

International Sociological Association
RC 20

Comparative Sociology

June 2015 Newsletter

Strasbourg: 26 June, 2015

Dear colleagues,

In this newsletter, you will notably find our programme within the framework of the ISA international Forum which will take place in Austria next year. We have received many session proposals and haven't been in a position to accommodate all of them. We will also have a few joint sessions (hosted by other RCs and not counted against our timeslot).

I wish to draw your attention to the fact that the deadline to submit abstracts is September 30.

All good wishes,

*Jean-Pascal Daloz
RC 20 Chair*

3rd ISA Forum of Sociology, Vienna (10-14 July 2016)

Sessions in alphabetical order

Also available at: <http://www.isa-sociology.org/forum-2016/rc/rc.php?n=RC20#top>

**Analysing the Global/Regional/National/Local Divide.
Comparative Perspectives on a "Blurred" Relationship**

Session Organizer(s)

Thomas LAUX, Chemnitz University of Technology, Germany,
thomas.laux@soziologie.tu-chemnitz.de

Thomas KERN, Chemnitz University of Technology, Germany,
thomas.kern@soziologie.tu-chemnitz.de

Michael HOELSCHER, German University of Administrative
Sciences Speyer, Germany, hoelscher@uni-speyer.de

Session in English

Processes of globalization or transnationalization are widely associated with an increasing interdependence of different levels of analysis. The interrelations of these levels are discovered in nearly all social spheres and they influence social change and social action significantly.

Though the relationship of the global and the local is subject to a variety of sociological analyses, its dynamics are captured only vaguely. Comparative perspectives enrich their understanding and foster the development of more adequate approaches for further research.

Thus, we seek innovative empirical comparative analyses of global/regional/national/local relations. Contributions touching on methodological problems of comparisons across different levels (and thereby heterogeneous units) are also welcome.

Possible topics may be, but are not limited to:

-
- Theoretical issues:
 - What theories offer promising insights for a comparative analysis of the global-local divide?
 - How can the (postulated) difference between the global and the local be captured theoretically?
 - What characterizes best the different processes between the different levels – coercion, adaption or translation?
-
- Methodological issues:
 - What are the relevant units for comparing different structural levels between the global and the local?
 - How to grasp these units of comparison adequately?
 - Which methodological approaches are most promising for analyzing the global/regional/national/local divide?
-
- Substantial empirical analyses:

- How do markets, organizations, and movements shape the relationship between levels of globalization?
- Where do the different levels meet? Are social movements, NGOs or global cities focal points of the global and the local?

Biographies – Figurations – Discourses: The Dialectic of Individuals and Society in the (Empirical) Study of Individual and Collective Hi/stories

Session Organizer(s)

Artur BOGNER, University of Bayreuth, Germany,
artur.bogner@web.de

Robert VAN KRIEKEN, University of Sydney, Australia,
rvkrieken@gmail.com

Session in English

The “dialectic” of “individuals” and “social facts” continues to haunt sociology and the neighboring disciplines. In the tradition of biographical research that originated in the Chicago School and is vibrant among others in Germany, France, Poland, Britain and Austria today, the concepts of “discourse” and “figuration” have gained increasing attention as tools for describing, investigating and explaining the mutual constitution or factual interplay between individuals and societies, individual and collective processes as well as the – individual and collective – (re-)construction(s) of these and their interdependency or interaction.

Biographical research and figurational sociology have last not least converged on the postulate of a longer-term, diachronic and trans-generational analysis and data collection. On the other hand attempts at a synthesis of biographical research and discourse analysis have moved to the forefront of current biographical research, again in the context of the endeavor to cope with the dialectic of individual and collective processes. This session is intended to give a forum for discussions centered on the terms biography, figuration and/or discourse and to offer a forum for “empirical” or “theoretical-empirical”

research into the mutual constitution or interplay of individual and collective processes, between individual and collective histories and their individual and/or collective (re-)construction. Slight preference would be given to contributions that discuss the use of these, similar or related concepts in the context of empirical, including “historical”, research.

Civilization, Decivilization, and International Relations – Current Trends

Session Organizer(s)

Stephen VERTIGANS, Robert Gordon University, United Kingdom, s.vertigans@rgu.ac.uk

Session in English

Global power figurations have been altered significantly since the end of the “Cold War”, the subsequent decline of America’s cultural, economic and political dominance, and the rise of nations like Brazil, China, India and resurgent Russia. In this session papers are invited to explore the consequences upon local peoples and international relations. Topics that are anticipated to be discussed include the impact upon social consciousness within communities that are experiencing enhanced national profiles, the fragmentation of the Middle East and the rise of Islamic State, the repercussions of America’s decline within the United States, and what these changes mean for international relationships and in particular different forms of social identification, global security and human rights.

Comparative Capitalism: Trajectories of Social and Economic Change in the Countries of the Former Soviet Union since 1991

Session Organizer(s)

Andrey REZAEV, St. Petersburg State University, Russia, anrezaev@yandex.ru

David WEAKLIEM, University of Connecticut, USA, david.weakliem@uconn.edu

Session in English

The objective of this regular session is to examine current hot issues in the studies of capitalism and to make sense of modern manifestation of comparative sociology in understanding processes of economic, social, and cultural development in former Soviet Union (fSU) societies after the demise of the USSR. On the basis of detailed theoretical and empirical analysis of everyday life practices the participants in the session will identify the patterns and underlying causes of success and failure in capitalism evolvement in the Newly Independent States of Eurasia. We encourage to apply those scholars who are interested in the following themes:

-
- comparative study of market institutions in fSU;
- comparative study of everyday life in countries of the fSU;
- trajectories of the educational systems;
- non-governmental and non-corporate sectors of societies;
- the phenomenon of poverty;
- comparative research in issues of culture.

The overall objective of the project is to highlight the role of comparative sociology in studying reality of the former Soviet countries of Eurasia, as well as to develop an advanced understanding of theoretical approaches to capitalism of the 21st century.

Current Research in Comparative Sociology (Qualitative Methodology)

Session Organizer(s)

Jean-Pascal DALOZ, Université de Strasbourg, France, jean-pascal.daloz@misha.fr

Session in English

This session welcomes innovative papers based on recent research using qualitative methods. The papers have to be comparative (at least two cases compared). Priority will be given to original proposals either from a thematic or

methodological point of view.

Current Research in the Comparative Study of Institutions

Session Organizer(s)

Hanno SCHOLTZ, University of Konstanz, Germany,
hanno.scholtz@uni-konstanz.de

Session in English

Including marriage and the market, the parliament and the psychiatric hospital, the university and right-hand driving, the company in general and specific practices in specific companies, the institution is a central sociological concept of both generality and precision, so central to the discipline that Emile Durkheim defined sociology broadly as the study of institutions. Also, the concept of institutions is central to comparative research as it allows to distinguish comparabilities and differences among social situation. For research that develops or uses concepts of institutions in comparative research, this session offers a general platform. It invites current research in the study of social institutions in comparative research. Both theoretical and empirical studies are welcome, although priority is given to those that combine both.

Declining Middle Classes: Challenging Classical Theories of Social Distinction through Consumption

Session Organizer(s)

Sofia ULVER, University of Lund, Sweden, sofia.ulver@fek.lu.se

Session in English

During more than a century theorists on status distinction have competed with one another in order to best explain and understand how the emergence of a western consumer culture is part of a reorganizing of social stratification and social distinction.

But if the 20th century was characterized by the rise of the

Western middle class and the theories on social distinction rested upon that basic assumption, the beginning of the 21st century has been characterized by the need for a monumentally antithetic assumption; namely the actual decline of the middle class, the emergence of a global "precariat", a liquid society and on the empirical level a "new" experience of status descendance in a "nouveaux pauvres" consumer culture. Hence, given that the grand narrative of a rising west has been challenged and, for some, even torn apart, how is social distinction through consumption changing in the declining middle class today?

For this session we call for papers bringing up new perspectives on social distinction through consumption when the formerly safe position of the privileged middle class is derogating. How is consumption used when individual and collective status positions are increasingly unstable? And how are consumer meanings of e.g. ostentation and humility changing in this context? We will prioritize papers using a comparative perspective (for example between cultural sites or sociocultural groups), or case studies between which can be made comparisons.

Political Representation in Comparative Perspective

Session Organizer(s)

Jean-Pascal DALOZ, Université de Strasbourg, France, jean-pascal.daloz@misha.fr

Session in English

Democratic representation is widely thought to be in a state of crisis and a range of factors have been emphasised to explain the increasing mistrust of professional politicians.

Drawing primarily on the resources of philosophy, legislative studies and sociological works concerned with issues of representativeness, the literature on political representation tends, however, to be quite repetitive.

The purpose of this session is to demonstrate how comparative approaches of political representation can contribute to renew traditional perspectives and offer stimulating insights.

The session welcomes comparative works as well as papers that

endeavour to renew traditional readings.

RC20 Business Meeting

Session in English

Recent Quantitative Research in Comparative Sociology – Part I

Session Organizer(s)

David WEAKLIEM, University of Connecticut, USA,
weakliem@uconn.edu

Session in English

This session welcomes comparative research in any area of sociology using quantitative analysis. The research may be based on cross-national surveys, official records, or archival data, and may use either large-N and small-N comparisons.

Recent Quantitative Research in Comparative Sociology – Part II

Session Organizer(s)

Frederick C. TURNER, University of Connecticut, USA,
frederick.turner@uconn.edu

Session in English

The session welcomes innovative papers in the field of comparative sociology using quantitative methods.

Universities: From Organizational Anarchy to Institutional Anarchy?

Session Organizer(s)

Hugues DRAELANTS, Université catholique de Louvain, Belgium,

hugues.draelants@uclouvain.be

Session in English

The universities of the 21st century can no longer be only institutions (Freitag, 2009), they are now enjoined to turn themselves into organizational actors (Krücken and Meier, 2006), that is to say, into rational rather than anarchical organizations (Cohen, March and Olsen, 1972). This instrumental rationalization movement, well described by the literature on governance and management of universities (Bleiklie and Kogan, 2007; Ferlie, Musselin and Andresani, 2008; Krücken, 2011), is accompanied by another movement of rationalization, a normative or substantive one, highlighted by the literature on organizational identity applied to the university (Stensaker, 2014; Weertz, Freed and Morphew, 2014). The higher education field is indeed increasingly infused by multiple and competing institutional logics (Thornton and Occasio, 1999) which question the legitimacy and identity of universities (Kodeih and Greenwood, 2014).

This RC20 session aims to think jointly these evolutions in order to study the interdependencies of this twofold rationalization process. To do this, our purpose is to bring together contributors who have examined these questions in different countries and local contexts in order to understand how universities are dealing with these various demands and pressures for change emanating from their institutional environment and how these transnational dynamics are implemented in specific contexts according to the path dependence (North, 1990) traced by the national histories and academic models (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004; Paradeise et al., 2009).

Urban Neighbourhoods and Culture-Led Revitalization: Comparative Processes, Entanglements, and (Un)Intended Effects

Session Organizer(s)

Sonia BOOKMAN, University of Manitoba, Canada,
Sonia.Bookman@umanitoba.ca

Session in English Spanish

Culture-led revitalization and processes of urban branding in “entrepreneurial” cities from Santiago to Vancouver have transformed city neighbourhoods into “creative”, cosmopolitan, and heritage quarters oriented toward middle-class residents, visitors, and workers (Cronin and Hetherington, 2008). While much work has addressed the gentrification effects of such revitalization, less attention has been paid to the different (and unintended) ways in which various actors engage with the material and cultural frames afforded by these rebranded neighbourhoods, and how revitalization and rebranding have not only been resisted but also put forward by different groups as a means to “remain in” urban districts.

Beyond gentrification, how are revitalized and rebranded urban spaces bound up with and co-produced through the performance of class-based identities and consumer cultures? What various processes and actors are implicated in the surfacing of revitalized neighbourhoods, and how do these arrangements differ across (and within) various cities? How are revitalized and rebranded districts promoted as a means to “remain in” the city and by whom? In what ways do people challenge such urban configurations, and with what (un)intended effects?

This paper presentation session welcomes proposals that address these issues, and that are based on empirical, especially ethnographic, research conducted in “entrepreneurial” cities worldwide. The discussant will aim to draw the themes of the papers together to consider: What can we learn about the ways in which such processes unfold and are challenged in different urban centres? How might this impact on the futures of our cities and urban life?

World Values on a Comparative Perspective

Session Organizer(s)

Marita CARBALLO, voicesconsultancy, Argentina,
maritacarbollo@voicesconsultancy.com

Session in English

The session will deal with changing attitudes and values in the past 30 years in different regions of the world allowing for cross-country comparisons. Presenters will give papers mostly based in the World Values Survey and European Values Survey to allow for historical trends since 1980 till 2014 and cover around 100 countries. Political issues, religious trends, family changes, happiness of nations are central themes of the session.

Joint Sessions

Click on the session title to read its description and the scheduled day/time.

Comparison in Ethnographic Research

Joint session of RC20 Comparative Sociology and RC33 Logic and Methodology in Sociology [host committee]

Contextualizing Cases and Types through Qualitative Multi-Level Analysis

Joint session of RC20 Comparative Sociology , RC33 Logic and Methodology in Sociology [host committee] and WG02 Historical and Comparative Sociology

Contextualizing Inter- and Multinational Survey Research: Discussing Regional Perspectives on Effects and Outcomes of Global Trends

Joint session of RC20 Comparative Sociology and RC33 Logic and Methodology in Sociology [host committee]

Health Inequalities in Comparative Perspective

Joint session of RC15 Sociology of Health [host committee] and RC20 Comparative Sociology

Linear and Non-Linear (Multi-Level) Modelling with Aggregate or Regional Data for Policy Analysis and Evidence-Based Counselling

Joint session of RC20 Comparative Sociology and RC33 Logic and Methodology in Sociology [host committee]

Announcements

Berlin Summer School in Social Sciences – Linking Theory and Empirical Research

Berlin, July 19 – August 1, 2015

We are delighted to announce the 5th Berlin Summer School in Social Sciences. The summer school aims at promoting young researchers by strengthening their methodological understanding in linking theory and empirical research. The two weeks program creates an excellent basis for the advancement of their current research designs.

In the first week we address the key methodological challenges of concept-building, causation/explanation and micro-macro-linkage that occur in almost all research efforts and strive for a clarification of the epistemological implications underlying methodological paradigms. In the second week, these methodological considerations are applied to central empirical fields of research in political science, sociology, and their intersections with other disciplines. In this second part of the program participants are assigned to four thematic groups according to their own research topics. The thematic areas cover “Governance, Politics and Processes of Decision-Making”, “Citizenship, Migration and Diversity”, “Social Struggle and Globalization”, and “The Dynamics of National and International Regimes”.

The program is characterized by a varied format of lectures, workshops, seminars, and one-to-one consultations. During the summer school participants will also have the opportunity to present and intensely discuss their own work and approaches and will be provided with hands-on advice for their research designs.

The school brings together a faculty of renowned international and Berlin-based scholars. Among the confirmed international lecturers are Michael Burawoy (UC Berkeley), Michael Coppedge (University of Notre Dame), Donatella Della Porta (EUI), Macartan Humphreys (Columbia University), Friedrich Kratochwil (formerly EUI), Daniel McFarland (Stanford University), Virag Molnar (New School for Social Research), Wendy Olsen (University of Manchester), and Sanjay Seth (Goldsmiths, University of London).

The Berlin Summer School is a joint endeavor of the Berlin Graduate School of Social Sciences (BGSS) at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin and the WZB Berlin Social Science Center. It is co-funded by the two institutions. Moreover, we receive generous funding from the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). Details on travel grants and tuition fees can be found on our webpage.

The international summer school is open to 50 PhD candidates, advanced master students and young Post-Docs. The call for applications has opened. Applications can be submitted online via the application form on the summer school webpage until March 31, 2015.

The decisions of the selection committee will be communicated to the applicants at the beginning of April. For more information, please visit our webpage at www.berlinsummerschool.de.

If you have additional questions, please contact directly the organizing team at summerschool.bgss@hu-berlin.de

40th Annual Conference on the Political Economy of the World-System (PEWS)
University of Maryland, College Park, MD, USA
April 8-9, 2016

Conference Theme:
**Global Commodity Chains, Social Inequalities and Social Movements:
The Past and Present of World-Systems Research**

The 40th Conference on the Political Economy of the World-System will provide a unique opportunity to take stock of enduring theoretical and empirical contributions of this perspective, and to identify promising directions for future inquiry and discussion. To this end, we look for contributions offering analytical syntheses of major fields of inquiry (e.g., the spatial and temporal boundaries of global commodity chains; the construction and challenge of various dimensions of social inequality; systemic and anti-systemic social movements). We also welcome empirical studies providing fresh insights and perspectives on these fields and key substantive premises of world-systems research, regardless of whether the aim is to endorse, challenge or reformulate.

1. The Problem of Scope and Methodologies. World-system scholars problematize the notion of unit of analysis in ways that often are ignored elsewhere in the social sciences. Moreover, world-system scholars emphasize the importance of critically assessing the types of evidence and methodologies that are most adequate to apprehend the world as

a whole, over time, as the relevant unit of analysis. We want to take stock of those areas in which world-system scholars in the past 40 years have promoted methodological innovation and/or generated useful global data, and to identify questions that demand additional methodological and empirical attention going forward.

2. Global Commodity Chains. One of the most productive areas for world-systems analysis has been the study of global commodity chains (GCCs). Much of this research has focused on how the growth of GCCs has entailed spatial and temporal inequalities in the distribution of the costs and rewards of production, distribution and consumption. At times, GCCs appear to give rise to relatively stable hierarchies, but on occasion they also seem to become axes of contestation and transformation. We invite papers that assess these tensions by focusing on the past, present and future of GCCs.

3. Social Inequalities. World-systems analyses have been recasting the study of between- and within-nation country inequality as constituent aspects of a single field of inquiry: the study of inequality and social stratification as processes that always have been global in their very essence (that is, not simply the interaction of otherwise “autonomous” processes involving, for example, “national wage stratification” on one dimension, “gender” in another, “race” in a third, “global inequality” on a fourth, and so on). Global social stratification pivots around institutional arrangements that render distributional outcomes as simultaneously “national,” “gendered,” “racialized” and “global” processes. We invite papers focusing on the processes that produce, reproduce, challenge and/or undermine the various forms of inequality that have been part and parcel of the modern world-system.

4. Social Movements: Systemic and Anti-systemic. Social movements lead us to periodically reevaluate the boundaries between the “systemic” and “anti-systemic.” In this regard, we are interested in critically exploring the ways in which the enduring legacy of Karl Polanyi’s concept of the “double movement” unintentionally may have served to bias world-systems research towards reading all forms of resistance to markets as “anti-systemic,” and movements relying on market mechanisms as “systemic.” In fact, a world-historical approach calls for greater sensitivity to the manifold ways in which such boundaries change over time and space. We welcome all paper proposals that reassess the meaning of “systemic” and “anti-systemic” in past and present social movements.

Submissions and Support:

Paper proposals (around 500 words) should be sent by **September 30, 2015** to [PEWS-2016@umd.edu]. Please include institutional affiliations and contact information for all authors. We will respond to all submissions by October 16, 2015.

Conference participants presenting papers will be provided lodging and meals during their stay. Selected papers will be considered for publication in an edited book.

Please direct your questions to [PEWS-2016@umd.edu]. A Facebook page [facebook.com/pews2016] will offer important updates, schedules, and an opportunity to communicate with other conference participants.

Conference organization:

Scott Albrecht and Patricio Korzeniewicz, Department of Sociology, University of Maryland, College Park, MD, 20782, USA.

Recent publications by RC 20 members

Said Amir ARMOJAND (ed.), *The Arab Revolution of 2011: A Comparative Perspective*, Albany: SUNY Press, 2015.

Esteban CALVO, Christine A. MAIR and Natalia SARKISIAN, "Individual Troubles, Shared Troubles: The Multiplicative Effect of Individual- and Country-Level Unemployment on Life Satisfaction in 97 Nations (1981-2009)." *Social Forces*, 93(4):1625-53.

Marita CARBALLO, *La Felicidad de las Naciones : Claves par un mundo mejor*, Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, 2015.

Stephen KALBERG, "Max Weber's Sociology of Civilizations: The Five Major Themes." *Max Weber Studies*, 14 (2): 205-32 (2014).

Max HALLER, in collaboration with Anja EDER, *Ethnic Stratification and Socioeconomic Inequality Around the World. The End of Exploitation and Exclusion?* Farnham/Surrey UK: Ashgate, 2015.

Fumiya ONAKA (ed. of the special issue) "Comparative Sociology of Examinations." *Comparative Sociology* 14(1):1-141, 2015.

20% discount – use code **AUTHOR20** when ordering



Ethnic Stratification and Economic Inequality around the World

The End of Exploitation and Exclusion?

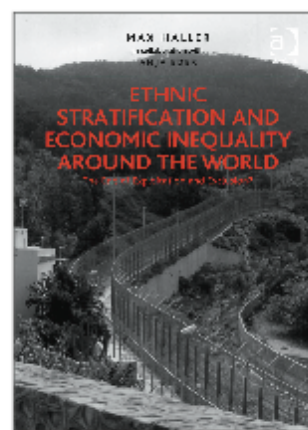
Max Haller in collaboration with **Anja Eder**, both at the University of Graz, Austria

'While global inequalities have had popular as well as academic attention for years, in recent years the developed world has suddenly woken up to the rising inequality within wealthy nations, particularly in the United States. So far, explanations for this growing inequality have focused on changes in the global economy and its impact within nations. Max Haller has written a well-researched and timely book showing how inequality within nations is more complex and involves differences in racial stratification as well as economic changes.'

Harold Kerbo, California Polytechnic State University, USA

'This book is a remarkable achievement. Haller has produced a major and original contribution to the study of global social stratification and inequality by revealing the enormous significance of ethnic divisions and ethnic exploitation in global patterns of inequality. He proves this beyond doubt both through statistical analysis of common global patterns and through regional case-studies of the many existing varieties of ethnic stratification.'

Michael Mann, University of California, Los Angeles, USA



A systematic examination of the interaction between class structures, social stratification and ethnic differentiation, *Ethnic Stratification and Economic Inequality around the World* sheds light on the manner in which social structures produce different levels of economic inequality, offering a fivefold typology of patterns of ethnic stratification, which can be applied to present-day world regions.

Contents: Part I The Problem, Theory and Quantitative Statistical

Analysis: Worldwide differences in national structures of economic inequality: some basic facts and their view in economics and sociology; Ethnic differentiation, stratification and conflicts in the world today: concepts, theories and basic facts; Ethnic stratification and economic inequality: theory and hypotheses; Income inequality as a result of ethnic heterogeneity and ethno-class exploitation: macro-level quantitative and qualitative analyses, *Max Haller, Anja Eder and Erwin Stolz*. **Part II Historical-Comparative Analysis and Case Studies:** The prevention and the emergence of ethnic differentiation and stratification: a sociological-historical typology; Two roads toward egalitarianism in ethnic homogeneous societies:

Sweden and Japan; State socialism as a silver bullet against inequality? How ethnic-national cleavages and conflicts affected the rise and fate of Communist systems; The ethnic hierarchy: India's caste system in comparative perspective; Coloured class structures: Brazil and Hispanic America; Ethno-class regimes: the origins and forces sustaining glaring economic inequality in sub-Saharan Africa; 'Separate, but equal': the characteristics, origins, and aftermaths of Apartheid systems; Israel: surge of inequality in a young ethno-nation; Preconditions and perspectives for peace and equality in ethnically differentiated societies: political implications and conclusions. References; Index.

May 2015 500 pages
Hardback 978-1-4094-4952-2 £75.00/\$134.95

View online at: www.ashgate.com/isbn/9781409460947 and use code **AUTHOR20**

ebook PDF: 978-1-4094-6095-4 ebook ePUB: 978-1-4724-0780-1

Discount not available for these electronic versions. Please see www.ashgate.com/ebooks for suppliers.

ASHGATE

www.ashgate.com