



# Global Dialogue

Newsletter

International Sociological Association

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## EDITORIAL

Welcome to the new ISA Newsletter, *Global Dialogue*. The new Executive Committee (page 5) will form its editorial board. We want this newsletter to become the center for the exchange of ideas within our global community. It will appear in multiple languages (French, Spanish, Chinese and English) every two months – but it will depend on your willingness to contribute materials from Research Committees, from National Associations, and from individual members. ALL CONTRIBUTIONS TO *GLOBAL DIALOGUE* SHOULD BE SENT TO THE EDITOR AT [BURAWOY@BERKELEY.EDU](mailto:BURAWOY@BERKELEY.EDU). The newsletter will be sent to all ISA members by email and posted on the ISA website. We retain the ISAGRAM for short announcements and the revamped E-Bulletin for longer articles. We would like to thank the following for translation, design, and technical support: August Bagà, Lola Busuttil, and Gisela Redondo all in Barcelona, Jing-Mao Ho in Taipei, Genevieve Head-Gordon in Berkeley, and Jose Reguera in Madrid.

## MEETING THE CHALLENGES OF GLOBAL SOCIOLOGY – FROM GOTHENBURG TO YOKOHAMA

by Michael Burawoy, President

Over 5,000 sociologists from 103 countries assembled in Gothenburg for the 17<sup>th</sup> World Congress, July 11-17, 2010. This was the largest attendance ever, greater than Bielefeld in 1994, Montreal in 1998, Brisbane in 2002 or Durban in 2006. We should thank and congratulate the Program Committee shepherded by Hans Joas; the Local Organizing Committee headed by Ulla Björnberg working with our conference organizer, Congrex; and above all the Madrid Secretariat, led by the indefatigable Izabela Barlinska who handled the stampede of sociologists with such finesse. Not only has the number of Congress registrants risen dramatically, but so has ISA membership, nearly double what it was only 8 years ago. For this we owe a great debt to President Wiewiorka's leadership these last 4 years, and it was he who captured our

new momentum in the theme of the Gothenburg Congress, "Sociology on the Move". He has challenged us to gain a clearer understanding of how, why and where we are heading.

If, in its youth, the ISA (and sociology more generally) was energized by flowing with history -- postwar and then postcolonial recon-



*Continued on page 2* Ulla Björnberg, Sweden, Head of Local Organizing Committee and Abdul Mumin Sa'ad, Nigeria, exchanging jokes in Gothenburg.

## OUR TASKS FOR THE FUTURE

by Raquel Sosa Elízaga, Vice-President for Program

First of all, I appreciate the honor of having the possibility of addressing my colleagues of the International Sociological Association. I have long wanted to make not only my voice heard, but also to know that our Association is willing to open up its resources, experience and professional capacities to give way to new challenges, and listen to many voices, both within and without the sociological community.

I would like to say that I find that, for more than thirty years now, many of our universities have been pressed to behave as small, middle

sized or even large enterprises, rather than the public spaces they are supposed to be: too eager to demand results, products, excellence and competitiveness, and more and more unaware or even absent from the sufferings and hopes of individuals and collectivities in the real social world. I remember different experiences listening to young colleagues, among the best students of some of our most famous and qualified institutions, who, when asked about the reasons why they chose their subjects for

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## Challenges of Global Sociology Continued

struction -- today we are energized by swimming against the stream, against the destructive collusion of market fundamentalism and new regulatory states. The critique of unregulated commodification and unrestrained bureaucratization has marked the history of sociology from the classics to the moderns, from marxism to structural functionalism, from feminism to postcolonial theory. But as the stream turns into a veritable torrent so sociology's animating vision, the very notion of society, is threatened along with our ever-more precarious planet and its inter-connected communities.

The forces arrayed against us are considerable. Universities and research establishments around the world face twin threats. On the one side the privatization and commodification of knowledge production threaten to turn scholars into appendages of university business offices and their private partners. On the other side bureaucratic regulation and mindless ranking systems are stifling exploration of new intellectual terrains and diverting energies from investigations of pressing social problems. In a

number of countries the twin threats are supplemented by old-fashioned repression or new-fangled surveillance. If you are in doubt about how dire the situation is take a look at the ISA blog, "Universities in Crisis" <http://www.isa-sociology.org/universities-in-crisis/>.

In this context sociology is particularly vulnerable. In many places sociologists can survive only by indenturing themselves to corporate agendas or bureaucratic programs they don't believe in. Where they have stood their ground and refused to support unlimited markets or to service regulatory states, sociologists have joined others in becoming a bastion of defense -- not only against the privatization and commodification of knowledge, but more broadly against new



Keynote Speaker and Nobel-Prize Winner Yuan Lee with Izabela Barlinska and Alice Abreu at the Gothenburg Congress.

forms of commodifying labor, money and nature that are generating the cumulative crises of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Sociology is such a rallying center because it takes the standpoint

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## Tasks for the Future Continued

doing research to obtain a degree, had difficulties in associating their concerns with questions beyond academic and conceptual debates, that is, with the life they will have as soon as they present themselves as professionals of the social sciences in whatever they do in the real world.

This is the reason why I believe it is so urgent that we all move our minds in different directions, where other voices can be heard, and where whatever knowledge we acquire has a meaning and contributes to the understanding and tackling social problems in a better way. This is what I will try to do in the next four years, together with the great team we have formed with colleagues of the Executive Committee, Michael Burawoy and all of you, wherever you are and whatever you are researching now. So I would like to share my thoughts on the foundations of our common project.

1. I think that we cannot suppose, let alone accept, that there are such things as *universal* truths, valid for all, at all times, or behave as if our modest contributions were part of those truths. And I also think that it is extremely important that we start considering whatever we study more in terms of posing questions, than in asserting, pretending to define, or presumptuously believing that what we learn and discuss at our universities is what the rest of the world should accept as facts. So instead of using nouns to denote what we believe is true, we could start by problematizing, asking questions that lead us to deeper knowledge, in a more modest and comprehensive way. I learned

a lot about this from my Latin American teachers: Sergio Bagú, Aníbal Quijano, Hugo Zemelman.

2. We spend and have spent a lot of time talking about interdisciplinarity, but we have not yet had the courage of actually opening up our knowledge, our academic activity, our social sciences. Immanuel Wallerstein made an extraordinary effort to sensitize us by recognizing that sociologists and other social scientists do not have all the explanations of what is happening to and in our world, but I believe we still have a long way to go. We do not listen to historians, anthropologists,

economists (they are not invited to participate in our debates in the ISA), but even less do we listen to society. And I urgently think we have to be able to recognize different sources of knowledge, both from academic and non-academic sources, and incorporate them in our reflections, as I also believe that we have to start treating society as a subject with its own life, made up of human beings who know what they want and what they do not want, have wills, fears, experiences, memories, but also have hopes, love and beauty in their lives, and do not just behave as the *objects of study*

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## HISTORY CORNER

by Jennifer Platt, Vice-President for Publications

ISA's first newsletter was published in 1971; before then, its news items appeared in UNESCO publications. That was an important year in ISA history: this independent newsletter could report the creation of ordinary individual membership, the representation of Research Committees in ISA's governance for the first time, and the opening of their membership. Before then, individuals could become ISA members only if there was no association to represent them, and RCs were small elite bodies joined by invitation.

The newsletter now communicated directly with individual members. Routine contents included election results, reports of EC meetings, news from RCs, obituaries of leading ISA figures, and World Congress announcements. Its format, with three columns of small print on each page, was not attractive, but the text became enlivened by photos, often informal ones of committee meetings. Leafing through, Magdalena Sokolowska appears unusually often in the 1970s -- not without reason: she was in 1974 the first woman to become an EC member, and then Vice-President. Fernando Cardoso appears in 1982 in a glamorous leather bomber jacket, and photos of other well-known colleagues reveal that they too had long hair and were young once.

Now, with the resources of the internet at our disposal, a newsletter that is both more informative and better looking becomes practical, and member participation is expanded further.

## OUR NEW EDITORS

by Jennifer Platt, Vice-President for Publications

Several new editors have been appointed recently for ISA publications. They are Eloísa Martín (*Current Sociology*), Christine Inglis (*International Sociology*), Bert Klandermans (*Sociopedia*) and Sujata Patel (*Current Sociology* monographs and Sage Studies in *International Sociology*); we expect great things from all of them in their important tasks. Special thanks go to their retiring predecessors Julia Evetts, Melinda Mills and Dennis Smith for their valued contributions. Devorah Kalekin and Vineeta Sinha continue their sterling work on the *International Sociology Review of Books* and the *E-Bulletin*.

### International Sociology



**Christine Inglis** is Director of the Migration and Multicultural Research Centre in the Department of Sociology and Social Policy at the University of Sydney. Her involvement with ISA has included being a Board Member of RCs 04, 05 and 31. She has also been on the Executive, and was Vice-President for Publications 1998-2002. She is on the

Editorial boards of the *British Journal of Sociology* and *Diversities* (formerly the *International Journal on Multicultural Societies*), and has been active in the Asian Studies Association of Australia. These reflect her research focus on migration, ethnic relations and education, particularly in Australia and the Asia Pacific region. Comparative studies and the policy implications of research feature in her current research, which includes a study of 2<sup>nd</sup> generation Turkish and Lebanese youth in Australia as part of the international TIES (the integration of the European second generation) project and *Planning for Cultural Diversity* (Unesco/IIEP 2008). Information on current projects can be found on the soon to be updated web site [http://sydney.edu.au/arts/sociology\\_social\\_policy/staff/profiles/christine\\_inglis.shtml](http://sydney.edu.au/arts/sociology_social_policy/staff/profiles/christine_inglis.shtml).

She has an apartment in Paris as well as one to which she recently downsized in Sydney, where books currently fight for space with nomadic rugs, Chinese snuff bottles and her son's collection of Congolese masks.

### Sociopedia



**Bert Klandermans** is professor of Applied Social Psychology at the VU-University, Amsterdam, of which he was Vice-Rector for 2004-9. The emphasis in his research is on the social psychological consequences of social, economical and political change. He has studied mobilization and participation in the labor movement, the women's movement and the peace movement, and has published extensively on the social psychology of participation in political protest

and social movements. He has served on editorial boards including those of the *American Journal of Sociology*, the *American Sociological Review*, *Political Psychology*, *Social Psychology Quarterly*, and *Social Problems*. Internationally he has, in addition to 2002-6 vice-presidency

of the ISA, acted as president of the ASA section on Collective Behavior and Social Movements and is president-elect of the International Society of Political Psychology; nationally, he has been awarded the Royal Decoration 'Knight in the Order of Orange Nassau' for his efforts in liaison between science and society. For more about him and his work, see <http://www.fsw.vu.nl/en/departments/sociology/staff/klандermans/index.asp>.

### Current Sociology

**Eloísa Martín** is Assistant Professor at the Department of Sociology in the University of Brasília, Brazil. She has been researching and publishing on Sociology of Religion since she was an undergraduate student, focusing specially on Popular Religion, Catholicism and Religion and Politics in Latin America. She is affiliated to RC 22, and a member of the RC22 board (2010-2014). She was General Secretary and Vice-President of the Association of Social Scientists on Religion of Mercosur ([www.acsrn.com.ar](http://www.acsrn.com.ar)) and the editor, for 10 years, of *Ciencias Sociales y Religión/Ciências Sociais e Religião* (Social Sciences and Religion, [www.ufrgs.br/revistacsrl](http://www.ufrgs.br/revistacsrl)). More recently, her main research interests are related to religion as Epistemology and academic transit in South America. She also chairs the Research Group on Peripheral Studies & South Cooperation. Eloísa has been living and working between Argentina and Brazil for more than ten years, but she has her heart definitely in Rio de Janeiro, where her Cláudio lives. In her free time, but specially when she needs to think, she loves cooking. So, it is always a good idea to visit her when she is on a writing binge! For more information about her CV, see: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/0651643598094686>.

### ISA Sage Studies in International Sociology



**Sujata Patel** is professor at the University of Hyderabad. A historical sensibility and a combination of four perspectives - Marxism, feminism, spatial studies and post structuralism/post colonialism - influence her work, in areas such as modernity and social theory, history of sociology/social sciences, city-formation, social

movements, gender construction, reservation, quota politics and caste and class formations in India. She is the author of more than forty papers and *The Making of Industrial Relations* (1997); in her capacity as ISA's first Vice-President for National Associations she edited *The ISA Handbook of Diverse Sociological Traditions* (2010), and she has coedited three books on Bombay as a city as well as *Thinking Social Science in India* (2002) and *Urban Studies* (2006). She is Series Editor of *Studies in Contemporary Society* (Oxford, India) and *Cities and the Urban Imperative* (Routledge, India).

Sujata also has interests in arts and aesthetics in the various spheres of her life. Her training in music, dance and art informs her artistic bent of mind. She has a passion for travelling, reading, watching movies on cities and listening to jazz and Indian classical music. For more about her and her work, see [http://www.uohyd.ernet.in/academic/school\\_study/social\\_sciences/Sujata\\_Patel.pdf](http://www.uohyd.ernet.in/academic/school_study/social_sciences/Sujata_Patel.pdf).

## SHMUEL EISENSTADT DIES AT 87

by Devorah Kalekin-Fishman, University of Haifa

Shmuel Noah Eisenstadt had the career of a world leader in sociology. One of the most widely published scholars, he was awarded the highest honors that could be bestowed on a sociologist and was regularly invited to be a keynote speaker at international congresses even in the last years of his long and busy lifetime. The list of accomplishments in the obituary compiled by Gad Yair almost

“ Eisenstadt was indeed the founder of Israeli sociology. ”

has the flavor of a Weberian ideal type.

For Israeli sociologists in particular and for Israelis in general, Professor Eisenstadt was not an abstract type. He was a human being and a power in the local sociological community that none else has matched to date. Shmuel Noah Eisenstadt was a man of many sides and influence far beyond what we can understand from the prizes - I would like to write about what his contribution within Israel means even now.

As a young man, rather stocky and with a shock of red hair, Shmuel Eisenstadt studied with Martin Buber at the Hebrew University where sociology was taught as subsidiary to philosophy. After completing his dissertation with Talcott Parsons at Harvard, he returned to Israel and set up the first Department of Sociology and Anthropology in the country. As head of the department, he was at the center of power in the profession. Professor Eisenstadt also founded the Israel Sociological Society and was elected its first president. Even beyond his term of office, it is safe to say that until the 1990s, his word was law in the world of Israeli sociologists. On the personal level, Professor Eisenstadt and his wife, Shulamit, often invited colleagues and students to his home. Warmly hospitable, Shmuel also showed a sense of humor, which, although not rollicking, was good-hearted, and subtle.

My personal memories of Shmuel Noah Eisenstadt are a conglomeration of impressions from fleeting personal encounters and reservations about his writings to a very late friendship. Let me start with the end. Eisenstadt was invited to be among the first distinguished contributors to [Sociopedia.isa](#) and he was kind enough to agree to write an entry on ‘multiple modernities’. Although he was notified at the outset that every entry should be no longer than 6000-7000 words, the paper that he sent

was more than three times as long. Because I was interested in getting a handle on his mature statements about modernity, I agreed to try to edit the entry down to a viable length. This was on the condition that Professor Eisenstadt would not know who had done it. My fear was that he would be insulted by having to give up more than half of what he had written, and would be especially angry to know that an Israeli had done the hatchet work. Much to my surprise, he was in fact pleased by the edited version and as a result I came out of hiding and we corresponded frequently. It turned out that Professor Eisenstadt was a reader of the *International Sociology Review of Books*, and found it very useful. He wanted to know about the other Sociopedia entries I could send him. He read them, and, enthusiastically suggested that Sage publish monographs to accompany the entries in Sociopedia. Had the idea been approved by the Publications Committee, he was eager to expand his own entry into a monograph immediately. Although this idea was not realized, it may very well be that the entry written for [Sociopedia.isa](#) was the last, or one of the last pieces of work that he produced.

In the course of our correspondence, Professor Eisenstadt invited me to visit him, and I planned to do that soon, but Jerusalem is apparently much farther from Haifa than is Gothenburg. Somehow it didn't work out. The truth of the matter is that the possibility of meeting Professor Eisenstadt as a colleague and friend was in a sense frightening. The correspondent who was tolerant of and highly interested in different approaches to sociology was not the person I remembered from my knowledge of his long term project on the study of

Israeli society. That was carried out with quite a specific agenda which had wide-ranging personal as well as professional implications.

Shmuel Noah Eisenstadt was indeed the founder of Israeli sociology and for a long time every person in Israel, including newcomers who had to wrestle with government bureaucracy, professional social scientists, and even students who registered for a single introductory course, were touched by him and his work. For students, Eisenstadt made sociology accessible by writing in Hebrew. His introduction to sociology was the first of its kind and required reading for at least twenty years. With his students in Jerusalem he was the first

to carry out systematic research projects on Israeli society. Collections in Hebrew of the work of these teams were the first indigenous textbooks – meaning the only work in sociology that native Israeli students were likely to read. But those projects had an impact far beyond the halls of the university. In the first heady decades of the new state, the teams headed by Eisenstadt were contracted to study the efficiency of the government bureaucracy, the adaptation of newcomers to unfamiliar milieus, their absorption into unfamiliar kinds of work, the success of immigrant children in schools, and so on. Miraculously, research findings according to structural-functionalist analysis tallied with the declared political goals of the ruling coalition governments and provided an acceptable scientific basis for guiding government policy, as well as for reading government intentions as constructive and beneficial. Thus from the first, professional sociology was presented in terms that were an integral part of the public agenda.

Strict adherence to the assumptions and methods of structural functionalism was expected of all who enrolled in the department



Shmuel Eisenstadt delivering a keynote speech in 2007.

then. A colleague remembers that in listening to Professor Eisenstadt's lectures she and her future husband, like most of their peers in the classroom, were enticed with the idealistic Zionist arguments elegantly phrased in the language of sociology. Very few found it possible to argue for a different viewpoint. In her class, the only one who tried to put forward another view was Baruch Kimmerling (1939-2007), whose work on Israeli society later diverged sharply from the structural-functionalist orthodoxy. This, however, took some time. As a professor from Germany remembers it, when he came to the Hebrew

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## ISA at the UN

by Jan Marie Fritz, Member of the Executive Committee

The International Sociological Association has standing with the UN's Department of Public Information (DPI) and with the UN's Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). The ISA's representatives for UN activities in New York are Rosemary Barberet (John Jay College of Criminal Justice) and Jan Marie Fritz (ISA Executive Committee member, University of Cincinnati), and Dilek Cindoglu (ISA Executive Committee Member and Bilkent University, Turkey). Representatives to UN activities are appointed by the ISA and do this work without financial support from the ISA.

Rosemary and I will be attending the fifty-fifth session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in New York City and the affiliated events in and around the CSW meeting. (See <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/55sess.htm>) The Commission will meet from 22 February – 4 March 2011. This event is a marvelous opportunity to learn how the Commission works and how so many NGOs work on the issues (before and during the meeting) that the Commission will be considering. Jan and Rosemary take part in a few of the working groups (the working groups actually work) to develop positions and recommendations to be considered by the Commission.

The priority theme of the 2011 CSW meeting is "Access and participation of women and girls to education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work." The Commission also will evaluate progress on the implementation of the agreed conclusions from its fifty-first session on "The elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child." We will propose an ISA session as part of the parallel program at the CSW and provide reference lists regarding the themes.

Rosemary also is one of our two representatives to UN meetings in Vienna.

### *Shmuel Eisenstadt Continued*

University as a foreign student to carry out a doctoral study of the development of Israel's religious parties, Professor Eisenstadt told him in no uncertain terms to forget the 'nonsensical phenomenological approach' which was the basis of his research design because it 'is not sociology'.

The fact is that the structural-functionalist approach as developed by Professor Eisenstadt became *the* science of sociology in all the universities. As each new university was set up in the 1960s and the early 1970s (Tel Aviv, Bar Ilan, Haifa, Beersheba), students who had completed their doctoral studies at the Hebrew University under Eisenstadt's direct or indirect tutelage, were the natural candidates for positions in the new departments of sociology. For many years, his opinion on the work of a sociologist determined that person's future. In terms of sociology, it meant that orthodoxy in Parsonian functionalism was the criterion for appointments, for tenure, for promotion.

My own first acquaintance with Professor Eisenstadt was while I was junior editor of a modest journal published in Haifa from 1978 to 1983, *Mahberot l'Mehkar ul'Vikoret* [Notebooks of Research and Critique]. The moving spirit behind the *Notebooks* was Henry Rosenfeld, a Marxist anthropologist who transferred to Haifa from Jerusalem and felt it was necessary to make critical social science known to readers of Hebrew. One of the first articles we published was written by Debby Bernstein and Shlomo Swirski who elaborated a critical analysis of the political implications of the structural-functionalism disseminated at the Hebrew University, and proposed an alternative theoretical viewpoint. Shlomo went on to write a book to defend the idea that immigrants to Israel from the Arabic-speaking countries who had not adapted to 'normal' Israeli life and their children who were famously failing in school and lowering the standards, were not really 'weak', or 'culturally retarded', but were being deliberately and systematically 'weakened' (*Lo Nechshalim, ella M'nuchshalim*). As keynote speaker at the annual meeting of the Israel Sociological Society, Professor Eisenstadt denounced

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Rosemary and Dean Rudolf Richter (University of Vienna), the other Vienna representative, will attend the meeting of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in Vienna. (Information about meetings in Vienna - e.g., Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, Commission on Narcotic Drugs, Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space - is provided on the UN-Vienna web page – <http://unvienna.org>).

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2010-2014

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### Executive Secretary

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## Tasks for the Future Continued

to which we have tried to consign them. If we truly dare to open up the debate about inter and transdisciplinarity, sociology will surely find its place together with other professions, social organizations and institutions. We do have to consider the need to listen to different voices as part of the responsibilities we take on with our schooling and professional work.

3. I also believe – sorry for using this word so many times, I should maybe speak of hope -- that we will be able to promote true intellectual, sociological imagination, as [C. Wright Mills](#) expected, by undertaking the collective exercise of asking ourselves and others not only what we know, but whether it means something to our society, and whether it might help to make peoples' lives any better. And in doing so, we will surely find significant problems not sufficiently analyzed; emerging or unseen social problems; urgent questions to be faced; risks to be prevented; conflicts to be faced differently. And so we might be able to synthesize our findings by answering simple questions as: What is changing? Who is changing? How far are we from what we hoped for? What can "better living" mean in our world today? And how do we get closer to it? Is there something we can do to reach some collective state of happiness? Or at least, is there something we can do to prevent major disasters that threaten our life and everybody else's life on earth?

4. I read that we have had more than five thousand colleagues in our recent Congress in Gothenburg. I do not think that each of us had the opportunity to speak or listen to more than forty or fifty (except for the candidates to some

Executive office, of course; and the organizers, among whom we have our extraordinary Izabela and her team). But anyway, the truth is that we have to find ways that get us much further. We do have to propose better ways of expressing our views of the world; broaden our cultural horizons through the languages we speak and understand (isn't there available technology that would break the monopoly of the English language?); improving and increasing our means of collecting and sharing information; working in real collectivities and not only presenting results in front of audiences; changing the ways of making our work known, both inside and outside sociological communities in the world. I deeply agree with Michael Burawoy that it is necessary to experience new types of electronic communications, but I still think we have to do more to *participate creatively* in today's lively, diverse, contradictory, anxious and happy debate about how to live and enjoy and even suffer in a more dignified way in our world today.

5. Finally, I have to say that I couldn't agree more with Michael's proposal for the theme of our next Congress, *Facing an Unequal World: Challenges for a Global Sociology*. 2015 is the deadline for the achievement of the UN *Millennium Development Goals*, adopted 10 years ago. Our world is still quite far from them, but we have a great job ahead if we ask ourselves what we think we know, what we see, what we



Elisa Reis, Brazil, and Yoshimichi Sato, Japan, smile for the camera.

haven't been able to see and what societies expect us to *see* and *do* about the present state of inequality today. Michael has already begun to think about some of the sociological challenges that inequality poses: exclusion, different forms of power and violence, destruction of the environment, privatization of knowledge. I would add: threats against diversity and tolerance; meanings of experience, memory, identity; the presence of colonialism and the coloniality of knowledge and power (as Samir Amin, Edgardo Lander, Aimé Césaire and many others have phrased it), but also, together with Ernst Bloch, the *Principles of Hope*. I am sure that, if we start from today, we will have plenty of time to work in our RCs, national and regional associations, through forums and workshops, electronic bulletins and whatever other means we can think of to let everybody's voice be heard about how sociology can contribute to face a significant number of urgent social questions in our unequal world of today. Thank you all.

## SOCIOLOGY IN THE AMAZON

by Tom Dwyer, Member of the Executive Committee

Between the 13-15 of September the Brazilian Sociological Society (SBS) will hold its Second Northern Regional meeting in Belem, capital of Para state, at the Federal University of Para. The northern region of Brazil has a land area approximately half the size of contiguous USA, it includes the Brazilian Amazon and is very sparsely populated. Many of the university lecturers and students who will make it to the conference will travel for days, in some cases thousands of kilometers, mixing river and air travel. In spite of the logistic difficulties in the region, the meeting looks set to be a great success. Over 450 paper proposals have been submitted for presentation in 16 different research committees. There will be keynote speeches, round table discussions and a festival of films entitled "Views of Amazonia". The central theme of the meeting is "Amazons, social changes and perspectives for the 21<sup>st</sup>

century". The reader will note that "Amazons" is written in the plural, this is a reference not only to the Brazilian Amazon, but also to the eight other countries which share the Amazon with Brazil. This is a huge and plural region, and demands that much knowledge be produced in a 'pan-Amazonian' perspective.

As the call for papers points out, "it is a function of the diversity of its social formation, and of its differences, be they ethnic, cultural, political or those that refer to identity formation itself..." that the results of research carried out over the last fifty years, whether in Brazil or in neighboring countries, permit one to talk of Amazons in the plural. "The proposal has, as its point of departure, the observation that there is no single sociological research paradigm that is capable of interpreting" the diverse situations and processes observed, we are indeed, when thinking about this region, confronted with

the "inexorable epistemological diversity of the world" and the need to produce new dialogues in the social sciences where the Amazonian questions have traditionally been treated by anthropology and economics.

At the same time as the conference seeks to bring together Brazilian researchers, and to expose their often neglected perspectives nationally, it also seeks to bring in researchers from other Latin American countries. Trans-cultural issues, projects of continental integration as well as the spread of migration, crime and other phenomena, link local issues in different parts of the Amazon to wider regional and even global issues.

The meeting is coordinated by Edna Castro, and we are sure it will be yet another demonstration of the liveliness of Brazilian sociology. For more information (in Portuguese) on the site: <http://www.sbsnorte2010.ufpa.br> and the blog: <http://www.sbsnorte.blogspot.com/>

## Challenges of Global Sociology Continued

or uncivil, stable or precarious - against excessive marketization and imperious statism. And this is a battle that can no longer be confined to national terrains. It requires us to forge an active global sociological community, and simultaneously build constituencies beyond the academy. That is why the ISA is ever more important, and one reason why it attracts ever more numbers.

Meeting this challenge will not be easy, but we can make headway by building on the considerable accomplishments of the ISA. Concretely, my program erects a global sociology on three legs, three Ms – *Media, Membership and Message*. We will make creative use of electronic media, to build a more inclusive and interactive membership, while advancing a global message aimed at our own community and beyond. These projects will involve the close collaboration of the new Vice-President for Publications, Jennifer Platt, who takes over from Devorah Kalekin-Fishman, and Robert Van Krieken, the new Vice-President for Finance and Membership, who takes over from Jan Fritz.

Let me start with the first “M” – electronic media. Here I propose to pursue 6 initiatives over the next 4 years.

1. *A Newsletter*. I will start an electronic newsletter, called *Global*



Counting the votes - President Michel Wieviorka aided by Izabela Barlinska and Sylvia Trnka.

*Dialogue*. You are reading the first issue. *Global Dialogue* will include regular reports from the President and Vice-Presidents. Members, too, will have a forum to air their activities as well as make suggestions and criticisms. The Newsletter should be a vehicle for two-way communication between the Executive Committee and members from around the world. It will be published in multiple languages under the direction of regional editors.

2. *The E-Bulletin*. Under the continuing editorship of Vineeta Sinha we will be re-organizing our electronic journal, the *E-Bulletin*, giving it a new name, making it widely accessible and far more visible, having its own website, while also widening participation in its production.

3. *Universities in Crisis*. We need to develop a better understanding of the rapidly changing research and teaching context within which we conduct our sociology. To this end, I will be soliciting contributions and give more prominence to the blog, *Universities in Crisis*, which analyzes academic life in all corners of the earth. <http://www.isa-sociology.org/universities-in-crisis/>.

4. *Translations*. A perennial problem in our association involves the

languages that divide us. We have discussed this on multiple occasions, and we will continue to do so. One proposal I and others have put forward is to make a concerted effort to translate important articles from around the world into English, making them widely available to our membership. We also need to find ways of making *International Sociology* and *Current Sociology* accessible to those who teach and write in languages other than English.

5. *Portraits of Sociology*. Over the years the diversity of ISA members has grown in many dimensions. To gain an appreciation of that diversity and better understand what doing sociology means in different contexts, I would like to create a video collection to be posted on our website of the everyday life of sociologists – famous and not -- from different countries.

6. *Global Sociology, Live!* I will start a regular program on global issues with short lectures and/or interviews with sociologists from around the world. It will be streamed as a video and audio recording, and posted on YouTube® with the goal of fostering an international audience for a live broadcast of global sociology.

In all these ways the *media* actually helps create the *membership*, my second “M”. Electronic media can potentially bring us together in new ways, allowing the vast majority of sociologists around the world, many of whom cannot afford to come to world forums and congresses, to participate actively in our community. Electronic media can also fill the hiatus between congresses with an ongoing virtual global conversation. In this way we can lay the foundations of a broader public sphere, internal to our organization but also connecting us to the world beyond.

But electronic media are not by themselves sufficient. We need an engaged, empowered membership that spans the globe. Building such a membership requires complementing virtual communication with face-to-face interaction. Here the ISA has served us well. We already have a very active complex of Research Committees, many meeting on a regular basis, along with National Associations that also have their own meetings, as well as Regional Associations of Latin America, Europe, Asia-Pacific, Africa, Turkic Countries, as well as French-speaking and Lusophone Associations, and more. In addition, the ISA supports two or three Regional Workshops every year.

Building a dynamic global membership also means catering better to Junior Sociologists, particularly the growing ranks of young sociologists in the Global South. This is not easy since Junior Sociologists are pre-occupied with building their careers, and have less time and more limited financial resources than their senior counterparts. But they are our future, and they are over a fifth of our membership. We already have the annual PhD laboratories introduced by Alberto Martinelli as well as the essay competition for Junior Sociologists<sup>1</sup> we hold every four years. I would like to develop other venues and occasions for Junior Sociologists to meet, which would help them integrate into the ISA. I have appointed a Committee, headed by Emma Porio, to examine such possibilities and wherever I travel I will try to hold meetings with early career sociologists.

The two wings of our association – the Research Coordinating Committee representing 55 Research Committees, 3 Thematic Groups, and 3 Working Groups; and the National Association Liaison Committee representing 57 National Associations – each have their own midterm conferences. Here we turn from media and membership to the message. How can we combine our organizational structure with new media to promote the messages of global sociology?

We have already made great strides in this direction. Arturo Rodrí

<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this competition the ISA defines Junior Sociologists as those who have not yet received their PhD or are within 5 years of having received it.

## Challenges of Global Sociology Continued



**Succession of Vice-Presidents for National Associations: Sujata Patel (right) 2002-2006, Michael Burawoy (left) 2006-2010, Tina Uys (center) Tina Uys (2010-2014).**

guez, the former Vice-President for Research, engineered a new departure in creating the first ISA Forum, held in Barcelona in 2008. Margaret Abraham, our new Vice-President for Research will be responsible for the next Forum to be held in 2012. A request for bids for a host country has been widely distributed. In addition to bringing Research Committees together, the Forum's goal is to bring professional sociology to bear on the unique and escalating problems of our time, consolidating links to constituencies beyond the academy.

The Forum's message dovetails with the idea of public sociologies that has captured the imagination of many, generating vigorous debate within our community as to who we are and what we are about. There are now over 20 symposia on public sociology published in different journals around the world – sociologists examining their own field in order to better examine issues of local, national and global concern. However, we cannot think of public sociology outside its relation to professional, critical and policy sociologies. Each type of sociology depends upon and contributes to the other three, even as they crystallize into very different national hierarchies, very different articulations of the four sociologies. Notwithstanding the considerable divergences in national sociologies, there are also convergences. As a result of international rating systems, world rankings of universities, the hegemony of the English language in publishing, and global competition for students, sociologists are being driven into opposed camps -- those oriented to international networks and those grounded in their immediate surroundings, what we have called cosmopolitans and locals.

We must contest such centrifugal pressures and bridge the many geopolitical divides by strengthening the fiber of our global sociological community. We should not weave it from above from the cloth of a single hegemonic sociology, but stitch it together from below through

National Associations, Research Committees or other vehicles that recognize and respect the rich diversity of sociologies. Across the globe there are many institutes, embedded in local communities and with long traditions of practicing public sociology, such as SWOP (Society, Work, and Development Institute, University of Witwatersrand, South Africa), CREA (Centre de Recerca Social i Educativa, University of Barcelona), and CENEDIC (Center for the Study of Citizenship Rights, University of Sao Paulo). These institutes all manage to embed their public engagement in serious research programs, subjecting sociology to continual critique and often undertaking principled interventions in the policy field. Another project I propose is to make the work of these and other such institutes better known, and connecting them to each other in a global network.

Finally, the National Association Liaison Committee sponsors its own conference every four years. Tina Uys, our new Vice-President for National Associations, will be organizing the next one in 2013. The last one was held at Academia Sinica in Taiwan in 2009. It was attended by representatives of 43 countries, and devoted to examining the inequalities and dominations that divide us, that is to apply sociology to ourselves. This exciting conference examined such issues as linguistic domination, unequal material and social resources, privatization of research, and the need to develop alternative theoretical frameworks. The 53 papers have been published in three regional volumes and can be found on line at <http://www.ios.sinica.edu.tw/cna/index.php>.

Raquel Sosa, our new Vice-President for Program, and I would like to use the Taipei discussions as a platform for the 2014 Congress in Yokohama -- Facing an Unequal World: Challenges for a Global Sociology. We will move from the divisions we face within our own community to the staggering inequalities on the world stage. It is not just a matter of recording their multiple dimensions – though that is important in itself. We also need to understand the underlying processes that generate these inequalities, specifically the creation of new forms of exploiting and also excluding labor, the devastating consequences of new financial systems, the destruction of the environment, the privatization of knowledge to name but a few. Explanation is not enough, we can learn much from exploring efforts to reverse these inequalities such as micro-experiments in eco-communities to systems of cooperatives such as Mondragon to the Tobin tax on financial transactions. To every critique we must supply constructive and concrete alternatives.

Many of these proposals were already “on the move” in Gothenburg. We plan to give them coordinated and focused attention in Yokohama. In the meantime a challenging program lies ahead whose progress will be mapped out in the pages of this Newsletter. Most of all, we are counting on your responses, both critical and supportive, to guide and stimulate the Association's trajectory over the next four years.

## Shmuel Eisenstadt Continued

the interpretations that were presented in the *Notebooks* in no uncertain terms as a misreading of reality and a complete misunderstanding of sociology. Of course, this presentation provoked a great deal of discussion, much of it irate. For the journal's editorial team it was an unpleasant run-in. For the author of the ‘outrageous’ book, the opposition was crucial, because he was coming up for tenure, and it was denied.

But this was not the end of the story. Professor Eisenstadt never deserted his convictions that structural functionalism was the only viable way to understand sociology. But he, too, realized in subsequent years, that the perception that Mizrahi immigrants were congenitally culturally retarded could not be taken to be the whole truth. And in the mid-1980s he openly admitted, again in a keynote speech at an ISS annual conference, that ‘we were wrong in many of our analyses’.

As my recent, and sadly abruptly ended, contacts with him showed, the professionalism and the personality of Shmuel Noah Eisenstadt cannot be summed up by citing the honors he collected or by referring to the arguments in which he was embroiled. Throughout his 87 years, Eisenstadt was a sociologist driven by curiosity and gifted with untiring energy that enabled him to keep studying difficult social problems until he felt he had reached a core solution. More, he was endowed with open-mindedness and the intellectual generosity that enabled him to recognize and retract errors that he discovered in his own work.

September 2, 2010 was indeed a sad morning when his secretary had to notify friends that he had passed away in the Shaarei Tzedek Hospital. Her letter ends with a gesture that all of us share: Professor Eisenstadt will be greatly missed.