



# **AAA 2013 Panel - Where are values? Exploring the ‘genuine’ within the law**

written by Allegra  
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**Friday, November 22, 2013**

Chicago Hilton

1:45 PM-3:30 PM

Organised by [Miia Halme-Tuomisaari](#) and [Julie Billaud](#)

Chaired by [Sally Engle-Merry](#)

Sponsored by the [Association for Political and Legal Anthropology \(APLA\)](#)

See program: [here](#)

Session Abstract: Recent anthropological work on the ‘law’ has often focused on the formal settings where norms, rules and values are produced and mobilised. Most of this literature has strived to describe the ways in which actors maneuver the plurality of normative orders available in their immediate environment, insisting on “strategies”, “tactics” and “calculations” as means to articulate Self-ethical positioning. Whereas this scholarship has diversified structuralist understandings of the law ‘as a major instrument of domination’, it has simultaneously depicted engaged actors as cynical strategists driven by rational costs/benefits evaluations. This workshop aims to enrich this scholarship by focusing on values. In tapping into both ongoing philosophical discussions on



values as well as the emerging anthropology of morality, it traces how values are historically and sociologically conceptualized and what they mean for different actors, how they appear in the world, how they circulate, become visible (or on the contrary, get marginalized) and how they transform social and political discourses, practices and subjectivities. Thus this workshop forms a new entry into recent legal anthropological work on transnational bureaucracies and the influential scholarship on audit cultures by focusing on the 'genuine' (and not so genuine) ways in which actors create and shape their moral universe by actively engaging with values. Further, it seeks to understand how the subjectivities of the engaged actors are shaped and influenced by the various normative forces that inform their systems and modes of action in an increasingly interconnected and globalized world. In this workshop we wish to examine these questions through ethnographic accounts of the international human rights regime - understood broadly to incorporate also 'humanitarianism', discussions on 'Corporate Social Responsibility', and legal interventions in post-war/reconstruction or 'democratization' processes.

Presentation 1: Ethical "Scripts": Analyzing the Normative of Human Rights Indicators and Alternatives Toward Social Justice in Ecuador

[Johannes M. Waldmueller](#) (The Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva)

Presentation 2: Justice As a Moral Dilemma. Judicial Practice and the Poetic of Compromise in Kabul

[Antonio De Lauri](#) (Forum Transregionale Studien - Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin)

Presentation 3: Keepers of the 'Truth': Producing 'transparent' Documents for the



UN Universal Periodic Review

[Julie Billaud](#) (Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology)

Presentation 4: Engagement, Detachment and Personal 'space': Exploring 'values' in UN Treaty Body Proceedings

[Miia Halme-Tuomisaari](#) (Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology)

Presentation 5: Towards a Cosmayapolitan Ethics: the Pan-Maya Construction of Rights From a Transnational Perspective

[Genner De Jesus Llanes-Ortiz](#) (Royal Holloway University of London)

Presentation 6: "The Feeling of Pursuing An Ideal": Minorities Section Bureaucrats At the League of Nations Reflect On Their Work

[Jane K Cowan](#) (University of Sussex and University of Sussex)