

Alternatives to Austerity?

Public conversation/ workshop

(meeting 4) 9 – 10 June, 2016



Department of Anthropology, LSE

Public conversation: meeting 4

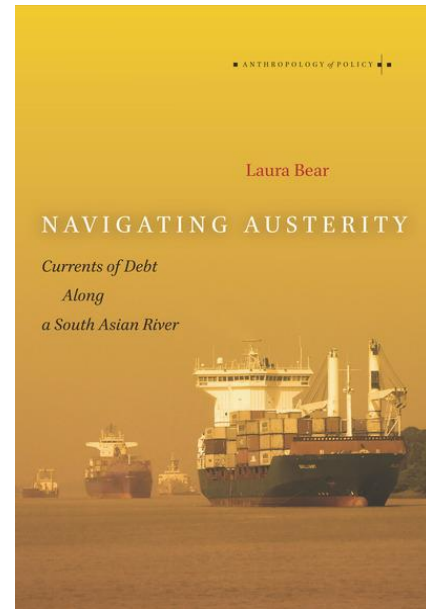
Time: 6.30pm
Date: 9 June 2016
Venue: Old Theatre
LSE, Houghton Street,
London WC2A 2AE

This panel discussion will look beyond the present into a future without austerity. Participants will discuss the proposals for a social calculus to be applied to government policy and sovereign debt relations as proposed in Laura Bear's recent book, *Navigating Austerity: currents of debt along a South Asian River* (Stanford University Press 2015).

How can we develop new forms of policy and politics that prioritise social rather than financial aims for government spending? How might we reform financial institutions so as to give precedence to longer-term goals than those set by market? What can be done to reduce the inequality generated by austerity policies in the UK and across the world? Can we imagine utopian institutions and social movements that could generate abundance, mutual and environmental protection?

Participants

Laura Bear	LSE
Anna Coote	NEF
Carly Schuster	ANU
Andrea Muehlebach	University of Toronto



Navigating Austerity: currents of debt along a South Asian River

<http://www.lse.ac.uk/anthropology/people/bear.aspx>
Navigating Austerity addresses a key question of our era: What happens to society and the environment when austerity dominates political and economic life? Laura Bear traces the hidden currents of state debt crises and their often devastating effects through the stories of boatmen, shipyard workers, hydrographers, port bureaucrats and river pilots on the Hooghly River, a tributary of the Ganges that flows into the Bay of Bengal and Indian Ocean. The setting is one where state debt has led to permanent crisis and austerity measures, revealed by the voyages along the river on which the book takes us. Showing how Bengali idioms and ethics - such as courage, trust, love and friendship - interrelate with cut-backs and speculative planning, the book is a departure from those studies which assume that capitalism is a rational, calculative ethic. It provides an account of austerity capitalism, showing how it arises from local social forms as well as affecting them. It contributes to an emerging literature on public infrastructure and ends with a challenging and utopian agenda that forces us to rethink fiscal policy proposes that we restore just social obligations, and suggests new practices of state debt. Ultimately she aims to transform sovereign debt from a financial question into a widely debated ethical and political issue.

Workshop

Time: 1.00pm – 6.00pm
Date: 10 June 2016

Venue: Vera Anstey Room,
Old Building,

Time		Presenter	Title
13:00 - 13:05	Welcome	Laura Bear	
13:05 - 13:20	Paper	Daniel Knight	Temporal Vertigo in Austerity Greece
13:20 - 13:35	Paper	Geoff Hughes	Austerity and Terror in the middle East: On the Welfare State and the Police State
13:35 - 13:50	Comment	Dimitrios Theodossopoulos	
13:50 - 14:05	Paper	Dimitris Dalakoglou	TINA to Austerity: A few ethnographic notes from an ethnography in Athens of crisis
14:05 - 14:20	Paper	Paul Robert Gilbert	Arguing with austerity: 'fiscal anthropology' & the politics of liquidity
14:20 - 14:35	Comment	Deborah James	
14:35 - 14:50	Discussion		
14:50 - 15:00	Paper	Ryan Davey	Advice & Austerity: Polluter pays? Understanding austerity through experiments in resourcing debt advice in the UK
15:00 - 15:10	Paper	Matt Wilde	Advice and Austerity: Embryonic alternatives to austerity amid the London housing crisis
15:10 - 15:20	Paper	Ana Gutierrez-Garza	Advice and Austerity: Is occupation the new "normal"? Alternatives to precarious housing in Madrid
15:20 - 15:35		BREAK	
15:35 - 15:45	Paper	Anna Tuckett	Advice and Austerity: "Please don't come, the island is full": Immigration policy and austerity in the UK
15:45 - 15:55	Paper	Deborah James	Advice and Austerity: Patchwork payments and displaced debts in UK advice offices
15:55 - 16:10	Comment	Andrea Muehlebach	
16:10 - 16:25	Discussion		
16:25 - 16:40	Paper	Claudio Sopranzetti	Austerity and the Scales of Sovereignty in Contemporary Italy
16:40 - 16:55	Paper	Sohini Kar	Faring Well in Austere Times: Capitalizing on Financial Inclusion and Welfare in India
16:55 - 17:10	Paper	Carly Schuster	Venturing against austerity: the politics of remuneration in Paraguay's commercial economy
17:10 - 17:30	Comment	Laura Bear	
17:30 - 18:00	Discussion		