

# NEWSLETTER OF THE RESEARCH COMMITTEE ON CONCEPTUAL AND TERMINOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

International Sociological Association – Research Committee 35

February 2009

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**In Memoriam of Fred W. Riggs  
† February 09, 2008**

We sorely miss our colleague and friend Fred W. Riggs, who passed away last February in Honolulu, Hawaii, at the age of 90.

Fred W. Riggs was one of the central figures and founding members of COCTA in 1970. At that time, COCTA became the influential first RC of IPSA, our Political Science cousin. Other founding members included Giovanni Sartori, George Graham and Henry Teune.

In 1978, when Fred Riggs was its chair, COCTA expanded and became RC 35 of ISA. Once again, Fred invested incredible and invaluable intellectual and organizational support to keep it alive and going. He was active on the COCTA Board right until the 15th World Congress of Sociology in Brisbane, 2002.

Thus, we would like to take this opportunity to express our deep-felt gratitude and admiration for his work, his life and his personality. His death is a great loss to our RC, and we will surely keep him in our memory exactly as he wished to be remembered: a devoted scholar who learned from his mistakes and truly enjoyed learning. Rest in Peace, Fred.

## COCTA-News

Dear members and friends of COCTA,

here are some news concerning our Research Committee. Unfortunately, not all of them are good news: It is with great sorrow that we confirm that COCTA founding-member **Fred W. Riggs** passed away last year. Fred was the driving force of our RC for many years and utterly devoted to the development of our committee. We promise to carry on the torch and to keep COCTA a thriving forum of scholarly debate!

Following our successful, but limited presence at the XVI ISA World Congress in Durban, South Africa in 2006, we participated at the First ISA Forum of Sociology in **Barcelona**, Spain last September where we had our **Interim Conference** on *Conceptual Change in a Global Era*. We planned and conducted seven sessions, the maximum number allocated to us, on a diverse range of concepts and enjoyed the lively, inspiring and thorough debates. In addition, we participated in the general programme, held our business meeting which focussed on future activities, especially the next World Congress, and went out for a communal dinner afterwards.

In view of the **XVII ISA World Congress** in **Gothenburg**, Sweden, July 11-17, 2010, we are now **inviting session offers**. Please see the detailed information below and send your proposal for a Call for Papers no later than **March 31, 2009**.

It has become a common practice for COCTA to participate in the activities of the International Institute of Sociology. While our president Volker H. Schmidt convened a session at the **IIS World Congress** in 2008, board member Boris Holzer and colleague Tobias Werron are currently organizing a COCTA session on "Mechanisms of Globalization: The Making of a World Society" at the 39<sup>th</sup> World Congress of the International Institute of Sociology which is to take place in **Yerevan**, Armenia, June 11-14, 2009. Please see the **Call for Papers** below. The deadline for the submission of abstracts is **February 28, 2009**.

Please spread the word on COCTA and let your colleagues know that everyone interested in our current and future activities is cordially invited to take part. Do not hesitate to present your ideas in case you would like to propose or organize a COCTA conference or session. We are looking forward to be meeting you (again) rather sooner than later!

On behalf of the board,

cordially yours,

David Strecker

## Invitation to Organize a COCTA Session

at the

XVII ISA World Congress in Gothenburg, Sweden, July 11-17, 2010

### Sociology on the Move

COCTA invites its members to organize a session at the next world congress. Each session will last 90 minutes. If you would like to convene a discussion on conceptual and terminological questions in sociology in Gothenburg, please send your proposal for a call for papers to [David.Strecker@uni-jena.de](mailto:David.Strecker@uni-jena.de) no later than **March 31, 2009**.

The selected sessions will be posted on the conference homepage (<http://www.isa-sociology.org/congress2010/index.htm>). There is ample time for receiving abstracts. We shall present the complete COCTA programme to the ISA in January 2010.

In selecting the sessions, the board will focus on the quality of the proposals and a balanced representation of its members. Session organizers are further requested to ensure that all participants to their session register by May 1, 2010.

Please consider organizing a session on the main theme of the congress or one of the main themes of the Plenary Sessions as this would secure us an additional session slot. An enumeration and description of these themes is to be found here: <http://www.isa-sociology.org/congress2010/priorities.htm>

The number of sessions allocated will depend on how many members our RC has on April 15, 2009. Since a number of memberships terminated at the turn of the year, we have just slipped below a certain threshold. Only a few members more would secure us two additional session slots. Joining COCTA is very easy via the individual membership form (<https://secured.com/~f3641/formisa.htm>) on the ISA homepage (<http://www.isa-sociology.org/>). If you are an ISA member already, tick RC 35 (Committee on Conceptual and Terminological Analysis, USD 10), only.

## Call for Papers

for the COCTA session on

### **Mechanisms of Globalization: The Making of World Society**

at the

39<sup>th</sup> World Congress of the International Institute of Sociology, Yerevan, Armenia,  
June 11-14, 2009, [www.iisoc.org/iis2009](http://www.iisoc.org/iis2009)

organized by

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What are the driving forces of globalization? In contrast to approaches that focus on particular fields such as the economy or politics this session aims to investigate generic and general mechanisms of globalization. Such mechanisms operate across different societal domains and are thus particularly useful for purposes of systematic and historical comparison.

For a start, two general mechanisms of globalization may be distinguished. The first mechanism is a relational one: Globalization is conceived in terms of “interconnectedness”, be it worldwide trade, migration networks, international organizations, multinational corporations or transnational personal relationships. The history of globalization then appears as a history of an increasing number, density and importance of connections across the globe. In contrast, the second mechanism focuses on institutions, and in a broader sense phenomenological and cultural factors. Institutionalized expectations accelerate the diffusion of models, norms and standards along different (coercive, imitative/competitive or professional) channels. Probably the most cogent argument of this type is made by world polity research in Stanford (John W. Meyer et al.). Other perspectives such as Roland Robertson’s work or systems theoretical version of world society theory (Niklas Luhmann, Rudolf Stichweh) put a similar emphasis on phenomenological or “world-cultural” arguments.

The session aims to investigate these and other mechanisms of globalization: How do they work together? How are they related to basic sociological concepts such as action, communication, differentiation and diffusion? Are there other plausible candidates for generic mechanisms? How can globalizing processes in the economy, politics, law, religion, sports, arts, science and so on be explained in terms of these mechanisms? And, finally, which globalization theories are able to incorporate such questions in their overall theoretical framework?

Please send your **abstract** directly to the conveners no later than **February 29, 2009**.

## **Composition of the Board for the Period 2006-2010**

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### **Board member without specific function:**

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