



European Association of Social Anthropologists
Association Européenne des Anthropologues Sociaux

EASA Newsletter No 86 July 2024

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1. President's Letter

President Ana Ivasiuc addresses the membership



Our mid-summer newsletter reaches you right before our most anticipated event: the EASA2024 conference. Many of you have already started tweeting and posting on upcoming events (remember to use the hashtag #EASA2024 on X!) and it is heartening to see so much enthusiasm building up to the conference.

Although understandably the highlight of this month is the EASA conference, I want to draw your attention to four topics of interest further detailed in this newsletter.

The first is the **Motion that was submitted to EASA for debate at the next AGM on the topic of collaboration with Israeli academic institutions**. The Motion builds on past debates and decisions taken by the EASA membership to curtail collaboration with Israeli academic institutions situated in the Occupied Palestinian Territories ([Motion debated in 2018](#) in Stockholm) and recommends, in light of the current genocidal violence that the Israeli state is inflicting on Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank, that our association takes appropriate measures to exert non-violent pressure on Israeli academic institutions to end the violation of human rights and the violence against Palestinians. We take this subject seriously and I urge all our members to consult the [website](#) set up by the signatories of the motion, and to prepare for our debate during the AGM by going carefully through the [FAQ](#) section of the website.

The second news of interest is **the constitution of the Working Group on Human Rights and Academic Freedom**, which started its activity on the 1st of June. The group (on whom you can read more below), composed of Julie Billaud, Chandana Mathur, Ruba Salih, Helena Zohdi, and our executive committee liaison, Hayal Akarsu, is already active and its first task, decided during the group's first meeting, is to monitor the debate within EASA on the Motion concerning EASA's ties with Israeli academic institutions.

Another important initiative of the current executive committee is the setup of a **mentorship program**. Recognising the need for mentoring in the early stages



of the academic career and taking stock of similar initiatives elsewhere, we are launching a call for mentees that will receive guidance and mentoring from a group of dedicated EASA members with a wide array of skills and expertise. My immense gratitude goes to those of you who have accepted to be mentors and are generously offering your time to pilot this initiative for the next academic year, and to my wonderful colleagues, Hege Høyer Leivestad and Hayal Akarsu for setting up the program.

Finally, many of you suggested over the last few years that a **renewal of our website** is long overdue. I am happy to let you know that we have started working on the complete overhaul of EASA's website. After the first meetings with [Juhani Juurik](#), a graphic designer trained as an anthropologist, and with our NomadIT colleagues, I can attest to how complex and time-consuming this task is. Nevertheless, we are aiming at delivering a new website - or at least a first version of it - by the beginning of December. To help us centre the needs of our membership regarding our website, we need your support with the member survey further described below.

And now very briefly again on the upcoming conference. The [timetable](#), so carefully curated by the Local and the Scientific Committees, is brimming with incredible panels, round tables, and events that touch upon crucial issues of our time. We will debate, among other things, the kinds of public anthropology that EASA should embrace (the round table "EASA Voices in a Troubled World", Tuesday 11.00-12.30, Room 304), the state of academic freedom and censorship around Palestine (the round table "Academic Freedom, Censorship and Palestine: Anthropology in Crisis Again", Thursday 18.30-20.00, Museu Marítim de Barcelona), anthropological engagements with [the confluence between the far-right and capitalism, the impact of precarity on anthropologists](#), and many more topics that demonstrate more than ever anthropology's relevance in our worlds and times.

Our conference begins on Thursday, 18 July, with a rich online offering starting early in the morning and featuring no less than 140 panels, labs, round tables and events in a single day. A highlight on the schedule is The Mantas Kvedaravičius Film Award 2024, which we are honoured to continue from its first edition in 2022. The winning film will be screened to EASA members on the online day of the conference and followed by the award ceremony and a Q&A with the directors.



One of the things that makes me incredibly proud of our association and grateful to the Barcelona Local Committee for its work is the organisation, within EASA 2024, of events in Spanish and in Catalan. This reminds us that EASA was conceived as a multilingual association, and that amidst calls for decolonising anthropology, we should return to the polyphony afforded by our different languages. On this note, I am looking forward to wishing you *Benvinguts i Benvingudes a Barcelona* for #EASA2024.

2. Motion concerning collaborations with Israeli academic institutions

The Motion has been added to the AGM agenda and will be discussed in Barcelona.

The EASA executive committee has received a [Motion concerning collaborations with Israeli academic institutions](#) in light of the ongoing systematic human rights violations in Palestine, Israeli war crimes, crimes against humanity and plausible genocide committed in the Gaza strip. The Motion has been added to the AGM agenda and will be discussed in Barcelona. The Motion submitted to EASA can also be found on at [EASAmembers4Palestine](#) with more detailed information, FAQs, and endorsements from various EASA members. In particular the FAQ section is useful in preparing the debate on this Motion at the next AGM.



Photo: Palestinian News & Information Agency (Wafa) in contract with APAIMages,



3. Agenda AGM and Members' Forum on the 25th of July in Barcelona (and hybrid)

View the agenda and find out how to attend

All are welcome to the AGM but only members are eligible to vote. There will also be online access.

AGENDA

1. Reports

- President's Report
- Secretary's Report
- Treasurer's Report and accounts for the year to 31st December 2023
- Journal editors
- Book editors
- Networks
- Lobbying and Mental Health in Academia reports
- Changes in conference format Report
- Ethics and Integrity Committee Report
- Human Rights and Academic Freedom Working Group Report
- Amendment to Constitution (details to follow)

2. Members' motion concerning collaborations with Israeli academic institutions in light of the ongoing systematic human rights violations in Palestine, Israeli war crimes, crimes against humanity and plausible genocide committed in the Gaza strip.

3. AOB



4. Opportunity to Join the Editorial team at Social Anthropology/Anthropologie Sociale

Apply now - shortlisting and interviews will be held in August 2024

EASA is looking for a new editor to join the current editorial team (Dimitra Kofti, Arne Harms and Ville Laakkonen) at Social Anthropology/Anthropologie Sociale. You will have existing editorial experience, be willing to work collaboratively as part of a team, and bring a clear vision for the future of the journal and its role promoting European social anthropology. Social Anthropology is committed to the principles of equity and diversity - applications from under-represented communities and regions in Europe are therefore particularly welcomed.



Application is by CV and covering email.

Applications should be sent to the EASA Secretary, monica.[heintz\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:heintz(at)gmail.com) by 31.07.2024.

Shortlisting and interviews will be held in August 2024. The editor would be expected to be in post from Autumn 2024 for a 4 year term of office, and will help with the transition to a new team when the current editors demit from their roles.

JOB DESCRIPTION

- To work closely and supportively with the two other Editors during the remainder of their term, along with the Assistant Editor and Book Review Editor, meeting regularly and ensuring a clear delegation of responsibilities.
- To develop the journal as a leading APC-free Open Access publication promoting the rich diversity of European social anthropology.
- To actively solicit manuscripts and themed issues from established and early-career scholars, from across Europe and beyond.
- To review submissions prior to selection of international peer reviewers, to oversee a system of high-quality review and revision, and to make final publication decisions.



- To write editorial introductions.
- To liaise with the EASA Executive, providing six-monthly updates on the journal's performance and direction, and writing an annual report for the AGM.
- To liaise with the publisher - Berghahn - and the International Editorial Advisory Board on matters of scholarly strategy and quality.

The post comes with a small honorarium and a travel allowance to attend international conferences and network. The Barcelona EASA20224 conference offers the opportunity to meet informally with the current editorial team and EASA Exec if you would like to find out more about the role.

5. New Book Reviews Editor at Social Anthropology/Anthropologie Sociale

Magda Crăciun is taking over from Arne Harms



Social Anthropology/Anthropologie Sociale have a new book review editor: Magdalena Crăciun (Magda for short). She is a lecturer in Anthropology at the University of Bucharest, and is currently working on plastics in Romania. She will be taking over from Arne Harms, who is now one of the editors of SA/AS. She welcomes suggestions and proposals for books to review at [magda.craciun\(at\)sas.unibuc.ro](mailto:magda.craciun(at)sas.unibuc.ro).



6. Composition of the Working Group on Human Rights and Academic Freedom

Meet the candidates: Julie Billaud, Ruba Salih, Chandana Mathur, Helena Zohdi and Hayall Akarsu

The Working Group on Human Rights and Academic Freedom has been constituted following a selection procedure carried out by the executive committee among six candidates. The group's aims are to monitor violations of, and gather evidence on academic freedom and human rights violations, to initiate policies accordingly, to create structures of support: guidelines for universities, "best practices" on academic freedom, and to organise events on academic freedom. The group will offer a space to discuss these issues within EASA and will foster a culture of academic freedom in our association and more broadly in Europe.

Julie Billaud



I am a legal and political anthropologist working on human rights and humanitarianism and an Associate Professor at the Geneva Graduate Institute. I have studied these themes through ethnographic fieldwork in Afghanistan, Britain, in Geneva at the United Nations and transnationally, with the International Committee of the Red Cross. In these different sites, I have examined how notions of rights, justice and accountability are operationalized

in everyday practices. I have been an active member of EASA since 2012. In 2021, I became co-convener of LAWNET (with Agathe Mora). As a member of the editorial collective of the open-access publication platform Allegra Lab, I am dedicated to making scholarly debates more accessible and relevant to understand contemporary world events. Above all, I am committed to helping find ways to tackle some of the most pressing human rights issues affecting our anthropological community, notably the current suppression of academic freedom and freedom of expression on universities' campuses.



Ruba Salih



I am currently a Professor of Anthropology at the University of Bologna. My research interests and writing include transnational migration and diasporas across the Middle East and Europe, colonisation and decolonisation, gender memory and colonial traumas-with Italy, Morocco, the Occupied Palestinian Territories, Lebanon and Jordan as main sites of my fieldwork. In the past ten years my research has focused on Palestinian refugees and their imaginaries of rights, through a decolonial perspective. Before joining Bologna University in 2022, I was Professor

in the Department of Anthropology at SOAS, University of London. From 2015 to 2019 I was a member of the Board of Trustees of the Arab Council for the Social Sciences where I was part of the academic freedom sub-committee. Currently, I am part of the Executive Board of Insaniyyat, Society of Palestinian Anthropologists. Academic freedom is core to my scholarly ethics and mission. As part of the EASA working group, I am committed to promote and protect spaces for anthropological critical thinking and writing, and to implement measures to ensure our association is equipped to deal with the challenges that are incumbent upon us.

Chandana Mathur



I am an Associate Professor of Anthropology at Maynooth University in Ireland. Drawing on the perspectives of anthropological political economy and political ecology, my research focuses principally on the contemporary United States, South Asia and the South Asian diaspora.

While serving as EASA Vice-President (2021-2023), I was part of the Executive's 'Emerging Issues' working group with Cris Shore and Chowra Makaremi, dealing specifically with issues of academic freedom and human rights. I have been actively involved since 2009 with Scholars at Risk (SAR), an organisation committed to protecting academic freedom globally. I was one of the Maynooth academics whose efforts established



Maynooth University as the host institution for SAR – Europe. I served as one of the two Human Rights Seats at the American Anthropological Association's Members' Programmatic, Advisory and Advocacy Committee (MPAAC) in 2021-23, and previously, in 2020-21, as MPAAC's Human Rights Liaison. I am also a former Chair of the World Council of Anthropological Associations (2016-18).

Helena Zohdi



Helena Zohdi is a PhD Candidate at the Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology at Goethe University Frankfurt. Her doctoral thesis focuses on the contemporary materialisation of Marxism in the theory and practice of Egyptian Revolutionary Socialists. She completed her studies in political theory at Goethe University in cooperation with the Technical University of Darmstadt. Her research interests include left melancholy, traveling theory, the role of propaganda and agitation in leftist movements, and exile activism.

Hayall Akarsu



Hayall Akarsu is Assistant Professor of Cultural Anthropology at Utrecht University. Previously, she was a Junior Research Fellow in the Crown Center for Middle East Studies and Lecturer in Anthropology at Brandeis University. She obtained her PhD in 2018 from the School of Anthropology at the University of Arizona, and her MA in 2012 from Near Eastern Studies at New York University (NYU). From her current book project on police reforms to her ongoing research on digital policing and environmental

crimes, Akarsu explores how various imaginations of risk and threat securitize and police different realms of social and natural life. Her book manuscript, *Force Experts: Afterlives of Police Reforms in Turkey*, explores the connections between policing, human rights, transnational flows and governance, and lived experiences of security and insecurity. In addition, her research projects have resulted in publications in prestigious academic journals such as *American Ethnologist*, *American Anthropologist*, *Anthropology Today*, and *Society and Space*, among others. Akarsu is a member of the Executive Committee of EASA (European Association of Social Anthropologists) and the Board of APLA (Association of Political and Legal Anthropology).



7. Mentorship initiative and *Call for mentees*

Apply now for EASA's free and fully remote new mentorship program

The European Association for Social Anthropologists (EASA) invites applications for its newly launched mentorship program. This free and fully-remote mentorship program aims to provide academic guidance and support for early-to mid-career scholars depending on their career stage and needs while facilitating long-lasting relationships with mentors and mentees. Applications from underrepresented groups and those with limited institutional support for their professional development are especially encouraged and will be prioritized in the selection process.



The mentorship program is scheduled to take place from September 2024 until May 2025. There will be a total of eight meetings consisting of three one-on-one mentor-mentee sessions for each semester (six in total) and 2 group meetings with all mentors and mentees. These two plenary sessions will be moderated by Dr. Hege Høyer Leivestad and Dr. Hayal Akarsu. Mentees will receive a certificate of completion upon the conclusion of the program.



ELIGIBILITY

- The mentorship program is open to early-to mid-career scholars (late-PhD students, postdocs, contingent faculty, and assistant professors who have received their PhDs no more than 8 years ago).
- Applicants need to be EASA members.
- A total of 10-15 mentees will be selected, and the program necessitates a serious commitment from the mentees to the scheduled mentorship meetings, so please take this into account while applying.
- Please complete this [application form](#) answering all required questions by **August 1, 2024**, midnight (CEST). Incomplete applications will not be considered.

8. Website redesign: *Member survey*

Take a few minutes to fill out an anonymous survey

EASA is currently working on an overhaul for the website. We aim to increase our relevance and to display the field-related info in a more coherent and structured way. We wish to turn the website into a useful tool not only for the public to discover social anthropology in Europe, but also for all our members. We wish for the website to become a useful tool to support your research, keep you up to date with the relevant news, and facilitate connection with colleagues. For this, we need your support in filling out a (short) anonymous survey regarding your experience navigating the current website and your needs for the future EASA pages. Thank you in advance to those who will gift us their insights and ten minutes of their time to help us design a better website for EASA.

To participate in the survey, please go to: [\[Link to the survey\]](#)



9. EASA on LinkedIn

EASA is now active on LinkedIn again!

Thanks to our wonderful communication team, [EASA is now active again on LinkedIn](#). Please connect with us and help us promote our work by sharing this [post](#) and our content.