Call for Papers
“Anthropology of Debt: Ethnographies from Post-Soviet Economies and Turkey”.

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Debt relations and economic exchange based on debts became more and more important within social relations in the context of shortage of money and income in both post-Soviet countries as well as observed in Turkey. Debt came out to be often discussed matter among people in the same region. Debt relations are not only the matter of economic exchange but rather is embedded into the social networks, dependencies, shared norms, identities, trust networks and power relations. We have observed various situations of debt relations such as in small shops where basic food is sold for debt, people continuously borrowing money from each other, people taking credits from a bank for buying food, or other economic activities involving debts among others.

Debt relations and economic exchange based on debt is an understudied field within anthropology. The classical anthropological studies of economic exchange and gift exchange are the oldest themes in the classical anthropology as well as economics. We would like to approach debt relations and economic exchange based on debt from holistic and processual approach using hermeneutical tools to understand the meaning of debt for various actors involved in making debts, paying debts, resolving debts, debts as business models and as a survival strategy. Analytical lenses will be directed towards understanding the process of debt making, debt paying, debt dependencies and social reality of the constitution of debt in two contexts such as post-Soviet countries and Turkey.

Anthropological and sociological approaches to debt and debt relations are going to be guiding theoretical framework of the contributions such as Greaber’s works on debt, Keith Hart’s works on money, classical literature on economic exchange (Malinowski, Maus), classical anthropological literature on economic anthropology and moral economy such as the works of Chris Hann among others.

The volume will gather anthropological and sociological analysis of debt making and debt paying, which highlight kinship and traditional set up of the social relations where debts are made and paid, considering such important aspects of such relations as, but not limited to religion, trust, dependencies and reproduction of gender and patriarchal systems.

The questions which could be dealt are:

1. What is debt making for persons involved in the process?
2. What are the implications of debt for kinship, and other social relations on the ground?
3. How are debt relations connected to wider socio-economic and political context?
4. How do we understand the change of debt relations in post-Soviet space and Turkey?
The contributions might also with other questions which arise in such contexts and situation of debt relations and are welcome to widen our understanding of debt relations and complicated processes of debt making, politics of debt, debt paying, and debt relations. Trust stands out to be one of the central aspects and an important basis within this context.

Please submit your abstracts not later than November 30, 2020 by email: r.turaeva@gmail.com.

The volume is going to be published in one of journals within Economic Anthropology journals. If the epidemiological situation allows us to meet to discuss we plan to raise funds to meet for a brainstorming workshop in Germany. If this will not be the case, we will organize a small event to discuss the papers in an online meeting.