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Article

Note from the editor

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Note from the editor

Dear reader,

After six volumes, the newsletter is changing its familiar but by now outdated layout. Christel Schommertz and Thomas Pott of the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Societies in Cologne, which also hosts the newsletter, have done an excellent job developing the new design.

The current issue and the next one will be devoted to historical perspectives in economic sociology. To begin with, Johan Heilbron provides a historical account of financial markets, which shows that stock markets have never been perfect, free markets. Instead, they are political constructs whose emergence would have been infeasible without the government's own continuous involvement.

In David Chiavacci's contribution about the emergence of the modern travel market in Japan, a number of core debates in economic sociology, about the role of institutions, social networks and culture in producing economic change, surface. In fact, the travel market bloomed due to a conception of religion which was not opposed to material life and which allowed pilgrimage to gradually transform into tourism.

In two other contributions, Gertraude Mikl-Horke and Leonard Seabrooke present thinkers that have so far not been 'canonized' in economic sociology, in spite of their important contributions to debates of their own days, and their relevance for contemporary discussions. Mikl-Horke shows how the Austrian sociologist Rudolf Goldscheid analyses the values and interests that underlie economy action and that stand in the way of a 'human economy.' Goldscheid's thinking shows strong familiarities with the moral economy of the early twentieth century political scientist John Hobson. As Seabrooke shows, this moral economy revolves around 'improperty', that is the unfair seizure of assets by others.

Finally, in the interview series Carlo Trigilia of the University of Florence argues that economic sociologists should be more keen on influencing policy. Alex Preda of the University of Edinburgh recommends readers recent literature in economic sociology.

In the next issue historical themes will be continued, among others with a contribution by Bruce Carruthers of Northwestern University. Submissions for the issue afterwards, which will be about globalization, are welcome. So are reviews of recent books in economic sociology.

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