



**International Sociological Association**

**Research Committee on Sociology of Migration (RC-31)**

## **RC-31 Newsletter, Spring 2015**

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### **From the President:**

**by Gustavo Verduzco**

Last March (18-19), a very interesting seminar took place at El Colegio de México in Mexico City on "Transit Migration and Frontiers in Europe and the Americas". Researchers from Europe and Latin America exchanged information about migration characteristics as well as migration policies with some emphasis on the vulnerability of undocumented migrants. Exchanges between European and Latin American scholars have been unusual at least in this field and the outcome of this meeting was a fruitful one. Migration policies in the European Union are very different from what we frequently hear in Latin America, where the North American vision has been prevalent. The integration of countries through a process of stages in the EU has been, among other things,

an interesting strategy to include the labor force needed in other regions of the EU. As one of the examples: Polish people as well as Romanians, who used to be undocumented migrants in Germany and Spain, became legal residents as these countries were part

of the Schengen Agreement, and neither Polish people nor Romanians have inundated Europe as some politicians and scholars were predicting. Labor was supplied through this process, and migrant vulnerability has been either avoided or

reduced. Although nothing like this is still taking place in Latin America, at least most borders have become now more open to other co-nationals of Latin America – with the exception of Chile, Venezuela, Costa Rica and Mexico. At present Latin Americans, can go across other borders carrying only their ID credentials (except for those countries mentioned). Does this precede a full integration? We do not know yet, but it might be so if we look at what has been happening in Argentina, where foreign migrants from the region can stay in the country after complying with only some small requirements. In Mexico (although not open yet), nationals from Central America entering through the southern border can easily get a temporary permit that allows them to work in some regions of the country. Although this is a small step, it seems that it could go further in the coming

years, since transit migrants in Mexico who arrive mainly from Central America are very vulnerable and have an urgent need for a protected legal environment.

It seems that the globalization of trade and investment has implied also the globalization of labor, although only a few destination countries have been inclined to recognize it. This seems to have been one of the main conclusions of our meeting between Europeans and Latin Americans. We hope to continue this kind of exchange not only between people of these two continents but with colleagues from the rest of the world. As President of RC 31 I hope that we can pursue this goal in our group.

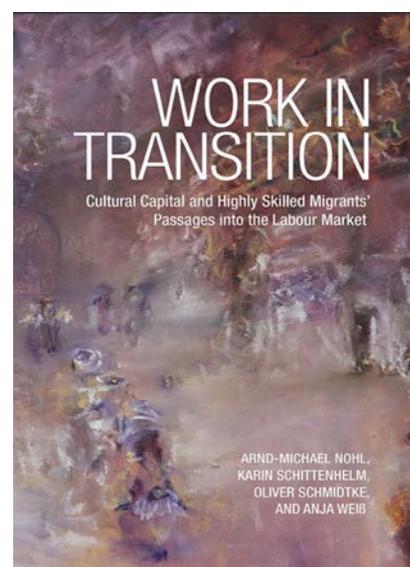
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## MEMBERS' NEW BOOKS

Arnd-Michael Nohl, Karin Schittenhelm, Oliver Schmidtke, and **Anja Weiß**, *Cultural Capital and Highly Skilled Migrants' Passages into the Labour Market*, University of Toronto Press, 2014 ([link to publisher](#)).

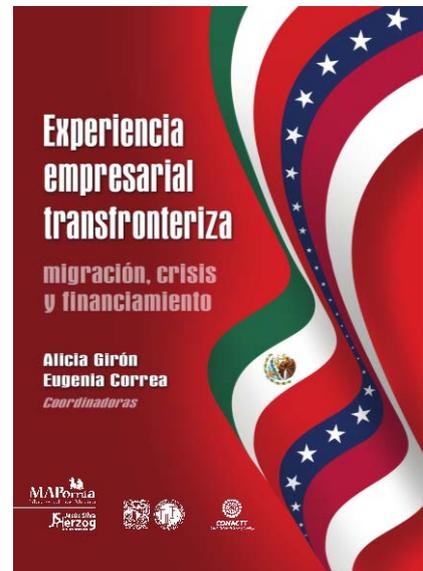
Despite the fact that many countries target highly skilled migrants for recruitment in the global labour market, few of those migrants are able to take full advantage of their educational and professional qualifications in their new homes. *Work in Transition* examines this paradox, using extended narrative interviews that focus on the role that cultural capital plays in the labour market.

Comparing the migrant experience in Germany, Canada, and Turkey, *Work in Transition* shows how migrants develop their cultural capital in order to enter the workforce, as well as how failure to leverage that capital can lead to permanent exclusion from professional positions. Exposing the mechanisms that drive inclusion and exclusion for migrants from a transatlantic comparative perspective, this book provides a unique analytical approach to an increasingly important global issue.



**Alicia Girón** and Eugenia Correa (Coordinators), *Experiencia Empresarial Transfronteriza: Migración, Crisis y Financiamiento* (CrossBorder Business Experience: Migration, Crisis and Financing), MAPorrúa, 2014 ([link to publisher](#))

This book presents the results of research on business expertise and funding of migrant Mexican businessmen. Different aspects of the experience are discussed, such as entrepreneurial skills acquired and existing cross-border family mobility; demand for financial services, features and performance; potential demand for funding for projects in-home communities; financial conditions and capital transfers; potential capacity for cross-border expansion of companies to regions of origin; potential demand in portfolio investment, insurance and savings funds for retirement; and processes of mortgage financing and the growth of a culture of equity investment. Products of this research include databases and archives with more than 100 semi-structured interviews of the companies and migrant entrepreneurs.

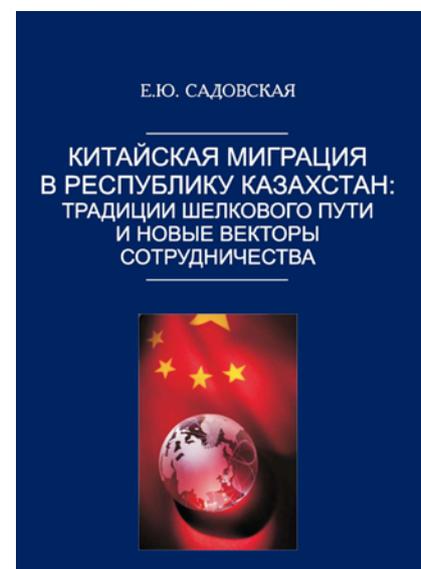


One of the major constraints for the deployment of business experience of these segments of the migrant population is adequate financing to develop projects of local and regional investment. For many years, the lack of jobs, economic and legal uncertainties have significantly limited the expansion of a culture of investment, savings, credit and equity investment among Mexicans. This has been a brake on economic performance especially in the regions and communities that expel the most workers and savings. This investigation was able to verify that the intensity of the financial and labor relationships is such that political boundaries are becoming blurred, creating an economic, social and political space, with a territorial demarcation that binds it together. However, they also demand proper funding and investment agenda.

**Yelena Sadovskaya**, *Contemporary Chinese Migration to Kazakhstan: Silk Road Traditions and New Opportunities for Cooperation*. [*Sovremennaya kitaiskaya migratsiya v Kazakhstan: traditsii Shelkovogo puti i novye vektory sotrudnichestva*] Almaty, Publishing House Raritet, 2014 ([link to publisher](#)).

The book summarises author's recent research on Chinese migration to Kazakhstan, one of the largest post-Soviet republics, and on the impact of China's rising economic presence and migration on Kazakhstan. The book covers the period since 1991 when Kazakhstan gained sovereignty.

The book offers an in-depth study of diverse migration patterns such as labour and entrepreneurial, educational and academic mobility, permanent residence, transit and illegal migrations. It explores Chinese migration within the migration-development nexus and argues that Chinese investment and trade policies as well as labor migration are beneficial for the social and economic development of Kazakhstan. The book also offers an analysis of China's "soft policies" in the region as well as educational migration and academic mobility from Kazakhstan to China. The author explores both positive and negative



implications of the eastward shift in educational migration to China, such as brain drain, brain gain, emerging transnational social spaces etc.

The book explores the attitudes towards Chinese migrants in Kazakhstan in a five-year perspective, based on two representative sociological surveys. The findings ultimately aim to increase the understanding of contemporary Chinese migration in Kazakhstan and to prevent anti-Chinese sentiments. The book summarises the two countries' respective national legislation and institutions for international migration regulation, and their bilateral and multilateral cooperation in border and visa regimes, labour and business migration and related fields. It concludes with an outline of challenges and opportunities of Chinese migration, and policy recommendations for Kazakhstan.

## **CALLS FOR PAPERS/Participation**

### **Religion and the Political Participation and Mobilization of Immigrant Groups: A Transatlantic Perspective**

#### **INTEGRIM SCIENTIFIC THEMATIC WORKSHOP Work Package 2: Citizenship and Political Participation**

**11 May 2015**

**CEDEM, University of Liège, Belgium**

The Centre for Ethnic and Migration Studies (CEDEM) of the University of Liège is pleased to announce the third scientific thematic workshop organized by the working group Citizenship and Political Participation on "**Religion and the Political Participation and Mobilization of Immigrant Groups: A Transatlantic Perspective**".

According to the last European Agenda for the Integration of third-Country Nationals, migrants should participate fully in all aspects of collective life. The European Commission has recognized that migrants' participation in the democratic process is important for their integration and that the implementation of integration policies allowing their political participation and their involvement is crucial for integration.

The scientific thematic workshop will examine the political participation of immigrants in an original perspective. Instead of analyzing it through an exclusive ethnic and racial origin lens, we will focus on the role of religion in the political participation and mobilization of immigrant groups in a transatlantic perspective (Europe-North America). The leading question, of the workshop is: what role does religion play in the political participation and mobilization of immigrant groups in European and North American cities? We don't want to focus on Muslims but consider Catholics, Protestants, and religions as well as non-religious faith such as secularism.

The intention is to prepare a special issue of a journal including a selection of the papers presented at the workshop. Those interested are asked to send a one-page presentation of their paper to Marco Martiniello by **February 8<sup>th</sup> 2015** : [mail to: M.Martiniello@ulg.ac.be](mailto:M.Martiniello@ulg.ac.be)  
The papers should cover in priority one of the following topics possibly in a comparative perspective. However, other topics proposed by the applicants will also be considered.

### The topics:

- Electoral behavior of Muslim, Christian, Buddhist, etc. citizens with an immigrant background
- Political mobilization through churches, mosques and religious associations
- Immigrants and organized secularism
- Music, religion and political mobilization of second and third generations
- Immigrants and anti-religious discrimination
- Trans-religious alliances among immigrants

This workshop is open to professors, researchers, MA students, PhD students. The attendance is free but registration is requested before April 15<sup>th</sup> 2015. Please send an email to [Sonia.Gsir@ulg.ac.be](mailto:Sonia.Gsir@ulg.ac.be)



ISA-RCSL 2015 ANNUAL MEETING in Canoas, Brazil, on May 5–8, 2015, in collaboration with ABraSD (Associação Brasileira de Pesquisadores em Sociologia do Direito [Brazilian Association of Researchers in the Sociology of Law]), [www.sociologyoflaw2015.com.br/english](http://www.sociologyoflaw2015.com.br/english)

### **“Migration Laws On The Move”: Towards Legal Pluralistic Perspectives**

Chair: Susana Novick, [susananovick@yahoo.com.ar](mailto:susananovick@yahoo.com.ar)

Co chair: Rashmi Jain, [rashmi.jn1@gmail.com](mailto:rashmi.jn1@gmail.com)

Coordinator: Arvind Agrawal, [drarvindagrawal@gmail.com](mailto:drarvindagrawal@gmail.com)

D Sundaram, Convener [dsundaram@gmail.com](mailto:dsundaram@gmail.com)

In keeping with the spirit of the theme of ISA RCSL 2015 as “ sociology of Law on the Move”, the WG on Law and Migration for the conference has its theme as “Migration laws on the Move-Towards the Legal Pluralistic perspectives.” as MIGRATION PER SE is a “CLOSED SYSTEM”. There is a need for diversity of legal regulations for the cross-border movement of people with a variety of problems such as unauthorised migrants, trafficking in people and the exploitation of migrant workers and problems like terrorism and security concerns, HIV/AIDS, environmental degradation, international trade, urbanisation and gender inequality relating to migration. Thus, migration has pluralist dimensions for an agenda of the need for legal pluralism increasingly tending towards an INTERSECTIONAL legal approach towards the interests of both migrants themselves and of countries of origin and destination.

Accordingly, the framework of Legal Pluralism as borrowed from Francophone approaches to legal anthropology may be applied here to understand law’s quest over the variety of the dimensions of migration issues. Thus, it may stipulate not the recognition of legal pluralism but to start focusing law in a pluralistic and inter-dimensional/intersectional (borrowed from feminist scholarship) ways of the problem perspectives of migration. . This can only be achieved if the legal point of view of Migration is changed and is not seen restrictively from the point of view of the migration per se and instead to hold the law to be involved as a lens in intersectional dimensions of the various perspectives of migration.

This will also engage in a pragmatic legal dialogue over migration and its variety of dimensions through the lens of intersectionality of the multiple/variety of social problems and processes of the migration perspectives of both the origin and destination countries in order to have a debate towards legal pluralistic perspectives of migration.

The case study for this 2015 RCSL conference is on Latin American countries.

## **MEDIA ACTIVITY**

**Loretta E. Bass**, University of Oklahoma, was featured January 23, 2015 discussing African immigrant families in "another France" in a radio interview streamed from the KGOU NPR affiliate. The interview and transcript can be accessed [here](#).

## **RECENT ARTICLES/CHAPTERS**

### **Thomas Faist**

- 2014. "The Public Role of Social Scientists in Constituting the Migration-Development Nexus", *New Diversities* 16, 2: 112-123 ([link](#)).
- 2014. "Brokerage in Cross-Border Mobility: Social Mechanisms and the (Re)Production of Social Inequalities", *Social Inclusion*, 2, 4: 38-52.
- 2014. "On the transnational social question: How social inequalities are reproduced in Europe", *Journal of European Social Policy*, 24, 3: 207-222.

### **Sonia Gsir**

- 2015. with Jérémy Mandin, Elsa Mescoli: "Corridor Report on Belgium – Moroccan and Turkish Immigration in Belgium", INTERACT RR 2015/03, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, San Domenico di Fiesole (FI): European University Institute ([link](#)).

### **Ewa Morawska**

- 2014. "Composite Meanings, Flexible Ranges, and Multi-level Conditions of Conviviality: Exploring the Polymorph," *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 357-74.

### **Andreas Pollman**

- 2014. 'Capital Intercultural: Hacia la Conceptualización, Operacionalización e Investigación Empírica de un Marcador de Distinción Sociocultural en Ascenso', *Cultura y Representaciones Sociales: Un Espacio para el Diálogo Transdisciplinario*, vol. 9, núm. 17: 54-73. (article available [here](#)).

### **Yelena Sadovskaya**

- 2013. "China needs to know more about the world and the world – to know more China" *Kazakhstan-Spectrum*. N 3, 30-42. ["Kitayu nuzhno bol'she znat' mir, a miru – bol'she znat' Kitay" (po rezul'tatam monitoringovogo sotsiologicheskogo issledovaniya)] ([link](#))
- 2014. "Chinese migration to the post-Soviet countries: Comparative analysis of Russia and Kazakhstan" [Kitaiskaya migratsiya na postsovetskom prostranstve: opyt sopostavitel'nogo analiza na primere Rossii i Kazakhstana] *VOSTOK (ORIENS)* № 3., 107-119 ([link](#))



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Visit the [RC-31 web site](#).

MEMBERSHIP dues are \$20 for a four-year period: to join, visit the ISA web site [here](#).

## SUBMIT YOUR ANNOUNCEMENTS!

(Not only announcements – there is also scope for longer pieces in the form of op-eds, etc.)

Send submissions for the next issue to David Bartram, [d.bartram@le.ac.uk](mailto:d.bartram@le.ac.uk)