Un/Commoning the Region

Regional expertise is a core requirement for ethnographic research and anthropological expertise. Anthropological departments have historically been organized along regional lines, and professional associations, such as the GAA, usually have regional working groups. As the speakers of the GAA Mediterranean Regional Group, we invite anthropologists working in and on different world regions to discuss multi-layered conceptualizations of their regions. What constitutes “the region” and “the regional,” and how has it shaped understandings of anthropology and anthropologists? When is “the region” invoked as a geographical space, a political idea, an economic project or a socio-cultural imaginary? Regions are dynamic, emerging through historical, political, social, and spiritual connections and separations. Practices of commoning–– such as transboundary solidarity, neighborly responsibility, and mutual care in the face of polycrises––invite us to rethink what is meant by “the region,” also in comparison to other concepts such as “the area,” “the local,” “the state,” and “the global”. We aim to explore how regions are constituted as geopolitical entities, diverse social spaces, socio-cultural landscapes, and (endangered) ecosystems shaped by historical legacies and (new) forms of marginalization. Efforts at commoning, including the preservation of shared resources, such as ecosystems and public goods, often face resistance, among others, from nationalist movements and extractivist politics. Contributions should address the question of what constitutes “a region”, “the regional” and its borders, and how practices of un/commoning shape regions with a focus on care, solidarity and resistance, even across species boundaries, that might challenge dominant social formations and power relations.

Editorial Board:

Gerhild Perl (University of Trier)
Lene Faust (University of Bern)

Panel:

https://tagung.dgska.de/zeitplan/#15990