



האגודה האנתרופולוגית הישראלית  
ISRAELI ANTHROPOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION  
الجمعية الإسرائيلية لعلم الإنسان والحضارة

## **Call for Papers**

**The 47<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Israeli Anthropological Association (IAA)**

**Anthropology and/of Technology**

**May 26 - 27 2019, Carasso Science Park, Beer Sheva**

The study of technology and material culture has always been central to anthropology – both in terms of observation of human practices and in terms of theorizing them. Yet, because studying technologies, techniques, and artifacts of “primitive societies” has often been relegated to museums, social anthropology has not developed a clear conception of the relationship between culture and technology. In recent years, (re)emerging studies of anthropology of technology both benefited from and energized the field of science and technology studies and the “material turn” in social theory, thus yielding an explosion of explicitly anthropological studies of technology.

Datafication of social life, enhancement technologies aiming to alter biology, the emergence of new financial devices, or the effects of climate change, are but a few examples of a vast and continually expanding field concerned with the shifting material conditions of social and cultural life. Collectively, these studies demonstrate and remind us how all aspects of modern life are deeply rooted in material conditions and continually technologically reworked. These changes, in turn, carry implications which are hard to overstate, and which shape our notions of self and constitute new subjectivities and new forms of sociality.

Anthropologists are well positioned to follow the trajectories of diverse technologies (be they environmental, biomedical, or industrial), tracing the way the material and social attributes of technology interact in context. Contemporary anthropology of material culture no longer reduces the materiality of production to determinism, leaving room for agency and the resultant creativity of person-artifact relations. At the same time, anthropological critique requires awareness of the way technological processes and artifacts shape sociality, raising important questions pertaining to the way individuals, organizations, nation-states and yes, 'technologies' themselves, adapt to the limits of matter, materiality and the new 'techniques' that have produced them.



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Israel, which markets itself as a “start-up nation,” is a productive field in which to think about the interface of technology, materiality, culture and society. This “start-up nation” - informed in part by ethno-cultural worldviews and political contingencies- consists, among others, of high-tech industries, some with strong ties to security and the military, while some other private enterprises struggle for recognition and funding. Israel heads the development and export of water desalination and purification systems as technology appears to creatively bypass the environmental determinism of Israel's fresh water availability while at the same time national and local politics shape a rigid country-wide water regime. And despite the ample sunshine and the obvious geostrategic advantage in replacing oil with renewable energies, Israel lags behind in developing and implementing solar and other alternative energy systems. We seek to address these and other complex relations between political policy, ecology, and the creativity and/or appropriation of technology in both global and local contexts in our yearly meeting.

We welcome papers that address technology in the widest sense. Examples include: production, circulation and consumption of tools and techniques; artisanship; ethnographic studies of workshops, sheds, garages and factories as sites of person-artifact agentic relations; materiality, technology and cultural consumption; production and consumption of clothing and fashion; datafication of health; body enhancement technologies; social networks; data mining and algorithms; financial technologies; energy research and anthropology; climate change and culture; environmental sustainability; temporality and technology. As always, we also welcome papers on other topics and issues of anthropological interest.

**English Stream:** we specifically solicit English language sessions. We expect quite a few high profile international guests and we encourage participants to present their work in English so as to attract these guests and get their feedback.

**Submission closes February 28, 2019**

**For additional information and Hebrew submissions please visit the Israeli**

**Anthropological Association's website - [isranthro.org](http://isranthro.org)**

**Abstracts in English should be sent to: [isranthro@gmail.com](mailto:isranthro@gmail.com)**



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**Daniel M.  
Knight**

This year's keynote speaker will be Dr Daniel M. Knight, Lecturer in the Department of Social Anthropology and Director of the Centre for Cosmopolitan Studies at the University of St Andrews, Scotland. He has held positions at the London School of Economics and Political Science and Durham University and collaborates closely with the British School at Athens. Daniel has been conducting ethnographic research in Thessaly, central Greece, since 2003, writing on the economic crisis, time and temporality, neoliberalism and neocolonialism, and renewable energy. His first book, "History, Time, and Economic Crisis in Central Greece" (Palgrave, 2015) explores how moments of the past are intricately woven together and embodied during eras of social upheaval. Turning his attention from the past to the future, Daniel is co-author of "The Anthropology of the Future" (Cambridge University Press, 2019), where he presents the concept of 'orientations' as a way to study the indefinite teleologies of everyday life.

His recent Leverhulme Trust project focused on the temporal complexity of renewable energy initiatives in austerity Greece, addressing how economic uncertainty has created dynamic spaces for entrepreneurial opportunism while renewables are locally perceived as neo-colonial programs and new extractive economies. This research is currently being written-up as a monograph under the provisional title "Renewable Energy in the Age of Austerity". Daniel is co-editor of "Ethnographies of Austerity: Temporality, Crisis and Affect in Southern Europe" (Routledge, 2017) and has edited special collections on "Alternatives to Austerity" and "Orientations to the Future". He is co-editor of "History and Anthropology" journal.