



Economy
and Society

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THE FIRST ISSUE OF 2025

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President's Letter

Over the past half year, the RC02 V Forum Program Committee has been busy building the largest RC02 program in our history. We are looking forward to welcoming all participants in the next week in Rabat!

We invite all participants to an RC02 **Dinner Wednesday 19:30 Dar Naj** in Rabat City (see Invitation this issue and be sure to get a free ticket through the Eventbrite link).

Please attend the **RC02 Business Meeting Thursday 19:00-20:30 SJES030** Faculty of Legal, Economic and Social Sciences to discuss the future of the RC and planning for the World Congress in Gwanju South Korea 2027. We depend on the active participation of our members!

ISA members continue to mourn the untimely death of RC02 member, past ISA president, and founder of Global Dialogues, **Michael Burawoy** on February 3, 2025. Many tributes have reflected on Michael's work and his public intellectual activities as one of the foremost social theorists of our time. Michael's tragic passing was a heavy blow, but RC02, along with RC44, where he also made significant contributions, is now looking ahead. We are committed to deepening our engagement with public sociology and offering a tribute that reflects what Michael would have done in response to tragedy and adversity. Please join us for the **Research Committees Tribute to Michael Burawoy Wednesday 17:00 – 18:45, SJES001 Faculty of Legal, Economic & Social Sciences**.

The full **RC02 Forum Program** for the V Forum of the International Sociological Association is available here:

<https://isaconf.confex.com/isaconf/forum2025/meetingapp.cgi/Symposium/839>

As a sign of our dedication to advancing early career researchers, the program begins on Monday morning with two sessions dedicated to PhD and post-doc presentations organized by Sandhya AS (see article this issue). Thanks to members Gracia Liu-Farrer, Sanjeev Routray, Aaron Pitluck and June Wang.

The RC02 program includes several thematic foci, worthy of mention. Four RC02 panels on **environment, economy and society** scheduled on Tuesday and Wednesday take up pioneering aspects of the conference theme *Knowing Justice in the Anthropocene* from an economy and society perspective:

- *Disaster Socialism* (Monday 15:00-16:45)
- *Building the Environmental State: Markets Movements Bureaucracies* (Tuesday 11:00 -12:45)
- *Chinese Investments in Africa and Other World Regions and the Just Transition Path* (Tuesday 13:00 – 14:45)
- *Ocean and Society: Organisational and Technological Developments* (Wednesday Part I 11:00 – 12:45 and Part II 13:00 – 14:45).

A focus the **economy and social regulation of migration and global mobilities**, spanning four panels, with an author-meets-critics panel covering violence in the global economy in an author-meets-critics session on trafficking in human beings.

- *Inequalities and Access of Cross Border Labor Markets* (Tuesday 9:00 – 10:45)
- *Subjection and Struggle of Non-Movers, Migrants, and Refugees: A Dual Marginal Space and the Nation State* (Tuesday 19:00-20:30)
- *Cross-Border Labor Markets: Actors, Infrastructures and Institutions* (Thursday 9:00 – 10:45)
- *India's Migration Development Regime: A New Analytical Framework for Labor Migration* (Thursday 11:00 – 12:45)
- *Economic Sociology of Transnational Labor: Skills, Sectors and Finance* (Thursday 13:00 – 14:45)
- *The Economic Sociology of Migration* (Thursday 15:00 – 16:45)

Authors-Meets-Critics: Trafficking Chains – Modern Slavery in Society by Sylvia Walby and Karen Shire

As in the past, the RC02 program advances leading research on the **reproduction and care economies** internationally, this year drawing on original research about gray markets, regional care labor markets in the global north and south, and in a new book featured in Author-Meets-Critics, on **theorizing solidarity** in securing livelihoods and social care.

- *Varieties of Care across the Global North and South Part I* (Wednesday 9:00 – 10:45)
- *Varieties of Care across the Global North and South Part II* (Wednesday 11:00 – 12: 45)

Authors-Meets-Critics: Against Abandonment: Repertoires of Solidarity in South Korean Protest by Jennifer Jihye Chun and Ju Hui Judy Han, with comments by Bridget Kenny, Eleana Kim, Rina Argawala, Marcel Paret, Yewon Andrea Lee.

The **sociology of finance** remains a focus with two panel scheduled for Friday morning.

- *Contested Financial Imaginaries: Islamic, Hindu Cybernetic, Cooperative and Sustainable* (Friday 9:00 – 10:45)
- *Financial Relationships: Violent, Marital, Intergenerational, Gendered and Emotionally-Laden* (Friday 11:00 – 12:45)

The RC02 program committee has included a series of panels on topics on theoretical traditions and empirical evidence of major **socio-economic transformations** bringing leading scholars into dialogue with early career researchers in economy and society research.

- *The Continued Relevance of Marxism Today* (Monday 13:00 – 14:45)
- *Navigating Authoritarian Capitalisms: Insights from variegated perspectives on labor, gender and social economies* (Tuesday 15:00 – 16:45)
- *World Economic Change and Waves of Social Protest: Findings from the Global South Protest Data Base* (Wednesday 13:00 – 14:45)

- *Revisting Revolutions: Debates and Trajectories* (Wednesday 15:00 – 16:45)
- *The Political Economy of Violence* (Thursday 13:00 – 14:45)

RC02 members from Morocco have organized a panel dedicated to *Personal Branding for Professors and Researchers* (Thursday 9:00 – 10:45)

At the crossroads of economy, sociology and addressing social inequalities in the economy is the study of entrepreneurship, featured in RC02 session *Entrepreneurship and Enterprises from the Lens of Justice* (Monday 9:00 – 10:00)

RC02 joins seven other RCs in joint sessions on Violence (WG11), Organizations and a second series of panels on Ocean & Society (RC17), Equitable Development (TG03), Democratic Innovations (RC18) Futures of Globalization and a second on Just Development Transitions (RC09).

RC02 together with RC41 has organized an **integrated session** dedicated to ***Scientific Knowledge and Social Practice – High Expectations, Tensions and Compromises***, (Monday 17:00 – 18:45) and joins Part I of the RC41 session on *Research to Practice? Concepts of ‘Knowledge Transfer’ and Their Elective Affinities* (Tuesday 8. July). Plans are already underway for a special issue of *Current Sociology*.

A **tip** for those attending an ISA conference for the first time: the conference program includes a **tool for constructing a personal conference calendar**. Be sure to include the RC02 Business Meeting scheduled for Thursday, July 10, 17:00 (for the agenda, see the notice in this issue).

My heartfelt thanks to Program Committee Members for their persistent efforts to make a conference program inclusive of diverse members from all world regions and addressing cutting-edge research on economy and society.

In this first issue of the RC02 Newsletter 2025 we continue the presentation of new members’ profiles. The RC02 membership has grown to well over 200 since 2023, and we are especially pleased to welcome many new early career researchers as members and scholars from the global south. Their participation in the network is reflected in the diversity of regions covered in the RC02 Forum program.

In this issue we present the participants of the early career researchers panels at the Forum (see the accompanying article by organizer Sandhya AS). Aaron Pitluck presents a special issue of *Current Sociology* on the RC02 project to broker new concepts in economic sociology, out of sessions in the last world congress, and covering a number of ethnographies of economy and society throughout the world.

Ece Kocabiçak in *From Farm to Factory: Not for Women in the Global South* challenges recent Nobel Prize in Economics winner Claudia Golden’s assumption that economic development will improve the livelihoods of women in middle- and lower-income countries. Ece Kocabiçak, drawing on a recent article with Yasemin Dildar demonstrates that patriarchal relations in production also have a determining effect on the share and quality of women’s labor force participation.

The publication of this newsletter and the V ISA Forum in July 2025 take place in a period of extreme violence and dislocation in Central Asia and the MENA region, regions of the world where geopolitics, legacies of colonial development, and incomplete revolutions continue to threaten not only livelihoods, but lives. Whether the aggressions in Iran, Gaza and the Ukraine constitute one war, or three is a debate. What appears certain is the relation of rising authoritarianism to violence, human rights, and environmental destruction. The V ISA Forum is our chance to build solidarity, search for solutions, and defy repression through theory driven research that matters, and collegial discussion that carve out pathways for a peaceful and sustainable future.

Karen Shire

President, RC02 Economy and Society

June 30, 2025



The Brokering Novel Concepts into Economic Sociology Project

Aaron Z. Pitluck

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Over the past two years, two International Sociological Association Research Committees, Economy and Society (RC02) and Conceptual and Terminological Analysis (RC35) have collaborated on a common research project. We have explored well-established concepts from other fields or sub-fields that are currently missing, underappreciated, or misconceptualized in economic sociology. You may have even attended one of our three joint sessions on this topic at the XX ISA World Congress of Sociology in Melbourne in 2023. I am pleased to share with our community that this research has been published as [Current Sociology monograph, Volume 72 Issue 2](#). The journal is freely available to ISA members and three of the articles are currently available worldwide as Open Access. If you are unable to access one of these articles, you are most welcome to contact Aaron Pitluck or the article's author.

[Aaron Pitluck's](#) initial impetus for the project was to experimentally explore how international scholars might apply [the heuristic tool](#) of brokering in a novel concept to generate new insights for analysing economic life. This has produced five articles and five concepts, each illustrated with original empirical research.

Dialogues with anthropology

[Dana Kornberg](#) brokers in 'transactional pathways' from economic anthropology to demonstrate that the genealogy of specific markets is inextricably intertwined with the genealogy of groups creating and reshaping social identities like class, race, gender, and caste. Her article deploys the concept in Delhi to explain the curious failure of a well-funded, formalized public-private partnership program controlled by upper-caste groups to displace lower-caste and Muslim informal waste collection and recycling workers. Another value of her research is to position Jane Guyer's concept within cultural and relational approaches to economic sociology.

Similarly inspired by anthropology, [Sally Schnapper](#) was compelled to broker in concepts from family and kinship anthropology to better understand her fieldwork of shopkeepers in rural France. From her ethnographic and historical reflections, she induced the concept of the 'trading house' to better understand family businesses. Both Kornberg's and Schnapper's contributions are noteworthy for engaging with anthropological theory to transcend ossified binary categories in sociological theorizing such as the distinction between formal and informal markets, and between households and businesses.

Dialogues with interdisciplinary fields

Several of the articles broker in concepts from interdisciplinary fields that economic sociology has neglected. For example, a 'fiduciary relationship' is a well-established concept in law, theology, and ethics, and is already well institutionalized in diverse academic fields, including economics—but rarely in economic sociology. [Jordi Mundó's](#) research seeks to correct this omission by demonstrating the utility of the concept in key sites of economic sociological inquiry, including analyses of property, public goods, and to help frame normative debates in environmental sustainability.

Two theories broadly used in economic sociology (and the discipline broadly) is Jens Becket's concept of 'fictional expectations' in the economy, as well as Ann Swidler's concept of a toolkit or repertoires approach in cultural sociology. In a provocative argument, [Dustin Stoltz](#) critiques the presuppositions of both theories by drawing on research in the cognitive sciences and then advances an 'embodied' approach to cognition. He deploys this concept to collect data about elite professional advisory firms to explore how they conduct (and sell) their imaginative labour. The article is filled with insights, regardless of whether your interest is in cognitive embeddedness, culture in the economy, the temporality and embodiedness of agency, or the power of transnational consulting firms to format economic life.

In *The semiosis and the market*, Jean De Munck and Tom Duterme remind us that economic sociologists extensively study the role of signs when studying consumption (e.g., the advertising industry's manipulation of signs), and many sociologists draw on the interdisciplinary Socio-economics of Convention literature to study how one type of sign—the convention—enables coordination in markets and production. But why focus only on conventions or the role of signs in consumption? De Munck and Duterme advocate for exploring the full spectrum of signs and their contextualized evolution (semiosis) by drawing on the work of Charles Sanders Peirce. To demonstrate the utility of Peircian sociology for economic sociologist, they draw on original research on stock market indices to explore their semiotic power in financial markets.

Openings and Closings

The heuristic metaphor of 'brokering in' an idea from one field to another requires that we attend to—and potentially question—the existing borders between disciplines and sub-disciplines that we have absorbed from our national sociologies and our diverse graduate trainings. In the monograph's opening article, [Aaron Pitluck](#) traces the (increasingly poorly named) New Economic Sociology (NES) that arose in the mid-1980s by scholars primarily based in the United States and subsequently exported world-wide within the historical context of the rise of neoliberal capitalism and the demise of the USSR. On one hand, the NES was an improbably successful brokering between several isolated research communities that was united by a persuasive 'fall and rise' narrative that sociological research on the economy had declined since the era of classical sociology and that a sub-discipline of Economic Sociology was necessary to challenge the hegemony of economists. On the other hand, this nascent rhetorical framing excluded as irrelevant sociological work on the economy conducted from the 1920s to 1970s, including dependency theory in Latin America, neo-Marxism, and international political economy. The NES conception of economic sociology is therefore simultaneously the product of successful brokering as well as of durable resistance to brokering from nearby fields.

In the monograph's closing article, [Alexander Ebner](#) excavates one such significant historical exclusion—the work of Joseph Schumpeter, particularly his insights on technological and organizational innovation as the driving force of capitalist evolution. Ebner carefully disaggregates key ideas in the New Economic Sociology to demonstrate a shared undertheorization of novelty and disruption in contemporary capitalism. Ebner's article provides numerous promising ideas with which economic sociologists could broker in ideas from contemporary evolutionary economists to better theorize the internal dynamics of capitalism.

We invite you to [join us in our reflections](#) on economic sociologists' conceptual toolkit.

From Farm to Factory? Not for Women in the Global South

Ece Kocabiçak

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Today, the developing world is marked by two contrasting scenarios: some countries exhibit significant gender gaps in labour force participation, while others do not. Closing the gender gaps in labour force participation has the potential to bring substantial economic benefits, empower women and girls and strengthen democracy (Karshenas and Moghadam 2021; Halim, O'Sullivan, and Sahay 2023). Therefore, particular attention should be given to the first group of countries, where there is a puzzling lack of women entering non-agricultural paid employment.

Existing scholarship often assumes that economic development alone determines women's employment patterns. For example, the Nobel Prize-winning economist, Claudia Goldin (2021, 2014) proposes that development initiates a shift from family farm and unpaid work towards factories and paid work. However, this framework fails to explain why, despite economic development, regions such as South Asia and the Middle East & North Africa exhibit persistent gender gaps in the transition of labour from agriculture to non-agricultural sectors, effecting roughly 1 billion women's lives.

Much of the research shares Goldin's assumption that economic development is the main factor influencing the demand for and supply of women's labour. *Demand-side studies* focus on dynamics such as export-led growth and the sectoral composition of growth and assume that capitalist production determines women's non-agricultural employment (e.g., Bhalotra and Fernández 2023; Tunali, Kirdar, and Dayioglu 2021). However, they overlook that demand alone is insufficient when women's labour is tied up with unpaid farm work. *Supply-side research* links gender gaps in labour force participation to lack of accessible childcare, but assumes that women's unpaid labour is limited only to the domestic sphere, where production is not market-driven (e.g., Olivetti and Petrongolo 2017; Oyvat and Onaran 2022). This neglects rural contexts, where women's unpaid agricultural work – often tied to market-oriented production – takes precedence over care work.

My research offers new insights into the persistent gender gaps in labour force participation despite economic growth, showing how patriarchal land and labour systems in agriculture constrain women's access to non-agricultural paid employment. Drawing on cases from India, Pakistan, Turkey, Bangladesh, Morocco, and Egypt, I initially identified a strong correlation between gender-discriminatory land inheritance and several macro-economic outcomes: gender gaps in education and non-agricultural work; a reverse gender gap in unpaid farm labour; urban labour shortages; higher manufacturing wages; longer working hours; greater investment in manufacturing technology; entrenched patriarchal norms; and weaker democratic institutions (Kocabiçak 2023a, c, 2020).

To move beyond correlation, Dildar and I have recently investigated causality using cross-country panel data and a difference-in-differences case study from India (Kocabiçak and Dildar 2025). This analysis shows that legal discrimination against women in the inheritance of agricultural land curtails their participation in non-agricultural paid employment through several mechanisms: (1) confining women to unpaid work in agriculture, (2) restricting their access to

education, and (3) preventing women from migrating to urban areas for education and employment. The cross-country panel data analysis further reveals that gender-based discriminatory land inheritance laws are associated with women's disproportionate involvement in unpaid farm work, limited mobility, and restricted access to non-agricultural paid employment. Moreover, eliminating such legal discrimination alters women's migration patterns by shifting them from marriage migration towards migration for education and employment, thereby increasing their participation in non-agricultural paid work.

My research, therefore, challenges the assumption that capitalist development exclusively leads to either pulling women into non-agricultural employment or confining their labour to the production of domestic goods and services. It rejects the notion that capitalist development is the sole determinant of patterns in women's paid and unpaid work. Instead, I show the important role of the patriarchal relations of production in determining where women's labour will be allocated: paid or unpaid work, domestic or market-oriented production.

This has significant implications for current policy interventions promoted by the UN and the World Bank, which tend to focus either on empowering rural women and girls as farmers or on reducing childcare costs in urban areas. The former is rooted in the flawed assumption that all rural women wish to remain on family farms, effectively denying them the right to pursue opportunities beyond the village. The latter overlooks the gendered patterns of rural-to-urban labour migration, resulting in increasing labour force participation among highly educated urban women but having limited impact on their less-educated counterparts (Kocabiçak 2023b). In light of the evidence I have analysed, I examine the potential of a transformative exit package that combines occupational training, guaranteed employment, and secure housing to support women and girls seeking to leave agriculture and pursue alternative livelihoods..

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Session Summary - Special Panel for Early Career Researchers

Sandhya A.S.

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The "Special Panel for Early Career Researchers" session, scheduled for 09:00-12:45 on Monday, 7 July, will feature presentations by 10 young sociologists, organized into different thematic clusters. This session is part of a broader initiative of the ISA RC02 to elevate the voices of early career researchers. Continuing a tradition established by Michelle Hsieh, Associate Research Fellow at the Institute of Sociology, Academia Sinica, Taipei, at the [Early Career Sociologists Workshop – a pre-conference event organized before the XXth ISA World Congress of Sociology in Melbourne, Australia](#), this special panel aims to provide young scholars with a platform to share their innovative research on various aspects of the economy, including labor, valuation, digitization, inequality, and markets. By fostering a supportive and enduring network, the panels introduce these emerging scholars to the work of the ISA and ISA RC02.

The panel is clustered into four themes. Theme 1, "Labour Valuation and Skill," includes a discussion by Ezgi Elmas from the University of Duisburg-Essen on the segmented healthcare sector for migrant physicians in Germany, specifically Turkish physicians, and Kadir Engil, also from Duisburg-Essen, who will explore the connection between transnational higher education and cross-border labor markets. Under theme 2, "Markets and Knowledge," Frederike Brandt from the Technical University Berlin will address the conflicts of materiality in lithium extraction in Argentina, while Elisabeth Schmidt from Bielefeld University will examine the role of global knowledge flows and labor mobility in the creative careers of the contemporary circus industry. In theme 3, "Labour Market Inequalities," Helena Geisler from the Swiss Federal University for Vocational Education and Training will present on employers' selection criteria during the hiring process, Duaa Kattana from Duisburg-Essen will present on the health outcomes of displaced children in Nigeria, and Aamir Ali from the University of Bielefeld will focus on the resilience strategies of Indian migrant workers in Gulf labor markets. Theme 4, "Digital Economies," will feature Ardita Osmani from Duisburg-Essen, who will discuss Chinese migrants in Italy navigating mobility and inequality, Annette Gailliot from the University of California, Berkeley, presenting an innovative methodology for reaching informal home care workers, and Michał Szewczyk from the University of Warsaw discussing the implications of a Polish-developed "Smile Counter" on emotional labor.

The panel will be further enriched by the participation of distinguished discussants: Gracia Liu-Farrer (Waseda University), Aaron Pitluck (Illinois State University), Sanjeev Routray (Universiti Brunei Darussalam), and June Wang (The City University of Hong Kong). Drawing on the papers submitted by the presenters, these scholars have generously agreed to provide detailed and constructive feedback. Their involvement will foster an intergenerational dialogue, offering early career researchers valuable scholarly engagement, mentorship opportunities, and the potential for future research collaborations across institutional and geographic boundaries.

Invitation to the RC02 Business Meeting

Thursday 19:00-20:30

SJES030 Faculty of Legal, Economic and Social Sciences

With refreshments!!!



Tentative Agenda:

- Introductions and New Members
- Reports 2023-2025
President, Membership, Newsletter, Social Media, Finances
- RC02 Publication Achievements and Future Strategies
ISA Journals, Global Dialogues, Visibility, etc.
- Proposal for an RC02 Best Paper Award for Early Career Researchers
- World Congress Gwanju South Korea 2027
- Open Discussion – RC02 Past, Present & Future
- Miscellaneous.

**All members and friends of RC02 are cordially invited to join the RC02
Dinner at the V Forum of the International Sociological Association, Rabat
Morocco**

Wednesday, July 9, 2025, 19:30

Restaurant Dar Naji

Rue Jazirat Al Arab, Bab Al Had, Rabat 11000 Maroc, Rabat

Please get your ticket for dinner at:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/rc02-dinner-tickets-1426321920259?aff=oddtcreator>

A special thanks to Sanaa Bouarourou for assistance in organizing this event!

Karen Shire

President, RC 02



The profiles of some of our new members



My name is **Yasmine Hafez**; I am a PhD candidate at SOAS University of London. My research focuses on lake-dependent communities—especially fisherfolk—around Lake Victoria (Uganda and Kenya) and Egypt’s Delta lakes. Drawing on extensive fieldwork and archival research, I examine the lakes’ colonial histories, neoliberal fisheries interventions, and contemporary climate politics. I also hold doctoral fellowships at the Centre d’Études et de Documentation Économiques, Juridiques et Sociales (CEDEJ) in Cairo and the Water Diplomacy Center (WDC) in

Jordan. Beyond my doctoral work, I am co-editing two volumes: one on South–South fieldwork experiences and another on water and food dynamics in Egypt



Nicos Souliotis is Senior Researcher at the National Center for Social Research (EKKE), Greece. He holds a PhD in Sociology from the EHESS, Paris (1998-2005). His research activity and publications concern issues of economic sociology, urban sociology and sociology of culture (see https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Nicos-Souliotis?ev=hdr_xprf, <https://www.linkedin.com/in/nicolas-souliotis-a1355a43/>). Email: nsouliotis@ekke.gr.



Polat S. Alpman is a professor of sociology at Yalova University. He works on production sociology, political economy, migration, and class, with research interests in labor regimes, marginalization, urban justice, public sociology, critical social policy, and regimes of race, ethnicity, and belonging. email: polatalpman@gmail.com Linkedin: www.linkedin.com/in/polat-alpman-a496082a



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Ilyes Boumahdi, PhD in quantitative economics, has been head of service at DEPF/MEF since 2002, and an adjunct professor at INSEA since 2007 and UM6P/FGSES since 2024. He has several research published in Scopus indexed journals relating to regional disparities, smart specialization, spatial evaluation of well-being and unconventional big data.

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Gábor Scheiring is an Assistant Professor at Georgetown University Qatar. He researches how economic shocks lead to precarity, mental and physical suffering, and how this affects democratic stability. As a member of the Hungarian Parliament (2010–2014), he advocated for a socially just transition to sustainability. Website: <https://www.gaborscheiring.com/> LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/gscheiring/>



Dr. Shilajit Sengupta, Assistant Professor at Alliance University, researches political economy, precarity, migration, and gender in the global south. With a PhD in Political Science, he bridges academia and grassroots development through praxis-driven inquiry and teaching. <https://www.linkedin.com/in/shilajit-sengupta-5212a0a1/>



Emrah Yıldız is an assistant professor at Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University in the department of Sociology. Emrah's ongoing research project focuses on understanding how modern Turkey delineated her economic interests throughout the period of 1929 to 1947.



Brian Schmitt, Associate professor (MCF) Faculté des Etudes Internationales et Interculturelles (FE2i) CY CERGY PARIS UNIVERSITÉ Lead professor for the EUTOPIA University CLC on Social Power & Social Change AGORA Research Center Areas: US political economy

Maurilio Pirone is Junior Researcher at the Department of Art of University of Bologna. He works for the Horizon Europe Project INCA and is member of Into the Black Box collective and COST Action P-WILL. His interests entail platform labour, globalization, digital technologies, logistics.

Olav Velthuis (o.j.m.velthuis@uva.nl) is Professor at the Department of Sociology of the University of Amsterdam, specializing in economic sociology and cultural sociology. He currently serves as Head of the department. His research interests include the art markets, gift exchange, valuation and pricing, and markets for adult content.

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