



Women **in** Society

ISA Research Council 32 | Newsletter December 2011

NEWSLETTER SUPPLEMENT

RC 32 /ISA Interim Conference: Program "Women, Social Justice and Democratization"

Program Co-ordinator: Evangelia Tastsoglou, RC 32 Chair

1. Title: Gender & Arab Revolts: Where are the Women?

Panel Organizer(s): Zakia Salime, Sociology & Women's and Gender Studies Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey . zsalime@sociology.rutgers.edu

Panel Organizer(s): Ashraf Mahmoud, Middle Eastern Studies, American University of Cairo, Contact information: Al Ahram newspaper Cairo Egypt 5115. Ashrafmahmoud13@yahoo.com

Abstract:

On March 9, 2011, a very disturbing event took place in Tahrir Square in Cairo, Egypt. Women commemorating the Women's Day were removed from the square when a group of protestors targeted them, launching a forceful intervention of the army and the removal of the women. Throughout the world, the media have shown women at the forefront of the Arab revolts. Some examples are : the case of Imane al-Obaidi, who was arrested while charging Kaddafi's forces of rape live on TV; the journalist Tawakul Karmane, whose detention in Yemen brought the very first virulent protests against the government; Iraqi mothers protesting the occupation, in men's clothing as a way to invoke gender role switching; Syrian women's demonstration in quest for a regime change. Cases such as these which cut across, class, age, and social backgrounds indicate that Arab women are challenging perceived notions of marginality and silence, and taboos about the sexual division of space and labor. The presence of women in these different geographies and temporalities defies the classic categorization of social movements into "new" and "old". In the meantime, women's unprecedented level of politicization across different locales raises questions about catalysts for such upsurge whether socially, economically or politically. This session aims at exploring these gendered spaces of revolution. We ask the questions: How did women in various parts of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) inscribe themselves in this revolutionary moment? How do they perform their gender identities, political sensibilities, claims, and desires in relation to other players? What kind of projection do women have as they envision better futures?

2. Title: Women, Islamic Piety and Social Justice: "The Headscarf Ban" at the Intersections of Intimate and Public Democratization

Panel Organizer: Dilek Cindoglu, Bilkent University, Ankara
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Abstract:

The possibilities and challenges brought about by Islamization, and democratization initiatives in Turkey within the context of EU accession process and neo-liberal globalization are not new, but the processes of gendered democratization in intimate and public domains have not yet been explored in-depth. This session focuses on the repercussions of the headscarf ban and the pious life styles in intimate and public democratization processes in contemporary Turkey. This session is addressing this phenomenon by inviting the works of feminist scholars who examine the legal and institutional processes as well as social and political processes regarding the secular headscarf ban. The concepts of pluralism and feminism in relation to 'new' pious female agency will be revisited within the context of intimate and public democratizations.

3. Title: "Democracy, Work and Gender Equality – a Comparative and Cross-Cultural Perspective"

Panel Organizer(s): Solange Simões, Sociology and Women's and Gender Studies .Eastern Michigan University/EMU, USA Assimoes@emich.edu.

Panel Organizer(s): Bila Sorj, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro/UFRJ, Brazil Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, Instituto de Filosofia e Ciências Sociais, bilsorj@attglobal.net

Abstract:

In the last decades of the 20th century, women in Latin America, Africa and Eastern Europe played important roles in the transition from authoritarian regimes to democratic institutions. Currently women in other world regions, notably in Arab countries, have been active agents of democratic change. This session raises questions about the relationship between new democratic institutional arrangements (political and legal), new economic models and the promotion of gender work equality, both in the labor market and home. What kinds of democratic institutional arrangements and economic change may be effective in promoting women's equal participation in the labor market? To what extent has related value change affected the domestic division of labor and unpaid work performed by women? Have increasing levels of women's workforce participation been associated with decreasing gender inequality? What are the challenges facing gender equality in consolidated democracies?

This session will address those questions looking at various experiences with the objective to a) assess the convergences and dissimilarities among contextualized local and national processes, and b) allow a comparative, cross-country, and cross-cultural analysis that might be relevant for current women's struggles to connect democratic processes to gender equality promotion.

4. "Movimientos de Mujeres por la Justicia Social y la democratización en América Latina.

SESSION IN SPANISH WITH CONSECUTIVE TRANSLATION / Type of Session: Regular

Co-organizers:

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En esta sesión se abordará, desde una perspectiva de género y / o feminista, el papel de las mujeres, sus experiencias y sus prácticas, en los movimientos sociales y en la política en América Latina. Las mujeres han tenido un papel protagónico en esta región, en los procesos de justicia social y democratización. Mujeres indígenas, negras, agricultoras, trabajadoras, académicas, migrantes, jóvenes, lesbianas, madres, profesionales, etc, han contribuido, desde diferentes perspectivas y reivindicaciones, a estos procesos. Reivindicaciones como la lucha por la tierra, por la aparición de los niños y secuestrados (hijos, nietos) y personas desaparecidas, por los derechos de la mujer rural, por la paz, provienen de las voces femeninas de los movimientos sociales y partidos políticos en todos los países de América Latina.

América Latina es un continente caracterizado por la heterogeneidad (cultural, étnica, lingüística, ambiental). Este hecho, por un lado, es un indicador de la riqueza de su diversidad, pero por el otro, obliga a afrontar los retos por la superación de sus enormes desigualdades. Por lo tanto, se espera que las propuestas se dirijan a evaluar críticamente la participación de las mujeres y su representación en los procesos de democratización y en la promoción de la justicia social en el Hemisferio Sur, así como ser capaces de incluir las agendas actuales, especialmente en relación con las diferentes formas de reinversión del Estado. El objetivo final de la sesión es fomentar la reflexión crítica sobre las acciones y procesos desarrollados por las mujeres latinoamericanas en la tarea de profundizar la democracia y la (re) construcción de modelos de justicia que pueden ser alternativa a las experiencias establecidas en el Hemisferio Norte.

"Women's Movements for Social Justice and Democratization in Latin America".

This session will address, from a gender and/or feminist perspective, the role of women, their experiences and practices in social movements and politics in Latin America. Women have played a leading role in this region in the processes of social justice and democratization. Indigenous and black women, farmers, workers, academics, migrants, youth, lesbians, mothers, professionals, and other collectives have contributed, from different perspectives and through different claims to these processes. Demands as the struggle for land, for the return of kidnapped children, grandchildren and other missing people, for the rights of rural women, for peace, come from feminine voices of social movements and political parties all over Latin America countries.

Latin America is a continent characterized by heterogeneity (cultural, ethnic, linguistic and environmental). This fact, on one hand is an indicator of its rich diversity, but on the other, these differences are major challenges to overcoming huge inequalities in the region. This session critically assess the participation and representation of women's movements and collectives in the democratization processes and promotion of social justice in the Global South. The role of women in the decision-making process in the reinvention of the state are also considered. The goal of this session is to provide a critical reflection and discussion of the role of women in the task of deepening democracy and (re)construction of models of justice. These models of justice could also be alternatives, useful to women's movements in established democracies in the Global North.

5. Title: Gender Empowerment and Microfinance: Theoretical and Empirical Perspectives

Panel organizer: Bahira Sherif Trask, Dept. of Human Development and Family Studies
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Abstract:

This session will examine varying perspectives on microfinance and microcredit options for poor women in developing countries. Microfinance programs which first emerged in the 1970s in Bangladesh and Brazil, refers to the provision of financial services including credit, savings, insurance, and money transfers to groups in low-income countries for various entrepreneurial activities. Microfinance programs first emerged in the 1970s in Bangladesh and Brazil. Since these early years, microfinance has spread, in particular, throughout South Asia, sub-

Saharan Africa and Central and South America. These programs have evolved to incorporate savings options and a broader range of recipients, including in some places young adolescent girls. Microfinance is often credited with bringing economic development to poor rural areas and for providing women with bargaining tools in their households. While microfinance carries many promises of social and economic transformation, not all of these have been realized in practice. Critics of microfinance have pointed out that this is a contemporary form of female servitude as it is primarily women who take on family debt, and it is often the men in families who profit from these ventures or who react negatively to changes in the balance of household power.

This session will examine the various facets of microfinance, drawing on case studies that document the successes and challenges of these initiatives. In particular, the gender dimension will be examined in detail. Under what conditions does microfinance empower women? Are nation-states displacing their moral and economic responsibilities by encouraging banks and NGO's to target low-income women? How do family dynamics, and specifically patriarchal norms and practices come into play with respect to microfinance? How does women's access to microfinance increase or decrease household well-being? How does women's differential access to household income play out with respect to access to microfinance? Why do women generally receive lower loan amounts than men? Does the exclusion of men from microfinance disadvantage women?

6. Title: Violence, Liberty and Constitutionalism: Feminist Perspectives

Panel Organizer: Kalpana Kannabiran, Council for Social Development, Hyderabad, India
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Abstract:

What are the ways in which violence may be understood from a feminist perspective? Cutting through a range – from sexual harassment and domestic violence to collective sexual assault, femicide and genocidal violence, women across different regions have been systematically subjugated through spiraling and shifting practices of violence. And women are targeted through intersecting negations and violence – disability, ethnicity, class, race and caste, among others. This session seeks to explore the precise boundary between the force and violence interrogating the limits of “permissible action” [that guarantees immunity] and definitions of legitimacy within the frameworks of state and non-state actors and importantly courts of law.

Struggles around the world with respect to rights to the environment, natural resources and the commons have witnessed the increasing use of force and state violence against indigenous communities. Explorations of state violence and the abstinence from the exercise of due diligence by the state in episodes of non-state violence spawned by neo-liberal “development” agendas importantly foreground the counter-constitutional project of the anti-democratic [even authoritarian] state. This session invites feminist reflections on these realities.

Women's experience of grave and everyday derogations forces a re-examination of the problem of liberty and an exploration of the possibilities of transformative constitutionalism in combating violence in different locales. What is the precise relationship between constitutionalism, social justice and democratization in different regions? What is the place of international instruments like CEDAW and the Rome Statute for instance in strengthening the local articulations of constitutionalism and social justice for women?

7. Title: From Subordination to Representation: Democratization, Social Justice and Empowerment in the Middle East

Panel Organizer: Suaad Zayed Al-Oraimi (UAE), UAE University
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Abstract:

The focus of this session is on democratization, social justice, transformation and empowerment of women in the Middle East. In many Middle Eastern countries a significant

transformation has been taking place, whereby women are considerably engaged in this social movement. This session, principally, aims at exploring the underlying reasons behind this phenomenon. What are the implications of having a large number of women taking a substantial role in the process of democratization? Has this contributed to the transformation of traditional gender roles in both private and public spheres? The session also intends to address the reasons behind why some Middle Eastern states have responded to this episode and started to promote social justice, democratization and women's rights. It also aims at identifying ways in which women's movements have utilized this revolution as a tool for self and collective empowerment. Themes and topics are centered around the following but not limited to:

- Social justice and the promotion of women' status in the Middle East.
- The role of women in modifying the face of politics in the Middle Eastern countries.
- Critical perspective on women's role in the democratic movement in the Middle East.
- The traditional perspective on democracy, social justice and women's representation in the Middle East (a case study).
- Women as agents for memorization and political change in the recent Middle East.
- Feminists and paradigm shift: new perspectives on women and revolution in the Middle East.

8. Title: Gender Policies in Latin America: a Route to Social Justice?

Type of session: Regular

Panel Organizer(s): Maria Salet Ferreira Novellino, National School of Statistics/Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics – Brazil
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Panel Organizer(s): Gloria Jovita Guadarrama, El Colegio Mexiquense – México
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Panel Organizer(s): Jussara Pra, Political Science, Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul – Brazil
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Abstract:

The purpose of this session is to examine gender public policies after the democratization of Latin America and to look at the ways in which the election of socialist or social-democratic candidates have contributed to issues of social justice and gender issues. The contribution of women in positions of power in government in improving gender public policies is also considered. Papers in this session examine Latin American gender policies, projects and programs within the context of democratization of Latin American countries. Contributions drawing on case studies from Latin America may address any of the following issues:

- Evolution of gender policies in the last decade.
- Latin America's democratization and its impact on gender policies.
- Contribution of Latin American feminist activists and organizations to the development and implementation of gender policies.
- The impact of gender policies in specific areas (such as healthcare, income, work, and violence) or at a specific groups of people (such as female bread winners, battered women, domestic violence perpetrators, ethnic groups, and youth).
- Increase in the representativeness of women in the State/Government and its impact on gender policies.
- Critique of gender policies with respect to ethnic diversity and social inequalities.
- Ideologies and theories underpinning gender policies in Latin America.

9. Title: Researching Women's Lives in Postcolonial Contexts: Challenges and Transformations in Decolonizing Self and Research

Panel Organizer(s): Akosua Adomako Ampofo, Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, e-mail: adomako@gmail.com/adomako@ug.edu.gh

Abstract:

Much has been written in recent years by feminist scholars about their self reflexive experiences in the research process. Issues discussed include the complex process of negotiating each stage of the research situation, the different ways in which the identity of the researcher can affect the nature of relationships, including power relationships with research participants and between research collaborators, as well as ethical challenges and contradictions the feminist researcher must confront and deal with during and after the research process. While recognizing the value of fostering high standards of self-reflexivity and openness in conducting feminist research, one area that needs further attention in this dialogue concerns the interplay between theory, epistemology and research practice in the experience of feminist researchers working in postcolonial contexts. Underpinning much of their training are still dominant paradigms of positivist scientific research and universalist constructs of feminist scholarship, which may not be applicable to the complex political, socio-cultural and economic contexts which intersect and impact their lives differently as scholars and activists. This session will contribute to this discourse by examining emerging approaches to post colonial feminist research in the social sciences and how feminist scholars in these contexts conceptualize and interpret the multiple facets of women's experiences as knowledge producers in diverse settings. Issues to be explored can include the dilemmas, quandaries, and contradictions feminist social science researchers face in the research process, and factors shaping their positionality as researchers and scholar activists.

10. Title: Gender, Science and Technology: Post-Colonial and Feminist Perspectives

Joint Session (RC23/RC32)

Panel Organizer(s): Laura Corradi, Gender Studies, Dipartimento Sociologia, Università della Calabria,- Italy

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Panel Organizer(s): Josephine Beoku-Betts, Center for Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, Florida Atlantic University,: Beokubet@fau.edu

Abstract:

Post-colonial feminist perspectives on gender, science, and technology accommodate a vast array of disciplines and contesting perspectives. Essentially, the interconnectedness of racism, colonialism and globalization, and their impact on women and gender, set a context for understanding the concerns, priorities, and contributions of post-colonial feminist scholars regarding the democratization of science and technology– from the rejection of a widely assumed neutrality to the active deconstruction of male scientific imaginary and practice, based upon a hierarchical opposition between science and nature. Post-colonial feminists have long questioned the aims and methods taken for granted in a white, male, upper-class scientific community which used to enjoy colonial privileges – and successfully unveiled the power relations underlying scientific knowledge, in terms of class, race, gender and sexuality. This session will discuss the meanings and understandings post-colonial feminism brings to the subject of gender, science, and technology. Questions to consider include: Has the 'critical mass' of women in the scientific professions been achieved? How do women in scientific careers locate themselves in relation to science and its practice? How can women change the directions of science and technology? What about the different feminist standpoints, politically and ethically, on hot issues such as nuclear energy, genetically modified seeds and embryos, military research and nano-biotech? In an era of growing economical and environmental crises, what are the priorities, the criteria, the objectives? How can social scientists contribute to this discourse, in terms of a re-definition of a socially useful science and technology?

11. Title: The Ethics of Intersectional Politics and the Challenges to Alliances Building in and outside Academe

Joint session RC05/RC32

Panel Organizer: Sirma Bilge PhD, Associate Professor, Sociology, Université de Montréal sirma.bilge@umontreal.ca

Abstract:

What are the ethics of intersectional politics and alliance building? What are the do's and don'ts of being an "ally"? Taking as point of departure Crenshaw's pioneering analysis of political intersectionality, or how competing single-issue politics erase particular individuals and groups, foregrounding certain forms of 'problems' and 'victims' over others, the session will deal with the ethics and potentials of intersectional politics, and the challenges of building alliances and coalitions between distinctive social movements, which have different social justice agendas that are often organized around competing single issue/identity claims, in particular antiracism, feminism and gay and lesbian activism. Central to our discussions will be a) the adverse effects of the partitioning of political space and civil society around single issues, despite loud declarations of commitment to diversity and multiple issues by many organizations and movements, and b) how the ways in which debates and problems are framed and organizations structured lead to various forms of exclusions and silencing through denial, displacement, misidentification, tokenism and cooptation.

12. Women, Poverty and the Struggle for Survival

Panel organizer: Dr Anita Dash, Faculty of Sociology, Ravenshaw University, Orissa, India
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Co-organizer: Sattish K. Sharma, Faculty of Sociology, H.P University, Shimla, India

Abstract:

Statistics indicate that women are more vulnerable to hunger, more likely than men to be poor and are at risk due to systematic discrimination in matters of food, education, health care, employment and control of assets. The process of liberalization, privatization and globalization of economies in the developing nations makes women's lives further vulnerable and results in a huge toll on their livelihoods. The recent recession in the developed as well as developing countries affects women severely as they become the first victims of layoffs. Thus the goal of eradicating poverty among women and their consequent empowerment becomes uncertain. Women have scarce opportunities to influence economic policy because they are allotted only a few seats at the tables where economic decisions are made, and economic policies and institutions often fail to take gender disparities into account. Thus, the vicious circle of poverty goes on, and women continue to struggle for their survival.

Papers are invited that deal with a range of issues such as: women and social exclusion; poverty and poverty alleviation programmes; women and agrarian economies; social vulnerability and women's health; gender disparities and human rights issues; women, livelihood and life chances in a globalising world; women in the informal economy; poverty, education and socio-cultural marginalization; women, poverty and hunger.

13. Title: Ethnographies of Middle Eastern Women's Everyday Life

Session Organizer(s): Nazanin Shahrokni, Department of Sociology, UC Berkeley, USA.
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Session Organizer(s): Nilay Çabuk Kaya, Department of Sociology, Ankara University.
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Abstract:

This session looks at the discursive effects of Middle Eastern women's everyday practices in shaping the relations of power. In this session, we welcome papers that are based on critical ethnographies that provide rich empirical data on Middle Eastern women's everyday life practices. Research that examines factors that shape women's lived experiences in the Middle East often focuses on either the formal and informal institutions of power or on the ways in which the effects of these formal institutions of power shape these women's lives.

There is a lack of studies that consider the discursive relationship between the formal and informal institutions of power (i.e. non-state agents) and the ways in which they shape and, in turn, are shaped by women's everyday life practices. Studies of women in the Middle East often focus on "Islam" and/or "culture". This session considers critical approaches to understanding the ways in which Islam and culture shape Middle Eastern women's lives but also looks at the ways in which class position, economic situations, global politics, neo-liberalism and other factors (at the macro and micro levels) impact on the changing structure of women's experiences in the contemporary Middle-East.

14. Title: Identity Politics and Skilled Migration: Negotiating Social Justice Issues

Session Organizer(s): Cynthia Joseph, Faculty of Education, Monash University, Melbourne, Australia. cynthia.joseph@monash.edu

Session Organizer(s): Glenda Tibe Bonifacio, Women's Studies, Faculty of Arts & Science, University of Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada
Glenda.bonifacio@uleth.ca

Abstract:

The papers in this session explore the career transitions and trajectories of migrant women post-migration. In what ways do gender and race/ethnicity shape their career trajectories and occupational identities? We look at the ways in which migrant women's identities operate in conjunction with cultural politics, global capital and labor markets and legal and juridical regulations to produce particular migration patterns, meanings and experiences within their new workspaces.

Discourses of knowledge economy, life-long learning, neo-liberalism and globalisation have transformed work practices and politics. Flexibilisation of the work force, and intensified accountability regimes have complicated the ways in which contemporary migrant women in global cities negotiate personal and collective agency, and local and global imperatives within their new cultural and work spaces. Within this context, following Fraser (1997, 2005, 2008) and Sen (2009) we examine career opportunities and occupational identities, created through the politics of distribution and recognition. We consider the 'parity of participation', asking which migrant women and groups have access to cultural, educational and occupational resources that will enable them to develop their fullest potential as contemporary skilled migrant women. How do these different resources relate to institutional structures and social inequalities?

15. Title: Aging and the Care Crisis

Session Organizer(s): Francesca Degiuli, Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work francesca.degiuli@csi.cuny.edu

Abstract:

The increase in life expectancy for men and women in most wealthy, post-industrial societies is one of the greatest achievements of the 20th century. Yet, these same societies are largely unprepared to address the challenges that come with such achievement. Among the many pressing issues, one is particularly urgent: the growing need for long-term care. Aging populations tend to develop physical or mental disabilities that require increasing levels of support. The question haunting many states and individual families : "Who will provide this care?" and "Who will pay for it?"

This session aims to answer these questions by exploring different approaches to ageing and the care process and industry in different societies. In specific, the session is interested in addressing how state, market and families interact in providing a response for this growing social issue both in the global North and the South.

16. Title: Women, Violence and Social Justice

Session Organizer(s): Evangelia Tastsoglou Department of Sociology and Criminology, Saint Mary's University, Halifax, N.S., Canada, evie.tastsoglou@smu.ca,

Session Organizer(s): Margaret Abraham, Hofstra University, 202F Davison Hall, Hempstead, NY 11549, : margaret.abraham@hofstra.edu;

Session Organizer(s): Antoinette Hetzler, Department of Sociology, Lunds University, Sweden, . Antoinette.Hetzler@soc.lu.se

Abstract:

Domestic violence, sexual harassment, racism in the workplace and the broader society, bullying in schools, classist, sexist and racist social constructions and exclusions of immigrant women, pornography and trafficking of women and children for sexual exploitation, systemic rape of women in conflict zones, are some of the forms of violence (human rights violations) that require our attention. How do women navigate their lives and resist these forms of violence? How do they enact their agency and take action for individual and social change for a more just society in which women's rights are also social rights? This session hopes to explore violence in all its forms as well as women's resilience and agency in the face of adversity, women's organizations and women's movements against violence.

17. Title: The Role of Language in Shaping Gender Justice and Sexual Rights Movements

Joint Session: RC25 and RC32 (in slot of RC 25)

Session Organizer: Melanie Heath, Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, McMaster University,, Ontario, Canada mheath@mcmaster.ca

Abstract:

What is the importance of language in shaping gender justice and sexual rights movements in the 21st century? How do discourses concerning race, class, age and other minority statuses affect the formation of coalitions in such movements? What role does language and culture play in creating and breaking down obstacles to the goals of attaining gender justice and sexual rights? Finally, what is the place of identity in movements relating to sexuality, gender, the family, and relations of intimacy? Papers investigating gender justice and sexual rights movements may incorporate a number of methodologies, such as frame analysis, conversation analysis, feminist analysis or Critical Discourse Analysis. Topics may include but are not limited: movements relating to gender equality, same-gender partnerships and parenthood, human trafficking, transgender rights, sex work, sex tourism, adolescent sexuality and child abuse.

18. Title: Women, Leisure and the Family in an Age of Transformations

Joint Session with RC 13 (Leisure), RC 09 and RC 32 (in time slot of RC 13)

Session Organizer(s): Ishwar Modi, India International Institute of Social Sciences iiiss2005modi@yahoo.co.in

Rudolf Richter, Co-Chair on behalf of RC 13

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Session Organizer(s): Ulrike M. M. Schurkens, Co-organizer on behalf of RC09, Ecole des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris, France uschuerkens@gmail.com

Angelica Wehrli, Co-chair, on behalf of RC 09

Institute of Social Anthropology, University of Bern, wehrli@anthro.unibe.ch

Session Organizer(s): Laura Maratou-Alipranti, Ph.D., co-organizer on behalf of RC 32 National Centre for Social Research (EKKE) and University of Athens, Athens, Greece; lalirpanti@ekke.gr

Roberta Villalón, Ph.D., co-chair on behalf of RC 32 Sociology and Anthropology Department, St. John's University villalor@stjohns.edu |

Abstract:

The role of women has become considerably transformed in an age when they are bearing the responsibility of being full-time workers while also being the carers of the home and dependent family members. It is also not uncommon for women to be single parents. How do we then understand the notion of leisure for women? What is the kind of leisure that women, burdened with such responsibilities, can expect? How does family life and individual / personal biographical plans shape women's understandings and experiences of leisure? How do gender, class, ethnicity/race, ability and age impact on one's concept of leisure and access to leisure? What does leisure mean and how does access to leisure vary for women in different parts of the world? How does the fact that women enjoy more or less leisure impact on the structure of and relationships within families? Such and other questions are proposed to be examined and discussed from an interdisciplinary perspective in this session.

19. Roundtable: Women, Social Justice and Democratization

Session Organizer: Vappu Tyyskä, Department of Sociology, Director, MA Program in Immigration and Settlement Studies, Ryerson University, 350 Victoria St., Toronto ON vtyyska@ryerson.ca

Abstract::

Selected papers that cannot be accommodated in any of the previous sessions will be included in this roundtable.

20. RC 32 AGM

21 Challenging the logic of neoliberalism: Labor-feminist coalitions and work-family policy campaigns

Joint session of RC32 Women in Society and RC44 Labor Movements [host committee]

Session Organizer(s): Ruth MILKMAN, The City University of New York, USA, rmilkman@gc.cuny.edu

In an era when government regulation and state-sponsored safety nets are under attack worldwide, one of the few areas in which new initiatives have been successful is work-family policy. In Australia, universal paid family leave was established in 2011. Even in the U.S.—long an extreme laggard in this area—several state and local governments have established new programs guaranteeing paid family leave or paid sick days to workers. The U.S. and Australian programs have incorporated principles of gender equity from the start; indeed they came into existence in large part due to the efforts of advocates for women, in partnership with organized labor.

By contrast, in many of the countries that established such paid leave programs in earlier eras, gender equity was often absent; indeed in some cases only mothers were eligible for such leaves. Yet in the neoliberal era, even as other social programs have been cut back, many countries have reconfigured their parental leave programs with the aim of making them more gender-egalitarian.

This session will include papers from selected countries to explore the implications of these recent developments in a comparative perspective, with an emphasis on the role of labor movements as well as the impact on gender relations.