

Winners of the Ashby Prizes

The editors of *Environment and Planning A* would like to announce that the Ashby Prizes for the most innovative papers published in the journal in the year 2011 have been awarded to Mara Miele for her paper “The taste of happiness: free-range chicken” and to Christian Berndt and Marc Boeckler for their paper “Performative regional (dis)integration: transnational markets, mobile commodities, and bordered North – South differences”.

Mara Miele: I am a reader in the School of City Planning and Geography at Cardiff University that I joined in 2004, after obtaining my PhD at Wageningen University in the Netherlands in 2001 and working at Pisa University, in Italy, till 2004. Since then my research has developed in conversation with human geographers, sociologists and science and technology studies (STS) scholars interested in the emerging field of animal studies. I am delighted to receive the Ashby prize and I am particularly grateful for the animated debate on animal geography hosted in *Environment and Planning A* that inspired me to submit the paper “The taste of happiness: free-range chicken” to this journal.

In recent years my research has focused on public concerns about animal farming and animal welfare, on the emergence of new farm animal technologies, and on the role of animal welfare science in producing insights about the life of farm animals in different systems of production. I have become especially interested in how innovations in animal farming generate new practices that affect human–animal relations in different sites (the lab,



the farm, the slaughterhouse, the home, the supermarket). In the past eight years I have been involved in two large EU-funded research projects, Welfare Quality® (2004–09) and Dialrel (2006–10), that allowed me to pursue these interests. Welfare Quality® was a large Integrated Project that has now concluded, but its activities are being taken forward by a research network of social and animal welfare scientists called the Welfare Quality Network.

The Welfare Quality® project was dedicated to developing a European standard of animal welfare for assessing animal welfare on farms and at slaughterhouses for three species: chickens, pigs, and cows. This project was financed under the European 6th Framework Programme. It started in 2004 and was a partnership of forty institutions in fourteen countries in Europe and, since 2006, four in Latin America (Uruguay, Brazil, Chile, and Mexico). More than 250 researchers, both from social sciences and animal welfare science, participated in the project. The main achievement of this research is the development of a standardised protocol for an overall assessment of animal welfare on farms and at slaughterhouses. The results of this research influenced the current European Animal Welfare Strategy that indicates the Welfare Quality® protocol as the tool for making animal welfare claims on animal foods accountable and comparable (Animal Welfare Strategy 2012–15, page 7).

I started to work on this project with Jonathan Murdoch and Emma Roe in 2004 and we firstly addressed the issue of animal welfare governance in Europe (Miele et al, 2005). In the following years I worked with Adrian Evans and Marc Higgin, who also participated with me in a second EU-funded project, Dialrel, dedicated to establishing a dialogue with the religious minorities in Europe about the welfare of farm animals in practices of religious slaughter. We focused our research on understanding the reasons and effects of the growing public concern about animal welfare in Europe as shown by two large Eurobarometer surveys in 2005 and 2006. We explored issues of information and communication about the life of farm animals and how these would affect consumption practices of animal foods (Evans and Miele, 2012; Miele and Evans, 2010). But during the lifetime of these two EU projects, that for several years overlapped, another line of research brought me to explore animal welfare science's methods and led me to engage more closely with animal welfare practices (Miele et al, 2011). I was fortunate to collaborate with many animal welfare scientists working on the development of measures for animal welfare as well as methods for assessing the quality of life of animals on farms and at slaughterhouses. Among others I worked most closely with Isabelle Veissier and Alain Boissy and I could observe part of their research on animals' emotions in the laboratory of the INRA in Centre de Recherches de Clermont-Ferrand-Theix, in France, and with Andy Butterworth and his team at the Veterinary School of Bristol University, where I could take part in the trial of the on-farm welfare assessment of chickens reared for meat production. This new research took me to unexpected places, filled with tensions and controversies, such as chicken sheds and slaughterplants, that afforded me the opportunity to see animal welfare science 'in action' to give an account of farm animal's quality of life and death, and to propose methods and tools for pacifying these controversies. This led me to engage more closely with STS approaches and sensibilities, especially with the work of Donna Haraway, Vincienne Despret, Bruno Latour, Michel Callon, and John Law who have been a source of inspiration for thinking about the complexities of forms of human–animal relations and how to bring our vital, coconstitutive entanglements with the *nonhuman* into the disciplinary fold. I hope that these ongoing collaborations and conversations will continue and will lead me to explore more sites of encounters between human and nonhuman animals.

Christian Berndt and Marc Boeckler: The Ashby Prize? Awarded to us? Not possible! There are at least a 100 more innovative and better written papers than ours (this is at least what we publicly say). On the other hand—yes, it is well deserved! This was a hard piece of work entailing long discussions and setbacks along the way—and the final result is not so bad after all (this is what we secretly think). The paper is the outcome of a twice-rejected research proposal we submitted to the German Research Foundation (DFG) for the first time in 2006. So there is some feeling of satisfaction (this is what we are trying to hold back). And, ultimately, we are very grateful to be acknowledged by a really great journal (this is nothing but being truthful and honest).

Despite the initial criticisms, we were convinced that the attempt to think global connectivity from its margins, from the border, and to relate this thinking to the question of how economics intervenes in the global b/order could somehow be fruitful. Seven years ago we started to travel along the northern border of the Global South, from Ciudad Juarez to Tijuana, mostly funded by our private money, staying with friends, sharing cheap hotel rooms, cooking our own meals, chasing tomatoes here and there, following some of the traces, linkages, and unevenness they left behind. In the autumn of the following year we followed the Mexican–US border into the fields of California's Central Valley, unsuccessfully trying to identify case studies for our DFG proposal, talking to trade unionists, farmers, and government officials. What would have happened if we stayed in the no-frills roadside motel in Bakersfield rather than residing in downtown Santa Barbara when we sat down to



write up the project? In Santa Barbara we got carried away a bit. No wonder, who thinks about the tactical necessities of proposal writing in the Californian sun? No wonder, too, that referees might have had second thoughts when reading a wordy research proposal setting out to follow the tomato through Alta and Baja California. After receiving the rejection letters, we continued regardless, creatively using every funding opportunity to get fieldwork done. We used the 2009 Las Vegas AAG to do research in San Diego County and a three-week fieldtrip with masters students the following year to check out high-tech tomato and other horticulture production facilities in Baja California. There we toured a latifundia-style tomato production complex, producing mainly for the US market. The migrant workers from Oaxaca were accommodated on-site and forced to buy groceries in overpriced company stores, while the owner-family's outrageous mansions overlooked the site from the neighbouring hills. Staying in an obscenely oversized hotel owned by the same family in which we were the only guests, we thought we might have an interesting topic for yet another research project. After all, isn't it well known in Mexico and Latin America that the horticulture boom is partly fuelled by drug money ...? Having become realistic regarding the funding potential of projects like these, however, we stuck to the b/ordering of the tomato and started to work on the paper for the 2008 Annual Meeting of the AAG in Boston where Jennifer Bair and Marion Werner organized an exciting panel. And there was the small intense workshop at Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, a couple of months later. We thank Philipp Hough for hosting us in Florida, the participants for their valuable feedback on both occasions, and in particular Jennifer and Marion for putting together a wonderful theme issue of *Environment and Planning A* with material emerging from these discussions.

Quite some time ago, when we were working as assistants (Wissenschaftliche Assistenten in the strange German system) in the same department at the same small Bavarian university, once, in the university calendar, our identities were merged and moulded. Bernd, a rather common German first name (omitting the 't' of Christian's last name), and Marc's surname fused into "Bernd Boeckler". Well, we thought, we could just as easily publish together as Berndt Boeckler—at least in German it sounds like the name of a single person.

We both share a formal training in both geography and economics, but other influences were more decisive. Christian went to Cambridge, where he became acquainted with critical geographies and labour geography, and wrote his dissertation on regions in decline, institutions, and labour relations, being influenced by regulation theory and economic sociology.

Marc served his academic apprenticeship in Germany and the Middle East. After studying philology and languages of the Middle East, he became more and more frustrated with practising his own essentializing orientalism, and delved enthusiastically into the poststructuralist cultural turn, rewriting primarily himself and some of his own empirical work.

More recently we developed a joint interest in the peculiarities of current geographies of marketization, and tried to bring some theories from cultural studies and economic geography into dialogue with each other: science and technology studies, actor-network-theory, performativity, and the political economy of uneven geographical development. When it comes to markets, there are plenty of theories of exchange (neoclassical economics), theoretical predictions of crises (political economy), and critiques of market-driven policies (neoliberalism). Nevertheless, there is relatively little work about real and concrete markets—those irritating, anonymizing, atomizing, yet at the same time connecting, enabling (and so on)—members of contemporary society crawling into every corner of the world. Markets are constantly in the making; they are a performative effect of sociotechnological agencements with ‘things’ and ‘science’, that is, ‘market devices’ and ‘economics’, recursively informing and intervening in processes of marketization. Breakdown and failure are as constitutive of these performances as construction and stabilization. We use the term ‘marketization’ to take account of this and to address another more obvious political question: what is it that holds neoliberalism in place even though its core principle of self-regulating markets has itself proven to be a failure?

To this end, ‘geographies of marketization’ deal with the constructions, materialities, socialities, and real effects of radical market orientation in our global modernity. Geographies of marketization refer to the arrangements of heterogeneous elements (conventions, technical devices, calculating systems, scientific knowledge, human beings, and so forth) that organize the circulation of goods together with the property rights attached to them through the contradictory encounter of quantitative and qualitative valuations. Indeed, as a modality of economization, marketization can be read as a radical translation process, one which ensures that economic and social realities are brought into line with the laboratory conditions of economic modeling, allowing the radical project of neoclassical economics to realize itself. With this perspective in mind we are currently continuing empirical research in different fields: ‘poor economics’ and their transformation of the Global South (eg, M4P—markets for the poor), the experimentality of behavioural economics (eg, the production of market subjects), the making of microinsurance markets, the performativity of global value chain concepts, the framing of offshore spaces in modular supply chains (eg, maquiladorization in Mexico), etc.

Despite the initial resistance, the German-speaking community of geographers eventually acquiesced to the supposed strangeness of our approach and granted us professorships at various universities (Christian first in Frankfurt and now in Zurich; Marc in Mainz, Konstanz, and currently in Frankfurt). Now we are on the other side of the feudal university system in Germany and Switzerland, where even today, full professors ‘own’ lecturers, readers, assistant, and associate professors—we literally own them, as written in our contracts. This is clearly not the sort of environment in which creative and innovative scholarship naturally is able to flourish. We see an urgent need for a change, but are realizing everyday that this is easier said than done. What we *can* do is play the role as supporter and mediator in the background. Why are we mentioning this? Because not so long ago, we

were dependent academics ourselves, landless thinkers on fixed-term contracts working for a professor who owned us, at least on paper. In practice, we were working for a very gentle, always supportive ‘jefe’ who gave us all the freedom to experiment with new ideas and awkward projects. We never had the chance to thank Hans Hopfinger for this opportunity. About fifteen years have passed since he has asked us independently whether we would be ready to split 1.5 posts. So for quite a few years we both were 0.75 academics in the strange German fractional appointment system. That’s how we got to know each other in a tiny Bavarian town in the remote hinterlands of Munich with the lowest unemployment rate in Germany, where people either work for the Catholic church or the automobile industry (one day, we will surely prove that there is a spatiocausal relationship between the two!)

Well, we had best stop here before the EPA editors get second thoughts. Thank you again for awarding us with this prize. Thanks also for continuing to support work that is a bit unusual. In a world dominated by a small number of market-driven publishing hegemonies, it is a great relief to have the *Environment and Planning* journals and a committed publisher such as Pion.

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