



# Newsletter

**May 2000**

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## From the Secretary

Our interim conference in Torun is the main forthcoming event, but not the only topic of this newsletter, written still in New York but produced in Austria and mailed from there thanks to the help of my son Florian.

Besides an updated program of the conference you will find also some practical tips regarding the transportation facilities and schedules.

Additionally I am happy to announce this year's winner of the Chall Dissertation Fellowship, Eszter Pál. Congratulations to our first female winner who is also the first from a so-called transitional society.

This is the last issue for everyone who didn't pay yet his or her dues for 2000 or will do it in Torun in cash where I will accept payments in US Dollars, or Euros. You can see the year up to which you've paid at the right corner of the address label.

For the next newsletter I plan to publish an updated directory of members; so, please, send me corrections and addenda before September 1, 2000.

# Letter from the President, No. 5

## No history of sociology without theoretical interests, no sociological theory construction without a foundation in the history of sociology

by Dirk Kaesler

Before we meet at our next "Interim Conference" in Torun allow me to offer - besides my unchanged conviction of the indispensability of our occupation with the history of sociology - two theses about the relation between history of sociology and sociological theory.

By sociological theory I mean that scholarly endeavour that aims for a systematic combination of statements about social reality based upon empirically proven sentences about interrelations between single observations, hypotheses and observed regularities in social reality. History of sociology means that scholarly endeavour to reconstruct those manifold processes that have governed the historical development of sociology until to-day. Both, sociological theory and history of sociology, are interconnected in the following manner:

- 1) Without the systematic occupation with competing histories of sociology no progress in sociological theory construction is possible; it instead suffers under the permanent danger of a rediscovery of the well-known.
- 2) Without the orientation at theoretical interests any history of sociology ends in antiquarian irrelevance for ongoing sociological research.

Do not agree too hastily with these two theses!

Who abuses history of sociology as some sorts of store to "proof" any argument of their own theoretical efforts not only produce useless history of sociology but also useless theory. What would remain of some trendy theory construction if one would realise that there is no such thing as Max Weber's "theory of modernity", that Talcott Parsons did not go so much "further" than Weber, but only abused Weber's work very idiosyncratically, if one would realise that trendy concepts like "individualisation" or "reflexivity" are no new concepts at all, - not even their labels? It can be shown that much of recent so-called "theory-production" in sociology has no valid historical foundation. Too much read-

ing of historical material prevents many "discoveries" and "inventions".

But also a purely "historical" history of sociology has no legitimate place in scholarly sociology. The most detailed reconstruction for example of the development of sociology during Nazi times or of West-German sociology, the most complete listings of chair-holders, booktitles, research projects, memberships, or such details alike, as well as a purely history-of-ideas reconstruction of all sociological textbooks, an all other such diligent enterprises have to answer the justified question whether they help to proceed with a sociology that can understand and explain social reality better. History for history's sake has no good place in sociology. Even the most complete knowledge of all details of the life of a sociological "classic", the most profound knowledge of all sociological contributions on suicide, or the complete list of all members of any sociological paradigm do not provide a history of sociology that is of significant relevance for sociology. It should, instead, be left to the "real" historians. Who, as sociologist, deals with the *Sozialgestalt* as well as the *Ideengestalt* of sociology has to answer the question what this contributes to topical sociological research. And this reply can only be given if theoretical interests stand behind our historical research.

In Torun we shall have another opportunity to discuss these questions. See you there!

To communicate with me by e-mail: [kaesler@mail.uni-marburg.de](mailto:kaesler@mail.uni-marburg.de).

# A Response to “Letter from the President, No.1”

Some more reasons, in no particular order, for knowing your past

by Sam Whimster

London Guildhall University

Reading Dirk Kaesler’s justification for the history of sociology (Newsletter, January 1999, pp. 2-6), I was forcibly struck by the emphasis on philosophical anthropology. At the heart of what Kaesler is proposing is an image of man, or rather *Mensch*, who is an autonomous, sentient, and moral individual. I recognise the trait even though I do not know the history of the tradition. I know it in part through Schelsky, it appears in Wilhelm Hennis, and I suppose it belongs to Kant. Do Heidegger and Jaspers belong to this tradition? Did Leo Strauss take it to America? I’m not sure about the answers, but the reason I can discern this ‘object’ philosophical anthropology is because English thought has no such tradition. Sociology being the brainchild of European Protestant cultures, it is surprising that such fundamental differences exist within the same historical milieu. And of course the big differences within European culture exist not within the Protestant north but its once peasant and Catholic south and its urban north. The period-place dimension of sociology configures very differently according to where you are stood. This leads to reason number two.

As the world gets concreted over and urbanised and as the process of rationalisation driven by the new market order gathers pace, social scientists should mark and understand ‘the world we have lost’ – to use Peter Worsley’s memorable phrase. Globalisation in its market order aspect up-roots memory. The past at an ever increasing rate becomes archaeology – buried and cut off from memory. Here naturally we depend on historians and anthropologists, but we should also keep our lines of communication fully open to those sociologists who are not so much ‘classics’ in themselves but rather they lived through a classic era. This was the historical watershed from early to high modernity, the ‘great divide’ as Gellner called it. If you live, as many of us do in OECD countries, you have no direct experi-

ence of an earlier world. The great “classical” sociologists straddled the watershed and could look both ways, forward and back. It’s from here you get the poignancy of Tönnies, the pathos of Max Weber, the utter ruthlessness of Marx, and Spencer’s sense of ‘imperial’ progress. All these guys left their own literary mountains of works and correspondence. We kid ourselves that their legacy is fully understood and received. In fact the lines of communication to our own recent sociological past are extremely faulty.

My friend Sven Eliaeson has deepened the question of reception history through the use of Quentin Skinner’s methodology. Either we are contextualists –time bound but true to the past, or we are retrospectivists taking only what we need from the past of sociology. My own view here is somewhat simpler: all sociology is reception history. To paraphrase John Wayne, you can forget the past but you can’t escape it. Savvy practitioners, of course, know this and they reinvent the community of sociology as their ‘new’ project. Talcott Parsons took the roots of the European tradition and created out of it a blueprint for the society of *Pax America* as civil, associational, pluralist and open-bordered. Of course his sources belonged to Hobbesian and very European *bellum*.

I think there is a strong case for taking up the project that Koselleck calls the history of the present. History is not the past but belongs in certain ways always to the present. (Or, as part of an English tradition, Collingwood’s “idea of history”.) In England the progress of Anthony Giddens’ “Third Way”, which is much more than the book of that name, is watched with great interest and, for me, excitement. Giddens is now the most influential sociologist since Herbert Spencer (and *how* have we forgotten just how successful Spencer was). But exactly what is Giddens’ project? Literate sociologists will have a copy of his *Capitalism and Modern Social Theory* on their bookcase. And Giddens announced in his introduction of *Critique of Historical Materialism, Part 1* that through a reflexive interrogation of European social theory he was going to re-constitute social theory. Well, is the

“Third Way” the outcome of that interrogation? Maybe, I just don’t know. The book itself of that title in fact turns as much to the European tradition of social theory and democracy, but somewhat shorn of its labour traditions. But how is the Third Way *received* in his travels with Tony Blair and with his counsels with the Clintons, or visiting Brazil’s President Cordoza or advising Spain’s Prime Minister Aznar. Is Giddens seen as the new mercantilism? My own hunch, and to call it an hypothesis is too strong, is that theoretically he derives from Garfinkel’s ethnomethodology and that his project is the democratisation of indexicality. The point, however, of this excursus is that I do not know and I suspect nobody else does. Perhaps, therefore, there is a case for starting a history of the present project on Giddens that would keep up with him (no easy feat!) and analyse what he says and writes in London, Washington, Madrid, Sao Paolo, and wherever. Perhaps the case for a site [www.RCHS.3rdway?](http://www.RCHS.3rdway?)

For various reasons, then, the past is inescapable. (Incidentally Martin Albrow’s *Global Age* is a refutation of this, for sociology, he argues, is now in a different ball-game beyond the nation-state and modernism. This is a real leap of imagination and temporarily at least I reserve judgement.) But I wonder, reading Kaesler’s commentary, whether sociology is a moral science. My doubt here is historical. Sociology is the modern form of a type of discourse concerned with community, sociability, and cultural values within an urban context. This has a very long history, back to Babylon, as old as the civilization of the town itself. This is a radical extension of Sven Eliaeson’s point about the long history of secularisation as an anti-Natural Law movement. Prior to modernity, we were priests. And somebody like Comte betrays this heritage with his positivistic priesthood. Why not, as a heuristic exercise, consider Castells, Giddens, Sennett, Habermas as our *illuminati*, the new interpreters of urban co-existence.

The moral coloration of much of classical sociology, I opine, derives from bad faith. Sociology as an urban movement feels guilty of its long subordination of the country and its rural religions. Christianity – and look how closely our classical sociology is inflected with the Judaeo-Christian tradition (and this is not to discount forms of Islam) – was the replacement of religious morality with urban cults and urban ethical communities. As a result of its guilty conscience the priest and the sociologist feel they should perhaps provide a morality by way of replacement of rural understanding of the world. And so we get Kant, Comte, Durkheim, Habermas. Weber, of course, was the great *refusnik*. He saw, through his study of religion as an urban social phenomenon that it’s all about ethics not morality – i.e. it’s how you treat each other, not what you believe in – religion is a form of social mediation not a thing in itself. Sociologists (and urban priests) always have to come down on the side of further rationalization, the long movement, as Weber came to realize, ending in secularization. In other words we are a ruthless confraternity never quite sure of our motives and ever attendant to our moral conscience.

Urban sociology is considered within the discipline the newest of the new. Not to know or not to have written about lofts, yuppies, place, and space is a terrible solecism these days. Yes, I’ve done my bit too. But yuppies date merely from the early 1980s, an urban rehabilitation of blighted generations who settled for the anomie of *suburbs*. Consider the 400 years of urban culture in Kyoto and then come back and say something sensible about urban culture, co-existence and the solaces to be found in the city.

So, summarising these reasons in a sentence: think of sociology as the history of the present. I don’t offer this as a prescription because it’s a comment as guilty as hell, coined by urban sophists trying to efface the memory of what a ‘noumenal’ time might be.

## Announcement

The 2001 competition for the Leo P. Chall Fellowship is on its way. Every RCHS member is asked to distribute to potential applicants the leaflet that Sociological Abstracts will be sending out parallel to this newsletter. The deadline for submission of applications is September 1, 2000. For details see the leaflet or contact the secretary of RCHS. The winner will be informed in March 2001. Winner’s name will be announced in RCHS’s newsletter, hopefully again with a short presentation of the honoured work-in-progress by the winner herself.

# Eszter Pál, 2000 Winner of the Leo P. Chall Dissertation Fellowship in the History of Sociology

RCHS's Nominating Committee (Professors Dirk Kaesler, Marburg Vladimir Kulygin, Moscow and Patricia Lengermann, Cornell University,) nominated three candidates out of eight applicants and the Board of Sociological Abstracts selected as the 2000 winner of the Leo P. Chall Dissertation Fellowship Eszter Pál, a Ph.D. candidate at the Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE) in Budapest. Congratulations! Below Eszter gives an overview on her project. (Other applicant's work is presented in a separate section on page 9 ff.)

C.F.

## Analogical Reasoning in Sociological Thought: Classical Organicism and its Legacies

The dissertation investigates the role of analogical and metaphorical thinking on constructing sociological theories. (The difference between an analogy and a metaphor is considered here only to the extent of its relevance to social theories.) While giving an account of the function of analogical reasoning in sociology in general, the research focuses on the organicist analogy, analyzing the works of classical and contemporary authors whose theoretical models are based upon a simile between societies and living organisms.

Chapter 1 investigates how metaphors and analogies operate in scientific thinking in general, and in sociology in particular, in order to establish a framework and define my analytical perspective for the subsequent investigation of sociological models. I argue that the significance of the organicist models is such in the construction of sociological theories that analogies and metaphors are indispensable for sociology. Beyond their illuminating and 'predicting' roles, they play a part in theory-constitution, as the 19<sup>th</sup> century history of organicism reveals. In social sciences, sometimes serving as bases for ideological arguments, analogies and metaphors often have a 'prescriptive' function too – a role again displayed by organicism.

In the following chapters, the dissertation focuses on the theories of significant authors, from 19<sup>th</sup> century classical theorists, such as Auguste Comte and Herbert Spencer, to 20<sup>th</sup> century functionalists, and beyond to neo-evolutionists, all of whom utilized an organicist approach. This analogy has yielded widely differing theoretical models in sociology, and the chosen authors were not selected simply by virtue of their impact upon social thought, but rather in such a way as to represent different types of organicism. This variety in the use of organicism makes it possible to explore the important differences in the forms the analogy itself takes.

The dissertation concludes with an evaluation of the state of metaphorical and analogical thinking, and of the organic analogy in the light of recent epistemological debates in social sciences, such as the debate about realism and non-realism. Here, the dissertation also seeks to answer questions concerning the roles of metaphors and analogies in general, and, more specifically, the uses and limitations of the organicist analogy in sociology.

While many critics of organicism seem to hold only against particular authors, the criticism that organicist models cannot conceptualise the factor of human agency has a firmer basis. Since an analogy by definition is drawn between two different things, there is always a limitation. Conscious human action cannot be embraced by an organicist analogy, and models where this consideration is ignored are vulnerable. An organicist analogy is not an exception; the exploitation of any analogy can only be particular rather than universal.

With the decline of positivist hopes concerning the possibility of testing theories against reality, criteria of the usefulness or validity of models have become problematic. Against a form of relativism, I argue that an analysis of core analogies of sociological models can offer a possible solution to this problem. The question is no longer whether an analogy as such is adequate or not, or whether which analogy has a universal validity, but whether it is useful in enriching our understanding of particular social phenomena.

# Interim Conference, June 1-4, 2000, Final Program

## Thursday, June 1, 2000

Zeglarska Street no. 8

7 p.m. Informal gathering in the University Building there.

## Friday, June 2, 2000

Institute of Sociology, 121, Mickiewicza Street, Room 14

### 9 a.m. Opening ceremonies

Rector of the University of the Nicholas Copernicus University

ISA Vice President Piotr Sztompka

**Jerzy Szacki** (Warsawa) Peculiarities of Polish sociology

10:00 – 12:00 SESSION 1 In Search of a 'Good Society': The Concept of Sociology as a 'Moral Science' in the History of Sociology

Institute of Sociology, 121, Mickiewicza Street, Room 14

Chair: Maarten Mentzel

**Piotr Sztompka** (Krakow):

Florian Znaniecki's vision of the future civilization and its relevance for the 21<sup>st</sup> century

**Dirk Kaesler** (Marburg; e-mail: kaesler@mail.uni-marburg.de):

Solidarity and sociology? Is there still a place for sociology as a 'moral science'?

10:30 Coffee break

**Barbara A. Misztal** (Brisbane; e-mail: B.Misztal@mailbox.gu.edu.au):

Durkheim: The desirability of normal

**Maarten Mentzel** (Delft; e-mail: mentzel@sepa.tudelft.nl)

Visions of the good society: Approaches, periods, and national traditions

## Friday, June 2, 2000

2 p.m.–6:00: General Session 1

Institute of Sociology, 121, Mickiewicza Street, Room 13

**Stef Adriaenssens** (Brussels; e-mail: stef.adriaenssens@kubrusel.ac.be):

The bones of dead white men: Is there a future for the history of sociology?

**David Kettler** (Annandale-on-Hudson; e-mail: kettler@bard.edu):

Political education: Max Weber's contested legacy

**Grazyna Kubica** (Krakow, e-mail: kubica@grodzki.phils.uj.edu.pl):

On Bronislaw Malinowski

**Elzbieta Halas** (Lublin, e-mail: halat@kul.lublin.pl)

Sociology and sociologists from the autobiographical perspective: Theodore Abel's journal of thoughts and events

4:00 Coffee break

**Juliana Lutz** (Vienna, e-mail: Juliana.lutz@univie.ac.at):

The history of ecology in social thought

**Lisiunia A. Romanienko** (Wroclaw; e-mail: lroman@ix.netcom.com)

Western sociology as coercive institution: The exclusion of Polish sociologists from anti-Semitism discourse

## Friday, June 2, 2000

2 p.m. – 6:00: SESSION 2 Archives on the History of Sociology

Institute of Sociology, 121, Mickiewicza Street, Room 10

Chair: Jennifer Platt

**Michael R. Hill** (Lincoln; e-mail: mdeegan@unl.edu):

Archival data and disciplinary knowledge in the history of sociology

**Uta Gerhardt** (Heidelberg; e-mail: Uta.Gerhardt@urz.uni-heidelberg.de):

An unknown classic: What the use of the Harvard University Archives Parsons papers has added to the understanding of Parsons' sociology

**Wlodzimierz Winclawski** (Torun; e-mail: winc@cc.uni.torun.pl):

The need for an archive of Polish sociology

**Jennifer Platt** (Sussex; e-mail: J.Platt@sussex.ac.uk):

National needs for the sociological archive – and the British situation

### Panel

Introductory remarks by Martin Bulmer and Christian Fleck. Together with the paper presenters they will discuss the issues raised and address some of the issues about ways in which archives and our use of them can be improved.

## Friday, June 2, 2000

6 p.m. Business Meeting RCHS

Institute of Sociology, 121, Mickiewiczza Street, Room 14

## Saturday, June 3, 2000

9 a.m. – 11:30: SESSION 3 Value-Incommensurability at the Turns of the Centuries

Institute of Sociology, 121, Mickiewiczza Street, Room 14

Chair: Sven Eliaeson

**Lennart Olausson** (Gothenburg):

Cohen, Adler and Rickert: Value-incommensurabilities and neo-Kantianisms

**Ola Agevall** (Mälardalen; e-mail: ola.agevall@svi.hv.se):

Max Weber's unfinished - Weber's argument in the essays on Roscher and Knies

**H H Bruun** (Paris):

Wert vs. Interesse: Weber's dependence on Rickert

10:30 Coffee break

**Sven Eliaeson** (Karlstad; e-mail: sven.eliaeson@kau.se):

Modes of value-incommensurability: Max Weber's 'Swedish relatives' Axel Hägerström and Gunnar Myrdal

9 a.m. – 11:30 SESSION 4 Sociologists in Two Worlds

Institute of Sociology, 121, Mickiewiczza Street, Room 13

Chair: Martin Bulmer

**Helena Znaniecki Lopata** (Chicago; e-mail: hlopata@luc.edu):

Florian Znaniecki 1882-1958

**Barbara Ballis Lal** (Los Angeles; e-mail: lal@ucla.edu):

André Béteille: Indian sociologist in two worlds

**Christian Fleck** (Graz; e-mail: christian.fleck@kfunigraz.ac.at) & **Dirk Raith** (Graz; e-mail: raithd@kfunigraz.ac.at):

Emigré social scientists from Austria: A propography

10:30 Coffee break

**Martin Bulmer** (Surrey; e-mail: m.bulmer@soc.surrey.ac.uk):

Central European criminologists in Britain: Leon Radzinowicz and Hermann Mannheim

**E. Stina Lyon** (London):

The Myrdals, the Thomases and the Lynds: Partnership in cross-cultural intellectual exchange

## Saturday, June 3, 2000

9 a.m. – 10:30 General Session 2

Institute of Sociology, 121, Mickiewiczza Street, Room 10

**Mike F. Keen** (Indiana; e-mail: mkeen@iusb.edu) & **Janusz Mucha** (Torun; e-mail: jmucha@cc.uni.torun.pl):

History in the making: Sociology and the transformation of Eastern and Central Europe

**Sergej Flere** (Maribor; e-mail: p\_flere@hotmail.com):

Ideology and Sociology: The treatment of the stratification phenomenon in Yugoslav sociology, 1960-90

**Sandro Segre** (Genova; e-mail: segre@csb-scpo.unige.it)

Stratification theory and research in Weimar Germany

11:30 Author meets Critics

Institute of Sociology, 121, Mickiewiczza Street, Room 10

**Erhard Stöling** (Potsdam) and **David Kettler** (Annandale-on-Hudson) will give oral reviews of Reinhart Blomert, *Intellektuelle im Aufbruch. Karl Mannheim, Alfred Weber, Norbert Elias und die Heidelberger Sozialwissenschaften der Zwischenkriegzeit* (München: C. Hanser Verlag 1999)

and **Reinhart Blomert** will then reply.

## Saturday, June 3, 2000

9 a.m. – 10:30 SESSION 5 Biographies in the History of Sociology

Institute of Sociology, 121, Mickiewiczza Street, Room 20

Chair: Dirk Kaesler

**Mary Evans** (Kent; e-mail: M.S.Evans@ukc.ac.uk):

Missing persons: The impossibility of auto/biography

**Ulf Himmelstrand** (Uppsala; e-mail: ulf.himmelstrand@soc.uu.se):

Surviving intellectually as a sociologist in a totalitarian society: Three different Russian careers

**Patricia Vannier** (Toulouse; e-mail: pat.vannier@wanadoo.fr):

Autobiographies by French sociologists after World War II: their impact on the interpretation of the history of French sociology

2 p.m. – 3:30 SESSION 5 Biographies in the History of Sociology

Institute of Sociology, 121, Mickiewiczza Street, Room 20

Chair: Dirk Kaesler

**Marcel Fournier** (Montréal; e-mail: fournima@SOCIO.Umontreal.ca):

How to write the biography of Marcel Mauss?

**Aino Sinnemäki** (Helsinki; e-mail: SINNEMAK@valt.helsinki.fi):

How to write an intellectual biography of Erik Allardt?

**Dirk Kaesler** (Marburg; e-mail: kaesler@mail.uni-marburg.de):

How to write a socio-biography of Max Weber?

**Sam Whimster** (London; e-mail: whimster@lgu.ac.uk):

The biographer's biography: The case of Marianne Weber

2 p.m. – 3 :30 SESSION 6 Contemporary Concerns, Traditional Inscriptions: The Chicago School of Sociology

Institute of Sociology, 121, Mickiewiczza Street, Room 14

Chair: Martin Bulmer

**Barbara Ballis Lal** (Los Angeles; e-mail: lal@ucla.edu):

Contemporary concerns, traditional inscriptions: An overview of developments

**Ken Plummer** (Essex)

Documents of life revisited: Twenty years on

**Ivan Light** (Los Angeles; email: light@soc.ucla.edu)

The Chicago school theorists discover immigration: Lessons and missteps

2 p.m. – 15:30 General Session 3

Institute of Sociology, 121, Mickiewiczza Street, Room 10

**Luigi Tomasi** (Trento; e-mail: ltomasi@gelso.unitn.it):

Early research in the brief history of Cambodian sociology

**Irmela Gorges** (Berlin; e-mail: Irmela.Gorges@fhv.Verwalt-Berlin.de):

Research strategies of political parties

**Anele Vosyliûte** (Vilnius; e-mail: vosylan@ktl.mii.lt):

The vision of social rightness and consolidation of nation in the works of Lithuanian sociologists

**Mary Jo Deegan** (Lincoln, e-mail: mdeegan@unlserve.unl.edu)

Arts and crafts in Chicago and Breitan: The work of Ellen Gates Starr at Hull House

4 p.m. Sightseeing Trip

Meeting point is the Copernicus Monument at Torun's Main Square.

## Saturday, June 3, 2000

8 p.m. RCHS Dinner Zeglarska Street no. 8



## Transportation update

From Warsaw Airport / Warszawa-Okecie exists a Special Airport City Bus line to Central Railway Station (Warszawa Centralna). Departs every 20 to 30 min between 6 a.m and 11 p.m.

It is not advisable to use a taxi for this distance!

From Warszawa Centralna (Central Railway Station) there are two fast trains to Torun, departing 7:00 a.m. (arriving in Torun at 10:12 a.m.) and 3:01 p.m. (arriving in Torun at 5:54 p.m.), and one express train departing 5:30 p.m (arriving in Torun at 8: 18 p.m.). In between also slower trains should be available.

One-way-fair is 76 PLZ / US \$ 18 for first class, and 38 PLZ / US \$ 9 for the second class, the express train costs 90 PLZ / 22 US \$.

From Torun to Warsaw the express train departs at 7:10 a.m. (arrives in Warszawa at 10:01 a.m.),

the two fast trains depart at 1:18 p.m. (arrives in Warszawa at 4:16 p.m.), 5:05 p.m. (arrives in Warszawa at 8:13 p.m.); slower trains in between in similar intervals as above.

Be aware that this time schedule is still from the winter schedule and may not be valid at the time of your travelling. You have to check it out.

There are also coaches from Warsaw to Torun. The line's name is POLSKI EXPRES. Between 7:30 a.m. and 8:30 p.m. they run every hour. The departure is from the stand at Aleja Jana Pawla II, very close to the Warsaw's Central Station. There is also a communication with this coach stand from the Warsaw Airport. In Torun, the coaches stop in the downtown, very close to the nearest taxi stand at the Teatralny Square. The one-way price is 37 PLZ / US \$ 9.

## Ph.D. Work-in-progress

Dissertation in Progress on the Founding and Early Years of the Department of Sociology at the University of Chicago  
by

Rainer Egloff

University of Zürich, Switzerland

My project discusses the prehistory, founding and early years of the first department for graduate studies in sociology ever. In 1892, the University of Chicago successfully launched sociology as an independent academic discipline, and for decades it also dominated the new field.

In the first part of my work, I discuss the establishment of the sociological discipline with regard to relevant epistemic, ideological and institutional contexts. I emphasize its embeddedness within the broader social and economic conjunctures of late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Century USA.

These contextualizations serve as a background for the second part of my dissertation, which provides a micro-study on the local process of founding and developing sociology at the University of Chicago. In the newborn Department of Social Science and Anthropology - as it was called by the time of its inception in 1892 -, a sociological discipline had yet to be gained. No preexisting disciplinary matrix was available.

Programs had to be created, textbooks had to be written, and so on.

Over a period of about 25 years, I follow the local construction, negotiation and definition of a sociological field and discipline. The creation and definition of the new academic field was characterized by a search for specific concepts, disciplinary rules and practices, and by attempts in securing audiences and markets. Sociology had its allies, competitors and enemies. Sociology was not only negotiating with other university disciplines. Nonacademic groups and practices - for example in journalism, social work and charity - were important as well, and boundary work was essential. Early Chicago sociology was deeply rooted in pragmatist thinking and adapted vocabularies from science as well as from religious and political discourse.

An Evolutionary History of Evolutionary Sociology

by

Maureen O'Malley

My project is an examination of the 'evolutionary turn' happening across the social sciences, with a focus on its implications for sociology. Much of this exploration is concerned with the history of social evolutionism, tracing sociological models of social change rather than anthropological accounts of cultural or behavioural

shifts. Spencer is the obvious starting point. His influence, combined with the legacy of Darwinism, can be tracked through a long lineage of sociologists. Inheritors of this tradition include Hobhouse, Ginsberg, Ward, Giddings, Parsons, Habermas, Luhmann and, most recently, W. G. Runciman (1989; 1997). Because Runciman represents an interim culmination of social evolutionary theory, I am giving his model a very close scrutiny (a chapter of my thesis already). Evaluating his success is, in many respects, an evaluation of the efficacy and viability of social evolutionism for contemporary sociology.

Since I am interested in both the differences between these theorizations of social evolution as well as the connections amongst them, I am investigating the conceptual and *social* descent lines of what appears to be a consistent evolutionary lineage. I find support for this in David Hull's (1988) evolutionary analysis of scientific change. He outlines a sociological version of the 'type-specimen' method of biology which is normally used to reveal the links between species by descent, rather than through the calculation of structural or morphological similarity. When applied to science, this method places bodies of knowledge within an evolutionary framework and can offer acute insight into the success - or otherwise - of explanations and theory. Hull's general theory of selection processes figures largely in the second half of my thesis (which is developing in tandem with the historical analysis), as I attempt to develop a more satisfactory sociological account of theory selection processes than he is ultimately able to provide.

What is emerging already in my analysis is the variable and metaphoric nature of the term 'evolution' for sociologists, and how un-Darwinian (in the Modern Synthesis sense) much of it is. There are, moreover, significant connections between all the above evolutionary approaches and the problems and challenges of sociology in general. Questions that repeatedly arise are in relation to functionalism, methodological individualism, rational choice models of behaviour, and epistemology itself. Evolutionary theory in the social sciences is, as could be expected, symptomatic of all the philosophy of science conflicts that have beset sociology and its sister disciplines throughout their history. Something more than symptomatology, however, is currently emerging from my inquiry. I am increasingly persuaded that not only does understanding the history of social evolutionism help us diagnose sociology's problems: it points us towards intra- and interdisciplinary solutions and their imple-

mentation. I hope to report these happy findings to the RCHS at a later date.

## Theories of Action in the Historical Sociology of the French Revolution

by

David Nowacek

University of Wisconsin-Madison

This undertaking, devoted to comparing the empirical fruitfulness of competing theories of human action in sociological historiography of the French Revolution of the last several decades, traverses the writings of Charles Tilly, Shmuel Eisenstadt and a circle of historians who have taken

as their subject the contributions of the Revolution to the creation of modern political culture.

I have thus far traced the limits which a rational model of action placed on Charles Tilly's treatment of the French counterrevolution of the Vendée.

Following a rational model of action, Tilly offered an explanation in terms of the objective structure of interests and power. His sole focus on such objective conditions produced a deterministic account, excluding any investigation of the cultural constitution of actors. By omitting the constitution of actors, his approach blocked from view possibilities for creative reconciliation and foreshortened the full range of comparative inquiry.

Subsequent chapters, while still under way, are beginning to focus topically on the origins of Jacobinism, which was at the center of François Furet's landmark resuscitation of the work of Augustin Cochin. Eisenstadt has also focused on Jacobinism in his recent investigations of fundamentalism, viewing Jacobinism as a distinctive "dimension of modernity" and as an analytical template for understanding fundamentalism as a distinctly modern phenomena. Although my task of clarifying the action-theoretical assumptions supporting these distinct treatments of Jacobinism is far from complete, I tentatively regard Eisenstadt's conceptualization of "axial-age" transformations as critical to an appraisal of his treatment of Jacobinism. In the literature that has spawned around Furet's work, I currently regard the recent emphases on language, conceptual history, the construction of events, and the rejection of sensualism as decisive.

## Boundaries of Social Knowledge: The Lorén Foundation, the Social Question, and the Formation of Social Science Discourse in Sweden, 1830-1920

by

Per Wisselgren

Umeå University

Using the Lorén Foundation (Lorénska stiftelsen) as a concrete empirical point of departure, the aim of my dissertation is to study the formation of a Swedish social science discourse in the historical context of the lengthy and broad-ranging discussions summarized in the formula "the social question". Established in 1885, the explicit aim of the Lorén Foundation was to promote the rise of Swedish social science and to contribute to the solution of the social question. Composing a heuristic case, the historical reconstruction of the Lorén Foundation and its activities thus comprise the intricate connection between modern social science and the "social question" with empirical substance and historical content.

Emphasizing the contextual and conceptual aspects of the history of social knowledge, the "social question", the Lorén Foundation, and the institutionalization of social science are regarded as different components in an historical discourse centred around the social sphere as it took shape from the 1830s and onwards. In this broad, multi-faceted definition and articulation process, social science is understood not as an unique "answer", but rather as one attempt alongside others to regulate the social. Focusing on the intimate interrelations between the social science practice and realist and naturalist authors, as well as contemporary social reform efforts, a secondary aim of the dissertation is to emphasize the historically changing boundaries of social knowledge, and its inherent political, gendered and professional dimensions. The final part of the study discusses the role of social science in the Swedish Welfare State in more general terms, employing a comparative, international perspective, and the historiographical construction of disciplinary identities characteristic of academic sociology after World War II.

## Recent Publications

Mary Jo Deegan

Play, School, And Society, New York: Peter Lang Publishing 1999, ISBN 0-8204-3823-5, 272 pp.

Christian Fleck

(Editor) Soziologische und historische Analysen der Sozialwissenschaften, Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag 2000 (=Österreichische Zeitschrift für Soziologie, Sonderheft 5) 343 pp.

There are two papers of RCHS members in this volume:

pp. 13-54: Christian Fleck, 'Auf der Suche nach Anomalien, Devianz und Anomie in der Soziologie' (In search of anomalies, deviance, and anomie in sociology), and

Charles Crothers

pp. 267-286 'Austrian sociology: A case study in the production of social knowledge'.

Harold L. Orbach

'The supposed influence of Schopenhauer on Durkheim. Anatomy of a modern myth that exemplifies Merton's 'Establishing the Phenomenon'', in: Soziale Welt 49:1 (1998), 71-90.

Maarten Menzel

'Twee routes naar de goede samenleving,' Filosofie & Praktijk 20 (1999) 4, pp. 192-202 (together with S. Koenis);

(Editor, together with A.W. Musschenga and T. van Willigenburg) Morele identiteit, Special Issue Filosofie & Praktijk, 21 (2000) 1, pp 3 -64.

Jennifer Platt

'Women in the British sociological labour market', Sociological Research Online 2000, <http://www.socresonline.org.uk/4/4/platt.html>.

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<http://www.ucm.es/info/isa/formisa.htm>, and it can be used even if you are not then also paying the ISA subscription - *though only if you are an ISA member*. Here - with apologies for the complexity, which our need to avoid our account's high foreign-exchange charges makes necessary - is how to pay if *not* doing so via the ISA.

During the time of his stay in the United States Christian Fleck will accept US cheques for the RCHS membership dues. Make checks payable to Christian Fleck and not to RCHS because the Committee itself doesn't have an account.

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