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RC35

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NEWSLETTER
of the Research
Committee on
Conceptual and
Terminological
Analysis

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION: LOOKING BACK, LOOKING FORWARD

Dear members of RC35,

On behalf of the board, I welcome our new members and invite all of you to participate in our activities!

Our main event next year will be the IV Forum of Sociology in Porto Alegre (July 14-18, 2020), having as its main theme: "Challenges of the 21st Century: Democracy, Environment, Inequalities, Intersectionality." Our Call for Sessions was very successful, and we would like to thank all of you who submitted session proposals. We received a large number of high-quality submissions addressing several fields of conceptual analysis in sociological theory and research and made our best efforts to include most of them in the program. Unfortunately, given the limited availability of time slots we still had to reject some excellent proposals. Yet we trust that you will find our program as exciting as we do and look forward to everyone's participation in order to bring it to life.

The topics extend from feminism to precarious work, from critical theory to relational sociology, from sociological comparatism to the phenomenology of power, from collaboration in sociology to the metamorphoses of the discipline, from art in contemporary society to the production of knowledge between 'north' and 'south'.

Below you will find general information on the Forum in Porto Alegre as well as the Calls for Papers. The deadline for submitting abstracts is **September 30, 2019**. We look forward to receiving your proposals!

Arthur Bueno, Secretary, Treasurer & Newsletter Editor

ISA FORUM PORTO ALEGRE 2020

GENERAL INFORMATION

The forum website with further information is:

<https://www.isa-sociology.org/en/conferences/forum/porto-alegre-2020>

Fourth ISA Forum of Sociology (Porto Alegre, Brazil, July 14-18, 2020). ISA Forum of Sociology is designed as a mid-term meeting of Research Committees, Working Groups and Thematic Groups combined with the Business Meeting of the ISA Research Council. The forthcoming Fourth ISA Forum of Sociology will be organized by Geoffrey Pleyers, current ISA Vice-President Research, in collaboration with the ISA Research Coordinating Committee and the Brazilian Local Organizing Committee, chaired by Hermilio Santos, Pontifical Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul.

Duties and Deadlines for Program Coordinators and Session Organizers of the Research Committees, Working and Thematic Groups:

January 15, 2019. Announcing Program Coordinators: RC/WG/TG provide name and contact details of Program Coordinator to the ISA Secretariat.

February 4 – 15 March 2019. Call for Sessions: 1. RC/WG/TG session proposer must submit session's description on-line via Confex platform. 2. Invited session organizer (RC/WG/TG, Presidential, Plenary, LOC sessions, etc.) must submit session's description on-line via Confex platform.

March 16 – 8 April 2019. Final list of Sessions: RC/WG/TG Program Coordinator must finalize a list of sessions. Sessions format, titles, descriptions and the language in which they will be held (English, French or Spanish), as well as contact details of session organizers (name, affiliation, country, e-mail) will be available on the ISA conference platform run by Confex.

April 25 – 30 September 2019. Abstracts submission: Participants and organizers of invited sessions must submit abstracts on-line via Confex platform. Abstracts must be submitted in English, French or Spanish. Only abstracts submitted on-line will be considered in the selection process.

October 7 – 4 November 2019. Abstracts selection: Session Organizer must complete selection of abstracts and provide a final presentation designation (oral, distributed, poster, round table). Session Organizers move good quality abstracts unsuited for their sessions to the Program Coordinator's bin for transfer to another session. **Note:** abstracts transfers should be done to the Program Coordinator's bin as early as possible so that good abstracts may be transferred to other appropriate sessions to enable organizers to consider these transferred abstracts and make decisions within the deadlines. **Session Organizers** add chairs, co-chairs, discussants, and panellists to their sessions as needed.

ISA FORUM PORTO ALEGRE 2020

GENERAL INFORMATION

November 5 – 25 November 2019. Abstracts re-location: Program Coordinator re-locates good quality abstracts considered unsuited by Session Organizers from the Program Coordinator's bin to other sessions. No more sessions can be added after November 24, 2019 deadline.

December 2, 2019. Notification letters: Confex sends notification letters to: authors and co-authors of accepted abstracts; authors of rejected abstracts.

December 16, 2019 – January 26, 2020. Sessions Scheduling: *December 15 - January 15:* Confex schedules Joint Session, Round Table, and Poster sessions. *January 16 - January 31:* Program Coordinators schedule regular sessions.

January 31, 2020. Applications for Registration Grants deadline: Program Coordinator receives applications for ISA grants submitted by the participants.

February 15, 2020. Submission of proposed Registration Grants recipients: Program Coordinator sends a list of selected individuals and amounts recommended to the ISA Secretariat (isa@isa-sociology.org) for verification and approval.

March 19, 2020. Registration deadline for presenters: Registration must be paid by the dead-

line. Confex matches registrations with accepted presenters and will send out last reminder to register. Presenters who have failed to register will be automatically deleted from the program.

April 1 - 17, 2020. Session Organizer modifies sessions based on withdrawal of non-registered presenters. **Chairs and discussants** are assigned from among the registered participants. **Program Coordinator** completes sessions schedule according to the conference timetable. In case the type of an individual's presentation is changed, or if a presentation is transferred to a different session, Confex will send notifications to authors with final session and presentation details after April 30.

May 5, 2020. Online program published.

ISA FORUM PORTO ALEGRE 2020 CALLS FOR PAPERS

PROGRAM COORDINATORS:

David STRECKER, University of Frankfurt, Germany, david.strecker@campus.tu-berlin.de

Arthur BUENO, University of Frankfurt, Germany, OliveiraBueno@normativeorders.net

SESSION OVERVIEW

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1. Critical Theory and the Diagnosis of the Present: What World Do We Live in?

SESSION ORGANIZERS:

Craig BROWNE, University of Sydney, Australia,
craig.browne@sydney.edu.au

Arthur BUENO, University of Frankfurt, Germany,
OliveiraBueno@normativeorders.net

Joint Session with RC16 Sociological Theory

Language: English

Session Type: Oral

The contemporary world appears to be riven with problems, conflicts and contradictions. One can point without difficulty to the current crisis of globalization and the neoliberal order, the recurrent outbursts of protests in various parts of the world and the rise of new forms of authoritarianism. However, it is necessary to ask whether the broad recognition of these tendencies is matched by compelling social theoretical diagnoses of the times. In this respect, one can compare the current discussions with those of the classical sociological theorists, who offered wide ranging views on modernity and its crises. Owing to its distinctive methodology of immanent critique, the Frankfurt School tradition of Critical Theory has systematically put forward diagnoses of the times, a task that has been taken up in different ways by its first, second, third and fourth generations. These diagnoses seek to explain the current state of social relations and how the present phase of capitalist modernization generates social pathologies, unfolding social

conflicts, and political struggles. Papers are invited that explore the questions of how established Critical Theory diagnoses of the times can be built upon and whether subsequent social theoretical developments warrant a reformulation of their methodological foundations. Is it still possible, for instance, to provide an overarching and global diagnosis of the present? Why have the normative-utopian and analytical-explanatory elements of diagnoses so often come apart? How should the recent Critical Theory diagnoses of the times be assessed in light of the unique challenges of the present?

2. Critical Theory and the Diagnosis of the Present: What World Do We Live in?, Pt. 2

SESSION ORGANIZER:

David STRECKER, University of Frankfurt, Germany,
david.strecker@campus.tu-berlin.de

Language: English
Session Type: Oral

The contemporary world appears to be riven with problems, conflicts and contradictions. One can point without difficulty to the current crisis of globalization and the neoliberal order, the recurrent outbursts of protests in various parts of the world and the rise of new forms of authoritarianism. However, it is necessary to ask whether the broad recognition of these tendencies is matched by compelling social theoretical diagnoses of the times. In this respect, one can compare the current discussions with those of the classical sociological theorists, who offered wide ranging views on modernity and its crises. Owing to its distinctive methodology of immanent critique, the Frankfurt School tradition of Critical Theory has systematically put forward diagnoses of the times, a task that has been taken up in different ways by its first, second, third and fourth generations. These diagnoses seek to explain the current state of social relations and how the present phase of capitalist modernization generates social pathologies, unfolding social

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3. Feminism Since and Beyond Beauvoir: Gender Struggles 70 Years after the Second Sex

SESSION ORGANIZERS:

Mariana TEIXEIRA, CEBRAP (Brazilian Center for Analysis and Planning), Brazil,
mariana.on.teixeira@gmail.com

Ingrid CYFER, Unifesp (Federal University of Sao Paulo), Brazil,
ingridcy@gmail.com

Language: English
Session Type: Oral

Seventy years after the first appearance of *The Second Sex*, Simone de Beauvoir's theory remains the object of debate and controversy. On the one hand, the provocative view that one is not born, but *becomes* a woman has been harshly contested by traditionalist sectors of academia (and of society at large) which seek to preserve a clear-cut gender binarism and the social roles ascribed to each gender. On the other hand, Beauvoir's characterization of what this *becoming a woman* looks like has been also harshly criticized by third-wave, intersectionalist feminists who shed light on the persisting forms of bias underlying *The Second Sex* – regarding race, class, and other categories of social domination. The fact that it has been passionately labelled both as subversive *and* conservative is an indicator that this book has yet to be grasped in its full explanatory and normative potential regarding present-day dilemmas within feminist theory and practice. This session will discuss the

actuality and limits of Beauvoir's legacy: What has changed since Beauvoir penned her masterpiece? What remains the same? Can it still resonate with contemporary forms of gender struggle? In what directions should we go beyond it?

4. How Is Society Possible? Relational and Processual Sociology after Simmel

SESSION ORGANIZER:

Natàlia CANTO MILA, Universitat Oberta de Catalunya, Spain,
ncantom@uoc.edu

Language: English
Session Type: Oral

Taking the cue from Georg Simmel's classical essay "How is Society Possible?", this session invites scholars to explore the relational and processual character of social life. Today, as in Simmel's time, to examine the conditions for the emergence of society as well as for its constitution as an object of knowledge amounts to probing into the very foundations of sociology. So much so, that the multiple approaches that make up the discipline can be distinguished precisely on the basis of the different answers they provide to that question. Discussing such an issue has become, moreover, particularly pressing at a time when established institutions are facing crises of different kinds – economic, ecological, political, social psychological – which call into question not only specific forms of life but potentially the reproduction of society itself. How are we to address the conditions of sociality in a context where, to paraphrase an often-quoted statement, it is easier to imagine the end of the

world than the end of the social order as we know it? In which ways can we build upon classical and contemporary social theories in order to answer Simmel's foundational question? What are the ontological, epistemological, normative and political implications of such an endeavour? What consequences does it entail for empirical research and the analysis of current forms of association? We invite papers that explore these and related issues on the basis of Simmel's oeuvre and/or from other relational and processual perspectives in social theory.

5. Marginal, Informal, Precarious: Studying Work from an Intersectional Perspective in Different Societal and Spatial Contexts

SESSION ORGANIZERS:

Fabienne DECIEUX, Johannes Kepler University, Austria,
fabienne.decieux@jku.at

Johanna GRUBNER, Johannes Kepler Universität Linz, Austria,
johanna.grubner@jku.at

Virginia PFLUECKE, B-TU Cottbus, Germany,
kimeyp@yahoo.de

Joint Session with RC32 Women, Gender and Society
Language: English
Session Type: Oral

In the 21st century different phenomena of intersectional exploitation like global care chains have been detected. Concepts like racial capitalism have become a mainstay to address economic structures deriving value from the subordination of people of color and migrants. Big theoretical concepts such as coloniality and patriarchy have reentered sociological analyzes of the global labor market. While many share a common intersectional perspective, discourses and receptions differ strongly: different language areas do not rely on the same theoretical frameworks, and one region might find a concept fruitful while others might not believe it to be a central pillar of analysis. While many agree in a pessimistic assessment of our time – especially in analyzing today's labor markets and their future social embedding – different concepts are used in different societal and spatial contexts.

In our session, we want to shed a light on three central theoretical concepts used in feminist and

intersectional analyses of the labor market – *marginal, informal, and precarious work*. Why has the deterioration of workers' social status within the Global North been evaluated with the theory of *precariousness* and *precarization* (e.g. Aulenbacher et. al. 2014), while sociologists from the Global South are applying the concepts of *informalization* (e.g. Chen 2013) or *marginalization* (e.g. Moraña et al. 2008)? What conceptual differences lie in the different terminologies, and what are their implications to a feminist intersectional perspective? Finally: which concepts do we apply when analyzing an increasingly global labor market?

6. Metamorphoses of Sociology: What Can We Expect of It and Do about It?

SESSION ORGANIZERS:

Paulo Henrique MARTINS ALBUQUERQUE, Federal University of Pernambuco, Brazil,
paulohenriquemar@gmail.com

André MAGNELLI, Ateliê de Humanidades, Brazil,
direcao.ateliedehumanidades@gmail.com

Language: English
Session Type: Oral

Sociology is a relatively recent science whose end may be near. Born in modernity, it may be a victim of its deconstruction, to which it has contributed. In this time of mutations, we wonder: Is sociology living a crisis and, if so, what does the near future hold in store for it? To answer these questions, we plunge into perplexities: But what is sociology? What can it know? What is it good for? What should it do? Or rather, what can we expect of it and do about it?

In this session we wish to reflect on the crisis of sociology in the face of a general crisis of our time. It is necessary to debate it from researchers' perspectives from different countries and regions. What interpretations are there about the crisis, and what outlets are being proposed? It is important to reflect on the history of sociology from its diverse culture and theoretical perspectives; to articulate its history with the present, connecting the crisis of

sociology with that of society and universities; and to reconstruct the experiences of classical sociology with disciplinary connections and theoretical and empirical plurality. In order to reflect critically on the limits of deconstructivist approaches – which are too attached to the discourse, thus reinforcing the current fragmentation process of reality and disconnection from its complexity –, we want to think about the possible metamorphoses that allow sociology not only to understand but also to respond to the challenges of the present time.

7. Phenomenology of Power: New Theoretical Approaches of the 21st Century

SESSION ORGANIZER:

Jochen DREHER, University of Konstanz, Germany,
jochen.dreher@uni-konstanz.de

Language: English
Session Type: Oral

This session concentrates on new theoretical outlines to conceptualize the phenomenon of power with a specific emphasis on current ideas of sociological thought that confront the established paradigms. Parting from and challenging classical social thought and theories of power from Francis Bacon, Friedrich Nietzsche, Karl Marx, Max Weber, Norbert Elias, Hannah Arendt, Michel Foucault, Steven Lukes, Pierre Bourdieu or others, we are discovering new outlines of a phenomenology of power. The established theories of power are under scrutiny with respect to their potential to analyze current developments related to the global challenges – as proposed for this conference – of democracy, environment, inequalities or intersectionality. The question is if the classical conceptions of power are still suitable to theoretically capture the problems of current globalized or network societies? Do we need to implement a new concept

of “communication power” (Manuel Castells) to consider power phenomena of the digital age? How can we theoretically capture political implications and questions of power with respect to the collection and control of (big) data in the network society? Are new social inequalities being created in current times of internet communication and how can we theoretically conceptualize them? The session welcomes new theoretical reflections on the phenomenon of power with a strong reference to the societal challenges of the 21st century.

8. Refashioning Collaboration

SESSION ORGANIZERS:

James MERRON, University of Basel, South Africa,
james.merron@unibas.ch

Elisio MACAMO, University of Basel, Switzerland,
elisio.macamo@unibas.ch

Language: English
Session Type: Oral

We are interested in thinking about collaboration as a particular modality of research and scholarship. A proposition formulated by David Scott serves as a framework for this panel session. Reassessing the role of criticism, Scott expresses a deep discomfort with the authoritative postures of critical thinking – its will to power, its presumption of truth telling, its masculinist and imperial arrogance – and with a model of scholarship as solitary endeavour, the exercise of a singular, sovereign and penetrating mind excavating the roots of social ills. Scott proposes the idea of friendship as an alternative model of thinking, one that is inherently dialogical and collaborative, and one that works less in the direction of truth than of clarification. What friends do with each other, Scott tells us, is to clarify matters of mutual concern. Friendship as a condition and context of reflective scholarly thinking depends on an ongoing provisional and recursive practice assembled, notably, out of both speaking

and listening. Friends are not only speaking but also listening selves. And listening is indispensable for clarification. Friends, understood in this way, are those who are able to cultivate a practice of listening as a dimension of thinking in each other's milieu. This posture toward scholarly engagement sets the tone for this panel session, which invites discussants to 'refashion collaboration', whether that be from north to South or inter- and transdisciplinary research.

9. Simultaneity and Reception: Concepts to Analyze the Production of Knowledge between “South” and “North”

SESSION ORGANIZERS:

Alejandro BIALAKOWSKY, Instituto de Investigaciones Gino Germani - Facultad de Ciencias Sociales - Universidad de Buenos Aires - CONICET, Argentina, alebiala_25@hotmail.com

Pablo DE MARINIS, Universidad de Buenos Aires, Instituto de Investigaciones Gino Germani, CONICET, Argentina, pablodemarinis@gmail.com

Gina ZABLUDOVSKY, Facultad de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Mexico, ginaza@unam.mx

Language: English
Session Type: Oral

Sociologies have always been elaborated in a field of tensions between local traditions and their interactions with wider contexts, regional or global. For reasons known, the circulation of knowledges has been unequal in terms of the volume of their flow. Thus, it has been asserted that the “South” has often been a “passive recipient” of problematizations, theories and analyses produced in other cultural contexts, namely the “North”. However, has that been the case? Have there not been rather “creative receptions” between one context and another as much as complex convergences and differences between the simultaneous problems that cross the “South” and the “North”?

At the intersection between diverse studies of social and sociological theory, of sociology of culture and intellectuals, and of intellectual and conceptual history, this session invites to reflect on the concepts of “simultaneity” and “reception” (and

others related), with the aim of deepening on the relations between the “South” and the “North” in terms of the production and circulation of theories and analyses. Contributions are expected to address these notions and, from there, maybe even discuss the definitions of the “South” and the “North” themselves. These exercises would also allow comparing contributions of different authors based on confluences and divergences in the complex and heterogeneous simultaneity of capitalist modernity, and/or studying cases, in which the various intellectual operations can be observed (adaptations, revisions, appropriations, conceptual creations) that are put into play when a perspective or a specific intellectual tradition “reads”, “recodes” and “reconverts” other perspectives and traditions.

10. Varieties of Sociological Comparatism

SESSION ORGANIZER:

Sergio MICELI, University of São Paulo, Brazil,
zaem@usp.br

Language: English
Session Type: Oral

The comparative mode of sociological intelligibility goes back to the founders of the discipline, in particular to Weber's sociology of religion. Comparative analysis, in its demanding version, involves not only the confrontation of experiences in a given domain of reality – religion, political system, economy, etc. – but the entire history of the social formations in question. In this sense, it consists in a complex strategy that requires considerable intellectual investment, as demonstrated by Weber's endeavors: the genesis of religions is entangled in processes of differentiation leading to a certain social hierarchy as well as to the emergence of a body of specialized religious agents. Delving into social diversity takes its toll in terms of data collection, respect for native categories and the unavoidable limits of one's own comparative stance. There can, however, be alternative paths to comparatism as long as the focus is somehow narrowed down. In-

stead of adhering to an ill-founded or insufficiently substantiated comparatism, one might envision projects of comparative explanation concentrated on social formations which have developed under similar historical circumstances, as in comparative researches on European (Charles Tilly), Latin American (Tulio Dongui), or Asian (Benedict Anderson) countries whose morphological peculiarities do not prevent the contrast between certain domains of practice (e.g., the transformations of economic or intellectual activity, or of national identity). Furthermore, it is necessary to expand the comparative scope by giving voice to sociological endeavors of transnational nature, even if the cases under consideration do not fit the parameters of Weber-inspired comparative analysis.

11. What Is Art in Contemporary Society and Sociology: Conceptual Interrogations

SESSION ORGANIZER:

Sachiko TAKITA-ISHII, Yokohama City University, Japan,
stakita@yokohama-cu.ac.jp

Language: English
Session Type: Oral

This session invites scholars who are interested in the role of “art” in society and the usage of “art” in sociological inquiry. The role of art may vary in different socio-cultural contexts around the world. For example, questions such as what is art in art education in different societies can be conceptually analyzed and compared. As for art as a research method, currently Art-Based Research (ABR) has been developed and used as a new method of inquiry in various intersectional and intercultural fields, such as Education, Anthropology, International Relations, History, Psychology, Health Sciences and (of course) in Sociology. Since this is a nascent field, we would like to welcome pioneering and experimental submission with keen interests in its conceptual appropriation and potentiality of arts unfolds.

BOARD (2018-2022)

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David Strecker,

University of Frankfurt, Germany,
david.strecker@campus.tu-berlin.de

Secretary, Treasurer & Newsletter Editor

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OliveiraBueno@normativeorders.net

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