Letter From the President of RC08

Dear colleagues and friends,

The War: A Sociological Perspective. The war in Ukraine: why this war? who is responsible? who will win? And a more personal question: what do we do, individually and collectively, as sociologists? During a war, inside or outside our countries, whether close or far away, we as sociologists think about this 'event', which is always a tragedy: people are killed, etc. Each of us have our own opinions, and sometimes we write for newspapers, sign petitions, etc., but mostly we continue working in our fields of research and specialties.

As historians of our discipline, however, we should ask two other questions: when and how did the war become a sociological object? And why has military sociology always been marginal (war studies are indeed more central in political science and history). I will not answer all these questions, but offer a few words about, first, studies of the war in the work of the founders of sociology, mainly Émile Durkheim, and secondly, the place of war studies in the ISA.
Durkheim and the First World War.

The founders of sociology were witnesses to the first World War, and active as intellectuals in the ‘war effort’, participating in debates, etc., though none produced an important work on the war. Perhaps with one exception: Georg Simmel and his famous essay, *Conflict* (1908). Yet we know of the importance of Marxist-Leninist theory, and more generally of conflict theory: the war as the consequence of imperialism (i.e., capitalist expansion and growth of the market; military-industrial complex theory, etc.). Moreover, Max Weber, at the beginning of the First World War, was a fervent nationalist supporter of the war effort, as were many German intellectuals of the period who were disillusioned with German war policies. Weber became a prominent critic of German expansionism (for example, the Belgium annexation), and of the Kaiser’s war policies.

This is not the place to develop an history of military sociology, with its various perspectives¹. I would, however, like to add a few words about Émile Durkheim and the First world War, and also about the ISA RC01 Armed Forces and Conflict Resolution.

Who wanted War?

During the First World War, Durkheim participated in the ‘propaganda effort’ as the Secretary to the Comité de publication des études et documents de la guerre, and published two pamphlets: *Who wanted War?* (Qui a voulu la guerre? Les origines de la guerre d’après les documents diplomatiques, 1915), in collaboration with his colleague, Ernest Denis; and *L’Allemagne au-dessus de tout: la mentalité allemande et la guerre* (1915). In this second pamphlet, Durkheim presented a sociological analysis of the collective representations in Germany, asking how could the Germans, who once belonged to ‘the family of civilised peoples’, have become such ‘barbaric, aggressive and unscrupulous beings’. His hypothesis was that the origins of such actions were to be found in a ‘set of ideas and feelings’, and a ‘mental and moral system’ that served as a sort of back drop to the ‘country’s consciousness’. This assumed there was such a thing as a German ‘mentality’ or ‘soul’. Durkheim’s study was largely based on the work of Heinrich von Treitschke. Durkheim described what he called the ‘morbid nature’ of the system of ideas known as the German mentality.

In his capacity as secretary of the Publication Committee, Durkheim was also involved in writing the *Lettres à tous les Français*. Originally published as unbound sheets, these pamphlets had a print run of three million copies, and most were distributed through a network of primary school teachers. The goal of the Lettres was to ‘improve the morale of the public mind’ and to counter the effects of the daily reports that concentrated on various events and incidents and stirred up people’s emotions, wore them down and got them over-excited by looking as their ‘permanent causes’. It was hoped that, by giving an overall picture, they would give their readers ‘reasons to be more optimistic’.

The twelve pamphlets were reprinted in book form by Armand Colin in May 1916. Durkheim himself made four contributions, and the project brought together a very heterogeneous group including colleagues from the Sorbonne (Ernest Lavisse and Ernest Denis), a Professor from the Collège de France (Antoine Meillet) and two military men (General Pierre Malleterre and Admiral Jean-Baptiste Degouy). The first letter, which served as an introduction, was entitled ‘Patience, Effort and Confidence’², and was written by Durkheim. He was speaking as a sociologist when he praised the ‘instinctive wisdom’ of France (which had ‘been able to exercise self-control in every kind of


circumstance’), and recalled the importance of collective action and individual self-belief. Durkheim’s leitmotiv was ‘Patience and confidence. We will win’.

According to Durkheim, force of arms and the power of money were not the only things that decide ‘the fate of battles’, which was also determined, Durkheim insisted, by ‘moral force’, and those forces included ‘world opinion’. As the situation changed, what was really at stake gradually became clear: the security of international relations, the right of peoples to self-determination, and the rights of humanity. There was therefore a ‘heightened sense of a human consciousness’, and that was ‘an obstacle for our enemies, and a support for us... We must place our trust in it for the future’.

During the war, the propaganda campaign mobilised many academics: philosophers, sociologists, historians and among them colleagues and collaborators of Durkheim, including Lucien Levi-Bruhl, Célestin Bouglé and Gaston Richard.

RC01 Armed Forces and Conflict Resolution. A few words about the RC01 between 1964 and 1974.

The first meeting of what was to become the RC, took place at a conference on the armed forces held in London, July 1964. The chairman was Morris Janowitz from the University of Chicago. The purpose was ‘to provide an international exploration of the comparative sociology of military institutions’. Participation varied from the V1 World Congress of Sociology in Evian in 1966, to the V11 World Congress in Varna in 1970 (72 papers from 25 countries), to V111 Congress in 1974 in Toronto (50 participants from 24 countries), etc. The three main topics were: 1) Social Recruitment, Prestige and Socialisation of Military Professionals, 2) Civil-Military Relations, Performance of Military Regimes, and 3) International Conflict, Disarmament and Arms Control. In 1974, the RC cooperated in launching an interdisciplinary journal on military institutions, civil-military relations, area control and peacekeeping and conflict management. The founding editor was Morris Janowitz, who has authored many relevant books including The Professional Soldier (1971), and Military Institutions and Coercion in Developing Nations (1977).

Two Conclusions.

First, as sociologists, we should ask a central question: what are our duties during a war, in or outside of our countries? Not necessarily propaganda, but as sociologists, analysts and public intellectuals, interventions (which is the title of one of Bourdieu’s books). Second, as socio-historians of sociology, we should open a field of research on the place of war and international relations in the history of discipline (e.g., in France during the 60’s, there were two important publications: Raymond Aron’s Paix et guerre entre les nations, PUF, 1962; and Georges Bouthoul's Fonctions sociologiques des guerres, in a special issue ‘War-Army-Society’ of Revue française de sociologie, 1961, 11(2):15-21), and perhaps also in the life of our association, the International Sociological Association. Why should we not, during the next Congress in Melbourne, have a session-debate on the war in Ukraine?

Marcel Fournier
President RC 08 History of sociology.

It may be only six months since our last newsletter, but so many major events have occurred in that period it seems a very long interval indeed. We are still experiencing the Covid-19 pandemic in rather different ways in our various locations. For some this is a perilous risk, bringing personal loss of family, friends and colleagues, while for others it has become something of an annoying and highly frustrating interruption to daily routines and the predictability we were once able to take for granted. The problems wrought by the pandemic have been compounded by other major events. For example, the east coast of Australia has been inundated by floods of record-breaking proportions. With the dams continuously at 100 percent capacity, and the land saturated, the continuous rains (it has been raining pretty steadily since September 2021) have swollen all the rivers and creeks and thousands of people have lost their homes not once but several times over the past 18 months. Such local events have taken place within a new set of tensions in Australia's backyard as China increases its hold over South East Asia and the Pacific islands. Looking to the other side of the world, the war in Ukraine has been another unfolding tragedy of major proportions – as our President, Marcel, has noted above. As the balance of power between and within nations irrevocably shifts, our sense of the world is further unsettled and our complacency severely shaken.

Somehow, amidst these events (and so many others I have not mentioned), we continue to teach, research, write and speak as sociologists. Although it is often difficult to maintain a focus on our work, there are many events ahead that are worth the effort. As I write this letter, we are being reminded to submit our abstracts for the ISA World Congress 2023. Hopefully many of you in the RC08 will be able to attend, either in person or on-line. The past two years of Covid-19 has meant the intellectual community has been starved of opportunities for meeting colleagues and making new contacts. I know I have particularly missed being able to introduce my PhD students to the community, showing them how to build networks, find supports and audiences for their work, explaining the conventions of the academy, and revealing the 'fun' side of being a member of a worldwide community. After such a long period, it is so good to have this Congress to look forward to! Let us try to make this a very special event, not just for ourselves, but for all those new, early-career sociologists who have been missing out. So do not delay, get those abstracts in, and you will have some time to work out how best to manage the logistics of getting to the conference itself.

I write this newsletter from my new academic position at the University of Karlstad, Sweden, and have successfully negotiated a somewhat challenging geographic re-location to the other side of the world. I would like to finish with a note of thanks to my new colleagues at Karlstad for making me feel so welcome. It has been a bit of a challenge settling into a new country, battling its bureaucracy, coming to terms with the snow and ice, learning a new language, and trying to access essential services (like medical care, internet and banking). Nevertheless, so many people have helped me to do this, and I am finally feeling settled, and have even learned to ride a bicycle so I can be a real Swedish woman. Thank you Karlstad!

Fran Collyer
Editor RC08 Newsletter
Secretary RC08
World Congress RC08 Sessions

World Congress June 25 - July 01, 2023 Melbourne, Australia.

The abstract submission process is open now. We have ten RC08 Sessions:

• Comparative National Histories of Sociology
• Follow the Money. Social Research and Funding Sources
• Past, Present and Future: Learning from ‘Old’ Sociological Research
• Reflecting upon Translation in the History of Sociology
• Sociology and Sociologists in Latin America. Institutions, Biographies, Networks, and Comparative Perspectives.
• South-South Intellectual Exchanges: Networks, Actors, Theories, Impact
• The Genesis of Sociology and the Relationship to Its Sibling Disciplines
• Theories and Methods in Undertaking Histories of Sociology
• Transnational Histories of Sociology
• When the Devil Started Laughing: Social Prognostication in Historical Comparison

Member's Publications


Baudry Rocquin: New book on the history of sociology - November 2021 - I am very happy to inform you that my new book has just been published (in French) at L'Harmattan Paris, on 18 November 2021. The official title is "L'invention de la sociologie et de l'anthropologie sociale (1789-1940) - Les Filles de la Révolution" which translates as "The Invention of Sociology and Social Anthropology (1789-1940) - The Daughters of Revolution". It is 140-page long and was written during the 2020 lockdown in France.

Book summary: 'Where do sociology and anthropology stem from? The book offers to shed a brand-new light on the history of sociology through the rivalry of two superpowers, France and Britain, from 1789 to 1940. The book argues in a compelling and stimulating way that the birth of Totalitarianism in Europe can be attributed to the failure of sociology itself'.

If you are interested in learning more about it or would like to order a copy, you may have look at the editor's webpage at: (https://www.editions-harmattan.fr/livre-l_invention_de_la_sociologie_et_de_l_antropologie_sociale_1789_1940_les_filles_de_la_revolution_baudry_rocquin-9782343248264-71730.html) (in French only) - or watch the 2'30 Youtube presentation video (https://youtu.be/MLCF_87iZ0I)


Histories of Sociology have become increasingly popular in recent decades, particularly national histories of Sociology, yet there have been few attempts to articulate a methodology and methods appropriate for the tasks at hand. This chapter examines the History of Sociology as a speciality of the discipline, defining its boundaries and tracing its own history. It investigates many national histories of sociology to ascertain their methods and methodologies, and reveals the extent to which these engage with existing methods and methodologies as found in the disciplines of Sociology and History, but also their related specialities, including the History of Ideas and History of Intellectuals, as well as Historical Sociology, the Sociology of Science, the Sociology of Ideas, the Sociology of Intellectuals, the Sociology of Institutions, and the Sociology of Knowledge. This systematic review suggests the sub-speciality has recently shifted from an emphasis on the Sociology of Ideas to a Sociology of Institutions, and begun to adopt, albeit implicitly, the principles of the Sociology of Knowledge in its increasing acknowledgement of the shaping of Sociology's terrain by the geo-socio-political context.


**Sociology of the Interwar Period in the German-speaking World. 1st Vol.**

In five volumes, the central main currents, theories, special sociologies, methods and institutionalisation processes of German-language sociology in the interwar period are presented in 100 contributions. The first volume was published in 2021, followed by another volume every year. The project is located at the Austrian Academy of Sciences.

It can be seen that the interwar period in the German-speaking world was a period in which a variety of sociological orientations emerged. Fascism put an abrupt end to this, even though some of the actors went into exile and continued to spread their ideas there, while others put their empirical knowledge at the service of National Socialism.

These volumes thus not only make an eminently valuable contribution to reviewing the history of sociology in theoretical, empirical and institutional terms, but also deepen this subject history by referring to neighbouring disciplines such as social history and the history of ideas, economics, psychology and ethnology.

**LINK:**

In a critical, comparative study of the sociological literature, this book explores the term “time,” and the various interconnections between time and a broad cluster of topics that create a conceptual labyrinth. Various understandings of time manifest themselves in the context of many individual social problems—there is no single vision in sociology of how to grasp time and address within social theory. This book, therefore, attempts to define an approach to the concept of time and its associated terms (duration, temporality, acceleration, compression, temporal structures, change, historical consciousness, and others). The volume is guided by a critical engagement with three main questions: a) the formation of human understanding of time; b) the functioning of temporal structures at different levels of social reality; c) the role and place of time in general sociological theory.

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Just Published!


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Bristol University Press is pleased to announce the launch of the Decolonization and Social Worlds series. Providing a radical new platform for high quality monographs that respond to the call for a decolonial revolution in sociology and the social sciences, this international series aims to expand the scope and imagination of the field.

Series editors Alana Lentin, Western Sydney University, Ali Meghji, University of Cambridge, and Syed Farid Alatas, National University of Singapore recently announced the series’ international editorial board, and are now accepting proposals.

We invite prospective authors to submit proposals for books of at least 60,000 words in length and we will be open to authored and edited volumes.

The subjects include (but not limited to):

* Knowledge
* Forgotten scholars
* Globalization
* Social methods and methodologies
* Gender
* Sexualities
* Race
* Indigeneity
* Migration
* Culture
* Political Economy
* Health
* Ecology

To discuss ideas for your next book in this field, please contact:

Ali Meghji (am2059@cam.ac.uk)
Alana Lentin (a.lentin@westernsydney.edu.au)
Syed Farid Alatas (alatas@nus.edu.sg)
Shannon Kneis (shannon.kneis@bristol.ac.uk)

Find out more about the series. To receive updates about the series, subscribe to our Sociology mailing list.
Call For Papers

Call for Papers
(Deadline: July 31, 2022)

Women in the History of Sociology
On the importance of works of classical women social scientists

Conference / Annual Meeting of the Section “History of Sociology”
of the German Sociological Association (DGS)

Organization:
Nicole Holzhauser (TU Braunschweig), Barbara Grüning (Università Milano-Bicocca)

Date:
Nov. 9 – Nov. 11, 2022
planned in attendance* with hybrid option if necessary (* = subject to the health situation)

Conference Venue:
Technische Universität Braunschweig (Institute of Technology), Germany

Small preface in own section matter of the section for the History of Sociology

As a section, we are planning a series of meetings over the next two years that will address single- and multi-dimensional processes of discrimination and marginalisation in the history of sociology. We want to take diversity seriously as a topic and research question, and contribute to the uncovering of historical social discrimination and/or marginalisation, but also and especially to the removing of contemporary social inequalities of researchers as well as of research topics in the scientific field of the social sciences.

To this end, we cordially invite researchers who are interested in contributing to this project from their respective current (sub-)disciplinary perspectives as well as from the research history of their field to collaborate across subdisciplines and sections. We also invite researchers working on the history of sociology, as well as all other social sciences, to critically examine possible historical processes of displacement of relevant knowledge (and relevant actors) in a sociological-historical and intersectional perspective. Our empirical analytical goal is to (re)discover lost or repressed knowledge, to theoretically reappraise related processes and practices of forgetting or repression, and to make the insights gained useful for contemporary sociology.
Nicole Holzhauser and Barbara Grüning will kick off this research series by organising a conference (the annual meeting of 2022) on "Women in the History of Sociology." This will be followed by a section meeting in 2023 on non-European, non-Western sociological knowledge in German-language sociological history (organised by Takemitsu Morikawa). In addition, we would like to continue and intensify this research series inviting proposals for further topics and conferences.

Call for Papers

From the present of the discipline, we look back on a history of forgetting. Only very few social scientists, having outgrown their historical context, are canonised or even marginally remembered for their life, work and impact as classics, i.e., as producers of relevant and still current knowledge. Those who are remembered with their works, in turn, have a great influence on the present of the discipline, on theoretical foundations, questions, definitions and developments of terms, methodological orientations and, in particular, on the socialisation of social scientists in specialised training as well as the self-image of the discipline. Who may be preserved in the history of sociology, that is, in the historical memory, as well as in the present discourse of the discipline, in which ways and for which reasons? All these are crucial questions. For this reason, theoretical and empirical questions, such as those concerning the selection decisions about or the selection processes of works and persons, especially with regard to the criteria for the productive processes of remembering and forgetting, as well as their consequences, are of great importance. To what extent do social structures of power and domination determine these processes, shape and limit the knowledge of a science? How do social scientists justify their selection criteria for knowledge stocks to be preserved? And are these criteria theoretically founded? Could there be 'neutral' criteria at all and how would one arrive at them? Can the 'neutral scientific discourse' possibly itself be part of repressive mechanisms and promote discrimination or marginalisation? Our aim is to approach these questions from an intersectional perspective, using the example of women in the history of sociology.

If the criteria of distinction according to which decisions about remembering (and continuing to use) and forgetting (and henceforth ignoring) are made in scholarly practice were such that no social (or otherwise, e.g., gender-correlated, categorised) groups had been systematically disadvantaged in the scholarly system compared to others, one might confidently think: 'Forgetting, it is part of it and it is productive'. However, the 'choices' in this process of inclusion and exclusion in the history of sociology are mostly not conscious, but usually based on rarely reflected micro-practices which affect both the disciplinary present and the future of the discipline (and thus, can also be studied in the discipline's past). These micro-practices, moreover, seem in their sum and consequence to lead to the disadvantage of very specific individuals and groups (or bodies of knowledge associated with them) whose contribution to the social sciences, however, may be relevant.

The aim of this section conference is to deal with the above-mentioned problems using the example of women in the social sciences, their individual as well as collective scientific biographies from the (forgotten) history of the social sciences. Our aim is to (re)bring to light the achievements and merits of women scholars, as well as to pose the theoretical and empirical question about their relevance and topicality. We want to ask whether there are works, approaches and perspectives that - for whatever reason - have been forgotten, but whose re-reading is essential for today's discipline, and to discuss them in terms of content, i.e., to consciously dedicate ourselves to these forgotten contents once again in a critical reflection from the current perspective.
This includes the analytical question of the practices, institutions, thought patterns, fields of knowledge and power that have caused and legitimised the (previous) forgetting, as well as the methodological question of research strategies to be able to 're-find' and 'salvage' forgotten knowledge stocks in history.

Beyond the exegesis of works and thus classical sociology, we are interested in examining invisible power structures within the social science field (or within certain parts of the intellectual field) from a sociological perspective on the processes of development. On a collective level, we are also interested, for example, in gender structure and how it changed in the process of institutionalisation and specialisation of the social science field. How were women incorporated into the discipline or fields of social science? Which topics and subject areas do they dominate and in which were or are they under-represented? To what extent were and are there self-selection mechanisms? We are interested in the social as well as the knowledge trajectories associated with institutionalisation: Who receives(s) whom and for what, who cooperates(s) and works(s) with whom? To what extent are these relationships shaped by power structures or power imbalances, etc.?

With this conference we want to contribute to the inclusion and explicit integration of neglected and forgotten women social scientists in the history of sociology. Connected with this is the intention to give persons and groups previously disadvantaged on the basis of social features the professional recognition they deserve by integrating them into contemporary sociological discourses, so that they can face history again under changed conditions that also need to be discussed, and so that we can (re)discuss their relevance for sociology today.

Contributions are invited that...

- ... explore the question of how knowledge has been processed in the history of sociology in a long-term perspective, i.e., according to which selection criteria remembering and forgetting has been or is controlled in the social sciences, and which criteria these processes follow.
- ...deal with one-dimensional and multi-dimensional processes of discrimination and marginalisation in the history of sociology using the example of women and analyse the underlying mechanisms. In doing so, an analytical approach to the question of why certain groups of people were subjected to these processes, what function this had and for whose benefit this happened, should become visible.
- ...constructively address the question of what (framework) conditions and behaviours would have to be in place to prevent such discrimination and marginalisation, and to what extent discrimination-free mechanisms for shaping remembering and forgetting can exist at all, or what they might look like.
- And, last but not least, we want to offer historical women from sociology and from neighbouring disciplines in the humanities and social sciences, or within the intellectual field, a sociological-historical space that provides them with an opportunity to engage in a sociological debate once again under the changed competitive conditions of contemporary discourse.

We look forward to receiving meaningful contribution proposals (ca. 350 words) in German or English by July 31, 2022, with brief biographical details to n.holzhauser@tu-braunschweig.de and barbara.gruning@unimib.it. We would especially like to encourage young scientists to submit proposals.
The End