
Introduction

The first set of chapters in this handbook presents basic approaches and orientations to economic life found in economic anthropology. The first four chapters present established positions within the sub-discipline, and all locate economic life firmly within its broader social and political context: even Ortiz's chapter on decisions and choices shows how these cannot be understood without close attention to the contexts in which they are made. The final two chapters in this part cover relatively new orientations. Narotzky describes an approach focused on the factors affecting the ways that households provision themselves, one which situates households in something like a commodity chain. The final chapter presents a view of economy that relates people's understandings of and transactions involving objects to their understandings of themselves as a group and of their relationships with other groups.