

## CALL FOR PAPERS

### Anthropology and the ontological turn

(Tsantsa 20/2015)

Guest editors: **Frédéric Keck** (Laboratoire d'Anthropologie Sociale, CNRS/EHESS/Collège de France),  
**Saskia Walentowitz et Ursula Regehr** (Institut d'anthropologie sociale, Université de Berne)

What does an anthropology look like, in which *anthropos* no longer occupies the center stage of the social world? What is a human science, if it is based on the observation that humans and non-humans constitute each other? What is cultural diversity when culture is no longer seen in contrast to a universal nature? What is the social when it no longer constitutes a separate domain? The thematic issue of Tsantsa 20 is dedicated to the “ontological turn” and the shifts it produces in the anthropological discipline.

Through paradigm change or by silent revolution, anthropology is abandoning its foundational dualism. The dichotomy between “nature” and “culture” is questioned by studies of cosmologies, which postulate the existence of “multiple natures” and of a unique “culture” shared by humans and other forms of life, things and artefacts. Western multiculturalism thus appears as one possibility among others to create collective life. There, the unity of nature is only obtained thanks to an ongoing distinction, i.e. through scientific practice, between humans seen as unique subjects of knowledge and the rest of the world seen as constituted by a myriad of known objects.

The decentralisation of *anthropos* has profound implications for the definition of research objects and methods of inquiry, as well as for the analytical gesture and forms of restitution. Anthropology becomes symmetrical by recognizing the agency of nonhumans, without, however, presuming any ontological distinction between “subjects” and “objects”. It takes materials seriously, without reducing them to substrata of actions or symbolic thoughts. This kind of anthropology favours the description of how common worlds are composed rather than explaining them. Through the shaking of the discipline's foundations, the contours of a new comparative anthropology emerge.

The approaches of such a comparative project necessarily vary. The term “ontology” is omnipresent in pioneering works, but carries different meanings due to their respective disciplinary horizons and fields of inquiry: anthropology of nature, multi-species ethnography, empirical philosophy, anthropology of science and technology, semiotic materialism, symmetrical archaeology, phenomenography, recursive anthropology ... Without calling for a unification of these approaches, TSANTSA 20 seeks for original articles which draw freely on these heterogeneous resources. How may a perspectivist anthropology in Amazonia inspire a study of biosecurity in Asia and vice versa?

How do ethnographies of multiple natures in Europe transform the analysis of globalisation processes regarding health or biodiversity? What happens to anthropological concepts when there is no longer the need to distinguish between the ideal and the material? What may an anthropology of science contribute in order to give speech to non-humans in analyses outside the realm of science? Conversely, how may we extend multi-species communication into techno-scientific worlds where new entities proliferate?

For this thematic issue, we are looking for texts, which bring these different approaches together and make them resonate. We are interested in reflections that do not only consider the potentials, but also the risks of such a decentralisation of *anthropos*. How may a non-anthropocentric human science critically engage with new forms of exploitation of human and non-human resources? What does such a science teach us about asymmetries, for example those that prevail between genders, a question that has hardly been addressed by the works prominent in the ontological turn. Do its approaches favour incommensurability, or do they, on the contrary, open up new forms of reciprocity with regard to the many challenges the world is currently facing?

**Languages:** English, German or French

**Abstracts:** 500 words, comprising a title, a summary of the argument, a description of the data corpus, a specification of the methodology, as well as a short biography specifying the discipline and professional status of the author/s, to be sent before January 31, 2014, to saskia.walentowitz (at) anthro.unibe.ch

**Articles:** max. 40,000 characters including empty spaces and references. The articles will be subjected to a double review by the editorial committee and external experts.

Please join:

- Abstract (500 characters in English)
- 3-5 keywords
- Personal and contact data (institution, phone, Email)

Further information under:

[http://www.seg-sse.ch/pdf/directives\\_Tsantsa.pdf](http://www.seg-sse.ch/pdf/directives_Tsantsa.pdf)

**Editorial schedule:**

January 31, 2014	Abstracts submission.
February 28, 2014	Editorial board's notification to the authors about the selection of the articles.
June 30, 2014	Submission of the articles.
October 1, 2014	Feedback of the reviews to the authors.
January 5th, 2015	Submission deadline for the final version of the articles.
May 2014	Publication of TSANTSA 20