

Abstracts

Dobbelt temanummer

Theme Editors' Introduction: Anthropological Contributions

Kasper Tang Vangkilde, Associate Professor and Head of AnthroAnalysis, Department of Anthropology, University of Copenhagen, kasper.vangkilde@anthro.ku.dk

Pernille Hohnen, Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of Copenhagen, pernille.hohnen@anthro.ku.dk

Simon Lex, Tenure Track Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of Copenhagen, simon.lex@anthro.ku.dk

Anthropology has become increasingly influential in a growing number of societal domains. While anthropologists have occasionally been criticized – also by themselves – for not taking active part in key societal discussions and challenges, anthropologists today are clearly engaged in topical societal issues. Whether climate, health, crime, digitalization, sustainability, economy, integration, aging, or something else, anthropologists are involved. But what is it that anthropology can contribute to society? In this theme issue, we focus on anthropological contributions to societal challenges and questions. Through six case studies, we demonstrate how anthropologists may generate both critical insights and constructive suggestions. In this introduction to the theme issue, we elaborate on the anthropological contributions as we seek to explicate some of the key ways in which anthropology may make a difference to society.

Gender, Bodies, and Controversies in Craftwork

Maia Ebsen, Ph.D. Scholar, Department of Anthropology, University of Copenhagen, me@anthro.ku.dk

Discussions about gender are increasingly becoming a concern at Danish workplaces. The public debate often queries the *vertical gender division* in the labour market, i.e. the gender ratio in the hierarchy of individual workplaces, whereas the *horizontal gender division*, i.e. the gender ratio within business sectors and professions, is more rarely debated. But what might we learn about the relation between gender and work if we explore the work of a group of female employees in a so-called male-dominated industry in Denmark? In this article, I examine a construction company that is striving to employ more female craft workers. I explore the close relation between gender, body, and professional identity, and show how the female craft workers' presence and participation in the work is problematized, albeit they contribute to a rethinking of the construction work.

Fresh Air in the Classroom: Anthropological Contributions to the Smart City

Simon Lex, Tenure Track Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of Copenhagen, simon.lex@anthro.ku.dk

Within a context of technological optimism, I present a case in which urban developers continuously meet practical obstacles when attempt-

ing to establish smart cities in Denmark. Since people living in the cities do not use the smart technologies as expected, anthropologists are involved in order to bridge the gap between technical expectations and daily practices. By exploring and documenting daily practices, the anthropologists expand a technically-oriented approach to the smart city. Furthermore, anthropologists ensure an understanding of different positions and stakeholders, thus helping cities to build a constructive relationship between citizens, local organizations, and centrally managed institutions. With an empathic approach and multivoical analysis of the city, anthropology introduces understandings that help to think and act across organizational boundaries and interests, and thereby provide a better basis for sustainable urban development.

Negotiating Debt in Credit Based Society: An Anthropological Analysis of Handling Debt in Denmark

Pernille Hohnen, *Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of Copenhagen, pernille.hohnen@anthro.ku.dk*

Credit and debt are classical anthropological topics and anthropologists are also increasingly concerned with cultural and moral aspects and understandings of credit and debt in the financialized economy. In an anthropological perspective, debt can be viewed as both socially constructed and as a moral and social obligation. Therefore, although debt is experienced as binding, the allocation of this obligation is not quite as obvious as we think. In some contexts, debt and debtors are highly stigmatized while, in others, debt is traded as a commodity. Some forms of debt are even conceptualized as 'disposable money' and treated as income. Embarking on fieldwork among young adults and voluntary debt advisors, the article addresses this variety in handling debt in a Danish context. Based on three empirical examples, the article shows how debt negotiations vary, but also

how the most vulnerable groups have the smallest space of negotiation.

From Handball to Business: New Anthropological Perspectives on Leadership and Performance

Kasper Pape Helligsøe, *Ph.D. Scholar, Department of Anthropology, School of Culture and Society, Aarhus University, kph@cas.au.dk*

Kasper Tang Vangkilde, *Associate Professor and Head of AnthroAnalysis, Department of Anthropology, University of Copenhagen, kasper.vangkilde@anthro.ku.dk*

Sport and business are often compared. Usually, it is former elite athletes who reflect on their own experiences and the relevance of these in a business context. But what might we learn if the parallel between sport and business is explored and analysed in detail? In this article, we invite the reader inside a professional handball club called Bjerringbro-Silkeborg Handball for the purpose of describing how leadership and performance are practiced in the club, and how this may be applied constructively in business, here in a software company called Systematic. Our ambition is to generate new insights and initiatives of relevance to leading teams in high performance environments, as well as more broadly to show the creative potential of comparison. But is the comparison of handball and software development not like comparing apples and pears? Well yes, but that is exactly part of the point. We demonstrate this by drawing on the anthropological tradition of comparing different societies and communities.

When Dignity Is Equal to Independence: An Anthropological Analysis of Demands for Activity and Self-Help in Aging Policies

Bjarke Oxlund, *Professor MSO and Head of Department, Department of Anthropology, University of Copenhagen, bjarke.oxlund@anthro.ku.dk*

In the past decade, Danish aging policies have been dominated by strong ideas about active aging, independence, and dignity. Based on ethnographic insights about aging Danes, this article shows how demands for activity and self-help in aging policies have made it partly illegitimate to become frail and in need of care services. The article argues that aging policies that are primarily based on activity theory run the risk of eroding the social contract between the individual and society that has characterized the Danish welfare state since the 1950's. It also shows that the social relation between care receivers and care providers changes as a consequence thereof.

Calibrating Neighbour Noise: the art of producing a common standard

Adam Veng, *Scientific Assistant, Department of Anthropology, University of Copenhagen, a.veng@anthro.ku.dk*

Sandra Lori Petersen, *Post Doc, Department of Anthropology, University of Copenhagen, sandra.lori.petersen@anthro.ku.dk*

Thea-Maria Sørensen, *Scientific Assistant, Department of Anthropology, University of Copenhagen, tms@anthro.ku.dk*

This article is based on anthropological interventionist research among residents struggling with neighbour noise nuisances in apartment buildings in Copenhagen. It explores how perceptions of neighbour noise are related to the particular importance of 'the home' in Danish everyday life as a place for upholding 'inner', private values and maintaining a border to the 'outer', public world. Residents often 'calibrate' neighbour noise through upholding their 'inner' values as a

standard for how other residents should behave, and thereby issues around neighbour noise are at the risk of turning into neighbour disputes. In the article, we describe research-based interventionist workshops composed of elements of common listening as well as information on and possible ways of improving the particular acoustic qualities and soundproofing of their building. We show how, for some residents, this allows for a 're-calibration' of what they perceive as the norm concerning neighbour noise to a common, acoustic-material 'outer.'

Denmark's Status in the United Nations HQ

Milan K. Jha, *MSc Political Science, milan_jha@hotmail.com*

Using status theory as the analytical framework, this article examines Denmark's status relative to its closest Nordic competitors in the UN HQ in New York: Norway, Sweden and Finland. Since 2001, successive Danish governments have neglected the UN as a foreign policy priority, potentially resulting in a status loss. For Denmark, status is especially relevant at the moment, as the country will stand for the 2024-election to the arguably most important multilateral decision-making body in the world: The United Nations Security Council. The analysis concludes that Denmark's relative status since 2001 has been reduced on the examined areas of development cooperation and military engagement. To account for this status loss, Denmark ought to change its strategy if the country wants to optimize its chances of gaining a seat on the Security Council in case of a contested election.

The Danger of Being Caught between Two Stools. The Defense Attachés as an Integrated Part of the Foreign Service

Line Lindegaard Christensen, *student of political science, University of Copenhagen, line-lindegaard@hotmail.com*

Sofie Amalie Juhl-Rasmussen, *student of political science, University of Copenhagen, ku.sofie@gmail.com*

Caroline Thoby, *student of political science, University of Copenhagen, caroline@thoby.dk*

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs no longer has a monopoly on Danish foreign policy. Sector diplomacy is booming, and defense attachés are especially relevant in a time of shifts in international relations. In this article, we examine the otherwise unexplored field of Danish defense attachés. We inspect the complex relations between the defense attaché and the Danish embassies, the Ministry of Defense, the Defense Command Denmark and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Despite their differences in culture and profession, the cooperation between all parties works well. As for most processes with differentiation of actors, there can arise problems of misunderstandings and loss of knowledge. In a time where Denmark attempts to maintain international cooperation, it is increasingly important to scrutinize the service of defense attachés to organize it to be as optimal as possible in the pursuit of furthering Danish interests.

Paradiplomatic Relations within the Kingdom of Denmark

Eva Victoria Arpe Østergaard, *student of political science, Department of Political Science, University of Copenhagen, evavictoriaoe@gmail.com*

Mathilde Agerskov, *student of political science, Department of Political Science, University of Copenhagen, mathildeagerskov29@gmail.com*

Morten Muff Pedersen, *student of political science, Department of Political Science, University of Copenhagen, tilmortenmuff@gmail.com*

The Kingdom of Denmark is a unique construction of three countries in one state; Denmark, The Faroe Islands and Greenland. The Greenlandic and Faroese governments administrate most policy areas, but foreign affairs remain a prerogative for the Danish government. This paper examines the effects of this division of policy areas and the resulting grey areas. We have interviewed diplomats and civil servants from all three countries to understand how the institutional setup of the Kingdom shapes foreign policy outwardly as well as the relationship between the three countries and their foreign policy departments. We conclude that an examination of the division of policy areas in the current geopolitical context is necessary to overcome issues relating to especially fishing and trade. These areas are Greenlandic and Faroese competences but committed by Denmark to the EU where neither Greenland nor The Faroe Islands are members.

The Danish Green Frontline missions – a bastion without weapons?

Mille Poulsen Jepsen, *stud.scient.pol., Department of Political Science, University of Copenhagen, millepj@hotmail.com*

Andreas Bøgh Rønberg, *cand.scient.pol., Department of Political Science, University of Copenhagen, andreas.ronberg@gmail.com*

In November 2019, the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) decided to engage itself further into the climate agenda (Udenrigsministeriet, 2019). After the launch of two climate and sustainability strategies, the MFA named 20 of its representations as “Green Front Line Missions” but with no further focus on what this title entails (Udenrigsministeriet, 2019; Regeringen, 2020). In this article we investigate how the MFA has worked with the launch and implementation of the Green Front line Missions as a new initiative. Our main argument is that as a consequence of a lack of communication from the home service to the 20 Missions, a discrepancy has occurred of the home service’s intended objective and the

Missions' understanding of the initiative. While the MFA perceives the new initiative as a part of a fundamental change of culture within the Ministry, the Missions have instead expressed the initiative as not being ambitious enough.