

Hart, Keith, Jean-Louis Laville and Antonio David Cattani (eds.). 2010. *The Human Economy*. London: Polity Press. 320 pp. Pb.: \$19.95. ISBN: 9780745649801.

In 2008, the burst of the speculative mortgage bubble, the Credit Crunch and the subsequent international financial crisis represented a turning point in the international debate about the economy. Since the late 1990s, works including Klein's *No Logo: No Space, No Choice, No Jobs* (2000) or Gray's *False Dawn* (2002) have highlighted critical features of neoliberal doctrine and the financialisation of the economy. However, it is only after the Credit Crunch that public international debate started questioning the present understanding of economics and capitalism.

In the face of this debate, this book, edited by Hart, Laville and Cattani, proposes a new way of understanding the global economy. While neoliberals had explained it as the result of impersonal forces, such as offer, demand, inflection, and institutions disembedded from society, the editors propose a new understanding, which Hart has termed the *Human Economy*, as a replacement to neoliberalism as described in Harvey's *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* in 2007. They explain that 'in order to be human, the economy must be at least four things: 1) It is made and remade by people; economics should be of practical use to us all in our daily lives. 2) It should address a great variety of particular situations in all their institutional complexity. 3) It must be based on a more holistic conception of everyone's needs and interests. 4) It has to address humanity as a whole and the world society we are making' (p. 5).

As expressed by the editors (p. 10), the *Human Economy* represents a further development in the theorisation of an *Other Economy* alternative to neoliberalism that continues a broader discussion started back in the early 2000s with the first World Social Forum held in Porto Alegre in 2001. The experience of the Social Forums led to a vivid debate in South America and in continental Europe in which politicians and scholars took part. From this debates, works, such as Latouche and Harpagès' *Le Temps De La Décroissance* (2010), Petrini's *Slow Food Nation* (2007) or Laville and Cattani's *Dictionnaire De L'autre Économie* (2006), stemmed. Besides the few English translations of some of these works, the results of this strand of research remain scarcely known to the anglophone public. In this respect, this volume was an attempt to bridge this gap by presenting the state of art of the international discussion.

The book is divided into five sections covering different areas of this debate, exploring the discussion about the world economy (Part I *World Society* pp. 20–75), human relationships (Part II *Economics with a Human Face* pp. 75–154), ethics (Part III *Moral Politics* pp. 155–210), community engagement (Part IV *Beyond Market and State* pp. 211–300) and the new sectors and features of the economy emerging in the past decade (Part V *New Directions*, pp. 301–360).

The book collects 32 brief essays wrote by international well-known scholars, such as Thomas Hylland Eriksen (*Globalization* pp. 21–31), Chris Hann (*Moral Economy* pp. 187–198), David Graeber (*Communism* pp. 199–210), and Catherine Alexander (*The Third Sector*, pp. 213–224). Each essay offers a survey of the debate highlighting the principal theoretical points developed in the course of the last decade, and proposes an

essential bibliography of further reading to better explore the subject. In this respect, the essays represents, rather than ground-breaking contributions to the on-going debate, clear and useful starting points for a research tackling the key areas of the current economy. They offer insight into different topics, encompassing subjects traditionally explored by anthropology, such as *Gift* (by Alain Caillé) and *Local Development* (by John M. Bryden), and other aspects of the economy that have only recently entered the scope of the discipline, such as *Alternative Energy* (by Arnaud Sales and Leandro Raizer) and *Microcredit* (Jean-Michel Servet).

The book is a useful reference tool for students and researchers in economic and development anthropology, and can be added to other encyclopaedic works such as Beckert and Zafirovski's *International Encyclopedia of Economic Sociology* (2006), Barnard and Spencer's *The Routledge Encyclopedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology* (2010) or Carrier's *A Handbook of Economic Anthropology* (2005).

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