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Sociology as a Vocation

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Randolf David

Revolution and Counter-Revolution

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> Editorial

Universities in Crisis

As I write Raewyn Connell is on the picket line at the University of Sydney, giving expression to her vision of sociology as a vocation laid out in this issue. She joins the strike of academic and non-academic staff at her university who are protesting the erosion of tenure, casualization, and threats to academic freedom – processes affecting most universities, elite and non-elite, across the world.

As universities turn from a public good to a private good, so they turn to selling their products to clients (students, states, corporations, or whoever they can attract). The competition for clients is intense and so universities brand themselves by trying to climb national and global rankings. Academics may resent these rankings but, often of their own making, they compete on their terms and with enthusiasm. This means writing not just for English-language journals, but for internationally recognized journals, i.e. the national journals of the US and England that frame questions, issues, methodologies in their own local ways. Sociologists from the South, but not only from the South, are often drawn away from the urgent problems facing their own countries.

Few have the resources, the courage or even the interest to buck the system. So we must salute the German Sociological Association for boycotting the national rankings, reported here by three sociologists from the Friedrich-Schiller-University in Jena. At the same time, we shouldn't forget that most universities don't even appear in the rankings, forming a large class of "untouchable" universities. Satendra Kumar examines what this means in Uttar Pradesh (India) where the university makes money by selling rights of accreditation to colleges which offer spurious degrees paid with state-subsidized fees. Public funds are thereby funneled into the private pockets of politicians who run the college as a political machine. That's at the other end of the world hierarchy from the University of Sydney, but the pressures are similar.

There are, of course, more conventional pressures on the university. Nazanin Shahrokni and Parastoo Dokouhaki describe the backlash orchestrated by the Iranian state in response to increased enrollments of women students. Many of Iran's Green protestors in 2009 (see articles by Abbas Varij Kazemi and Simin Fadaee) came from the ranks of these college dissenters. Not surprisingly, the Iranian state maintains a careful watch over its universities.

In all these cases the membrane separating university and society is disappearing. We cannot pretend to be outside society. So we are forced to take sides – are we with the rationalizers and marketeers or with their critics and dissenting publics? Writing on the vocation of sociology, Randy David demonstrates that it is possible to sustain a critical and public engagement even in the politically inhospitable Philippines. Still, it takes courage to wade into terrifying worlds such as the normalization of violence described by Mona Abaza for Egypt and Ana Villarreal for Mexico. People may not want to hear us, but that's no reason for silence.

> ***Global Dialogue* can be found in 15 languages at the** [ISA website](#)
> **Submissions should be sent to** burawoy@berkeley.edu

***Raewyn Connell**, Australian feminist and author of* Southern Theory, *regards the sociologist as partaking in a hierarchically organized global labor process that is being further distorted by the market invasion of campuses.*
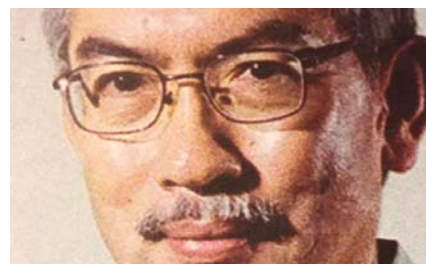
***Randolf David,** Filipino sociologist of great renown, describes a life of critical engagement dedicated to the transmission of sociology into the public sphere and shows how very different this is from political engagement.*

***Nazanin Shahrokni** and **Parastoo Dokouhaki** show how the growth of women students in Iranian universities has led to strategies of gender segregation as the state protects the labor market interests of men and staves off a crisis of masculinity.*

> Editorial Board

> In This Issue

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> The Vocation of Sociology

Collective Work on a World Scale

by Raewyn Connell, University of Sydney, Australia

Raewyn Connell.

Raewyn Connell, an Australian sociologist, made her mark with research into class power, and the relation of class and gender in schooling. She rose to fame with her theory of the institutional basis of gender relations in *Gender and Power* (1987), and established herself as a global figure with her book, *Masculinities* (1995) which develops her oft-cited notion of hegemonic masculinity. Always interested in the history of sociology and calling attention to its Northern foundations she mounted a severe critique of mainstream sociology in her controversial article, "Why is Classical Theory Classical?" extended into a book, *Southern Theory* (2007) that gives pride of place to theorists from the Global South. If there is an abiding theme in her work it is that knowledge cannot be understood outside the context of its production – contexts that she has contested all her life. For more see http://www.raewynconnell.net/

If you are a sociologist you are a worker, you have a trade, you are part of a labor force. Understanding that will save you from delusions of grandeur; and will get you thinking about connections with other workers. Your trade is the making of knowledge, and the teaching and application of knowledge. That's a collective project, not an individual one. Social science, like natural science, is about shared knowledge. It is inherently public. The circulation of what you know is rightly called "publication". What you contribute to the *social* process of knowing about the social world is what makes you a sociologist.

> Searching for Sociology

Not much sociology was taught in Australia when I was a student in the 1960s. I did a degree in History, and a higher degree in Government. That was good intellectual training; but the world was in flames. I was part of a student movement contesting the war on Vietnam and challenging the conservatism of universities. We wanted more relevant, more committed, knowledge. So we tried to make our own, and set up an amateur Free University to do it.

After my doctorate I traveled to the United States, to a famous Sociology department, to find a framework. I found the department almost in a state of civil war between radical students and right-wing faculty. The university was shortly closed down by a student strike. But I got some great reading done: Lévi-Strauss, Sartre, Mills, Gouldner, Lazarsfeld. Later I noticed they were all men, all white, all from the Global North, and I began reading more widely.

Back in Australia, I was twice involved with groups setting up a new sociology program in a new university. We could build a whole curriculum; it was a lucky historical moment. Today there are much heavier controls on university workers. Yet there is always room for creativity in building curriculum.

> Institutions

In Australia, about half of all undergraduate teaching is now done by casual labor. Lots of young people with higher degrees can only scratch a living by juggling part-time jobs in assorted courses on two or three campuses. Can you call that a vocation? In developing countries even tenured academics often have multiple jobs.

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From that position, it's not easy to be active in the institutional machinery of sociology – the journals, the conferences, the research projects, or the associations. Yet neoliberal managers have become obsessed with trying to measure individual output, regardless of such circumstances. Prestige rankings, fee income, numbers of articles, and grant dollars have become the currency of the modern university – just as indices of individual "performance" have in the corporate world. Forty years ago, Claus Offe in a brilliant book, *Industry and Inequality*, proved this was crazy. In massive organizational complexes it is impossible to determine rationally the share in output due to any one person, or even one category of workers. That's an example of really useful sociology. But our masters have forgotten it.

Instead, the corporate world, which has increasingly taken over the universities, constructs an individual career as a *simulated* vocation. Corporate executives, interviewed for the media, declare their deathless passion for the corporation and its shareholders, a passion that generally lasts until the headhunting agency calls. What they are actually doing is building fortunes. Very few people in universities will make fortunes. But most can share in a real, and immensely important, collective project of building knowledge.

> Sociological Knowledge

However the current state of the collective project – the institutional machinery and the "body of knowledge" – is deeply problematic. Sociological thought is sedimented from nineteenth-century imperialism and twentieth-century empiricism, spiced by themes from the workers' movement and the women's movement, and stained by intellectual cults from functionalism to deconstructionism. Sociological theory as an academic field is appallingly Eurocentric. Sociological research is often mechanical and repetitive; computerization too often substitutes the machines' processing power for close familiarity with real problems. Social research in developing countries is frequently, as Thandika Mkandawire has remarked, poor research for poor people – under-funded, short-term, and under-theorized.

So the project of sociology requires a critique of sociology – a critique that is now taking new forms. I think the most important unpacks the Global North dominance of sociological knowledge, and brings Southern-generated theory and post-colonial society to the center of the project. There is resistance to that critique, and I understand why. Northern perspectives are institutionalized in the discipline, and thousands of sociologists have built careers on them and expended huge energy in making them work.

Sociological research is hard – at least, hard to do well. I advise my students to leave the textbooks on the shelf until they need to tell an orthogonal rotation from an oblique. (Advice to beginners: forget the oblique.) Every research problem is new – fresh issues are at stake, different resources are at hand, unique patterns in the data turn out to be crucial. The best way to learn method is by doing it. The next best way is by reading really good research reports and thinking about how the researchers solved their problems. Everyone has their own Top Ten; among mine are Barrie Thorne's *Gender Play*, Robert Morrell's *From Boys to Gentlemen*, and Gordon Childe's *The Dawn of European Civilization*. All these magnificent studies involved a hell of a lot of work. Long, solid engagement with a lot of information – without that, the sociological imagination spins its wheels.

> Audiences, Publics

A few days ago I went to the launch of a website for autobiographical interviews with older lesbians, called *55 Uppity* (http://55upitty.com/). Many of Sydney's lesbian community were at the happy occasion, and there was much talk about generational turnover, and making ageing visible. Here, it seemed to me, was a community not just imagining itself, but re-making itself through a knowledge project.

Sociologists mostly want their work to be useful, especially to the communities and institutions where the research is done. I've been involved in several projects with a strongly reflexive logic. They include research on sexuality and AIDS prevention used by gay communities in Australia (Kippax et al., *Sustaining Safe Sex*); and research on social inequalities in education, intended for teachers and school policymakers (Connell et al., *Making the Difference*; *Schools & Social Justice*).

University-based sociologists need connection with other groups who can use sociological knowledge. So I've valued long-term links with the labor movement, which found some use for our research on class; and with teachers and teacher educators, who found some use for our research on schools. The last stage of my academic career has been in a faculty of education and social work, rather than a department of sociology. But the potential audience for sociology is wider again. Some sociology gets into mass media. Some circulates in mysterious ways through international networks, publications, translations, travel, and rumor. I think it's quite wonderful when I hear in Australia from someone in Brazil, Estonia or China who has come across my work and wants to get in touch. It gives me a sense of the tremendous interweaving global project that sociology can be.

> And the Basic Purpose?

I took up this trade because I thought that social science generated the knowledge most important for grappling with our shared problems – of violence, injustice, and destruction. I still think that. Social science *can* play a key democratic role, as a central part of society's self-knowledge. I have learnt how difficult it is to produce knowledge, and how difficult it is to put knowledge to work. I have learnt how much depends on co-workers and institutions. I have learnt that we need to think about all these issues "on a world scale" to use Samir Amin's phrase. It's a daunting prospect, but it is also inspiring. If sociology is a vocation, it's not in the old sense of a personal religious calling. It's a collective calling, and it has to be worldwide. ■

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> The Vocation of Sociology
Critical Engagement in the Public Realm

by Randolf S. David, University of the Philippines, Quezon City, Philippines
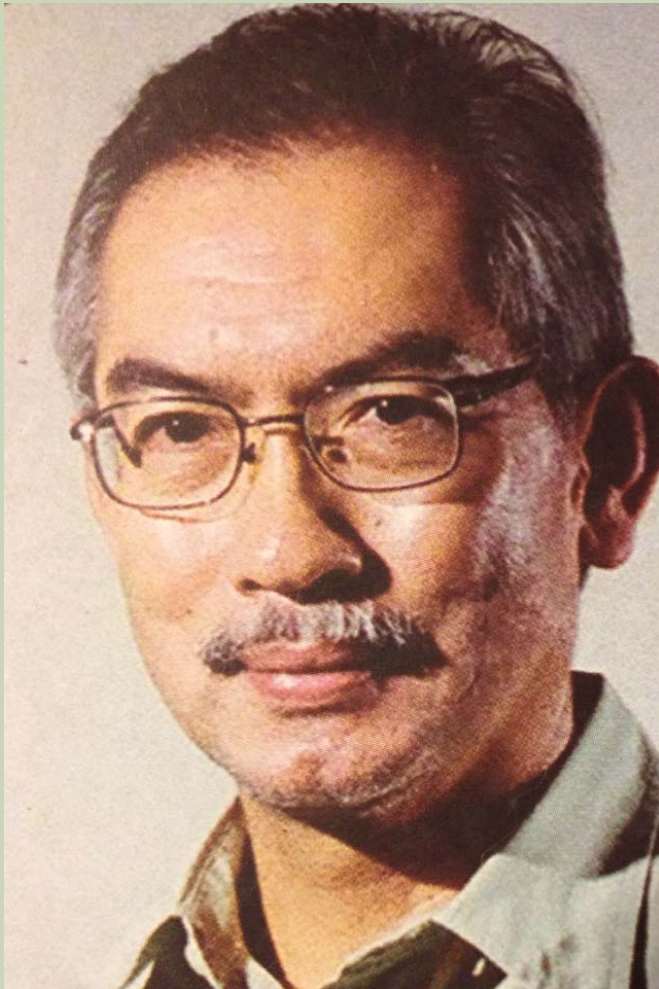
Randolf David.

Randolf David is a public sociologist extraordinaire. A distinguished academic with an award-winning book, *Nation, Self, and Citizenship: An Invitation to Philippine Sociology*, Randy David is best known outside the university for his Sunday column, "Public Lives," in the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, which he began in 1995, and for his public affairs program on television, "Public Forum." He has been an inspiration to legions of sociology students and brought sociological visions into the public eye.

Sociology was not my first love. I would say I found myself in it for reasons other than intellectual. I came to the University of the Philippines in the early 1960s hoping to be a lawyer, like my father, someone who could fix social problems, and not merely analyze them. In those days, one entered university not so much to get an education as to learn a profession.

If one was planning to study law, the prescribed preparation was political science or philosophy, or any of the social sciences. The pre-law requirement had just been relaxed to include any bachelor's degree. This change somehow benefited the newer disciplines like Sociology.

I was originally an English major. I had planned to earn a living as a journalist after graduation while taking up evening classes in law. But, when you're young, your best-laid plans could be derailed at any point. In my junior year, I took up the introductory course in Sociology as an elective, having heard that the professor in this course gave out high grades. I meant to boost my general weighted

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average, which had been pulled down by middling grades in difficult literature subjects.

Lo and behold, I fell in love with Sociology. Long after the course ended, I continued to read sociological books. On my senior year, to my father's consternation, I shifted to Sociology. It was one of those contingencies that decisively shape one's life. I met my future wife in those Sociology classes, and my exposure to social issues completely transformed my political outlook. Law would have led me to a conventional career in politics, for I was active in campus politics. I would have been in the same law class as many of the present senior legislators of my country.

Sociology gave me the attitude of mind needed for the sustained study of a troubled young society like the Philippines. To borrow a phrase from Hannah Arendt, I found myself seized by the *pathos of wonder* – the habit of disciplined observation that resists the urge to find quick solutions for every problem. The long-term structural orientation this engenders pairs nicely with radical politics. And in the late sixties, it was difficult for a sociologist not to be a Marxist.

But, the Marxism of an academic sociologist is not the same as the Marxism of a party member. While the latter is inevitably subjected to the imperatives of revolutionary praxis, where one is expected to suspend critical reflection for the sake of the organization, a Marxist sociologist typically spells trouble for any Leninist organization, because he will never give up the habit of reflexivity. He will always be an observer, more than an engaged participant. Apart from the ideology, his own actions usually become the object of his unrelenting deconstructive gaze.

That is why, I think, praxis has never been the sociologist's strongest suit. One doesn't turn to a sociologist for practical advice. The primary sociological commitment is to second-order observation – the observation of the way other people make distinctions in everyday life. The attitude the sociologist takes in the face of social complexity is one of awe at the way things are, rather than impatience or despair or panic over the seeming insolubility of social problems.

This being the inescapable character of the sociological stance, it is only logical to ask if there is any place in a developing society for a discipline that tends to revel in the observation of things rather than in the pursuit of solutions. Indeed I have asked myself this question many times.

Still, I would argue that at no other time has it become more important for society to make room for an intellectual attitude that, instead of offering quick solutions, questions the very frames in which the world is problematized. The vocation of politics requires a different temperament from that of a scholar. You can never be an effective politician or social activist if you are in the habit of subjecting yourself to constant self-analysis. To my mind, reflexivity is the political practitioner's worst enemy.

I thought I knew this well enough to resist being drawn into the world of politics. But I was wrong. Sometime in 2009, I read the signs and arrived at the conclusion that the country's unpopular president, Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, would, at the end of her term, seek a congressional seat in order to protect herself from political reprisals. Because we belong to the same congressional district, it dawned on me that I could stop her by putting myself up as a candidate. Instead of dismissing the idea as foolish, I made the mistake of entertaining it in a moment of conceit.

Before I knew it, I found myself cast in the role of a David who would stop the country's political Goliath. It was a great story line in a nation that had been searching for messiahs. But, as a sociologist, I was fully conscious of the risks one takes when one crosses functional boundaries. I knew nothing of the specific problems of my electoral district. I had not previously run for any public office. I had no finances for an electoral run.

Most of all, I did not have the temperament for traditional politics. I knew that while I was standing up to power, I had no wish to pursue it. But having found myself at a point of no return, I began preparing to enter a world I had spent a lifetime interpreting but whose ways I could not have adequately grasped in the limited time that I had. On the day I was to file my candidacy, I decided it wasn't worth squandering my family's time and savings just to indulge a personal whim. My decision not to proceed was attacked by people, including friends, who had been waiting for a grand battle.

Armed with knowledge, as a sociologist operating in the public realm you may often find yourself having to stand up to power. If you wish to remain a sociologist, you must take care not to do so as a politician or as a member of a political party, but as part of the public. As a sociologist your mandate is to interrogate politics, not to seek to win in it on its terms. ■

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> Backlash
Gender Segregation in Iranian Universities

by Nazanin Shahrokni, University of California, Berkeley, USA, and Parastoo Dokouhaki, journalist, Tehran, Iran
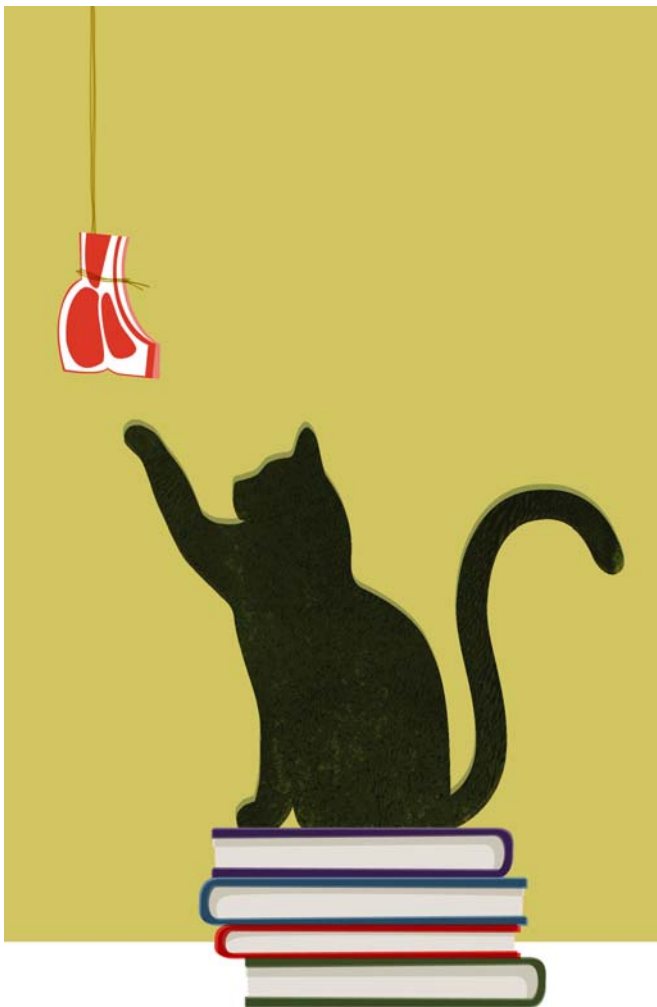
Illustration by Arbu.

O n August 6, 2012, with the new academic year approaching, the government-backed Mehr News Agency in Iran posted a bulletin that 36 universities in the country had excluded women from 77 fields of study. The reported restrictions aroused something of an international uproar. Shirin Ebadi, the Iranian human rights lawyer and Nobel laureate exiled in Britain, wrote a letter to Ban Ki-Moon, the UN secretary-general, and Navi Pillay, the UN high commissioner for human rights, condemning the measure as "part of the recent policy of the Islamic Republic, which tries to return women to the private domain inside the home as it cannot tolerate their passionate presence in the public arena." State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland read a statement on August 21 calling upon "Iranian authorities to protect women's rights and to uphold Iran's own laws and international obligations, which guarantee non-discrimination in all areas of life, including access to education."

In Iran, higher education officials went on the defensive, denying the existence of gender discrimination. Kamran Daneshjoo, the cabinet minister who is the public face of the restrictions, suggested that the story had been blown out of proportion by the Persian-language services of the BBC and Voice of America. "If they are unhappy," he said, "it means we are doing the right thing."[1]

With the academic year well under way in Iran, it is clear that the spin from both the Islamic Republic and the West was somewhat misleading. The new restrictions affect both men and women, and are part of a long-standing scheme of gender segregation. Such schemes date back to the early years of the Islamic Republic and have been tried by different governments in the service of different goals. In the 1980s, the state sought to physically separate men and women on campus, in keeping with the idea that mingling of the sexes outside the home was "un-Islamic" and dangerous for public morality. Today, the hardliners want to "Islamize" the campus anew, but also to redress the unintended consequences of the feminization of higher education in Iran. The new gender segregation measures are primarily aimed at protecting the life chances of men, in

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Women in the shadow of Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Khomeini.

education, marriage, and the job market, and at shielding the state from political pressure amidst high unemployment and overall economic malaise.

> ### The Devil's in the Details

The overall gender segregation regime is a patchwork of different practices that are applied, albeit unevenly, at universities across the country.

Many universities have simply expanded the rigid gender quotas that have been in effect since the Islamic Republic's first decade, by which a specific number of places are allotted to men and women in each field of study. For example, Tehran University, generally considered the flagship institution of Iranian higher education, allocates half the classroom seats to men and half to women in almost every discipline. There are exceptions to the 50-50 quota system: Shahid Beheshti University, also in the capital, has accepted 110 law students – 60 women and 50 men.

Other schools are separating male and female students into two cohorts, which, at least in theory, will follow two tracks in their studies. The men are admitted in the fall semester and the women in the spring. In practice, however, and in the absence of any monitoring of the separation all the way through, the cohorts eventually mix and men and women often end up sitting in the same elective courses. Such is the case, for example, at Arak University in central Iran, and Lorestan University in the mountainous west. It is mostly provincial universities that have carried out such policies. The Islamic Republic has

often used the provinces as testing grounds for its more controversial initiatives.

Still other universities have reserved certain fields of study exclusively for men, usually fields that for economic or cultural reasons are traditionally regarded as "masculine." The men-only programs have garnered the most media coverage, but several institutions have also reserved certain fields of study – often "feminine" ones – exclusively for women. In 2012, Shahid Chamran University admitted no men to study history, Persian literature, psychology, or education.

There does not, however, seem to be a countrywide pattern to the new types of single-gender admissions. Various universities seem to have adopted the measures arbitrarily and drawn the line between "masculine" and "feminine" fields of study haphazardly.

Gender segregation, however, is not solely an administrative practice of admissions officers. In the early 1980s, extremist factions within the fledgling Islamic Republic asked that classrooms be gender-segregated and, in some cases, dividers were actually erected between rows of men and rows of women. Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the leader of the 1979 revolution, reportedly spoke against this practice. The dividers were taken down, but gender segregation endured. Signs went up in hallways, classrooms, libraries, and cafeterias directing "sisters" and "brothers" to walk in separate lanes or sit in separate places. These restrictions eventually faded away as it was difficult and costly to monitor students' every movement. Science Minister Daneshjoo wants these measures back: "Beginning this academic year, male and female students will have to sit in separate rows and university deans are responsible for overseeing this process."[2]

Daneshjoo is also rallying support among the clergy and in the Majles, the Iranian parliament, for single-gender universities. The ministry says its goal is to build a women-only university in each province of the country.[3] It remains to be seen whether the state will try to channel women to these women-only spaces or whether they will simply provide women with more choice in higher education. Past experience, however, shows that women have used such spaces as a way of extending their access to and presence in the public sphere.

> ### Cotton and Fire, Meat and Cats

Faced with opposition, Daneshjoo claimed that gender segregation policies were "in line with the Supreme Leader's demands."[4] Indeed, despite his opposition to barriers in classrooms in the early 1980s, Ayatollah Khamenei, the Supreme Leader, appears to have embraced the concept of gender segregation by the late 1990s, during the reformist administration of Mohammad Khatami. In one lecture, the Leader had berated the science minister of the time, Mohammad Moin, for his carelessness: "Co-ed school trips and retreats? I am baffled! There are places in the world where mingling of the sexes, is absolutely normal. But in our country, in an Islamic environment, this is

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not the case."[5] Hojjat-ol-Islam Nabiallah Fazlali, Khamenei's representative at Tehran's Khajeh Nasir Tusi University, lent insight into the Leader's thinking in 2009 when he spoke of his "bitter memories" of "inappropriate friendships" on campus. "Women and men are like cotton and fire," Fazlali continued. "If you don't keep them apart, the cotton catches fire." What attracts boys and girls to one another is "instinct and lust" – and nothing else. "When you throw a cat raw meat, it will eat the meat. How could it not?"[6] Young men, in both metaphors, are poised literally to devour young women, yet it is clear that the object of the clerics' concern is the men.

Earlier in 2012, in a religious TV program aimed at youth, Hojjat-ol-Islam Naser Naghavian, Khamenei's cultural representative at Shahid Beheshti University, recalled the extreme frustration of a young male student who asked him if it was religiously permissible to feel sexual urges when sitting behind a woman in the classroom. Echoing Naghavian, MP Motahhari declared, "If men and women are to mingle, then sexual relations should also be permitted, as in the Western world. Otherwise, the suppression of sexual desire leads to various mental and psychological problems."[7] In the deputy's mind, if the sexes mingle freely, young men will need to suppress their desire. The moral of the story would seem to be that if the cat cannot eat the meat, the meat must be taken away.

> **"Lost in the Shadow of Modern Women"**

The regulation of sexuality is not the only motive behind the gender segregation moves, and worries over the position of women in Iranian universities are not new under Ahmadinejad. In 1998, for the first time in Iranian history, women outnumbered men in the ranks of newly admitted university students. Women's share of places at university has been on the rise ever since. The overall trend of feminization is not restricted to undergraduate education. According to Fereshteh Roohafza of the Women's Cultural and Social Council, a subdivision of the High Council of Cultural Revolution, in the past decade there has been a 269 percent increase in the number of women in doctoral programs, while the number of women pursuing a master's degree has jumped by a factor of 26.[8]

Government officials and state-sanctioned news agencies constantly cite these figures, along with others indicating the explosion of female literacy (especially in rural areas), to present to the world the Islamic Republic as a promoter of women's rights. Inside the corridors of power, however, the statistics are a source of anxiety. Tayebeh Safaei, a member of Parliament's education and research commission, worries about the remarkable gains of women in education: "These imbalances can lead to social crises."[9] What is the "social crisis"? All over the conservative press and online, commentators fret that men are losing out in education and the work force. (In reality, men continue to outnumber and out-earn women in the job market, but the perception is otherwise.) One such article reads like a requiem for male glory. "Modern men," the author implies, are lost "in the shadow of modern women": "It is obvious that men are becoming junior partners. 'Whipped' is the best adjective for describing modern men. Effeminacy is at the heart of modernity: Men are no longer the men they used to be. Women are the center, like the sun, and men are relegated to the margins, useless and submissive, like the moon [whose light is a reflection of the sun's]."[10]

> **Protecting Men and the State**

The September 15, 2012 issue of *Hamshahri Javan*, a state-run magazine intended for youth, dedicates an entire section to women's successes, but depicts them as dangerous. The main cover title reads: "Hands Up! Women Ambushing Social Spheres: First Universities, Then Sports and Now Key Jobs. What's the Next Target?"

A girl in pigtails armed with an assault rifle faces down a tall, top-hatted man with spindly legs, whose shadow is seen against the wall. The illustration evokes My Daddy Long Legs, a 1990 Japanese anime television series (based on the 1912 American novel *Daddy-Long-Legs* written by Jean Webster), which was dubbed in Persian and shown on state-run TV in the 1990s. The series tells the tale of a girl, Judy Abbott, who is attending college thanks to a wealthy man whom she has seen only in silhouette. The message of the *Hamshahri Javan* cover would seem to be that Iran's Judy Abbotts have not only outgrown their need for male benefactors, but also become hostile toward them.

The feminization of Iranian higher education is a phenomenon deeply rooted in social change, rather than in political divides inside and outside the Islamic Republic. Opposition to the new gender segregation regime is coming not only from students and professors but also from conservative women's groups. The criticisms have been so fierce that some universities, like Shahid Chamran, have rescinded the initial restrictions on what and where young men and women may study.

Meanwhile, the evidence from the Iranian press and the statements of public officials suggests that the fresh turn toward gender segregation policies, although its costs are paid mainly by women, is more about an escalating concern with a crisis of masculinity, embodied in sexually frustrated, under-educated men who are confronting a bleak future. The state wants to give an impotent masculinity the kiss of life rather than kiss a potent femininity goodbye. And it is not about men's feelings. Iran is in economic crisis, squeezed by sanctions, reeling from devaluation of the rial and worn down by a high unemployment rate. The hardliners in control of the Iranian state are employing all measures possible to stave off social unrest led by jobless men, whom their assumptions lead them to fear the most. ∎

[1] *Khabar Online*, August 12, 2012.
[2] *Fararu*, July 7, 2011.
[3] *Fars News Agency*, July 5, 2011.
[4] *Student News Agency* (Iran), October 24, 2011.
[5] *Radio Farda*, November 20, 2009.
[6] *Parsine*, July 6, 2011.
[7] *Khabar Online*, October 1, 2011.
[8] *Fars News Agency*, February 10, 2012.
[9] *Tebyan*, July 10, 2012.
[10] *Rasekhoon*, April 30, 2012.

> Who is behind Iran's Green Movement?

by Simin Fadaee, Humboldt University, Germany

Poster for the documentary,
The Green Wave, *depicting the power of the Green Movement.*

The Green Movement of Iran emerged after supporters of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's main rival in the presidential election of 2009 took to the streets and protested the election results. The protestors then transformed themselves into a complex and popular movement that is active in actual and virtual space. In light of the ongoing debates regarding the social activists of other recent uprisings in the Middle East, I will examine the social base of those who have been involved in the Green Movement of Iran. I argue that the main protagonist is the newly emergent social force that I refer to as the "post-Islamized Milieu." This milieu was at the core of the Green Movement of Iran in 2009. Similar forces shaped the core of the Arab Spring a year later.

The Green Movement must be understood in the context of the nationwide social movement called the Reform Movement, which came into existence in the 1990s. It was a response to the introduction of Islamism after the revolution of 1979 and

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to subsequent economic reforms of the late 1980s. The Green Movement emerged as the continuation of, and within the framework of, the Reform Movement.

Immediately after the revolution, Islamism began to dominate all aspects of the social structure. This meant that existing institutions were reorganized with reference to Islamic laws and regulations, while "new" Islamic institutions were introduced to control different aspects of the economy, politics, and society. After the end of the war with Iraq and the death of Ayatollah Khomeini in 1988, the market economy was advanced to counterbalance Islamic statist policies of previous years. It was within this context that the Reform Movement emerged, calling for a diversified public sphere.

Pierre Bourdieu has argued that human beings react to different – i.e. new – situations based on a set of internalized dispositions that he termed "habitus." People with a similar habitus who have access to similar resources and lead similar lives cohere into "social milieus." Elsewhere I have analyzed the emergence of five major social milieus in early 1990s Iran on the basis of the changing social structures stemming from the intersection of Islamism and the market economy.[1] Here I focus on one of these major milieus, the "post-Islamized milieu," because it was a driving force behind the Green Movement.

The post-Islamized milieu is comprised of urban middle-class residents who have access to higher education and the Internet, such as academics, artists, journalists, and students. They reject the "old" narratives and ideas represented by the Islamic Republic, and they embrace the idea of a "new" society. In comparison to the other milieus, they have the highest level of global cultural capital e.g. foreign language competence, Internet access and foreign travel. Some members of this milieu are former supporters of the Islamization process, yet they reject Islam as a binding force that can serve as the bedrock of the nation. What unites this milieu is a growing awareness and common understanding of such issues as social pluralism, civil rights, and liberal democracy which, in turn, stimulated new demands.

Mohammad Khatami's election in 1997 and his support for reform was a tremendous victory for the Reform Movement, but Ahmadinejad won the presidential election of 2005 by focusing on economic and populist issues which appealed to segments of the traditional middle-class milieu, the working-class milieu and the rural milieu. In the following years these groups were frustrated by persistent unemployment and sluggish economic growth, and by 2009 their economic situation had deteriorated. Moreover, all the major democratic achievements of the Reform Movement of Khatami's era had been rolled back.

Breezes of change began in the months and weeks before the 2009 election through an outpouring of support for the reformist candidate Musavi whose followers were then galvanized by the controversial reelection of Ahmadinejad. This opposition then grew into the Green Movement which expanded to encompass wider political issues.

The post-Islamized milieu shaped the core of the Reform Movement in its early stages. However, its further development and especially the rise of the Green Movement, was only possible with the participation of other social groups such as the traditional middle-class milieu and the working-class milieu. Due to the shortage of institutions that could support those facing economic devastation and political disenfranchisement, the Green Movement increasingly saw itself as a political opposition to the regime. As a result, it became a multi-layered and diverse movement with the potentiality to dramatically change older political, social, and economic structures in Iran. ■

[1] Fadaee, S. (2011) "Global Expansion of Capitalism, Inequalities and Social Movements: The Iranian Case," in Boike Rehbein (ed.) *Globalization and Inequality in Emerging Societies*. Basingstoke: Palgrave-Macmillan.

> Appropriating the Past
The Green Movement in Iran

by Abbas Varij Kazemi, New York University, USA

Photo : shaigan

FARS NEWS AGENCY

In 2009, Iran experienced an unusual social movement, known then and now as "The Green Movement." This was not an environmental protest but was prompted by contested presidential election results, youthful desire for expression and reform, and a collective wave of national political optimism. Iranians at home and abroad demonstrated in the streets calling for legal and political reform. Some characterize the Green Movement as a religious movement. Although the movement did incorporate religious iconography and vocabulary, these elements became free of their initial religious significance when demonstrators used them in a newly defined context and political environment. This process of redefining symbols and rituals exemplifies Michel de Certeau's[1] concept of tactic, which states that if the state refuses to grant a space for protest, the people will seize what is available to them, which, in the case of Iran, meant the realm of religion.

The state's strategies were no match for the people's tactics. In a country awash with state-sanc-

> The Green Movement created its own "Green Friday Prayer," adopting one of the central institutions of the Islamic state but violating one of its sacred principles, the segregation of men and women.

tioned and organized rituals of religiosity, there are many arenas – times and spaces – that can be manipulated. Thus, the religiosity of the Green Movement, its "Green Islam," is simply a discursive element of a new social movement. The Green Movement was to a considerable extent, a movement of a subaltern group, Tehran's middle

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As part of its strategy of cultural resignification, the Green Movement appropriated and "repolitcized" the historic meaning of the color "green".

class, which from time to time has asserted itself in spectacular ways. Thus, Iranian social transformations are invariably linked to the types of protest methods adopted by the Iranian middle class in negotiating religion and authority.

> **"Demonstration of Silence"**

On June 15, 2009, a "demonstration of silence" blanketed Tehran's main streets. Only three months before the silence had descended, election culture filled street life with vitality and hope. Before the June 2009 election, everyday life was emboldened by the spirit of optimistic politics. People became accustomed to gathering in the streets without fear of police intervention, cars' headlights shone, and people's hands were raised with a sense of hope. After the election, the June 15 "demonstration of silence" was considered a watershed in the fate of Iran's Green Movement. The demonstration drew hundreds of thousands of protesters to Azadi Square, where attendees marched in silence. Protestors' hands were raised, not with pre-election enthusiasm, but in protest. This silent protest was fueled by the people's anger with the government's decision to prohibit public gatherings or organizing after the contested presidential election. Unlike their predecessors who led the 1979 revolution to oust the Shah, Green Movement

participants did not return home to resume their normal lives, leaving the revolution in the care of the government, or the state. The Iranian middle-class youth sought ways to remain engaged and continue the fight for their demands. Although the government continued to crack down on Green Movement activities, participants pursued innovative approaches to continue protesting.

Within Iran's rigid and intolerant political structure, how are social movements possible? I believe that de Certeau's concepts of tactic and strategy address such possibilities. Within his framework, resistance in societies with a highly intricate power structure and pervasive state presence can only come through invisible, tactical, and concealed practices. Following de Certeau I shall show how the Green Movement managed to redefine the purposes and roles of specific places and symbols.

> **Re-politicizing the Color Green**

We can start with the name of the movement and its symbolic color – green. During the politically turbulent months after the presidential election, the color green symbolized protest and dissent, which has to be understood within the Iranian historical context where the color has deep cultural and religious roots. On the one hand, the color green holds

religious meaning. Among Shia Muslims, it is seen as a sacred reference to the Prophet Mohammad and his family. In the past, green's sacred nature also represented protest, signifying Shia Muslims' opposition to the dominant religion (Sunni). Throughout its history, Shia culture developed around active opposition to threats from ruling parties that included the formation of underground resistance networks. Over centuries, Shia Muslims expressed their protest by displaying and utilizing the color green, for example, by ritualizing the mourning of fellow martyrs. Since the 16th century when Shia Islam became dominant the color green has been a sacred part of Iran's cultural fabric. Therefore, green already held political significance in Iran prior to June 2009 when the urban middle-class leaders turned it from a symbol of religious resistance and pride into a symbol of political protest against the regime.

Several months before the 2009 presidential election, Tehran's streets, cars, and its people were covered in green – green was visible everywhere. Even online, Iranian bloggers demonstrated their support of the Movement by covering their websites in green. Its ubiquitous presence brought fresh life to the city, its citizens, and the potential for political reform. Green cloth wristbands, once considered a talisman for the terminally-ill seeking mercy or a miracle, became an essential part of the uniform worn by Tehran's middle-class youth. This adoption no longer represented the healing of physical ailments, but referred to the more critical illness – rehabilitating Iran's political and social health. At this juncture, the collective adornment and display of the color green became a new protesting space.

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> Inverting of the Old Slogans

The strategy of the Green Movement was to appropriate the political slogans used in Tehran's streets during the 1979 revolution – slogans representing defiance against the state. Following the 1979 revolution, the new government, the Islamic Republic of Iran, adopted the slogans and rhetoric of the protestors as a part of its official ideology. With time most Iranians forgot the revolutionary rhetoric as the state no longer represented the original life of the movement. But in 2009, the protestors exhumed the slogans, bringing 1979 back to life but free of the current regime's influence or agenda. Young middle-class Iranians wearing green armbands of hope filled the streets marching and shouting repurposed 1979 slogans. Such slogans and sentiments represented Ernst Bloch's idea of drawing on unfulfilled aspirations of the past (1979 revolution) in order to attain "potential possibilities in the future." Thus, the Green Movement reclaimed the popular 1979 revolutionary slogan, "Independence, Freedom, and Islamic Republic," which the state-run media had transformed into a cliché and which was now chanted against the state.

Although the protestors' slogans seem to mirror those of the Islamic Republic, they have lost their original implications to convey brand new meaning, namely that the 1979 Revolution is an unfinished project. Once forgotten politics returned with slogans such as "Allah o Akbar" and "Ya Hussein, Mir Hussein." The former, a 1979 slogan, was turned into a military slogan during the eight-year Iran-Iraq War when Iranian soldiers shouted "Allah o Akbar" or "God is great" upon attacking the enemy. The slogan was repoliticized during the 2009 post-election protests. "Ya Hussein, Mir Hossein" referred to the dead Shia religious leader Imam Hussein, who was being called upon to help Mir Hossein, a reference to Hossein Mousavi, the opposition leader and Green Movement hero. In this way slogans of a state-sponsored religion were turned into political chants of the opposition.

> Politics of Commemoration

The Green Movement's different use of space and place originated within Shia culture. Such culture has roots in its role as a once minority religious sect. Following the government's killing of the religious leader Imam Hussein in Karbala on Ashura Day (680 A.D.), Shia Muslims adopted the slogan, "Every day and place is Ashura and Karbala." Shia Muslims internalized this slogan and it became symbolic of Shia culture – its legacy continues in the retelling and acts of remembrance. Although the initial events were not a victory for Shiite Muslims *per se*, the act of retelling was considered triumphant, turning Ashura into a modern-day ritual in Iran. Like early Shia Muslims, Green Movement protestors used national holidays such as Student Day, Palestine Day, and other national and religious events as opportunities to organize protests and sites of resistance. This phenomenon also led to unofficial holidays such as Green Friday Prayers or Green Mountain Excursion, as other opportunities to continue speaking out against the government.

> Small Media and Politics

"You are the media," was a powerful Green Movement slogan, a message to the government, demonstrating that the media is a powerful weapon which everyone can use to communicate and express dissent. Opposition leader, Mir Hossein Mousavi, declared that: "Once the government closes a door, we must seek an alternative window. Once a newspaper is closed another one must be created under the legal framework. For every blog that is shut down, tens of alternatives must be opened up".[2]

As many independent newspapers and websites were shut down, e-mail and text messaging were vital tools used to inform people when to take to the street. Social media sites like Facebook also became a go-to source as the BBC and other traditional media organizations fought to keep up with events. Protesters instantly became citizen journalists and content providers as they used their cameras and phones to share news and information. Consequently, events were often broadcast live by overseas media agencies.

> Territories of Power and Acts of Remembrance

The Green Movement takes its cues from post-religious social movements. Although the movement deploys religious iconography and vocabulary, these elements became free of their religious connotations in a new representation. The one thing we should keep in mind is that the powerful structures of the state regain their domination. Efforts of resistance are often forgotten when spaces and occasions are recaptured by the state rendering the resistance apparently in vain. After the post-election protests, the resistance activities were brought to a halt – cell phones were cut, text messages were monitored, and, eventually, wearing Green Movement symbols was forbidden. Public gatherings or crowds of people in Tehran became few and far between. Six months after the Movement began, all signs of protests withdrew from the streets and people were returned to normalcy. At the same time, underground life signs, graffiti, and most importantly, the act of remembering, are still available to be used as mechanisms for spreading protest. A new underground culture was born, with the people as the storytellers.[3] ∎

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> The Violence
of Egypt's
Counter-Revolution

by Mona Abaza, American University of Cairo, Egypt

Icon Martyr Khaled Said who was killed in Alexandria by police officers of the Mubarak regime. Said's killing was one of the main incidents to trigger the January 2011 revolution. Said's smashed and tortured face has been replicated in numerous graffiti and photographs. Photo by Mona Abaza.

A large number of Egyptians keep on wondering how they are surviving the vertiginous daily violence perpetrated by the regime of the Muslim Brotherhood. This has led many to have second thoughts about the past two years since January 2011. Many seem to be flirting with the idea that a military junta might be more bearable than the present regime of the Muslim Brothers that merely reproduces corrupt Mubarakist practices, but with beards. The designation of the regime as Muslim fascists has been circulating in numerous articles, commentaries, and talk shows to remind us that there are repertoires and analogies with European history that need to be reflected upon.

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This said, be it the military junta or the Islamists, be it that both parties still rule through a negotiated division of labor – the Brotherhood at the forefront of civilian life and the military at the backstage, with nevertheless high tensions between the two camps –, or be it that the contradictory politics between the army and the Brotherhood over the Sinai region will culminate into an open war because of the Brotherhood's supranationalist ambitions that clash with the army's national interests, these are all recent observations that hint at the fact that a military coup might occur much sooner than we thought.

In either case, Egypt has been witnessing over the past months extreme horrifying moments of systematic killings, of kidnapping, of humiliating, denuding, dragging, beating to death and once again *en masse* incidents of intentionally disfiguring protesters. On the other hand, in the absence of a police force that would protect citizens from crimes and looting, a form of "popular justice" seems to be taking over. The people in slums take their own revenge by collectively killing, burning alive, and beating to death publicly the thugs and thieves, not to speak of the sporadic attacks on police stations.

This short piece, therefore, aims to rethink the place of the body in the struggle for a new public culture of dissent – dissent exemplified by the reaction to a curfew imposed by the Morsi regime on Port Said in January 2013 that led the entire city to defy the regime's decisions by taking to the streets and celebrating vehemently with a mass presence through organizing tournaments of football games and other such public events. As I write this article, at the beginning of March, civil disobedience continues in almost all the city of Port Said with ever more impressive massive support.

Since Morsi's ascent to power, Egypt has witnessed a crescendo of killings, kidnappings, and mutilation

of the revolutionary opposition. Since then and more than ever, the public display of violence in the continuous urban wars and clashes between the police forces and the protesters, has reached a frightening scale, so much so that the running joke is that ousted dictator Mubarak has turned out to be a kind-hearted man compared to the blatant and heedless violation of human rights under the regime of the Islamists. While Morsi's presidency dates back eight months, it has managed to inflict a toll of a hundred martyrs from all over Egypt (through clashes in the cities of Port Said, Alexandria, Ismailliyah, Suez, in Rafah, Mansura, Mahalla al-Kubra and in other governorates, not counting Cairo: Tahrir Square, the Mohammed Mahmud Street II clashes of 2012, and the events of the presidential palace)[1]. Since January 25, 2013 alone, 53 people have been killed in Port Said.[2]

Today, many raise the question: were not the numerous incidents under the Mubarak regime equally testimony to police brutality and torture? Let us be reminded of the killing of Khaled Said in Alexandria which triggered the revolution, as well as the numerous previous torture cases in police stations: were not these precisely the reason why the January revolution was triggered in 2011? So what is new about it now?

What makes perhaps a divergence from Mubarak's time is that we are now witnessing in public, repeated and systematic violations of any sort of human dignity precisely after a revolution which itself sprung from the demand to restore human dignity. This collective bodily humiliation is being conducted precisely by a regime that claims to defend the revolution. The public display of brutality has certainly a powerful effect, thanks to the media that are instantly diffusing the events. Perhaps too, because the Islamists, being the former victims of the Mubarak regime, through having hijacked the revolution, are desperately trying, like never before, to

"Brotherhoodize" the state by placing their followers in key functions, with the long-term aim of implementing a theocratic state. Nevertheless, they have remained entrapped in reproducing an identical discourse, methods, and procedures of their victimizers, i.e. the ancient regime, with a difference that they have to be even more brutal with the street.

The last months have produced a collective bewilderment, if not a collective anger against the Brotherhood's mediocre mimicry and bankrupt repertoires, providing a fascinating case study in the making of counter-revolutions. Perhaps too, this is why several Egyptian psychiatrists have recently pointed to the schizophrenic element of the post-Mubarakists, who are calling for an Islamic morality and chastity while instigating in public the most humiliating bodily practices like the stripping naked of men and women, dragging, beating, and kicking, disfiguring or simply killing protestors. The way the Islamic militias committed revengeful acts towards the younger generation of revolutionaries by mutilating and torturing young men and women at the palace makes many wonder whether such acts mirror bodily sadistic tendencies, or whether they are a kind of eruption of collective disorder resulting from a long authoritarian counter-culture fed by the authoritarian establishment.

Since the Muslim Brothers sent their armed militias to kill peaceful protesters at the presidential palace and set up torture chambers, we have witnessed the emergence of a qualitatively new level of violence and its public display, designed to spread terror among the protesters. The incident took place on December, 5 when, under the pretext of defending the president, militias spread terror through open killings.[3] The live media coverage was shocking because it instantly transmitted the killings. One could see on television the targeted and systematic mutilation of the protesters. During that night several satellite channels dif-

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The Open Museum of the Revolution, picturing its martyrs in the center of Tahrir Square. The museum was replicated at the presidential palace in Heliopolis. Tahrir was raided several times by police and the Museum disappeared. Photo by Mona Abaza.

fused images of armed militias using live ammunition against the protesters. The CBC+2 channel transmitted during the entire night horrific images of internal security forces kidnapping youngsters from the crowd and violently beating them to death. Yet many then asked: what's new about that? Once again, violence was already there under Mubarak.

YouTube abounded with evidence that snipers were directly killing not only protesters, but also passersby and mourners who were carrying coffins in a funeral in Port Said. The militias' torture chambers were filmed and the incident was made public. Gang raping by some 300 or 400 thugs in Tahrir, who have assaulted separately some 20 women over the last month, has been a repeated tactic of the regime to scare away women. Series of kidnaps, torture of young revolutionaries who were then found almost dead and stripped naked, continue to happen on a daily basis. This is how young Mohammed al-Guindi who belonged to the Popular Current party was killed this month while the official sources insist that he died in a car accident.[4] The opposition media, the press, and human rights organizations argued that one aspect of this shift in the qualitative scale of violence is turning out to be a "systematic" organized strategy to

silence forever anyone opposing the Brotherhood. Take for example the hordes of gang rapists of Tahrir, and the way they move in organized circles to squeeze and isolate women from their group, strip them naked, torture them and stab their vaginas with knifes to inflict utmost pain in the most intimate parts. That some of the young girls ended up seriously mutilated was completely ignored by Morsi. Take for instance the fact that the incidents are all repeatedly identical. And if the Shura Council adds fuel to the fire by trying to pass a law stating that women should be accountable for gang raping because, in the first place, they should not be demonstrating in Tahrir, it means one and only thing: that the regime is now legalizing crime.

Under the rubric of systematic exterminations, members of the April 6 Movement and several Facebook admins have been murdered and others threatened with killing. Torturing included, too, some of the dissenting leaders of the workers of Mahalla al Kubra.[5] Children were not spared torture as when the press spread the news of the incarceration of some 114 in the camp of Torah jail, and al-Gabal-al Ahmar. It was a shock to hear on the air that some parents, after a long search, could not recognize their children mutilated by heavy

torture when they finally found them in different jails. Once again, the nation was shaken when hearing how a twelve-year-old child, a poor ambulant seller of sweet potatoes in Tahrir, was murdered with two bullets.[6] It was discovered later that he was shot by a soldier who targeted him, while in the media it was announced that he was shot by mistake. However, nothing was mentioned in the official media about the fact that he was a twelve-year-old destitute street kid.

Some observers keep on reminding us that these atrocities are no novelty. In fact, blogger Sandmonkey[7] and Nelly Ali, an anthropologist working on street children[8], both express one and the same argument, as horrible as it sounds: what Egypt is witnessing is nothing but a continuation of the practices of the Mubarak regime. It has been a while since street children have been undergoing rape, torture, and systematic killings, just as it has been a while since Egyptian jails were concentration camps. It is only new that the middle classes are now encountering such horrific facts in their daily lives. Brutality doesn't spare their sons and daughters any longer. The past few months have seen that the victims of the regime were mostly good-looking, middle-class youngsters, as if once again the ageing, patriarchal, resentful regime had to continue to sacrifice young and beautiful bodies for its desperate survival. ■

[1] *Al-Tahrir*, February 16, 2013, p. 9.
[2] The Egyptian Initiative for Human Rights, February 19, 2013, http://eipr.org/pressrelease/2013/02/19/1635
[3] Tadros M. "Signs of Islamist Fascism in Egypt?", December 8, 2012, http://www.opendemocracy.net/5050/mariz-tadros/signs-of-islamist-fascism-in-egypt, retrieved February, 14, 2013.
[4] *Al-Tahrir*, February, 12, 2013.
[5] *Al-Tahrir*, February, 12, 2013.
[6] *Al-Tahrir*, February, 14, 2013.
[7] Salem M. "The Horror", *Daily News*, February 11, 2013, http://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2013/02/11/the-horror/
[8] Ali N. *al-Shuruq*, February, 15, 2013.

> How Indian Universities Become Profit Machines

by Satendra Kumar, Delhi School of Economics, Delhi, India

Advertisements for the Credentialing Business in Uttar Pradesh.

Worldwide the university is facing the double pressures of regulation and commodification, and the university in India is no exception. In the late 1990s, following global trends and World Bank dictates, the Government of India declared that institutions of higher education should make efforts to raise their own resources by raising fee levels, encouraging private donations, and generating revenues through consultancy and other activities. The government justified this decision as necessary to ease pressure on public spending. In April 2000, the Prime Minister's Council on Trade and Industry appointed a committee headed by Mr. Mukesh Ambani and Mr. Kumarmangalam Birla to suggest reforms in the education sector. The committee considered education a very profitable market, and suggested that the government confine itself to primary education while leaving higher education to the private sector. The two industrialists made a case for the full commodification of higher education. In the following years, the budgetary allocation for higher education was decreased and new recruitment

of regular academic and non-academic staff was almost halted. In what follows, I discuss how this commodification has led to the effective dismantling of a public university in Meerut, Uttar Pradesh, and its replacement by a perverse system of private education.

Chaudhary Charan Singh University (CCSU), named after a farmer leader and former Prime Minister from the region, was established in 1966. The university offered MA, M. Phil. and Ph.D. courses in Arts and Sciences. In addition, around 55 colleges in Arts, Sciences, and Management (graduate and post-graduate) were affiliated with the university. While the university had poor-quality teaching, over-crowded classrooms and lack of infrastructure, it still did an admirable job of providing education in multiple fields to people of diverse class and caste backgrounds. However, things changed dramatically in the early 2000s when the university, following changes in government policy including dramatic budget cuts, started raising funds by giving out certificates and other forms of approval to run self-financed vocational courses, first within the university departments, and later in affiliated state-run colleges.[1]

The university's initiative to give out certificates to private parties to run professional courses led many local industrial houses to open new colleges. Soon this initiative also captured the attention of unemployed educated youth, some of whom were running coaching centers. It also attracted local political leaders who had access to the university bureaucracy and the dominant political class. Overnight, many one-room coaching institutes were converted into vocational colleges. Thousands of acres of public land, which had been snatched from farmers at throwa-

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way prices, were allotted to politicians by local authorities. These politicians set up colleges under charitable trusts, which helped them invent ways to convert "black money into white" and evade taxes in the name of social service[2]. Within a decade, more than 350 private colleges were set up in rural and urban Meerut and nearby towns. The CCSU gave certificates to these colleges to run various courses in Engineering, Management, and Pharmacy, and to offer Bachelors in Education degrees (B.Ed). Hardly any private institutions are interested in offering courses in Arts, Social Sciences or Philosophy. The result is that CCSU has been reduced from a large and comprehensive public university into a machine that distributes certificates for profit-making private colleges.

The state's dismantling of the public university and the emergence of a burgeoning private sector has had many perverse consequences on the quality of education and social justice. In the beginning, many institutions were set up and run without following the guidelines laid down by the government for opening a private college. This resulted in hundreds of the colleges and institutions being run without proper infrastructure and qualified teaching staff. Today you can find institutions where students are registered on paper, but in which no classes are held. These colleges bypass existing rules by charging huge capitation fees[3] that many poor and lower-class students cannot pay.

In order to help poor and lower class or caste students the government offered fellowships and subsidies to institutions that admitted Scheduled Caste (SC) students to vocational courses. But rather than promoting social justice, this has benefited private colleges that have gamed the program for their own profit. Many colleges and institutions hired so-called "consultants" (brokers) to prepare lists of SC students by going door-to-door in villages and urban neighborhoods around Meerut. These students were asked to enroll in the vocational courses that qualified for government subsidies. In many cases, the students were not interested in these courses, but were enrolled on paper anyway. Further, many students were admitted to more than one college without their knowledge. In the former case, students benefited from the fellowships by obtaining degrees without attending classes, while the college own-

ers received huge subsidies. In the latter case, the college owners and consultants were beneficiaries with no benefits to the students. In this way, huge public funds were laundered into the private sector.

The private colleges also became political machines for accumulating votes. Many politicians set up vocational colleges in rural and semi-urban areas. For many of them, one of the motives was to buy cheap farmland in the countryside. These politicians projected themselves as charity workers who were not only helping their fellow caste members but also people across castes and classes in rural areas where educational facilities are still few. The private colleges have become an instrument to extend patronage to poor parents who cannot afford huge capitation fees and to educated youth who struggle to find jobs. During elections these parents and young people campaign and vote for their patrons.

In reality, public resources have been used to fund the expansion of the private sector in India. Not only has this privatization created a rich class of college owners belonging to the upper and middle castes, it has also aggravated inequality of access to higher education. A large proportion of graduates of private colleges either end up enrolling in additional courses to enhance their qualifications or they take jobs at very low salaries. SC and poor students find themselves stranded in the maze of private colleges. Thus, the result is reproduction of class and caste, and the pure instrumentalization of knowledge. I have studied this phenomenon only in Meerut and Western Uttar Pradesh, but I expect the privatization of public education elsewhere in India to have similar consequences when state regulations can be circumvented with bribes or other forms of corruption. This resembles the worldwide trend of public goods being transferred to private players with the connivance or positive encouragement of the state. ■

[1] In the self-financed courses a student was supposed to pay more than usual on user-fee grounds, but infrastructure such as buildings, teaching staff, and libraries were provided by the university in these campus-run but self-financed courses. In short, the government was providing public resources to fund private education.

[2] Running an educational institution comes under social service. It is considered a non-profit activity and is non-taxable.

[3] A capitation fee is an unofficial payment, which, in India, is often necessary for admission to institutions of higher education.

> German Sociologists Boycott Academic Ranking

by Klaus Dörre, Stephan Lessenich, and Ingo Singe,
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MA student, Johanna Sittel, of the Friedrich-Schiller-University in Jena joins many other German sociologists in a national boycott of academic ranking systems.

Universities and institutions of higher education across the globe are being impacted by structural change, guided by principles of the entrepreneurial university. The imposition of New Public Management principles means that universities are increasingly being managed like private enterprises. Resources are being allocated according to performance records and target agreements. Academic capitalism has entered Germany, and its main instruments are university department rankings and league tables. The downside is an academic routine biased towards quantitative performance indicators (research funding, number of doctorates and graduates) and a neglect of qualitative criteria. Work in academia has changed fundamentally in both design and content. Teaching and research are increasingly being obstructed by the growth of administrative responsibilities. There is a logic of escalation inherent in performance measurement exercises ("more and more and never enough"), resulting in work intensification, stress, and overload amongst all groups of the academic workforce. Negative effects on the quality of research and teaching are increasingly being felt.

The German Sociological Association (GSA) has therefore decided to take a stand against academic capitalism by boycotting the 2013 CHE (Center for the Development of Higher Education) ranking, which certainly is the most influential ranking in the German-speaking world. Quality in teaching and research, the reputation of scholars, scientific infrastructure, and international "visibility" are amongst the assessment criteria for university departments. For this purpose, data (for example on third-party funding) is

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gathered from university directorates, students are being surveyed, and some professors are also being consulted. Results are published in cooperation with the highly respected weekly *Die Zeit* and certainly are a very important point of reference for university directorates as well as for the science bureaucracy.

The GSA recently called upon departments, lecturers, and students not to participate in the CHE ranking. The initiative was first taken by the Institute of Sociology at the Friedrich-Schiller-University in Jena. Having been ranked amongst the best in the league tables, the university's sociology department used this strong position to publicly declare its non-participation. The announcement was made shortly after the results of the 2011 ranking had been published. The department's resolution stated:

"The new 2011/12 CHE Ranking, published in *Die Zeit*, has ranked the Institute of Sociology at the Friedrich-Schiller-University at a top position. We are pleased about this expression of appreciation of our work. However, we are deeply skeptical about the instrument of university ranking as such. We consider the information value of the CHE ranking to be low, if for only one reason, namely that a significant number of institutes have been ranked on the basis of incomplete data. First and foremost, ranking universities serves as an instrument for establishing competitive cultures in academia. It systematically produces winners and losers but does not help to improve the quality of scientific work. The Institute of Sociology therefore is planning not to take part in the next round of this competition. As already stated, we will consult with the GSA's board and council

in order to coordinate a joint approach of the discipline. On this occasion, there needs to be an exchange about appropriate instruments for assuring scientific quality and ways to provide students with information on the different sociology programs at German universities."

The boycott, which has been widely covered in the press, has meanwhile been joined by the GSA and a majority of sociology departments in Germany. It is also being supported by other disciplines. Historians, English literary scholars, chemists, pedagogues, and political scientists have decided not to partake in the CHE ranking for the time being.

The boycott is not given unequivocal support by university managements. And the GSA has made it clear that it will not refuse performance appraisals on principle. The GSA's board thus decided in October 2012 to establish an alternative exclusively descriptive information system for students. It has also decided to set up a working group called *"Task Force Studiengangsevaluation"* which is to discuss alternative ways to establish valid evaluation mechanisms. The boycott will enter its "hot phase" during the summer term of 2013. The coming months will show whether or not the boycott is being supported by sufficient numbers of students and scholars. Right now, the outcome is uncertain, but sociologists from Jena, and indeed Germany, are appealing to the international scientific community to follow suit and boycott rankings.

For further information please refer to:
www.soziologie.de/che ■

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> Kidnappable:
On the Normalization of Violence in Urban Mexico

Ana Villarreal, University of California, Berkeley, USA

Drawing by Ana Villarreal based on the last Facebook profile of a 31-year-old business owner and avid hunter, kidnapped from his office in 2012. Although his family paid several ransom installments, his body was found shot dead on a nearby highway one week later. Fearing a similar fate, numerous business owners in Monterrey have decided to oversee their business activities from afar, relocating their office closer to or inside their homes.

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Carolina took her seven-year-old girl to see *Rapunzel* in a movie theatre and deeply regretted it. For months to come, little Mariana kept bringing up her fear of having someone climb through her window to kidnap her. "I feel there are bad people out there," she told her mother, who evoked this conversation during an interview with me sipping coffee on her balcony in a wealthy municipality of Monterrey, Mexico. "Yes, but you don't have to worry about it," she recalled telling her, "First, this is not a castle. Second, you do not have magic hair. Third, in those days, they had no gates, alarms, and her parents slept far away when we sleep next door to you." It took a lot of imagination and work to reassure Mariana that she is always taken care of at school, at the gym, and with her cousins. "Fuck Disney," Carolina concluded in rage, "Why are they making movies of children being kidnapped?"

The movie triggered a fear too many Mexicans experience today: the fear

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of being kidnapped. Once exclusive to the upper classes, kidnapping has become increasingly common across the class spectrum in cities such as Monterrey, an industrial hub of 4.5 million inhabitants located in northeastern Mexico. Once praised for its entrepreneurial spirit, Monterrey has made news headlines worldwide in recent years as a site of gruesome drug violence. Pictures of hanging bodies and descriptions of piles of decapitated corpses found in nearby highways have circulated the globe. Yet drug violence has exacerbated other forms of criminal violence that are just as detrimental for the local population and that are not making the headlines.

According to a recent study carried out by a think tank in Mexico City, kidnapping is the criminal activity that has the most impact on citizen perceptions of insecurity, even more than homicides related to organized crime (CIDAC, 2012). Official crime statistics are particularly unreliable in relation to kidnapping, as victims and their families are unlikely to report their case due to low trust in police enforcement and justice institutions, not to mention direct threats from kidnappers. Nevertheless, careful revision of available crime statistics and victimization surveys reveals rising trends in kidnapping rates both in Mexico and the state of Nuevo León, where Monterrey is located (México Evalúa, 2011). Here I examine one indicator of how kidnapping has become normalized in urban Mexico, by drawing from ongoing fieldwork into the ways increased violence is transforming everyday life in Monterrey.

You know violence is becoming normalized when it enters the realm of common language and daily practices. In terms of language, during the last two months I have begun to hear a linguistic innovation in response to increased kidnapping rates from peo-

ple, at least, in the middle and upper classes. Individuals are beginning to define themselves as *secuestrable* or not, "kidnappable" in English. I heard this term for the first time on Friday, January 25, 2013 from a 43-year-old upper-class woman, Lucía, who had decided to put aside her fears and the fears of her family and visit their country home located on the outskirts of the city. The country home, a two-story house with a large pool surrounded by dozens of orange trees and guarded by a gardener and his family, had not been visited in over eighteen months due to criminal and military activity in the area. "My family thinks I should not come out here because I am *kidnappable*," she told me once we got there, drinking beer and bearing her stomach to the burning sun. "Any of us can be caught in a cross-fire, this has already happened to me," she added, "but that is not the worry out here, but rather that you're so isolated that you can be kidnapped, because you're *kidnappable*, they can ask money for you."

The second time I heard this term was in the mouth of Santiago, a 28-year-old man living in a middle-class neighborhood. During our interview on Tuesday, February 26, 2013, he explained, "I know I am not *kidnappable*, my income is approximately 17,000 pesos a month, so it's really enough for me but how much could I have in my bank account? If my income were 100 or 200,000 then I would feel *kidnappable*. My car is a discrete 2002 Cavalier." The point about the car is crucial, as many Monterrey residents have changed their cars as part of a more discrete lifestyle. One such man sold a BMW to one of Santiago's friends, which has led Santiago to worry about him. The friend insists it's an old BMW that he bought for cheap, but Santiago tells him kidnappers will not know this. "They can kidnap you," he recalled telling him, "and how are you

going to pay?" So there is great concern not just about being *kidnappable* but also about appearing or not to be *kidnappable*.

In this context, the normalization of violence can be seen in the way the verb *secuestrar* (to kidnap) becomes an adjective. High kidnapping rates are constructing a new form of social classification in relation to crime, dividing the population into two groups: those who perceive themselves as at risk of being kidnapped and those who do not. Being *kidnappable* in this context becomes an integral characteristic of the self, capable of determining a series of consumption practices, schedules, work, and transportation strategies, which I am currently documenting.

"They don't need to know these things are happening," Carolina adds towards the end of our interview referring to her children. "I still want to protect them from this, to preserve this bubble, to preserve their childhood." Carolina says she does not think she is *kidnappable*, but she is careful not to leave the wealthy municipality where she lives. She does not wear her Cartier watches anymore or drive a flashy car. She does not read the newspapers or watch the news on television. She rarely goes out at night and has tightened her social circle to her friends from school and her family. She is articulate about these shifts and seems starkly aware that as she tries to construct a bubble for little Mariana, she is also trying to construct a bubble for herself. Yet at the end of our interview, she adds casually, "I wonder how people live in war zones. How do they do it? How do they manage their anxiety? It must be awful." ■

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> Social Fragmentation among Mexican Youth

by Gonzalo A. Saraví, Center for Research and Higher Studies in Social Anthropology (CIESAS), Mexico

Inequality seems to be endemic in Mexico. After a decade of moderate economic growth and improvements in some social indicators, the country continues to show very high levels of social inequality. Overall levels of education have risen, coverage of some basic health services has expanded, and conditional cash transfer programs, such as *Oportunidades*, now reach more than 5 million households, which represent nearly a fifth of the total population. Still, the contribution of these programs to poverty reduction has been modest and very inconsistent.

Nevertheless, behind these and other indicators of progress in meeting international human welfare goals, we see a persistent inequality. In the context of contradictory trends, a new model of "unequal inclusion," is emerging. Privilege and deprivation exist side by side, ignoring each other and even tacitly accepting each other. Inequality has taken a qualitative leap towards fragmenting the social structure through spaces of inclusion that are not only unequal, but also socially and culturally distant.

This process of fragmentation is evident when we examine the transition to adulthood. Childhood and youth represent key periods in the life course. On the one hand, the opportunities and constraints at this stage define the possibilities and conditions for one's future wellbeing. On the other hand, these are critical moments of socialization and subjectification that will determine how one integrates into social and cultural spaces in adult life. Literature on the topic has provided important insights into structural inequalities and the mechanisms by which they operate, but we know much less about how inequality leads to a process of social fragmentation. The transition to adulthood and the experience of youth are ideal processes for exploring theories of social fragmentation both in their structural and in their socio-cultural dimensions.

> ❝ **The possibility of encounters across class is almost zero** ❞

Access to education in Mexico has increased substantially in the past few decades. Between 1990 and 2010, basic education coverage (through age of nine) became almost universal, and among those aged between 25 and 29 the average number of years of schooling increased from 7.9 to 10.2. In addition, there were several constitutional reforms that extended compulsory education, most recently in 2011, up to the age of twelve. But, at the same time, the educational system has experienced a deep fragmentation. Thus, privileged children and youth attend the same private schools, have more and better resources for learning at school and at home, and receive an education of higher quality and greater variety. Among poorer groups, children and youth also attend socially homogenous schools, but with a more precarious infrastructure and fewer pedagogical resources to support students that come from homes with little social or cultural capital. As a result, educational achievement scores show substantial differences; in the 2006 PISA exam in science, for instance, only 25% of students from the highest quartile on the Socio-Economic and Cultural Index failed, but this percentage grew to 56% in the second quartile and 71% in the first or lowest quartile.

The consequences of fragmentation are not limited to educational achievement; they extend to school experiences and the meaning of

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education. For privileged children and youth, school represents a total and closed experience. A large part of their lives occur and are organized by school, which becomes the most important space of socialization, definition of identities, and construction of cultural capital. The homogeneity and social networks built in schools extend to other spaces and persist from early childhood through adulthood. School is for them the only possible path of transition to adulthood, and their educational trajectories are continuous and linear. Meanwhile, for children and young people from poorer strata, school is a limited experience that must be combined with other activities and obligations. At the same time, it is more open to the influences of other concerns, interests, and external conditions. Therefore, these children's school careers tend to be intermittent and fractured so that, as they progress, school loses importance in the face of other pathways and spaces of transition and social integration.

Fragmentation in education finds its correlate in urban fragmentation. In Mexico, as in other countries in the region, large cities are undergoing a process of increasing residential segregation. In the case of Mexico City, for example, just as the poor periphery has grown larger and more distant, the privileged classes have concentrated in specific areas and in gated and exclusive communities. Enclosure and isolation is not exclusive to the elite; stimulated by urban insecurity and fear of the city, they have also spread into the middle class and even to lower-class people with aspirations to upper mobility.

Socio-spatial fragmentation goes beyond residential segregation and extends to the experience of the city and the urban sociability of children and youth. Housing, schools, shopping, and entertainment centers function as socio-spatial nodes that determine one's urban experience: they are primary spatial referents and a focus of social relations. This process creates a particular and unequal spatial structure: poor and privileged young people each have their own urban geographies as well as their own spatial habitus.

Their definitions of normal urban life, of what it means to live in the city, are constructed in contexts where the characteristics of transport, housing, streets, green spaces, shopping centers, and even the ways of acting, dressing, and speaking are completely different. This refers not only to different and unequal cities, but also to spaces of belonging within cities that are mutually exclusive and unknown to each other.

Even when the scale of segregation decreases, urban social life is characterized by the avoidance of "the other" and by social homogeneity in encounters and interactions. Privileged young people retreat from open public spaces: they live in closed condominiums; they study in private universities; they consume in exclusive shopping centers and restaurants; they move about in private cars. Of the twenty young people I interviewed in

two private universities, only three did not have their own cars, while of the 19 interviewees in two public universities, not one had a car. Of the latter, 90% had used public transport more than three days of the last week. In contrast, among the privileged young people, only 15% (the three without cars) had this same experience.

The retreat from public space is not exclusive to the elites. New semi-public spaces, closed and with various levels of private security, have emerged for other social classes as well. But open public space is dominated by the popular classes. The possibility of encounters and shared social experiences across class is almost zero. Moreover, outside of the city young people find mostly empty spaces or prohibited zones. Interaction with strangers, when it is unavoidable, is dominated by mutual stigmatization, or inserted into controlled hierarchical relationships.

Such social fragmentation has two implications. The first is the possibility that behind social indicators that point to advance and progress, a model of "unequal inclusion" is being consolidated – with social approval. The second is that the formation of distant and mutually exclusive social and cultural spaces may weaken collective responsibility as well as the recognition and awareness of the other. Social fragmentation can hide inequality and, at the same time, undermine social cohesion. ◼

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> Social Inequality in Contemporary Japan

by Sawako Shirahase, University of Tokyo and member of the Local Organizing Committee for the 2014 ISA World Congress in Yokohama, Japan
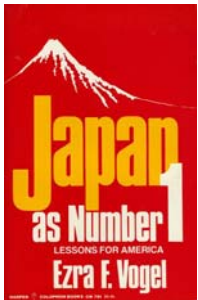
Harvard sociologist and East Asia specialist Ezra Vogel's Japan as Number One: Lessons for America*, published in 1979, became a best-seller in Japan.*

In postwar Japan, inequality debates were revived in a peculiar way, so that the blurred divisions of class and Japanese uniqueness were oddly drawn together. Japan was the first Asian country to successfully industrialize. The period of rapid economic growth, which began in the 1950s, transformed the nation's industrial structure and made Japan a leading economic power. Of particular significance was the book by the American sociologist Ezra Vogel (1976), *Japan as Number One*, which praised many Japanese institutions and delighted many Japanese readers by appealing to their sense of superiority. In the economic dimension, at least, Japan could hold its head high. Discussions of national character took a boastful turn: it was precisely because it was Japan, precisely because we were Japanese, that we were able to achieve unprecedented economic growth. With those very special Japanese characteristics being given such causal importance, differences from other countries came to be exaggerated as being absolute and categorical.

From the 1970s and into the 1980s, the notion of the "all-middle-class society" became buzzwords. Although there was some decrease in the growth rate, average incomes continued to rise; the majority came to be able to afford household electrical appliances and cars. In a comparative study of income distributions in 1976, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) found Japan to be the most egalitarian country (Sawyer, 1976). This was taken as further evidence of Japanese "exceptionalism," and the characterization of Japan as a wholly middle-class and homogeneous society was given further impetus. Such confident assertions of Japan as an egalitarian society started to fade from the late 1980s into the 1990s against a background of growing doubts about the degree of social equality.

Japan entered a period of long economic recession after the collapse of the "bubble economy" in the early 1990s. The unemployment rate, particularly among fifteen- to nineteen-year-olds, who were at most high-school graduates, had sharply risen from 6.6 percent in 1990 to 12.8 percent in 2002. More importantly, the traditional Japanese employment system, which had previously been represented by seniority and lifetime employment, was no longer guaranteed. One of the major driving forces that facilitated high economic growth in the 1950s and 1960s was the favorable economic environment in which companies could afford to train newly employed young workers immediately following the completion of their education, and to provide them and their families with a secure livelihood. The seniority system offered workers, young and middle-aged, secure future prospects to the extent that they could plan their future on the basis of employment security. However, at present, almost half of the individuals aged fifteen to twenty-four years who are not at school are engaged in non-standard jobs and are therefore unable to live an economically independent life.

On the one hand, young men claim they are not ready to marry due to a lack of economic security, which prevents them from being able to support their family. On the other hand, however, young women claim that their reluctance to get married and give birth stems primarily from a fear of losing their freedom. Evidently, gender inequality, which is deeply embedded within family systems, is a significant contributor to social inequality in contemporary Japan. The family is one of the most critical Japanese social institutions and has played a major role in providing basic security. Having one's family to rely on can reduce socioeconomic hardships. In fact, single mothers without family help and elderly widows living alone face high risk of severe economic hardship.

Gender and generation are key factors in structuring class inequality in Japan, but such studies of inequality from a macro perspective have been rather few even though they are very important in examining various social and public issues. Indeed, we can say that all industrial societies face social problems that should be discussed within frameworks of social inequality, frameworks that illuminate both the differences and similarities between countries. ■

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> Haiku: Beauty in Simplicity

by Koichi Hasegawa, Tohoku University, Sendai, and Chair of the Local Organizing Committee of the ISA 2014 World Congress of Sociology in Yokohama, Japan

"**H**aiku" is the shortest form of poetry in the world. It was originally a part of traditional Japanese culture; yet, today, it is widely enjoyed in other cultures and languages. A traditional haiku has a total of 17 or fewer syllables with three lines of 5-7-5 syllables, requiring one word or phrase symbolizing a season of the year. These two are the only rules for haiku writing. The history of haiku goes back to the poetry master, Basho Matsuo (1644-1694), who was also an energetic traveler. Since then, haiku has become an extremely popular part of Japanese daily life. Major Japanese newspapers provide famous haikus with short explanations every day, present weekly choices from among haikus submitted by readers, and from these choices regularly select the top 40 to 50 high-quality haiku poems, as assessed by four or five judges. Haiku composers get together at weekend community centers in Japan to share their writings and to improve their poetic talents. Japan today has millions of haiku poets and enthusiastic fans.

What is essential for haiku is simplicity, a belief it shares with Japanese Zen Buddhism, tea ceremonies, and Japanese cuisine. Being simple is an important value represented in Japanese culture and in the beauty of life. Traditional Japanese artwork, for example, leaves large spaces on its drawings, avoiding too many colors, lines, and expressions. In this way, the art invites you to actively interpret this most simplified and intuitive act of communication. Likewise, haiku refrains from too many words and phrases; thus, it is considered important to leave subtle overtones of the haiku to the reader's own interpretation. And a haiku focuses ultimately on just one or two of the phrases. In sum, haiku represents the beauty of simplicity.

A statute of Basho Matsuo along a street in Higashine City, Yamagata prefecture, which was on his route back from Hiraizumi where he wrote his famous haiku on the impermanence of human glory.
Photo by Koichi Hasegawa.

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Let me introduce you, my sociology friends around the world, to the most famous haiku written by Basho Matsuo, the founding father of haiku from the 17th century. Donald Keen, a Japanese literature specialist and Professor Emeritus of Colombia University, translates Basho's haiku into English[1] as follows:

> **The summer grasses -------**
> **Of brave soldier's dreams**
> **The aftermath.**

Basho wrote this in 1689 when he visited Hiraizumi, currently Iwate Prefecture in Japan, and the site of a well-known battlefield from the 12th century. Every year summer grasses grow strong and high in the ruined war site; yet, such a field represents the eternal strength and cycle of nature. On the other hand, what the warriors wished for were momentary hopes and dreams. In these three lines, Basho vividly contrasted eternally cyclical and powerful nature with the short-lived political authority of a particular moment. In this way, haiku makes full use of techniques like metaphors, contrasts, symbolisms; nonetheless, such techniques themselves should not be obtrusive. Exhibiting the strictly natural is an important feature of haiku expressions.

Nature has long been the principle center of life in Japan. Four clearly divided seasons led people to cherish their sensitivities to each season and its change. How many words and expressions of "rain," for instance, are you aware of? A commonly used Japanese dictionary includes more than 160 nouns associated with rain, such as "silky rain," and "flower rain drops," which shower off cherry blossoms just as they come into full bloom. Japanese culture offers nuanced expressions of rain and other seasonal terms. Such a delicate cultural character has attracted many passionate haiku fans in Japan and in the world. I am such an enthusiast, who enjoys writing between ten and twenty haiku poems a month. Adding to my career as a sociologist, I have published a collection of my own haiku, titled *Ryoku-U* (*Raining in the Season of Green Leaves*). As an environmental sociologist, my inspirations come from environmental challenges, events, and issues, and even natural disasters. Creating a haiku is just like shooting one moment of our experience – life, society, and nature – with a snapshot camera.

I would like to conclude this essay with another haiku of rain by Basho Matsuo recorded at Chūson-ji Temple, Hiraizumi, Japan[2]:

> **Have the rains of spring**
> **Spared you from their onslaught,**
> **Shining hall of Gold?**

Hiraizumi, where Basho Matsuo expressed one moment of life in the "summer grasses" haiku, is now part of the World Cultural Heritage recognized by UNESCO (http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1277). It is three hours from Yokohama, where the 2014 World Congress of Sociology will take place. Haiku and sociology have much in common; they analyze, critique, and record our life experience in society and nature. ■

[1] In Japanese: Natsukusa ya/ Tsuwamono domo ga/ Yume no ato.
[2] Samidare no/ Furinokoshite ya/ Hikaridou.

> Executive Committee Meeting in Bilbao

by Michael Burawoy, University of California, Berkeley, and ISA President

The Executive Committee of the ISA, meeting in Bilbao, take a tour of the city.

For its annual meeting the ISA Executive Committee (EC) assembled in Bilbao for five days at the University of the Basque Country, generously hosted by Professor Benjamín Tejerina, EC member, and his colleagues in the Department of Sociology. Two days of our meeting coincided with a fascinating International Conference on "Beyond the Crisis: Sociology Facing New Forms of Risk, Uncertainty and Precarity," which drew on members of the Executive Committee and the external members of the Program Committee.

The five-day marathon began with separate meetings of the Program Committee for the Yokohama Congress in 2014, chaired by VP Raquel Sosa Elízaga, the Publications Committee, chaired by VP Jennifer Platt, the Finance and Membership Committee, chaired by VP Robert Van Krieken, the Research Coordinating Committee, chaired by VP Margaret Abraham, and the National Association Liaison Committee (NALC), chaired by VP Tina Uys. Summaries of their reports can be found below.

The Executive Committee met as a whole for two days at the end of the week. It has been a good year with a successful PhD Lab in Taipei, and an exciting ISA Forum in Buenos Aires, generating momentum for the 2014 Congress in Yokohama. I reported on trips to different continents and the progress made during the year with regard to ISA's Digital Worlds (*Global Dialogue*, *Universities in Crisis*, *Public Sociology Live*, *Journeys through Sociology* and the proposed *Professional Development* site).

The EC was pleased to confirm that Toronto will be the venue for the 2018 Congress. One of our most urgent tasks was to decide where to hold the 2016 ISA World Congress. We had three excellent bids from Budapest, Copenhagen, and Vienna. We short-listed two – Budapest and Vienna – and will make a final decision pending site visits to both.

Among the other decisions we took:
• Adopted a proposal to restructure the ISA that would draw more on the EC for members of the program committee. This committee would be chaired by the President, thereby making redundant the position of Vice-President for Program. This proposal now goes to the Assembly of Councils for an electronic ballot.
• Established the conditions under which the ISA could make public statements defending sociologists facing human rights abuses.
• Developed an ISA policy on disability access for our major meetings.

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• Established a committee to seek external funds for ISA projects.
• Created a new ISA Award for Excellence in Research and Practice

> Margaret Abraham,
Vice-President for Research

The Research Coordinating Committee (RCC) had a productive meeting in Bilbao. I reported on the success of the Second ISA Forum of Sociology held in Buenos Aires (July 31-August 4, 2012) that brought together 3,592 registrants from 84 countries to participate in more than 650 sessions. The Social Justice and Democratization Space has been a great success and we have plans for its improvement.

The subcommittee on statute revisions reported on the research committees (RCs), working and thematic groups (WGs and TGs) that have reviewed and revised their statutes, and listed the RCs that have to complete this process before the forthcoming elections. The RCC reviewed the reports on the 2011 and 2012 grants allocation and approved the allocations for 2013. The Prize subcommittee reported on the RC37 (Sociology of Arts) award proposal that was approved. Thematic Group 05's (Visual Sociology) request to be upgraded to a Working Group was approved. The proposal for a new Thematic Group on Sociology and Social Work was carefully reviewed but ultimately declined due to overlap with existing RCs.

The RCC discussed the preparations for the World Congress of Sociology in Yokohama, 2014, including:
• Confex's progress to enhance the online system based on feedback provided at the Second ISA Forum and by RC program coordinators.
• The selection of the ten integrative proposals for the World Congress by the joint committee of the RCC and NALC.
• Improving the use of grants, by providing Congress grants to RC-TG-WG participants in the form of support for registration.
• The agenda for training newly elected RC/WG/TG officers and for the Research Council meeting.

I am also pleased to report that the ISA Finance Committee granted our request for additional funds (10,000€) to support the registration fee of Program Coordinators for Yokohama.

> Raquel Sosa Elízaga,
Vice-President for Program

Over the past three years, the Program Committee gathered on the occasion of the three annual meetings of the Executive Committee, to which most of its members belong: Michael Burawoy (ISA President), Margaret Abraham (Vice-President for Research), Tina Uys (Vice-President for

National Associations), Elena Zdravomyslova, Benjamín Tejerina, Sari Hanafi, Chin Chun Yi, and myself, as Vice-President for Program. Koichi Hasegawa attended as the chair of the Local Organizing Committee. In addition, a group of distinguished scholars, who specialize in the study of inequality, accepted our invitation to participate as external members of our committee: Edgardo Lander, Göran Therborn, Kalpana Kannabiran, Markus Schulz, J. Esteban Castro, and Boaventura de Souza Santos (who was, unfortunately, unable to attend the meetings). The scholarship and experience of all the members of the committee guaranteed a high-quality scientific debate. Their collaborations, which we deeply appreciate, allowed us to prepare the document Facing Inequality, which was published on the website of the Association, and has served as the basis of our arguments on how to approach all the problems to be discussed in our plenaries. Their effort was also crucial to determine the structure and organization of the program, the number and profile of every plenary, which is now directed to contacting colleagues whose contributions are known worldwide. The result of this work will be presented in several volumes which will be published by our Association.

The committee also discussed at length the way the plenaries should contribute to the general organization and structure of our Congress. The great interest aroused by our theme allowed us to broaden our horizons with the contributions of our colleagues in Integrative, National Associations and Ad Hoc sessions, as well as to incorporate well-known specialists in the Authors Meet Critics sessions, the extraordinary sessions prepared by the Local Organizing Committee and the Presidential sessions, which for the first time will be integrated into the ten plenaries that were approved. The Yokohama Congress will take place a year before UNESCO's term to fulfill the *Millennium Development Goals*. We truly hope that our own work will contribute as much as possible to a deeper understanding of inequality as well as to ways of overcoming it.

> Jennifer Platt, Vice-President for Publications

Our publications are doing well, but there are some important new developments as we respond to changing situations.

The first review issue of *Current Sociology*, produced in cooperation with *Sociopedia*, appears later this year. That will contain updated reviews of various fields of work – for instance social conflict, disaster studies, health, and illness – so far available only in *Sociopedia*, opening them to a wider readership. For later issues, direct submission of papers reviewing further areas will be invited. *The International Sociology Review of Books* is to accept reviews of items, such as films, which are not strictly "books." The *eSymposium* is only moving house; it will be located on our Social Justice and Democratization web site, http://sjdspace.sagepub.com/ with each issue only for ISA members until the next comes out.

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Vineeta Sinha, the current editor, becomes director of the web site, and her successor as editor will be Kelvin Low.

To help us respond to the developing needs of the international sociological community, an online survey will seek views about the contents of *Current Sociology* and *International Sociology*; the results will be discussed at the World Congress.

For our books, *Sage Studies in International Sociology*, there is a major innovation in pricing; hardback copies for libraries will still be produced, but a low-cost paperback edition will become available for ISA members and developing markets. The first in our series *Key Texts in World Sociology* are in preparation.

The pressures in some countries for "open access" to journal articles reporting work supported by some funding bodies have made it necessary to introduce new provisions. It has been agreed that authors whose work requires it, can pay a charge and make their paper immediately open to all, and those for whom the "green" option of openness only after a year is appropriate, can have that without charge.

> ## Tina Uys,
> ### Vice-President for National Associations

The National Associations Liaison Committee had a productive 2012. The most important forthcoming event on the NALC's calendar is the Meeting of the Council of National Associations to be held in Ankara, Turkey from 13-16 May 2013 on the campus of the Middle East Technical University (METU). The theme of the conference is "Sociology in Times of Turmoil: Comparative Approaches." The conference will be attended by approximately 70 delegates of whom 40 represent national associations that are regular collective members of the ISA. We would like to express our appreciation to the Turkish Local Organizing Committee, chaired by Professor Doctor Ayse Saktanber, Chair of the Sociology department at METU, for all their hard work to ensure the success of the conference.

The application from the Saudi Society of Sociology and Social Work for regular collective membership was approved after discussion of their Statutes. Presently the ISA has 57 regular collective members. We also revisited the process for dealing with applications for regular collective membership received between annual EC meetings so that applicants will not have to wait for the outcome until the next NALC/EC Annual Meeting.

The Sociological Association of Kyrgyzstan, the Iberic Meeting of Sociology, the Bulgarian Sociological Association, and the Mozambique Sociological Association submitted reports on the regional conferences that they hosted with the support of an ISA grant. These were discussed and approved.

Grants to upgrade websites were awarded to the Argentinian Consejo de Profesionales en Sociología, the Argentinian, Australian, Croatian, German, and Iranian Sociological Associations. The Finnish Westermarck Society received a grant to organize a regional PhD workshop to be attended by doctoral students from the Nordic countries. Members of the NALC stressed the importance of demonstrating the regional nature of a workshop when applying for a grant.

> ## Robert van Krieken,
> ### Vice-President for Finance and Membership

• **Membership**

The committee reviewed collective membership as well as individual membership, which at December 2012 was at an all-time high of 5,300.

The membership of Research Committees, Working Groups, and Thematic Groups was reviewed, noting four RCs in a medium- to high-risk situation of declining membership, and those RCs and TGs growing significantly: RC07 Futures Research, RC09 Social Transformations & Sociology of Development, RC13 Sociology of Leisure, RC19 Sociology of Poverty, Social Welfare & Social Policy, RC21 Regional & Urban Development, RC31 Sociology of Migration, RC32 Women in Society, TG03 Human Rights & Global Justice, TG04 Sociology of Risk & Uncertainty, and TG05 Visual Sociology.

Concerns were expressed about the increasing proportion of Life Members, and the committee referred the question to the Executive Committee for its consideration. A sub-committee of Ishwar Modi and Tom Dwyer reported on their analysis of the membership figures, and made a number of recommendations about improving membership, including establishing a sub-committee to monitor membership developments.

• **Finances**

The committee noted a slight decline in membership fees, royalties from publications, and interest income, as well as increases in expenditure on various aspects of the ISA's operations, but also a significant increase in the Sage contribution.

A detailed Financial Statement for 2011-2012 will be posted on the ISA's website.

Additional requests for funding were considered and either approved or referred to the EC for final decision, including the provision of additional support for grants for National Association delegates to Yokohama and also for Program Coordinators in Yokohama, as part of the World Congress budget. ■

> **Introducing the Polish Editors**

The Public Sociology Lab

by Karolina Mikołajewska, University of Warsaw and Kozminski University, Poland

In autumn 2011 we founded a student organization called the Public Sociology Lab (in Polish: Koło Naukowe Socjologii Publicznej) affiliated to the Institute of Sociology, University of Warsaw. We are students attending undergraduate, graduate, as well as postgraduate courses, who were joined by a common interest in discovering public issues in private troubles, to use C. Wright Mills' famous phrase. We want to pursue social inquiry that is engaged in the life of our society.

Our group undertakes many activities, but our flagship activity definitely remains translating *Global Dialogue* into Polish. In *GD* 2.4 we published a summary of a debate devoted to the issues raised in the dispute between Sztompka and Burawoy, referring especially to conditions of Polish academic life. This was one of our discussions around different ways of doing public sociology which has so far attracted a significant audience. Apart from that, we have organized a series of seminars with actively engaged sociologists. Currently we are planning to build a network of Polish sociology students. We are more than happy to participate in the *Global Dialogue* network, and thereby spread our discussions of public sociology beyond Poland. ■

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Adam Müller PhD candidate at the Institute of Sociology, University of Warsaw where he received his MA degree in Sociology. Presently, his research interests are focused on cooperative banking institutions and moral economy.

Karolina Mikołajewska PhD candidate at the Institute of Sociology, University of Warsaw, where she graduated with an MA in Sociology. She works as a teaching and research assistant at the Center for Research on Organizations and Workplaces at the Kozminski University in Warsaw. Her research interests embrace economic anthropology and sociology, labor relations and organization studies.

Krzysztof Gubański Undergraduate student of sociology and culture studies at the University of Warsaw. He also spent one year at the Ludwig Maximilians-Universtät in Munich. Interested in economic sociology, urban studies, discourse analysis. Active member of the student council. He is writing his Bachelor's thesis on changes in higher education in Poland.

Mikołaj Mierzejewski Undergraduate student of sociology at the University of Warsaw. His fields of interest cover such topics as sociology of higher education, sociology of science, economic sociology, class analysis, and public sociology. He is also a member of the "New Opening of the University" initiative and its research organization, which is focused on recent changes in academia.

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Jakub Rozenbaum Graduate student of sociology at the University of Warsaw. He is writing a thesis on the restitution of private property after communism in Warsaw. His main sociological interests cover labor relations, civic (especially youth) participation, and the housing question. He is a strong supporter of the engagement of social sciences in social change.

Anna Piekutowska Graduate student of sociology at the University of Warsaw. Among her interests are social movements and social economy, sociology of gender, and sexuality. Her previous research included an analysis of feminist organizations and their influence on the situation of women in Poland. For her Master's thesis, she is examining social cooperatives as a tool for social inclusion.

Tomasz Piątek PhD candidate at the Robert B. Zajonc Institute for Social Studies at the University of Warsaw. His main fields of interest are sociology of education and educational systems, youth studies, critical pedagogy, and the question of the social responsibility of sociologists.

Julia Legat MA student at the Institute of Sociology, University of Warsaw, where she also received her BA degree. Her main fields of interests are social movements, civic participation, and social inequalities.

Zofia Włodarczyk Graduate student of sociology at the University of Warsaw. She is writing a thesis on various manifestations of agency in rural women's biographies. Her main fields of interest are public sociology, civic participation (especially among youth and in rural areas), and biographical sociology.

Emilia Hudzińska Graduate student of international relations at the University of Warsaw, currently interested in American studies and the issue of decolonization. She also graduated from the Institute of Sociology, University of Warsaw, where she received her MA degree. For her Master's thesis she examined power relations among Polish celebrities and politicians.

> Canadian Sociology is ready to welcome you!

by Patrizia Albanese, President-elect, Canadian Sociological Association; Chair, Local Organizing Committee of the 2018 ISA World Congress; and Ryerson University, Toronto, Canada

Sociologists from the Toronto area met with Michael Burawoy and Izabela Barlinska to discuss the organization of the 2018 World Congress. Back-row, from left to right: Lorne Tepperman (University of Toronto), Cheryl Teelucksingh (Ryerson University), Izabela Barlinska (ISA Executive Secretary), and Bob Andersen (University of Toronto); Front-row, from left to right: Nancy Mandell (York University), Patrizia Albanese (Ryerson University), and Lesley Wood (York University).

Canadian sociologists are pleased to share the news that Toronto, Canada, has been selected as the host city for the 2018 ISA World Congress. In the run-up to the World Congress in 2018, we hope to have many opportunities to get to know you, and you us, better. We are a peculiar but friendly bunch, both critical and self-reflexive. Let us begin then with a brief introduction to who we are and what we do.

Canadian Sociology. It is easier to identify what it isn't, than to determine what it is and what makes us distinct; but to start, it *isn't* dull, it *isn't* static, it *isn't* homogenous, and it isn't easy to describe in a few words.

Sociology has (almost) always been open to borrowing from within and outside of the traditional disciplines and academia. We are a scavenging profession, not afraid to reach out to places, spaces, and ideas typically outside "the norm." We shed light. We rock boats. We question – even ourselves and what we do for a living. Over the years, like in other sociologies, Canadian sociologists have questioned who we are, what we do, and why we do it. In Canada, Robert Brym (2003), Neil McLaughlin (2005), and Doug Baer (2005), among others, have debated whether Canadian sociology is in crisis. The existence of such discussions and debates is a healthy sign, we think. And to put all concerns to rest, in the words of Mark Twain: "The reports of my death are greatly exaggerated."

Canadian sociology is alive and well. In fact, the Canadian Sociological Association is growing, as are the reputations of Canadian journals of sociology. Dr. Reza Nakhaie (University of Windsor), the current editor of the *Canadian Review of Sociology*, the oldest peer-reviewed sociology journal in Canada, recently published an overview of the past 45 years of the journal's history. In it he noted: "Les articles publiés dans la RCS ont contribué à la production d'un dialogue dynamique entre les sociologues et les autres intellectuels qui représentent le courant dominant et la sociologie scientifique du Canada, qui est universitaire et parfois même critique, radicale et oppositionnelle. En soi, la RCS représente et a constitué un canal pour la diffusion des idées et d'un dialogue entre les professionnels et les critiques universitaires canadiens" (Nakhaie, 2010: 320).[1]

What we hope will always remain true for our discipline is our ability to remain relevant. Sociologies that are not relevant probably deserve to be in crisis. An analysis of program descriptions from 54 English-speaking sociology departments from across Canada found that primarily undergraduate program departments emphasized the practice of critical thinking, the importance of a broad-based liberal arts education and the chance to make a lasting impact on surrounding social conditions (Puddephatt and Nelsen, 2010: 423). If we achieve even some of these with and for our undergraduate students (and even more with our graduate students), we are well on our way to proving our worthiness as a discipline.

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To close this brief introductory piece, allow me to share with you the views of some of your colleagues from across Canada. In response to a cross-Canada email request for suggestions on what makes Canadian sociology distinct, for this article, your colleagues in Canada wrote:

• "Canadian sociologies are distinguished along a number of axes, including language, region, educational training, theoretical approach, and empirical application. If there is any consensus among the country's sociologies it is around a commitment to integrating both American and European traditions, attention to historical trends, acceptance of mixed methods and a commitment to 'critical' engagement. The positioning of Canada's sociologies occurred first in the Liberal Porterian tradition, to be followed by a Marxist new political economy, and more recently engagement with power from decolonial, feminist, post-modern, and emerging perspectives. Largely missing is a canonized perspective, which is a sign of Canadian sociology's health." (Dr. Howard Ramos, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Dalhousie University).

• A graduate theory seminar at the University of Saskatchewan discussed this and collectively wanted to share with you the following: "Canada's disparate population distribution, combined with varied natural and geographic environments, offers challenges for understanding complex social relationships. Canadian sociology is enriched by its ability to understand the nuances of a highly diverse population. Canadian sociology has a critical edge that is important for exposing the 'backstage' of a national image and fabric that is often glossed over by notions of shared values and cultural attributes."

• Dr. Nancy Mandell, department chair at York University, one of the largest sociology departments in the country, provided the following summary of her program: "Our inherited 'niche,' arising from the critical sociology of the 1960s and its application to Canada and internationally, is to offer our students a sociology of engagement. The Department, overall, takes a critical approach to scholarship that challenges conventional assumptions and, in so doing, aims for greater social justice on issues such as more equal access to health, sexual freedoms, and accountability of justice officials. Broadly speaking, it focuses on inequality, power relations, and ideology issues; it encourages social activism. Many faculty members have approaches emphasizing the centrality of history – especially the impact of colonial and imperial expansionism around the world – in analyses oriented to the understanding of our present."

• Paula Graham, a PhD candidate in Sociology at Memorial University of Newfoundland wrote: "From the perspective of my research on social movements, the concept of 'Canadian sociology' is generally liberating. While I sympathize with efforts to identify what is Canadian about 'Canadian sociology' and solidify the field as a program in its own right, I consider the ambiguous identity of 'Canadian sociology' to be helpful. Without having to subscribe to an American, European, or other interpretive approach, I can more openly and receptively engage with literature and theories from all corners of sociology, including Canada".

And on that note, I close. Canadian sociologists look forward to welcoming you in person, for a lively exchange of ideas in our conference seminar rooms, pubs, and restaurants. Together, we are sure to forge new and exciting collaborations. ■

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References

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[1] Translation: "The articles published in the *CRS* have been instrumental in producing dynamic dialogue among sociologists and other intellectuals who represent Canada's mainstream and scientific sociology which is academic and at times critical, radical and oppositional. As such, the *CRS* represents and has been an outlet for the dissemination of ideas and dialogue among Canadian professionals and critical academics."

> Letters to the editor

Responses to Feras Hammami on Israeli Universities (Global Dialogue 3.2)

Dear Editor:

It is instructive to contrast the article by Feras Hammami "Political Crisis in Israeli universities," (GD3.2) with others in the same issue. André Béteille writes that as a sociologist he does not consider it his role to moralize, while Jacklyn Cock writes in a highly political vein which achieves its purpose without glorifying the victim status of those who suffer from the problems she describes and without demonizing those responsible. Not because there are not responsibilities, but because she does not claim to be a lawyer or a judge. The article on Israel, in contrast, puts moralizing and denunciation first, focusing on a number of high-profile and difficult instances, using as evidence only activist sources. The author could have found academic or newspaper sources to bolster his case (this being an academic publication after all). He may also have been caught out by deadlines, because the Israel Higher Education Council decided on February 13th to reverse the decision, which Hammami singles out, to close the Political Science Department at Ben-Gurion University.

The article elevates individual incidents into widespread patterns. There are indeed right-wing groups who denounce professors in Israel for their opinions, and sometimes pressure has been shocking, as in the case of Neve Gordon, but the article ought at least to offer some evidence for the very serious and wide-ranging allegation that "to avoid public vilification, job loss, imprisonment, or even death, staff members delimit the information that might provoke the authorities." This is hardly a claim to be tossed about carelessly. In any case, Neve Gordon remains a tenured Professor at his university. There was indeed much criticism of the denial of tenure to Ariella Azoulay and the view that it was politically motivated is widely shared. Even so, some evidence should and could have been offered, for it is a serious matter to accuse a university of political bias in appointments.

The article's call for boycott rides roughshod over the individuality of persons, and seeks to punish people living in a country for the misdeeds of their government. A boycott does, of course, make a point. It aims to raise consciousness, and in this case may encourage Israeli academics to reflect on their government's actions. But that is no justification for a campaign to isolate and vilify a whole population of (supposed) colleagues. Campaigners would do better to focus on areas which might actually hurt governments – and indeed I would not oppose the removal, for example, of Israel's favored trade relationship with the EU, which is already giving rise to complications about labeling of West Bank products as "Made in Israel."

The analogy with South Africa is problematic because the universities and the sports associations in that country were themselves practicing discrimination as a policy, which is not the case in Israel. But this boycott is a mean-spirited sort of proposal: it would poison professional and intellectual relationships, and would politicize even further academic collaboration involving Israeli scientists.

David Lehmann, Cambridge University, UK.

Dear Editor:

Feras Hammami's exploration of the political crisis in Israeli universities brings out how little Israeli academics have felt it necessary to protest their government's policies. The great majority was silent on the matter of the closure of the Palestinian universities, but when their own academic freedom was threatened there has been a very different response. Crises however often offer opportunities.

One of the powerful propaganda weapons of the Israeli state has been its projection of itself as an island of democracy in an ocean of Arab despotism, another the projection of its universities as a source of liberal criticism. While the wave of media euphoria over a prematurely claimed Arab Spring is spent, the propaganda concerning Israel's claims to be a democracy and its universities a source of liberal criticism has come into difficulties. A handful of colleagues supported by a tiny number of dissenters but with significant international support has limited – not stopped – victimization. In the case of the proposed closure of an entire department at Ben Gurion University, the role of an international panel has been critical in revealing the modesty of Israel's commitment to academic freedom. The Council for Higher Education (CHE) having invited an international panel to evaluate all the politics departments in the Israeli university system read the report as recommending closure. Unquestionably the CHE was under pressure from hyper-Zionists in and out of the university who were already gunning for the department as a nest of anti-Zionists with Professor Neve Gordon, a very public supporter of the academic boycott, as their key target.

The CHE succumbed to the pressure, proposing closure in September 2012, but senior academics, not insignificantly from the Weizmann Institute, a power house of Israeli science and technology, immediately saw the harm this would do to the image of Israel's universities as bastions of academic freedom. Within a week 300 Israeli academics signed a petition criticizing the decision. Internationally, a flurry of individual academics and associations protested. Ben Gurion, the home of the threatened department and also one of Israel's leading universities, also saw the danger and began legal proceedings against the CHE, arguing that it had a secret and academically irrelevant agenda that breached the legal definition of academic freedom. Worse still for the CHE, the international panel said they had not recommended the closure of the department, questioned the motives behind the move, and pointed out that the CHE had not moved against the University of Bar Ilan though its department had also been criticized.

Mounting pressure on the CHE led it to postpone closure until after the January election. This saw an extreme right-wing government elected but the closure decision was not re-instated. In early February, *Haaretz*, the most liberal of the Israeli press (2/13/2013) reported that the decision to close had been withdrawn, but that the international panel would continue to monitor the department.

The hope must be that now that Israeli academia has experienced a threat to its own academic freedom – successfully opposed with the help of international support – it will begin to recognize that academic freedom is not divisible but also applies to their Palestinian colleagues who teach and research just a few miles down the road. This is the opportunity.

Hilary Rose, Bradford University, UK.