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TRANSFORMING CAPITAL

In the past years and decades, even supposedly basic economic concepts – such as money, debt, and indeed, capital – have come to appear ever more elusive, affecting and transforming the lives of millions of people while escaping any firm definition. The variety of meanings and imaginaries assigned to these concepts by people grappling with their origins, their nature, and their effects, is dazzling and stunning. Anthropological ways of thinking can help us understand such social and cultural creations, as attested by the articles in this issue of *The Unfamiliar*. The essays on urban planning in Malaysia and the links between technology literacy and college access in the U.S. offer inspiring alternatives to conventional ways of thinking about society and economics. The three pieces of our special focus section, dealing with transformations in Greek society following the debt crisis, together with the article on understandings of the economic field among U.S. conservatives demonstrate how ordinary people engage directly with abstract fields such as ‘the economy’. Finally, the two visual anthropology pieces offer glimpses of ‘capital’ hiding at the margins of mainstream economic flows. All in all, this issue demonstrates that ‘specialists’ in capital are not the only ones that have a right to say anything about it, and that we are all entitled to have a voice in the processes of transforming capital.

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