



SOCIETÀ
ITALIANA
ANTROPOLOGIA
APPLICATA

APRIL 28, 2020

17:00 | 19:00

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**Frédéric
Keck**

**Introduction:
Mara Benadusi
Moderator:
Luca Rimoldi**



UNIVERSITÀ
degli STUDI
di CATANIA

WHAT DO BATS THINK OF THE VIRUS? Sentinels and pandemics

Pandemic is one of those catastrophic events that trigger global mobilization. The rise of a new coronavirus in China in December 2019 confirmed the cyclical nature of the epidemics, after "the Spanish" (1918), the "Asian" (1957) and the "Hong Kong" flu (1968), as well as the Ebola Hemorrhagic Fever (1976), the HIV (1981) and the SARS (2003). These events force the authorities to deal with health, moral, geopolitical and economic consequences of pandemic crises, in a world where processes of urbanization, industrial agriculture, deforestation and climate change provoke dramatic transformations. The sentinel species, on the first line of the "wars against viruses", reveal the emergence of infectious diseases through early warning signs.

Starting from a research conducted in Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore – three territories located on the borders of China and closely connected to the rest of the world – Frédéric Keck shows that "virus hunters" and public health officials collaborate with veterinaries and bird watchers to track mutations of the virus among wild birds, domestic poultry and humans. By using social anthropology methods, Keck describes how, in the so-called Anthropocene, the preparation techniques for pandemics have transformed inter-species relationships.

FREDERIC KECK

Research director at CNRS in France. He directs a comparative study on the social factors that influence the transmission of diseases from animals to humans. He is the author of "Avian Reservoirs: Virus Hunters and Birdwatchers in Chinese Sentinel Post" (Duke University Press 2020) and "Les Sentinelles des pandémies. Chasseurs de virus et observateurs d'oiseaux aux frontières de la Chine" (Zones Sensibles 2020)