New Scholarship in Community Economies LIVIANA 2025

In this series of sessions, alumni from the CEI Summer/Winter School who have completed their PhD theses will make short presentations about their theses. This will be followed by responses from selected Series Editors of the Diverse Economies and Livable Worlds book series (J.K. Gibson-Graham, Stephen Healy, Maliha Safri, Kevin St. Martin).

Session 3:3: **New Scholarship in Community Economies I (see below for Abstracts)**

Weds 5 Nov: New York 6 to 8pm
Thursday 6 Nov: Amsterdam midnight to 2am; Bangkok 6 to 8am; Warrane-Sydney 10am to midday; Aotearoa midday to 2pm

Jack Barrett, "Diverse Economies and Economic Possibilities for Kāinga Housing in Aotearoa New Zealand" (2025)

Arianna Lindberg, "Labor in the Landscape of the Local: Mapping Migrant Farm Labor, Care, and Diverse Economies in Community Supported Agriculture" (2025)

Denise Gibran Nogueira, "Social Finance Ecologies: Interrogating Transformative Implications in Alternative Food Networks" (2025)

Responses from Maliha Safri and Kevin St. Martin. **Chair**, Jenny Cameron.

Session 6:2: **New Scholarship in Community Economies II (see below for Abstracts)**

Monday 10 Nov: New York 2 to 4am; Amsterdam 8 to 10am; Bangkok 2 to 4pm; Warrane-Sydney 6 to 8pm; Aotearoa 8 to 10pm

Sangwon Chae, "'We just want to live well together': the makings of alternative urbanism in a developmentalist city Seoul, South Korea" (2025)

Gilles Evrard Essuman, "Community Initiatives and Social Innovation as Pathways to Socio-Territorial Transformation and Degrowth" (2024)

Ella Hubbard, "Bioregioning: Composing a politics of place for living well together" (2024)

Responses from Katherine Gibson and Stephen Healy. **Chair**, Jenny Cameron.

Session 6:3: **New Scholarship in Community Economies III (see below for Abstracts)**

Monday 10 Nov: New York 9 to 11am; Amsterdam 3 to 5pm; Bangkok 9 to 11pm
Tuesday 11 Nov: Warrane-Sydney 1 to 3am; Aotearoa 3 to 5am

Noortje Marie Keurhorst, "Destruction as care: a vanguard vision of more-than-human flourishing in the Galician monte" (2025)

Markus Sattler, "Surviving Well Together in the Web of Life: An Examination of Enterprises in Ordinary Peripheries of Armenia and Georgia" (2025)

Colm Stockdale, "Transformative social innovation and rural collaborative workspaces: assembling community economies in Austria and Greece" (2025)

Responses from Maliha Safri and Kevin St. Martin. **Chair**, Christina Jerne.

Session 3:3: New Scholarship in Community Economies I

Jack Barrett, "Diverse Economies and Economic Possibilities for Kāinga Housing in Aotearoa New Zealand" (2025, Waipapa Taumata Rau | University of Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand)

This thesis explores the diverse ways that Māori create economies and economic possibilities for housing provision in kāinga (ancestral Māori settlements). It explores this process through an in-depth, ethnographic case study with Hikurangi Enterprises, a community-owned social enterprise in Te Tairāwhiti of Aotearoa, and their wider network. Drawing on housing political economy (Aalbers and Christophers, 2014), diverse economies (Gibson-Graham, 2006, 2008, Gibson-Graham and Dombroski, 2020) and Indigenous selfdetermination literatures (Corntassel, 2008, 2012; Coulthard, 2014; Simpson, 2014) it argues that within kāinga of Aotearoa New Zealand, Māori are mobilising to create new, diverse economies that challenge established modes of housing provision and the inequalities they produce. These kāinga housing economies are built from the ground up and involve Māori as central agents, who bring together diverse actors to enact place-based Indigenous aspirations. To materialise, these aspirations are mediated through market norms, state-power and capital, which shape the extent they can be achieved and their trajectories. Nonetheless, it argues that Māori exercise creative agency to achieve housing and other community aspirations within their wider political, economic and institutional contexts. These arguments are drawn through an elaboration of the diverse economies and ethical motivations that support, and are supported by, Hikurangi Enterprises' unique approach to housing provision. It also focuses on Hikurangi Enterprises' engagement with finance, exploring their efforts to address the structural barrier of accessing finance for housing on whenua Māori (Māori land), by developing a novel rent to buy programme in collaboration with philanthropic and state actors. This exemplifies Hikurangi Enterprises' central role in creating community economy assemblages (Turker and Murphy, 2021) and economic openings for housing and beyond, a process further explored through their engagements with forestry economies and efforts to scale community-led kāinga housing provision. Overall, Hikurangi Enterprises' development of housing opportunities and diverse economies that strengthen kāinga suggest that empowering housing economies can emerge within contemporary capitalist political economies and are not contingent on systemic change as housing scholars often argue (Aalbers and Christophers, 2014; Clapham, 2018; Jacobs, 2019; Madden and Marcuse, 2016; Pawson, 2020). Despite this narrative of an empowering, ground-up housing political economy, this thesis argues for a balance between attentiveness to the potentialities of ground-up initiatives such as Hikurangi Enterprises, and the larger political processes they contend with. It holds that such a balance is crucial to uncovering and supporting similar ground-up initiatives and the futures they possess.

Key words: Diverse Economies; Housing; Political Economy; Indigenous Self-determination, Kāinga.

Arianna Lindberg, "Labor in the Landscape of the Local: Mapping Migrant Farm Labor, Care, and Diverse Economies in Community Supported Agriculture" (2025, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, US)

Within the narrative of the local, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) differentiates itself from the harms of industrial agriculture as an economy of direct mutual support between farmer and consumer, and a space and practice of ethical commitments to both people and place. What is nearly always omitted from this narrative are the migrant farmworkers whose labor is essential to the alternative agriculture espoused by CSA. This study undertakes an autoethnographic research approach on two New Jersey farms in order to make visible the experience of migrant farmworkers and the diversity of economy they make possible. The work foregrounds a feminist ontology in service of reading the economy of CSA for difference and care, and it draws on the use of narrative mapping to articulate the economy of CSA by centering the experience of those engaged in migrant farm labor. As a qualitative nontextual analytic technique, the map is used to visually record the overdetermination and mutual constituency of migrant labor on CSA and the relationality of often disparate and non-linear things. It is used to present research findings through three distinct layers: *El ajo* (garlic); The Body, dis/located; and The Body, rooted. In the first layer, garlic is both a literal and metaphorical means of communicating a post-capitalist strategy that is emerging and evolving in the economic difference of CSA. Embedded in this representation are the promises and iii outcomes of community, livelihood, growth, and care that are fostered in the commons of CSA and upon which we can build, but only with awareness of the class processes always already enacted in relations of field production, marketing, and distribution. The disarticulation of the body and arcing genealogy of migrant and immigrant farmworkers in the second layer, paired with the promise of *labor vincit omnia*, names and makes visible divergence from a reading of migrant labor as all and only extraction while also uprooting the local narrative of CSA from its foundation in an agrarian imaginary. In so doing, the map identifies and establishes coordinates that expand rather than limit the livelihood possibilities bound to these two farms. The roots of the third map layer trace the diverse and community economies made possible by the migrant workers on the two farms and reveal a multiplicity of practices that include the building of trust and care foundational to imagining other possible economic futures.

Denise Gibran Nogueira, "Social Finance Ecologies: Interrogating Transformative Implications in Alternative Food Networks" (2025, Queensland University of Technology, Australia)

Social finance encompasses alternative financial practices that provide financial capital and services to initiatives with strong social utility or for populations experiencing exclusion and disadvantage. This form of finance has gained prominence in recent decades as a response to escalating social inequalities, environmental degradation, and economic crises. Historically, as part of socio-solidarity economies, social finance practices have adopted a community-driven approach, meaning they have been controlled by communities and serve communities in promoting transformative goals. More recently, social finance's boundaries have stretched towards markets, especially financial markets, as a way to mobilise larger sums of financial capital to address

societal issues. In this new context, social finance follows an investment-driven approach where the mobilisation and allocation of funds reflect neoliberal politics. Thus, social finance is considered a hybrid phenomenon that is "both more-or-less market and more-or-less social" (Langley, 2018, p. 14). Importantly, these new and emerging social finance arrangements have implications for the end goals of social transformation, which remain largely under-researched.

To understand the implications of social finance in relation to transformative social change, this research explores the social finance arrangements of alternative food networks. As manifestations of socio-solidarity economies, alternative food networks are mobilised to create local, fair, and sustainable food economies, changing how food is produced, distributed, and consumed. Examples of alternative food networks may include community-supported agriculture programs, community farms, and food hubs. In Australia, alternative food networks in different stages of development have been engaging with social finance to address specific needs or as a strategy to achieve their sought outcomes. These experiences have been broadly noted in the literature but not explored in depth, offering a highly informative and socially relevant setting for this PhD study.

This research is informed by the financial ecologies theoretical framework. Deriving from the field of economic geography, this approach seeks to understand how distinctive ecologies of the broader financial ecosystem unfold in different spaces and times. By analysing the interrelation between actors and social, economic, and natural environments that constitute these ecologies, this theoretical approach offers the possibility to examine the power dynamics that can influence social change via alternative forms of capital. In the current study, social finance is explored as a relational, diverse, and situated phenomenon, thus avoiding the dualistic views often observed in the literature and enabling the development of a critical pluralistic perspective.

Adopting a qualitative research design, this research was based on a case study, where various alternative food networks' social finance ecologies were explored, and elements of these ecologies were compared to seek in-depth understandings and draw theoretical insights. Data collection entailed interviews with 33 participants involved in social finance ecologies of alternative food networks, encompassing food collectives, lenders, investors, donors, peak bodies, financial advisors, and policy advisors.

The findings show how alternative food networks relate differently to the social finance ecosystem and the diverse social finance ecologies explored in this thesis. On one side, some alternative food networks refrain from engaging with the social finance ecosystem, often associated with mainstreamed impact investment practices and irregular grant schemes, as this ecosystem does not meet the needs nor match the interests of alternative food networks. On the other side, some alternative food networks have been engaging with social finance ecologies that are collectively constructed by/with actors displaying similar principles and commitment to changing food systems. However, the findings evidence that these ecologies are inherently connected to the social finance ecosystem, exposing alternative food spaces to power dynamics associated with financial marketisation. Moreover, the findings demonstrate that these ecologies remain

isolated from each other and fragile, thus exposed to disturbances that can lead to extinction or co-optation of alternative food spaces. Drawing upon these findings, the thesis proposes the concept of financial ecotones as a metaphor to explore converging zones between different financial spaces, expanding the financial ecologies framework. The thesis offers fresh insights into new and emerging social finance practices, providing practical contributions that potentially translate to strategies that support alternative food networks' needs and transformative goals, and inform the development of public policy.

Session 6:2: New Scholarship in Community Economies II

Sangwon Chae, "'We just want to live well together': the makings of alternative urbanism in a developmentalist city Seoul, South Korea" (2025, University of Oxford UK)

This thesis explores the makings of alternative urbanism in a developmentalist city Seoul, South Korea. Sitting at the intersection of East Asian urban developmentalism and post-politics, it argues for taking seriously generative ontologies of the urban as a site of ethical interdependencies. In so doing, this thesis puts forward a modest theorisation of alternative urbanism as the ethical coming together of strangers that leads to alternative modes of collective city life, suggesting more generative ways of thinking about the urban political in the wake of depoliticising urban politics. Urban East Asia serves as a generative springboard in this respect, both conceptually and empirically, considering its rather circumscribed state-society relations where urban developmentalism across the region not only reinforces the rise of post-politics but also shapes different modes of urban resistance in and through the everyday.

Central here is to grapple with the grounded notion of living well together which recognises mutual interdependencies as an underlying condition of urban living–a grassroots account that becomes prominent in my ethnographic fieldwork in a local community called *Seongmi-san Maeul* in Seoul. Adopting social infrastructure, care-full city, and community economies as useful conceptual optics to explore particular facets of alternative urbanism in the making, this thesis critically examines situated ways in which people encounter, get connected to one another, and explore and negotiate their mutual interdependencies, facilitating different ways of urban living especially in the face of various forms of urban injustice that they encounter and experience as a collective. Social infrastructures of and for alternative urbanism, counternormative practices of care, and community economies found in *Seongmi-san Maeul*, taken together, suggests a hopeful, performative rethinking of the city which broadens the horizon of different possibilities. The ethnographic thick descriptions of how local activists and residents enact and imagine a radically different kind of city call for more open-ended, enabling epistemologies of the urban that are attentive to how people simultaneously live through, resist, and rework dominant neoliberal urbanism. It is with this reparative stance which holds onto the generative potentialities of the urban that

this research seeks to carve out a fertile intellectual ground upon which more progressive urbanisms could be imagined and theorised, one that is concerned with the ways to organise the city in the existence of others.

Gilles Evrard Essuman, "Community Initiatives and Social Innovation as Pathways to Socio-Territorial Transformation and Degrowth" (2024, The University of Luxembourg)

This thesis explores the role of alternative economies in mitigating socio-economic and environmental shortcomings, such as inequality and environmental degradation, of conventional capitalism. It postulates that community-led initiatives, rooted in the frameworks of community economies and social innovation, are pivotal for engendering socio-territorial transformations and potentially fostering degrowth. Focusing on empirical evidence from France—particularly through "La Doume," a local currency project, and "Le Biau Jardin," an organic farm that promotes localized food supply chains in Clermont-Ferrand—the research investigates how these initiatives can stimulate socio-territorial transformation processes. In conjunction with other satellite projects within the so-called 'French Empty Diagonal,' results from these case studies challenge the notion of territorial emptiness, uncovering a landscape rich in social innovation and economic activities that bolster regional dynamism. Beyond this conceptual redefinition, the research further posits that these areas are fertile hubs for sustainable development with the potential to drive wider socio-economic changes. Utilizing an ethnographic approach, the study examines how these initiatives contribute to a degrowth strategy in a postcapitalist context. It advocates for a paradigm shift towards economic models that prioritize social justice, economic equity, and ecological sustainability.

Ella Hubbard, "Bioregioning: Composing a politics of place for living well together" (2024, University of Sheffield, UK)

There is an urgent need to find more just and sustainable ways to inhabit the Earth. Postcapitalist literature has called for new ways of living well together that are beyond capitalist relationships and practices. This has included a strategy of 'starting where we are' to build on already-existing diverse economic practices and foster more just and sustainable livelihoods. I use bioregioning to turn attention to the question of 'where are we?', and to ask what bioregioning might contribute to understanding place and the composition of ecological livelihoods.

Bioregionalism is an eco-philosophy that advocates for living according to natural landscape and ecology as a strategy for sustainability (the 'reinhabitation' of bioregions). Bioregionalism has been critiqued in geography because for its neglect of the spatiality of power and the economy, and the risk of environmental determinism. This thesis examines how this ecological thought has been reinvigorated through the verb 'bioregioning'. It is based on qualitative research of two groups, Bioregioning Tayside (Scotland, UK) and the Casco Bay bioregion (Maine, USA), including interviews and 160+ hours of participant observation.

I mobilise Gibson-Graham's politics of language, politics of the subject, and politics of collective action. I find that bioregioning unsettles narratives of place, showing that the relationship between humans and ecology is contingent and changing. This opens up the possibility of place-based politics. Secondly, bioregioning generates new, more collective forms of subjectivity based on exposing interconnectedness for ethical negotiation. Finally, through bioregioning, forms of collective action are emerging that offer tentative experiments in moving forward together, rather than a single theory of change. This thesis not only offers empirical examples of how community groups are mobilising relational understandings of place in their projects, contributing both to geographical spatial concepts, and community economies literature.

Session 6:3: New Scholarship in Community Economies III

Noortje Marie Keurhorst, "Destruction as care: a vanguard vision of more-than-human flourishing in the Galician monte" (2025, University of Vigo, Spain)

The challenge of reordering more-than-human relationalities to affront current multifaceted ecological, economic, and social crises is the subject of a wide range of engaged scholarship. In order to live well together on a damaged planet (Tsing, 2015), more-than-human care scholarship argues for mutual care and collaboration between humans and non-humans for common survival. Such scholarship has hitherto focused mainly on remedying conflict, minimizing tension, and recently on recognizing care work done by nonhumans, so that common flourishing can be assured. In this article, we push tensions within this field a step further by considering targeted acts of destruction as a form of care. We attend to how violence and destruction enter into more-than-human commoning projects, situating our study in Galicia, in Northwestern Spain, where the *Brigadas Deseucaliptizadoras* seek to eradicate eucalyptus and acacia to enable a wider range of more-than-human flourishing. To do so, we use the sociotechnical imaginaries framework to consider how acts of destruction are imagined as acts of care, reconstituting more-than-human relationality. We lay out the nascent imaginary of *destruction as care* that embeds notions of greater collective autonomy and Galician independence from the Spanish state. Informed by ecological, traditional, and embodied knowledge, this imaginary sits in opposition to historical interventions into common lands in pursuit of the institutional imaginary of *productive forestry for prosperity*. Through ethnographic research, we engage with two field sites, the Galician villages of Froxán and Lentille, to explore how acts of destruction are imagined as care and what implications this has for reconfiguring more-than-human relations.

Markus Sattler, "Surviving Well Together in the Web of Life: An Examination of Enterprises in Ordinary Peripheries of Armenia and Georgia" (2025, Leipzig University, Germany)

This cumulative dissertation explores how locally rooted enterprises in the "ordinary peripheries" of Armenia and Georgia contribute to collective survival amid multiple crises. It challenges dominant imaginaries that either uncritically celebrate entrepreneurial innovation as a solution to, or condemn it as complicit in, polycrises. Instead, the study aligns with an emerging third imaginary: pluriversal, enabling, and grounded in the possibility of "surviving well together". Drawing on post-development theory, (feminist) political economy (including diverse and community economies, material ecofeminism, world-systems analysis), and postsocialist studies, the dissertation reconceptualizes enterprises as embedded in a broader "web of life": an open-ended assemblage of human and more-than-human relations. The work offers three core interventions. First, it articulates a critique of the realist epistemology in mainstream enterprise research (by showing the importance of "positioned desires"). Second, it reconceptualizes Armenia's and Georgia's positioning in a global economic perspective ("ordinary periphery"). Third, it reorients the geographies of innovation literature and especially political economy frameworks, particularly through the concepts of "community-place value" and "sufficiency value". While recognizing the adverse effects of peripheral integration into the global economy, the suggested ordinary periphery approach foregrounds the diversity of (often devalued) economic practices that could contribute to surviving well together in Armenia's and Georgia's peripheries. This approach decouples entrepreneurial innovation from Silicon Valley-style models and promotes a less capitalocentric understanding of regional (post-)development and the role of enterprises therein, anchored in a context-specific idea of "surviving well together". Empirically, the study combines analysis of policy frameworks (especially around entrepreneurialism and innovation) with a multi-scalar, patchwork ethnography and ten qualitative enterprise case studies from non-metropolitan regions (with five examined in depth in Chapter 7). The dissertation investigates how these enterprises shape, resist, or reproduce socio-ecological relations through practices of re/production and exchange. In doing so, the dissertation rethinks key political-economic concepts – such as value, surplus, innovation – by placing them in dialogue with the Armenian and Georgian contexts and the abovementioned theoretical debates. By reconstructing entrepreneurship as a site for negotiating interdependent needs (sufficiency value) and addressing place-based injustices (community-place value), the study opens pathways for both academic inquiry and transformative praxis in and beyond the South Caucasus. Methodologically, the dissertation employs weak theory, thick description, ethical positionality, and diffractive reading to stay accountable to the complexities in studying enterprises in the web of life. The dissertation concludes with practical, theoretical, and methodological implications for future research and action

Colm Stockdale, "Transformative social innovation and rural collaborative workspaces: assembling community economies in Austria and Greece" (2024, The Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences, Greece)

This thesis attempts to provide a novel framework towards understanding the transformative potential of rural collaborative workspaces as they engage in processes of social innovation by drawing from post-capitalist literature and assemblage thinking. Collaborative Workspaces are rapidly growing and evolving across the world and are predominantly understood as an urban phenomenon. Recent years however have seen their diffusion beyond large urban agglomerations to small towns and villages, with their functions assumed to be more community orientated. At the same time, social innovation, or social innovation processes have been gaining prominence in academia, policy, and practice, as they address societal problems and hold potential for new forms of social relations. The thesis investigates the transformative potential of rural collaborative workspaces engaging in processes of social innovation through an international case study comparison between rural Austria and Greece (One case from each country). The methods applied were: semi-structured interviews (N=28), participant observation and focus groups (2).

The results of the study demonstrate that community-led rural collaborative workspaces do engage in social innovation processes by addressing social needs and changing social relations. They change social relations i) on the individual level by connecting locals with material and immaterial resources that allows them to (re)discover their agency and form meaningful connections with themselves and others, and ii) on the collective level by helping to form different groups and hosting events and activities with a collective ethos. These actions hold transformative potential as they operate against and alongside circuits of capital, build capacity within the community for collective action and prefigure community economies. The collaborative workspaces also co-operate with state and market institutions and recode them to their ethical and open way of operating. The thesis concludes that social innovation does hold a lot of potential for societal transformation, but also holds danger of being co-opted towards being used instrumentally. Therefore, although they require further institutionalization and support to move beyond the interstitial and symbiotic stages of transformation, this requires caution. Future research could highlight the tensions between entrepreneurship and collectivity within social innovation assemblages, as well as compare contrasting geographical locations such as urban-rural and global south-global north to further our understanding of social innovation.

Keywords: Collaborative Workspaces, Social Innovation, Post-capitalism, Assemblage, Rural