Dear Authors,

I am writing with an update on the progress of the Global Informality project.

**Big news:** I am happy to report that the manuscript of the Global Encyclopaedia of Informality was submitted for review to the UCL Press. Costanza Curro and Elizabeth Teague took from Sheelagh Barron and previously Anna Bailey to bring the project to completion. The editorial team has edited over 200 entries overall, and I am happy to report that we have included all finalized entries into the two volumes of the Encyclopaedia. As we have overextended the word limit substantially, we had to reformat the submission into two volumes and resubmit (on 11 October). We thank everyone who had submitted entries in time and particularly the authors of the conceptual entries who has worked on very short schedule. I enclose the detailed Table of Contents for your attention at the end of this Newsletter. Also see below how we hope the cover of the book will look. Of course things
will change and we will have to respond to the reviewers’ suggestions but you might want to see the scale of the project and appreciate its complexity to date. We will keep you informed about the progress.

If the UCL Press decides to publish the Encyclopaedia, each author will receive a contract/form to sign. Please note that the UCL Press pioneers open access publications online (and in cheap print). We are not likely to receive complimentary paper copies, and there are no royalties on our publication, but we expect to have a significant number of Internet hits (UCL Press has been very successful with the number of hits on their previous online publications) and we will be given author’s discount to order a paperback copy (UCL Press prints on demand). More on the UCL Press FRINGE series: [https://www.ucl.ac.uk/ucl-press/series](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/ucl-press/series).

**Online version:** UCL Digital Humanities intern Adriana Bastarrachea Santez continues to work on the website, making it accessible and searchable for all. The website is organized as A to Z WIKI where each entry will have an illustration – at least where we managed to secure copyright.

**World Map of Informality:** The map continues to develop with an increasing number of entries submitted to the project. Do spread the word – we do need more!

**The FRINGE connection:**
To become a member of FRINGE and to receive the Centre’s newsletter, sign up at [http://www.ucl.ac.uk/ssees/fringe-centre](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/ssees/fringe-centre). We will be launching a promotion video soon.

Last, but not the least, thank you for all your help in this tough period before the submission.

**Alena Ledeneva**
Professor of Politics and Society, University College London
The FRINGE Series: SOCIAL AND CULTURAL COMPLEXITY

THE GLOBAL ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF INFORMALITY: TOWARDS UNDERSTANDING OF SOCIAL AND CULTURAL COMPLEXITY

Volumes 1-2

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ALENA LEDENEVA
with
Anna Bailey, Sheelagh Barron, Costanza Curro and Elizabeth Teague

The cover features a painting by Pavel Filonov (born in Moscow in 1843, died in the siege of Leningrad in 1941). Filonov has been dubbed “The Seer of the Invisible.” We felt that his work is the nearest proxy to the social and cultural complexity we aim to capture. It tackles the paradox of the abstract and the natural, formularises what’s impossible to formalise, and visualises the invisible, hidden or taken for granted.
Blurb
This book invites you on a voyage of discovery, to explore society’s open secrets, unwritten rules and know-how practices. Broadly defined as ‘ways of getting things done,’ these invisible yet powerful informal practices tend to escape articulation in official discourse. We have identified unique research into such practices; mapped the grey zones, blurred boundaries, types of ambivalence and contexts of complexity, thus creating the first Global Map of Informality. Our database is searchable by region, keyword or type of practice. Do explore what works, how, where and why!

The informal practices revealed in this book include emotion-driven exchanges of gifts or favours and tributes for services, interest-driven know-how (from informal welfare to informal employment and entrepreneurship), identity-driven practices of solidarity, and power-driven forms of co-optation and control. The paradox—or not—of the invisibility of these informal practices is their ubiquity. Expertly practised by insiders but often hidden from outsiders, informal practices are, as this book shows, deeply rooted all over the world, yet underestimated in policy. Entries from all five continents presented in this volume are samples of the truly global and ever-growing collection, made possible by a remarkable collaboration of over 200 scholars across disciplines and area studies.

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