

NEWSLETTER OF THE RESEARCH COMMITTEE ON CONCEPTUAL AND TERMINOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

International Sociological Association – Research Committee 35

December 2015

CONTENT	PAGE
RC 35 NEWS	2
Session-Overview	3
Challenges for a Global Sociology: Extending the Postcolonial Critique	4
Mass, Crowd and Individuality as Challenging Classical and Contemporary Concepts	6
Modernity at New Crossroads	8
Modernity Re-Visited: The Role of Technology and Engineering	10
Reconceptualizing Memory and Post-Traumatic Growth from a Crosscultural Perspective	12
Social Exclusion and Power	14
Social Ontology in Social Theory	16
Subject or Subjectivation?	17
Time and Society: Cultural, Personal and Institutional Ways to Relate Past, Present and Future	18
Composition of the Board for the Period 2014-2018	19

RC 35 NEWS

Dear members and friends of RC 35,

first of all, as usual, it is our great pleasure to welcome our new members! On behalf of the board we invite all members to participate in our activities and to make any proposals for conferences or other academic proceedings in the field of conceptual analysis.

This issue of *COCTA News* focuses on our contribution to the Vienna Forum 2016. If you have any questions about a particular session, please get in touch with the respective session organizer(s). You can access the platform and will find all the usual information on the Forum website: <http://www.isa-sociology.org/forum-2016/rc/rc.php?n=RC35#top>.

For **registration** see:

<http://www.isa-sociology.org/forum-2016/registration.htm>

For information on **accommodation** consult:

<http://isaforum2016.univie.ac.at/about-vienna/hotel-booking/>

Information on **grants** is provided here:

<http://www.isa-sociology.org/forum-2016/grants.htm>

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

On behalf of the board, cordially yours,

Elke Wagner and David Strecker

Session-Overview

(In Alphabetical Order)

Challenges for a Global Sociology: Extending the Postcolonial Critique

Mass, Crowd and Individuality as Challenging Classical and Contemporary Concepts

Modernity at New Crossroads

Modernity Re-Visited: The Role of Technology and Engineering

Reconceptualizing Memory and Post-Traumatic Growth from a Crosscultural Perspective

Social Exclusion and Power

Social Ontology in Social Theory

Subject or Subjectivation?

Time and Society: Cultural, Personal and Institutional Ways to Relate Past, Present and Future

#1

Challenges for a Global Sociology: Extending the Postcolonial Critique

Session Organizer(s)

Oliver KOZLAREK, Universidad Michoacana de San Nicolás, Mexico, okozlarek@yahoo.com

Session in English Spanish

Recent decades have seen a number of challenges to standard interpretations of the global within critical social and cultural theory. These have included critiques of methodological nationalism as well as postcolonial and decolonial criticisms of Eurocentrism and Orientalism. Many of the debates have centred on a call to rethink modernity from other perspectives and to develop a new global sociology.

In this session, we invite papers that extend the critiques being made and that seek to think through contemporary understandings of global sociology with a focus on the challenges and possible limitations of the positions being identified. We would also welcome papers that discuss these debates in the context of particular empirical examples such as **reconsiderations of the idea of "Cosmopolitan Europe" to take into account its racial and multicultural constituencies.**

Challenges for a Global Sociology I

Presentations:

G. Bhabra: Connected Sociologies: From Cosmopolitan Europe to Postcolonial Europe

J. Holmwood: Moral Economy Versus Political Economy: Provincializing Polanyi

F. Biskamp: Provincializing Frankfurt. Towards a Conversation Between Habermasian Critical Theory and Postcolonial Critique

J. M. Perez-Agote: Eurocentrismo y Modernidad: Apuntes Sobre La Crítica Decolonial/ Eurocentrism and Modernity: Some Notes on the Decolonial Critique

Challenges for a Global Sociology II: Colonialism, Modernity, and Eurocentrism

Presentations:

W. Knoebl: Social Theory in a Global Context

O. Kozlarek: From Macrosociology to an Experiential Critique of Global Modernity

J. Capetillo and L. Galanes: Reconsidering American Colonialism in Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands from a Global Sociological Perspective

F. Welz: Global or Local Sociology? the Battlefields of Theories in a Historical-Comparative View

S. Fornos Klein: Dependence Theory and the Center-Periphery Relation (revisited) As Critical Stance

#2

Mass, Crowd and Individuality as Challenging Classical and Contemporary Concepts

Session Organizer(s)

Jochen DREHER, University of Konstanz, Germany,
jochen.dreher@uni-konstanz.de

Alejandro BIALAKOWSKY, Universidad de Buenos Aires, Argentina,
alebiala_25@hotmail.com

Hisashi NASU, Waseda University, Japan, hnasu@waseda.jp

Pablo DE MARINIS, Universidad de Buenos Aires, Argentina,
pdemarinis@fibertel.com.ar

Session in English / Spanish

Mass, crowd and individuality are key concepts for sociological theory. **Without being obvious “fundamental concepts”** of the discipline, mass and crowd appear linked to a sort of “dark side” of modern society and sociology: to imminent irruption of dangers, irrationality, chaos and collective pathologies and suggestions.

The problematization of these terms emerges in certain decisive **crossroads of modern societies simultaneously both “central” and “peripheral”** within their singular study traditions, for example, in the crisis of liberalism at the end of the 19th century and in the decade of the 1930s. In that way, because of being a shared concern for different spaces and times, the conceptual analysis of mass and crowd allows a **theoretical and methodological approach that is not limited to “central”** elaborations of Western Europe and the United States.

In contrast to the concepts of mass and crowd, individuality can be considered as a counter concept, since mass and crowd as forms of collectivity include the least involvement of the subjectivity of the individual actor. The mass we-relationship fugaciously and temporarily gets established, while the moral individual who can promise, feel guilty or regret gets suspended in mass collectivity. Collective mass action may appear independently of the possibility for the individual to interfere, leading to its potential dangerous, irrational and chaotic progression.

The session investigates the dynamic interrelationship of mass, crowd and individuality from a cross-cultural theoretical perspective, confronting concepts from diverging cultural viewpoints (European, North American, Asian, South American, etc.) to contest their validity independently of cultural differences.

Presentations:

P. De Marinis / A. Bialakowsky: "Mass Society": A Simultaneous Approach of David Riesman and Gino Germani

J. Dreher: Complete Loss of Individuality – Phenomenological Reflections on Mass Action

M. Krause: On the Family As a Collective Subjectivity

D. Alvaro / E. Torterola / V. Haidar / E. Fraga / J. Trovero: En Los Márgenes Del Canon Sociológico, la Cuestión De Las Masas En Los Umbrales Del Siglo XX: Gustav Le Bon, Gabriel Tarde, Georg Simmel y Robert Park

#3

Modernity at New Crossroads

Session Organizer(s)

José M. PÉREZ-AGOTE, Universidad Pública de Navarra, Spain,
jose.perez.agote@unavarra.es

Session in English Spanish

The modernity debate seemed to lose its meaning and importance at the end of the last century, when the postmodern critics began to decline. But the interest in modernity, however, remains alive as long as new uncertainties and unanswered questions arise.

Certainly, postmodernism questioned the core assumptions of the classical modernization theory and eroded the ability of the modern project to show itself as the goal of a historical logic impelled by progress. Thus, current approaches to modernity focus on topics like the failure of the secularization process theory, the plural ways in which modernity may be experienced, the understanding of modernization in the light of postcolonial views and the end of a sociological reading of history as an ineluctable fate.

This call for papers tries to gather these new theoretical approaches which are renewing the comprehension of modernity, by paying special attention to perspectives like "Multiple Modernities" or "Axial Civilizations", the reshaping of cosmopolitanism and so on.

Modernity at New Crossroads I: Rethinking Classic Modernity

Presentations:

E. Davila: Pensar El Presente. Una Reconstrucción Teórica Del Concepto Moderno De Tiempo

L. Chavez: La Modernidad y Su Eterno Retorno Moral, o La Voluntad Por Lo Correcto

B. Boskovic: Anthony Giddens's Understanding of Identity in Modernity: Relevance and Questions

E. Usategui and A. I. Del Valle: Paradojas e Incertidumbres De La Segunda Modernidad

M. Aguiluz-Ibarguen: Ejercer La Suspensión Sobre La Modernidad Como Génesis De La Existencia Social Presente

Modernity at New Crossroads II: Diversifying Western Modernity

Presentations:

V. Gil: Cosmopolitan Modernities and European Social Imaginaries

H. Dahms: The REAL Dark Side Modern Society: Inverted Futures

C. Capdequi: The Creativity and Transcendence: Diagnosis about the Present Time

J. Beriain: Modernities in Conflict

J. Gil-Gimeno: Reflecting about Multiple Secularizations

#4

Modernity Re-Visited: The Role of Technology and Engineering

Session Organizer(s)

Dieter NEUBERT, University of Bayreuth, Germany,
dieter.neubert@uni-bayreuth.de

Elísio MACAMO, University of Basel, Switzerland,
elisio.macamo@unibas.ch

Session in English

Debates over modernity usually stress social, political and economic structures, institutions or processes and tend to be silent on the impact of technology and engineering in its constitution. This limitation is shared by different perspectives on modernity.

Authors such as Giddens, who sees fundamental features of modernity across cultural differences, point to the state, capitalism, industrialism as well as to the ability to master nature as constitutive elements, but hardly mention technology. Eisenstadt, with his concept of “multiple modernities”, highlights the role of social movements, political systems and ideology in the production of different forms of modernity. Critics of modernity, like in the globalization debate, or Luhmann’s world society approach stress the social, political and economic interconnectedness of a multipolar world. And even post-colonial perspectives (Bhambra) criticize what they perceive to be Eurocentric in sociology as documented in its inability to acknowledge the importance of colonialism in the constitution of modernity and lay emphasis on shared histories and entangled modernities (Randeria).

The relative neglect of technology in these debates is all the more astonishing since societal processes everywhere have increasingly come under its influence, including in such settings as those where religion plays a key role in the design of statehood or among groups acting on the belief that they are resisting the West while relying on modern technology for their military activities.

The session invites theoretical and conceptual papers that take up these issues and address the relevance of technology and engineering for a deeper understanding of modernity.

Presentations:

E. Macamo: Attractiveness and Destruction: Polanyi and the Ambivalence of Products of Modernity

E. Rafael: The Modernity of Technology: Conceptualizing the Technological Distinction

J. Merron: Uncaptured Modernities and the “Pure Exteriority” of Technology and Engineering

R. Umlauf: Fixing Diseases – Locating Modernity. The Role of
Technology for Improving Uganda’s Health System

#5

Reconceptualizing Memory and Post-Traumatic Growth from a Crosscultural Perspective

Session Organizer(s)

Sachiko TAKITA-ISHII, Yokohama City University, Japan,
stakita@yokohama-cu.ac.jp

Gabriela FRIED, California State University Los Angeles

Session in English

This session invites scholars from all over the world working on a sociological re-conceptualization of memory in society of personal/collective loss and recovery after natural and human-made/political disasters.

The predominant discussion in the collective memory literature in sociology has emphasized the political struggles and the negotiations over predominant meanings and redress movements around events after massive violence and loss.

Accepting this as the main focus or premise of the present sociological analysis of memory in society after violent loss, we want to explore further what happens in the realm of memory more fully to account for **a wider range of cases that develop "before the public," or cases that are "left out" of regular or ordinary accounts in public memory of loss/violence/trauma.** This void in the sociological literature follows a certain misconception that those who do not join public or collective **movements of remembrance, or those who "stay silent" (because of their own or socio-political censorship),** are not as important to the salience or significance to the process.

We welcome submissions that bring analytically or empirically "what is typically left out" back into the discussion of sociology of memory and post-traumatic growth from a cross-cultural perspective. We particularly welcome work which addresses analytically or empirically different sites and cultural experiences from a non-western non-hegemonic perspective.

Presentations:

S. Takita Ishii / G. Fried: The Intersubjective Dimension of Memory: **What Has Been "Left out"**

Y. Ogura: Reciprocal Transmission of Traumatic Memory: Co-Production of an Art Work at a Hiroshima High School

L. d'Orsi: Moral Silence of the Fighter or Traumatic Silence of the Survivor? Different Cultural Construction of Selfhood Among Former Revolutionists

E. Nakamura: "Invisible" War Trauma in Japan: Medicine, Society and Military Psychiatric Casualties

H. Yaron Mesgena: Forgotten Refugees and Migrants: Infiltration and Infiltrators in Israeli Archival Records and Public Discourse

G. Fernando: Exploration of Traumatic Memory in Collectivistic Cultures: Sri Lanka As an Example

Social Exclusion and Power

Session Organizer(s)

David STRECKER, University of Jena, Germany, david.strecker@uni-jena.de

Session in English

Identified as a key concern by European social policy in the late 1980s, social exclusion has since become a widely used concept in various fields of sociology. Generally referring to the ways in which individuals or groups are blocked from participating in social practices and access to rights and resources, it has been linked to the notions of underclass (especially in England) and precariousness (at first in France) within the sociology of poverty and of inequality as well as to broader theoretical concerns about the functioning of modern society in systems theory (primarily in Germany).

All these different research contexts share the assumption that, in order to be adequate to contemporary society, classical hierarchical models of social stratification have to at least be supplemented by vertical approaches along the lines of an in/out distinction, shifting **attention to those that have been "cut-off from society" and are deemed "superfluous"**.

But to what extent is the concept of social exclusion able to do justice **to central concerns of the "older" hierarchical approaches to social stratification related to power**? This session invites conceptual, theoretical and empirical papers addressing the question of how mechanisms of social exclusion are linked to such processes as domination and exploitation. Additional discussion of further theoretical ambiguities of the notion of social exclusion like its relation to inclusion, to integration and to the sometimes narrow focus put on participation in the labour market is welcome too.

Presentations:

N. Parker: The Power of Insolence

G. Casuso: Power, Exclusion, and Critique: Between Cognitive Dissonance and the Social Constitution of the Space of Reasons

S. Costa: Downsizing Exclusion, Bringing Inequality Research Back in

D. Strecker: Social Exclusion and the Right to Justification: The Case of Slavery

M. On Teixeira / A. Bueno: Social Exclusion: Pathology or Misedevelopment?

#7

Social Ontology in Social Theory

Session Organizer(s)

Craig BROWNE, University of Sydney, Australia,
craig.browne@sydney.edu.au

Session in English

Recent discussions in social theory have witnessed a revival of interest in social ontology. Social ontology is a mode of theorising that is generally concerned with the basic structures of social life and the conditions of social practices. Social ontology seeks to clarify those properties and elements that are constitutive of social forms and accordingly social ontologies aim to specify the characteristics of relatively abstract categories like action, institution, groups, rules, structure, and the social.

While it is undoubtedly true that certain strands of social theory tend to be oriented towards social ontology, it appears that a broader range of theoretical and empirical approaches have recently engaged with issues of social ontology. From a certain standpoint, this is merely the result of making explicit some of the formerly implicit social ontological assumptions of social theories. Yet, there may be other reasons for the renewal of social ontology, such as the self-questioning of social scientific methodology, the elucidation of the constitution of values, the eroding and reconfiguring of borders, like that between the social and the natural, the attempted syntheses of various theories of practice, disorienting experiences of processes of social change, and the perceived need to buttress critical social diagnoses.

This session aims to assess the implications of this background context to recent statements of social ontology in social theory. Is social ontology essential to social theory discussions of the futures that we want?

Presentations:

F. Leon: Social Ontology and Model-Building: Practices of Generative Social Science

D. Elder-Vass: How to Recognise the Material without Discarding the Social

S. Fornos Klein: Critique Between Renewal and Negativity: Some Comments on Social Ontology

S. Adams: On 'Direct' and 'Indirect' Social Ontologies: Rethinking Castoriadis, Ricoeur and the Human Condition

Subject or Subjectivation?

Session Organizer(s)

Frank WELZ, Innsbruck University, Austria, frank.welz@uibk.ac.at

Session in English

Foucault's introduction of the analysis of subjectivation processes has radically challenged the formerly dominant German *verstehende* approach of the human subject. On the one hand, in an era when differences, chance, choice and agency became key terms of social analysis, **Foucault's intervention has reorientated sociology** toward an understanding of how society shapes action. On the other hand, **according to Foucault's analysis the formerly assumed creatively "meaning-constituting" individual subject (A. Schutz) seems to have got lost.** Should sociology abandon its classic view of the "subject" or should the latter be revived?

Presentations:

P. Rebughini: What Is Left of the Subject. What Is Missing in Subjectivation: A Dialogue

D. Wetzel: Subjectivation As Process of Becoming a Subject - Transgressing Foucault with Butler

V. Kombarov: Rediscovering the "Subject" in Post-Foucauldian Era of Conceptualization

J. Spurk: Futures That Subjects Could Want

F. Hardering: Bringing Identity Work Back in: How the Concept of Identity Work Helps to Overcome Theoretical Imbalances in Research on Subjectivity

Time and Society: Cultural, Personal and Institutional Ways to Relate Past, Present and Future

Session Organizer(s)

Hartmut ROSA, University of Jena, Germany, hartmut.rosa@uni-jena.de

Session in English

All known forms of social life necessarily develop an (however dim) awareness of times past and of the future and a sense to link the two in what is perceived as the present. However, as ethnological, sociological and psychological research has shown, there are vast differences in the cultural, institutional and personal ways to construct the past and the future and in the ways and means through which they are intertwined in the present.

Memory and Planning are just two dimensions which reveal the ensuing differences. Thus, for example, the Zimbardo Time Perspective Inventory is an interesting tool for empirically testing the Psychology of Time. On the one hand, the proposed session seeks to clarify the use of this tool for sociological and cultural analysis, and on the other hand, it asks for alternative approaches and tools to explore the ways in which past, present and future are constructed and enacted in cultures, institutions and individual minds.

Presentations:

S. Tusini: The Temporal Apartheid of Migrants in Italy.

J. Kramarczyk / M. Diestchy: How Past, Present and Future Are Constructed By Slow Livers? Using Qualitative Methods to Measure Temporal Practices and Values in France and Poland

G. Verpraet: Reorganization of Time and Cultural Regimes during the Economic Crisis: How to Construct a Future

H. Hama: Stopped Clocks and Watches: Rethinking Modern Society and Clock Time

A. Matlapeng: Private Property Ownership of Bommandi: The Palimpsestic View

Composition of the Board for the Period 2014-2018

President

David Strecker; University of Erfurt, Germany,
david.strecker@uni-erfurt.de

Secretary, Treasurer & Newsletter Editor

Elke Wagner; Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, Germany,
wagnere@uni-mainz.de

Vice-President North America

Oliver Kozlarek; Mexico

Vice-President South America

Alejandro Bialakowsky, Argentina

Vice-President Europe

Gurminder K. Bhambra, University of Warwick, United Kingdom

Vice-President Africa

James Merron, University of Basel, Switzerland

Vice-President Asia

Sachiko Takita Ishii, Yokohama City University, Japan

Vice-President Australia

Craig Browne; University of Sydney, Australia