

GLOBAL DIALOGUE

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Morphogenesis Intensifies

Margaret Archer

The ISA Takes Off

Interview with Izabela Barlinska

Modernity and Islam

Riaz Hassan,
Mohammed Bamyeh,
Jacques Kabbanji

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NEWSLETTER



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> Editorial

The Question of Language

The Second ISA Forum was a great success. 3,600 registered participants in 55 Research Committees (RCs), Thematic Groups (TGs), and Working Groups (WGs) gathered together at the Economics Faculty of the University of Buenos Aires, August 1-4. For the success we have to thank the dedication of Margaret Abraham, ISA Vice-President for Research and President of the Forum; Izabela Barlinska and her staff at the ISA Secretariat; and Alberto Bialakowsky and Alicia Palermo, President and co-President of the Local Organizing Committee. No less important were the organizational skills and devotion of the leaders of the RCs, TGs and WGs who had to cope with overflowing demand for participation on panels. We left Buenos Aires enthused by transcontinental discussions, impressed by Latin American sociology, ready to march forward to the Yokohama Congress in 2014.

The last time we were in Latin America was 1982 when our Congress was held in Mexico City. As Izabela Barlinska recounts in the interview published in this issue of *Global Dialogue*, this was a tempestuous meeting with local participants rightly incensed by English linguistic imperialism. Only after that 1982 Congress did Spanish join French and English as an official language of the ISA. 30 years later we were more successful in managing the language problem, with simultaneous translation of the plenaries, with a Spanish stream of sessions, with multilingual panels, and with everyone helping out in different ways to communicate across languages.

Over the last 30 years our meetings have become more inclusive along many dimensions, not least language. At the same time, English has become even more dominant as a *lingua franca*, increasingly adopted as the preferred second language across the planet. Undoubtedly, this has its benefits, enlarging the scope of sociology, giving many access to a wealth of new opportunities and materials. Yet, the expansion of English has generated its own inequalities: a deeper exclusion of those not familiar with English, and the creation of hierarchies among those who are. Fluency in English, far more than in any other language, brings enormous advantages whether in oral presentations or in publishing articles, and thereby becomes a marker of “distinction” not just globally but, no less important, *within* national scientific communities (where English is a second language).

As universities enter worldwide competition for symbolic status (bringing with it material rewards), so publication in international journals is at a premium. That means not just publishing in English but conducting research within frameworks and paradigms that are often alien to the problems and issues of the author's own society. Palestinian sociologist Sari Hanafi puts it this way: “Publish globally and perish locally OR publish locally and perish globally.” Meeting this challenge means being bilingual, bi-professional, doing double work, speaking to multiple audiences. That goes for the parochial sociologies of the US and UK no less than for others. In these regards the Buenos Aires Forum has set new standards for a global sociology.

> **Global Dialogue can be found in 14 languages**
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> **Submissions should be sent to:** burawoy@berkeley.edu



Margaret Archer, former President of the ISA, presents her vision of sociology that examines the question of the evolving interaction of social structure and social agents, what she calls *morphogenesis*.



Izabela Barlinska continues her fascinating personal account of the growth of the ISA during the last 25 years, starting with the transplantation of the Secretariat to Madrid in 1987 where it has been ever since.



Ernest Gellner, Max Weber and Edward Said all figure in the debate about Modernity and Islam, represented here in the clashing perspectives of Riaz Hassan, Mohammed Bamyeh and Jacques Kabbanji.

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> On the Vocation of Sociology as Morphogenesis Intensifies

by **Margaret Archer**, **École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne, Switzerland, and former ISA President, 1986-1990**



Margaret Archer was the first and only woman President of the ISA, 1986-1990. She has pioneered the study of social change as a process of “morphogenesis” by which she means the serial interaction of social structure and social agents – interaction made possible by cultural understandings. It all began with her studies of the French and English educational systems, showing how they structure responses which in turn reshape those systems. She is the author of many books that elaborate her “realist” social theory, and she has followers the world over. For many years she taught at Warwick University and now directs the Center of Social Ontology at the École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne.

Margaret Archer addressing the International Association for Critical Realism in London in 2008.

Sociology was born seeking answers to four questions: “Where have we come from?,” “What is it like now?,” “Where are we going?,” and “What is to be done?” These are all realist questions: there is a real social world with real properties inhabited by real people who collectively made the past and whose causal powers are already shaping the future. One way in which Weber expressed the vocation of sociology was to discover why things are “so” and not “otherwise.” Those who have made this commitment could never accept Baudrillard’s conclusion: “All that remains to be done is to play with the pieces.” Ibn Khaldun might have called that the hallmark of a decadent civilization.

What is more damaging than postmodernist “playfulness” is actually breaking up the pieces. All social life – micro-, meso- and macroscopic – necessarily comes in a SAC; the relations between “structure,” “agency,” and “culture” are always indispensable to explaining anything social.

Without being fussy about definitions, leave out “structure” and the contexts people face become kaleidoscopically contingent; omit culture and no one has a repertoire of ideas for construing the situations that they confront; without agency we lose activity-dependence as the efficient cause of there being a social order. The vocation of sociology is to account for their interplay and resulting

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configurations. By breaking up the pieces and then pulverizing them, too many social theorists have renounced their vocations and become morticians, writing out death certificates for each component of SAC. Yet, with these “deaths” every part of the world is deprived of its toolkit for explaining why things are so and how they could be otherwise.

Where “structures” are concerned, current “de-structuration” theories replace them with flows. The metaphor of liquidity points to the ultimate uncontrollability of the social. This was heralded by the “runaway,” “juggernaut,” and “risk” societies, but the flood has gained momentum and is floating out into the sea of self-organized phenomena charted by complexity theory. However, unfitness for purpose is glaring in the face of the current economic crisis. This crisis has revealed part of a structure previously occluded. We know more now about the structuring of global finance capital and its intertwining with the multinationals and national governments than ever before 2008. All that is solid has not melted into air, but derivatives, sub-prime mortgages, foreign exchange dealing and debt trading take more understanding than Fordism.

Because the structured positions, relations, and interests are indeed complicated, the media have trivialized and personalized the crisis in terms of bankers’ bonuses and helping some greedy heads to roll. The “Occupy movements” testify to the missing sociological toolkit. Are they opposing austerity measures or global finance capitalism? Whilst London seemed unsure, the Geneva movement holds regular seminars in which to come to grips with the intricacies involved. Associations of heterodox economists have generally been of more assistance than sociologists. Where is our equivalent to Stefano Zamagni’s analysis of the damaging contributions made by the last ten Nobel Prize winners in economics? What has our contribution been to envisaging a civil economy?

This leads to “culture” and the huge role that TINA (“there is no alternative”) has played in the attempt to return to “business as usual.” The “cultural turn” privileged discourse, but the crisis cannot be reduced to the discursive. The hegemony of discourse displaced the concept of ideology, consigning it to the trash can of “zombie” class warfare. With it, the crucial nexus between ideas and interests was lost as the site of legitimation politics. Lost too were ideational sources of critique, not merely as expressive activities (there is plenty of them), but as resources in social mobilization (whose absence empow-

ers TINA). Ironically, as the flows turn into floods, there is a perverse clinging to habit, dispositional habitus and routine action in sociology, despite their incongruity with rapid change. Yet, as the great American pragmatists were the first to stress it, problem situations are the midwives of reflexive innovation.

Finally, and most serious is the death of the subject, erased as Foucault put it more than 40 years ago, “like a face drawn in sand at the edge of the sea.” Since then our human erasure has been repeated by many board-cleaners: persons becoming open slates for self-inscription (Gergen), serially re-invented selves (Beck), and ultimately, demotion to the agential “actant.” With the death of the subject, intentionality, reflexivity, caring, and commitment also make their exit, together with the uniquely human capacity to envisage how the social could be “otherwise.”

Those defending our human liabilities and potentialities have been quite rare; hence Andrew Sayer’s need to write his excellent book on *Why Things Matter to People*. Sociology retains a humanistic strand but its approach to the humane is rather stifled. Thus, loneliness and isolation are not popular themes compared with marginalization and exclusion, but they are just as much scourges of the developed world and among its exports. Sociologists are also more forceful in accentuating our susceptibility to suffering than to flourishing. We have been too timid about advancing a “Sociology of Thriving,” largely limiting ourselves to indisputable biological needs. Why is there no sociology of joy, little mention of exultation or rich contentment and why is happiness left to the metrics of economists? Answering these questions is a predicate of sociology contributing to the definition of a flourishing civil society.

Today, the leading trope is “liquid modernity,” but metaphors explain nothing and often mislead (remember the mechanical, organic and cybernetic similes). Particular theories of change have accentuated one element of SAC alone: “culture” for “Information Society;” “structure” for “Globalized Capitalism” or “Empire;” and “agency” for the “institutionalized individualism” of “Reflexive Modernization.” Each seizes upon one (empirically striking) component, considers it to be the leading part and wrongly equates it with the generative mechanism of change. Instead, we need to examine the SAC synergies and positive feedbacks making social morphogenesis the *process* responsible for intensifying change – in a non-metaphorical manner. ■

> The ISA Takes Off: Interview with Izabela Barlinska

Izabela Barlinska and ISA Vice-President for Research, Margaret Abraham, discussing a serious matter at the Buenos Aires Forum, August, 2012.

In the previous issue of *Global Dialogue* (2.5), we learned how a young Polish student was recruited to the ISA and how she became the indispensable organizing brain of the Association. In this second and final part of the interview, Dr. Barlinska tells us the story of the consolidation of the ISA into the powerful organization it is today.



MB: We left off the story with you in Amsterdam entertaining the famous writer, Ryszard Kapuściński. But, then, in late 1986 Fernando Henrique Cardoso, then ISA President, offered you the job of Executive Secretary if you would move to Madrid to set up a new office. And so that's what you did?

IB: Yes, I arrived here in Madrid in January 1987, all by myself, not speaking a word of Spanish. I had to set up office. I guess you have to be young and inexperienced to take on something like that. I didn't have much of an imagination of what it all meant. I arrived together with a big container, which had my suitcases and ISA papers, to occupy a place in the Spanish Academy of Sciences. ISA arrived at the invitation of the Spanish Minister of Education, but the offices the ISA was to occupy in the Spanish Academy of Sciences were not finished.

MB: You were completely by yourself?

IB: The only help I had was Sergio Contreras, a colleague from Chile who had also worked in the Secretariat in Montreal and Amsterdam. He came to help out because he spoke Spanish. The two of us were trying to open the office. It was tough. I learned my Spanish from building constructors. But the good thing was that I got to know the people in the Ministry of Education because of all the papers that had to be prepared to officially register the ISA. Since the secretaries were not able to speak with me in Spanish they would let me go to the bosses. So I got to know and built friendships with people in high positions in the Socialist government, I used to go trekking in the mountains with friends from the generation that was taking over power with Felipe González.

MB: For them you must have been quite a curiosity, coming from Poland.

IB: Poland was very famous in those days. Everybody understood the importance of Solidarity as a force fighting against an authoritarian regime, as they had done in Spain. So Poland, or at least the opposition, had a good reputation among those socialists.

MB: So basically you were on your own. Cardoso's term of office had come to an end and then came Margaret Archer.

IB: Margaret was elected President in 1986 at the World Congress in New Delhi. She was the first and, so far, only woman President of the ISA. We worked together and built up a long-lasting friendship.

MB: So what was the most difficult challenge when you came here?

IB: It took time to settle in and organize the office in a new country. Once we touched ground, so to speak, we started organizing the 1990 World Congress of Sociology in Madrid. That meant a presence of a big contingent of Latin Americans with the consequence that Spanish finally became the third language of the Association.

MB: Only then? I thought it was in Mexico in 1982.

IB: Mexico faced the protest – everybody was protesting that the Congress was not in Spanish. But the recognition of Spanish happened much later. So it was as if a new continent was joining the ISA by the very fact that the Secretariat moved to Madrid. We didn't have any fancy technology – the first computer was already in the office but it was all very, very different. And the difficulty here was that while, on the whole, Spanish location and people were most friendly to both the congress and the Association, there were however some Spanish people who wanted to... how shall I say... use the Association for their own career and their own ends. And that became quite unpleasant for everybody. I think ISA suffered. The Madrid Congress itself had a lot of tension and not only because it was held in three different buildings of the University Complutense in the boiling heat of Madrid, with no air conditioning.

MB: This was the Congress at which the Indian sociologist, T.K. Oommen, was elected President?

IB: That's right. These election results brought real trouble for the ISA since some of the local sociologists were hoping a Spaniard would be elected as President. One of the unexpected consequences was that the ISA was crossed off the register at the Ministry of Interior Affairs where it was formally registered and then we were expelled from the offices at the Spanish Academy of Sciences. So for some time the office had to migrate to this very terrace where we are talking.

MB: So once again the ISA had to move – how was this resolved?

IB: Well, we were lucky that the Faculty of Political Sciences and Sociology at the University Complutense generously offered us an office. The support of Miguel Ángel Ruiz de Azúa, President of the National Union of Sociologists and Political Scientists, was inestimable. It was a good move in the sense that it is better for the Secretariat to be at the university. There are more colleagues – sociologists, students and an active academic milieu.

MB: But how did the ISA survive materially?

IB: You have to understand that ISA arrived in Spain on the invitation of the Minister of Education and the agreement was that the Secretariat would receive funding in the form of subventions from the Spanish government, as we had in Montreal and Amsterdam. And that's how it continued in Spain for six years. The Spanish government was very generous. But then that money was finished. And there was a big conversation in the ISA – what do we do? And it's not that there was any other offer in the wings waiting for our acceptance. At the same time the Internet appears, email appears. And then everybody realizes it doesn't really matter where you are. So instead of moving it was decided we would stay in Spain. And we stayed. But mind you, since then, ISA operations have been absolutely self-financing.

MB: That's impressive!

IB: The reason was good housekeeping and a very limited number of staff. Of course, in those days there were fewer activities and fewer members. But it represented a big change in the life of the ISA, because we stopped moving the Secretariat every four years.

MB: It also meant you could build up your own staff, too?

IB: Yes, indeed. Nacho (José Ignacio Reguera) has been with us since before the 1990 Congress. Again I met him through Polish connections. When we were at the Academy of Sciences I had a tiny little Fiat with a Polish registration plate. One day I found a little note on the windscreen, written in Polish: "I am a visiting professor from Poland in the Institute of Physics; maybe we can meet." I say why not. It turned out to be Jacek Karwowski, professor from the University of Torun. We became friends immediately. With him, his friends and his family we went discovering Spain because, don't forget, at that time, I thought I'd be in Spain only for four years. That's how I found Nacho who was working in that same Institute of Physics.

MB: And he brought the ISA into the world of personal computers, email, and Internet?

IB: Nacho has been building the database for the ISA. He knows everything. He is very good, loyal, caring, and creative. An important acquisition for the ISA, especially in the modern world of computers and social media. I tell him what is needed, and he delivers. We are on the same wavelength.

MB: Perhaps, this is a good point for you to say something about the daily work of the Secretariat.

IB: The everyday routine is a tedious housekeeping, with a lot of details. But, as they say the devil is in the details. It might sound boring, but at the same time you should not lose the perspective.

MB : The perspective of...

IB: Of the Association, of where it should go and why people contact us, even if it is only to change an address. But it is crucial to update that address because on the following day we may get a request from another colleague who would like to get in touch with the author of an interesting abstract he has seen on the ISA Congress website.

MB: You're putting everybody in touch with everybody else.

IB: Indeed, it's an exchange network for many people which has been built thanks to a daily routine throughout many years. It includes now 5,000 active members plus another 3,000 contacts in the database. And then there is also a complex structure of over 60 Research Committees, Working and Thematic Groups, 60 national sociological associations, institutional members. It is a huge potential and it is important to use it and address it properly.

MB: What do you mean?

IB: ISA Executive Committee defines the association's goals and policies and the Secretariat has to implement them. One has to remember that most of our members are not native speakers of English so we've got to be careful in formulating the messages, in constructing the ISA website. The more technically sophisticated it gets, the more difficult it becomes to access in countries where electricity supply is limited. One should never forget about those differences and inequalities. It is indeed a very special feeling we have working in our small office in Madrid but being surrounded by people from all over the world. This awareness of being able to help others is very valuable for us.

MB: Right. So how many people are there?

IB: Four in total; some part-time, some full time. And although each of us has a special responsibility (like membership payments, database and website updates, announcing conference programs, etc.) we have been lucky to create a team concerned with constructing this international network of sociologists worldwide.

MB: Yes, and in this you have been incredibly successful. Presidents of the ISA must have played a role in this too. So let us return to the historical sequence. Oommen was President between 1990 and 1994 and during his reign you had to cope with losing your office. And then comes the Bielefeld Congress of 1994 when Immanuel Wallerstein was elected.

IB: With Immanuel a big change came to the ISA because he brought the Internet and email to the everyday life of the Association; it was of course the time when it all started in the world. Immanuel used it and was very active. He had good ideas, he wanted that job and for good purpose. These were important years for the ISA. And it was very interesting to work with him. But, there were good days before. In the days of Margaret Archer – which were tough because of the local situation – we nevertheless established ISA journal *International Sociology* and the World-wide Competition for Junior Sociologists. So even in those difficult times new things were begun that also carried on.

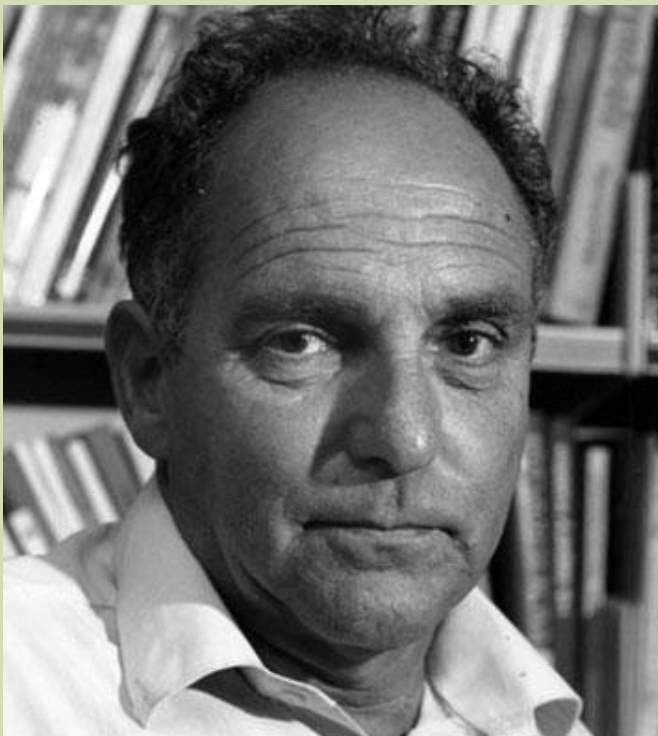
MB: I guess that's the trick – to start new ones and to continue old ones.

IB: : If they're good, they stay.

MB: Thank you, Izabela, for granting me this interview. I know you haven't been keen to enter the limelight like this. You have always tried to work in the shadows, but the members of the ISA have loved hearing from you, about the history of the ISA, and what it's been like these last 25 years. You can ask any ISA President and he or she will openly acknowledge just how dependent is the ISA on Izabela Barlinska. So, on behalf of all the members of the ISA – present, past and future – I'd like to offer a most sincere thanks for all you have done, all you do. ■

> Why Does the Muslim World Suffer from Deficits of Freedom, Development and Knowledge?

by Riaz Hassan, Institute of South Asian Studies, National University of Singapore



Ernest Gellner (1925-1995): "Islam is, of the three great Western monotheisms, the one closest to modernity."

In his seminal book *Muslim Society*, Ernest Gellner boldly asserts: "By various obvious criteria – universalism, scripturalism, spiritual egalitarianism, the extension of full participation in the sacred community, not to one, or some, but to all, and the rational systemization of social life – Islam is, of the three great Western monotheisms, the one closest to modernity" (Gellner, 1983: 7). He goes on to say that had the Arabs won at Poitiers and gone on to conquer and Islamize Europe, we should all be admiring Ibn Weber's *The Kharejite Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* that would conclusively demonstrate how the modern rational spirit and its expression in business and bureaucracy could only have arisen in consequence of neo-Kharejite puritanism

in northern Europe and not if Europe had stayed Christian "given the inveterate proclivity of that faith to a baroque, manipulative, patron-ridden, quasi animistic and disorderly vision of the world" (Gellner, 1983: 7).

But that's not how it turned out. Today, any observer would have little difficulty assembling volumes of data from the United Nations and World Bank Development Reports to demonstrate the acute development and freedom deficits in the Muslim world. This has given rise to a contentious debate about the causes of these deficits. The culprits identified by social scientists include Islamic theology and culture, oil, Arab-specific culture and institutions, Palestinian-Israeli conflict, "desert terrain and institutions," weak civil society and the subservient status of women.

> Development Deficit

Perhaps the most contested debates on the causes of economic backwardness and democratic deficit in the Muslim world center on whether Islam is the main cause of these twin deficits. In regard to economic backwardness the evidence shows that before the balance of power had shifted after the European expansion in the 17th century, the Middle East was economically just as dynamic as Europe. Muslim merchants were just as successful in carrying their commerce and faith to far corners of the world as their European counterparts. According to economic historian Angus Maddison, in the year 1000 AD the Middle East's share of the world's Gross Domestic Product was larger than Europe's – 10 percent compared with 9 percent. By 1700 the Middle East's share had fallen to just 2 percent and Europe's had risen to 22 percent. Among Western scholars, the standard explanations for this decline are that Islam is hostile to commerce and bans usury. But these are unsatisfactory because Islamic scripture is more pro-business than Christian texts, and as for usury the Torah and Bible say the same. The Prophet Muhammad and his first wife Khadija were both successful mer-

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chants. Many Muslims, however, blame their economic backwardness on Western imperialism. But then why did a once mighty civilization succumb to the West?

Turkish-American economist Timur Kuran (2011) persuasively discards these and related explanations. He marshals impressive empirical evidence to show that what slowed the economic development in the Middle East was not colonialism or geography or incompatibility between Islam and capitalism but laws covering business partnerships and inheritance practices. These institutions had benefited the Middle Eastern economy in the early centuries of Islam but starting around the tenth century they began to act as a drag on economic development by slowing or blocking the emergence of central features of modern economic life – private capital accumulation, corporations, large-scale production and impersonal exchange.

Islamic partnership, the main organizational vehicle for businesses of the Muslim merchant classes, could be ended by one party at will and even successful ventures were terminated on the death of a partner. As a result most businesses remained small and short-lived. Most durable and successful business partnerships in the Muslim world were operated by local non-Muslims. Inheritance customs hindered business consolidation because, when a Muslim merchant died, his estate was split among surviving family members which prevented capital accumulation and stymied long-lasting capital-intensive companies. According to Kuran, then, the resulting organizational stagnation prevented the Muslim mercantile community from remaining competitive with its Western counterparts.

> Democratic Deficit

Research by the Harvard economist Eric Chaney (2011) debunks the theories that its root cause is Islam or Arab cultural patterns, oil, Arab-Israeli conflict or desert ecology. Chaney shows the democratic deficit, as reflected in the prevalence of autocracies in the Muslim-Arab world, is real. But it is a product of the long-run influence of control structures developed in the centuries following the Arab conquests. In the ninth century rulers across this region began to use slave armies as opposed to the native population to staff their armies. These slave armies allowed rulers to achieve independence from local military and civilian groups and helped remove constraints on the sovereign in pre-modern Islamic societies. In this autocratic environment, religious leaders emerged as the only check on the power of the rulers. This historical institutional configuration which divided the power between the sovereign backed by his slave army and religious elites was not conducive to producing democratic institutions. Instead, religious and military elites worked together to develop and perpetuate what Chaney calls “classical” institutional equilibrium – which is often referred to as Islamic law – designed to promote and protect their interests.

Ostensibly, religious leaders devised “equilibrium institutions” to protect the interests of the general public but in effect this institutional configuration cast an autocratic shadow across centuries. Rulers came to rely on slave armies, freeing themselves from dependence on civil institutions. Religious leaders cooperated with the army to design a system that proved hostile to alternative centers of power. This concentration of power and weak civil societies are the enduring legacy of this historical institutional framework in regions conquered by Arab armies and which remained under Islamic rule from 1100 AD onwards.

However, regions incorporated into the Islamic world after they were conquered by non-Arab Muslim armies, such as India and the Balkans and where Islam spread by conversion (e.g. Indonesia, Malaysia, and sub-Saharan Africa), did not adopt this classical framework. Their institutions continued to be shaped by local elites which preserved their political and cultural continuity. Consequently, the democratic deficit has remained an enduring legacy in the Arab world and in lands conquered by the Arab armies that remained under Islamic rule from 1100 AD onwards. But in the Islamic countries incorporated into the Islamic world by non-Arab Muslim armies or by conversions, democratic developments have followed a more progressive trajectory.

> Knowledge Deficit

In the recent 2012 *Times Higher Education* world rankings of universities, not a single university from 49 Muslim majority countries with a population of 1.2 billion or 17 per cent of world’s population found a place in the top 200 universities in the world. This has been a recurrent pattern over many years and signifies a serious academic and intellectual crisis. By comparison the United States, with less than 5% of the world population, had 75 universities in the top 200.

Several factors can account for this crisis, the most important being the meager resources allocated by Muslim countries to research and development. The science budgets of the Organization of Muslim Countries (OIC) are near the bottom of the world league. According to a recent estimate, based on the UNESCO and the World Bank data, between 1996 and 2003 the average annual research and development for OIC countries spending was 0.34% of GDP, much lower than the global average of 2.36% over the same period. Many OIC countries, particularly the richest, spend more on armaments than on science or health. Six of the world’s top ten military spenders as a share of public spending are OIC countries: Kuwait, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Syria and Oman spent over 7% of their GDP on arms. While the science spending is among the lowest, spending on education is more variable. Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Morocco, Tunisia and Iran were among the top 25 spenders on education in 2002 (Butler, 2006).

According to the World Bank's "education index" of the poorest performers in 2002, 15 are OIC countries including several African countries, Bangladesh and Pakistan. The low investment in science and technology is also reflected in poor scientific outputs including low levels of scientific articles and number of researchers. In 2003, the world average for production of research papers per million of population was 137. The OIC average was only 13. Not a single OIC country reached the world average. Moreover, with the exception of Turkey and Iran, the numbers of papers produced by 24 OIC countries for which the data are available have either remained flat or declined. Turkey's publication rate has grown from around 500 in 1988 to 6,000 in 2003. In the case of Iran, from a low base of less than 100 papers per year, ten years ago this number has increased to nearly 2,000 (Butler, 2006).

Part of the obvious explanation for these conditions is related to inadequate public investment in education and R&D. But an important cause of their present predicament can also be attributed to prevailing cultural and political practices. Countries like Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, China and India have taken notable strides in the fields of science and technology and are now among the major emerging economies. Institutions of higher learning thrive in societies with a robust civil society based on institutional and ideological pluralism strong enough to counterbalance and resist the power of the central institutions of the state over power and truth. This is unfortunately lacking in Muslim societies. Most of them have weak and underdeveloped civil societies.

In many Muslim societies there is another, growing obstacle. They are coming under increasing pressure from religious fundamentalist movements to impose epistemologies compatible with their versions of Islamic doctrines that are generally hostile to critical rational thought. This is stifling the development of conditions conducive to the development and growth of vibrant universities. A robust civil society is a prerequisite for the development of countries based not on the tyranny of strongly held convictions and beliefs but on a social order based on doubt and compromise. Science and technology prosper only under conditions that privilege the rule of reason and nature.

In the knowledge economy of the third industrial revolution, the creation of wealth will rely primarily on "brain industries." The OIC countries produce hardly any patents and are among the lowest exporters of high-tech products. These scientific, technological and intellectual conditions are going to have far-reaching socioeconomic repercussions. The intellectual stagnation of Muslim countries threatens to imprison a significant proportion of humanity in permanent servitude. There is a great urgency to create and nurture conditions promoting academic excellence and to develop strategies to arrest the decline of higher learning. Only this will ensure an honorable survival of future generations of Muslims. This is probably the greatest challenge facing the governments of Muslim countries today.

What are the implications of this for the Arab Spring? Is history destiny? There are some optimistic developments which suggest that it may be possible for the Arab world to escape from its autocratic past. The region has undergone structural changes such as increasing levels of education, urbanization, and industrialization over the past 60 years that have made it more receptive and conducive to democratic change than any time in the past. The uprisings of the Arab Spring that have swept the Arab world since 2011 are unprecedented in the region's history. This does not preclude the emergence of political equilibrium in countries like Egypt and Yemen, similar to the historical equilibrium. On the other hand, countries like Turkey, Albania, Bangladesh, Malaysia, and Indonesia are more likely to defy history than Arab countries but even here poverty and weak civil institutions remain obstacles to democratic change. ■

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> Response to Hassan: On Reducing Complexity to Deficits

by **Mohammed A. Bamyeh**, University of Pittsburgh, USA, and Editor of the *International Sociology Review of Books*



Max Weber (1864-1920). "Ever since Max Weber, the question as to why other people in the world have not become like Europe, has only lost rather than gained in conceptual clarity."

As should be obvious to anyone, "freedom," "development," and "knowledge" deficits are quite distinct concepts. They are also complex: how one evaluates them depends entirely on how one defines them, and this can vary significantly. Discussing any single one of these concepts satisfactorily in a single short article is hard to imagine, much less all of them in the same short breath, across ten centuries and while covering the entire massive Muslim world. It is, therefore, not surprising that Riaz Hassan not only offers nothing new here, but unfortunately confuses the picture even further. And he does that precisely in a revolutionary period when fresh perspectives are most needed, and also possible. After all, such perspectives could draw on the ever increasing wealth of current sociological and anthropological knowledge of Muslim societies, movements and institutions.

Instead of referencing this new literature, as one would expect, Hassan revives old views that have time and again proved themselves to be exhausted. To begin with, ever since Max Weber, the question as to why other people in the world have not become like Europe,

has only lost rather than gained in conceptual clarity. This question does not begin by considering how different societies may have developed functioning forms of civil order, from which we might actually learn something. Rather the question begins by approaching them as a "problem" to be explained, since they are not like Europe. And even if this is granted as a legitimate question, the possible answer, as Hassan duly notes, can vary immensely, and therefore one has to approach it with care, nuance and patience. For example, when social historians of the Muslim world know well that Islamic economic laws were followed in diverse ways, and were openly violated, sometimes with an explicit license from the religious establishment itself, it is hard to grant that Timur Kuran explains adequately the entire history of Islamic economics: a simple look at the text of Islamic law does not tell us how it was applied (or not) *in practice* within highly different environments and across different time periods (for more nuanced and illuminating accounts, see especially Gran, Abu-Lughod, Owen, among many others).

The Muslim world is large, old, complex, and tremendously varied. Those

who sought to study the world empirically as a unit tended to discover that the more data they assembled, the more varied it appeared. For example, when Moataz Fattah (2008) sought to study Muslim attitudes toward democracy worldwide, he came to what I think should have been the starting premise, namely that the Muslim world is a number of different worlds. Hassan himself cites evidence that the Muslim world is diverse and cannot be taken as a coherent unit for what he himself is examining, yet strangely this observation leaves no effect on his analysis. Equally strange, he remains with the notion that Islam is somehow connected to or responsible for a knowledge deficit, even as he cites two recent exceptions to that trend (Turkey and Iran). Those exceptions remain unexplained, like everything else in Hassan's outline that does not support grand but ultimately simplistic claims.

And when we have very substantial evidence that shows colonialism to be the fundamental turning point at which economic prospects shifted decisively away, not only from Muslims but from the whole colonial world, in the direction of Europe, Hassan simply cites approvingly, without any discussion, those authors who deny that colonialism should be blamed for anything. When other evidence shows a divergence within the Muslim world with regard to democratic prospects, Hassan explains that divergence by endorsing another highly problematic thesis by Eric Chaney: the democratic deficit among Muslims is to be traced to Arab political culture and Arab social structures.

Astonishingly, this thesis (substantiated by a truncated historical narrative that can actually be read in the opposite way from Hassan's reading, via Chaney) is mentioned as a sufficient explanation for the lack of Arab democracy, precisely at a time when the Arab world is witnessing the greatest democratic revolutions in modern history! It is also mentioned without any consideration of any of the global

public opinion polls on democratic attitudes since 2001, which tended to show the general affinity of Muslims for the basic attributes associated with democracy. For example, a series of Gallup polls covering Muslim majority countries that house 80% of the world's Muslims, showed strong support for such concepts as political freedom, liberty, fair judicial systems, and freedom of speech, and that on most key indicators, Muslim attitudes to democracy and liberty differed little especially from those of US respondents (see Esposito and Mogahed, 2008). All this evidence is ignored, in favor of poor empirical support for poorly defined propositions.

Overall, when one seeks to explain modern conditions in terms of historical traditions, one has to be exceptionally careful in ways that are not in evidence here. Those who lived in the 13th century, for example, could scarcely be blamed for their lack of commitment to liberal values as we understand them today. But they could be analyzed in terms of what worked *for them*. Until modernity (however we periodize it), the question of social order for Muslims and non-Muslims was a question of systems of mutual obligations that had evolved over centuries, for which the state was far less central than it is today (see for instance Lapidus, 2002). Thus the fact that a certain group, for instance religious scholars, occupied a key role in old civic cultures is not something that can be meaningfully discussed in terms of modern democracy. It can be meaningfully discussed in terms of how Muslims cultivated flexible and multiple civic cultures that organized social life under different circumstances and time periods.

If history is to play a part at all in our analysis, we would need a rich historical sociology and not simplistic formulas. The former would show how Muslims have always striven to give meaning to their social life under highly different environments, and also how they have cultivated a "convivial" (as Olivier Roy has

called it) sense of religion itself. That convivial religion had included important liberties and a principled acceptance of diverse rather than uniform tradition. Muslims did not need to learn about pluralism, for example, from Europe. But this principle, along with other liberties associated with the convivial tradition that had been the norm everywhere for centuries, came into disuse precisely as Europe came to Muslims in the form of "modern" colonial administrations, succeeded by strong postcolonial states. This authoritarianism is modern, not ancient.

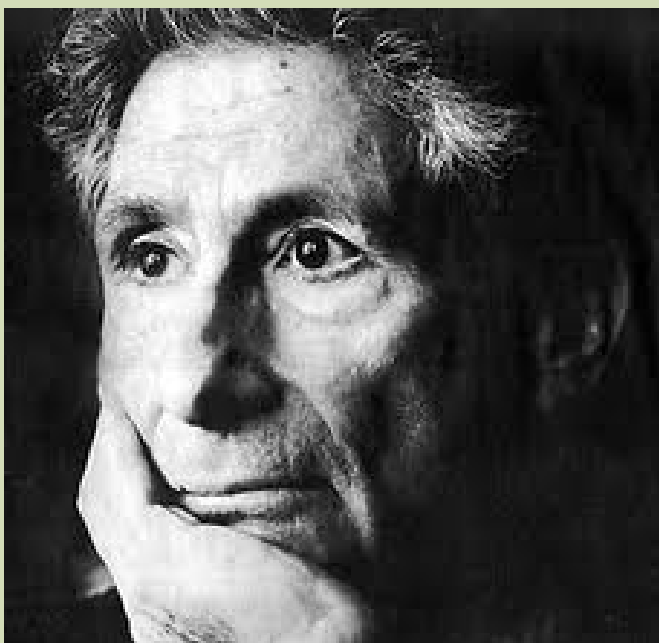
Understanding this rich historical picture would give us a meaningful historical sociology that also has some bearing on present attitudes. But nothing is less illuminating than denouncing the ancients for not having developed a democratic culture, or for not having prepared us for it, or for not having become Europeans early enough. ■

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> Response to Hassan: The Limits of “Orientalism”

by Jacques E. Kabbanji, Lebanese University, Beirut, Lebanon



Edward Said (1935-2003). “As Said formulates it [...] the West stands on the side of modernity, while the East is struggling with its religions (Islam in particular) and its history.”

Since the end of 2010 popular uprisings have sprung up in rural as well as urban areas and spread to many Arab countries. While it is still difficult to predict their final outcome one thing is becoming clear: they express the determination of the populations in the Arab world to reject despotism and authoritarianism as destiny. They also express, partially at least, the affirmation of a common political actor: the “people.” Even though spontaneity is a characteristic of these uprisings, they are also distinctive in their social and political “massiveness.” As such, the “people” have emerged from the “state of powerlessness” to which they have been condemned by many scholars of Arab societies. This, among other features, constitutes a challenge to the most deep-rooted academic traditions in the study of Islam and Arab societies.

Since the early 1960s these traditions have been labeled “Orientalism.” Although this term has spread with the publication of Edward Said’s *Orientalism* in 1978, the idea goes back to 1963 when Anwar Abdel-Malek published a pioneering article with the title “Orientalism in Crisis.” Orientalism points to an intellectual attitude which approaches Oriental societies with a Western perspective. Their history and present are understood and analyzed as exceptional and self-generating. As Said formulates it, Orientalism marks the difference between the West and the East in cultural and essentialist terms. The West stands on the side of modernity, while the East is struggling with its religions (Islam in particular) and its history.

Ernest Gellner and Bernard Lewis, two prominent analysts who studied Islam and “Muslim” societies, represent this Orientalist vision of Arab societies. In their view Islamic culture (and ideology) and Islam’s peculiar history are crucial for understanding “Muslim society,” making both appear to be unique. Lewis, for example, is unambiguous in his judgment: “Many remedies have been tried – weapons and factories, schools and parliaments – but none achieved the desired result. Here and there they brought some alleviation, and even – to limited elements of the population – some benefit. But they failed to remedy or even to halt the deteriorating imbalance between Islam and the Western world.”¹ According to Gellner, Muslim society is a weak state with a strong culture.

Therefore, the perception of Muslim societies is based on a specific approach: it is the one that takes religion itself, Islam in this case, as the key concept in the analysis of these societies. The same approach is not applied to non-Muslim societies because they are not defined by their religious “identity.” Thus, in the scholarly discourse one is unlikely to find “Christian societies” or “Buddhist societies” as an analytical category, except in particular ethnographies. The truth of this reduction of Muslim societies to religion requires comparative evidence. Further-

more, Weber, who has inspired many scholars in their approach to society and religion, says specifically that no economic ethic has ever been determined solely by religion. Why, then, is this rule applied only to societies other than “Muslim” societies?

Having shown the inadequacy of the “essentialist” or “Orientalist” view we still have to ask what prevents “Muslim” societies from achieving the turn to modernity? This is usually the point of departure for approaches that see development as linear: if industrial capitalism has succeeded in the West (and other societies as well) so why has it not succeeded in the Muslim-Arab societies?

To answer this question some scholars use the answers provided by international organizations. Thus, according to Hassan “economic backwardness” and “democratic deficit” are found especially in Arab societies. The economic backwardness is not due to colonialism or geography or incompatibility but to the “Islamic law” in matters of partnership and inheritance. But then, we should ask, why the same societies that started applying positive laws since the 19th century, in the case of the Ottoman Empire (Turkey) and, to a less extent, Iran, and in the 20th century for other societies, have also failed to overcome this backwardness?

Turning to the “democratic deficit,” Hassan argues, it is the product of control structures developed in the centuries following the Arab conquests. Hence, “this concentration of power and weak civil societies are the enduring legacy of this historical institutional framework” (Chaney as cited by Hassan). This argument has its problems. First of all, recent history does not help it. Development in major historical cases has not been primarily the product of democratic structures or “a robust civil society.” Contrary to what we have been informed, South Korea as well as Brazil (and Turkey to some extent) have been forced to go through the industrialization process under dictatorial regimes, with a huge cost in workers’ life and rights. Furthermore, what can one say about China? Does it fit the “Western” perspective of “democracy and civil society” as a *sine qua non* condition for development?

Second, “tyranny of strongly held convictions and beliefs” does not impair “development or modernity.” It suffices to look at what is happening in the field of “knowledge and higher education” in Arab countries. American universities, or at least the American curriculum and ways of teaching, are growing everywhere in the Arab region. American English is the hegemonic language and the hegemonic value system. All this is happening within undemocratic structures of power and the tyranny of rigid beliefs. Furthermore, Islam, as religion and as ideology, seems to coexist well with this state of affairs.

Obviously Islam is central to the perception of “Muslim” and Arab worlds. But unfortunately it is mainly seen as an ideology. Thus, instead of allowing an unbiased approach to studying society it becomes an obstacle. Methodologically speaking, the Arab world is part of a global system that admits of no strictly national base for development. This has led to “revolutionary” upsurges from below: open markets, ideas circulating more or less freely, homogenization of institutions and workplaces. Any development process inside this system is limited and Islam can be mobilized by political and economic powers to justify the existence and persistence of these limits – powers that also determine the way Islam is present in the market as well as in the public sphere. On the other hand, Arab revolts have shown that major popular demands have no necessary religious, i.e. Islamic, meaning. On the contrary the core democratic, political and economic demands express a clear preference for a secular state that provides social justice. This is why the attempt at the “Islamicization” of the post-uprisings period is paradoxically made in the name of social justice and economic reform rather than the full application of Islamic law. The uprisings have liberated the political will of ordinary people, opening a new terrain for new challenges. As social scientists, we have to sharpen our analytical tools since the old ones, especially those provided by Orientalism, have already demonstrated their inadequacy. ■

¹ Lewis, B. (2002) *What Went Wrong?* New York: Oxford University Press, pp.151-2.

> The Gender Question in Contemporary Russia

by Anna Temkina, European University at St. Petersburg, Russia



The feminist punk group, Pussy Riot, performs an anti-Kremlin punk prayer on the altar of Moscow's Cathedral of Christ the Savior.

Over the past two decades, researchers and activists have discussed whether it is appropriate to use the term “gender” in the Russian context. They often found themselves in a blind alley, trying to grasp what the gender agenda could be, since Russian women are generally not discriminated against, abortion is legal, women have economic independence and social support. There is even some political representation of women. Of course, there are still many problems but by and large, for most people, these are personal problems, i.e. they are not simultaneously political issues.

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However, over the last year, the gender agenda has been assuming a new and ominous shape and we are, therefore, interested in what this means, and why it is happening. Note, however, that so far it has not reached the public eye.

> **The Moral Threat of Gender Equality**

So, firstly, the term “gender.” Unobtrusively, with many pundits unaware, “gender” has quietly entered political discourse. And not just in those areas where it seems to be most relevant, for example in discussing legislation around gender equality. Most significantly, gender entered where it was not expected and was not widely noticed, namely, in religious discourse. Moreover, it entered with a sharp negative connotation, as a symbol of foreignness and the West. It was seen as a threat and a challenge.

This was manifest during the Duma discussion of the Law on Gender Equality. This law, which will probably be adopted in due course, attracted little attention and had little influence, but in religious circles it was seen as a major threat. Equality is not rejected, but, so say religious officials, it is not appropriate for a statutory authority to rule on the question of gender. So they consider “gender” a threat even though the law, if passed, will have little influence and will only be applied on a voluntary basis.

What, then, is this threat that “gender” poses, conceptually and practically? In the second decade of the 21st century, why and to whom is gender equality so dangerous when it has long been the norm in many (but not all) sectors of Russian society? Ironically, gender equality has become a political issue, not because there is not enough (although that is also true) and one has to fight for it, but because the forces which regard it as a moral threat have turned it into a political issue.

> **Symbolic Politics of Restricting Abortion**

Second, unnoticed by the general public, at the end of 2011, there was a discussion about amendments to the Law on Health Protection, aimed at significantly limiting access to abortion. This prompted some feminist organizations to mount a campaign on the Internet and even taking it to the streets. In the end most of the amendments were rejected although the reasons for this are not entirely clear. Certainly, a group of protestors with placards could not have had such political influence. Discussion of the amendments was hard – there was much irrationality, moralizing, incoherence and terminological ambiguity. Demographers, sociologists, and doctors explained once again that reducing the number of abortions is best accomplished through the promotion of modern contraception rather than prohibition. But this is hardly news.

The gender agenda – and the issue of abortion is at the center of the agenda, focusing as it does on the collision of women’s rights and the rights of the unborn child as well as the collision between private and public control and responsibility – is gaining ever more symbolic power, but also ever greater potential for real consequences. Such laws concerning abortion have economic and social dimensions, with different consequences for different classes. The lowest strata of society are far more affected by such laws than the higher strata who are more accustomed to using contraception and, in any case, can always pay for an abortion. Still, the abortion controversy is another potent item on the “gender agenda.” Thus, in September 2012 St. Petersburg parliamentarians discussed possible changes to the Constitution that would vest a human embryo with human rights.

> **Equating Homosexuality and Pedophilia**

Third, there is the law banning publicity that promotes homosexuality and pedophilia among persons under age 18. According to this law supporting pedophilia is seen in the same light as supporting homosexuality. Gay pride is one example of publicizing homosexuality that should be outlawed. Signed in some regions, including in St. Petersburg in 2012, this law suffers from the same lack of logic and the same terminological ambiguities as the previous two. It does not seem to be legally well-founded and has prompted discussion and protest on the Internet.

Most important, it has symbolic meaning. Perhaps the law can never be applied, but it can still have serious practical consequences. It is well designed to stigmatize both pedophiles and homosexuals as equally corrupting of children. Practically, it creates opportunities to prosecute certain politically “non-reliable” homosexuals or LGBT groups. At the same time such a law complicates the practical struggle against the real and complex issues involving pedophilia and violence. It suggests that the supporters of the law are not well versed in its subject, nor in the relevant scientific research. There is no reason why it should be passed now or why in this particular version, making it reminiscent of the laws of the Stalin era, albeit in a milder form. It does not generate any broad public interest or mobilization.

> **From Irrational Law to State Coercion**

The promotion of a “gender agenda” through these laws falls into a familiar pattern. Thus, we can recall earlier attempts to condemn the civil marriage by the State Duma Commission on Childhood, Maternity and Family. In this way sexuality, reproduction, equality all become gender threats. But why? And for whom? What’s it all about? Is it about reducing the number of abortions or condemning them? Is it to strengthen the family or is the goal to return the woman to the family, limiting her

other options? Is it to develop a pragmatic social policy through which many women can give birth to more children? Is the idea to eliminate pedophilia? Is the idea to take into account the complexity of the world, the impossibility and inefficiency of simple solutions? Is there an attempt to involve experts and arrange public discussions? Or is it about forging a discursive symbolic weapon without concern for providing resources or for material consequences? Such a symbolic weapon requires only moral arguments about spirituality and Russian particularities, and legal prohibitions then follow “automatically.” A minimal legal logic with solid arguments is missing.

Where arguments are not sufficient, force fills the vacuum. Formulating “gender” as a threatening Other, something dark, fuzzy, vague, and without boundaries, justifies a reaction that is also menacing, dark and unclear. Force (just like law) can be applied selectively. We have a lot of such experience in our history.

In 2012 Pussy Riot, a feminist punk-rock collective that stages politically provocative impromptu performances in Moscow, entered the political scene and highlighted a cluster of oppositions – the secular *versus* the religious, tradition *versus* the postmodern and feminism, and even presenting itself in opposition to Putin. They raised questions about who, what and how to punish, and about limits to the use of force.

A parallel cluster of contradictions, with opposite political meaning, can already be found in spiritual and religious discourse. Indeed, they were present in the discussions of all three laws referred to above, but they went unnoticed by the public. The Pussy Riot action, however, was much more visible and was greeted with extreme reactions in the press and with public retribution against this punk-rock collective. Three members of the collective were convicted of hooliganism and sentenced to two years in prison. Force prevails where arguments are inadequate and, most importantly, in the absence of clear limits to the influence of religious institutions in a secular state – specifically, limits to their influence on social policies with regard to public health, reproduction, sexuality, and gender.

> For a Genuine Gender Politics

In Russia numerous studies have shown that the effects of present-day social policies supporting mothers

are very weak (including demographic policies that offer monetary incentives for a second child with the goal of augmenting the population) and, moreover, they do not serve the real needs of young women and their families. Women criticize the government for the inadequate organization of reproductive and child health care as well as schooling for their children. Thus, having long since fallen outside the scope of wage employment, or refusing to have children (or at least more than one), many women, alone or with their family, spend much of their time fighting against the bureaucracy to receive adequate support for their children. In the future, they, like their mothers, will have to struggle alone with the problem of caring for their elderly and sick parents. They do not receive and don’t expect adequate support from the state, although paradoxically they don’t give up hope for some dispensation. They are only too aware of their predicament, but the question is whether they see it in terms of gender inequality, and under what conditions they might problematize their continuing dependence on state, male partners and kinship networks.

So far, mass discontent of modern city dwellers has not been linked to the gendered character of social problems and social policy. However, it is clear that potential solutions to such complex and resource-intensive problems require a strong and sound social and family (i.e. gender) policy, and effective participation of citizens in decision-making. But young city women, who do not trust the state and do not want to rely on it, nevertheless still depend on its social policies as they try to achieve an acceptable mother-work balance.

So long as such politics do not constitute a new agenda, and do not portend anything new – that is, as long as politics do not take into account the interests and representation of different groups – it is possible to intervene only in selected areas (to shift support among different groups or different issues as in the case of family demography), to moralize (in the case of homosexuality or abortion), or to use force (in the case of Pussy Riot). An anti-gender politics is slowly but surely being formulated in which declining birth rates, high levels of abortion, family instability, homosexuality and minority rights are all blamed on “gender,” an insidious concept attributed to Western influences and their Russian supporters. ■

> Prospects for Public Sociology in Ukraine

by Lidia Kuzemska, University of Lviv, Ukraine



Senior Ukrainian sociologists at the Conference on Public Sociology at National Kyiv Mohyla-Academy. They are from left to right: Svitlana Oksamytna, Valeriy Khmelko, Volodymyr Paniotto (standing), Andrii Gorbachyk, Evgeni Golovakha (speaking), and Iryna Bekeshkina.

I had mixed feelings after I left the conference on the dilemmas of public sociology in Ukraine that was organized jointly by the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy and Kyiv National University of Taras Shevchenko, May 28, 2012 with ISA's President, Michael Burawoy, as a keynote speaker. He briefly presented his well-known model of four types of sociology, highlighting the importance of public sociology as a means for sociology's survival. Professor Burawoy pointed out that public sociology makes sociologists and sociology accountable to society. Consequently, it also gives sociology legitimacy by bringing important issues into public debate. In brief, public sociology assumes, on the one hand, that there are sociologists who want to share their knowledge, and, on the other hand, that there are publics ready to listen to (and even use) sociology.

The following panel discussion brought together key Ukrainian sociologists and one Russian colleague, Elena Trubina. They debated the question: "What does it mean to practice public sociology in Ukraine?," converging on a common understanding of the existing obstacles even as they diverged over the prognosis for the future of public sociology. As regards the difficulties, all the speakers noted

that Ukrainian sociology lacks both accountability and legitimacy. The clear predominance of policy sociology, seen as a source of monetary gain, limits its accountability to broader publics, while public sociology is often perceived as the simplification of science for a largely indifferent public. In addition, poor public speaking skills and complicated language make contact between sociologists and publics – for example, with journalists who need short and quick answers – rather demanding on both sides. As a result, the public is neither aware nor interested in the achievements of Ukrainian sociology, which does not have the confidence or legitimacy to obtain financial or moral support.

It was challenging not to agree with such pessimism, but I was reassured by those who actually do practice public sociology in Ukraine. Among them we can find respected and experienced sociologists such as Evgeni Golovakha and Iryna Bekeshkina, who are frequent contributors to television and periodicals, as well as young researchers, such as those from Kyiv-Mohyla Academy who produce the magazine *Spil'ne* ("The Commons") and travel around the country to discuss its articles with various publics. Their activity proves that public sociology in Ukraine does exist. For the moment, however, it is mainly the initiative of individuals or small groups and it would benefit from greater visibility and wider involvement, especially from the younger generation of sociologists. Openness and visibility of sociology as well as the usefulness of its results for different publics are necessary for sociology's development in Ukraine. Otherwise, it will be stuck with limited financial and human resources.

Besides, public sociology can be an effective support for an autonomous civil society. We can (so, we must!) change the image of our country by talking and working with publics on their problems in the same way that doctors try to uncover latent processes hidden from everyday appearances – to use the metaphor of Professor Yuri Yakovenko. Using new technologies, creative ideas and youthful initiatives, public sociology in Ukraine can advance. Let's hope this conference will take us in that direction. ■

> Romania's Winter of Discontent

by Cătălin Augustin Stoica and Vintilă Mihăilescu, National School for Political and Administrative Sciences (SNSPA), Bucharest, Romania



Protesters in University Square, downtown Bucharest, January, 2012.
Photo by Vlad Petri.

zation of Romania's population until the beginning of 2012. On January 2012, for more than three weeks, thousands of Romanians took to the streets in Bucharest and 50 other cities to protest against the resignation of Raed Arafat, a Palestinian-born Romanian doctor, who helped build the national Mobile Emergency Service for Resuscitation and Extrication (SMURD) – a service deemed to be an example of best practice at the European level. Dr. Arafat resigned following a televised dispute with Traian Băsescu, the President of Romania. The latter supported the adoption of a draft of a new health law, which promoted the privatization of the national medical emergency system. The protests took the former governmental coalition, the political opposition, and pundits alike by surprise as most of them believed that “the polenta does not explode.” According to *The Economist* (“Rioting in Romania: the battle of Bucharest”, January 16, 2012), the latter is “the gnomish phrase Romanians use to describe the attitude of resigned acceptance typical of the country.”

Raed Arafat's resignation was the triggering event, but the protesters' demands focused on a wide range of issues: the austerity measures adopted by the former center-right government, the ongoing economic crisis, the perceived widespread corruption among politicians, the former

The specter of the global financial crisis was largely ignored by Romanian politicians who were busy campaigning for the general and presidential elections of 2008 and 2009. Yet, at the beginning of 2010, Romania was facing economic collapse. To avoid it, the government and President Băsescu appealed to the IMF and the European Union, who then lent money to Romania under very strict conditions. Against this backdrop, in May 2010, Romania's center-right government adopted a series of harsh austerity measures: public sector employees' wages were cut by 25%, some pensions were taxed, social benefits were reduced, the value added tax was increased from 19% to 24%, and thousands of state sector employees were laid off. The economic crisis, combined with the austerity measures, devastated Romania's private sector and scared off potential foreign investors.

During this time of economic hardship, old and presumably forgotten ills resurfaced. Despite some important changes in the legal framework to combat corruption, the majority of Romanians became (again) dissatisfied with widespread corruption among politicians and state institutions. Media accounts and reports of non-governmental organizations have revealed numerous shady (and often quite outrageous) deals among national or local (elected) officials and politically connected big-time entrepreneurs (the so-called “smart guys”). In addition, private businesses renewed their public denunciations of the predatory, rent-seeking behaviors of public officials and other politicians.

In 2010 and 2011 trade unions and other civil society organizations protested against the policies of the center-right government but they failed to produce a significant mobili-

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And the impressive police force dispatched to control the demonstrators.
Photo by Vlad Petri.



governmental coalition's alleged indifference to people's needs and hardships. Some local and foreign analysts have deemed these protests the Romanian version of the *indignados* movement for several reasons: First, the Romanian themes of discontent were highly diverse, ranging from pensions to health care, women's rights to child support benefits, wages and environmental issues. Second, the Romanian demonstrations were supported by protestors from diverse social backgrounds. In Bucharest's University Square and in other cities the crowds of protestors included retirees, college students, unemployed individuals, employees of multinational companies, football hooligans (or the so-called "*ultras*"), reputable university professors, feminists, supporters of extreme-right and/or populist parties, left-wing radicals, hipsters, and homeless people. Third, the main means of mobilization were the Internet, mobile phone networks, and television. Fourth, some of the themes of discontent were global or transnational in their character (e.g., environmental issues, women's rights, IMF's policies, and the irresponsible behavior of financial institutions). Fifth, some of the themes of discontent

were borrowed directly (in English) from the symbolic arsenal of the *indignados* and *Occupy Wall Street* movements. Above all, as in other parts of the world, in Romania too, the protestors were united by their explicit criticism and rejection of all current politicians.

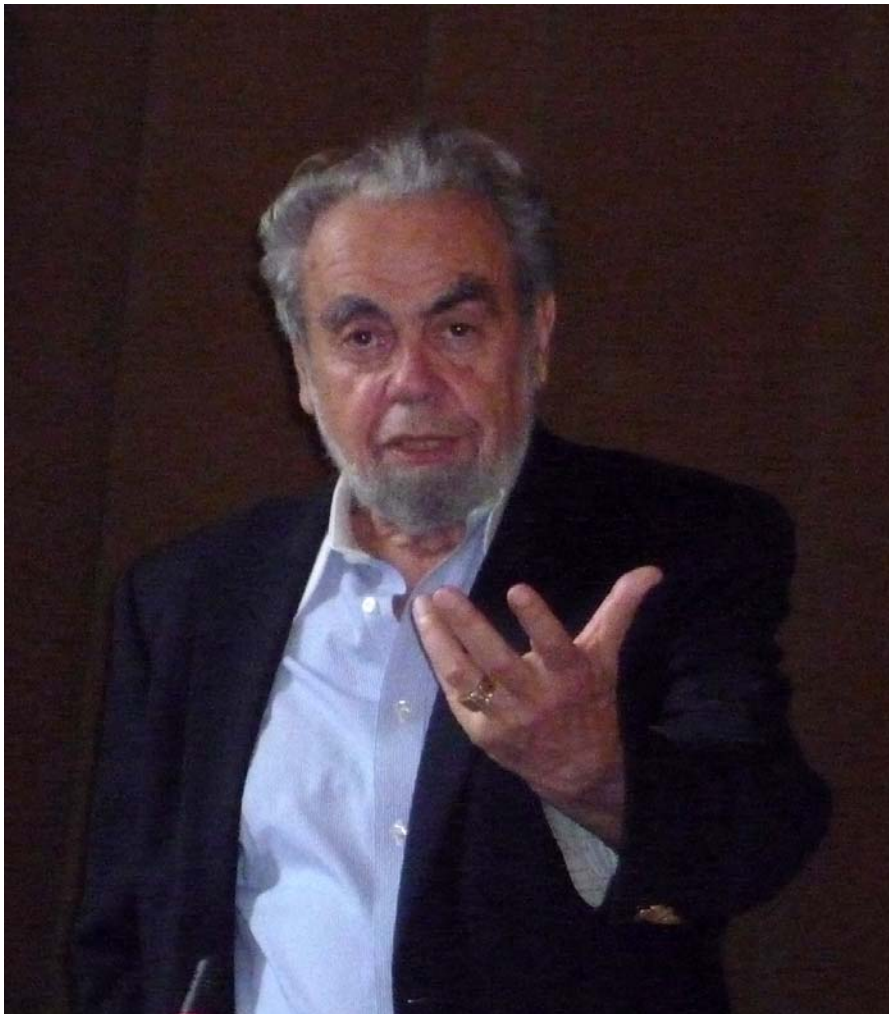
Top-level figures of the former center-right government attempted to downplay the importance of these events and insulted the protestors by calling them "inept and violent slum dwellers," "worms," or "neurotic individuals." By the end of January, however, the Prime-Minister Emil Boc resigned, the draft of the new health law was withdrawn, Dr. Arafat was reinstated as an Under-Secretary of State in the Ministry of Health, and the new government announced it would attempt to increase wages for employees in the state sector. The new center-right government lasted only a few months and it eventually fell due to a censure motion filed by the Opposition. Although, from a quantitative standpoint, the Romanian protests relied on a much smaller number of people as compared to Spain, the impact of these protests has been extremely powerful. According to some analysts, the

January 2012 events marked the beginning of a new era of civic participation in Romania.

Along with other Romanian colleagues (sociologists, anthropologists, and media analysts) we have edited a book on the January 2012 protests – *The Winter of Our Discontent: The Romanian Protests of January-February 2012*. Some might claim that it is too early to conduct an in-depth analysis of the January 2012 events. We contend, however, that it is not too early for a public sociology approach to the recent Romanian protests. Against this backdrop, our volume aims to reach a wide audience by providing a sociological analysis of public issues and a platform for dialogue for those who witnessed and those who were involved in the recent protests. We have not made any effort to draw "general conclusions" from these events but, along the lines of Michael Burawoy's public sociology, our goal has been to simply offer different viewpoints and opinions on the protests. Readers interested in this volume can consult the website at <http://www.proteste2012.ro/en.html> in English. ■

> Romanian Sociology beyond Globalization

by Ioana Florea, University of Bucharest, Romania, and Delia Badoi, University of Bucharest, Romania, and EHESS Paris, France



Michael Cernea, George Washington University (USA), returns to Romania to receive a distinguished award for his life-time contributions to sociology.

we generate better policies, based on sociological research?

Entitled “Beyond Globalization?,” the conference became a platform for a three-day debate – just as was intended and just as any scientific event should be. One of the first debates concerned the question mark in the title – why is it there, what does it mean, have our social lives been transformed “beyond globalization,” what really lies beyond globalization? As in any good debate, it remained open.

The plenary sessions at the beginning of the conference triggered another round of debates. Professors Michael Burawoy (University of California, Berkeley), Lazăr Vlăsceanu, and Marian Preda (University of Bucharest) launched the debates on public sociology – why we need it, who needs it, what are its relationships to other “sociologies,” what can it do and how? And, regarding the debate initiated by Michael Burawoy and the challenge for Romanian sociology, are sociologists really capable of speaking to the public, and if this were to happen, how might this affect sociology? The controversial discussion about Romanian public sociology was launched by Professor Lazăr Vlăsceanu, the President

In the academic world, June is known as an eventful month, featuring exams and evaluations, application deadlines for research projects, applications for summer schools, end-of-semester conferences. In this tradition, June, 2012 started well in Bucharest, with the international conference of the Romanian Sociological Society (RSS), held at the Faculty of Sociology and Social Work, The University of Bucharest. RSS, founded in 2008, is a growing professional body, bringing together both young and established

social researchers from all sociology departments around the country, in more than 30 working groups and sections. Since 2008, more and more debates about the public state of Romanian sociology have arisen, especially at the annual meetings of RSS in Cluj-Napoca and, most recently, in Bucharest. The main focus of this year’s conference was to outline the role and the utility of sociology for social life. Other focal points of the conference concerned the following: what could researchers really do with sociological knowledge and how could

of the Scientific Committee of RSS, who argued that, in Romania, sociology failed to engage the public and to connect its knowledge with the lives of the people.

Today, there is a growing critical and reflexive vision of how sociology as a scientific domain answers Romania's social needs. In this context, Michael Burawoy's roundtable about public sociology created a lot of interesting debates about the actual context of professional sociology in Romania, and a lot of criticisms about the public status of Romanian sociology. Public sociology in Romania seems to be, on the one hand, marginalized and, on the other, desirable because sociologists should be able to communicate with the public. When we start discussing the meaning and existence of a good public sociology the legacies of national sociology are important. Thus, sociologist Michael Cernea reminded us, during his roundtable, that Romania has a public sociology tradition – "*sociologia militans*" developed by Dimitrie Gusti at the "School of Romanian Sociology" in 1921.

Some Romanian sociologists searched for public sociology in the history of sociological theory in Romania. To some extent, Romanian sociology has confronted the issue of connecting social theory to social practice (in the terms of Wright Mills). Maybe we first need to develop a closer connection between the empirical research and social theory, and in that way create a strong professional sociology in Romania as the foundation for an effective public presence. If the problem in Romania is that sociologists didn't create a public sociol-

ogy, this is because Romania doesn't have sociologists that are engaged in the public sphere, engagement that might generate or deepen corresponding debates at the scientific level. As Michael Burawoy said, "Sociologists are present only in election times, and after that they disappear." This is definitely not the road to a vibrant Romanian public sociology!

The challenges of public sociology are an issue, not only in Romania but in all countries. As elsewhere, it can be quite risky to come out in the open in the face of a professional sociology that fears public scientific debates. The fact that there is a permanent tension between professional sociology and public sociology makes it more difficult for sociologists to be engaged in the public sphere. For sure, we don't speak only about engaging but also about intervening to create social change. The Romanian sociologists were also absorbed with the question: "Can sociology generate social movements?" Following Alain Touraine's conception of "sociological intervention," public sociologists must also understand that sociology can't transform the world but can only help understand how it works. A good public sociology is strongly associated with professional sociology and is dedicated to translating sociological issues into language accessible to different publics.

Professor Jean-Claude Kaufmann (René Descartes University, Paris V) stimulated our discussions on the question of the formation of normality and norms, thus linking the macro perspective on globalization to the micro observations of everyday life.

Professor Michael Cernea presented a personal history of Romanian sociology, combined with an account of his participation in World Bank projects – thus opening the path for debates on old *versus* new, local *versus* global challenges in sociology and social policy. Professor Marian Preda stimulated discussion about the social risks and inequalities lurking beyond globalization – the past and present debts to be paid by the future generations, demographic changes and the dangers of the consumer society.

With such themes in the opening speeches and with participants not shy to ask questions, even to renowned professors in the intimidating grand hall where the plenary sessions took place, you can imagine the wave of debates that spread through the conference! In addition, each panel (and there were almost 40!) had its "Q&A" session – creating yet another wave of discussion.

Last but not least, the young social researchers attending the conference managed to take advantage of this global moment – a meeting of colleagues not just from all over the country but from all over the world. It was a rare and special occasion for Romanian students with limited access to academic funds. New working groups were set up within the framework of the Romanian Sociological Society. New collaborative research projects, volumes and articles were planned. It was also an occasion to severely criticize the ISI Web of Knowledge monopoly over the evaluation of scholarly writings. As young social researchers, of course, we enjoyed the good critical debate! ■

> CriticAtac

An Anti-Capitalist Manifesto from Romania

by Victoria Stoiciu, Ciprian Siulea, Mihai Iovanel, Ovidiu Tichindeleanu, Costi Rogozanu, Florin Poenaru, and Vasile Ernu, all representing CriticAtac



Members of CriticAtac: Victoria Stoiciu, Vasile Ernu, and Ciprian Siulea introducing themselves to Michael Burawoy.

Global Dialogue's editor came across this enterprising and open-minded group while visiting Romania. *CriticAtac* collaborated with the sociology department at the University of Bucharest to stage a colloquium on "Marxism after Communism," attended by a packed audience. This seemed to be a remarkable departure for this part of the world where Marxism has been deeply discredited by its association with the Soviet past.

CriticAtac is a social, intellectual and political group, founded in September, 2010 in Bucharest. Our group's ideology is leftist, but we are not an ideological faction and don't go around patting each other on the back for the brilliant and concerted line of our thinking. One of our main aims was to create something new in a rather worn-out, inarticulate, routinized and authoritative

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public space, and that is one reason for our diversity.

CriticAtac is not an academic group, although we do have academic connections. We have an electronic platform www.criticatac.ro, but we also go beyond the online space and organize meetings, seminars, and debates in the universities. In November, 2011, we organized the Romanian Social Forum, bringing together all the important groups and social movements from Romania to discuss crucial issues for our society: public goods, forms of protests, democratization. We strive to get people engaged in social and political issues, and to attract new audiences to a public sphere that is now on the verge of collapse. Too many people are without voice and representation, while “writing the agenda” is left to the predictable few.

As enthusiastic supporters of the market, today’s Romanian mainstream intellectuals have learnt how to entertain the public, and perpetuate a captive cultural market that

leads nowhere. We have an intellectual “free market” where the prevailing success criteria are legacies and oligopolistic arrangements. We’re also in a serious gridlock when it comes to topics: anti-communism, the obsession with “Westernization,” compulsive pro-capitalism, aggressive elitism seem to be the bovarist themes that have taken us nowhere for the past 20 years since the fall of the communist regime, in part because they are not meant to take us somewhere.

We have commented on the major topics of the public agenda, as well as topics which we consider fundamental for our society: equality, the individual and societal right to follow one’s own path, discrimination and privilege, inequality and equal opportunities, relations between employers and employees, relations between society and the state, the future of the political system, and much more. Moreover, we aim to discuss all this in a relevant and accessible manner. However, we’re not interested in sham anti-corporate activism, fanatical “environmental-

ism,” or fashionable anti-consumerism lacking sound arguments.

We do not want to partake in party politics. The limitations and ritualism of the current political system are so deeply rooted that genuine politics can only be made outside its terrain. We want to have a political impact from outside the establishment but not from the position of a civil society flirting with the political system, or from the position of a civil society condescendingly suggesting public policies or opportunistic political strategies to parties. All these are top-level games which disregard the importance of separating the civil and the political. Instead, we aim to introduce into the political equation what is urgently required: the idea that representative democracy must represent everyone and that politics should not be confined to narrow political, technocratic, intellectual elites. And before devising any elaborate proposals for public policies, we want to radically reshape the lens through which we examine the pressing issues of today. ■

> Three years of *Sociopedia.isa*

by Bert Klandermans, VU-University, Amsterdam, Netherlands, and ISA Vice-President for Finance, 2002-2006

Some years ago the Executive Committee of the ISA discussed the possibility of publishing an annual volume of review articles. The proposal was to produce an on-line journal rather than a book. We reasoned that the production of a book would take so much time that the articles would be out-of-date by the time of publication. An on-line journal, on the other hand, can publish a contribution as soon as it is ready, and there would be no problem of missed deadlines. Michel Wieviorka, Bert Klandermans, and Izabela Barlinska got together and discussed what became Wieviorka's Presidential Project. As he had developed a similar idea, Kenji Kosaka joined the founders. *Sociopedia* was born.

To acknowledge the affiliation to the ISA and to distinguish it from other initiatives it was named *Sociopedia.isa*, a new concept in the production and dissemination of knowledge. It combines the best of two worlds: rapid publication using the Internet and scientific quality ensured by thorough and imaginative editing and peer review. While experienced editors and peer reviewers ensure the highest possible quality, the Internet makes it possible to provide "state-of-the-art" review articles. *Sociopedia.isa*, then, offers a "living social science." It promises users up-to-date entries, revised on a regular basis. After two years the authors of the original articles are asked to update the entry. Moreover, each entry has a supplemental discussion section.

Three years ago the first five articles were uploaded. Since its inception *Sociopedia.isa* has published 35 articles on a wide range of subjects that includes Protest, Social Conflict, Sex Roles, Disaster Studies, Health and Illness, Diaspora, Memory, Mobility, Everyday Life, Immigrant Transnationalism, Secularization, and Reflexivity. Using their ISA password, ISA members have access to *Sociopedia.isa* via the ISA website or the Sage website. Every 3-4 months, five ISA articles are also freely accessible. *Sociopedia.isa* has been visited by thousands of users.

Entries for *Sociopedia.isa* can be submitted by email to sociopedia.isa.fsw@vu.nl. Those who are interested are advised to look for the *Sociopedia* Submission Procedures that can be found at the ISA website. The typical *Sociopedia.isa* article is 7,000 words excluding the bibliography. Articles must be in English but *Sociopedia.isa* encourages authors to simultaneously send in a copy of the article in another language such as French or Spanish. The author needs to make sure, however, that such a translated article is identical to the English version. A typical *Sociopedia.isa* article has the following structure: overview of theoretical approaches; review of empirical evidence; assessment of research to date; discussion of future direction that theorizing and research might take. The article needs to be completed with the following three elements: references cited, annotated suggestions for further reading ("Read this article because..."); and a short author biography of approximately three sentences.

Bert Klandermans is the Editor of *Sociopedia.isa*. Associate Editors are: Devorah Kalekin-Fishman, Kenji Kosaka, Elisa Reis, Arturo Rodríguez Morató, and Henri Lustiger Thaler. As a rule, submissions are sent to at least two external reviewers. In principle, the editors work with the authors until the entry is considered acceptable. Once a paper is accepted it is published within a few weeks. Starting in 2013, every year 8-10 *Sociopedia.isa* entries will be selected for publication in a *Review Issue of Current Sociology* – one of the two off-line refereed ISA journals. This makes publishing in *Sociopedia.isa* even more attractive.

There is one further innovation, namely *Sociopedia.isa colloquium*, which is an extension of the standard *Sociopedia.isa* review article. The same editing and peer review process will govern it, with experienced editors and peer review to ensure the highest possible quality. *Sociopedia.isa colloquium* will commence with a leading and acknowledged author summarizing his or her position on a given sociological problem or thematic, followed by three or four articles that address and evaluate the main article's approach. The three or four commentators will take on the role of critical discussants. Henri Lustiger Thaler is preparing a Colloquium on "Cosmopolitanism" while Devorah Kalekin is preparing one on "The sociology of the senses."

I encourage everyone who is interested in writing a review of his or her field for *Sociopedia.isa* to submit a paper to sociopedia.isa.fsw@vu.nl. ■

> Better Healthcare for All

by Ellen Kuhlmann, Goethe University, Frankfurt, Germany, President-elect of RC52 (Sociology of Professions), Claus Wendt, University of Siegen, Germany, Board Member of RC19 (Poverty, Social Welfare and Social Policy), and Ivy Bourgeault, University of Ottawa, Canada, Vice-President of RC15 (Sociology of Health)

Better healthcare for all citizens is a key to fighting social inequality and poverty and high on the agenda of policymakers across the globe. Besides their many differences, emergent healthcare systems in the Global South and the East as well as in established welfare states of the West all seek to improve the organization, delivery and accessibility of healthcare. This includes new modes of governing health professionals. For these processes social responsibility and public sector services have proved to be crucial for the health of the population, although markets and management enjoy high currency in the current climate of financial restrictions. There is an urgent need for more creative policy solutions that are sensitive to the realities of power relations.

The Second Forum of ISA in Buenos Aires was an optimum chance to flag the emergent field of health policy and services from a sociological perspective and to highlight the benefits of an international approach. (See also *Current Sociology*, Special Issue, July 2012.) This new field is transdisciplinary in nature, and consequently, we launched calls for joint sessions. The response was overwhelming, and thanks to our host RCs, RC15 (Health) and RC19 (Social Policy) organized joint sessions on “better healthcare for all,” while RC15 and RC52 (Professional Groups) held a

joint session specifically on professional governance. All the sessions were packed with papers and were the scene of very lively debates.

The sessions provided a platform for discussing what matters in health policies and services, and what to learn from international experiences. Most fascinating, and indeed unique, the joint sessions brought together researchers from all continents, and language barriers were creatively overcome by bilingual presentations and discussions. Participants came from North and South America, from various European countries and Australia as well as from Nigeria, South Africa and Japan.

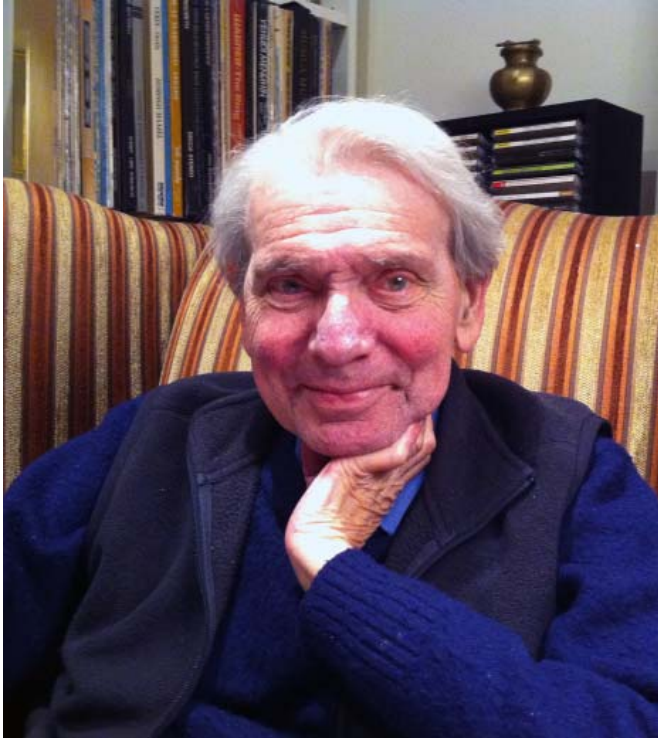
“an overwhelming response for joint sessions”

Major topics included the challenges of comparative research in a highly diverse and dynamic healthcare sector. Here, there were suggestions for more complex typologies, the need for connecting macro and micro levels of research, and the use of a range of indicators. Another key issue was the question of inequalities. There was no shortage of examples of a persistent and even widening gap in the acces-

sibility of healthcare; this included gender equality, women’s healthcare and reproductive rights, but also issues of culture, language, place and ethnicity that may create inequalities. Common themes across countries were the relevance of rights and the importance of universal access to healthcare; the role of social movements and actors; and the changing balance between public and private healthcare services. Another strand of the discussions addressed the complexity of professional governance and the need for more efficient management of health human resources.

No doubt, the joint sessions greatly add value to the existing RCs and we look forward to future collaborations, having already built bridges for Yokohama. ■

> Obituary: Ivan Varga, 1931-2012



Ivan Varga lived many lives. One of them involved everlasting devotion to the ISA and in particular to RC22 (Sociology of Religion), for which he is remembered fondly by many. The following obituary was written by his wife and daughter, Eva Varga and Christina Varga.

| *Ivan Varga at his home in Kingston, Canada.*

Dr. Ivan Varga stood up for what he believed in, no matter how dangerous or unpopular his opinions. He was from an assimilated Jewish family in Budapest, Hungary. During the Second World War, he would go out without his yellow star outside curfew hours for Jews, in order to get more food rations, thus risking being picked up and being shot into the Danube River.

He survived that, only to see the dream of liberation by the Russians turn into the nightmare of an oppressive regime. But he didn't keep a low profile; rather spoke and wrote critically about the regime, making him a target during Hungary's uprising in 1956. He escaped to Poland, and when it was safer for him to return to Hungary, found himself blacklisted from working for years.

After the war, he studied with luminaries such as Georg Lukács, later earning his doctorate. He and Eva Launsky married in 1961 and Christina was born in 1968.

Having acquired several languages, including English, Ivan was allowed to leave Hungary to teach at the university in Tanzania, accompanied by his family. But after the four-year stint was up, they decided to defect, leav-

ing a known but grey future in Hungary for a completely unknown future in the West. They landed in Germany, bringing nothing but their clothes, a few African artifacts and their education.

He taught at universities in Germany, but after a year, was recruited to teach sociology at Queen's University in Kingston, Canada. There he stayed until retirement in 1996, when he became Professor Emeritus.

Throughout his career, he pursued his interests in the sociology of art and culture, and religion, later adding a new interest in the study of the body. He worked in an international forum, collaborating with colleagues around the world, including a senior research fellowship at Harvard's Center for the Study of World Religions, and research in France and Hungary.

After retiring, he continued to write and edit international publications, and organize and attend conferences abroad. He continued his decade-long work with the International Sociological Association, particularly with the Sociology of Religion Research Committee. After his term as President of the Research Committee was up, he became Honorary President, a role he kept until he died. ■

> What Doors does “Open Access” open?

by Jennifer Platt, University of Sussex, UK, and ISA Vice-President for Publications,
2010-2014

“Open access” is a movement which is spreading rapidly beyond its points of origin, and brings some threats as it approaches the social sciences. The basic idea is simple and attractive: everyone should be able to benefit from the research knowledge available in journal articles. Important from one side of the movement has been the anger of natural scientists at the excessive prices charged, and profits made, by some publishers of the journals they use, which has led to a boycott of Elsevier journals. A more recent ideological theme, crucial to new British government policy, is that the products of state funding should be freely available to the state’s citizens. Relatedly, it is claimed that businesses, in particular, will benefit from such access and thereby promote national economic growth. Major funding bodies in the USA and Britain are now requiring that the research they have funded should be published only in journals which provide free access for readers – thus putting pressure on journals to change their practices.

At present the normal system is that publishers produce journals, and access to them depends on the payment of a subscription. Most often these days that is paid by universities, which then make the journals free online to their members. This is complicated by the fact that major

publishers now normally sell subscriptions to libraries in the form of large bundles of journals rather than single ones, which gives access to many but at considerable cost. Authors of articles are not paid, and considerable unpaid labour goes in at the university end, but there is no doubt that the production process also has considerable costs, which somehow need to be covered.

“Open Access could have grave implications for the ISA”

Two broad alternative models of “open access” are being widely discussed. The “Gold” model requires the authors [assumed to mean their university or research funding body] to pay a substantial fee to cover the cost of publication, but the articles will be open to readers without payment. The “Green” model does not make authors pay, but requires deposit of the article in some accessible repository, perhaps after an embargo period of 6 or 12 months (too long for the speed of some natural science fields) to leave some incentive for subscriptions.

Under either model, authors benefit from more readers having access to their work, and readers benefit from having that access. But what are the other effects?

- Gold: Most authors from poor countries may not be able to publish in strong rich country journals unless they have a grant from an international funding body. In sociology, it is certainly not automatic that articles are based on grant-funded research. It is not clear whether authors without such funding would be exempt from the charges. Authors from poorer universities even in rich countries may have their publications limited by their own administrations. Universities will save money now spent on subscriptions, but will not necessarily use that to support research. The research that is available seems likely to be reduced, and more biased in its range.

- Green: Nobody will be paying the costs of publication, unless the embargo makes enough libraries or readers prepared to pay for earlier access to the journal contents. (The half-life of journal articles in the social sciences is considerably more than a year.) Publishers therefore tend to prefer the Gold model. Learned societies such as the ISA, which are not likely to regard author payment as acceptable, could lose a significant part of

the income from publications, income that supports other activities.

There are variants on these basic models which we cannot go into here. It is accepted that there could be “hybrid” journals that are prepared to let some papers be released to a repository while others are not; this is the American Sociological Association’s current policy. Some journals might act on the perverse incentive to prefer papers without the funding which re-

quired them to provide open access. British national research councils are now requiring not only free access to the papers published, but that each provide access to its data so that it can be mined or reanalysed. How would this deal with issues of confidentiality in social science?

The ISA clearly needs to develop a policy appropriate to its international mission, and it will be very much helped in doing that if it has informa-

tion on how these issues are emerging in worldwide sociology. We know that in some places the system of journal publication and funding varies from that taken as standard in Europe and North America, and the discussion elsewhere may raise further questions that we should consider. It will be very much appreciated if you could let us know how things look from where you are, and what your thoughts are on what ISA policy might be. Please write to me at j.platt@asussex.ac.uk ■

> Introducing the Indian Editorial Team

by **Ishwar Modi**, President of the Indian Sociological Society, and ISA Executive Committee Member, 2010-2014

When I was reading about the Iranian Editorial team of *Global Dialogue* (GD2.4), I was stuck by the fact that almost all of them were either undergraduate or graduate students. As compared to them, the Indian team members are fairly old and experienced. The major focus of the team is to provide standard Hindi translation of the complicated technical language of the discipline, which at times proves to be a tough job. We were pleasantly surprised when quite a few of our colleagues from other universities in the country told us that Hindi versions of *Global Dialogue* are being used as the matrix for translations done by their students (from the English version of GD to Hindi) so that they may compare and realize where they have to improve. However, both the English and the Hindi versions of *Global Dialogue* are being increasingly talked about in Indian academic circles because of its global material which is always very interesting, informative and enlightening. Thus, we are all very proud of our association with *Global Dialogue*. ■



Professor **Ishwar Modi** is the founding father of Leisure Studies in India. He is presently President, Indian Sociological Society, and Director, India International Institute of Social Sciences as well as a member of the Executive Committee of ISA. He has also been re-elected President of ISA Research Committee on Sociology of Leisure (2010-2014). At the time of his retirement in 2000 he was the founder Director, Centre for Leisure and Tourism Studies, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur (India). He later served as a Visiting Professor at the Indian Institute of Health Management Research. He is the founder President of the Indian Leisure Studies Association. He is a recipient of Honorary Life Membership of the World Leisure Organization and is presently a senior fellow and founder member of the World Leisure Academy. He has organized several national and international conferences and authored, co-authored and edited eight books.



Rajiv Gupta is presently Professor and Head, Department of Sociology, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur. He is a keen student of sociology of Marxism. Indian Social Science Association honored him with the D.P. Mukerji Senior Social Scientist Fellowship Award in the year 2007. He recently conducted a study of the sociology of textbooks. His book, *Communalization of Education or Education of Communalization*, sparked a nationwide debate and led to the embarrassment of the rightist political parties. As keen observer of Indian society, he has examined social phenomena like agrarian relations, domestic violence, trade union movements, urban development, education and academic profession. His doctoral work was on the role of academic intellectuals in contemporary Indian society. As a public sociologist, he has always participated in various movements including movements against neoliberal economy.



Rashmi Jain teaches in the Department of Sociology, University of Rajasthan. Her interest is in the area of Development and Communication, Globalization studies, Sociology of Law, Leisure Studies and European Studies. She is also coordinating fieldwork activities for a Masters degree in Social Work. At present she is involved in a project entitled “Society and culture of Rajasthan under the impact of Globalization.” Her published works include *Communicating Rural development – Strategies and Alternatives*. Besides being an academican, she has given voice to destitute women and collaborated with civil society organizations of Rajasthan.



For the last six years **Uday Singh** has been working with the India International Institute of Social Sciences under the dynamic leadership of Ishwar Modi. He has a Masters Degree in Economic Administration and Financial Management from the University of Rajasthan. As a translator of *Global Dialogue* he is very excited to learn more about various sociological phenomenon and happenings all over the world.

> Surviving on the Margins

Alexia Webster, Photographer, and Edward Webster, University of Witwatersrand, South Africa, and former President of the Research Committee on Labor Movements (RC44)



Many of the jobs that are being created in the inner city of Johannesburg are survivalist jobs, or what have become known as precarious jobs or the informal economy. These include hairdressers and traders working on the street, women and men cleaning taxis at the side of the road, others working from home, or in shebeens (unlicensed taverns), as well as those who pull carts through the streets of the city collecting paper or scrap metal.

We photographed one of these informal waste recyclers, an elderly black woman on her way to a recycling center. At first she seemed like an apparition as we could not identify her amongst the load she was carry-

ing on her back. But if you look carefully you will see parts of her body overwhelmed by the bags of recycling waste. She is not a helpless victim; she is a productive worker. She spends ten hours a day collecting paper and then carrying it on her back through the streets of Johannesburg to sell to the buy-back center. It is not a job in the conventional sense; it is a livelihood strategy. She not only creates value by recycling paper that is bought by a large multinational company; she is also cleaning the streets. It is a “green” job but she earns on average only USD5 a day.

What characterizes these informal workers is that they are self-employed. They have successfully

captured an economic space in the city, where they can engage in economic activities in ways very different from traditional employment. The emergence of these informal activities presented sociology with a puzzle. It was assumed in the 1950s and 60s, following modernization theory’s teleological view, that dynamic industries would absorb the rapid flow of people to the cities as in nineteenth century Europe. This, however, has not happened. Instead, the urban populations of the developing world have grown dramatically, surviving on small-scale informal economic activities rather than formal employment. In the photograph she is invisible, but she is part of a growing army of precarious workers across the globe. ■