writing when he joined the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin as a Fellow in 1997 (Hann 2000). At that time, the Max Planck Society (the central organization which maintains over eighty institutions that conduct scientific research across the physical and social sciences) was already hatching plans for a new Institute for Social Anthropology, to be located in one of the Neue Bundesländer, or new federal states in the territory of the former German Democratic Republic (GDR), with Hann designated as

one of the founding Directors. The Institute was established in the city of Halle/Saale in 1999. Hann placed his initial research focus on 'Property Relations' (1999–2005), a theme that had gained much momentum following the 1989–91 collapse of the socialist states. It was the topic studied by the first research team in the Department.

In the following years, while at the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology (MPI), Chris Hann established a fourth fieldsite – with Ildikó Bellér-Hann – in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, north-western China. Despite the particular challenges of carrying out research in this part of China, the material also held considerable comparative value in giving Hann yet another field location from which to explore 'postsocialist' questions. The expansion of research activities into an additional region, of what was once viewed as the socialist world, provided a final piece of the puzzle, allowing him to develop a concept of Eurasia that became fundamental to his thinking. 'Composed primarily of the landmass that is conventionally divided into the two continents of Asia and Europe' (Hann 2016b: 1), Eurasia has become a major organizing principle of his work that is founded on viewing the interconnectedness of the landmass. 'Eurasia' also unifies a number of research themes – civilizational analysis, the relationship between religion and economy, and economic embeddedness more generally, as well as (post)socialism. Conceptually, Hann reconciles influences from Goody and Polanyi in order to develop his own notion of Eurasia: drawing on Goody's concept of Eurasia as a structural unity (that in turn Goody had adopted from Childe; see Hann (2016b: 3)), while adding a particular unifying and historically rooted force to the concept, based on an understanding of embedded economy drawn from Polanyi. This has enabled Hann to 'recentre' the Western tradition of scholarship away from Europe and an 'Atlantic' bias, instead putting Eurasia centre stage as the locus for the generation of historical development (Hann 2016b: 7). At the same time, the mixed forms of economic practices exemplified by Eurasia provide a platform from which a contemporary critique of neoliberalism and market dominated economics can be conducted.

The thematic unity provided by the concept of Eurasia is reflected in the research groups Hann established at the MPI. A series of studies focused on the links between religious phenomena and new forms of capitalist economy, such as the focus groups 'Religion and Civil Society' (2003–5), 'Religion and Morality' (2006–8) and 'Economy and Ritual' (the latter headed jointly with Stephen Gudeman, 2009–11). The group 'Social Support and Kinship in China and Vietnam' (2006–10) set out to investigate the distinctive features of 'socialism with neoliberal characteristics' (Endres and Hann 2017). Research themes relating to economy and social

change were further pursued in the focus groups 'Industry and Inequality in Eurasia' (with Catherine Alexander and Jonathan Parry, 2012–14) and 'Financialisation' (with Don Kalb, 2015–17). The ERC-funded project *Realising Eurasia: Civilisation and Moral Economy in the 21st Century* (REALEURASIA, 2014–20) paid particular attention to the embeddedness of the economy in religion, polity and society, and emphasized the commonalities across various civilizational traditions in Eurasia with regard to the moral norms governing economic relations and practice. A project group focusing on the post-Soviet transformation of Siberia was established initially in Hann's department in 2000, but it gained status as an interdepartmental research unit two years later.¹

Despite expanding his scope of research areas, Hann has maintained and closely followed developments in the four Visegrád states (Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Hungary). In 2017, he initiated the Visegrád Anthropologists' Network (V4 Net) with a twofold aim: to contribute to a deeper understanding of the social processes emerging out of the gradual 'deepening of neoliberal structural peripheralization' (Hann 2019a: 301) in these countries; and to consolidate the standing of anthropology in the region. Under his leadership, the department, named 'Resilience and Transformation in Eurasia', has grown and flourished. It has expanded to include several additional groups led by established senior researchers who both complemented and extended his research trajectories. These included the topics of citizenship from below, lifestyle plurality, tradition and urban modernity, markets and infrastructure, and ethnic minorities and the state.²

The contributors to this volume are part of the extensive and multidisciplinary network of research collaborators, senior colleagues and academic friends who have worked with Hann over the years and have engaged with his ideas and arguments on numerous occasions.³ The chapters are arranged into three parts, which are organized around the interrelated themes of rethinking postsocialist developments, global economic and social transformations, and the economy's relationship to the sacred world. They reflect the wide range of topics on which Hann has researched and written during his – to date – four-decade engagement with anthropology. The themes also represent the important ways in which Hann has helped extend the frontiers of the discipline: not only in terms of regions that have gained the focus of anthropological interest (postsocialist Eurasia), but also intellectually in terms of broadening our understandings of economic activities and critically engaging with capitalism from the perspective of former socialist arrangements. We feel the best way to highlight Hann's contribution to the discipline and beyond is through the chapters that make up this book by colleagues stimulated

by his work. The chapters also provide testament to Hann's impressively rich set of intellectual interests.

Reconsidering (Post)Socialist Spaces

The point of the Eurasian perspective is to escape from the binary of Europe and the rest of the world. It is to declare Yes, we are the children of the past 500 years, but we are also heirs of much older interactions between the human economy and the religious-political nexus, dating back in the Old World at least 3,000 years. (Hann 2016b: 7)

As noted above, the theme of Eurasia is prominent in Hann's large-scale vision, presumably triggered by his initial interest in 'postsocialist' states that served as a lever for critical thinking about civilizational centres, market economies and embeddedness. 'Eurasia' stands in contrast to the North Atlantic world as the global centre of the market and of disembedded economic activity. It is a means to move beyond potential Eurocentric biases and boundaries through providing a broader and recentred conceptual framework. Hann's intellectual goal in adopting the 'Eurasia' terminology was to synthesize on a macro-scale while at the same time providing a concept that accommodates modern world changes from a long-term historical perspective. In Hann's (2016b: 9) conceptualization, the Eurasian landmass is characterized by a 'unity-in-civilizational-diversity' that presents a potentially important antidote to the socially disintegrating effect of neoliberal capitalism. As he puts it: 'The study of civilizations in Eurasia draws our attention to functional adaptations of many kinds, but also to the persistence of values that cannot be reduced to any materialist calculus' (Hann 2012a: 120). Elaborating on Jack Goody's thesis of Eurasian commonalities and Karl Polanyi's 'substantivist' approach to the study of economic history, Hann reminds us that both of them 'together enable us to recognize that Eurasia, from the Axial Age civilizations to the mixed economies of the post-war era in Western Europe, offers an alternative to the liberal and neoliberal nightmares' (Hann 2015: 319).

The contributions in the book's first part engage with these ideas from different disciplinary backgrounds. Johann P. Arnason's chapter links up with the big question of 'whether social and cultural anthropology has a contribution to make to civilizational analysis' (Hann 2018c: 339). This is also the subject of debate in a recent book he coedited with Hann (Arnason and Hann 2018). In his chapter in this volume, Arnason recognizes a major weakness of contemporary work by civilizational analysts, namely that economic considerations are not given sufficient attention. Arnason's

chapter takes up this challenge by returning to classical sources in order to explore ways in which ‘the economy’ has been treated, and what lessons can be learnt from the comparative and embedded approach offered by economic anthropology.

In chapter 2, Stefan Troebst scrutinizes five concepts of historical meso-regions (East-Central Europe, the Balkans, the Black Sea Region, Europe and Eurasia) for their value as both heuristic devices and investigative frameworks. In so doing, he highlights the importance of Hann’s development of ‘Eurasia’ as an analytical framework. Troebst argues for an intensification of interdisciplinary and transnational cooperation to create a transregional perspective that spans several centuries and ties several historical meso-regions together.

Modernization agendas, Mihály Sárkány reminds us in his chapter, formed the backdrop to all of the fieldsites where Hann has worked. Sárkány looks at the mixed activities of rural communities in two locations – former socialist Hungary and Kenya – borne out of a necessity for survival. In both cases, local economic strategies amount to the prioritization of households’ survival above the supposed lure of market engagement (whether state-driven or otherwise). As Sárkány notes, ‘poverty hinders modernization’. He therefore not only underlines the ongoing relevancy of mixed economic activities, but at the same time questions ‘modernization’ programmes and the nature of the economic transformations in both capitalist and socialist systems.

A consistent finding of researchers working in ‘postsocialist’ states, also evident in Hann’s own work, is the acknowledgement that socialism offered many sections of the population a high degree of social and economic security. It is this security that has been eroded since the reforms of 1989/91, which is especially evident in the case of those who have been economically marginalized through the ‘shock therapies’ of neoliberalism. Often, voices that express former socialist arrangements in a positive way have been dismissed or trivialized as ‘nostalgia’. At the same time, such views do not necessarily imply that postsocialist citizens wish to return to a past of collective property and central planning. Rather, as Hann holds, ‘their sentiments must be understood as commentary on the present, and even as a form of resistance to the prevailing order, with implications for future alternatives’ (Hann 2012b: 1127). ‘Nostalgia’ is a perspective that has gained currency with hindsight.

In his chapter, Nigel Swain contends that postsocialist nostalgia also has a ‘real’ basis, at least in rural Hungary where he, much like Chris Hann, has conducted fieldwork over the past four decades. The mutual dependency of the ‘first’ (formal) and the ‘second’ (informal) economy provided a material security that enabled many rural communities to

live comfortably and prosper. It is this material security under Hungary's system of 'goulash socialism', Swain argues, that rural dwellers miss the most in the contemporary era.

Disenchantment with the inequalities produced by neoliberal market capitalism has not only triggered longing for bygone times in the former socialist countries of Europe, but has also produced a turn to right-wing populism and nationalism. These tendencies may not be unique to Eastern Europe, but, as Hann notes: 'Populist *ressentiments* in Hungary and the other Visegrád states are not difficult to understand when one recognizes the failure to bridge the economic gulf separating them from the West' (Hann 2019b). In the fourth chapter, Michał Buchowski explains the mechanisms that have promoted right-wing and nationalist tendencies in the case of Poland. He takes a Gramscian approach to highlight the role of public discourses in co-shaping social images and practices, and shows how various populist narratives have contributed to the discursive creation of an 'internal Other' that, in addition to external Others, is deemed to threaten the moral (and physical) integrity of the nation.

The consequences of postsocialist marginalization, and the rise of inequalities, is tackled from a different angle by Michael Stewart in his chapter, who takes the example of Romany money lenders in rural Hungary to address the question: 'When do people feel exploited?' Rather than applying a Marxian perspective, Stewart suggests that the complex phenomena of money lending may best be understood through the lens of Adam Smith's Theory of Moral Sentiments.

The present desperate situation of large sectors of the populations of the former socialist states lends support to Hann's view that: 'Neither the militant post-socialist liberals nor today's populist power holders in Hungary and Poland can dismiss the accomplishments of their Marxist-Leninist predecessors' (Hann 2019a: 327). Yet can Hann's results from the Visegrád-based ethnographies also be applied more broadly to other socialist and postsocialist systems? This is the question Steven Sampson pursues in his chapter by looking at the case of Romania. He argues that repression and surveillance were more extreme than in the Hungarian case, and people's coping strategies were less successful both before 1989 and afterwards. A key concept discussed in this context is 'resilience' – a term that appears in the name of Hann's department at the Max Planck Institute, but has largely remained untapped in his work, both theoretically and analytically.

Economic Anthropology in a Changing World

The larger question at issue is whether, in the globalized world of the twenty-first century, it is still possible to organize the economy according to principles other than those of neoliberal market capitalism. (Hann 2018a: 1717)

Socialism's appeal in terms of the greater security – economic and social – that it offered its citizens, which is evident in cases observed by Hann (amongst others), has provided a means from which to critically evaluate capitalism. In other words, the search for a human face of capitalism, and a critique of its worst economic extremes, has provided a backdrop from which to explore the alternate political economy of socialism, a central concern of much of Hann's work. Nor does Hann subscribe to the common interpretation of the collapse of the Soviet Bloc 'as proof that there can be no alternative to private property as the most basic organizing principle of human economy, or at least of those economies which have reached a high degree of complexity and technological sophistication' (Hann 2019a: 101). Hann's engagement with Polanyi, amongst other economic historians, is precisely centred on the intricate interconnectedness of economic activity within society. Polanyi's concept of embeddedness offers ways of exploring economic relations from a broader context than the approaches traditionally used in other disciplines.

Andre Gingrich's chapter argues that a Polanyi-inspired approach in economic anthropology, as advocated and elaborated by Hann, may be usefully applied to the precapitalist economies in Southwest Arabia during the centuries preceding Ottoman rule. In particular, Gingrich focuses on the ritual and nonritual exchanges in the Zaydi realms of the northern Yemeni highlands from the twelfth to fifteenth centuries. He shows that Karl Polanyi's triad of forms of economic integration – reciprocity, redistribution and market exchange – helps us to grasp and explain the pre-Ottoman social, political and economic constellations along the Indian Ocean's northwestern shorelines.

Whereas in the 1960s and 1970s, Polanyi-inspired anthropologists considered embeddedness as a characterizing feature of premarket or precapitalist societies, current perspectives advocate that all economies are inextricably embedded in social structures, norms and power relations. This view also appeals to sociologists concerned with labour law. As Ruth Dukes and Wolfgang Streeck argue in their chapter, economic anthropologists have much to offer to an institutional analysis of law and society. More specifically, they hold that insights gained through in-depth anthropological studies of work and employment are crucial for understanding

the normativity of working life as well as for the making and remaking of labour law under contemporary, post-industrial conditions.

A salient concept that Hann and others have critically engaged with over the years is the concept of the moral economy (see e.g. Hann 2018b). First advocated by E.P. Thompson (1971) and later developed by James Scott (1976), it has been most usefully deployed in analysing reactions to the expansion of the market principle and the threat it posed to ‘a normative consensus among certain groups concerning basic entitlements’ (Hann 2018b: 230). In her chapter, Monica Heintz applies the concept of ‘moral economy’ in a very different way from how it is conventionally understood in anthropology. For Heintz, moral economy gains relevance by way of the idea of an open science where data and results are freely accessible and there is a sharing and collaboration of knowledge. She explores the issue of access with respect to the anthropological discipline and more specifically acknowledges Hann’s role in promoting Eastern European scholarship in a number of ways, not least through facilitating exchanges between scholars of Eastern and Western Europe. In other words, Heintz reads Hann’s endeavours through the lens of the economy of sharing and collaboration that characterizes open science – a movement that aims to make research and its results more widely accessible and inclusive.

The theme of moral economy (and embeddedness) is also taken up by Frances Pine in chapter 11 in a very different context. In her critical appraisal of how E.P. Thompson’s term has been overused and sometimes misused, Pine reinforces and expands upon how the economic field can be better understood when examined from a broader perspective that includes the moral dimension (as termed by Hann). She shows how in arguing for embeddedness and the widening of the definition of economic practices, Hann is implicitly – if not always explicitly – taking into account kinship/gender/generational factors, which are intricately entangled in notions of labour, morality and economic practices.

Hann’s interest in the complexities of economic life has gone beyond the specific topic of moral dimensions. In the first years of the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, with the research group ‘Property Relations’, he set out ‘to reach inside local understandings of particular property systems, as well as to enhance comparative analyses of property systems generally’ (Hann 2001: 76). In her chapter, Deema Kaneff takes stock of Hann’s contribution to the anthropological study of property and highlights the continuing influence of his work on the topic. Some two decades after the original work on this subject, Kaneff suggests a shift in perspective, taking the powerful ideas about property – reconceptualized as resources – in order to build a model of social change. She argues that

the mobilization of resources, as they move between use and/or exchange value, can be developed as an analytical tool for understanding processes of social change.

In chapter 13, Chris Gregory is concerned with both property and labour, or what Polanyi called ‘special’ (or fictitious) commodities. He draws on his own fieldwork in the central Indian town of Kondagaon to conclude that these special commodities require special methods of investigation. While he emphasizes the importance of ethnographic fieldwork in determining the relationship between kinship, economy and religion, he also sees the need to locate these studies in their broader cultural-geographical and historical contexts.

The relationship between the state and the economy is a relevant theme beyond former socialist Europe. The tea-producing smallholders on the Black Sea coast of Turkey, a developing capitalist location and thus with comparative value when considered against the previous socialist fieldsites, provided an opportunity for Chris Hann and Ildikó Bellér-Hann to explore the theme of economic relations and the state (Bellér-Hann and Hann 2001; Hann 1990). Lale Yağın-Heckmann takes up this theme in her chapter on tea production. She carries the story forward to the current millennium and investigates the ongoing role of the Turkish state, focusing on how global competition and continuing modernization have been affecting Turkish tea and the tea-growing region of the Black Sea since the early 2000s.

Economies of the Sacred and the Secular

We must attend to the common-sense meaning of economy, i.e. the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services, involving markets, money and material technologies. These modern analytic categories can be applied to any human economy, including those in which people do not themselves recognize ‘economy’, do not distinguish between practical work and ritual (or between the work of men and the work of Gods). (Hann 2018b: 250)

The relationship between religion and economic activities – a position from which to explore the embeddedness of economic practices – has been an important theme in Hann’s work. His interest in the study of religious communities harks back to the 1980s, when he studied the tensions between Greek Catholics and the dominant Roman Catholic Church in southeastern Poland (e.g. Hann 2002; Hann and Goltz 2010). During the first two decades at the MPI, Hann and several of his research groups devoted considerable attention to investigating the dynamics of changing religious practices under postsocialist conditions. Rituals, it was argued, often ‘represent a reaffirmation of the connectedness of socialism

vis-à-vis the divisive individualism of market economy' (Gudeman and Hann 2015: 7). However, the research has gone further, including several countries in Europe and Asia that have not been subject to socialist economic principles and that had been substantially influenced by one of the 'world religions', as identified by Max Weber in his comparative studies of religions and civilizations. One of the main questions driving this research pertained to the relationship between changing economic conditions and religious observances and practices. How does the sacred – and its entanglement with the secular – reflect the impositions of the market?

In the spirit of this thematic direction, the chapters in the last part look at the economy's relation to the sacred and the secular. In his chapter, Stephen Gudeman revisits 'economy and ritual' (a topic he had worked on with Hann a decade earlier) and takes the argument one step further; suggesting that all economies can be seen as rituals imbued with beliefs concerning human practices relating to livelihoods. Importantly, he argues this case across a range of locations, showing the relevancy of such a position 'across the board'.

The remaining chapters in this part focus on different dimensions of economy and ritual in the specific context of Asia. In his chapter, Gábor Vargyas examines the relationship between popular religious tradition and technological innovation among the Bru ethnic minority in the Central Highlands of Vietnam. He shows that while the production of rice is intricately linked to ritual, ritual 'accommodations' are found when new methods for harvesting and threshing are made available. Despite these adaptations of customary beliefs and practices, Vargyas argues that in the course of agricultural modernization in the past three decades, religious considerations have ultimately lost out to an overwhelming desire for innovation.

The relationship between economy and ritual is scrutinized by Christoph Brumann in chapter 17, who asks how contemporary Buddhist religious specialists in East and Central Asia handle economic and financial questions. He argues that money matters have remained a constant concern for both the clergy and the laity across Buddhist societies, and much effort goes into symbolically marking the boundaries between 'Buddhist businesses' and ordinary market transactions. Brumann concludes that from a Buddhist emic perspective, the desire is to keep the two domains of religion and economy separate from each other; in so doing, he reappraises the relationship of interconnectedness discussed by Gudeman and Hann (2015).

Also inspired by the complex relationship between ritual and the economy, and the work carried out by Gudeman and Hann (2015), Burkhard Schnepel looks at the interface of ritual and political economy. His chapter

takes the reader to east India, where he investigates the circulation of goddess idols in the politico-economic context of Hindu kingship. Despite their commodity potential, these idols circulate not by exchange, but by theft. However, these thefts are not considered illegitimate; on the contrary, as Schnepel shows, they add authority and legitimacy to the thief's power and thus create what Appadurai (1986) has termed 'tournaments of value'.

David N. Gellner's chapter looks at the Indian *jajmani* system, a system of ritual and occupational obligations practised in traditional Indian communities that has been romanticized in the literature as a morally embedded and sanctified way of organizing the division of labour in the caste-based village social structure. In line with Hann (2018b), Gellner argues that it is pertinent to trace moral reconfigurations through social relations. More recent research has shown that many contemporary Dalits (formerly untouchables) in fact prefer the uncertain and risk-driven market relations to the 'value-laden hierarchies of prestige and contempt' that characterize the *jajmani* system. In this case, the socially embedded form of the economy seems incompatible with the principles of equality and liberty that underlie the modern world.

During the early nineteenth century, many Hindus were recruited from British India to work as indentured plantation labourers in colonial Mauritius, where they joined descendants of European settlers, African slaves, Creoles and Chinese traders. Thomas Hylland Eriksen shows that a Polanyian lens can be fruitfully applied to study the structural differences that remain among the various ethnic and religious groups constituting the multicultural tapestry of contemporary Mauritian society. In his chapter, Eriksen discusses to what extent Hann's Eurasian perspectives can shed light on one of the major social, economic and cultural faultlines that cuts across the island, namely that between Hindus and Creoles.

Concluding Thoughts

Few anthropologists can claim the degree of ethnographic adroitness that is evident in Chris Hann's scholarship: research based on four quite different sites spanning Eurasia – Hungary, Poland, Turkey and China – which is always solidly informed by an excellent grounding in, and appreciation of, the relevant (theoretical) literature. The three themes under which the 20 chapters that make up this volume are organized bear witness to the breadth of Hann's intellectual capacities, developed over a lifetime of research based on detailed ethnographic accounts. The chapters highlight his endowment to the anthropological discipline and indeed beyond. His promotion of 'Eurasia', which enables practical and

ideological engagement with former socialist states while recentring 'European' or 'Western' (scholarly) conceptual frameworks; his concern with embedding economic activities in wider social contexts and practices (in rejection of the dehumanizing capitalist processes); and his ongoing concern to engage, more specifically, with the relationship between religion and economy, are all themes which feature in his lasting intellectual contribution to anthropology.

In closing, we also wish to highlight the more practical support that Hann has given to the discipline. In his role as a director of the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, he has built an academic infrastructure that reaches far beyond the actual Institute in Halle that has grown, in its first two decades, to become arguably the largest research centre for anthropological study in the world. It is an infrastructure that has made it possible for scores of Ph.D. students, postdoctoral researchers and senior scholars from around the world to benefit from training, networks, conferences and opportunities to visit. Beyond its 'practical' value, such institutional building has created a global anthropological community. Hann has also been instrumental in sponsoring and developing anthropology in Eurasian countries, where local scholars have gained from support, and anthropological departments have been strengthened through joint collaboration. At the same time, he has enriched the scope of German anthropology, taking it into hitherto less-explored territorial directions, while facilitating exciting interdisciplinary exchanges.

As evidenced in the following chapters, many of us have been inspired by Chris Hann's ongoing intellectual projects. We express our gratitude through these contributions, which engage with his ideas. It is our gift offered with thanks and appreciation.

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Notes

1. The Siberian Studies Centre (2002–12), jointly led by Chris Hann and Günther Schlee and coordinated by Otto Habeck, addressed a variety of themes related to social processes and technical changes in Siberia.
2. These research groups were: Lale Yalçın-Heckmann's group 'Caucasian Boundaries and Citizenship from below' (2004–9); Christoph Brumann's group on the interplay between tradition and urban modernity; Kirsten Endres' research on markets and infrastructure in mainland Southeast Asia; and Dittmar Schorkowitz's historical anthropological perspectives.
3. The editors sincerely thank John Eidson for his helpful comments on an earlier version of this Introduction.

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