

**Productive Articulations: Re-examining wealth, abundance and generativity in Latin America**

12 June 2017

Department of Anthropology  
LSE



*Villagers expecting state food supplies in Ecuadorian Amazonia*

This one-day workshop will focus on understanding how states and markets provide key sources of vitality, productivity, and abundance that, in turn, are central to the organisation of local societies in Latin America. Although ethnographic descriptions concerning the production, consumption, circulation and distribution of material resources are widespread in the anthropology of Latin America, the extent to which local political economies currently articulate with broader, regional – often global – relations of production and power remains underexplored and undertheorised. Moreover, while recent scholarship has begun to pay attention to the ways in which wealth, wellbeing and vitality are central organising notions for many of the region's Amerindian and rural societies, the intractable forms of inequality that accompany 21<sup>st</sup> century capitalism are rarely taken into account. The papers to be presented will constitute ethnographic explorations that shed light on the processes of articulation through which local populations are able to generate their lives. Participants will therefore aim to highlight ethnographic accounts that illustrate the multifaceted ways in which economy, politics and ideology shape and are shaped by their articulations with local households, communities and settlement economies.

Over the course of the day we will explore questions that strike at the heart of ongoing debates in anthropology: What sorts of political collectivity are possible when productivity must be elicited from the state? What role does labour play in people's attempt to generate valuable lives? How do societies organise when acts of production (and reproduction) meld with economic notions of productivity? And how do local notions of abundance, vitality, and generativity intertwine with the production of material plenty within capitalism at different scales? What happens to households when local ideas about autonomy and dependency revolve around the ability to establish relations with frontier economies and state institutions?

In attempting to answer these kinds of questions we hope to blur the boundaries between traditional models that have centred on descriptions concerning the control of scarce resources to pay attention to alternative conceptualisations of political economy. The workshop aims to provide a platform for the development of new

ethnographic and analytical frameworks that will further our understanding of local political economies. To do so, we will bring together scholars that work in different regions of Latin America, including the Lowlands, Highlands and Mesoamerica. While the workshop will focus on cases from different Latin American regions, we expect to generate discussions that will make for cross-cultural comparisons regarding the ways in which subaltern populations conceive of productivity and generate livelihoods in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. To this effect the final roundtable will provide a space for scholars working in other parts of the world to comment on the differences and similarities they have observed over the course of their own research.

**Date and Time:** June 12<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 – 18:00

**Location:** Seligman Library, (OLD 6.05) Old Building  
London School of Economics and Political Science  
Houghton Street  
London WC2A 2AE

**Attendance is open to the public, but we ask that you confirm your attendance through [Eventbrite](#)**

For info, contact the conveners: Dr Agustín Diz [a.diz@lse.ac.uk](mailto:a.diz@lse.ac.uk) and Dr Natalia Buitrón [n.buitron-arias@lse.ac.uk](mailto:n.buitron-arias@lse.ac.uk)

## Programme Monday 12 June, 10:00 – 18:00

10 – 10:20	Welcome coffee & Opening Remarks on <b>Productive Articulations</b> Natalia Buitrón (LSE) and Agustín Diz (LSE)
<b>10:30 – 13:00</b>	
<b>Lowland South American Panel</b>	
10:30 – 10:50	<b>Nature, Time, and Ceremonial Wealth among Gê-speakers</b> William Fisher (William & Mary)
11:00 – 11:20	<b>Expecting Abundance in a ‘Time of Politics’: Precarious Work and Patronage in the Argentine Chaco</b> Agustín Diz (LSE)
11:30 – 11:50	<b>Envisioning Abundance: Efficacious work and the Productivity of Public Budgets in Ecuadorian Amazonia</b> Natalia Buitrón (LSE)
12:00 – 12:30	<b>Free and Unfree Labour in the Brazilian Amazon: Historical Issues</b> Stephen Nugent (Goldsmiths)
12:30 – 13:00	<b>Open discussion</b>
<b>13:00 – 13:45 Lunch</b>	
<b>14:00 – 16:30</b>	
<b>Highland and Mesoamerican Panel</b>	
14:00 – 14:20	<b>“Working for the Union is like Ploughing the Land”: Understanding Non-agricultural Productivity in an Andean <i>ayllu</i></b> Miranda Sheild-Johansson (UCL)
14:30 – 14:50	<b>Two Essays on Abundance</b> Eric Hirsch (McGill)
15:00 – 15:20	<b><i>Nexí</i> and Promises of Development Transfers in a Yucatec Village, Mexico</b> Andrés Dapuez (Conicet)
15:30 – 16:00	<b>Open discussion</b>
<b>16:00 – 16:30 Afternoon Tea</b>	
<b>16:30 – 17:15</b>	
<b>Roundtable: Cross-cultural comparisons</b>	
Laura Bear (LSE), Deborah James (LSE), Mukulika Banerjee (LSE), Chloe Nahum-Claudiel (LSE)	
<b>17:40 – 18:00 Closing discussion</b>	