

Crisis, Power, and Policymaking in the New Europe

Why Should Anthropologists Care?

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ABSTRACT

At a time when European integration faces many crises, the efficacy of public policies decided in Brussels, and in member state capitals, for managing the everyday lives of average Europeans demands scrutiny. Most attuned to how global uncertainties interact with local realities, anthropologists and ethnographers have paid scant attention to public policies that are created by the EU, by member state governments and by local authorities, and to the collective, organised, and individual responses they elicit in this part of the world. Our critical faculties and means to test out established relations between global–local, centre–periphery, macro–micro are crucial to see how far the EU’s normative power and European integration as a governance model permeates peoples’ and states’ lives in Europe, broadly defined. Identifying the strengths and shortcomings in the literature, this review essay scrutinises anthropological scholarship on culture, power and policy in a post-Foucaultian Europe.

KEYWORDS

Europe, European integration, the European Union, policy, power

Jean Monnet, the French economist, public official and a most important architect of European integration, proclaimed in his memoirs (Monnet 1978: 417) that ‘Europe will be forged in crises, and will be the sum of the solutions adopted for those crises.’ He further contended (Monnet 1978: 109): ‘People only accept change when they are faced with necessity, and only recognise necessity when a crisis is upon them.’ Influenced by what has since become known as Monnet’s Law (McCormick 2012: 12), many ‘European specialists’ (Bellier 2000: 60) engage in crisis talk and each time reinvent ‘Europe’ as a solution to its many crises in their efforts to calm the public outcry.¹ But a globalising construct that emerged as a result of centuries-long imperial and colonial interactions, crisis is endemic to ‘Europe’ according to world-systems scholars (see Wallerstein 2004). In fact, ‘Europe’ comes



in many forms (Hudson 2000) that crosscut differences between ‘Europe of the European Union (EU)’ and ‘Europe of the people’ (Jaffe 1993), many of which have long been associated by critics of the political right and left with multiple crises (see *Evening Independent* 1963; Singer 1996; James 2012).

Some of these democratic and political crises are more enduring and endemic to the region, whereas others like the recent financial crisis, and the subsequent economic crisis, that are manifested in recessions and rising youth unemployment, are more global, therefore hard to contain by the EU alone. At a time of multiple crises, the efficacy of public policies that are decided in Brussels, in member state capitals, and by regional and local authorities throughout Europe, and are geared towards managing the everyday lives of average Europeans, acquires dramatic importance and demands scrutiny.

Despite the almost continual crisis talk and its potential to unsettle the power of the EU and its policies, or perhaps because of it, the Union’s pervasiveness in the lives of peoples and states in Europe continues to capture anthropological attention. In this special issue, contributors query how, and to what extent, the normative power of the EU reaches into our everyday lives by asking the following questions: How do urban centres in Europe at large, such as Gdańsk, adjust to new cultural realities that are shaped by such concerns as economic pull and demographic push, also common in other European (and world) cities? Do the initiatives of the EU and its member states that take ‘culture’ and heritage as policy loci adequately engage with these concerns? What happens as EU and member state officials, and advocacy groups engage in politics of rights on their way to a common health policy, or when the Italian state ‘fails’ to implement EU policies regarding the rights of same-sex couples and access to health care, citizenship and residency entitlements? How do new food politics and local food provisioning movements in Italy generate new forms of political and economic activism and representation, such as direct democracy and solidarity economies? Can the Italian example serve as a model to crisis-ridden Europe? How does Turkish officials’ engagement with the EU’s techno-bureaucracy complicate the Union’s many policy initiatives, including enlargement, that aim to manage supranational relationships between old and new member states and between member and non-member states? Finally, what are the implications of all these for our rethinking of the anthropology of European integration and policymaking, and the redrawing of the state–citizen relationship across Europe?

Power and Policy in Post-Foucault Europe

Like any other problems, crises and uncertainty breed the necessity to overcome them; and policy, in its most canonical definitions by political scientists, is the government's tool to that end (Colebatch 2009). Such a perspective on policy carries several highly problematical assumptions: that policies (even public policies) are exclusively made by governments who use them to bring about 'positive change', and that the relative success or failure of policies are measurable by the relative degree of public content/discontent they generate (for critical elaboration of these points, see Colebatch 2009; Shore 1997, 2012; Wedel et al. 2005). Yet, a quick look at policymaking processes in Europe attests to the complex, non-linear processes through which policies come into being as a result of negotiations among multiple actors at various national, regional and local levels. This complexity can best be captured at times of crisis and uncertainty.

Most attuned to the ethnographic worlds of how global uncertainties interact with local realities, anthropologists occupy a significant vantage point from which to study the ways in which policies come into being (acquire presence in the minds of those who make them and whom policymakers target), and how they are negotiated, circulated and communicated, resisted, circumvented, ignored or instrumentalised (Galbraith and Wilson 2011) through socio-cultural engagements among their makers, shakers, workers and those in their spotlight. Yet, Europeanist anthropologists began to engage with policy issues much later than their colleagues in cognate disciplines such as in political science, sociology or policy studies.² To study policy processes in/of Europe anthropologically requires attention to 'various struggles concerning what Europe is and means to differently situated individual and collective actors, and about what political, economic and symbolic resources are produced and reconfigured in the process' (Narotzky 2012: 6–7). With regard to this task, anthropologists in general, and Europeanists in particular, echoing Cole (1977), have only 'come part-way home'. Almost two-decades after the publication of a path-breaking programmatic collection of essays on the anthropology of policy (Shore and Wright 1997b), there is yet to be a systematic, critical scrutiny of the reconfigurations of culture, power and policymaking in Europe from an anthropological perspective that can test out established relations between the global and the local, the centre and the periphery, the macro and the micro level in this part of the world, as well as in others related to it.

The endeavour to study public policies from within anthropology acquired greater significance when the EU project became an ever-encroaching aspect of human life. Scholars commonly approached to policies in multiple European contexts from the perspective of Foucault's (1991) governmentality, enmeshed with methodological, processualist and interpretative analyses. In an interview, Shore unpacked his approach to policy in the following way: 'When we think about policy or follow its trajectory – its genealogy, the language used to frame and represent it, the way it is translated into practice, its institutionalisation, and the effects it creates – we suddenly realize that what we have here is a methodological tool for connecting the global to the local and for linking structure with ideology, agency and subjectivity' (Durão 2010: 605).

In their programmatic conceptualisation of an anthropology of policy, Shore and Wright (1997a: 5, 11), following Foucault, have argued for taking policy work in terms of 'language and power', especially in analyses of political oratory and written policy documents, as cultural agent, for policies carry 'normative claims [that are] used to present a particular way of defining a problem and its solution, as if these were the only ones possible, while enforcing closure or silence on other ways of thinking or talking' (Shore and Wright 1997a: 5) – as political technology, or 'instrument of governance', geared towards forging collective identities, be they local, regional, national or supranational (see also Wedel et al. 2005). According to Shore (1997), for example, the EU's audiovisual policy aims to foster a European identity (see also Shore 1999). Shore and Black (1994) argued that 'culture' itself became a political technology to forge a common European identity, in order to remedy the democratic deficit in the Europe of the EU. For others, the monetary policies of the EU and the introduction of the euro were set to serve similar purposes (Malaby 2002; Reinhardt 2004; Wolters 2001).

Other scholars defined policy as 'a complex social practice and ongoing process of normative cultural production constituted by diverse actors across diverse social and institutional contexts' (Levinson and Sutton 2001: 1). Here the emphasis is on the negotiated order of policy among its actors throughout the enmeshed instances of policy formation and formulation (mostly within official governmental domains), and implementation, or appropriation (Levinson and Sutton 2001: 2). In order to understand how policymakers do what they do, others have argued for an interpretative analysis. For instance, Jenkins (2007: 34) set out an interpretive approach whereby he sug-

gested taking policies as ‘processes of representation and of the production and the reproduction of meaning’ (see also Blom Hansen and Stepputat 2001; Herzfeld 1992; Shore and Wright 1997a).

One particular issue that has received special attention from anthropologists of policy has been the intimate relationship between power and policy. But the anthropological mind since the 1990s has been under the spell of Foucaultian power theory (see Abélès 2009a), whose explanatory efficacy remains partial in efforts to capture the emerging state–citizen relationships in the current European context, for it leaves out problems of accountability and agency. Instead, I suggest that an anthropological explanation of current European policy realities requires a multi-dimensional conceptualisation of power such as the one suggested by Lukes (2005a [1974]; see also Heyman 2003).

According to Lukes (2005a: 25), power is first about exerting control over decisions that are already on the political agenda, or are in the making. This is what most politicians, statesmen and community leaders do. Here, power operates by framing the very policy process and its actors’ and agents’ practices and behaviour (see also Colebatch 2009: 19). But not every issue makes its way to the political agenda. Some framing is done in order to forestall certain types of policy behaviour. If one focuses on the non-decisions and silences in the policymaking processes, one encounters a different dimension of power. Here, power is still about controlling the political agenda, not by pushing some issues onto it, but rather by controlling ‘the ways in which potential issues are kept out of the political processes’ (Lukes 2005a: 25). In such context, the making of non-decisions refers to ‘the practice of limiting scope of actual decision making to “safe” issues by manipulating the dominant community values, myths, and political institutions and procedures’ (Bachrach and Baratz 1963: 632; see Mishtal in this issue). However, argues Lukes, real power lies in the capacity to ‘shape, influence or determine others’ beliefs and desires, thereby securing their compliance’ (Lukes 2005b: 486). Lukes’ concept of real power approximates that of Mills (1956) and Weber (1978 [1921–2]). Putting it as a relation of domination, Weber (1978: 942) defined power, as ‘the possibility of imposing one’s own will upon the behavior of other persons’. Similarly, Mills defined the ‘powerful’ as ‘those who are able to realize their will, even if others resist it’, and continued: ‘No one, accordingly, can be truly powerful unless he has access to the command of main institutions, for it is over these institutional means of power that the truly powerful are, in the first instance, powerful’ (Mills 1956: 9). In its simplest form, this is how ‘ideology’, or ‘common

sense', works; others have given it a different name: 'symbolic power' (Bourdieu 1979 [1977], 1991), 'governmentality' (Foucault 1991), and 'structural power' (Wolf 1990).

Power in its first dimension has been the classical concern of political scientists, while with the Foucaultian turn in political and social sciences scholars focused on its third dimension. Here, my concern is that the second dimension remains very much understudied, possibly due to the obvious difficulties such a study involves. Yet, studying the (sometimes forced) silences and non-decisions in policymaking processes carries immense potential for policy research (see Snyder 1989). To that, we could add non-verbal ways of communication, such as body language and gestures, as rich ethnographic moments of policy analysis (for an example, see Yanow 1996).

Anthropologists are already very familiar with the symbolic dimension of power. In pointing out the relationship between power and its dramatic manifestations, Cohen (1979: 3) argued that all forms of power are symbolic: 'Power relations are objectified, developed, maintained, expressed, or camouflaged by means of symbolic forms and patterns of symbolic action.' Later he suggested that 'ordinary symbolic performances ... repetitively reproduce or modify power relations' (Cohen 1980: 66; see also Kertzer 1988). Policy processes have their myths, mythologies, symbols and rituals that help embed power relations in policy structures and in actors' relationships to one another. In Europe, for instance, the symbolic dimension of the power of EU and member state policies often accommodates their efficacy and efficiency when 'the production of appearance of coherence and order; being seen to have a policy – as opposed to actually effecting the outcomes specified by policy' take credence (Jenkins 2007: 25). This may be due to the high costs involved in having a policy (Schön and Rein 1994; Colebatch 2009) or because policies (from an emic perspective on organisations) mainly function to foster political support and to 'account upwards, legitimiz[e] expertise, signify alliances, or conceal differences' (Mosse 2006: 939; see also Garsten and Jacobsson 2007; Müller 2011; Anaya, Grasseni, Mishtal and Stacul in this issue). Anthropologists working on audit systems in various public sector areas ranging from higher education to health care have encountered this dilemma between policy outcomes and policy appearance (see essays in Shore, Wright and Però 2011). In the Europe of the EU, the 'art of symbolic politics', or the 'art of being seen to do something', is as much a constitutive part in the art of governance as things that are actually done (Jenkins 2007: 28; see also Abélès and Rossade 1993; Firat in this issue).

Studying European Policies Anthropologically

With their attention to lived experiences at the bottom and governing practices at the top, the existing anthropological engagements with policymaking in Europe have opened up avenues to account for the fact that public policies are often contested and negotiated by a variety of agents, actors and enactors during the twin processes of policymaking and policy implementation. Earlier anthropological engagements with EU policy processes focused on polity-building and the culture of policy professionals to see whether a common European interest/identity is to emerge among the EU elites who were expected to converge socio-culturally as a result of the ‘culture contact’ in multicultural institutions of the EU (Abéles 2009b: 43; for examples, see Abéles 1993, 1997, 2000; Bellier 2000, 2002a, 2002b; Shore 2000, 2002, 2007; Geuijen et al. 2007, 2008). Although the cultures of policy professionals still capture and captivate the anthropological imagination (Boyer 2008), others have investigated the technical blueprints of policy, ranging from cultural and media (Katcherian 2010, 2012; Shore 1997, 1999, 2000) to social and welfare (Thedvall 2006), immigration and citizenship (Feldman 2005a, 2005b; Shore and Black 1994), education (Shore and Baratieri 2006; Shore and Wright 1999), urban planning (Abram 2001), agricultural (Otten 2013), energy (Frolova 2010; Hecht 1994, 2009; Krauss 2010) and industrial, financial and monetary policies (Holmes 2009, 2013; Malaby 2002; Peebles 2011; Prattis 1980; Wolters 2001) in and of the EU (see also essays in Heatherington 2011; Shore and Wright 1997a; Shore, Wright and Però 2011; Wilson and Smith 1993). Surely, this list is not exhaustive but illustrative. Yet I maintain that ethnographic engagements with European governments’ policies so far have appeared rather erratically.

Several reasons both endogenous and exogenous to the discipline can account for this relative late-coming of anthropologists to studying European policy processes. First, if policies are defined as the way states and governments relate to their citizens (Wedel et al. 2005: 34), policy processes are taken for granted in (Western) Europe because of the long history of democratic tradition in this part of the world — albeit contestation is very much embedded in true democracies. There is much truth in Shore and Wright’s (1997b: 5) argument that where modern organisations are concerned, policy has become ‘a major institution of Western and international governance, on a par with other key organizing concepts such as “family” and “society”’. When invoked, policies carry hidden claims to organisational authority. Con-

sent to that authority mutes further debate and discontent among its actors (practitioners and target groups) with regards to a particular policy, or a whole set of policies. Arguably then, such policies equally receive no (major) contention in terms of what they mean to the governing bodies and to those that are governed. Although a prominent Eastern Europeanist long ago suggested it as a possible way of refocusing the anthropological purview to 'Europe' (Verdery in Asad et al. 1997), the opening up of policy relations under liberal democratic (and capitalist, for capitalism is its dominant form of political economy) conditions by taking 'policy' as an object of anthropological inquiry remains for the most part uncharted.

Second, anthropology as a discipline has been most productive with regard to development issues, perhaps a legacy of European colonialism (Herzfeld in Asad et al. 1997). Students of development anthropology have scrutinised development policies and programmes developed in European and North American world capitalist centres in terms of their effects and 'effective' implementation elsewhere, such as in Latin America, Africa, Southeast Asia and the Middle East. But scholars have shied away from studying similar questions in Europe. Traditional locations of ethnographic research on development have been the receivers of European (public and private) donor money in the form of development aid. This development anchorage has created a blurring effect over the possibilities of studying the donors themselves from a similar (developmentalist) perspective either by scrutinising the centre-periphery relations between different regions in Europe, or by inverting the looking glass to travel up the ladder of policy relations by following the policy processes from the local to the global, or from the recipients of aid to the givers (but see Falk Moore 2001). To turn the analytical refractor to Europe would mean unsettling well-established developmental(ist) power relations, as well as turning arguably much necessary attention away from 'real problems' where European-originated policies of aid and funding were still much needed. The relative absence of critical development ethnographies in Europe in return contributes to unequal power and policy relations between different regions of the world (see Cooper and Packard 1997; Crewe and Axelby 2013; Falk Moore 2001).

To open up more European policy processes to anthropological scrutiny is an urgent matter. For Europe is a vital link in our efforts fully to understand sweeping phenomena like globalisation, capitalism and regional integration. Although it vies for power with the United States, the EU's dominant (and domineering) role as a strong policy-

making actor in international economic and trade relations is too significant to avoid. By carrying to member states and their non-member peripheries the WTO rules on production and quality control measures, for example, the EU is now in a position to dictate trade terms and conditions to states that do business not only with EU members but also with non-EU regions and states (Duina 2006). On the other hand, anthropological analyses of European policies are necessary to map out changing meanings of sovereignty, citizen–state relations and democratic accountability in this part of the world. One profound challenge is that our inquiry has to be ‘now less about defining the unknown than about redefining the well-known’ by politicians, policymakers and scholars in cognate disciplines (Rogers in Asad et al. 1997: 719).

An anthropological inquiry on European policies can serve as a powerful reminder of the fact that policymakers and workers act in a cultural interpretative framework. Studying the role of policy workers such as bureaucrats and consultants in policy processes, some anthropologists have suggested that researchers focus on the ‘ritual[s] and [the] production of meaning ... rather than [the] production of effective policies *per se*’ (Blom Hansen and Stepputat 2001: 17), or the measurement of policy efficacy and effective implementation schemes, much favoured by political scientists. Policy workers are meaning producing, cultural performers, ‘whose product should not be judged in terms of its supposed practical ends’ (Stirrat 2000: 43; Herzfeld 1992). Nevertheless, a normative separation of policy from practice (implementation) and product (end result) may more impair our ethnographic outlook than help. The policy, its practice *and* product, I maintain, are all equally important for reasons of democratic legitimacy and accountability – especially troubled in the current European context (Shore 2004) – and to relate the ‘policy worlds’ of professionals (Shore, Wright and Però 2011) to the worlds of others properly with often limited or no access and standing, in the former. At another level, attention to process, practice *and* product improves our inquiry. In order to do well the job of ‘studying through’ (Reinhold 1994) or ‘following’ (Marcus 1998) policy, policy ethnographers need to show how various new forms of relationships among social classes are bred by these policies. Moreover, policy worlds and processes are circular rather than linear, and contestation and renegotiation occur at multiple times during the ‘social life of a policy’ (Appadurai 1986; see also Shore 2012). To capture this circularity in the anthropological studies of policy, Wedel (2001, 2004, 2009) has consistently recommended network analysis as a productive method.

Anthropologists of Europe have in the main shied away from theorising EU policymaking. This is due to two main reasons: the discipline's staunch emphasis on concentrating on European integration as it affects citizens' lives at the bottom, and its disinterest in, even disdain for EU-isation as a techno-political process of elite engineering from above. But there is immense benefit in turning this disdain into rigorous scholarly effort. If 'understanding "policy" means understanding the way in which practitioners use it to shape the action' (Colebatch 2009: 20), anthropologists are in a privileged position because of the ethnographic method they use in their studies to establish an emic perspective on policymaking. By way of an emic account of policy processes in Europe and in the EU, anthropological studies, especially those conducted at the centres, could help demystify the EU's fragmented power, something on which political scientists have been slow to concentrate. A demystified account of power will not only enable a more accurate understanding of power relations in Europe (as elsewhere), but it will rightly put emphasis onto the fact that power, post-Foucault, is much more relative than it looks from the outside.

From Crisis to Culture

In her contribution to the *AJEC*'s twenty-first anniversary, Reed-Danahay (2012: 8) remarked on the absence of public policy as a theme in this journal. In order to address the strengths and shortcomings of the anthropological scholarship of European policies, discussed here, as well as to respond to Reed-Danahay's call to begin a systematic, critical debate on policies and policymaking processes in Europe, articles in this special issue address either (1) the drafting, negotiation and implementation of policies that are created by the EU, its member state governments, and regional and local authorities, or (2) the collective and organised responses to those policies or their negotiation, contestation and renegotiation at individual, personal or community levels by policy actors and agents at different scales of governing in both 'old' and 'new' Europe (Poland, Italy and Turkey), telling us how crisis and uncertainty are negotiated by Europeans, lay or elite. Common to all is the idea that policy is a particular relationship of power, a way of relating between different actors implicated by cultural differences, including their political class positions and role in the policy 'field' (Bourdieu 1998). Bourdieu defines the field as 'a structured social space, a field of forces, a force field' which

contains people who dominate and others who are dominated. Constant, permanent relationships of inequality operate inside this space, which at the same time becomes a space in which the various actors struggle for the transformation or preservation of the field. All the individuals in this universe bring to the competition all the (relative) power at their disposal. It is this power that defines their position in the field and, as a result, their strategies. (Bourdieu 1998: 40–1)

Shore (1997: 142) uses the concept of policy field to refer to ‘broader political agendas or meta-narratives through which policy is construed, and the different interests, actors and agents’. But because policy is a power relation, it is, following Foucault, also productive in that it gives way to new cultural practices and ensuing forms of politics, economy and society.

Jaro Stacul’s article is an example of how EU policies can bear counter-intuitive results when looked at from a top-down perspective. Stacul examines the cultural policy and urban transformation initiatives in post-socialist Poland. Faced with neoliberal economic requirements, politicians and policymakers from former industrial cities such as Gdańsk, with powerful histories of labour unionism and anti-regime politico-social movements, contend in redefining their cities and regions as emerging centres for foreign economic and financial investment and tourist attraction. Stacul succinctly demonstrates the ways in which a materially manifest struggle for appropriating city spaces to different political, social and economic interests – such as local politicians and investors, who wish to efface Gdańsk’s socialist past in order to ‘Europeanise’ it for non-Polish EU citizens, versus others, some of whom reclaim the socialist Gdańsk in order to nationalise and Catholicise it – entangles with the struggle over the emergent meanings and reframing of local identity, heritage, freedom, and culture as national registers in Poland. The Gdańsk case shows that local engineering of EU cultural policies could result in unsettling the politically motivated reinventions of the city as a multicultural setting where no immediate past is available to its residents. Stacul concludes that the EU’s regional and cultural policy initiatives counteract with the Poles’ strong national identity, very much undermining the European integration project. This article speaks to how policy processes result in cultural forms that are unanticipated by policy frameworks.

Lauren Anaya examines a political campaign through which same-sex couples in Italy, failed by conventional actors of policy and law making at the national political level, turn to Italian courts and successfully mobilise them for the recognition of commonly-held rights in the EU,

such as marriage equality, right of residence, and travel. Being put to work, Italian courts respond to their demands by opening up a space of possibility by way of upholding the EU law vis-à-vis Italy's national laws. Further at stake in this case are the EU as a common legal space, the question of inalienable rights, and European citizenship. Here is a classic case of how demands for rights could successfully turn to the supranational EU system to circumvent failed policies of the nation-state. Anaya concludes that in a national context of declining trust in state and democratic institutions and actors, judicial activism on the part of Italian judges furthers the democratic crisis in Italy.

Unlike same-sex couples' partial success at the expense of democratic politics in Italy, Joanna Mishtal discusses how a rights-based discourse arrests the policymaking processes at the supranational level over access to health care and reproduction. Mishtal concentrates on struggles between the EU, its member states, rights activists and the Catholic Church over the policy field of reproductive governance, from which Poland is considered exempt since its accession to the EU. This struggle takes place as much through policy formulations at the European Parliament and the Council of Europe as in hospitals that are populated by health care providers who often opt out from providing contraception, infertility care, prenatal testing and treatments on conscientious (moral, or religious) grounds. Similar to same-sex couples in Italy, Polish women's rights advocacy groups turned to the EU to put pressure on the Polish state to curb conscientious objection by doctors who refuse to provide life-saving treatments to women. But while the European supranational setting enables Italian judges and activists to override the Vatican's pressure concerning same-sex issues and the state-citizen relationship defined through the nation-state framework, a similar backdrop forecloses such an opening to Poles, especially poor-resourced women in Poland, due to differences in power and political settings between Italy, Poland and the EU. Here at stake is EU citizenship (and whether it grants same rights to all men and women in the EU regardless of nationality), but also the sovereignty of EU member states vis-à-vis the supranational EU and its increasing competencies, as well as democratic accountability – not only in this part of Europe, but also in others, since issues of reproduction, family, and rights and citizenship are equally challenged by conservative politicians in Malta, Italy, Ireland and Turkey.

Cristina Grasseni deals with the ways in which citizens respond to failed economic, financial and social policies in Italy, a founding member of the EU, and discusses whether alternative politics are emergent.

Grasseni contends how, faced with advanced capitalism's material (ecological) and social destruction, young, middle-class Italians invent new forms of cultural (economic and ecological) and political activism that are geared towards a future which is environmentally and socially sustainable. By organising food provisioning networks and thus engaging in solidarity economy, these Italians practice new forms of direct democracy and develop a renewed interest in local and regional politics. This new economy escapes a purely economic rationality (for participation in such provisioning networks is costly). It further unsettles current capitalist divisions between producers and consumers, as trust takes a central role in the establishment of producer-consumer relations. Practiced by a small, but growing number of Italian households, this solidarity economy is explicitly political. In response to the crisis of representative democracy in Italy and despite the Italian state's continuous regulatory attempts, these Italians refuse to be co-opted by a system which they perceive as practicing hierarchical, top-down government inattentive to their environmental, cultural and political sensibilities, forcing local and regional governments to revise their economic policies and the way they administer those policies.

My contribution to this issue focuses on a moment of crisis of the EU as a policy-producing organisation. Taking the anti-case of Turkey's bid for EU membership, my study concerns the EU's enlargement policy and practice, and the responses it elicits among Turkish politicians and policymakers (and policy workers). I argue that, in the case of Turkey's accession, the EU's enlargement policy by and large failed to satisfy existing disenchantments within EU member states towards the Union's further expansion. It also failed to instigate change in the cultures of governing in Turkey. I maintain that such policy failures are due to the EU's pedagogical approach that breeds power inequalities between the Union and its peripheries. I also discuss in detail various policy tools and techniques, as well as two competing forces embedded in the accession negotiations (technicalisation and politicisation) that are invented in due course of instituting a pedagogical relationship between the EU and Turkey. Those on the receiving end of the EU's enlargement policy usually respond to it with much ambivalence, and some, like Turkish policymakers, with defiance, not because they are defending themselves against this pedagogical power, but because it implicates them.

Collectively, the articles in this special issue address policy as a socio-political practice and ongoing process. The authors focus their anthropological inquiry on socio-cultural relations of actors such as

local, national and supranational politicians, civil society actors and citizens who, empowered by the crises of representative democracy and of traditional forms of politics and economy, choose to experiment with alternative forms of solidarity. Articles in this issue examine how these figures are differentially situated within a policy field, and how they engage with each other from a variety of vantage points by means of policies. After all, a particular policy problem and the participants in that policy field are mutually constitutive (Colebatch 2009: 36). To that end, Anaya, Firat and Mishtal provide an emic perspective on the makings of policy, while Grasseni and Stacul consider the implications and negotiations of policy among its end-users.

In their ethnographic accounts, Anaya, Firat and Mishtal discuss different ways in which policies act as political technologies, whereas in Anaya, Grasseni and Stacul, policies that are made by state agents mostly act as cultural agents to foster and sanction certain collective identities while foreclosing others. Yet, our cases show how policies-as-political-technologies could unexpectedly turn against their makers and even provoke competition for the right to manage citizens' lives. But even from the perspective of the citizens as end-users, several authors demonstrate that, with regard to policy change, the recasting of existing policy in a number of fields by citizens' individual and organised action is either already underway (Anaya, Grasseni) or a strong prospect (Mishtal, Stacul). Put differently, these ethnographic accounts collectively demonstrate that policymakers, workers and recipients are in relationships with each other wherein power is relative and shifting, especially at times of crisis. Amid the region's contemporary crises or 'growing pains' (Narotzky 2012: 7), this special issue is a timely investigation of the reconfigurations of culture and power in today's Europe as viewed through the anthropological prism of policy.

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Notes

1. According to Bellier (2000: 60), these European specialists, or those individuals for whom ‘Europe’ matters most and whose emergence is linked to the process of institutionalisation of the EU, are ‘Europeans by destiny’ (those who are committed to the idea and/or take an oath to serve it), ‘Europeans by obligation’ (the civil servants/administrators/bureaucrats of EU member states posted to Brussels and are entrusted with negotiating differences among national interests of member states with supranational interests of the EU in Brussels), and ‘Europeans by interest’, or the representatives of EU publics (social, economic, sectoral/professional groups ‘who adapt their actions to the best level of efficacy, meaning that they influence the political power where the rules are taken’). Crisis talk is common parlance among these groups, the most recent case of which is the financial crisis (for an example of this crisis talk, see Barroso 2011; also Wilson 2010).
2. Many have noted the fact that anthropologists have always had scholarly and advocacy engagements with public policies in myriad ways (Okongwu and Mencher 2000: 108–9; see also Wedel et al. 2005). But a concerted focus on policy as an object of analysis is quite recent vis-à-vis the disciplinary history of anthropology (see Shore and Wright 1997b; Wedel et al. 2005; Schwegler and Powell 2008). For earlier forms of engagement between anthropology as an applied science and policymaking, see Cochrane (1980); Hinshaw (1980); Harding and Livesay (1984) and Okongwu and Mencher (2000).

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