



Participation, Organizational
Democracy and Self-Management

RC10 NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2025

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Dasarath Chetty and Sheetal Bhoola

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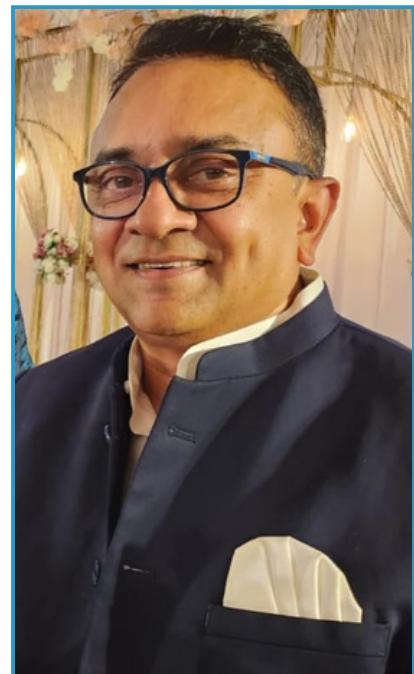
1. A Message from the RC10 President

Dear Colleagues

I would like to take this opportunity to thank RC 10 members and fellow social scientists for their willingness to participate in the 2025 Forum. This Forum is an in-person event only, and many of us have not had the support of institutional funding to attend this conference.

The programme had to be modified to accommodate unexpected participant dropouts, and the changes will be reflected online on the ISA website. However, the programme changes will not be documented in the printed programmes available at the conference. We now have a total of 19 planned sessions, eight of which are joint, and a total of 66 presentations.

Please be mindful of the modified date, time and venue of the RC 10 Business Meeting. It is an important platform for RC 10 members to voice and share their opinions and scientific objectives and discuss how RC 10 academic engagements can assist in meeting these objectives.

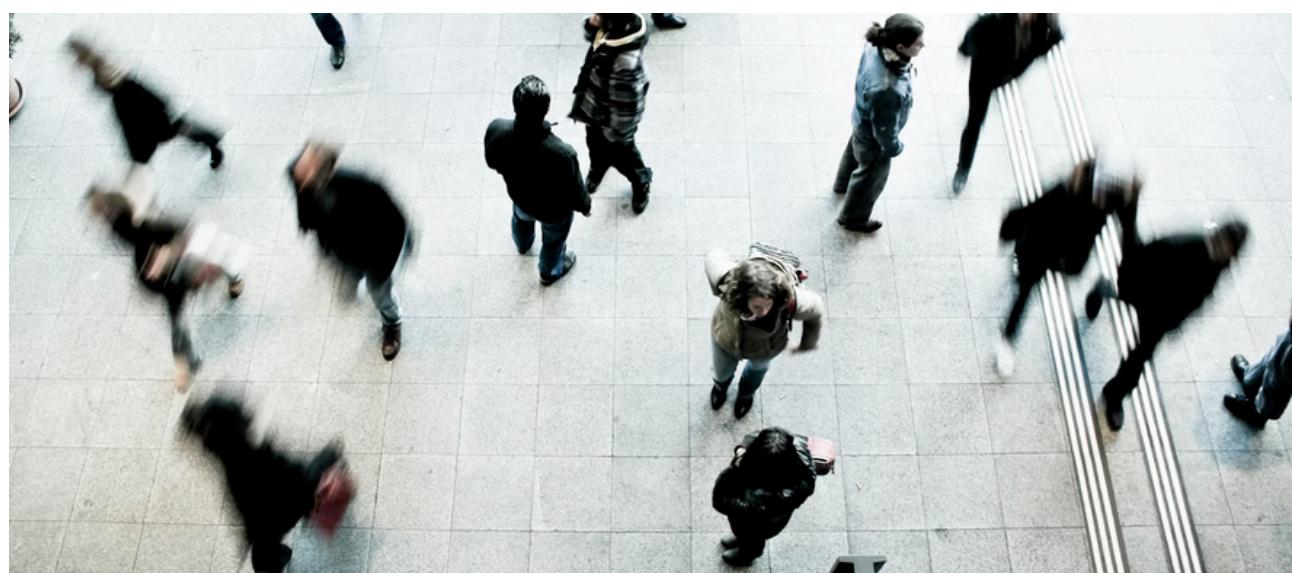


In addition, the meeting is a good platform to welcome new members, renew old friendships and collaborations, and discuss ways to increase the research committee membership and ensure the continued relevance of our RC.

This Newsletter includes the final programme of the RC sessions. The presenters, session themes and presentation topics promise to meet expectations of global relevance and excellence in academic discourse, debate and academic knowledge exchange.

I wish you well on your journey to Rabat and look forward to meeting you soon.

Sincerely
Dasarath Chetty



2. Program amendments (RC 10 sessions only)

Dear RC 10 and ISA Forum participants

I would like to inform you of the following program changes. These changes will be reflected on the ISA Forum official digital webpages.

1. Session JS 163 have now been merged into the session titled, Social Justice through Decoloniality through the Anthropocene (Session 145) which is scheduled to take place on the 7th of July at 9.am.
2. Session 151 has been merged with session 149 because session 151 had only one presentation. Session 151 has been cancelled and merged with Session 149. The
3. Session 145 now has 2 sessions with this new amendment.
4. The timeslot allocated for session 151 (cancelled) will be utilised for the RC 10 Business Meeting. Please note the change.

The RC 10 board collectively took the above mentioned decisions at a meeting held on the 13th of June 2025. Therefore, even though the previous sessions (151 and JS 63) have been documented in the main ISA PROGRAM in print, they are no longer taking place. PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGES.



Session 145, 151 and JS 63 each had one presentation in each session and we therefore decided to move these presentations into other sessions. This is due to the fact that many presenters especially from South Africa were registered to participate in Forum but are now unable to attend due to funding constraints. The above changes will be reflected on the ISA digital program, but unfortunately not in the printed program.

We have decided to also amend the date and time of the RC 10 Business meeting given the availability of a slot which is preferred by RC 10 Board Members. Please do make every effort to attend.

The new scheduled date and time is as follows:

Business Meeting

Date: Wednesday, 9th of July

Time: 9 am

Venue: FSE010 (Faculty of Education Sciences)

Thanking you

Dr. Sheetal Bhoola

ISA RC 10 Secretary (2023-2027): © 2025 ISA, International Sociological Association.
Programme Co-ordinator



3. RC 10 Sessions and Joint Sessions

Knowing Justice in the Anthropocene

The 5th ISA Forum of Sociology will take place in Rabat, Morocco on July 6-11, 2025. This is the first ISA Forum to be held in the region and specifically in a country that is known for being at the crossroads of civilizations spanning the Mediterranean, the Middle East and Africa. This unique geographic location, and the campus of Mohammed V University where we will be hosted, is the perfect setting for the intense intellectual debates that are foreseen around the theme "Knowing Justice in the Anthropocene". The dates of the Forum provide us with the opportunity to engage these debates in our Forum and in a sociological film festival that will be open to the public, just before the city will turn its gaze from sociology to football as host of the 2025 Africa Cup of Nations.

The Forum will bring together sociologists from around the world to unpack this complex theme. Our point of departure lies in the recognition of the Anthropocene and the environmental concerns that accompany it. This word entered our lexicon at the turn of the Millennium when geologists first began to identify what they considered to be irreversible geological traces of human societies on the planet. In March 2024, the 'scientists' (according to a New York Times reporter) decided that no, we were not really in a new geological epoch. But the journalist noted that the term had already gained so much importance in anthropology and history that it will most likely stay relevant in societies. This situation of contested knowledges is precisely what we will tackle in Rabat.

What does it mean to "know" in the context of the Anthropocene? Whose knowledge counts? What forms of knowing (understood in its feminist and relational sense) are prioritized, and with what consequences, in societal change? While some sub-disciplines have been actively contributing to academic and public debates, sociology writ large has not been at the center of these debates regarding the conditions of living with and in the Anthropocene. How might engaging the sociological imagination in discussions of the Anthropocene better equip sociologists and citizens to contribute to these public debates about our individual and collective capacities to live together in such an epoch?

This brings us to the question of justice. How do we know what is fair and just? Can we forge new understandings of justice for the Anthropocene? What can sociology contribute to how we know justice among knowledges (ontological and epistemic justice) or about aspects of our social worlds, such as environmental justice, legal justice, transitional justice, land justice, water justice, interspecies justice, racial justice, ethnic justice, or gender justice? What new questions are opened about these types of relations when the conditions of the Anthropocene are taken seriously?

This broad theme provides a space for dialogue within and across ISA's 67 Research Committees (RCs), Working Groups (WGs), and Thematic Groups (TGs). We invite all sociologists from all walks of life and all corners of the earth to join us in Rabat in 2025!

Allison Marie Loconto

Vice-President for Research & 5th ISA Forum President

145 Social Justice through Decoloniality in the Anthropocene

Session in English

TIME 09:00 - 10:45

VENUE Faculty of Education Sciences (FSE), FSE010

SESSION ORGANISER Dasarath Chetty & Simangele Cele

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SESSION CHAIR Stefan Lücking

Presentations:

145.1 Decoloniality, Participation, Organisational Democracy and Self-Management

The paper explores the intersection of these four concepts (decoloniality, participation, organisational democracy and self-management) with specific reference to post-apartheid South Africa and the global south. It asserts that the aspirational human goals of participation, organisational democracy and self-management in the global south cannot be delinked from the matrix of colonial power which continues to negatively impact efforts to ensure social inclusion, democratic participation and self-management. The continuing processes of imperial extraction, capitalist exploitation to ensure massive profitability, and the psychological, social and physical violence suffered by the unemployed and the working poor who constitute the majority of the population in South Africa, serve to hinder any prospects for real freedom. The paper concludes by seeking to address what spaces exist for progressive change. ■

Presenter: Dasarath Chetty, Durban University of Technology



JS-163.1 - The Interaction between School Self Evaluation and Digitalization in Italy

The digitalization of administrations (Decree Law no. 82/2005) regulated the automation of administrative tasks to promote innovation policies in the public sector. The technological aid has enabled the containment of human and material resources on the one hand, and the reduction of the complexity of the processes on the other. With the launch of the National Evaluation System for education and training (Presidential Decree no. 80 of 28 March 2013), the Self-Assessment Report (RAV) was introduced in digital format for all educational institutions. The digital platforms for schools' self-evaluation, which INVALSI designed, and which were progressively implemented, first on an experimental basis, then as a system, meet the needs for automating complex processes, characterized by multiple activities and professionalism. This paper discusses the main evolutions of the digital platform in the field of schools' self-evaluation, through the presentation of the peculiarities of the RAV, and reviews the outcomes of these surveys, proposing an evaluation of the digital platforms by its users. ■

Presenters:

1. Michela Freddano, National Institute for the Educational Evaluation of Instruction and Training (INVALSI)
2. Emanuela Vinci, National Institute for the Educational Evaluation of Instruction and Training (INVALSI), Italy
3. Daniela Torti, INVALSI (National Institute for the Evaluation of Educational System of Instruction and Training)

146 Food Democracy, Politics of Food in Relation to Urbanisation and Sustainability: Understanding Participatory Practices and Policies

Session in English

TIME 11:00 - 12:45

VENUE Faculty of Education Sciences (FSE), FSE010

SESSION ORGANISER Sheetal Bhoola

SESSION CHAIR Catherine Casey

Presentations:

146.1 Tribal FOOD and Culture

Our culture and identity are strongly influenced by our food, which reflects our geographic origins through the ingenious use of locally available ingredients. For tribal people whose lifestyles are intricately entwined with nature and its resources, food systems are deeply rooted in local culture and customs. Their food culture demonstrates a reciprocal relationship with nature where they have managed to support both life and the environment. Growing interest in sustainable living and environmental concerns has prompted increased research into the traditional and eco-friendly food habits of tribal communities' characteristics of tribal food.

- Simple
- Easy Making
- Cheap
- Easy Learn
- Take Time Very Less
- Distinct from the Mainstream
- Raw Food. etc ■

Presenters:

1. Jhaverbhai Patel, Gujarat university Ahmedabad, School of Social

Sciences

2. Dr.Ila Macwan, Sardar Patel University, V.V.Nagar

146.2 The Efficacy of South Africa's National School Nutrition Program in the King Cetshwayo District, Kwazulu-Natal.

KwaZulu-Natal has recorded the highest number of malnourished children in South Africa. This qualitative study seeks to determine the prevalence of malnutrition, child hunger and child neglect within the King Cetshwayo District in KwaZulu-Natal. To combat this national and provincial challenge, South Africa's National School Nutrition Program (NSNP), which is administered by the Department of Basic Education, targets nutrition in children by providing meals for children at impoverished schools. The aim of the National School Nutrition Program is to provide nutritious meals for school-going children, but media reports indicate that this program has been ineffective in achieving this goal. Therefore, this qualitative study investigates the efficiency and effectiveness of these programs at 3 selected schools in the King Cetshwayo District in KwaZulu-Natal. Data has been retrieved from fifteen teachers employed within this school, 20 parents that live within this area and 50 children over the course of 2024. Particular focus is paid to quality-of-service delivery by the selected meal suppliers and the nutritional content, quality and freshness of the meals prepared for the children. The study aims to accurately identify the ills in the implementation of this program, so that there can be appropriate corrective measures applied. The relevance of this research collectively contributes towards the curbing of the prevalence of malnourished children in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa and aims to identify and understand the various ways in which children experience neglect and malnutrition. ■

Presenter: Sheetal BHOOLA, The University of Zululand

146.3 Impact of Institutional Barriers on International Marketing of Healthcare Services: Elekta in the Emerging Market of South Africa

Healthcare marketing is a complex phenomenon due to the involvement of patients, concern about life situations, and interactions between individuals and firms in the service delivery process. In emerging markets, international healthcare marketing is intricate because of institutional barriers and the influence of cultural factors. This study explores how institutional constraints impact the marketing of healthcare services, focusing on Elekta, a Swedish subsidiary in South Africa. Through a case study approach including observation, interviews, and document analysis the research addresses two key questions. What institutional barriers do healthcare providers encounter in South Africa's emerging market, and how do they deal with those constraints to build networks and develop marketing strategies? We analyze the role of formal and informal institutional constraints and how the service provider deals with them by developing networks and trust in the local market. The findings suggest that for international marketing of healthcare services, it is crucial to follow local rules and regulations for establishing relationships with authorities and local bureaucracy. It is important to standardize the offering and provide the same quality of service as in developed countries. Collaborations with academic hospitals and local customers, offering access to global expertise and know-how, influence trust building. Additionally, partnerships with complementary firms, using local expertise, adapting to local institutional frameworks, helping with the planning of the service, and providing affordable high-quality solutions are vital for network development and effective marketing strategies. The research emphasizes the role of public organizations, as key market actors, shaping marketing strategies through their focus on equitable healthcare access. To succeed in South Africa's emerging market managers must overcome institutional barriers, collaborate with public organizations, maintain global standards of care, and contribute to the expansion of the boundaries of the healthcare market. ■

Presenters:

1. Maria Fregidou-Malama, University of Gävle, Department of Business and Economic Studies, Faculty of Education and Business Studies.
2. Akmal Hyder, University of Gävle, Department of Business and Economic Studies.
3. Michelle Rydback, University of Gävle, Department of Business and Economic Studies.
4. Vannie Naidoo, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Faculty of Management and Law

146.4 Fight for Landscape Formation: Discourse Analysis of Urban Activism in the 2018 Protest during Reconstruction of Reformatai Park in Vilnius (Lithuania)

The reconstruction of urban public spaces involves conflicting interests of various actors, including municipalities and business enterprises, while the preferences and needs of local communities are frequently ignored. It is especially evident in countries like Lithuania, where there is no strong tradition of urban collective action due to the suppression of civil society initiatives during the previous socialist regime. However, one case of reconstruction of Reformatai Park in Vilnius gained massive protests against the initial reconstruction plan, especially in social media. Thus, the aim of the presentation is to reveal the impact of social media in mobilization efforts that resulted in changes of reconstruction plan.

The presentation is based on insights from landscape sociology and particularly on a social constructionist perspective that defines "landscape" as created by a human act of conferring meaning on nature and the environment within a particular cultural context (Greider & Garkovich 1994). In this perspective, the cultural heritage and memory of historical places (Bender 2002) along with transformations of ideologies (Duncan & Duncan 1988) are crucial factors related to the construction of landscapes. Besides, the presentation is also based on insights from urban environmental activism studies, that reveal the structural and social-psychological factors of motivation of this activism (Bastidas et al 2023).

The presentation is based on discourse analysis of social media conducted in 2024 in the framework of project „(Post)Authoritarian landscapes“, financed by the Lithuanian Council of Science. Through a post-structural discourse analysis (Laclau & Mouffe, 1987), this study analyzes how selected groups articulate contrasting perspectives on public space. It investigates the resources these groups mobilize to advocate for their respective values and beliefs, which often lead to antagonistic relationships representing different ideological perspectives. ■

Presenters:

1. Ingrida Geciene Janulione, Vilnius University
2. Karolis Jonutis, Vilnius University

Monday, 7 July 2025

147 Governance, Stakeholder Engagement, Participatory Evaluation and Social Responsibility

Session in English, Spanish, French

TIME 13:00 - 14:45

VENUE Faculty of Education Sciences (FSE), FSE010

SESSION ORGANISERS Dasarath Chetty & Michela Freddano

EMAIL chettytd@gmail.com & michela.freddano@invalsi.it

SESSION CHAIR Dasarath Chetty

Presentations:

147.1 Local Governance: Exploring Participatory Mechanisms in Tlajomulco De Zúñiga, Jalisco, México.

Despite the ongoing democratic changes that have developed since 2000, and that continues until now, the process of consolidating democracy in Mexico remains indefinable. This leads us to analyze the actions that the government has carried out and to examine the challenges it confronts. Mexican history offers valuable insights into areas requiring improvement across all three government levels. Nevertheless, the post-transition landscape has introduced intensified complexities, encompassing a spectrum of struggles within Mexican territory. My project uses ethnographic methodology to understand the challenges faced by local governments and citizens. By doing so, it seeks to contribute not only to the comprehension of local-level democracy in Mexico but also to a broader understanding of the struggles that face urban areas within Latin American cities.

My main aim is to analyze Mexico's post-2000 democratic transition through the perspective of municipal urban conditions. My research has two specific aims. Firstly, it aims to assess the effectiveness of citizen participation tools in empowering individuals living in the Jalisco municipality. By classifying the reach of these tools, it will provide insight into the extent to which they enhance citizens' engagement and decision-making. Secondly, this study aims to identify citizens who actively access these democratic mechanisms and investigate how they perceive, negotiate, and engage with them. It will shed light, therefore, on the intersection of participatory mechanisms with citizens' values, goals, and experiences as a resident of Jalisco municipality. By highlighting these alternative approaches, this study aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the diverse ways in which citizens unite, respond, and employ strategies to address the challenges within their communities. ■

Presenter: Greta Bustamante H., University of Leeds

147.2 Evaluation, Equity and Social Justice

Evaluation can be a space for critical thinking that assumes criteria for judging public policies that are alternative to those present in neoliberal politics. In the history of evaluation, there are methodological orientations and theoretical reflections that look at the ability of evaluation to promote social justice by assuming judgment criteria that consider the interests of less privileged groups as priorities and look at the ability of the evaluated programs to promote equal access to civil liberties, human rights and opportunities.

Justice-oriented evaluation is not neutral but must take into account above all the needs and interests of those who have less power and must highlight how certain political choices lead to increasing social inequalities. This vision is particularly important in the evaluation of social and educational interventions aimed at children and adolescents where it is necessary to think of evaluation models that can listen to their voice while taking into account their specificity and fragility.

This does not only imply, formally, that all stakeholders are represented, but that the evaluation exercises a rebalancing towards those who are more likely to be overlooked in the political decision-making process and that participants are ensured at least a tendency towards equality of power.

In order for an evaluation oriented towards social justice to be carried out, it is important to reflect more on the ethics of the evaluator which should be inspired by values such as moderation, humility, social dialogue to verify whether the various actors involved in the evaluation process are inspired by values that conceive of justice differently from one's own and whether the evaluation process itself cannot lead to the development of new criteria of judgment emerging from the comparison between the different perspectives. ■

Presenters:

1. Giuseppe Moro, University of Bari Aldo Moro
2. Rosalinda Cassibba, University of Bari Aldo Moro

147.3 Patterns and Determinants of Civic Participation in Europe

The process of global transformation has various consequences. One of fundamental theses of globalists assumes that the possibilities of citizens' participation are increasing (S.Huntington 2004) . Opponents emphasize in turn , that the processes of globalization lead to completely opposite effects (Sennet 1992).

The aim of the paper is to try to answer three main problematic questions:1/What is the general level of civic participation in Europe ? 2/What patterns of civic participation dominate in Europe? 3/ Which of the following models (socio-economic status model,social capital model or attachment model) is best suited to explaining the variation in civic participation in Europe?

Civic participation as a dependent variable is understood as an activity that is implemented through citizens' actions in the public, political and associational spheres (Pattie, Seyed, Whiteley, 2003).

Participation in each activities was coded using the 0,1 system. The empirical basis for the presentation will be the data base of the European Social Survey of 2018, 2020 conducted on representative samples in 34 European Countries.

As a result of the analyses, it was found that the general level of civic participation in Europe is not high. The highest level of civic participation was identified in the Scandinavian Countries, and the lowest in the Post-communist countries and Portugal. The dominant pattern of civic participation is voting in parliamentary elections and campaign participation. The socio-economic status model and the social capital model are equally suited to explaining variability of civic participation in European Countries. ■

Presenter: Paweł Starosta, University of Łódź

147.4 Les Organisations Communautaires De Base, Sont-Elles Un Tremplin Vers La Participation Politique ?

Le leadership social et politique dans les zones rurales marocaines a été pour longtemps accaparé par sa forme coutumière ; les notables traditionnels acquis au pouvoir central. Profitant de l'ouverture politique du Royaume dans la deuxième moitié des années 90, plusieurs acteurs politiques et de la société civile marocaine ont multiplié les initiatives en direction des zones rurales dans l'objectif de favoriser l'élosion d'une jeune génération de militants et de militantes associatifs et politiques, modernes et démocratiques. Les pouvoirs publics ont réinvesti, avec force, le terrain associatif à travers le lancement en 2005 de l'Initiative National de Développement Humain (INDH).

La présente étude se propose de cerner l'impact de ces deux dynamiques sur le renouvellement des élites rurales et sur l'accès des nouvelles générations à la scène politique locales dans les zones défavorisées du Moyen Atlas marocain. Il est aussi visé d'analyser le positionnement social et politique permettant à ces nouvelles élites de participer à la gestion locale à travers l'investissement du processus électoral au niveau local et national.

Une méthodologie de recherche mixte, quantitative et qualitative, est ainsi mise en œuvre au niveau de quatre sites à dominance rurale du Moyen Atlas. Les résultats de ce travail montrent une diversité des profils des nouvelles élites de l'action collective instituée différenciés selon les spécificités locales, l'âge et le genre. Certains traits transverses communs se dégagent ainsi que des rapports d'instrumentalisation et d'instrumentalisation croisée avec le leadership politique notabilier permettant la constitution d'archétypes descriptifs des stratégies adoptées par ces nouvelles élites pour accéder au leadership politique. ■

Presenters:

1. Noureddine Bahri, INRA Meknès
2. Abderrahim Bentaibi, INRA Meknès
3. Nekrache Hassane, Independent Researcher

151.1 - Evaluating Participatory Processes in Water and Environmental Policymaking: Framework and Applications

Our intervention will draw from 20 years of experience as researchers supporting the evaluation of participatory processes in policymaking in the field of water and environmental governance. We will detail the principles and theoretical framework that we are using, as well as case studies in two countries. The theoretical framework is part of the CoOPLAGE approach, developed by an interdisciplinary group of researchers and practitioners from Montpellier (France) and beyond (Hassenforder & Ferrand, 2024). CoOPLAGE is the French acronym for "Coupling Open and Participatory Tools to Let Actors Adapt for Environmental Management". The main assumption underlying evaluation in the CoOPLAGE approach is that evaluation should support citizens and other actors when making decisions in a policy-process. We will argue that 12 principles can be applied for evaluation to support the transparency and accountability of public policies: useful, participative, subjective, early, reflexive, adaptive, fixed, open, simple, endogenous, mixed and plural. After presenting this theoretical framework, we will illustrate its application in two cases. In the Drôme region in France, citizens participated in the participatory process and in its evaluation towards the revision of the river basin management plan. In Tunisia, more than 4000 citizens participated in the elaboration of integrated territorial management plans in 6 rural territories. The evaluation of this process raised challenges in terms of numbers of people involved, diversity of data collected, multiplicity of evaluation objectives, etc. Our intervention will highlight the challenges and lessons learnt from these experiences.■

Presenters:

1. Emeline Hassenforder, Cirad
2. Nils Ferrand, INRAe
3. Sabine Girard, INRAe
4. Guillaume Lestrelin, Cirad

JS-34 organizing Refugee Participation

Joint Session with RC17 Sociology of Organization (host committee)
Session in English, Spanish, French

TIME 13:00 - 14:45

VENUE Faculty of Education Sciences (FSE), FSE031

SESSION ORGANISERS: Nadine Arnold, Robert JUNGMAN, Gerhild Perl

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SESSION CHAIR Robert Jungman

Presentations

JS-34.1 “I Call It My Backpack Office”: Organizational Materiality of Refugee-Led Grassroots Organizations Vis-a-vis Refugee-/Serving Professionalized Agencies

Recent scholarship interrogates grassroots refugee-led organizations (RLOs) as institutions in multilevel governance vis-a-vis professionalized refugee/migrant-serving organizations. Whereas the latter, as street-level bureaucracies, are constrained by policies, funding and the political sphere, refugee-led organizations enact resistances and affordances at the most local levels of governance. This paper contributes to this line of scholarship by drawing from a new materialist lens to hone in on the relevance of materiality, space, infrastructure and relationality in analyses of refugees' organizational life. Analysis draws upon multiple sources of data: surveys, focus groups and interviews with refugee leaders in the United States; and survey and interviews with migrant workers and practitioners in Canada. This paper argues that organizations' occupying of physical space, use of digital tools and deployment of privatized resources are bound to their visibility as an institution and to the actuality of their practices. Borrowed office space, WhatsApp group chats, a grocery store, and a refugee's 'backpack office', for instance, emerge as salient in examining the settlement and integration practices of RLOs. The material is examined not merely with tangible qualities, but also with symbolic capacities. That is, the physical spaces, digital tools and material resources of RLOs yield meaning—affordances and limitations—that shape their work. The nimble, small, improvising RLO is contrasted with the stable, established social service agency. In their grassroots endeavors, the symbolic legitimacy and the materiality of refugee-led organizations go hand-in-hand and are mutually constitutive. ■

Presenter: Odessa Gonzalez Benson, University of Michigan

JS-34.2 The 'local Turn,' in Refugee Governance: An Ethnography of Refugee-Led Organizations (RLOs) in the Rohingya Refugee Camps in Bangladesh.

The 'local turn', 'localisation' and 'global-local dynamics' have gained renewed interest and importance in understanding peacebuilding, humanitarian policy and refugee governance. For some time, particularly in the UN system and their allies, we have seen the use of 'local governance', 'local capacities', 'local ownership', and 'local agency'. However, recent research has shown that the use of 'the local' was rather rhetorical, and, in reality, it has been neglected. The 'local' has also been used as an instrument in promoting a (neo)liberal agenda and hence requires a critical reflection on the use of 'local'. Thus, taking the 'local' turn in humanitarian and refugee governance as a point of departure, this paper aims to explore the grassroots mobilisation by the Refugee-Led Organizations (RLOs) in refugee camps to understand how 'localisation' unfolds in humanitarian and refugee governance in the global South.

This paper is based on an ethnographic study of the world's largest refugee camps in Bangladesh. This paper shows the acknowledgment of the existence of the RLOs is almost non-existent. Yet, some of the RLOs are recognized by the international system. Therefore, a preference towards bigger and 'important' RLOs indicates a discrimination to the others and thus has produced a complex interaction process that can be termed as 'friction'. In addition, national institutions have emerged as a coercive actors in refugee governance and imposed strong surveillance on these RLOs. Using a decolonial lens, it is obvious that power relations between (inter)national institutions and the local are asymmetrical. International institutions still use a 'capacity development/building' approach rooted in colonial modernity, to work with the RLOs. Despite the huge potential of grassroots mobilisation by the camp-based community organizations (RLOs) in different Rohingya camps in Bangladesh, partnership and mutual respect and learning trajectory between the international, national and the local are absent there. ■

Presenter: Mohammad Salehin, UiT The Arctic University of Norway

JS-34.3 The Swiss Refugee Parliament: Contesting Otherhood to Gain Political Voice

The call for meaningful participation of refugees in democracies and decision-making processes is intensifying. This shift, moving away from the traditional model of refugee support provided by nonprofit organizations to one centered on self-help initiatives led by refugees, has sparked the formation of new organizations that aim to empower refugees by giving them a voice and enabling their participation.

In this context, the Refugee Parliament was established in Switzerland in 2021. In an expressive way, this parliament connects refugees while also seeking to exert influence on politics and public opinion. In doing so, it adheres to principles of refugee autonomy, solidarity, and responsibility, positioning itself as an alternative organization.

The literature on alternative organizations highlights that organizational alterity forms a normatively desired counterpoint to a dominant, conventional model, suggesting that organizations could be constructed differently from what is commonly known and expected. However, neo-institutional theory has revealed the influence of shared expectations and common beliefs that drive organizational homogenization.

Using qualitative data, I examine the role of institutionalized beliefs pertaining to organization in the early formation of the Swiss Refugee Parliament. While the Refugee Parliament initially appears as a counterpoint to conventional parliaments, findings reveal that it mimics traditional parliamentary structures, adopting rationalized and hierarchical organizing methods, which are commonly considered atypical for alternative organizations, as a necessary means to achieve a political voice. Yet, the Refugee Parliament offers an unsettling counterpoint to traditional nonprofits by rejecting the institutionalized and well-esteemed notion of "otherhood"—that is, advocating for the interests of other actors (Meyer 2010).

My contribution sheds light on an alternative organization that constructs its alternativity by challenging the prestigious concept of otherhood prevalent in the nonprofit sector. Organizing refugee participation, therefore, can be seen as a contested rejection of the institutionalized belief in advocating for marginalized others. ■

Presenter: Nadine Arnold, University of Lucerne

JS-34.4 Conditions for Inclusion in Civil Society Organised Language Education Programmes for Adult Forced Migrants in Macedonia

This paper examines the conditions for and implementation of civil society organised language education programmes for forced migrants based on the example of Skopje. It discusses adult language education programmes which have been realised by the Macedonian Red Cross starting from 2022, following the war in Ukraine.

Research on civil society and its relation with forced migrants' agency and access to rights in Europe is mostly conducted in popular "destination countries", including few so-called "transit countries" such as Turkey and Greece. Smaller transit countries like Macedonia have so far not been in the centre of attention, with exceptions such as Milan (2019).

This paper elaborates on how educational practices implemented by the Macedonian Red Cross relate to discourses on migration and race. It aims to clarify, which forms of intersectional discrimination can be identified in the context of civil society organised language education for refugees i.e. along which positional lines inclusion/exclusion is negotiated. With realities of protracted transit stays and non-linear migration patterns in mind, educational practices on the periphery of Europe are relevant beyond the local or national context.

The study is of an explorative ethnographic research design. The data set consists of semi-guided interviews with language teachers, learners, volunteers and programme managers, as well as group discussions with language class participants, classroom observation protocols and extensive field notes taken during the duration of the field stay, containing accounts of diverse informal and semi-formal conversations with mostly members of the Ukrainian Community as well as civil society activists in the field.

Preliminary analysis suggests that implementation of programmes is dependent on engagement and pressure from the Ukrainian community. Further, access to the programmes seems to be structured by specific interlocking cultural and social forms of capital (Anthias, 2007; Bourdieu, 1986; Erel, 2010), which this paper aims to explore. ■

Presenter: Marija Cubalevska, Universität Bremen / Universität Wien

JS-34.5 Institutional Dynamics of Inclusion and Exclusion: Child Language Brokers in the School-Child-Family Triad

Our study investigates how students' roles as language brokers within their families impact their experiences in the institutional setting of the school, particularly within the school-child-family triad. Focusing on participants' perceptions of their translation efforts in school contexts, we explore how these roles influence their relationships with parents, teachers, and peers, as well as how these dynamics affect their experiences within the educational system. Ultimately, we highlight how institutional arrangements within schools—such as localized policies, routines, and practices—either facilitate or hinder the social inclusion of multilingual, newly arrived migrant children and youth, sometimes leading to their exclusion from meaningful participation in educational opportunities.

Employing qualitative methods, including semi-structured interviews with individuals who served as language mediators during childhood and focus groups with newly arrived parents and students, we investigate the dynamics of multilingualism and language brokering in German school settings within postmigrant contexts (cf. Foroutan 2019; Yildiz 2015) from an intersectional perspective (cf. Haschemi Yekani & Nowicka 2022). Key questions guiding our investigation include: How do different students perceive their roles as translators in school settings, and how do institutional responses—such as support or neglect—affect their experiences? To what extent does their mediation role influence their relationships across family and educational environments?

Drawing on Meyer and Rowan's (1977) concept of neo-institutionalism, we explore how organizational rules are translated into institutional actions and delineate how institutional arrangements within the school-family-child triad enact processes of inclusion and exclusion. Our analysis specifically investigates whether these arrangements reinforce or counteract exclusionary practices, particularly for children and youth from multilingual, newly arrived migrant families within the school-child-family triad. Additionally, we aim to identify solutions and best practices that could enhance inclusive approaches within educational institutions, fostering a more equitable learning environment for all students. ■

Presenters:

1. Benedikt WIRTH, German Centre for Integration and Migration Research (DeZIM)
2. Seyran Bostancı, German Centre for Integration and Migration Research (DeZIM)

148 Action-Research and the Multiplicity of Theoretical orientations and Methodological Applications

Session in English, Spanish, French

Time: 15:00 - 16:45

VENUE Faculty of Education Sciences (FSE), FSE010

SESSION ORGANISER Azril Bacal Roij & Michela Freddano

EMAIL bazril@gmail.com & michela.freddano@invalsi.it

SESSION CHAIR Michela Freddano

Presentations:

148.1 Public Sociology and the Collective Co-Production of Knowledge with Roma/Ciganos

There are still severe limitations regarding systematic, up-to-date, and in-depth knowledge about the conditions and living conditions of Roma/Ciganos people in Portugal, which is an obstacle to monitoring the impact and effectiveness of public policies and the processes of including this population. "Public sociology brings sociology into a conversation with publics, understood as people who are themselves involved in conversation." (Burawoy, 2005, p. 7) In this context and from this perspective, we have undertaken a study that seeks to overcome these shortcomings, committing itself from its conception to its implementation, monitoring, and publication to actively promote the active participation of people and groups of Roma origin, making them protagonists in the process of the social construction of knowledge about themselves. In other words, based on a multi-method strategy that is still being implemented, the aim is to implement a more inclusive strategy of collective co-production of knowledge, research "with" the Gypsies/Roma and not "about and for" them (Ryder, 2018). In this process, we aim to involve Roma organizations, informal groups, and other institutions that work closely with this community at various scales (local, regional, and national). The aim is to produce recommendations regarding public policies that efficiently and effectively combat the different levels and forms of inequality and discrimination. This research aims to unveil and analyze the cultural, ethnic, social, economic, symbolic, and geographical diversity and heterogeneity of people and collectives of Roma origin in Portugal and to adopt an intersectional perspective that intersects and interrelates various factors that are at the origin of mechanisms for the production and reproduction of social inequalities, from a multidimensional and multilevel perspective. Research "with" implies bridging the gap between academics, activists, and policy-makers.■

Presenters:

1. Manuela Mendes, CIES-iSCTE
2. Inês Barbosa, ISUP

148.2 Navigating Gendered and Structural Barriers to Aspirations through Feminist Action-Research: Experiences of Youth in Kalyanpuri, New Delhi

Feminist action-research is a powerful tool for bridging theoretical research and social change, combining real-world engagement with academic rigor. Drawing on Jean Dreze's (2002) insights, this paper explores how integrating research and action enhances knowledge while fostering social emancipation, particularly in contexts of inequality. Dreze's work highlights how action-research democratizes knowledge by engaging with communities and influencing policy from a grassroots perspective, challenging purely academic models.

This study carried out in an informal settlement, Kalyanpuri, in New Delhi, India, exemplifies this by using participatory methodologies to explore the socio-cultural barriers constraining marginalized youth, especially girls. Grounded in the capability approach by Amartya Sen (1995, 1999) and Martha Nussbaum (2011), the study shifts the focus from access to resources to expanding youth capabilities and agency. It shows how gender norms, economic hardship, and social resources shape aspirations and limit opportunities, with girls facing particular challenges in education, mobility, and safety. This paper explores how feminist action-research empowers girls belonging to underprivileged backgrounds, fostering collective agency, to drive change in discriminatory social norms and practices. We will discuss the use of mixed and multi methods, particularly the use of participatory tools based on theatre of the oppressed, reflexivity, participant observations, and case studies, emphasizing their role in highlighting the lived experiences of marginalized groups. The paper highlights how action-research challenges power structures, supports sustainable development, and facilitates community empowerment, serving as a catalyst for social transformation.

Dreze, J. (2002). On research and action. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 817-819.

Sen, A. (1995). Inequality reexamined. Harvard university press.

Sen, A. (1999). Commodities and capabilities. OUP Catalogue.

Nussbaum, M. C. (2005). Women's bodies: Violence, security, capabilities. *Journal of Human Development*, 6(2), 167-183. ■

Presenters:

1. Mubashira Zaidi Zaidi, Institute of Social Studies Trust
2. Camellia Reja, Institute of Social Studies Trust

148.3 Participatory Action Research and the Research Forum. Conceptual Considerations and Practical Challenges

Participatory action research is based on a collaborative research process that relies on communication and understanding between practitioners, citizens and academic researchers (Thomas et al. 2021). In the paper, I would like to conceptualise the research forum as a communicative space (Kemmis & McTaggart 2005) that aims at the active participation of co-researchers in the research cycle. The research forum unfolds on four levels, which I would like to illustrate against the background of my research experience:

- Opening spaces for social encounters
- Establishing communicative exchange
- Developing social self-understanding
- Formation of public opinion and counter-public discourse

Citizen engagement can make a difference in the search for knowledge about societal issues. Participation in science can lead to a new and deeper understanding of one's own situation as a basis for new opportunities for action and empowerment. The Research Forum provides a collaborative framework for understanding in which science and lived experience can exchange perspectives. It is characterised by conversation and discussion of common issues and social challenges in an open, safe space where everyone can speak and be heard. The aim is to achieve a convergence of perspectives in an actionable interpretation of the situation and of reality (also in differentiation from each other), in order to promote the effectiveness of one's own knowledge in social practice. Guidelines and quality criteria of the Research Forum will be discussed in a reflection on my research practice. ■

Presenter:

Stefan Thomas, University of Applied Sciences Potsdam

148.4 Participatory Action Research for Community Regeneration in Mediterranean Sociocultural-Ecological Systems. Insights from Living Labs Experience in Sardinia

In recent decades, rural Mediterranean areas have encountered complex challenges which significantly affect their social, economic, environmental and cultural dimensions. Sustainable development in these regions requires participatory processes to drive community regeneration and manage sociocultural-ecological systems effectively (Berkes and Folke, 1998). This paper examines the role of participatory action research (PAR) in developing innovative solutions for local development, drawing on two case studies from Sardinia (Italy) and the implementation of Living Labs (Hossain et al., 2019; Ceseracciu et al., 2023).

PAR is based on stakeholder involvement throughout the research process, seamlessly integrating the moments of knowledge generation, action and intervention (Reason and Bradbury, 2006; McTaggart, 1997). The result is twofold: the regeneration of community participatory processes and the creation of shared knowledge capable of driving tangible social change in local sociocultural-ecological systems.

Monday, 7 July 2025

Following a critical contextualization of PAR in rural areas, we reflect on the insights emerging from the PRIMA-funded OURMed project, which promoted the activation of Living Labs in the Mediterranean. Living Labs were centered on social and cultural capital, and they were designed as participatory spaces for building shared knowledge, integrating community tacit knowledge and scientific knowledge. Living Labs facilitate the co-design (Busse et al., 2023) of sustainable development and the activation of context-specific and innovative participatory community regeneration processes.

The main results of the PAR activities include raising awareness of diverse community interests and interdependencies, fostering empowerment of marginalized stakeholders, and building new synergies between public institutions and local communities.

We also discuss critical methodological and epistemological challenges encountered in implementing Living Labs in Mediterranean rural areas, including semantic and conceptual stretching, the role of time, researcher positioning, stakeholder mapping, and the interplay of cultural, social, and ecological innovation. Addressing these challenges is crucial for ensuring the effectiveness of participatory processes in transforming rural Mediterranean sociocultural-ecological systems. ■

Presenters:

1. Romina Deriu, Department of History, Human Sciences and Education - University of Sassari. Desertification Research Centre (NRD) and Department of Agricultural Sciences, University of Sassari.
2. Giampiero Branca, Desertification Research Centre (NRD) and Department of Agricultural Sciences, University of Sassari. Department of History, Human Sciences and Education - University of Sassari.
3. Chiara Ceseracciu, Desertification Research Centre (NRD) and Department of Agricultural Sciences, University of Sassari. University School for Advanced Studies IUSS - Pavia.
4. Pier Paolo Roggero, Desertification Research Centre (NRD) and Department of Agricultural Sciences, University of Sassari. National Biodiversity Future Centre (NBFC), Spoke 4 - University of Sassari.

JS-56 Conflicts, Communities and Social Change in the Time of Anthropocene Technologies

HOST: RC26 Sociotechnics, Sociological Practice (host committee) & RC10.

Session in English, Spanish, French

Time: 09:00 - 10:45

VENUE Faculty of Education Sciences (FSE), FSE031

SESSION ORGANISER Arsenii Buchatski

EMAIL arsbuchatskiy@yandex.ru

Presentations:

JS-56.1 Social Imprints of Political and Cultural Values. the Case of Kazakhstan

The social structure of society should be explored in order to identify the factors that influence the establishment of a given political regime and the reasons for the formation of various political systems and institutions in various societies. Since there are currently no well-defined approaches for examining the democratic nations that arose following the fall of the USSR, we investigate Kazakhstan as a nation with a developing democratic government. As we analyze the connection between political values and socioeconomic status, we aim to address the following research questions: which political values are more ingrained in Kazakhstani society? How much within society do the political beliefs of various social groupings align and diverge? The study's empirical foundation consisted of data from a national representative social survey that was conducted by KISI in June 2024.

Social status has been chosen as a social class indicator for the research. The eleven-stage socio-professional stratification scheme (EGP) created by J. Goldthorpe was selected to place a respondent into a specific social class. The three categories of social relationships—employers, employees, and entrepreneurs—are the foundation of the analysis.

A left-right scale with two opposing poles is typically taken into consideration when examining political values. According to our study, respondents' attitudes on social policy, economic involvement by the state, and social inequality reflect the differences between these two categories of values. Finally our political values scale is exclusively focused on the economic side because it was constructed only on the basis of inquiries concerning the function of the state in the economy. Therefore, people who support little government involvement in economic affairs are described by the right pole, while those who oppose cutting government spending and think the state should give its citizens good pensions and unemployment benefits are represented by the left pole. ■

Presenters:

1. Aigul Zabirova, Kazakhstani Institute for Strategic Research
2. Saltanat Yermakhanova, Kazakhstan Institute for Strategic Studies under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan
3. Natalya Seitakhmetova, Institute of Philosophy, Political sciences and Religious Studies

JS-56.2 Society By Humans Not By Robots: Robot Control, Human Resistance

Artificial intelligence and robots together with fake news have challenged irrevocably our society at global and local level. Global freedom declined for the 18th consecutive year in 2023. The breadth and depth of the deterioration were extensive. Political rights and civil liberties were diminished in 52 countries, while only 21 countries made improvements. In 2024, our social systems will need to develop a new socio-technic paradigm (i.e., the human intelligence culture [HIC]) in order to understand that human resources, public interest and regulation of artificial intelligence are the main issues in digital transformation. Recently, a new social order and digital systems had been exposed to AI developments in our democratic systems. At the same time, digitization in cultural and social systems has meant that nation-states have become more socially plural and multicultural. These developments have provoked counterpressure's for governments to maintain or restore national social order in globalization. Within this context, we can identify the contrasting principles between the global versus local interests and between social rights, democratic citizenship, human's rights and automatic decision-making systems. This chapter examines and analyses artificial intelligence, robots, and human decision-making process together with the role of public interest and regulation in artificial intelligence and robots. It considers critical questions regarding global regulation, social standards and public interest. It examines the need for regulation in digital society. Finally, it outlines the model's human intelligence culture (HIC) and "Product and Process Regulation" (2PR) as methodological tools to analyze human and social rights in the digital transformation era. ■

Presenter: George Gantzias, Hellenic Open University

149 Governance, Stakeholder Engagement, Participatory Evaluation and Social Responsibility 2

Session in English, Spanish, French

Time: 11.00-12.45

VENUE Faculty of Education Sciences (FSE), FSE010

SESSION ORGANISER Michela Freddano

EMAIL michela.freddano@invalsi.it

SESSION CHAIR Sheetal Bhoola

Presentations:

149.1 Data & Digital Literacy for School Self-Evaluation: Evidences from Italy

The paper focuses on school evaluation as a "data-driven process of inquiry and decision-making" (Ackoff, 1989; Mandinach & Gummer, 2016). Through the Italian National Evaluation System of instruction and training, the Self-Evaluation Report (SER) and the Improvement Plan, a systemic design is encouraged. During the first research step, the integrated model "Data & Digital Literacy for School Evaluation" had been elaborated. After the desk research on the model, a quantitative study started with the aim of investigating three main topics: 1) Self-Evaluation; 2) Data & Digital Literacy; 3) Experience with external evaluation. An online survey was organized and is currently in progress, aimed at School Principals and the members of the Internal Evaluation Teams of 158 Italian schools. This contribution focuses mainly on the aspect concerning Data & Digital Literacy. What it is hoped to derive from this survey is an overview of the specific training needs for those who carry out the activities of the school evaluation process, through a data-based profiling of participants (clustering). Finally, it is planned to systematize the newly gained knowledge in order to define large-scale training courses based on the information provided by the survey. Results will be shown at the conference, opening up an opportunity to discuss the opportunities for a competence-based approach in school evaluation processes from an integrated perspective of evaluation and learning. ■

Presenters:

1. Daniela Torti, INVALSI (National Institute for the Evaluation of Educational System of Instruction and Training)
2. Miriam Mariani, INVALSI (National Institute for the Evaluation of Educational System of Instruction and Training)

149.2 Fostering Inclusive Education: A Model of Participatory Peer Evaluation

The Italian school system aims to promote inclusive education, as defined by UNESCO, supporting the participation of all individuals and groups by removing barriers to access. Evaluation serves as a crucial tool for transforming educational institutions into more inclusive and equitable environments. The Nationally Significant Project Evaluating School Inclusion: A Shared Quality Index for Developing a More Inclusive Education for All is currently trialing a peer participatory evaluation pathway that focuses on inclusive processes within schools. This pathway combines social research techniques typical of participatory evaluation with peer review models between schools.

Participatory evaluation offers valuable insights into social contexts and related processes. Similarly, peer evaluation fosters transformative learning, enabling school staff to gain insights from observing different educational settings, thereby enhancing their professional development. In this field study, groups of three schools, totaling 15 institutions, participate in peer evaluation activities to analyze the inclusive processes implemented in each school.

Each school organizes a remote "visiting," hosting the other two schools via videoconferencing and also participating in the remote visits of the other institutions. The primary goal is to present and critically assess the host school's inclusive practices, focusing on innovations and potential challenges. The visiting schools are guided through a virtual tour to observe the host school's inclusive processes during a three-hour session, which includes an introduction, observation of spaces and activities, interviews, and a follow-up discussion among participants. Presentations are enhanced by multimedia materials, including photographic and video evidence of school spaces and the surrounding community.

The anticipated outcome of this study is the development of a model of peer evaluation that supports the implementation of inclusive practices, facilitating broader community involvement and sharing of best practices among schools. Additionally, it aims to establish a more participatory governance structure, promoting accountability and shared responsibility in implementing inclusive policies. ■

Presenters:

1. Donatella Poliandri, INVALSI - Italian National Institute for Educational Evaluation
2. Letizia Giampietro, INVALSI (Italian National Institute for Educational Evaluation)

149.3 Understanding the “Small-Philanthropy” in Education: Networks, School Engagement and Public-Private Collaboration in Chile.

The expanding influence of philanthropy in education has become a key contemporary global phenomenon (UNESCO, 2023), which has sparked increased research interest in recent years (Erfurth & Ridge, 2020). Existing research has primarily focused on the rise of 'venture' philanthropy, and on foundations' strategies to mobilize nationwide privatization reforms (Ball, 2013; Reckhow & Tompkins, 2018). Yet, besides mainly proceeding from the Global North, literature has tended to focus on so-called "big players" (Ball, 2019) while overlooking the diversity within the philanthropic sector and the national/local expressions of their educational involvement (Hogan et al., 2022).

With the goal of contributing to emerging interest on understanding the local/national manifestations of this global phenomenon (Hogan et al., 2022), this paper analyzes the rise, logic of actions and networks of edu-philanthropy in Chile. The case of Chile is particularly interesting to this respect, given its extreme exogenous privatization (Verger et al., 2017) and philanthropy's increasing support to educational initiatives (Aninat & Fuenzalida, 2021), which have largely remained unexplored. Methodologically, we draw on a combination of research techniques, including online search based on philanthropic foundations operating in Chile in K-12 education; desk research of these philanthropic foundations in diverse dimensions and; individual interviews with executive directors of 15 philanthropic foundations.

Tuesday, 8 July 2025

Our findings suggest three main trends. Firstly, we emphasize the spread of a so-called 'professionalization' trend within foundations, closely linked to the increased use of metrics for evaluating their impact. Secondly, despite a variety of forms of action, foundations primarily focus on direct philanthropy to public schools. Finally, while we identify the emergence of new public-private networks and formal and informal strategies for influencing national education policy, most foundations rely on a 'bottom-up' approach. In sum, the paper allows us to discuss how philanthropic foundations influence the construction of education in the Global South. ■

Presenter: Cristóbal Villalobos, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile



150 Justice, Social Inequality, Climate Change, and Sustainable Development: Challenges and Expectations

Session in English, Spanish, French

Time: 13:00 - 14:45

VENUE Faculty of Education Sciences (FSE), FSE010

SESSION ORGANISER Eleni Nina-Pazarzi & Isabel da Costa, Charalambos Meletiadis

EMAIL enina04@yahoo.gr & isabel.da-costa@ens-paris-saclay.fr

SESSION CHAIR Eleni Nina-Pazarzi

Presentations:

150.1 "Gender Equality and the Climate Crisis: Challenges, Opportunities, and the Role of Sustainable Development in Greece"

Our approach in this study focuses on gender inequality and the climate crisis. Women often have less access to resources such as land, education, and financial services, which limits their ability to adapt to climate challenges like food insecurity and displacement. These inequalities perpetuate cycles of poverty and exclusion, making it harder for women to participate in sustainable development initiatives.

In Greece specifically, extreme weather, climate change, and its impacts disproportionately affect differently women. A research (using questionnaire) that we conducted in 2023 in certain regions of the country revealed that the consequences are not the same for everyone. Women are disproportionately affected due to biological, economic, and social factors, such as motherhood, lack of resources, psychological pressure, increased caregiving responsibilities, and the reduction or elimination of their incomes.

At the same time, it became clear that the climate crisis exacerbates existing inequalities, with women being more severely impacted in various sectors by natural disasters and energy poverty. Limited access to education and employment opportunities reduces women's ability to adapt and respond to new conditions.

By leveraging the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a systematic plan is created to address these issues, providing a useful roadmap. Specifically, Goal 5, which focuses on gender equality, aims to empower women and girls by addressing the systemic barriers that limit their participation in economic and environmental decision-making.

To tackle these issues in Greece, it is crucial to strengthen gender equality, ensure women's participation in decision-making centers, and promote environmental education and awareness. This paper will outline how effective collaboration between various stakeholders can ensure inclusive governance while simultaneously combating gender stereotypes, which are essential for achieving climate justice, sustainable development, and enhancing the equality and the resilience of women and society as a whole. ■

Presenter: Zefi Dimadama, PANTEION UNIVERSITY

150.2 The Post-Modern Connection between Democracy and Justice; Social Justice Effects

Nowadays a decline in rule of law prevalence can be easily noticed worldwide. More than obviously, post-modern states and jurisdictions constantly "struggle" to maintain a commonly accepted level of equity and justice, when new endeavours keep escalating.

Based on the experiences and perceptions of the general public and in-country legal practitioners and experts worldwide, rule of law implementation shows continuous recession. The latter is genuinely stated in independent evaluations or indexes as well as in EU/US reports' discoveries concerning the fact of declining balance between actual democracy and justice, with social effects.

Key factors of those examinations looking for stable institutional developments and providing follow-up assessments are: Justice system, media pluralism and freedom, anti-corruption framework and general issues related to "checks and balances".

Within country borders special parameters of oecumenical values are also estimated: Social and gender inequality, progress without discriminations or exclusions, functionality of social mobility "ladder" and sustainable development showing respect to climate change.

Furthermore, educational system status is concerned; use of language and mass media connection is currently taken into account, since language works as facilitator of human communication and means of education.

Expectations are always high; lack of sufficient policies should provoke social upbringings in the era of "4th Industrial Revolution" that we witness, when adapting to new rules and facts by maintaining social coherence and ideal solidarity is necessary.

Another topic of our presentation will deal with justice and politics(policy) in the Anthropocene thinking. The dilemma of justice during the Anthropocene era has opened new questions and debates which are a challenge for a multifaceted strategy.

The various forms of injustice during this period need an interdisciplinary analysis which creates difficulties to policy and law makers to tackle with the needs for more egalitarian and sustainable society which is the goal of equity of justice. ■

Presenters:

1. Georgios Karalis, Piraeus Bar Association
2. Ioanna Pazarzi, Athens Law Bar Association
3. Ino Pazarzi, Athens Law Bar Association, National Bank of Greece
4. Eleni Karali, PhDc, MSc, BSc, BA, Hellenic Broadcasting Corporation (E.R.T)

Tuesday, 8 July 2025

JS-100 Democratic Innovations

HOST COMMITTEE: RC18 Political Sociology

Time: 15:00-16:45

Session Organizer: Lucia Miranda-Leibe

VENUE Faculty of Legal, Economic, and Social Sciences (JES), SJES005

Joint Session with RC02 Economy and Society

Joint Session with RC10 Participation, Organizational Democracy and Self-Management

Joint Session with RC14 Sociology of Communication, Knowledge and Culture

Joint Session with WG10 Digital Sociology

Presentations:

JS-100.1 Navigating the Digital Battlefield in Morocco: The Dual Role of Social Media in Empowering Female Politicians.

Nowadays, social media serves as a potent instrument for women's empowerment and political engagement. It is an extremely powerful force that has the ability to shape individuals' perspectives and ideologies regarding a variety of issues. However, it may be used either constructively or adversely; that is, it may provide support and solidarity or impose guilt and victimization on Moroccan female politicians. This paper investigates the role of social media platforms as contentious and paradoxical arenas for feminism and political discourse. It tends to explore how social media serves as a powerful tool for raising awareness, mobilizing support, and fostering community among Moroccan political females while also highlighting the challenges of misrepresentation, backlash, and fragmentation of feminist political discourse. The study reveals the complexities inherent in digital activism through case studies, interviews, and critical examination of online activism and social media platforms. Furthermore, it underscores the dual-edged nature of social media as a space for feminist political engagement, where empowerment and conflict coexist, shaping the future of feminist activism in the digital age. Ultimately, this research emphasizes the complex interplay between online spaces and real-world implications, illuminating the transformative potential of women's activism and its political dimensions while acknowledging the inherent tensions within digital activism. ■

Presenters:

1. Dounia ZIANI ZIANI, FLDM, USMBA, Fes

2. Abdelaaziz EL Bakkali, FLDM, USMBA, Fes

JS-100.2 Social Media and Youth Activism in Morocco: From Slacktivism to Political Action

The emergence of new media has led to the development of new social needs and forms of interaction. These new forms of interaction create an environment for youth to express their ideas and opinions. The rise of social media as a tool for organizing and mobilizing has fostered both slacktivism—where young people engage in low-effort online activism—and a more profound political consciousness. This digital engagement has facilitated the organization of protests and the sharing of political content. This study examines how social media, as a platform for self-expression, plays a role in shaping Moroccan youth activism, influencing cultural and political engagement. While slacktivism can raise awareness and foster collaboration, it frequently fails to replicate the transformative power of direct political action. Through a mixed methods approach that includes case studies, content analysis, and interviews with Moroccan youth activists, this study aims to understand the motivations behind engaging in political issues through social media and the challenges young people face in transitioning from slacktivism to political action. This paper highlights how youth activism on social media translates into real-world political participation, providing insights into the significance of meaningful political engagement in reinforcing community bonds. ■

Presenters:

1. Maryam El Hilali, FLDM, USMBA, Fes
2. Abdelaaziz El Bakkali, School of Arts and Humanities, Dhar El Mahraz, USMBA, Fes

JS-100.3 Justice, Power, and Authority: How the Iapd Framework Clarifies the Roles of Social Actors

If we are to address today's power imbalances and to know justice in the Anthropocene, social actors will need to know what power is. This paper presents a new conceptual analysis that distinguishes between four idealized types of social relationships: Influence, Authority, Power, and Domination ("the IAPD framework"). By focusing on only one type of social relationship, the so-called 'power debates' between Mills, Dahl, Bachrach & Baratz, Lukes, Foucault, Gaventa, and others, were too limited. By contrast, the IAPD framework takes social relationships as its starting point, allowing conceptual space for the full range of actual social interactions.

Tuesday, 8 July 2025

Part 1 of the paper identifies the six properties inherent in social relationships: (1) identity, or the in-group/out-group membership (Plato's *The Republic*, Popper (1945, 1947), Habermas, Cronin, & De Greiff, 1998); (2) scope, the where, when, and what of the relationship (Dahl 1987); (3) intensity, the depth of feeling (Mann 1986); (4) possibility, meaning rights, options, and choice (Hirschman 1970, Frankl 1984); (5) sanction, the extent to which punishment, clemency, deprivation, and reward are normalized in the relationship (Machiavelli 2014 [1532], Lasswell & Kaplan 1950); and (6) well-being, the objective interests and subjective values of the members in the relationship (Gaventa 1986, Nyman & Nilsén 2016, Wilkinson & Pickett 2019, Sen 2000). Part 2 briefly shows how the IAPD framework can be applied to clearly and reliably distinguish power relationships from relationships of influence, authority, and domination. Part 3, argues that there is an inherent tension between justice, power, and authority. From a normative perspective, moral authority relationships, with their basis in membership well-being, minimize sanction; yet enforcement mechanisms, in particular punishment, are a defining characteristic of power relationships. It will be shown that, in practice, social actors pursuing justice carefully balance these two competing demands. ■

Presenter: Brian Schmitt, CY Cergy Paris University



RC10 Business Meeting

TIME: 09:00am

FSE010 (Faculty of Education Sciences)

All members to attend.

152 Organizational Justice and Participation at Work in the Global Digital Age

Session in Language: English, French, Spanish

TIME 11:00 - 12:45

VENUE Faculty of Education Sciences (FSE), FSE010

SESSION ORGANISER Isabel da Costa

EMAIL isabel.da-costa@ens-paris-saclay.fr

SESSION CHAIR Stefan Lücking

Presentations:

152.1 Discontent and Resistance in Platform Work. Crowd Workers' Communities and Orientations in India, the USA and Germany

The paper presents an empirical study of forms and antecedents of resistance by crowd workers on the digital labour platforms Amazon Mechanical Turk and Upwork. Digital labour platforms constitute transnational labour markets where requesters (often from companies located in the global North) outsource tasks to an often large number of workers (many of whom are located in the global South). Remote crowd work usually comes with deprivations for workers and precariousness, as market power is unequally distributed and used by platform companies and requesters at the expense of workers (e.g., Shor et al. 2020; Irani/Sberman 2014; Fieseler et al. 2018). However, due to the characteristics of remote crowd work, collective voice or representation of interests are difficult to achieve, despite the disadvantages and deprivations many crowd workers encounter (Lehdonvirta 2016; Al-Ani & Stumpp 2016).

The paper examines discontent among groups of crowd workers from different countries as well as the forms and conditions for collective action. It pursues the following research questions: (1) Which forms of (collective) resistance can be observed among crowd workers from different countries and on different platforms? (2) Which are the factors that may foster or hinder (collective) resistance? Informed by mobilization theory (Kelly 1998) and a concept of work orientations, empirical results of a 2024-quantitative web-survey ($n=1,022$) of crowd workers from India, the USA and Germany on the online labour platforms Upwork and Amazon Mechanical Turk are compared.

Findings show that some groups of crowd workers reveal work orientations which are favorable to collective action and appear to be open to mobilization efforts, while others appear rather reluctant. It is argued that communication and involvement in digital communities are important conditions that may foster mobilization. The research sheds some light on practical implications for organizing activities. ■

Presenters:

1. Markus Hertwig, Faculty of Social Science
2. Korn Anna, Ruhr-University Bochum
3. Patrick Witzak, Ruhr-University Bochum

152.2 The Impact of Brexit on European Works Councils: Forms and Factors of Continuity and Change

European Works Councils (EWCs) provide employees with consultation and information rights in multinational companies (MNCs) operating in the European Union (EU). The decision of the United Kingdom (UK) to leave the EU (Brexit) meant that UK subsidiaries in EU-based MNCs no longer fall under the scope of the European works council directive. As a result, UK-based EWCs are moved to other EU-countries. Management may eliminate UK members from EU-based EWCs. The directive's threshold conditions for the existence of an EWC may not be met anymore, resulting in their extinction.

This paper explores the question of how EWCs have been affected by Brexit and what strategies the various actors have developed to pursue their interests in keeping or disrupting a specific EWC. Using a qualitative case study design of some 60 company cases, we analyse how EWCs developed since Brexit. Interviews have been led with EWC and SE-Works Council members and managers from the UK, France, Germany, Belgium, Spain, Italy and Ireland. This data is complemented by data from trade unions, expert interviews and document analysis.

We focus on two sets of questions. First, we seek to analyse the characteristics of change in EWCs in specific companies: Which changes have occurred in EWCs regulatory frameworks, i.e. the company specific EWC agreements, formal structures and participation rights and how can those developments be categorized? In which aspects did an EWC remain stable or change after Brexit? To cover different types of change, we draw on institutionalist theory and develop a typology with four types of developments, i.e. stability, exclusion, limitation and innovation. Secondly, the study aims at explaining the changes observed: What are the key factors and mechanisms explaining the above-mentioned developments? How did the developments unfold in processes of bargaining between the actors involved (i.e. management, EWC, national representatives, trade unions)? ■

Presenters:

1. Kahmann Marcus, Institut de Recherches Economiques et Sociales (IRES)
2. Anna Frisone, Institut de Recherches Economiques et Sociales (IRES)

153 Gender in Localisation: Key to Attain Sustainable Development Goals

Session in English

TIME 13:00 - 14:45

VENUE Faculty of Education Sciences (FSE), FSE010

SESSION ORGANISER P.P. Balan

EMAIL balanpp25@gmail.com

SESSION CHAIR P.P. Balan

Presentations:

153.1 Third Sector Facing Gender Issues: Training Sessions on Gender Gap and Female Empowerment for Achieving Gender Equality

This contribution presents the results of the "Third Sector and Gender Issues" formative sessions, developed as part of the FQTS project (Third Sector Executive Training) aimed at training managers and representatives of non-profit organizations in Southern Italy. This multi-year project (2023-2024) is promoted by the National Third Sector Forum and Sapienza University of Rome's "Communication and Social Research" Department. The initiative seeks to foster a deeper understanding of gender issues and to promote the implementation of inclusive policies in organizations towards Goal 5 of Agenda 2030.

Although the Third Sector in Italy plays a vital role in advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including gender equality, there is still no concrete data on women's representation in leadership roles within non-profit organizations. This study seeks to address this gap by leveraging the educational project to explore opportunities, challenges and resistance to women's empowerment in Third Sector organizations.

The training is designed to equip managers and representatives with skills needed to identify and address gender inequalities with an intersectional perspective. It includes an initial top-down phase, where gender experts present data and reports to inform and sensitize participants, followed by bottom-up discussions (focus groups and interviews that gather and compare participants' experiences of discrimination).

The uniqueness of the "Third Sector and Gender Issues" course lies in (I) involving both men and women from Third Sector, emphasizing that gender issues are not "just a woman's concern." (II) It also provides practical tools for organizations to draft their own gender reports, addressing the lack of reliable data on the sector's gender gap. These reports help assess the current situation and set concrete goals toward achieving Goal 5. Results from about 8 focus groups, 15 interviews and 10 reports have highlighted obstacles, opportunities, and contradictions that need to be addressed to reach gender equality. ■

Presenters: Gaia Antinelli, Sapienza University of Rome

153.2 Constructing Alternative Epistemes of Development from Gender Perspective: An Ethnographic Study on a Social Experiment in Northern China

Gender perspective is an approach of adopting feminist values to redefine and reconstruct development. By "gender perspective", we imply a way of seeing and thinking grounded in feminine values such as receptivity, non-violence, living on and tenderness stemming from the nature of "life-protecting". Rather than adopting an essentialist understanding, we align with Dai Jinhua's proposal to regard "feminism" as a search for alternative possibilities other than global capitalism. This research, through an ethnographic study, will illustrate how a local NGO explored an alternative development of a rural community in North China based on gender perspective.

Since the marketization reforms of the 1980s, while developmentalism has led to China's rapid rise, rural areas have experienced decline and rural women have been marginalized. In 2017, a women-based NGO in Henan Province, with the aim of promoting rural gender equality, collaborating with a transdisciplinary team, mobilized villagers in Z Village to renovate abandoned dwelling caves as public space to explore alternative development. This initiative, named the "House of Dreams", represents a social process of social reconstruction and empowerment, driven by epistemes developed from gender perspective. Our study will unpack four aspects of the epistemic content that underpins this process: 1) Humanization, which encompasses humane care, prioritization of human needs, and community education; 2) Relational philosophy, emphasizing the crucial role of emotion and social bonds; 3) Preservation orientation, which fosters actions such as small-scale and building with upcycled materials; 4) Inner radical struggle, reflecting the inherent resistance of gender-based development.

Through understanding and reworking development from gender perspective, this experiment challenged the conceptual roots of development in practice and demonstrated the possibility of an alternative development. By placing this research within the gender localisation of global context, we will further discuss the implication of this localized and gender-based case beyond China. ■

Presenters:

1. XI Lan, Guangxi Normal University
2. Hok Bun KU, Hong Kong Polytechnic University

154 Urban Collective Action Around Public Spaces

Session in English

TIME 15:00 - 16:45

VENUE Faculty of Education Sciences (FSE), FSE010

SESSION ORGANISER Jurate Imbrasaitė

EMAIL jurate.imbrasaitė@vdu.lt

SESSION CHAIR Jurate Imbrasaitė

Presentations:

154.1 Unity amidst Diversity: Chinatown Anti-Prison Protests

This research investigates the diverse coalition of activists protesting the construction of a mega jail in Manhattan's Chinatown, part of New York City's plan to close Rikers Island. Despite the issue being localized and neighborhood-specific, the protests have attracted participants from various ethnic and social backgrounds, including Chinatown residents, non-Chinese activists, and individuals from other neighborhoods. This study explores how this broad coalition formed and how different groups with distinct interests were mobilized around a shared cause.

Drawing from theories on urban collective action, displacement, and social movement mobilization, this study addresses key questions: What motivates individuals with minimal direct ties to Chinatown or the jail construction to participate in the protest? How do the protest organizers use narratives of displacement and racial discrimination to build solidarity across diverse groups?

Methodologically, the research employs an ethnographic approach, combining participant observation with semi-structured interviews for 7 months. By actively engaging in the protests, documenting participant demographics, roles, and interactions, and analyzing social media materials, this research sought to understand the factors and mechanisms that drive mobilization and sustain the coalition.

The research identifies three main categories of participants: broad protest alliances (including organizers and organizations members), interest groups with cooperative ties to the alliance, and individuals who are not formally part of the alliance but are concerned with the Chinatown jail or broader social justice issues. These diverse groups are connected through three core local social organizations, which facilitate the formation of a wide-ranging protest front through the exchange of resources and the development of social networks.

This research contributes to the understanding of cross-ethnic mobilization and collective action in the context of urban displacement and gentrification. It offers insights into how grassroots activism can influence local government decisions regarding public spaces. ■

Presenters: Xuewei He, Columbia University

154.2 Negotiating One's Place in Public Space through Squatting: The Activist Trajectory of a Female Sex Workers' Collective in the Raval Neighborhood, Barcelona

Since 2005, the City Council of Barcelona has implemented legal measures sanctioning sex workers' presence in public spaces and has deployed various strategies to exclude them from the city center (Hubbard, 2017).

In response to the municipality's punitive strategies, sex workers from the Raval neighborhood, located in the highly touristic old city, formed a collective in 2006 still active today. The collective's purpose is to fight against institutional attempts to exclude the practice of prostitution from public spaces (Motterle, 2018). These women's activist trajectories are remarkable for the diversity of the repertoires of action they use, the evolution of the recognition of their protest by municipal actors, and the longevity of their mobilization, especially given the limited resources with which they initially began their protest.

Drawing on a reflection on citizenship, this presentation focuses on a particular mode of collective action used by these sex workers: the practice of squatting alongside other local residents (Isin, 2008 ; Dadusc, 2019).

An ethnographic study conducted in squats in the Raval neighborhood, complemented by archival analysis and participatory methods involving the collective's sex workers, shows how these women find in these illegally occupied spaces an opportunity to express themselves, to value their skills, and to build alliances with local actors despite the criminalization of their presence in the city. In their repertoire of action, squatting emerges as a tool to negotiate their social recognition both as political subjects and as citizens. I will demonstrate that sex workers' involvement in squats contributed to their progressive integration into municipal decision-making processes concerning prostitution, from which they were initially excluded, and to legitimate their presence in public space. ■

Presenters: Mme Alizée Lazzarino, Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne

154.3 E Petitions and Mobilisation Dynamics : The Case of Environmental Engagement of Citizens

Petitions are, like demonstrations and boycotts, a form of political action arising from the people with the aim of issuing a challenge to power (Tiberj, 2017). E-petitions are increasingly recognised as another way for citizens to make their voices heard and/or influence the political agenda. The main aim of this research is to investigate electronically enabled forms of participation and their mobilisation dynamics in three environmental e-petitions. We focus on the local and global dynamics associated with online/offline forms of engagement, and look at the actual behaviour of e-petitioners. We then show how e petition may be seen as an entanglement of on line-offline and global-local dynamics, and explain which factors influence the level of success that a collective movement may achieve in the policy making process.

Wednesday, 9 July 2025

Our results highlight the benefits of localized engagement in mobilizing citizens and fostering collective action by examining specific case studies in France and Belgium. We also delve into the mechanisms and processes through which e-petitions can trigger mobilization, ranging from social network effects to emotional resonance and issue salience. Last, we analyze how e-petitions can effectively serve as a catalyst for change in environmental policy and promote sustainable practices.

Access to a database on the website lapetition.be, provides the opportunity to overcome a certain number of limitations that are associated with traditional methods of studying political participation, since this allows us to focus on the reality of the signatories' behaviour rather than on their declarations.

Our research presents a comprehensive case study conducted in France and Belgium, analyzing the dynamics and outcomes of e-petitions focused on environmental concerns. We examine the impact of local engagement, considering geographical, social, and cultural factors that influence the success and effectiveness of online mobilization efforts. ■

Presenters: Martine Legris Revel, Université de Lille - CNRS



155 Climate Justice and Trade Unions in Global Perspective

Session in English and French

TIME 11:00 - 12:45

VENUE Faculty of Education Sciences (FSE), FSE010

SESSION ORGANISER Stefan Luecking, Vera Trappmann and Catherine Casey

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SESSION CHAIR Stefan Lücking

Presentations:

155.1 Climate Crisis and Green Transition in Nigeria: Trade Unions in Policy and Practical Response.

Nigeria is an emerging market and lower-middle-income economy. It has the largest population, a young demographic profile, and is one of the richest in Africa. Its economy is highly concentrated in the oil and gas industry. That sector, while crucial to Nigeria's development to date, is responsible for contributing to far-reaching ecological and environmental degradation in Nigeria, and global climate change crises. Gas flaring and increased CO2 emissions, destruction of agricultural and marine ecosystems from oil spillage, and exposure of people to poisonous gas and resultant chronic illnesses, are significant among the negative impacts of the oil and gas industry to Nigerians and neighbouring populations.

These well-documented concerns and their crisis-deepening implications have met with mixed policy response and variable efforts for change. The Nigerian government endorses international climate change response initiatives and strives to develop and implement national initiatives. The Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC), one of the largest unions in Africa (ITUC, 2021), pursues its Climate Change Policy issued in 2015. However, even as NLC leaders acknowledge that Africa is the most vulnerable continent to climate change and global heating, with severe effects on populations portended, and demand a "just transition" to a more sustainable economy, their policy strategies and actions toward a just transition appear to date to be fragmented.

Utilising the duo of ILO guidelines on just transition and the holistic framework for evaluating policy mixes for just transition (Kaljonen et al., 2024), this paper evaluates the policies and practices of labour actors in Nigeria in responding to climate change and pursuing a just transition for workers and the poor. By so doing, it uncovers the policy interventions points of the Nigerian trade union movement, and the reactive, active and emancipatory practical responses aimed at distributive and procedural justices in their efforts at seeking a just transition.■

Presenters:

1. Kabiru Oyetunde, Loughborough University
2. Catherine Casey, Loughborough University

155.2 - A Green and Just Transition: Transnational Labour Governance and Climate Crisis Response

Trade unions, while showing notable industry and national variations, exhibit mixed histories of addressing environmental concerns. The persistent risk of a politics of conflict between environmental imperatives and workers' jobs and livelihood security put workers' interests into turmoil. Unions express more emphatically in the 2020s a two-fold interest: transition to a more sustainable economy, to an at least post-carbon dependency in economic and production activity, must attend to workers' socio-economic interests simultaneously with ecological protection. It must be a "just" transition.

Much attention to date on labour questions and sustainability addresses state actors and national or regional union bodies and other labour forums such as works councils, and international union confederations. Other debates pursue efforts of labour-environmentalist NGOs and community coalitions. Questions arise as to how labour actors in countries with highly sector variable or weak institutionalised social dialogue can effectively engage with a "just transition" and decarbonisation imperatives.

Our project, in contributing to advanced debate, focuses on transnational relations and dynamics among labour and company actors in global corporations. Global companies are significant non-state global actors. Their activities in regard to global climate response and acceptance of a just social transition can have significant influence among global MNC supply chain parties and regional powers. The quality and effectiveness of their transnational labour governance is a crucial factor in accelerated adoption and implementation of an eco-social program of response and reform.

This paper especially focuses on workers' voice, social dialogue, and demand formation in local and transnational labour relations. It discusses findings from our empirical study of labour and eco-social actors in Asia Pacific contexts. Multilevel transnational labour governance generates new qualities and capacities for more democratic global governance of common concerns, crucially including a just eco-social transition.

Presenters:

1. Catherine Casey, Loughborough University
2. Helen Delaney, University of Auckland

155.3 Just Transition in Spain - 'Best in Class'?

This paper talks to the RC10 call for papers on the theme of Climate Justice and Trade Unions in Global Perspective. It focuses on the case of Spain drawing from a wider research project examining the role of labour in just transition policy making globally. Spain is a country that has strongly embedded the concept of just transition within wider climate policy and could be viewed as a 'best-in-class' example of efforts to address justice issues within climate mitigation if the ILO's Just Transition guidelines (2015) are used as a benchmark. Set amongst contradictory assessments over the potential impacts of climate mitigation strategies on employment in Southern Europe, the role of labour and other social actors becomes of interest in how just transition policy and practice are formed. This paper considers how unions and other key stakeholders have engaged in multi-level dialogues over climate and just transition policy and the resultant form that 'transición justa' takes in Spain. It traces how Spanish unions have framed the challenges of climate change and decarbonisation and worked to build coalitions with other actors, notably the state. The paper considers the inherent contradictions and tensions within state-led and labour perspectives on the nature-employment nexus and the implications for wider climate justice within the green transition in Southern Europe.■

Presenters: Jo Cutter, University of Leeds

JS-190 Digital Futures: Contesting Power and Visions (Part I)

Joint Session with RC14 Sociology of Communication, Knowledge and Culture, RC23 Sociology of Science and Technology and WG10 Digital Sociology.
Session in English, Spanish and French

TIME 13:00 - 14:45

VENUE Faculty of Legal, Economic, and Social Sciences (JES), SJES005

SESSION ORGANISER Markus Schulz

EMAIL markus@markus-s-schulz.net

SESSION CHAIR Markus S. Schulz

Presentations:

JS-190.1 Combatting Digital Capitalism: The Criminal Strategy behind Big Tech's Social Harm and the Need for Transformative Justice

This paper proposes rethinking Big Tech's socially harmful behavior as the consequence of a deliberate strategy that is inextricably linked to its business model and thus cannot be corrected by conventional means. The crimes of digital capitalism relate to upstream and downstream operations. It ranges from modern slavery in the context of mineral extraction to Taylorist exploitation in Chinese hardware production industries. It shifts to machinic dispossession in automated warehouses, algorithmic discrimination in welfare systems, and the deployment of policing technologies by private and public actors. Although we all suffer the consequences of a digitized global structure of inequality, the resulting social damage is not equally distributed. The crimes of digital capitalism are, by nature, an inherent and organizational part of an imperialist phenomenon.

Thursday, 10 July 2025

Hegemonic digital corporations are often headquartered in countries in the Global North, while their victims are disproportionately located in the Global South. Moreover, this structure of inequality is intertwined with prior forms of racial, class, and gender oppression. We need new approaches, methods, and institutions of the commons capable of enforcing concepts of justice that lead to a real and profound transformation that shakes the causes of social harm. Thinking about the crimes of digital capitalism is an exercise aimed not at reaffirming mechanisms for punishment but at producing the necessary tools to abolish the conditions that make them possible. Drawing on the approaches of white-collar crime and crimes of the powerful, and complemented by recent contributions from critical legal studies, the paper lays the theoretical groundwork from which to analyze the crimes of digital capitalism. In doing so, this paper aims to explain why certain specific behaviors of the "digital powerful" are often not criminalized and, moreover, have become essential to the operation of the digital capitalist system of exploitation.■

Presenters: Aitor Jimenez, Basque Country University

JS-190.2 Platform Politics: Corporate Power, Grassroots Movements and the Sharing Economy

The platform economy, powered by companies like Airbnb, Uber and Deliveroo, promised to revolutionize the way we work and live. My presentation shows how platform capitalism is not only shaped by business decisions, but is a result of struggles involving social movements, consumer politics and state interventions. It focuses in particular on the controversial tactics used by platform giants to avoid regulation. It identifies some common trajectories of political struggle across contexts and across several 'lean platforms'. It discusses platform rhetoric, the contentious and confrontational language and stories told by platform businesses. Using a case study of former Airbnb workers, it also delves into 'platform power', the ways in which platforms mobilise their users and allies to shape or avoid state regulation. These concern the imaginaries, potential and future of the new digital economy: platform possibility.■

Presenters: Luke Yates, University of Manchester

JS-190.3 Israel's AI Powered Weaponry: A Joint Production of Empire

In April 2024, investigative reporter Yuval Abraham exposed the Israeli military's use of an A.I.-powered kill list to eliminate Palestinians suspected of association with the armed wings of Hamas and the Islamic Jihad. The kill list is generated by an algorithm called "Lavender" which reviews vast amounts of surveillance data and assigns every person in Gaza an individualized risk score of 1 to 100, with higher numbers suggesting an increased probability of belonging to an armed faction. The result is a ranked list that the Israeli military uses to prioritize targets for assassination. In this paper, I argue that the Israeli military bears responsibility for deploying the kill list, but the technology itself is the product of an imperial network of military/carceral forces.

In 2012, the Chicago Police Department rolled out the latest innovation in predictive policing: the Strategic Subjects List (SSL). Designed as part of the CDP's War on Crime, the SSL algorithm analyzed CPD data and produced individualized risk scores on a 500-point scale, with higher scores meant to signal an increased likelihood that the person would become either a shooter or a victim. Police commanders used the SSL to identify people for targeted interventions.

Unlike the SSL, Lavender incorporates A.I. technology and is being used for the targeted annihilation of Palestinians. But the SSL clearly helped pave the way for Lavender. So how should we understand the movement from the SSL to the Lavender list? Drawing on research in Palestine/Israel and the United States, this paper traces the flow of data and technology through webs of imperial policing. Advancements in one arena fuel developments in others, generating an expanding spiral of surveillance. In short, Lavender is best understood as a joint production of the Israeli settler colonial state and the U.S. empire state.■

Presenters: Andy Clarno, University of Illinois at Chicago

JS-190.4 Asserting “Digital Sovereignty” to Rein in Platform Power? European Regulatory Instruments and Their Limitations

In the context of a growing debate on adequate policy responses to Big Tech dominance (Moore & Tambini, 2022), the enactment of the Digital Services Act (DSA) and the Digital Markets Act (DMA) highlight the European Union's political efforts to regulate major digital platforms (Bietti, 2021). While the DMA focuses on ensuring fair competition in digital markets, the DSA aims to regulate digital public spaces by addressing the responsibilities of platforms in managing online content.

The EU is thus actively engaged in a global race for “digital sovereignty” – a concept that, while somewhat vague, has been widely discussed (Floridi, 2020; Roberts et al., 2021). In a bid to protect its citizens and promote the emergence of European tech champions, the EU is developing a framework of “digital constitutionalism” (Suzor, 2010, 2018; de Gregorio, 2021; Celeste, 2023). This approach involves a comprehensive legislative arsenal and new investigative and sanctioning powers aimed at regulating digital platforms.

Our research focuses specifically on the regulation of digital public spaces, through the lens of DSA negotiations and implementation. Key questions include: What policy approach underpins the DSA? What regulatory instruments does it offer? At what level should they be applied and what are their limitations? Ultimately, does the DSA empower European states to counterbalance the influence of Big Tech?

To address these questions, we carried out documentary analysis and qualitative fieldwork. We conducted 19 interviews with members of the administrations involved in negotiating and implementing the DSA, and with stakeholders active in shaping the legislation. Our analysis delves into the origins of the DSA at national and international levels. We then assess the DSA's regulatory instruments to understand their impact on the division of powers within the digital regulation chain, involving the European Commission, EU Member States, social media platforms and citizens.■

Presenters:

1. Benjamin Loveluck, Université Paris Panthéon Assas
2. Clément Le Ludec, Université Paris Panthéon Assas

JS-190.5 Imagining Beyond the Artificial Intelligentsia

Carceral technologies are increasingly being deployed to expand and exacerbate state violence and surveillance, aided by private companies. ShotSpotter is a faulty AI-powered acoustic “gunshot detection technology” used by over 120 police forces across the United States, South Africa, Jamaica, the Bahamas, and, as of 2021, Occupied Palestine. ShotSpotter’s scope extends beyond local police departments: is also used, has been tested, and it is funded, by the U.S. federal government, including the military. These various carceral contexts led me to interrogate the central marketing claim of ShotSpotter: that it exists to reduce gun violence. I build upon the tradition of Black Internationalism to assess how ShotSpotter is actually a carceral, settler-colonial tool used by the U.S. police, military, and Israeli Occupation Forces to control, oppress, and surveil “occupied” communities of color both “internal” to the U.S. empire and “external” to it. I offer the term imperial pre-occupations to illustrate how prediction (pre-) is a tool for the occupation of racialized communities and policing racialized populations is a preoccupation of the imperial state domestically and internationally, using ShotSpotter as a case study. My paper explores how these imperial preoccupations materialize in the similar and differing language and logics of ShotSpotter’s use by U.S. police, military, and the Israeli Occupation Forces due to their related settler-colonial projects; via the tools and techniques employed to make the technology useful to the state in different contexts, whether it be attached to drones in occupied Palestine or the streets of the Southside of Chicago or on U.S. military bases in Afghanistan and Iraq; and the marketing & funding of the ShotSpotter technology. By situating how ShotSpotter functions as an imperial tool globally, a portal to envision and enact transnational resistance against ShotSpotter emerges.■

Presenters: Amber Rahman, Princeton University

JS-202 Digital Futures: Contesting Power and Visions (Part II)

Joint Session with RC07 Futures Research (host committee), RC14 Sociology of Communication, Knowledge and Culture, RC23 Sociology of Science and Technology and WG10 Digital Sociology Session in English, Spanish and French

TIME 15:00 - 16:45

VENUE Faculty of Legal, Economic, and Social Sciences (JES), SJES005

SESSION ORGANISER Markus S. Shulz

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SESSION CHAIR Tin-Yuet Ting

Presentations:

JS-202.1 Ecologies of Friction in Digital Platform Investment

Digital platforms are underpinned by the ideal of a frictionless market, obscuring the simultaneous practices of market monopolisation and the restriction of consumer choice and movement. This concurrent removal and erection of barriers to participation triggers ecosystemic responses such as individual adaptations and establishing alternative organisations to counter the progression of these 'walled gardens'. In this article, we contribute to theorising ecologies of friction in the platform economy, drawing on Tsing's friction in the creation of global connections, Orbach's friction paradox, and Bateson's ecological epistemology. Analysing a European short-term rental platform cooperative's difficult launch, we ask: How do frictions emerge on alternative platforms in the digital economy, and what effect do they have on prefiguring the platform business? Frictions become apparent in platform investment, a complex resource-allocating relationship binding together multiple stakeholders, laden with expectations about the future. We highlight the interconnected frictions of individual investment into platform work, collective investment into platform participation, and resource investment into the business model. These are bound with platform organising, community development, and managing scale as the cooperative tries to prefigure a future platform economy in establishing its current practice. We contribute by extending the concept of ecologies of friction in connecting individual and collective investment with ideas around platform growth. We illustrate how all platform economy actors – participants and platforms alike – are entangled in frictions. We suggest that alternative platforms' struggles are largely caused by the impossibility of escaping the broader ecosystemic dynamics established by dominant platform imaginaries.■

Presenters:

1. Mikko Laamanen, Oslo Metropolitan University
2. Karolina Mikolajewska-Zajac, University of Queensland

JS-202.2 Mapping Platform Cooperatives: Identities, Dimensions and Challenges

A young and digital cooperative movement is trying to emerge in reaction to the triumphant platform capitalism of the last thirty years. Despite the growing scholarship, the numbers and dimensions of platform cooperatives are not well known. There are no quantitative studies describing a large number of platform cooperatives. This paper constitutes a first attempt to map platform cooperatives globally. On the basis of the first international economic survey on platform cooperatives, it constitutes a comprehensive international economic chart of the identities, dimensions and challenges of platform cooperatives. Data from 86 respondents registered legally in 5 continents outline 27 platform cooperatives' geographies, dimensions, legal forms, values, the number of workers, co-owners, users and providers of these platforms, the amount of capital involved, where their original capital comes from, their relationship with blockchain, their governance, their legislation obstacles, and their main challenges. The paper distinguishes platform cooperativism from platform cooperatives, and it addresses definitional issues that have arisen since they were defined. It finally offers a grounded understanding of platform cooperatives' challenges and their most up-to-date empirical picture.■

Presenters: Stefano Tortorici, Scuola Normale Superior

JS-202.3 Edtech Companies and the Digitalization of Education in Chile. the Growth and Consolidation of Technosolucionism in Global South.

In Global South, recent research shows that transnational technology corporations have increased their engagement in educational development following variegated institutional logics and rationales (Patil, 2023), with special emphasis to commercial digital platforms provided by Big Tech companies -the so-called GAMAMs- (Williamson and Hogan, 2020). In contrast, to date, the role of national edtech companies in public policies and educational policies has been little studied.

This article analyses the network of actors involved in the contemporary digitalization of the Chilean school system and the role of private EdTech corporations in this ecosystem. Using a framework based on new modes of education governance and contributions from the cultural political economy, three sources were triangulated: i) 22 semi structured interviews with key actors and policymakers, ii) a database of startups in the EdTech sector in Chile and iii) a systematization of the main digital education policies implemented in the country.

The findings reveal a poorly coordinated network of actors, which has allowed the inorganic and heterogeneous growth of EdTech corporations, whose role encompasses not only the production of technology but also its articulation and management. Secondly, the results show that edtech companies (along with BigTech) promote educational techno-solutionism, promoting images that directly connect students with technology and diminishing the role of schools in education. Finally, EdTech companies, although with national roots, seek to expand their models to other countries in the Global South, through the idea of "local solutions, global problems." To this form, EdTech companies play a central role not only as producers of technology, but also as articulators and administrators, illustrating a displacement of the State from some of its historic functions.■

Presenters: Cristóbal Villalobos, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile

JS-202.4 Is Users Rating Becoming Overpowering? the Risks of Inappropriateuse of Digital Feedback

Digital technologies have made it easy to generate feedback on the performance of products and services. They have contributed significantly to reducing the information asymmetries between producers and consumers, between suppliers of public goods and users, and between politicians and citizens.

It seems that Web 2.0 has enhanced the effectiveness of the "voice" evoked by Albert Hirschman in the 1970s. Is there a risk that the feedback provided and the connected rating may become too invasive, so much as to constitute a threat to the confidentiality of individual data?

We distinguish between three types of feedback:

- 1) bottom-up feedback, occurring when many individuals evaluate and comment on the performance of organizations;
- 2) the transversal one, which happens when a series of individuals exchange comments, appreciations and reciprocal evaluations;
- 3) the top-down one, when organizations assign a rating to individuals. We finally offer some suggestions to moderate the existing risks.■

Presenters:

1. Daniele Archibugi, Italian National Research Council, Irpps
2. Natalia Tosoni, University of Bologna

JS-202.5 'Digital Good' and Vulnerable People's Digital Inclusion: Key Findings from Testing a Social Lab Framework.

In this paper, we present findings from a pilot study exploring what 'digital good' looks like from the perspective of vulnerable people in relation to their digital inclusion and associated socio-digital inequalities. The study adopted a social lab framework (Tsatsou & Polizzi, under review) to explore the concept of the 'digital good' and to test whether such a framework is effective in generating insights into the relationship between 'digital good' and the digital inclusion of three vulnerable groups - ethnic minorities, older people and people with disabilities. Methodologically, the study was informed by Participatory Action Research (PAR), which is often championed for generating social change (Abma et al., 2017; Penfield et al., 2014), and it adopted a decolonising research approach (Thambinathan and Kinsella 2021), thus addressing three questions:

In what ways, if any, do vulnerable people's perceptions and experiences of 'digital good' (re)shape their digital inclusion and associated inequalities in the digital and broader social realm?

What initial conclusions can we reach about individual agency and resistance as part of how 'digital good' is perceived and experienced by vulnerable people in relation to their digital and broader social inclusion?

How effective is the proposed social lab framework in enabling research to explore how 'digital good' speaks to vulnerable people's digital inclusion and associated socio-digital inequalities?■

Presenters:

1. Panayiota Tsatsou, Birmingham City University
2. Gianfranco Polizzi, University of Liverpool
3. Magdalena Brzeska, DeMontfort University

JS-211 Digital Futures: Contesting Power and Visions (Part III)

Joint Session with RC07 Futures Research (host committee), RC14 Sociology of Communication, Knowledge and Culture, RC23 Sociology of Science and Technology and WG10 Digital Sociology

Session in English, Spanish and French

Time: 09:00-10:45

VENUE Faculty of Legal, Economic, and Social Sciences (JES), SJES005

SESSION ORGANISER Markus S. Shulz

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SESSION CHAIR Ruha Benjamin

Presentations:

JS-211.1 Prognostic Cultures in the Digital Age. Epistemic and Authoritarian Forms of Governing the Future

Different kinds of future predictive techniques such as scenario analyses and forecasts, roadmaps and predictive policing contribute to an epistemic culture of the present, which is primarily concerned with its potential futures. These futures may be envisioned as socially desirable disruption, driven by technology and leading to human progress, as is the case in what Barbrook and Cameron (1996) called The Californian Ideology. Or they are bound up with proliferating fears of harm and catastrophe, as in sociological analyses criticizing precautionary strategies and the Emergency Imaginary (Calhoun 2004) in general. In any case, these futures are technically constructed, algorithmically calculated and digitally mediated. Their origin is not, like in former times, the disclosure of an eremite, they spring from serverfarms and digital infrastructures. But just like yesterday, envisioning the future implies new systems of social ordering and control as well.

Against this backdrop, the talk sorts contemporary cultures of prognostics using three contrasting, empirical examples. These can be assigned to two ideal types of modelling uncertain futures by data: an authoritarian future as the product of autonomized algorithmic decision-making systems (ADMs) on the one hand, and (referring to the works of Rheinberger and Knorr-Cetina) epistemic futures on the other. The latter appear paradigmatically in two contrasting social arenas: first, as the systematic multiplication of competing futures in financial-economic arbitrage trading (e.g. Beunza and Stark 2005), and second as unattainable futures in the mundane practices of self-measurement/self-tracking (Noji and Vormbusch 2018). The former (ADMs) appear as calculative infrastructures accumulating and synthesizing Data, thereby assigning resources and social positions to people without them having control. The talk contrasts these techniques of producing future knowledge with regard to the opening and closing of attainable futures, the relationship between human and machine knowledge, and the embedded power relations.■

Presenter:

Vormbusch Uwe, FernUniversität in Hagen, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Institute of Sociology

JS-211.2 Remaking European Futures through Digital Innovation Politics

Amidst the unfolding of global economic and geopolitical challenges, the European Union (EU) has increasingly projected its future as closely intertwined with its 'power to innovate'. From artificial intelligence (AI) to blockchain, from digital health to personalised medicine, emerging areas of digital innovation have been targeted by the Union for major investments, as well as governance and regulatory efforts. EU-led initiatives in digital sciences and technologies, which cut across other prominent innovation sectors such as life sciences, are widely seen as promising to address complex societal challenges and transform the way we live, move, communicate and are cared for. Moreover, while they aim to provide the knowledge and material infrastructures for an ever more integrated and globally competitive European knowledge economy, they are heralded as the 'European way' to digital innovation, tailored to what are framed as distinctive European values and principles such as privacy, solidarity and fairness.

Drawing on insights from STS-informed infrastructure studies, the sociology of European integration and the political economy of digital technologies, we explore how the constitutive elements of European 'post-digital' societies, such as AI algorithms and genome sequencing, are increasingly assuming the role once assigned to coal and steel as building blocks of the European integration process. Based on the book 'Project Europe: Remaking European Futures through Digital Innovation Policies' (Edward Elgar, 2025, co-edited together with L. Marelli, J. Dratwa), we address the question of how novel digital orders are co-produced with distinctly European social, political and economic identities, institutions and practices, and provide an understanding of how 'Europe' is being reimagined and repositioned in a wider debate about the identity, shape and future of the EU, including in relation to other geopolitical entities such as the US and China.■

Presenters:

1. ne Van Hoyweghen, KU Leuven
2. Gert Verschraegen, University of Antwerp

JS-211.3 Artificial Intelligence, an Intricate Part of the 4th Industrial Revolution – Motifs and Implications for Human Development?

This current decade witnessed an upsurge in scholarly research on the phenomenon dubbed the 4th Industrial Revolution (4IR). This was largely influenced by the claims of its advocates that the 4IR is bringing changes at the global scale never seen before and therefore that the world will never be the same. Such claims are no new to academic scholarship. Francis Fukuyama before wrote about the end of history and others wrote about globalisation as marking an end to fragmented world. Whether such claims are founded or not, the point is that they are made based on observation under the subject that has always captured the imagination and interest of social scientists i.e., seeking to understand and explain epochal changes in human history. Presently, we have seen a shift in this interest to artificial intelligence (AI). The question though is: just how new is this AI phenomenon? Closely linked to this is, what drives it and what implications does it have for human development in the long term? Is it likely to mark progress or the opposite of it? This paper examines the AI phenomenon through a critical review of evidence. The drive behind its rapid growth and its implications for human development, as understood through the United Nations Development Programme's index, are also examined.■

Presenter: Mokong Simon Mapadimeng, University of South Africa

JS-211.4 Imagining Regulation of AI: Comparing Czech and Portuguese Media Representations with CadS

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become an inevitable part of the visions of the digital future. Thus, the possibility of AI regulation is one of the most crucial questions in shaping it. The development of technologies like AI depends on media-shaped public perception (Chuan et al., 2019). This research focuses on media debates about AI regulation from an interdisciplinary comparative perspective. It analyses imaginaries in the Czech and Portuguese online mainstream media, using Corpus Approaches to Discourse Studies (CADS) (Baker et al., 2008). CADS combines corpus linguistics with CDA while reflecting on critiques of the latter (Orpin, 2005). It mainly strengthens data representativeness and interpretative transparency of the analysis. CADS allows the investigation of the aggregate effects of language, highlighting typical discursive patterns. Czechia and Portugal represent intriguing study cases; the countries similar in area size, population, or GDP (Eurostat, 2024) differ significantly regarding their tech sectors and the length of the EU membership. Conceptually, this study approaches AI regulation visions with "sociotechnical imaginaries" (Jasanoff and Kim, 2015, p. 4), which have been plagued by conceptual ambiguity recently (Rudek, 2022). This research overcomes it by adopting a three-level imaginary concept (Sau, 2021). It structures the analysis of media representations by asking for imaginary's (1) social commentary, (2) vision of the future, and (3) means to achieve it. The research also highlights the roles of different related actors. Comparable corpora are collected from digitally available media in each country, covering the period of discussions about the EU's "AI Act" regulation (3/2018-12/2023). Results are explored and compared using Sketch Engine (Kilgarriff et al., 2014), analysing keywords, collocations and concordances. Such research provides innovative, empirically rooted comparative insights into the current media debate on the future of AI. Also, it provides a clearer perspective of sociotechnical imaginaries by grounding these to objective linguistic cues.■

Presenters:

1. Tibor VOCÁSEK, ISS FSV, Charles University Prague, CLUNL, Universidade Nova de Lisboa - NOVA FCSH, Av. de Berna 26-C, 1069-061 Lisboa
2. Raquel Amaro, CLUNL NOVA Lisbon, Department of Linguistics FCSH NOVA

JS-211.5 Disconnection : A New Trend in Sociology of Resistance

Based on a multi-sited ethnography conducted in Alaska, the Pyrenees and the French Alps, this contribution aims to lay the groundwork for a sociology of digital disconnection, viewed as a system of social control or domination. It will demonstrate how voluntary disconnection emerges as a new form of social struggle. Additionally, it will examine how the advent of satellite-based connectivity (e.g., Starlink) disrupts these efforts. After outlining 3 ethnographic cases, the presentation will examine the perspective of digital power and avoidance strategies as a means of rebalancing relations of domination at a local level. It will also look at how these struggles take shape in communities between supporters of hyper-connection and those defending the right to total disconnection. Ultimately, the work will draw on David Graeber's theories to explore the rearticulation of local resistance in the digital age.■

Presenter: Olivier Servais, University of Louvain

JS-220 Digital Futures: Contesting Power and Visions (Part IV)

Joint Session with RC07 Futures Research (host committee), RC14 Sociology of Communication, Knowledge and Culture, RC23 Sociology of Science and Technology and WG10 Digital Sociology

Session in English, Spanish and French

Time: 11:00-12:45

VENUE Faculty of Legal, Economic, and Social Sciences (JES), SJES005

SESSION ORGANISER Markus S. Schulz

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SESSION CHAIR Jiang-Bang Deng

Presentations:

JS-220.1 The Dialectical Taming of AI Futures from below

Applications of artificial intelligence are anticipated to impact the delivery of public employment services (PES). Sparked by discourses between utopian notions of automated job allocation and rather dystopian side effects of discrimination and loss of agency (Allhutter et al., 2020; Busemeyer, 2022), this study explores perceptions and anticipated effects of algorithmic technologies from the perspective of frontline-workers as “analog interfaces of the digital welfare state” (Kaun & Liminga, 2023).

Based on 23 interviews with employees of the Austrian PES, I find that concerns associated with the use of algorithms and AI (loss of jobs, biases, formalisation) are being “tamed” within workers’ aspirations of futures (Appadurai 2013) by emphasizing the importance of the “human”, while simultaneously affirming technological developments. Situated within the entanglement of digital transformations of the welfare state and the resulting shifts in governance regimes (from “street-level” to “system-level” bureaucracies, Lipsky 1981; Bovens & Zouridis, 2002), such aspirations are rooted within problematisations of present working conditions (not enough time for clients and resources) and role reconfigurations (administration of systems instead of supporting clients) which they envision to repair.

By synthesising futures that promote the values of a truly “human” counselling situation through “machinic” means, such taming is dialectical: As prevailing logics of datafication are sought to be overcome by resorting to imaginations prioritizing workers’ “humanity” and highlighting the necessity of “customer care” over “data/system care”, these sociotechnical futures challenge a perceived status quo while intrinsically relying on the very means of computation that are considered responsible for it.■

Presenter: Thomas Zenkl, University of Graz

JS-220.2 Altering Power Relations in Defining AI Fairness: A Process of Negotiation from the Mammoth Project

The fairness of Artificial Intelligence (AI) systems is at the centre of many debates, but there are different perspectives on what it entails. At present, technical approaches dominate the scene. Discourses on AI fairness are frequently structured around the proposition of technical solutions designed to address algorithmic biases. This approach tends to privilege a computer science perspective on the problem and frequently fails to address the social context in which these systems are constructed and to recognise the diversity of opinions regarding what constitutes fairness when different stakeholders are involved in the discussion.

As part of the EU-funded MAMMOth project, we investigated

- a) how the problem of fairness in AI is approached by different disciplines through 29 interviews with experts from both computer sciences and social sciences, and
- b) how fairness is perceived by those groups who are often discriminated and marginalised by AI systems through 6 co-creation workshops and a survey which collected 171 responses. While the results show different approaches to fairness across the participants, they also help to identify a common ground on which to build a lay-socio-technical view on the issue.

The presentation will demonstrate how these disparate approaches and opinions have been reconciled within the MAMMOth project, and how fairness has been negotiated both between disciplines and in order to translate the concerns of vulnerable groups into technical requirements. The transition towards a lay-socio-technical perspective on AI fairness necessitates the redefinition of current power relations. These include the rebalancing of power between disciplines, where computer science currently holds a more dominant position than social sciences in determining the direction of technological development, and between experts and lay people, as people from vulnerable groups are often left out of the conversation.■

Presenters: Marta Gibin, University of Bologna

JS-220.3 Meta-Identity and Digital Platforms: The Influence of Algorithmic Decision-Making on Social and Personal Identities

The rise of digital platforms has reshaped how individuals construct and perceive social and personal identities. From a sociological perspective, meta-identity refers to the categorizable and indexable information that individuals provide to digital platforms. This data is processed on a large scale to set parameters that influence algorithms, often shaped by the unclear intentions of decision-makers. The impact of such algorithmic decision-making is profound, creating identity frameworks users might not fully control or understand.

This proposal presents findings from the analysis of over 400 content creators who produced approximately 100 amateur films in a laboratory environment for platforms. By comparing how authors, their peers, and the public label these works with the categorizations generated by platforms like YouTube, the study examines divergences that may occur between human and algorithmic understandings. It explores how these differences shape identity, influence public visibility, reinforce stereotypes, and limit the diversity of perspectives available to creators and audiences.

The study offers a critical perspective on the broader impact of algorithmic decision-making and highlights the need for greater transparency in how platforms manage data. It advocates for policies to ensure fairer, more inclusive digital environments where content creators and users can maintain control over their identities and the narratives shaped by platforms.

Topics for Discussion:

1. Analyze the role of meta-identity in shaping social and personal identities on digital platforms.
2. Present findings from over 400 content creators and 100 amateur films, examining how platforms categorize user identities.
3. Explore the implications of algorithmic decision-making on the diversity of perspectives and identity construction.
4. Discuss the importance of transparency, user control, and policy-making to mitigate the impacts of algorithmic identity formation.■

Presenters: Allan Herison Ferreira, New University of Lisbon
(Universidade Nova de Lisboa NOVA/FCSH)

JS-220.4 The Worlding Practices of Autonomous Stores

‘Autonomous stores’ are often characterized in the media as the future of shopping: physical environments made smart by augmentation through digital technologies that can process data automatically, seamlessly, and without the need for workers, identifying both consumers and their actions. References to autonomy and automation conjure a set of imaginaries of technology in the service of consumption and progress: for consumers these novel environments are purported to mean gains in convenience, whereby saving time is saving money. For retailers, they mean the possibility of gathering significant amounts of information on the behaviour of customers in a store environment, thus being another manifestation of what Zuboff (2019) calls ‘Surveillance Capitalism’.

Despite being hailed as autonomous, these spaces are vast digital assemblages that rely upon networked infrastructures composed of people, knowledges, values and numerous technological entities (such as, AI, sensors, algorithms, computer vision, cameras). Departing from the premise that “technology is society made durable” (Latour 1990), this paper draws upon 17 semi-structured interviews conducted with three Portuguese corporations – Sensei (a startup tech developer of autonomous stores), Continente (large food retailer) and Galp (large oil and gas retailer) – who are collaborating in the development and implementation of autonomous stores in the Portuguese context, to examine the discourses and practices that drive, justify and sustain their collaborations.

We pay particular attention to the discourses through which they are built: Who is pushing for them? Why? What are the main issues that are being discussed both in terms of advantages and problems? Who is included/excluded? And, finally, what futures are being built? This will then allow us to shed light on the concepts that underlie these spaces – What are “autonomy” and “smartness” in autonomous stores?■

Presenters:

1. Ana Viseu, NOVA FCSH
2. Pedro Lucas, ICNOVA, Universidade NOVA de Lisboa
3. João Pedro Pereira, ISCTE-IUL

JS-220.5 Logos Ex Machina: Policy Implications for AI-Driven Consumer Systems

The rise of artificial intelligence (AI) is transforming consumer products from mere intermediaries—tools people interact through—into active communicators, enabling more direct and immersive actor-to-actor engagement. This shift introduces new opportunities for co-creation, agency, and value exchange, but also exacerbates issues such as algorithmic bias, surveillance, and ethical dilemmas. AI-driven systems, particularly those reliant on black-box models like large language models (LLMs), raise profound questions about transparency, accountability, and user trust.

In this research, we explore the evolving digital ecosystem from the perspective of AI consumer products, focusing on user engagement with both explainable and opaque AI. Through five exploratory studies, we examine the complex interaction between consumers and AI technologies, highlighting the challenges posed by black-box systems and their broader societal implications. We identify the varying outcomes shaped by differential access to AI resources and regulatory frameworks, particularly in global contexts. Our framework for understanding AI-consumer interactions informs a set of considerations for policymakers, emphasizing the need for global, comparative perspectives on regulatory interventions.

Ultimately, this research contributes to ongoing debates about the social shaping of AI technologies, offering propositions for future investigation into how AI may exacerbate inequalities or foster new forms of empowerment in different geopolitical regions.■

Presenters: Nandita Roy, Indian Institute of Management Calcutta

JS-231 Digital Futures: Contesting Power and Visions (Part V)

Joint Session with RC07 Futures Research (host committee), RC14 Sociology of Communication, Knowledge and Culture, RC23 Sociology of Science and Technology and WG10 Digital Sociology Session in English, Spanish and French

Time: 13:00-14:45

VENUE Faculty of Legal, Economic, and Social Sciences (JES), SJES005

SESSION ORGANISER Markus S. Shulz

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SESSION CHAIR Aitor Jimenez

Presentations:

JS-231.1 Playing Catch-up: How Australian Indigenous Broadcasting Services and Their Audiences Are Navigating the Digital Transformation

The Australian Indigenous broadcasting sector is vast, delivering content to 214 communities in urban, regional and remote areas since 1982. The sector's radio and television services are well-established and highly valued by their communities, especially in remote areas – but the place of Indigenous broadcasting in the lives of communities is shifting as the media landscape transforms. This paper draws on a national study of the Australian Indigenous Broadcasting and Media Program, a major government-funded media initiative. For more than 30 years, this program has supported Indigenous community broadcasting to deliver unique content, providing cultural content, language maintenance, community connection and a forum for the broader political goals of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This national study conducted throughout 2023-2024 found a valued community media sector at a critical juncture – maintenance of radio services and technical support is uneven, leaving some communities without active radio service; communications infrastructure is poor in many remote areas, creating a significant digital divide; and funding and policy levers have not kept up with audience behaviour, meaning traditional radio and television services are not engaging with communities active on social and digital media platforms such as TikTok, YouTube, Instagram and Facebook.

These are important issues to highlight, as Indigenous broadcasting provides Indigenous communities with the opportunity to create a 'black public sphere' (Squires, 2002) – in our case, an Indigenous public sphere – to produce and consume unique, community-centred content. This is essential in the context of a colonised nation that boasts a media system that does not cater to (or consider) their Indigenous audience in any real way. Drawing on a survey of 762 Indigenous people and qualitative fieldwork at 18 community sites, this paper outlines the critical juncture of Australian Indigenous broadcasting and possible solutions to secure its 'digital future'.■

Presenters:

1. Susan Forde, Griffith Centre for Social and Cultural Research, Griffith University
2. Debbie Bargallie, Griffith Centre for Social and Cultural Research, Griffith University
3. Heather Anderson, Griffith Centre for Social and Cultural Research, Griffith University
4. Harry Van Issum, Griffith Centre for Social and Cultural Research, Griffith University
5. Troy Meston, Griffith Centre for Social and Cultural Research, Griffith University

JS-231.2 Foresight Study on Digital Trust in Taiwan for 2040

People's daily lives are more and more embedded to the digital environment, including the use of digital technology in everyday lives and exchange messages through various social medias and other online platforms. However, the "trust" in the digital world is always a central issue. There could be at least two dimensions of digital trust, the mechanical digital trust and relational digital trust. The "mechanical digital trust" is related to the issues like cybersecurity, transparency, fair and other issues on technology mechanism. Instead, the "relational digital trust" is concerned more about how the people's attitude toward to the technology, the experience of using technology and how to make people feel that digital technology is trustworthy. Different generations and social economic classes maybe have different way of trust building process with the new technology. Practically, in the coming years and decades we may expect to see the artificial intelligence and robot will more involve in our daily lives. Are we well prepared to live with the robot at home? Are we expected the robot become a caregiver to take care the elders? This session welcomes papers to discuss the issue of digital trust and foresight with empirical studies, scenarios and other innovative ways of thinking.■

Presenters:

1. Po-Jung Shih, Market Intelligence & Consulting Institute, MIC Institute for Information Industry
2. Jian-Bang Deng, Department of Education and Futures Design

JS-231.3 Filling the Gap: Technology-Facilitated Repression of Social Movements in the Spanish Context

The relationship between social movements and new technologies has been widely studied (Earl and Kimport, 2011; Fominaya and Gillan, 2017; Treré, 2018), as has the role of digital technologies in controlling dissent. Extensive research exists on surveillance capitalism (Zuboff, 2020), Big Data and protest (Degli, 2014; Ferguson, 2017), and more recently, the role of artificial intelligence in policing (Polcumpally and Rahar, 2022; Drage and Frabetti, 2024). However, there has been limited integration of studies on social movements and repressive technologies, with most work focusing on autocratic regimes and their suppression of dissent (Topak and Mekouar, 2022; Kuznetsova, 2024). The lack of research in other contexts presents a notable gap in the literature, especially as emerging digital technologies, such as AI, significantly impact how protests and social movements are controlled.

The shortage of empirical studies is particularly pronounced in Spain, where the literature on technology-facilitated repression is largely confined to human rights organization reports (Defender a Quien Defiende, 2024; Scott-Railton et al, 2022; Miralles et al, 2021) and a few academic works (Gunzelmann, 2022; Maroto and Segura, 2018).

This paper offers a literature review on technology-facilitated state repression of social movements, as part of a broader PhD thesis focused on the Spanish context, seeking to identify key findings and gaps in existing research. Additionally, preliminary results from interviews with Spanish human rights defenders, academics, and activists who have experienced technology-facilitated repression will be presented. Therefore, this paper seeks to expose the main repertoires of technology-facilitated repression, their impacts, the resistance strategies developed by activists, and potential future lines of research on this issue, contributing to the collective reflection on how digital transformation may erode (or strengthen) struggles for social justice.■

Presenters: María Santiago Prieto, University Complutense of Madrid

JS-231.4 Digital Odyssey: Navigating Cosmopolitanism amid State Intervention in the Consumption of Chinese Console Players

The global console game industry in China operates in a grey zone, with players adopting digital strategies to bypass state-imposed restrictions. Similarly, Jenkins'(2004) concept of "pop cosmopolitanism" suggests global popular culture drives consumers away from local culture, fostering an embrace of cosmopolitan identity, but it overlooks the role of state intervention. State intervention is a tangible method of defining market boundaries (Amengual&Bartley,2022), imposing dynamic structural elements on individuals' everyday consumption practices. It accommodates the practical turn in sociology, where practice theory views consumption as an active process involving both personal and institutional factors (Swidler,1986; Reckwitz,2002; Warde,2014).

This study treats both players and the state as actors. **By clarifying console game consumption of Chinese players, it explores how state intervention shifts in this grey zone and how players balance cosmopolitan gaming identities with national identity in the face of state intervention.**

It conducted in-depth interviews with 24 players and engaged in participant observation of digital intermediary platforms frequently mentioned, with the collection of Chinese policy documents.

It finds that this consumption is built on global information and economic networks, facilitated by players' strategic use of digital platforms. State interventions here primarily include internet firewalls, selective content censorship and public opinion control, with varying degrees of impact influenced by political and economic conditions.

Players create local communities centered around foreign console games, distinguishing their gaming practices from consumption. Although they recognize the challenges posed by state intervention, players do not regard their circumvention efforts as resistance. They perceive console games as an identity-free cultural sanctuary to rationalize their behavior, indicating that their cosmopolitanism coexists with national identity in different layers, challenging the binary opposition between global and local. Furthermore, players even support state intervention, as it aligns with their deeper sense of national identity. Thus, I term this phenomenon "limited cosmopolitanism."■

Presenters: George Ran Zhao, Renmin University of China

JS-231.5 El Rol De La Red Social Tik Tok En El Posicionamiento De Las Instituciones Públicas En El Perú En El 2023

El TikTok ha emergido como una herramienta crucial para las instituciones públicas en Perú, destacando en la promoción de servicios y en la interacción con sus públicos. Con un enfoque descriptivo y cuantitativo, se empleó el machine learning para analizar las reacciones de más de 36,000 usuarios a los contenidos de estas instituciones en la plataforma. La metodología aplicada incluyó la segmentación de las reacciones en categorías de análisis de sentimientos: positivo, negativo y neutro, así como el análisis de variables como horarios de publicación y tipos de contenido.

Además, se aplicó una encuesta a 10 responsables de instituciones públicas en TikTok, en la que se analizaron los objetivos, estrategias empleadas, tipos de contenidos e impactos, entre otros aspectos. Los resultados son reveladores e importantes para las instituciones públicas, ya que evidencian desafíos en la creación de contenido relevante y en la gestión continua de la plataforma. Asimismo, subrayan la importancia de adaptar los tiempos de publicación para maximizar el impacto.■

Presenters: Janeth Villegas Arteaga, Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos

Organised by The Hans Böckler Foundation

There is a conference to be held in Frankfurt am Main (Germany) on the 6th of November 2025.

Counter-power and counterstrategies in transnational value chains

Global value chains are currently undergoing dynamic change. New (geostrategic) competitive relationships and far-reaching restructuring through digital technologies are facing changing political, economic and legal conditions. These developments imply fundamentally new challenges for present employees and trade unions. New forms of (digital) control over value chains mean ever new forms of deprivation and exploitation of workers and the destruction of nature.

At the same time, it is becoming increasingly difficult to understand the interrelationships at company or national level alone. Interest representation increasingly requires a transnational orientation. To what extent are instruments such as the German Supply Chain Act (LKSG) or the European Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD) suitable for developing effective counterstrategies? Under what conditions can they be used effectively? What other dimensions of countervailing power need to be considered and developed?

At the conference, we want to discuss these questions with scholars, human rights activists, journalists, trade unions and workers from India, Bangladesh, Brazil, Spain, Ecuador and Germany. Starting point for this discussion are the results of two research projects funded by the Hans Böckler Foundation dealing with digitalisation and litigation in global supply chains.■



Participation, Organizational
Democracy and Self-Management