

*International Workshop*

**Fictitious Commodities Revisited:  
Enquiries into the Great Transformations of Market Socialism**

**Time:** April 8-10<sup>th</sup>, 2026

**Venue:** Building X -E1-201, Bielefeld University, Germany

**Convenors:**

**Minh Nguyen**

Professor of Social Anthropology, Faculty of Sociology, Bielefeld University

**Ngoc Luong**

Post-doctoral Researcher, Social Anthropology, Faculty of Sociology, Bielefeld University

**Hairuo Jin**

Post-doctoral Researcher, Social Anthropology, Faculty of Sociology, Bielefeld University

**Tentative program**

**WEDNESDAY, 8 APRIL 2026**

- Arrival** – Check in at hotels
- 16:30 -18:00 **Bielefeld City Tour** (Courtesy of Social Anthropology Unit - Optional)
- 18:00 - 20:00 *Dinner in the city (optional, self-paid)*

**THURSDAY, 9 APRIL 2026**

- 8:30 - 9:00 Arrival and registration
- 9:00 - 9:30 Welcome address by **Oliver Flügel-Martinsen, Dean of Faculty of Sociology**, Bielefeld University (GER)
- 9:30 - 10:30 Opening remarks by **Minh Nguyen**, Bielefeld University (GER)
- 9:30 - 10:30 Keynote lecture: “A Poetic Politics of Shade in Saigon” by **Erik Harms**, Yale University (USA)
- Chair: **Ngoc Luong**, Bielefeld University (GER)
- 10:30 – 11:00 – *Coffee, tea & cake break* –

- 11:00 -12:40     **Panel – Changing Accumulation Regimes**
- Governing the Circuit: Vietnam’s World-System Position, Social Reproduction, and the Entangled Commodification of Labour, Land, and Money – **Do Ta Khanh**, Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences (VN) and **Pietro Masina**, University of Naples (IT)
  - Industrial Parks with Financial Wings: Land, Capital, and Production in China’s New Normal Economy – **Yingyao Wang**, University of Virginia (USA)
  - The Impact of Financial Innovation on Bank Performance in Lao PDR - **Pakaiphone Syphoxay**, National University of Laos (LA)
- Chair: **Kai Koddenbrock**, Bielefeld University (GER)  
Discussant: **Don Kalb**, University of Bergen (NO)
- 12:40 – 14:00     – *Lunch break*–
- 14:00 - 15:40     **Panel – Transforming Property Relations**
- Spiral of Cumulative Commodification: Land Acquisition, Indebtedness and Intergenerational Precarisation around the Global Factory – **Ngoc Luong**, Bielefeld University (GER)
  - Transforming Agricultural Land into a “Fictitious Commodity”: The Financialized Trade of Farmland on the Urban Fringe of Hanoi – **Tuan Anh Nguyen**, Vietnam National University, Hanoi (VN) and **Jonathan Rigg**, University of Bristol (UK)
  - The Polanyian Politics of Food and Land in China: Adjusting the Rate of Change Through Campaign Mobilization – **Tiantian Liu**, University of Manchester (UK)
- Chair: **Ursula Mense-Petermann**, Bielefeld University (GER)  
Discussant: **Anne-Christine Trémon**, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (FR)
- 15:40 - 16:00     – *Coffee, tea & cake break* –
- 16:00 - 17:40     **Panel – Nature and Ecology**
- Protective Commodification? The Regulation of Markets for Land and Forest Carbon in Contemporary Upland Laos – **Michael Dwyer**, Indiana University, Bloomington (USA)
  - Mediating Fictitious Commodity: The Value of Carbon across Nature, Humanity and Economy – **Charlotte Bruckermann**, University of Cologne (GER)
  - Making and Caring for Coffee In Vietnam: More-than-Productive Livelihoods and Mediated Markets – **Skylar Lindsay**, University of Bristol (UK)
- Chair: **Hairuo Jin**, Bielefeld University (GER)  
Discussant: **Pierre Alary**, University of Lille (FR)
- 17:40 - 18:00     **FinancialLives Project Kick-off**  
**Huyen Duong, Phonesavanh Sitthideth, Jiarong Wu**, Bielefeld University (GER)
- 18:30             *Dinner at Das Wirtshaus 1802 im Bültmannshof (Walking from University)*

FRIDAY, 10 APRIL 2026

9:00 -10:40

**Panel - Time and Life**

- No Time to Rest: The Pressure on More-than-human Relations in Late Socialist Vietnam – **Hoàng Cầm**, Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences (VN) and **Sango Mahanty**, Australian National University (AUS)
- Bamboo Shoot Money vs. Days of Thunder: Market Secularism and the Disenchantment of Daykeeping among Khmu in Laos – **Paul-David Lutz**, Université libre de Bruxelles (BE)
- “Passing Orders to Aunties, Raising Efficiency”: Worker-led Outsourcing and Temporal Reconfiguration in China’s Food Delivery Platforms – **Yukun Sun**, Bielefeld University (GER)

Chair: **Laura Späth**, Bielefeld University (GER)

Discussant: **Christina Schwenkel**, University of California, Riverside (USA)

10:40 – 11:00

– *Coffee, tea & cake break* –

11:00 - 12:40

**Panel – Local Configurations of Risk**

- Coffee Brokers and the Financial Lives of Fertilizer – **Sarah Grant**, California State University, Fullerton (USA)
- Digitalization of Agriculture and the Conceptualization of Money, Land and Labour – **Horacio Ortiz**, Fudan University (CHN) and CNRS (FR)
- Inclusion or Limbo? Land Exit and Marketization Risk Differentiation among China’s Migrant Labor Forces – **Tao Liu**, Zhejiang University (CHN)

Chair: **Theo Westphal**, Bielefeld University (GER)

Discussant: **Minh Nguyen**, Bielefeld University (GER)

12:40 - 14:00

– *Lunch break*–

14:00 - 15:40

**Panel – Moralities of Commodification**

- “Keep Faith in the State”: Understanding International Politics, Foreign Capital, and Financial Sovereignty through Retail Trading in China – **Hairuo Jin**, Bielefeld University (GER)
- The Moral-Economic Development of the Lao Development Lottery – **Chip Zuckerman**, Boston College (USA)
- Doing Good across Apps: Digital Green Volunteering and Platform Capitalism in China – **Yueran Tian**, IT University of Copenhagen (DK)

Chair: **Phill Wilcox**, Bielefeld University (GER)

Discussant: **Pietro Masina**, University of Naples (IT)

15:40 - 16:00

– *Coffee, tea & cake break* –

16:00 - 18:00 **Panel – Aspiration and Disenchantment**

- Intimate Alliances in Northern Laos: Money and Development in Hmong-Chinese Connections – **Phill Wilcox**, Bielefeld University (GER)
- Knowledge as a Fictitious Commodity: Insights from the Analysis of Lao International Graduates' Labour Market Outcomes – **Soubin Sisavath**, National University of Laos, (LA)
- Debt as governmentality: student loans as social policy and compliance in Vietnam – **Huong Nguyen**, Vietnam National University, Hanoi (VN)
- Branding as the Production of Fictitious Commodity in The Commercialization of Vietnamese Identity – **Lan Phuong Thi Ngo and Long Dang Tan Tran**, University of Social Sciences and Humanities-VNUHCM (VN)

Chair: **Mark Simon**, Bielefeld University (GER)

Discussant: **Jonathan Rigg**, University of Bristol (UK)

18:00 - 18:45 **Plenary discussion and publication plans**  
**Minh Nguyen**, Bielefeld University (GER)

19:30 *Dinner at Brauhaus Joh. Albrecht  
(Tram to city centre)*

- End of the Workshop -

**Scan here to access the  
shared folder that includes:**

- Workshop program
- Abstracts
- List of participants
- Workshop poster

