Theory

The Newsletter of the Research Committee on Sociological Theory
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CURRENT BOARD

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From the Chairs

As the newly elected co-chairs of RC16 we would like to introduce ourselves to all the members of the Research Committee, to describe some of our activities of the last six months, and to indicate some of our plans for the next few years.

Since it was founded in the 1980s RC16 has grown to become one of the most important sections in the ISA measured in terms of membership numbers and collective activity. The World Congress in Gothenburg testified to this, with a range of high quality papers from scholars from around the globe. Many thanks are due to the members of our executive board, who organized the panels; special thanks go to Fuyuki Kurasawa and Philip Smith, who as co-chairs of RC 16 from 2006-2010 infused the RC with great energy and vision. Thanks also to Frédéric Vandenberghe and José Maurício Domingues, who as newsletter editors produced consistently engaging and interesting articles for our members to read. We also wish to congratulate Jeffrey Alexander, one of the original co-founders of RC 16, who was awarded the Mattei Dogan Prize during the 2010 World Congress. Professor Alexander's public lecture at the prize ceremony was, as always, both brilliant and provocative.

One of the goals of RC 16 during the last four years has been to internationalize our leadership. This continues with the current board, which is comprised of members from eleven different nations, spread over six continents. This geographical diversity is also represented in our Associate Board, whose twelve members come from eleven different nations. The Associate Board was a very successful innovation introduced by Phil Smith and Fuyuki Kurasawa, which we are happy to be continuing during our leadership term.

This is the first issue published by our new newsletter editors, Craig Browne and Paul Jones. It contains the first installment of the conference session reports from the World Congress, with the second installment coming in a subsequent issue. We are also delighted to be able to include an excerpted version of Zygmunt Bauman's prize-winning lecture. Professor Bauman was awarded the 2010 Distinguished Contribution to Sociological Theory Award of Research Committee 16. Professor Bauman was unable to attend the conference to receive the award, but he has graciously allowed us to publish his talk in the newsletter.

We are beginning to plan our interim conference, which will most likely be held in Summer 2012 in Trento, Italy. We will provide more concrete details in the next issue of the newsletter, but we want to encourage all of our members to consider attending this event. Those of us who attended the 2008 Interim Conference in Pusan, South Korea can well remember the vibrant intellectual atmosphere that emerges in such an environment, and no doubt also have fond memories of the exceptional hospitality of our Korean hosts.

Once again, we are excited about the opportunity to lead RC 16 during the next four years, and we thank the previous members of the executive board for the work they did in the service of this Research Committee. We look forward to seeing all of you in

Trento in 2012, in Yokohama in 2014, and no doubt in many other intellectual venues in the intervening years.

Ron Jacobs & Giuseppe Sciortino

Editors's Introduction

We would like to endorse the Presidents's acknowledgment of the excellent work of the former editors of *Theory*, José Maurício Domingues and Frédéric Vandenberghe. We hope to emulate the standard set by their issues, although we realize that this would be difficult to match.

In addition to Bauman's paper and the session reports which Ron and Guiseppe mentioned, we publish pieces by Pauline Johnson, Eduardo de la Fuente, and Craig Browne celebrating thirty years and over 100 issues of the social theory journal, *Thesis Eleven*. These papers derive from a workshop that was held at the 2010 Australian Sociological Association Conference, Macquarie University. We hope that these appreciative papers give a sense of this Australian-based journal's distinctive contribution to sociological theory and something of the Australian context of the editors.

In future issues, we would like to similarly promote the exchange between various national and regional social theoretical formations. As such, we would particularly welcome contributions that give us access to sociological theorising that is otherwise inaccessible.

More generally, we would like to maintain the tradition of short pieces by RC members on issues of note, including pieces based on members' forthcoming books. We are open to other suggestions for suitable material.

Finally, we would like to reiterate Ron's encouragement to members to shift their subscription to 'digital only'. Our resolution at the last general meeting *requires you to actively opt-in to digital*. We respect and share the sentiment attached to the paper version. However, we'd like to point out that the obvious advantages of the pdf form go beyond cost-savings to speed of delivery, the possibility of inclusion of colour photography and greater ease of archiving and searchability.

It would be foolish to attempt a general reckoning of the current state of sociological theory. However, our intuition is that one of our objectives should be to counter its lack of appreciation in certain contemporary contexts, such as the neoliberal 'reforms' of university systems that work against the development and teaching of sociological theory. If we are able to demonstrate what sociological theory has accomplished and the vitality of ongoing work in this area then we believe, as editors, that the newsletter will be some way towards meeting this goal.

Craig Browne & Paul Jones

Sociology: Whence and Whither?

(An excerpt from the background paper prepared on the occasion of the ISA prize acceptance at the Congress held in Gothenburg in July 2010. The full version of this piece will be published in Zygmunt Bauman's forthcoming book: *Collateral Damage: Social Inequalities*

in a Global Age, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2011.)

For more than half a century of its recent history, and because seeking to be of service to the managerial reason, sociology struggled to establish itself as a science/technology of un-freedom: as a design workshop for the social settings meant to resolve in theory, but most importantly in practice, what Talcott Parsons memorably articulated as "the Hobbesian question": how to induce/force/ indoctrinate human beings, blessed/cursed with the ambiguous gift of free will, to be normatively guided and to follow routinely a manipulable, yet predictable course of action; or how to reconcile free will with the willingness to submit to other people's will, lifting thereby the tendency to "voluntary servitude", noted/anticipated by la Boètie at the threshold of the modern era, to the rank of the supreme principle of social organization. In short: how to make people to will doing what doing they must…

In our society, individualized by the decree of fate aided and abetted by the second managerial revolution, sociology faces the exciting and exhilarating chance of turning for a change into a science/technology of freedom: of the ways and means through which the individuals-by-decree and de jure of the liquid-modern times may be lifted to the rank of individuals-by-choice and de facto. Or to take a leaf from Jeffrey Alexander's call to arms: sociology's future, at least its immediate future, lies in an effort to reincarnate and to re-establish itself as cultural politics in the service of human freedom.

In the result of all that, the kind of sociology that dominated academia for many decades, a sociology made to the measure of demands and expectations of the managerial reason of yore, found itself out of a job. There are few if any buyers left for its staple products. Hence the blues…

Some distinguished American sociologists complaining of having lost contact with the "public sphere", and wondering whether that link could be restored. But let's be clear about it – it is but one particular sector of the "public sphere" that dissolved, retreated from the "human engineering" business or withdrew its interest. The present-day fears are an outcome of sociology one-sidedly over-specialized in running an industry that has lost, or is fast losing, its clientele. It was, however, but one kind of possible ways of doing sociology - and not, let me confess, a kind whose demise I personally would be inclined to mourn and bewail.

I'd suggest that sociology has little choice but to follow now as ever the track of the changing world; the alternative would be nothing less than loss of relevance. But I'd suggest as well that the particular "no-choice" quandary that we face today should be anything but a cause to despair. Quite on the contrary. In our short, yet crises-and-fateful-choices-rich history, a nobler, more elevated and morally laudable mission was never imposed on our discipline with such a force, while being simultaneously made similarly realistic - at any other of the times which, as Hegel suggested two centuries ago, it's the prime humanities' destination and perennial vocation to catch.

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One seminal function/duty that in the course of the recent liquid modern individualization had been dropped from the heights of "imagined totality" into the cauldron of (to borrow Anthony Giddens's term) individually conducted "life politics", has been, for all practical intents and purposes, the task of truth-validation and meaning-production. This does not mean of course that the truths for individual validation and the raw stuff of which individual would mould their meanings have stopped being socially supplied; but it does mean that they tend to be now media-and-shops supplied, rather than being imposed through communal command; and that they are calculated for seducing clients rather than compelling the subordinates. The task of choice-making, complete with the responsibility for the consequences of choice, falls now and needs to be carried on the individual's shoulders.

This is a totally new ball game, as Americans used to say. It has its promises – not the least the chance of shifting morality from conformity to ethical command to the unconditionally individual responsibility for the well-being of others. But it is also filled with dangers, and augurs a risk-full life. It casts the individuals (and it means all of us) in the state of acute, and in all probability incurable, under-determination and uncertainty. As the views memorised and skills acquired are poor and all too often misleading or even treacherous guides to action, and as the available knowledge transcends the individual capacity to assimilate, whereas its assimilated fraction falls as a rule far short of what the understanding of the situation (the knowledge how to go on, that is) would require – the

condition of frailty, transience and contingency have become for the duration, and perhaps for a very long time to come, the natural human habitat. And so it is with this sort of human experience that sociology needs to engage in a continuous dialogue.

I'd say that the twin roles which we, sociologists, are called to perform in that dialogue, are those of the de-familiarizing the familiar and familiarizing (taming, domesticating) the unfamiliar. Both roles demand skilfulness in the opening to scrutiny the net of links, influences and dependencies too vast to be thoroughly surveyed, fully scanned and grasped with resources supplied by individual experience. They also demand the kind of skills best caught in the English novelist E.M. Foster's phrase "only connect": the skilfulness in reconnecting and making whole again the notoriously fragmented and disconnected images of the *Lebenswelt* – the world lived in our times from episode to episode, and lived-through individually, at individual risk and with individual benefit in mind. Last though not least, they call for skills in uncovering the "doxa" (the knowledge we think with but not about), pulling it out of the murky depths of the subconscious, and so enabling and setting in motion a process of perpetual critical scrutiny, and perhaps even conscious control over its contents, by their thus far unaware possessors and unwitting employers. In other words, they call for the art of the dialogue.

To be sure, dialogue is a difficult art. It means engaging conversationalists with an intention to jointly clarify the issues, rather than to have them one's own way; to multiply voices, rather than reducing

their amount; to widen the set of possibilities, rather than aiming at a wholesale consensus (that relic of monotheistic dreams stripped of the politically incorrect coercion); to jointly pursue understanding, instead of aiming at the others' defeat; and all in all being animated by the wish to keep the conversation going, rather than by desire to grind it to a halt. Mastering that art is terribly time-consuming, though far less time-intensive as practising it. None of the two undertakings, nor the mastering of them and practising them together, promise to make our life easier. But they do promise to make our lives more exciting and rewarding to us, as well as more useful to our fellow humans - and to transform our professional chores into a continuous and never ending voyage of discovery.

Not to steal more of your time, that most precious resource notorious for its supply being in inverse proportion to demand, I finish my speech. Much has been left out of my speech that shouldn't, and I am sure that you've found in it many more questions than answers. But here you are: this is how it is going to be from now on, in case we decide to embark on the voyage whose itinerary I tried, ineptly, to anticipate. What remains to be said, then, is bon voyage!

Zygmunt Bauman

***Thesis Eleven*: Beyond the Antipodes – Thirty Years, One Hundred Issues**

***Thesis Eleven* –Thirty Years On**

I'm very pleased to be invited to say a few words about the journal *Thesis Eleven*. Thirty years of first-rate publishing in contemporary critical theory is a great achievement.

Looking at what others have said about *Thesis Eleven* in the invited pieces in the 100th issue, I was particularly struck by reflections Martin Jay made on differences between *Thesis Eleven* on the one hand and *Telos* and *New Left Review* on the other. These were similar in the sense that all were attempting to make some sense of a critical agenda in times that were wary of any forceful and one-sided account of what this meant. Of these, *Thesis Eleven* came out very well. Jay comments that compared to the other two, *Thesis Eleven* was 'less partisan' in its editorial policy, less preoccupied with finding and holding onto some kind of supporting banister. In a particularly complimentary sentence he remarks that *Thesis Eleven* 'made the transition to non-dogmatic, post-Marxist critical thinking with considerable grace and agility' (p23). There is indeed a lack of embittered and boring dogmatism throughout *Thesis Eleven*. In accounting for this we certainly have to praise the editorial collective that willed it so.

I'd like to say a few words now about the *Thesis Eleven* effect. It seems that over its 30 year history the journal has played a vital role in producing a self-recognising community of critical scholars- certainly here in Australia but internationally as well. It's probably fair to say that this function of producing the grounds for recognition has been particularly important as the neo-liberal University has contrived to confuse critical thinking with its so-called 'managing change' agendas. What are some of the ways in which *Thesis Eleven* has been able to produce a reservoir of recognition for several generations of

scholars (both in Australia and abroad) who are interested in critique?

Firstly, it helped to introduce us to vital traditions of thought, particularly in continental critical theory. Martin Jay talks about the 'catalytic role played in Australia by the arrival in the late 1970s of members of the Budapest School'. He's certainly right and we must also include here the powerful influence of Johann Arnason. Contemporary readers of the journal will note the number of first class contributions from Agnes Heller, Ferenc Feher and Maria and George Márkus and Johann Arnason and their intellectual networks have made over many years on a wide range of topics. Some of these are real classics in their fields. We have been fortunate beneficiaries indeed of their generous commitment to building a community of critical scholarship in Australia. What younger scholars might not realize though is how relatively bare the Australian cupboard was of translated material, and even awareness, of major continental critical theory traditions at the time that this journal was set up. *Thesis Eleven* broke into this landscape and played a major role in bringing many of these unknown or little known traditions to the attention of the academic world in Australia. Coming clean now as an ex-Athusserian Marxist, the arrival of the Márkuses in Sydney changed the intellectual landscape overnight but certainly *Thesis Eleven* also played an important role by providing a critical local forum where continental voices and the new generation of talented local theorists could express their ideas.

As I dipped recently into the history of *Thesis Eleven* I've enjoyed reconnecting with my obligations. For me a landmark issue is Number 42 1995 dedicated to Ferenc Feher after his untimely death. In a moving piece on his old friend, George Márkus commented that Ferenc (together with Agnes Heller) ' had a lasting impact on a whole generation of social theorists in Australia'. I warmly acknowledge my own continuing debt.

2) We don't just need to thank *Thesis Eleven* for what it helped to introduce us to and keep before us. We also owe something to its own high level of self-reflexiveness about the challenges it has faced. I'm not surprised to hear that the editors had some on-going debates about the title of the journal. It's interesting though that they didn't decide to let it go. I was struck by the self-consciousness of its changing role that is threaded through journal editorials, particularly in its commemorative editions. These are pretty much a calm history of reflections on some of the options and challenges faced by a critical academic cohort. The title remained in place but the subtitle changes in the 1990s to 'Rethinking Social and Political theory' with a programmatic statement appearing on the back cover from the mid 1990s to 2005. Proclaiming itself to be "Marxist in origin and post Marxist by necessity' it is a statement that expands on the already noted awareness that with 'targets that are moving' contemporary social and political theory needs to be on the move too, rethinking what needs to be talked about and how we might think about directions and processes of change. Its characteristic self-reflexiveness was also there in 2002 when the journal again changed its subtitle to 'critical theory and historical sociology'. As I see it, the main importance here was its index to an

editorial board that was trying to think about what the journal was doing -I can't say that I noticed any real tightening of the editorial belt to exclude papers that didn't fit with some new agenda.

Central also to the self-consciousness that has kept *Thesis Eleven* fresh is of course the always-present awareness of the importance of place and context. Andrew Milner thinks that this was sacrificed as the journal morphed into its 'professional academic ' status. I don't see that at all. The question of 'distance from the centre' of the South is always cropping up in various forms. In his piece in the 100th issue, George Steinmetz suggests that the question of the South and what hangs on it (by way of certain sorts of histories and perspectives) features as an unsettled issue throughout the journal. Again it doesn't seem to be the role of a journal in the humanities and social sciences to try and sort out a definitive answer rather to help to identify and keep important discussions alive. It can do more than that of course and suggest a range of tools that we might use to dig further into these questions. In this regard, it seems that Arnason's sophisticated account of the 'intercivilsational encounters' and 'multiple modernities' makes a real contribution to our need to think about these aspects of modernity in far more sophisticated ways.

3) Finally we can say that *Thesis Eleven* has not just helped to channel important traditions of thought through to us that otherwise were a bit of a blank spot in the Australian cultural scene. Nor has it only helped us to become self-reflexive about the on-going struggle to think critically about the ills, predicaments and

options of our times. It has also and obviously provided us with somewhere to try out our ideas that would give them both a local and an international hearing. I always certainly felt very chuffed whenever I got something into *Thesis Eleven*. Sometimes, unlike most of my publications, people would even talk to me about them.

Lastly - I'd like to say warm congratulations to the Melbourne editorial collective. I'm sure that despite the pleasures of the achievement it's been a hard grind. *Thesis Eleven* has managed to straddle a kind of theoretical openness and to make itself available to different voices while remaining in a general sense true to its original interest in the role of theory as critique and as a spur to action.

Pauline Johnson

'Lukács in Reverse': Cultural Sociology and the Future of *Thesis Eleven*

As a cultural sociologist working in the Australian university system, the journal, *Thesis Eleven*, has had three connotations for me personally: firstly, sophisticated theorizing upon the modern condition by prominent social theorists ranging from Zygmunt Bauman to Agnes Heller, Niklas Luhmann to Martin Jay; secondly, the impact of the Central European intellectual tradition upon the English-language academy (and, in the case of Australian academe, the migration of the so-called Budapest School to our shores); and thirdly, the La Trobe Department of Sociology and more recently the *Thesis Eleven* Centre at La Trobe University. The fact that the

latter recently changed its name to the *Thesis Eleven* Centre for Cultural Sociology and that, in many respects, this is the direction in which the journal is heading, is the point I want to address. So why 'Lukács in Reverse'? The expression was used by John Carroll at an event at La Trobe University in 2010 where he spoke of his own recollections of working alongside Agnes Heller and Ferenc Feher after their exile from Hungary. John's explanation for referring to the work of the Budapest School as 'Lukács in Reverse' was the following: he felt that from *Dictatorship over Needs* onwards the work of these Hungarian scholars in exile constituted a long but inevitable return to the early or pre-Marxist Lukács - in particular, the Lukács of *Soul and Form*.

This is not an insignificant formulation. For it implies that those sociologists and social theorists who have been influenced by Heller and Feher- and there are many in Australia - are only 'two degrees' removed from the young Lukács. This is the Lukács who was involved from 1912-1917 in the Sunday Circle that met at Marianne and Max Weber's house in Heidelberg. Scholars such as Lawrence Scaff (1989) have recounted how at these Sunday afternoon soirees the topics would range from Tolstoy to the Russian Revolution, from vegetarianism to pacifism, from music to the question of charisma. The young Lukács was so taken by the modus operandi of the Weber Sunday circle that, when he returned to Budapest in 1917, he created his own version. The Budapest Sunday Circle included, amongst others, the sociologist Karl Mannheim, the art historian Arnold Hauser, the composer Béla Bartók and the poet Béla Balázs.

The central problematic for the pre-1918 Lukács was the nature of 'lived experience' and whether specific cultural forms enhanced or diminished life. Here's a sample of what he had to say about culture and technology:

"There are those who, when the topic turns to culture, prefer to talk about aeroplanes and railways, the speed and efficiency of telegraphs… And yet, can we claim… our letters [have] gained in depth and become more soulful on account of a faster mail service? [Have] human responses to life become stronger… because a larger number of people get closer to more and more things?" (Lukács, 1994: 146)

In the very same essay, Lukács (1994: 146) provides his own succinct definition of culture: culture is 'the unifier of life; a unity strong enough to intensify and enrich life'.

When Claudio Veliz and John Carroll organized the inaugural La Trobe Seminar in the Sociology of Culture in 1982, Agnes Heller presented a paper where the influence of the young Lukács was very much in evidence. She wrote at the time:

"It is 'trendy' today to apply anthropological methods to the sociology of culture and conclude that our own culture is the sum total of various 'subcultures'… But even if one subscribes to complete cultural relativism, an attitude I would not recommend, one still remains under the spell of the traditional language of the sociology of culture for the vantagepoint remains the same… The world is not a

whole, only theory is holistic." (Heller, 1982: 14-15)

She then goes on to list which thinkers, in her opinion, have carried out this kind of sociology of culture best. She lists Tonnies, Weber, Simmel, Sombart, Durkheim, Mauss, Scheler, Pareto and Mannheim. Interestingly, Marx is missing from the list. But the ones listed are clearly the kinds of sociologists that the Lukács of *Soul and Form* would have been attracted to.

Echoes of the early-Lukács are also evident in *Thesis Eleven* Issue Number 100. One of the central concerns of the Heidelberg and Budapest Sunday circles was what kind of 'leap of faith' was required by revolutionary politics and to what extent this leap of faith resembled the 'social psychology' or theodicy of religious movements. I suspect that Weber and the young Lukács must have had some very 'tasty' discussions concerning this matter and there is little doubt Weber would have been disappointed by his young friend's decision to join the Communist Party in 1918. But the young Lukács would have directly confronted the Weberian formulation that socialism was a religious 'ethic' of sorts and it is therefore fitting that *Thesis Eleven* Issue Number 100 contains an essay by Jeff Alexander entitled: 'Marxism and the Spirit of Capitalism: Cultural Origins of Anti-Capitalism'. Alexander's essay would not have been out of place at the discussions of either the Heidelberg or Budapest Sunday Circles.

My comments on the early-Lukács are a way of saying that as the work published in *Thesis Eleven* increasingly falls under the label of a cultural sociology there is no cause for alarm. I can understand why the journal's shifting towards 'culture' could well have some reaching for their metaphorical 'guns'. But hopefully this concern with culture will be closer to that fashioned by the young Lukács and those that directly influenced him rather than the 'profane' and largely nominalist concept of culture that we find in British cultural studies and French structural sociology (on the 'profane' concept of culture operating in current media studies departments and curricula see de la Fuente, 2011).

For the young Lukács culture was neither a set of semiotic codes nor a mode of resistance. The key terms in the young Lukács' conceptual armory are: 'poverty of spirit'; 'soulful' and 'soulless'; 'form' and what 'form' does to 'life'. Again, think Weber's 'Science as Vocation' or his 'Religious Rejections of the World' essay; or, perhaps even more so, Simmel's reflections in 'The Conflict in Modern Culture'.

In conclusion, I think the formula, 'Lukács in Reverse', has some merit. I suspect that for reasons of marketing and brand recognition the editorial board will stick with the current journal title! But, even if the title remains the same, I hope the spirit of the young Lukács will continue to influence what happens at *Thesis Eleven*. As the journal moves towards a more explicit engagement with the project of a cultural sociology the legacy of this Central European social theoretical tradition will keep it in good stead.

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Eduardo de la Fuente

Between Interpretation and Critique: From Marx's thesis to *Thesis Eleven*

I'm very honoured to be invited to participate in the TASA Workshop Session: '*Thesis Eleven*: Beyond the Antipodes – Thirty Years, One Hundred Issues'; some of my best academic experiences have some connection to the journal *Thesis Eleven*.

I would like to draw attention to why the journal is considered so significant internationally, something that is not, in my opinion, as well appreciated in Australia as it should be. *Thesis Eleven* has evolved with the times; however, in terms of social theory and sociology it has often been ahead of the times. In particular, *Thesis Eleven* opened the way for two theoretical conceptions that have come to penetrate the broader fields of social theory and sociology: social imaginaries and multiple modernities. These two conceptions involve a stronger interpretative dimension than is to be found in either typical Marxist

social theory or sociological theories of modernisation. These previously dominant perspectives on modernity, as Peter Wagner explains, tended to have an "exclusive focus on institutional structures at the expense of the interpretative analysis of societal self-understandings (Wagner 2010: 54)." One implication of the multiple modernities perspective is that to explain persistence and change in institutional and organisational forms it is necessary to explicate societal self-understandings, or, in different terms, the instituted social order has to be related to the social imaginary, its horizon of meaning, web of significations, cleavages and conflicts, specifically the conflict between social genesis and the denial of social creation in the instituted closure from which the experience of the world draws its stability and is taken as reality.

The journal's original political focus is evident from the one-hundredth issue's republished first editorial and Peter Beilharz's new 'Countereditorial (2010)'. In my view, the journal's move to interpretation was particularly influenced by Castoriadis's notion of social imaginaries. Castoriadis highlighted the social creativity of meaning-making and how the richness of the experience of the world eluded most theoretical perspectives. Everyday life, as the republished 'Editorial Number One (1980)' makes clear, has been a kind of touchstone for the journal and these implications of Castoriadis's notion of social imaginaries enabled an appreciation of how the significance of everyday practices and meanings is not exhausted by their colonisation by capitalist wage-labour and bureaucratic-state administration. Significantly, Castoriadis provided a critique of the immersion of Marx and Marxist thought

within a broader cultural horizon. Although informed by a variety of sources, Castoriadis's notion of social imaginaries inspired Peter Beilharz's work on antipodes, stretching from political economy to aesthetics. Similarly, Castoriadis's explication of the social imaginary was particularly important to Johann Arnason's development of a historical sociology that related praxis to interpretation. For Arnason, the civilizational analysis of multiple modernities develops from 'the idea of culture as an interpretive articulation of the world' (1993: 94). Of course, the journal's recognition that politics incorporates a cultural dimension of meaning and that it is shaped by the interpretation of experience had a variety of sources, including a background in the Budapest School's critique of really existing socialist societies' closure of meaning by the dictatorship over needs.

My intuition is that the intertwining of critique and interpretation did not so much result from the debates over social science methodology, although it is clear that the editors are well aware of these arguments. This is one reason why it would be wrong, I think, to equate *Thesis Eleven*'s interest in interpretation with a particular social scientific semantic, semiotic, or pragmatic approach or program. *Thesis Eleven* developed its own approach to interpretation, one grounded in the *problematiques* of historical sociology and informed by the practical-political intent of critical theory. In the first instance, the journal's innovations stemmed from reflection on the relation of theory and politics, something that required an appreciation of how meaning-making, including social theory, is connected to social struggles

and whose contemporary complications implied a need for new theoretical understandings. Critical theory has always been reflexive about its social-historical context, but this reflexivity had not been previously applied in the way that *Thesis Eleven* would develop. *Thesis Eleven*'s endeavours to theorise the transformations of the contemporary society have always been tempered by an awareness of the longer-term history and the salience of place. The journal has thereby been able to avoid the exaggerations and false alternatives that have dominated contemporary social theory and sociology. Now, this interpretative approach involves a certain relativising of one's own world, yet *Thesis Eleven*'s perspective has proven to be of far more general significance. The journal gave expression to a version of multiple modernities prior to Shmuet Eisenstadt's conceptualisation. In the early nineteen-nineties, *Thesis Eleven* defined itself in the following terms: "The identity of the journal, like its location, is multiple: European in the continental sense, but also transatlantic and colonial."

I cannot conclude without referring to Marx's famous thesis. In my opinion, the journal's adoption of the title *Thesis Eleven* expresses a sense of humour rather than hubris. Peter Beilharz's (1989) comment on Castoriadis's wit conveys something of the distinctive attitude that animates the journal's critique. Castoriadis's "humour is no mere embellishment: his sarcasm rests on this sense of hope, and its fragile expression in everyday life, where things can be counted on to go wrong, where idiots will always be in charge." (Beilharz 1989, 140) However we evaluate Marx's notion of the synthesis of theory and practice today, Marx

enabled a demarcation to be drawn between theories that are committed to critique and those that unintentionally affirm the existing social order. Critique, I want to suggest, derives from the modernist notion of the potential constitution of society through the autonomous action of subjects, whereas interpretation is a kind of practice that can be oriented by other norms, as well as that of autonomy. *Thesis Eleven* has disclosed how critique involves interpretation and is dependent upon it, yet this conditioning of critique should not obscure a difference in orientation. Critique entails some moment of discordance, whereas interpretation, proper, is oriented towards identification or concordance. Of course, critique would be empty without some identification with part of social reality; it would be simply an abstract negation. Nonetheless, this means that critique engages with what Luc Boltanski (2009) describes as the 'hermeneutic contradiction', since its interpretative component inevitably draws to some extent upon extant meanings and these meanings participate in the instituted order's attempt to construct and define the 'what is of the what is' or the reality of reality. Boltanski argues that there is never a complete coincidence between the institutional order's reality and the world of meaning. *Thesis Eleven* has for thirty years practised a form of critique that has continuously revealed that there is a larger world than that which would otherwise be taken as reality and, although the journal is now an institution, to paraphrase Marx's third thesis on Feuerbach, in this way its self-changing practices have coincided with innovations and transformations in social theory and the world.(1)

Notes

1. "The materialist doctrine concerning the changing of circumstances and upbringing forgets that circumstances are changed by men and that it is essential to educate the educator himself. The doctrine must, therefore, divide society into two parts, one of which is superior to society. The coincidence of the changing of circumstances and of human activity or self-changing can be conceived and rationally understood as revolutionary practice." (Marx 1977, 156)

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Craig Browne

ISA World Congress Research Committee on Sociological Theory (RC 16) Session Reports

Trust and Intersubjectivity

In the original statement outlining the topic of the session 'Trust and Intersubjectivity' the easy equating of trust with objectivity was put in question. Although it may appear at first sight that trust between agents must have a direct dependence on the truth of their assertions, such an assumption will not bear the theoretical weight that a proper analysis requires. The reason is that it not so much takes for granted that there does exist a common goal for our mutual communications, an 'ideal speech situation', a final match of word to world, but takes for granted such a goal without realizing that such a metaphysical ideal could be a needful, though strictly false, hypothesis that acts as a temporary focus for speakers' differing acts of referring.

The 'vulnerability' to risk was the theme of Barbara Misztal's presentation 'Trust: Acceptance of, Precaution against, and Cause of Vulnerability' (Barbara Misztal is at the University of Leicester). She pointed out that the bonds of solidarity that have been established between communicating agents are not secure against the unpredictability of common action, where an outcome may have been foreseen by one agent but not by another or may be unforeseen by all, entirely unintended. This entails a morally sophisticated conception of what a promise is, certainly not one in which the responsibility for the original commitment could only be what one originally believed. She quoted Georg Simmel on 'the unknowability of the other', and deduced that the co-operation implied in speech might lead one into a predicament where an unsuspected need for forgiveness —and, I would add, sacrifice — is involved.

Svetlana Bankovskaya (Moscow State University) brought insight from Harold Garfinkel into the discussion. Garfinkel came to see the rationality of social interaction, not as a given from a pre-existing standard of thought, but as a continually adjusted achievement. As Bankovskaya put it, the 'perceived normality of an event' was not something ontologically guaranteed; its typicality is produced in the engagement of agents in the compromises of their differing actions, as she put it, in the 'in-betweens' of meaning. Local circumstances always have to taken account of, especially when they reveal unintended consequences. The relation to the topic of trust lies in the fact that original expectances are 'undermined'; those in interaction 'become strangers'. Her conclusion is similar to that of Misztal; a renewal of mutual co-ordination cannot take place without an open-eyed acknowledgement of the 'in-between'.

Shai Dromi (Yale University) addresses the same problematic, drawing his illustrations from the conflict between Israeli settlers and a government that sought to withdraw them from their establishment in Gaza. He called his paper 'Measuring Heartbreak', which, in view of what has been said above, places in oxymoronic clash human motivation and a system which would seek to assess it, again a confrontation between speakers' meanings and the supposedly common word. He goes straight to the collision in the values of the two parties, which he describes as

'incommensurable'. It shows itself in the attempt to apportion monetary value in the legal arguments about compensation, where, for example, there were efforts to quantify 'sentimental attachment to place'. What the example makes salient is that for such disagreements there are often no outcomes satisfactory to both parties; perhaps, at the extreme, disagreement can issue in real tragedy.

Marcin Smietana (University of Barcelona) also drew attention to the fact that the strategies agents take in endeavouring to find resolutions to conflicts are on a scale that varies from 'adaptive' to 'resistant', a conclusion that Dromi would obviously second. The examples he instances were from the relations between school authorities in Spain on the one hand and lesbian and gay parents of schoolchildren on the other. There was considerable variation in the attitudes on both sides of these disputes, and it was traceable to the degree and flexibility of the trust exhibited (for parents could opt for non-disclosure, selective disclosure, or openness about their sexuality).

Edmond Wright, it being the last paper of a long day, opted to entertain the audience by devoting the opening of his presentation to a dramatic monologue suggested by the film 'Avatar'. He appeared as Vishnu, the Hindu god, not perhaps the first god to come down amongst men in avatar-form, Krishna. Having temporarily regained control of Wright's body, in a new avatar shape he commented upon the difficulties of projecting his moral definitions, particularly of the Self, into an animal body in order to make it human. He realized the problems of uttering speech

at all, especially because among omniscient gods he had found no cause to speak. He ruefully admitted that, since, even as a god with the best will in the universe, talking drew with it such inevitable misunderstandings that 'original sin' could be as much on the god's (society's side) as that of the agent's. The latter half of the talk was taken up with an indication of how the moral demands of risk and its implications for human faith (not creed) had immediate relevance for the current controversy over religion.

Edmond Wright

Inequality and Difference

The session on Inequality and Difference discussed original theoretical perspectives. The four presenters offered inspiring ideas with deep implications for further theoretical discussion and elaboration, pointing to promising paths to frame our understanding of inequality and difference. The clear proof of that was the lively and fruitful debate they stimulated on the occasion. Unable to reproduce it here, I highlight some of the most insightful aspects raised in the papers discussed.

Jochen Dreher (University of Konstanz) in his "Knowledge and Social Inequality: The Interplay of Subjective Constitution and Symbolic Construction", focuses on the interface between phenomenology and sociology of knowledge to propose an approach to inequality alternative to the mainstream preference for focusing on social stratification. He takes inspiration from Husserl, Schultz, Berger and Luckmann, and Pierre Bourdieu, seeking to reconstruct typification procedures and systems of relevance that are effective

within the constitution of inequality in which the individual actor is involved. As he poses it, "If we concentrate on the dialectical relationship between individual and society, it is possible on the one hand to analyze the subjective constitution of inequality based on incorporated knowledge typifications. On the other hand, inequality is constructed through collectively shared knowledge structures that are established in processes of symbolization."

The paper on "Structural Equivalence, Established-Outsider Configurations, Allotment Farmers, and Gender – a network theoretical view on social inequality", by Jan Fuhse (Bielefeld University) uses network theory to offer an alternative to approaches based upon group interaction, relying instead on the idea of structural equivalence. In his perspective, many dimensions of inequality are based on specific pattering of interaction ties, rather than on increased internal interaction. He incorporates Elias notion of established and outsider configurations suggesting that these can be seen as mechanisms through which structural equivalence in social structure can lead to material and symbolic inequality.

"The Contractual Illusion", by Pekka Sulkunen (University of Helsinki) discusses the contract form so pervasive in contemporary practices of governance. He sees it as "a configuration of power and justification, more profound than a hegemonic ideological turn back to the boon of market competition." Luke's theory of power and Thevenot's theory of justification are some of the elements he uses to elaborate the idea that the contractual power constitutes a fourth

power dimension. Contract is his words, disguises social relationships as voluntary agreement, therefore concealing subordination and inequalities. Arguing that today autonomy, or rather agency at large, is itself a principle of inclusion and differentiation, he contends that the contract enforced in governance practices is an illusion, but one which has real, practical consequences.

Mervyn Horgan (Acadia University) with his "From the Stranger to Strangership: suggestions for reconceptualizing difference and inequality" proposes to take further the relational component in Simmel's definition of the stranger as someone who peculiarly combines proximity and social distance. In order to do so, he takes into account the very notion of strangership. This insight allows Horgan to propose an innovative theoretical approach to difference and inequality which are typical relational notions. He discusses basic conditions for the genesis and persistence of strangership, looks at how this condition is produced at the interactional and the structural level, and offers examples of how strangership is entangled with inequality and difference.

Elisa Reis

The Performance of Power

RC16's session on The Performance of Power opened with Jason Mast presenting on processes by which political legitimacy is contested through performative means in everyday and grand political struggles. Mast suggested approaching the question of legitimacy, its reproduction or erosion, as part of a process that conforms to particular genre

expectations. He posed the question, can we look at politics as comprising its own genre, and examine it as a practice of conforming to and straining against genre expectations, and furthermore, critique it based on its particular typifications and basic constituent parts? In addition to de-naturalizing politics, Mast asserted that the concept of genre helps us examine politics and legitimacy as processes of ongoing performances, staged by motivated political actors, mediated by critics, and interpreted by audiences, all in the context of a deeply rooted, widely shared system of collective representations.

In his presentation, Bin Xu explored the question of why Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao's performance in the wake of the Sichuan earthquake was highly effective, while his and other leaders' similar performances in the wake of other disasters were not. Comparing three crisis events, Xu found that performances of power are greatly shaped by the physical scenes in which they take place inasmuch by the strategies of impression management the performers work to inhabit. The scene enabled Wen Jiabao's performances to facilitate strong emotional connections with his audience, and helped to create and reinforce the development of a cultural script in which the Premier came to embody the fusion of two characters, that of a caring "Grandpa" on the one hand, and that of the "Premier of the People" on the other.

Erik Ringmar presented on applying a performative framework to the study of international politics, a practice virtually unheard of in contemporary studies of the subject. Ringmar compared three international systems -- the Westphalian,

the Sino-centric, and the political system of Tokugawa Japan -- and concluded that a focus on how they are performed provides good insights into their basic logics of the ways power is disseminated within the each system. This, in turn, provides us with suggestions for how to visualize a future where the state is no longer the dominant political unit.

Patrick Baert spoke about how Sartre's talk "existentialism as a humanism," which took place in October 1945 in Paris, was crucial to the rising popularity of existentialist philosophy. Baert elaborated the rhetorical tools Sartre used to promote his views, and discussed how Sartre managed to navigate the tumultuous waters of the postwar constellation and helped sections of society come to terms with the experience of the war.

Jeffrey Alexander commented on the presentations, noting that despite the differences in empirical sites and literatures addressed, the projects each demonstrated sensitivity to illuminating how power is embedded in a performative process. The session was well attended, and the presentations inspired questions for each of the presenters. Questions ranged from probing the challenges a comparative case may pose for a genre approach to politics, the historical particularities that Sartre confronted, the challenges of engaging the prevailing approaches to international politics, and the cultural processes by which a scene takes on a particular meaning structure.

Jason L. Mast

Cosmopolitanism and Recognition

Cosmopolitan discourses, narratives and theories frame a specific domain between political communication, recognition theories, globalization theories, and civilization theories. There was considerable value, then, in the session's initiating a discussion of the theoretical references of these large developments.

Maurice Roche (Sheffield) detailed the historical formation of Europe and the sociological characterization of Europe as a civil space. Roche suggested that these enabled the cosmopolitan thesis to be envisaged and it is in these terms that it should be assessed. He reminded us that Europe's common history is that of conflicts between nation states (Tilly). Nonetheless, he proposed that European cosmopolitanism involved an extension of the institutional and normative attributes of civil society beyond the national frame, giving rise to what he characterized as a complex civil space:

"The European civil complex, then, can be understood in relation to this analysis of the European social complex as consisting of normatively valued and valuable elements at each of these levels. On the one hand, corresponding to the societal dimension and institutional level, there is the sphere of European 'civil society'; on the other hand, corresponding to the deep structural level there is the sphere of European 'civil space'. In each of its two aspects the European civil complex in its networks and flows involves the practice and regulation of principles of peaceful co-existence and free (unconstrained) communication. " (Roche)

This socio-historical approach to the cosmopolitan opportunity attempts to enumerate both an analytical cosmopolitanism (Vertovec) and a normative cosmopolitanism (such as one finds in the work of Beck).

Klaus Muller (Berlin) was more dubious about the merits of cosmopolitan discourses in the face of the reality of political and geopolitical relations. He developed a genealogic argument, centred on force relations, *Realpolitik*. He sharply questioned the ethic of judgment in early political economy (A Smith), so as to draw links between the genealogy of Marxist criticisms and the political realism that shapes internal and external relations. The central issue becomes the question of whether there can be a cosmopolitan political space between nations, given the framework of international relations. In Muller's view, the hard facts of real politics mean that cosmopolitan discourses should be dismissed.

In opposition to this thesis, Tassin underlines the place of cosmopolitan discourse when, following Hannah Arendt, violence is suspended, when countries are making peace and negotiating (Tassin, 2003). The analytical question of cosmopolitanism and recognition could then be reformulated, focusing on the place of culture in the international relations between States, ideologies, and modernization discourses. It is just such a view that Johann Arnason has recently developed with his notion of cultural encounters between civilizations (Arnason, 2010).

Csabo Szaló (Brno) considered the idea of cosmopolitanism as a utopia beyond

the nation state. He questioned the pragmatic consistency of these cosmopolitan narrative utopias. "How to give a rough idea of a shared critical-normative culture and empirical-analytical perspective.?" Szaló proposed a distinction between moderate and strong modes of critical cosmopolitanism. "The moderate position, as in the texts of Gerard Delanty, is centred on a desire to go beyond ethnocentrism and particularity in the process of interpretation. The strong position, represented by works Ulrich Beck or Manuel Castells, is grounded on the radical critique of methodological nationalism".

This epistemological interrogation led, in turn, to a questioning of the presuppositions of the cosmopolitan narration and the cosmopolitan audience. For this reason, Szaló presented "a hermeneutical reconstruction of two cases of critical cosmopolitanism: the discourse of post-modern anthropology represented by the Writing Culture movement and the discourse of postcolonial cultural studies formed around the journal *Public Culture*. As these cases showed, critical cosmopolitanism is built on the *duality of epistemological and ethical claims. These generate a contradiction between the quest for radical conceptual innovation and comprehensible public communication"*. Szaló underlined the performative effect of these discourses of critical cosmopolitanism: "Beside appealing to existing audiences they made an effort to create their own audiences". These imbalances effect the social interactions and symbolic encounters of the very practices of cultural exchange.

Szaló thereby contributed to cultural pragmatism's criticisms of globalization discourses. Yet, this raises the question of whether a cosmopolitan cultural pragmatism would have to be sustained by some of the same historical approaches. The cosmopolitan challenge that confronts multinational states, such as is currently manifesting itself in Central European countries, may provide a broad justification for seeking to connect the theses of Mannheim, Rorty, Alexander and Delanty.

Gilles Verpraet (Paris) proposed an axiological framework and a typology of cosmopolitan discourses. This was based on the pragmatic modalities of effectuation, that is, as contextual effectuation (urban cosmopolitanism, political cosmopolitanism) and as effectuation inside the global exchange (cultural cosmopolitanism, ethical cosmopolitanism). In suggesting this repertoire, Verpraet referred to how Tassin (2003) underlines the possibility of political community beyond the nation state as a cohesive community.

Within this analytical frame, cosmopolitanism can be recognized as a civil discourse and as a cultural discourse. The civil discourse of cosmopolitanism proceeds between nation states, between proximity and distance, between the close foreigner (as friend, as competitor) and the distanced foreigners at large (unknown, threat, virtual friends). The processes of recognition are decisive for the qualification of foreigner; they constitute the cognitive means of cosmopolitan discourses and visions. Indeed, Verpraet showed that claims for recognition are explicit inside the ethical and civil discourses of cosmopolitanism

The processes of cultural exchanges inside globalization themselves suppose some conjunction between cultural identities (Friedman, Arnason). Cultural processes inside globalization have specific constituencies. The same message can be similarly and differently received by, and communicated between, different national audiences - different publics - following the conjunctions and disjunctions between nations. The frames and standards of communication have to take into account these historical transitions. With the differentiation of plural audiences comes the possibility of cultural dialogues. Todorov underlines how, after 1989, the civil rights charter has been claimed by successive new European countries, but with the different acceptations conditioned by national history (Poland, Czech, Ukraine, Turkey, Georgia, Russia, and Afghanistan, Iraq,). Differentiation processes are then part of cosmopolitan development. The legitimation processes of the cosmopolitan discourses have presented national and historical variations.

The theoretical approaches to cosmopolitan narration directly question the legitimations and distortions endorsed by forms of cultural recognition. Recognition and visions of the world are tangible elements for cosmopolitan discourse. The workshop sharply questioned the ontological contribution of the cosmopolitan discourses and the cosmopolitan theories. What ontology of subjects and cultural identities is compatible with globalization? Which ontology of cultural exchange and how far is it open to translation? Questions were raised about the possibilities for transnational politics and civil discourse in a period of globalization. These were found to be the current questions of contemporary social theory and to which recognition theory, cultural pragmatism, and theories of public space are all seen to be making a sociological contribution, articulating such questions in their own styles.

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Gilles Verpraet

Theorizing global media and cultural flows

This session featured papers that considered the general theme of media and globalization from a variety of different theoretical angles. Alberto Ribes presented the first paper, "Earth Hour as an Aleph Event: performing meta-narratives". Professor Ribes, from the Universidad Complutense de Madrid (Spain), argued that Earth Hour was not entirely successful as a global media event, if success is defined by increased global awareness and collective social action. Rather than emphasizing the narrative of climate change threat, most media coverage of Earth Hour instead focused on the ritual events themselves (e.g., collective blackouts, public candle ceremonies, etc.), on celebrity partipants, and on the striking images of the landmarks in which the ritual events were situated. In other words, an awareness of the event as a global media event crowded out coverage about the collective action goals, while the global nature of the event was refracted through a more local lens.

Matthias Revers (University at Albany, State University of New York, USA) presented the second paper, "Media Systems and Media Cultures: News Coverage of Deportation in the US and Austria". Like Ribes, the data that Revers presented challenged the assumptions of cultural homogenization that we find in many theories of media and globalization. Combining insights from comparative media systems research with others from the Strong Program in Cultural Sociology, Revers showed that there were significant differences in the narratives used to report about deportation in the US and Austrian news media. Where the different media systems were more similar, in contrast, was in their tendency to focus on questions related to media ethics and "metacommunication". In other words, while there were some general tendencies toward cultural convergence, the specific organization of the journalistic field and the distinct political cultures in each nation meant that media coverage was largely refracted through a more local and national lens.

Christian Fuchs (University of Salzburg, Austria) presented the third paper, "Global Capitalism: New Imperialism? Media Imperialism?". Beginning with Lenin's theory of imperialism, Fuchs argued that a strong case could be made for the existence of globalization and media imperialism. In the concentration of capital, the merging of bank capital with industrial capital, and the existence of political and spatial hierarchies, there is a global imperialism in which media play an important role. On the other hand, Fuchs argued that globalization is not being driven by the media sector, but rather continues to be led by finance and industry. Furthermore, while media industries are becoming more transnational, they remain anchored in national economies in certain crucial respects. Ultimately, Fuchs argues, it is a mistake to call the new imperialism a media or informational imperialism.

The final paper was of the session was presented by Zanetta Jansen, from the University of South Africa at Pretoria. Professor Jansen's paper, "A Critical Political Economy of Media Organizations in the 21st Century", used the case of the Reuters news agency as a way to explore how media organizations are adapting to globalization and

transnational cultural flows. The key to Reuters' success is its particular strategies of differentiation. By combining globally comprehensive political coverage with specialized financial reporting, Reuters has been able to stake out a distinctive position that is attractive to the global financial elite, thereby assuring the news organization of clients and revenues. Understanding these developments, Jansen argues, requires a critical political economy that fuses an interest in economic markets with a focus on cultural practices.

Ron Jacobs

Urban Space and Global Cities

This panel consisted of three presentations around the theme of "urban space and global cities." The three papers discussed three very interesting and theoretically informed cases about Russia, Germany and Portugal, and together they brought out a rich array of issues relating to the sociology of space, social practices and cultural development. These papers received enthusiastic responses from a small but critical audience.

Alexander Filippov and Svetlana Bankovskaya from the State University - Higher School of Economics elaborated a couple of theoretical tools for the sociology of space and related them to a public place – Manezhnaya square – in Moscow. Every observation was the observation of social events in space and time. People's orientation in space had their practical schemes to act and to interact in places. In the case of Manezhnaya square, the flâneure and his/ her movements and performances at

the "empty" place was the object to experiment with. It was depicted by the two modes of the transient movement through this space: 1. flâneure's performances, movements mainly (as intended, but purposeless action), which gave the psychogeographical profile of the square; 2. observation (as a purposive action) of the flâneure's performances and tracks of movement, "chasing flâneure" and fixation of his/ her interaction with the artefacts on the spot in details, which formed the sociogeographical profile of the square. The interference of the profiles accounted in more details for the fluid, performative, solidarities, emergent on the spot. In the "Q&A" session, the floor and the presenters were engaged in some very interesting discussion about the changing forms of solidarity as manifested in the case, an issue that was at the heart of classical sociology.

The second paper by Michael Jonas from the University of Vienna, Austria, explored the reconfiguration of urban forms with a praxeological approach, which concerned the question of how cities position themselves through urban entrepreneurialism projects and how inter-connected socio-economic, political and cultural processes take place, in light of different influences and contexts. Jonas combined the theoretical concepts of assemblage, territorialisation, reterritorialisation and deterritorialisation introduced by Deleuze and Guattari in their book *Thousand Plateaus* with the concept of social practices developed by Schatzki. Based on these theoretical ideas, he looked at the socioeconomic transformation of Dortmund, a city in Germany, and ascertained that urban entrepreneurialism might be grasped as a

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multiple phenomenon created through the activities of heterogeneous actor constellations, whose individuals are members of different assemblages (for instance of economic policy, different industries, creditors or the public media) actualising different partly overlapping or partly contradicting bundles of social practices (for instance of urban revitalization concept development and legitimation, of concept implementation, of company foundation, of company development, of employee participation, of venture capital financing, of informing reporting or of a critically-distanciated report).

The third and final paper was by Tatiana Travisani, a PhD student in Visual Arts in Universidade de São Paulo. It focused on contemporary artistic works that incorporated global cities as poetic and / or illustrative inspiration. Using Portugal as an example, the paper discussed some site-specific, and mobile art, and explored the artistic design of the contemporary city in the contexts of migration and globalization. Travisani also reflected on the tendency of cities to become protagonists of current artistic experimentation through the use of new electronic media. The paper received some thought-provoking comments from the floor regarding how the artworks explored the concept of the global city and if they expressed common features to cities.

Agnes Ku