



Racism, Nationalism,
Indigeneity and Ethnicity

Newsletter for RC05: Racism, Nationalism, Indigeneity and Ethnicity

March 17th 2025

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Newsletter prepared by Catharina Peeck-Ho, for any concerns or contributions for the next newsletter, please contact catharina.peeck-ho@uol.de.

1. Editorial

Dear RC05 members,

The ISA Forum in Rabat is fast approaching and I would like to take this opportunity to remind those who have not yet registered that in order to be included in the program, the deadline for registration is 22 March. You find all the relevant information on the webpage: <https://www.isa-sociology.org/en/conferences/forum/rabat-2025>

A few weeks ago, we received the sad news that Michael Burawoy had been hit by a car in Oakland, California. In his memory, Margaret Abrahams, former ISA president and member of RC05, wrote a text that you can find on the following pages. I would also like to thank all the other contributors who shared their articles, news and announcements. The current political and social developments around the world are significant for our field and I think it is more important than ever to connect and discuss issues of racism, nationalism, ethnicity and indigeneity. We have many interesting events planned for the forum and hope that many members will travel to the site to share ideas, approaches and experiences.

Apart from the ISA conferences and the forum RC05 can also provide a framework to organize online workshops and discussions. If you are interested, please feel free to contact the board.

The next newsletter will be published in autumn 2025. Please feel free to send me anything that might be of interest to the members of RC 05.

Best wishes,

Catharina

2. Tribute to Michael Burawoy

Michael Burawoy, ISA President (2010-2014) was killed on February 3, 2025, when he was hit by a car while walking on a crossroad near his home in Oakland, California. Margaret Abraham, ISA President (2014-2018) and member of RC05 shared the following words during an initial online tribute organized by ISA on 8 February 2025 to celebrate Michael Burawoy's life and legacy.

It's hard to grapple with Michael Burawoy's untimely and tragic death. Many of you around the world have incredible and inspiring stories to share about Michael. About his huge impact on sociology, on students, colleagues, professional associations, educational institutions, unions, family, friends and on our individual lives. Michael Burawoy's brilliance, boldness, boundless energy and commitment to equality, fairness and social justice came through day in day out – in what he wrote, how he spoke and what he did. He truly exemplified what it means to help advance the discipline, to actively engage, including by taking on key leadership roles in professional associations such as ASA and ISA, --- but also, by his continuous commitment to reflect and (re)situate sociology to meet the disciplinary and societal challenges of our time.

Michael always sought ways to break down hierarchies and promote scholars from around the world, especially emerging sociologists. He sought to have them showcase their own work and offered incredible support in opening pathways, especially for those marginalized and excluded. He was never afraid to challenge the status quo. This great sociological sojourner spoke truth to power, through his brilliant writings, rigorous analysis, eloquent and sharp presentations, asking critical questions, always open to debate and dialogue, and having the very rare skill of intensely listening. He continued to be persistent, passionate, and persuasive about the promise of sociology for a better, equal and more peaceful world.

In my recent communication with Michael, just a few days ago, we discussed the state of the world. He, in his usual insightful way, noted "Strange world we live in - both so connected and so disconnected..." However, the optimist in him remained hopeful and emphasized the importance of effort in our struggles for justice. He said "...the effort is more important than the success..."

Michael had a beautiful way with words, engaging in ways that epitomized the humanist he was. This is not the place nor time to speak in depth about the magnitude of his contributions, nor to adequately express my gratitude for who he was to me and to so many of us across the globe. There will be other times and places. Instead, I would like to end by sharing few lines from the poem, “When Great Trees Fall”, written by the acclaimed and world-renowned American poet, and civil rights activist, Maya Angelou. I find the words very meaningful and powerful, and I hope this poem resonates with many of us as we come together to mourn and to celebrate Michael Burawoy’s life and legacy.

When Great Trees Fall

*“Great souls die and our reality, bound to them, takes leave of us.
Our souls, dependent upon their nurture, now shrink, wizened.
Our minds, formed and informed by their radiance, fall away.
We are not so much maddened as reduced to the unutterable ignorance of dark, cold caves.*

*And when great souls die, after a period peace blooms,
slowly and always irregularly.
Spaces fill with a kind of
soothing electric vibration.*

*Our senses, restored, never to be the same, whisper to us.
They existed. They existed.
We can be.
Be and be better.
For they existed.*

Thank you, Michael, Thank you

Margaret Abraham

3. Indigenous social mobility: empirical reality, growing phenomenon. What now?

by Rochelle R. Côté and Michelle Evans

The article is a slightly abridged version of the first edition of the OCHRE Papers Series, published by the Dilin Duwa Centre for Indigenous Business Leadership: <https://dilinduwa.com.au/ochre-papers>

Social mobility is about the advantages and disadvantages of our family background and how that intersects with our own efforts to build an economic base (Weber, 1946; Payne, 1989). Looking closely into the intergenerational socio-economic realities of disadvantage is critical to understand how to address economic disparity. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) 2022 reports that it can take five generations for individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds to achieve the mean income of a given society. It has been nine generations¹ since the 1788 British invasion and importation of White² values, systems and logics. It has been a mere two generations since the 1967 Referendum which instigated a ripple effect of changes including the repeal of the Aboriginal Protection Act that governed the lives and livelihoods of Aboriginal people in Australia. Over these past two generations there have been policies and programs aimed at reducing Indigenous socio-economic disadvantage alongside growing Indigenous participation in the economy and education. What we ask is, has this translated into increased social mobility for Indigenous Australians?

Self-employment is positively associated with social mobility. Owning and running a business requires professional expertise, business acumen, personal financial resources and access to social networks that can promote and support the business. Those who can do this successfully find themselves accumulating wealth and being role models for others. It is perhaps no surprise that the rate of Indigenous business startups in Australia is over 8% year on year (Evans et al., 2024), higher than the national average. As such, we choose to focus on Indigenous business owners as a group who are more likely to experience positive economic outcomes associated with social mobility.

¹ A generation is understood as a 25-year period.

² When we refer to the category of 'White' we are referring to the seat of power in settler societies founded on the premise that European colonial powers continue to dominate.

What are the drivers of upward social mobility?

A British nation-wide study (Savage 2015) highlights the need for social and cultural capital, as key resources facilitating upward social mobility. Social capital is the stuff of our social networks associated with the resources and opportunities that we can access. Cultural capital, the different kinds of knowledge and skills that we cultivate throughout our lifetime helps us successfully navigate the written and unwritten rules of society. Social and cultural capital can be used to build the other, and economic capital, facilitating the accumulation of different kinds of wealth, and social mobility. The way social and cultural capital is defined and measured does not entirely consider Indigenous kinship and relational logics intertwined with Indigenous knowledge and cultural practices. Further, Palawa Professor Maggie Walter points out the distinctiveness of Indigenous forms of capital that differ from Western understandings in that they emphasise the bounded relationality between individuals and country and the consequences for Indigenous people who move away from country and kin impacting the strong bonds and networks (2015). In this perspective, upward social mobility presents a risk for Indigenous individuals and families seeking opportunities beyond their community.

Why is this important?

Social mobility research illuminates the stratification of society by exposing layers of advantage and disadvantage reproduced over time. Indigenous populations are also racially stratified, and this historical and cultural experience of colonialism, oppression and exploitation has a fundamental impact on their social mobility. Walter (2015) argues that Indigenous people may find themselves occupying similar places geographically and economically as Whites, but not inhabiting the same spaces (Walter et al., 2011). This critical insight points out that while Indigenous people may work to obtain career or business success, the space they live in is fundamentally influenced by the impacts of racial segregation meaning that equality with the White norm is far from achievable, and maybe even not desirable.

This societal set of inequalities is further complicated by the tensions Indigenous people experience when accessing mainstream social and cultural capital resources. Stereotyped, colonial thinking conveyed through society and culture asserts that successfully navigating mainstream networks and culture is equated with a lack of prioritisation of Indigenous networks and culture. These pressures are amplified by claims that with increases in personal income, there are decreases in cultural legitimacy (Behrendt, 2015). In this way, Indigenous identity and upward social mobility are placed in juxtaposition with each other, bringing us to the question – can Indigenous people ‘wealth’ out of Indigenous identity? Or more precisely does upward social mobility imply cultural assimilation?

What did we do?

We conducted two waves of interviews with Indigenous entrepreneurs between 2008 and 2023. Over the course of eight years (2008-2015), the first wave of interviews was conducted with Indigenous entrepreneurs in Toronto (Canada), Phoenix (United States), and Brisbane, (Australia). In total, 220 entrepreneurs participated across these three sites talking about their experiences of engaging with large, urban marketplaces, and the role that social and cultural capital played. Consequently, conversations centered around their understandings of success, and how Indigenous definitions of success sometimes matched but often diverged from traditional understandings of what it meant to be successful in business. While this initial study provided a wealth of information about Indigenous entrepreneurs and their experiences of success, it also led to more questions, and wanting to learn what happens when Indigenous people build economic wealth. In 2023, we conducted a second wave of interviews. We contacted Indigenous entrepreneurs from the (2008- 2015) study in Brisbane, Australia and asked if they would sit down for follow-up interviews so we could better understand what happens when Indigenous people build economic wealth. Thirty-three individuals agreed, and interviews were conducted between February – July 2023.

Through the interview, we asked participants to talk about how their businesses had been doing since the initial study, and also asked questions about (1) their experiences of social mobility, (2) the diversity of their social and cultural capital today, and (3) their experiences of growing up, and finally (4) how they experience economic success today.

What did we find?

The story starts with our analysis and findings from the first wave of interviews conducted between 2008-2015 across the three research sites. Theory and popular opinion suggest that the more connected to White networks and culture (individuals of European descent, and what we refer to as mainstream culture) entrepreneurs become, the less connected to Indigenous networks and culture they will be. However, we found the opposite (Côté and Evans 2023). There were no significant differences in Indigenous entrepreneurs' levels of Indigenous and White social capital, and this was true of all three sites. We also found that Indigenous entrepreneurs had significantly richer Indigenous cultural capital, compared to White cultural capital – suggesting that they were actively participating in many different forms of Indigenous culture. In this, we show that theory and popular opinion do not hold up.

It is easy to argue however, that our findings from the first wave of interviews only reflect one point in time, and that what theory and popular opinion are really suggesting, is that there is

an erosion of Indigenous social and cultural capital over time. Our follow-up interviews in 2023 with the Brisbane cohort were meant to look (again) at whether or not this was true. If it was the case, we would expect to find an inverse relationship between increasing social mobility, and White and Indigenous social and cultural capital. Using a pared- down version of our measures for social and cultural capital for both waves of Brisbane interviews, we went about trying to see if this was the case with Brisbane respondents. We found that these entrepreneurs had significantly richer Indigenous social capital, when compared to White social capital. The updated measures we used indicate that, not only are entrepreneurs cultivating and maintaining ties to Indigenous people, but they are doing so more than cultivating ties to Whites and significantly so. Most importantly however, we look at the richness of Indigenous and White social capital over time. Findings show that between 2015 and 2023, there is no difference between levels of Indigenous social capital over time – entrepreneurs have not lost Indigenous social capital. However, the richness of White social capital has declined over time. They have less diverse ties to Whites in 2023, than they did in 2015. Over the course of eight years, respondents seem to perhaps be investing less in White networks but holding the course with their Indigenous networks. When we look at Indigenous and White cultural capital, we do find that in 2023, entrepreneurs now have similarly rich Indigenous and mainstream cultural capital, showing no significant difference when we compare them to each other. Looking at the diversity of participation in Indigenous culture over time, findings also show that there is no significant difference between 2015 and 2023. We find a similar relationship for participation in mainstream culture activities and events over time – there is no significant difference between 2015 and 2023. Over the course of eight years, entrepreneurs seem to be holding the course in terms of the way they are participating in different forms of culture. Importantly, while there doesn't seem to be an erosion of Indigenous social and cultural capital over time, there does seem to be a changing interest in accessing White social networks, and mainstream social capital. It's not only the case that theory and popular opinion are not holding up here, but that we might all have it wrong about what the relationship between social mobility and Indigenous identity is.

4. News

New Book Series on [The Sociology of Race and Ethnicity](#)

Series Editors: David L. Brunsma and David G. Embrick

Publisher: University of Georgia Press

In this book series, we are open to new and original research; especially work that pushes new theoretical and methodological boundaries in race/racism/ethnicity and racial/ethnic oppression/liberation. We are also interested in working with authors who bring interdisciplinary sociological analyses as well as work that is international in scope.

Indeed, we have already published eight (8) books in the series, with more right around the corner! Check them out:

- [*The Bricks before Brown The Chinese American, Native American, and Mexican Americans' Struggle for Educational Equality*](#) by Marisela Martinez-Cola
- [*Bodies out of Place Theorizing Anti-Blackness in U.S. Society*](#) by Barbara Harris Combs
- A translation (by Steve Garner) to English (from the French) of [*Islamophobia in France The Construction of the "Muslim Problem"*](#) by Abdellali Hajjat and Marwan Mohammed
- [*Liberal White Supremacy How Progressives Silence Racial and Class Oppression*](#) by Angie Beeman
- [*Imprisoned: Interlocking Oppression in Law Enforcement, Housing, and Public Education*](#) by Cassi A. Meyerhoffer and Brittany Leigh Rodriguez.
- [*Ecologies of Inequity: How Disaster Response Reconstitutes Race and Class Inequality*](#) by Sancha Doxilly Medwinter.
- [*From Jesus to J-Setting: Religious and Sexual Fluidity Among Young Black People*](#) by Sandra Lynn Barnes.
- [*The Souls of Jewish Folk: WEB DuBois, Anti-Semitism, and the Color Line*](#) by James Michael Thomas.

In addition to these we have more scholarship coming by Eileen O'Brien, Lisa Huebner, Wille Barnes and J. Scott Carter, Walda Katz Fishman and Jerome Scott and many more!

And, after many, many, many meetings with prospective authors from 2017- present, at international, national, regional conferences, as well as on Zoom, phone, you name it, we have a strong and healthy set of books in the pipeline.

That's where you come in! We hope you will consider our series for your work and/or sharing the series with colleagues and students. Our goal with the series is to seek, nurture, mentor, and publish the best and most important sociological analyses of race and ethnicity that we can find. Particularly ones that "speak to the public square" and across multiple publics. If you or someone you know might want to consider the series for their work, do not hesitate to share my contact with them. To be sure, we are always open to having discussions with prospective authors at any stage of their project development: early ideas, initial outlines, proposal drafts, full manuscripts, etc. And are here to support authors to see their work to fruition. So, feel free to reach out. We look forward to working with you. Peace.

Series Advisory Board: Margaret Abraham, Elijah Anderson, Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, Patricia Hill Collins, Philomena Essed, James Fenelon, David Theo Goldberg, Tanya Golash-Boza, Jose Itzigsohn, Amanda Lewis, Michael Omi, Mary Romero, and Victor Rios.

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5. RC05 on Social Media

The position of **Social Media Officer** is still vacant. Interested members can contact Kalpana Kannabiran (kalpana@csdindia.org). As we are currently looking to expand the RC's social media presence, we would be glad if the position can be filled soon.

6. Calls for Papers

Special Issue: “Rethinking inequalities: Theoretical and methodological questions of intersectional gender research”

Editors: Ingrid Jugwirth, Barbara Grüning, Catharina Peeck-Ho, Anna Amelina

Since the concept of intersectionality was established in US-American problematizations of feminist anti-racist political practice (Crenshaw 1991; Combahee River Collective 1977), a broad spectrum of theoretical approaches, debates and different research practices has developed. The analysis of the interaction of gender and other categories and processes of inequality and their mutual conditionality is also productively taken up in the German-speaking context. This raises methodological and theoretical questions, including the transferability of the concept to different social contexts and academic disciplines – starting with the critique of “whitening intersectionality” (Bilge 2014) and the question of the meaning of the central category of race beyond the US context, as well as methodological developments in qualitative and quantitative research. The examination of the concept of intersectionality as a theoretical and methodological approach as well as a power-critical instrument is productive, creative, and challenging at the same time. Against this background, we invite submissions on theoretical and methodological issues of intersectional analysis as well as on empirical research results of interdisciplinary gender studies.

More information: <https://www.gender-zeitschrift.de/en/call-for-papers-gz>

Panel on the 42. Congress of the German Sociological Association "Transitions and temporalities in migration", Organizer: Section Migration and Ethnic Minorities

22.-26.09.2025 University of Duisburg-Essen, Germany

Migration as a kind of transition, which is structured and experienced temporally, has recently become a focus of debates and studies emphasizing its processual aspects. Key topics include timing and stages of migration and migration decision-making; temporality of migration journeys; liminality at the destination and postponed arrival; alternative temporalities of circular or return migration and waiting en route. Studies have also explored the temporal orders of migration regimes and how institutions structure the social realities of migrants by means of time-specific mechanisms. While any migration can be understood as a transition, we would like to focus on contributions that address its distinct temporal dimension, whether

from the perspective of the migration experience or methods and concepts of migration research. These insights will inform discussions on the implications of thinking about temporality as a theoretical concept and possible ways of approaching it empirically. We invite submissions of papers that explore migration with a focus on transitions and their temporality from diverse sociological perspectives and research paradigms.

More information: https://soziologie.de/fileadmin/sektionen/migration-und-ethnische-minderheiten/cfp/CfP_Sek_Migration_und_ethnische_Minderheiten_Transitions_and_temporalities_in_migration.pdf

7. Members' Recent Publications

Rochelle R. Côté

McDonald, Stephen, **Rochelle R. Côté**, and Jing Shen, editors. 2024. *Handbook on Inequality and Social Capital*. London: Edward Elgar Publishers.

Sarah Murru

Garny, N. & Murru, S. (2024) "The Sisters' House as an Intersectional, Feminist Reception Project for Migrant Women: Exploring the Concept of Constructive Resistance.", *DiGeSt - Journal of Diversity and Gender Studies* 11(2), 81-99. <https://doi.org/10.21825/digest.90129>

Merla, L., Murru, S., Orsini, G., & Vuckovic Juros, T. (Eds.). (2024). *Excluding Diversity Through Intersectional Borderings* (1st ed.). Springer. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-65623-1>

Tancrède Pagès, A., Garny, N., Vandevordt, R., & Murru, S. (Eds.). (2024). Intersectional Solidarities and Resistances in Face of Violent Migration Regimes. *DiGeSt - Journal of Diversity and Gender Studies*, 11(2). <https://www.digest.ugent.be/issue/current/>

Kalpana Kannabiran

Book: Kannabiran, K. ed. *Law, Society, Justice: Selected Works of Upendra Baxi* (Volume 3: *Law & Society*). New Delhi: Oxford University Press. 2025.

Article: Kannabiran, K. “A New Constitutional Vocabulary? Constitution-as-Commons, Citizenship and the Borders of Belonging” Response to *Secularism as Misdirection* by Nivedita Menon. *Law and Other Things*. 12 February 2025. <https://lawandotherthings.com/secularism-as-misdirection-response-by-kalpana-kannabiran/>

Book Reviews

Kannabiran, K. ‘The Optimism of the Intellect’: The Wor(l)ds of the Writer.ly Teacher Upendra Baxi, *Social Change*, 1-7, DOI: 10.1177/00490857241294199. Review of U Baxi , A Narain , L Liang , S Kakarala, S Chaganti, *Of Law and Life: Upendra Baxi in Conversation With Arvind Narrain, Lawrence Liang, Sitharamam Kakarala, Sruti Chaganti*, Orient BlackSwan, 2024, xxii + 582 pp., ISBN 978-93-5442-304-8 (Hardcover). U Baxi, *Towards a Sociology of Indian Law*, Law and Justice Publishing Company, 2024, xxix + 250 pp., ISBN 978-81-19129-94-2 (Paperback).

Kannabiran, K. *The Last Courtesan: Writing My Mother’s Memoir* by Manish Gaekwad, in *The Book Review*, October 2024, 53-54.

Kannabiran, K. Combined review of *The Yellow Sparrow: Memoir of a Transgender Woman* by Santa Khurai (Translated from the Manipuri by Rubani Yumkhaibam), Speaking Tiger Books, New Delhi, 2023. Pp 294 PB *Embedding Subversion and Gender Identity: ‘Ulti’, the Secret Language of the Hijra-Koti Community* by Enakshi Nandi, Tulika Books, New Delhi, 2024. Pp. 188 pp. HB *Hijras, Lovers, Brothers: Surviving Sex and Poverty in Rural India* by Vaibhav Saria, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2023. Pp. 253 pp. HB. *The Book Review*, January 2025.

Public Writing

Kannabiran, K. “We need to talk about caste when we talk about menstrual justice. *The Frontline Magazine*, 21 April 2024. <https://frontline.thehindu.com/profile/author/Kalpana-Kannabiran-20106/>

Kannabiran, K. “Wounding the Spirit of the Constitution of India”, *The Hindu*, 14 December 2024: <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/wounding-the-spirit-of-the-constitution-of-india/article68982713.ece>

Kannabiran, K. “At 75, Constitutional Justice and Personal Liberty”, *The Hindu*, 25 January 2025: <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/at-75-constitutional-justice-and-personal-liberty/article69137125.ece>

Catharina Peeck-Ho

Bös, M. & Peeck-Ho, C., 2025: From Liberal-Colonial Citizenship to Acts of Citizenship: The (Re-)Formation of Gender, Migration and Citizenship. In: Kenner, Steve et al.: Inclusive Citizenship. Interdisziplinäre Perspektiven auf Bürgerschaft und Politische Bildung. Wiesbaden (Springer): 187-197, https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-658-45757-0_12

Peeck-Ho, C., 2024: Versicherheitlichung als Strategie der Verfügbarmachung (*Securitization as a Strategy of Appropriation*). In: Wissenschaftliches Netzwerk "Soziologie des Un/Verfügbaren (Hrsg.): Un-/Verfügbar. Natur-Technik-Politik. Baden Baden (Nomos): 237-255, <https://www.nomos-elibrary.de/10.5771/9783985721122-237/versicherheitlichung-als-strategie-der-verfuegbarmachung?page=1>

Nabers, D.; Bohmann, U.; Peeck-Ho, C. (2024): Die politische Konstitution des Sozialen und die Un/ Verfügbarekeit politischer Begriffe (*The Political Constitution of the Social and the Un/Availability of Political Concepts*). In: Wissenschaftliches Netzwerk "Soziologie des Un/Verfügbaren (Hrsg.): Un-/Verfügbar. Natur-Technik-Politik. Baden Baden (Nomos): 257-278, <https://www.nomos-elibrary.de/10.5771/9783985721122-257/die-politische-konstitution-des-sozialen-und-die-un-verfuegbarekeit-politischer-begriffe?page=1>

Luisa Farah Schwarzman

Balaguera, Martha, Luisa Farah Schwartzman, and Luis van Isschot. "Racial Frontiers: Hemispheric Logics of Haitians' Displacement and Asylum in the Americas." *Antipode* 56.2 (2024): 379-399.