



Alienation Theory and Research

NEWSLETTER RC36 april 2021

Dear RC36 Members and Colleagues,

We would like to take this opportunity to review our Research Committee's recent activities and some of those being planned.

The IV ISA Forum of Sociology

The first point to mention concerns the recent ISA Forum, which was hosted online by our colleagues in Porto Alegre, Brazil. It is fair to say that the challenge of organizing a conference of this size—approximately 3,300 participants this year—was amplified by the current world-wide public health situation. This necessitated having to move the Forum to a completely online format after the initial rescheduling of the dates from summer 2020 to early 2021. Regardless of the many difficulties this created, including a quite new order of technical issues, the Forum hosts—and the ISA Secretariat as well—succeeded in organizing a conference that was inspiring and of the highest academic caliber.

RC36 shared in this success in that our sessions attracted attention, were well-attended, stimulated vibrant and insightful conversation, and received many favorable comments. Our presentations and discussions displayed the value, importance, and scope of our Committee's research agenda. Moreover, they illustrated how the concept of alienation has only grown in relevance for gaining an understanding of social, economic, and psychological problems and other issues since it first emerged during the nineteenth century as a topic on its own merit in the work of social theorists and philosophers. The impression we made at the Forum and the reception we enjoyed provide a solid basis upon which to continue developing the activities of our Research Committee.

The XXII April Conference on Social and Economic Development

Our Committee will take part in another large international event in April. We will have two dedicated RC36 sessions on alienation at the XXII April International Academic Conference on Social and Economic Development, which will be hosted by the National Research University Higher School of Economics in Moscow. This is a major gathering that will have over 1700 participants, and our two dedicated sessions will fulfill ISA requirements for one of the interim conferences that all Research Committees must have between successive World Congresses. This year it will be held online, as was the ISA Forum. The RC36 sessions are scheduled for April 23rd.

2022 World Congress of Sociology

We have already begun preparations for the next ISA World Congress. We are planning for ten sessions, and have notified the ISA that the RC36 Program Coordinator will be Vessela Misheva, assisted by our Board Member Dirk Michel-Schertges.

As many of you know, however, the ISA has recently announced that, because of the current public health situation, it cannot commit to holding the World Congress this coming summer as initially scheduled in Melbourne, Australia, either face-to-face or in a hybrid format. The two alternatives from which it will choose are 1) to hold the World Congress online on the dates originally scheduled, 24–30 July 2022, and 2) to postpone the Congress until June 2023 and hold a physical meeting in Melbourne, most likely with some hybrid options. If the World Congress is postponed, the mandates of the ISA Executive Committee will be extended by a year until elections can be held as usual at the Congress. The various deadlines concerning the World Congress for session proposals, abstract submissions, and so forth, will also be adjusted in accordance with the alternative chosen.

The decision concerning how to proceed will be taken as soon as possible at an upcoming meeting of the Executive Committee. We will notify you of upcoming deadlines associated with the World Congress when they are confirmed.

RC36 Publications

Many of you already research and publish with other RC36 colleagues, and this is an area of activity that we would like to develop further. A useful first step in this regard is keeping our fellow members informed of our own publications. This can be done by informing the Board and Officers concerning the articles, book chapters, monographs, and books that you are publishing, and these details can be provided to the membership as whole through our newsletters. In addition, a form is available on the ISA home page so that your book-length publications during the previous two years can be announced to those who visit that website. This is a convenient way for letting the ISA community know about your more substantial publications.

Another possibility, particularly after a major conference such as the ISA Forum, is to publish one or more collections of selected and reviewed articles based on the conference presentations of our members. This would be an effective way in which to present the research of our membership to a broader public. Discussion of such projects is to be encouraged, and members should keep others advised of their plans in this regard. Discussion within the Board has placed a priority upon this type of activity, and your suggestions for how to proceed further in this direction are welcomed.

On that note, we would like to wish you not only further success in your professional endeavors, but also continued safety and health in the present troubled times.

With best regards,

Vessela Misheva, RC36 Program Coordinator for the ISA World Congress

Dirk Michel-Schertges, RC36 Board Member, Guest Newsletter Editor

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