

# GLOBAL DIALOGUE

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Walden Bello

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MAGAZINE



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# > Editorial

## Sociology in an Age of Reaction

**D**uterte, Erdogan, Orban, Putin, Le Pen, Modi, Zuma and Trump – they all seem to be cut from a similar nationalist, xenophobic, authoritarian cloth. The triumph of Trump has given new energy to illiberal movements and right-wing dictatorships. Undoubtedly, the political reaction has been in the making for decades as liberal democracies have propelled third-wave marketization with its precarity, exclusion, and inequality. The fascist turn of the 1920s and 1930s, a forerunner of today, followed second-wave marketization. It collapsed with World War Two, but can we be so sure that this round of reaction will be defeated? How strong are the liberal institutions of democracy? The early days of the Trump administration suggest they are not without resilience in the face of a barrage of executive orders. The article by Portocarrero and Lara García points to the university as one such arena of resistance.

What about other countries? In this issue Walden Bello describes the atrocities of Philippines President Duterte, whose rise to power can be traced to the failures of liberal democracy, following the overthrow of the Marcos regime – failures expressed in brazen political corruption, burgeoning inequality, compounded by subjugation to US foreign policy. This political response to the flaws of liberal democracy may be populist in character even as it protects the interests of the dominant classes while demonizing a stigmatized section of the population – drug users and drug dealers – just as Erdogan demonizes the Kurds, Trump demonizes immigrants and German fascism demonized non-Aryans. Indeed, Bello's recounting of parallels with German fascism is all too convincing.

Pakistan is another country that is no stranger to military rule where populist appeals accompany the concentration of economic power. Pakistani sociology is a restricted enterprise but innovative and critical nonetheless as we see in this issue with articles on the way infrastructural development benefits multi-national corporations, how the Gulf countries surveil bodies to select the most productive Pakistani migrants, and how female entry into the labor force does little to arrest violence against women. We also have two studies of Pakistanis in the UK, dealing with changes in Pakistani-immigrant marital relations and how Muslim students handle being the targets of securitization. Together, the five case studies develop a genuine postcolonial sociology of subjugation that transcends national boundaries.

Very different is the more optimistic sociology from Canada, tied to such issues as immigration and environmental justice. Canadian sociology is far more connected to the policy world. Despite the derogatory expletives of former Prime Minister Stephen Harper, Canadian sociologists receive a comparatively friendly reception from the wider society. Their despondent tone only reflects their high expectations from a still social democratic state.

If there is one sociologist who has captured the significance of our era, it is Zygmunt Bauman, who sadly died at the age of 91. Our three memorialists describe his extraordinary life, informed by a powerful moral vision, laced with a skeptical utopianism. His inspirational sociology will live on for decades.

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> **Submissions should be sent to [burawoy@berkeley.edu](mailto:burawoy@berkeley.edu)**



**Walden Bello**, committed scholar, political activist, and global sociologist describes the new regime of Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte.



**Pakistan:** Engaged, transnational sociology from Lahore University of Management Sciences.



**Zygmunt Bauman:** Tributes to one of the great sociologists of our time.



**Canada:** Unrepentant and influential sociology from across the country.



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# > Duterte's Revolt against Liberal Democracy

by **Walden Bello**, State University of New York, Binghamton and former member of the Philippine House of Representatives



Old-style avenger Rodrigo Duterte, aka "DU30" (pronounced "du-terte") or "The Punisher."  
Illustration by Arbu.

**W**ith the victory of the Nazi counterrevolution, Joseph Goebbels famously said, "The year 1789 is hereby erased from history." Along the same lines, could one argue that the rising fascist movements in the US, Europe, and elsewhere seek to erase 1989 from history?

1789 heralded the French Revolution. Similarly, for Francis Fukayama and others, 1989 marked the apogee of liberal democracy. In what Fukayama termed "the end of history," the defeat of communism in Europe and right-wing authoritarian regimes across the developing world marked "an unabashed victory of economic and political liberalism [...] and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government."

Fukuyama's nascent utopia was soon challenged by anti-liberal movements, mainly religious-inspired forces like political Islam in the Middle East and ethnic exclusivist ones in Eastern Europe. But no movement or individual has been more brazenly contemptuous of liberal-democratic ideals than Rodrigo Duterte, elected President of the Philippines in May 2016 by an insurgent electoral movement.

## > **Eliminationism**

Duterte's signature program has been his war on drugs, which after only nine months has claimed nearly 8,000 lives. This is no ordinary law-and-order campaign. Carried out with a fanaticism bordering

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on the ideological and justified with ideas reminiscent of pseudo-scientific Nazi racial theory, the campaign has stripped a whole sector of society of the rights to life, due process, or membership in society. Duterte has all but written drug users and drug dealers – a group said to comprise three million of the country's population of 103 million – out of the human race. With a typical rhetorical flourish, he told the security forces: "Crime against humanity? In the first place, I'd like to be frank with you: are they human? What is your definition of a human being?"

Justifying killings "in self-defense" by the police, Duterte insists that using "*shabu*" – the local term for meth, or methamphetamine hydrochloride – can "shrink the brain of a person, who therefore is no longer viable for rehabilitation." Calling drug users the "living, walking dead" who are "of no use to society," he insists they are "paranoid" and dangerous. Duterte has offered police a blank check to kill drug users, whether or not they resist arrest. Indeed, to any policemen who might be convicted of killing drug users without justification, he has offered an immediate pardon "so you can go after the people who brought you to court."

In spite of, or because of, these views, Duterte – who after all promised during his campaign that he would "fatten the fish" in Manila Bay with bodies of thousands of criminals – remains immensely popular, with approval ratings hovering around 83 per cent, and a fanatical following of netizens, who launch cyber assaults on people who dare criticize his regime's extra-judicial executions.

### > The Roots of Dutertismo

What are the roots of Duterte's mass appeal? True, his identification of drug users as the plague of society resonates widely. But there are more profound causes. Duterte's hold on society reflects deep disenchantment with the liberal-democratic regime

that followed Ferdinand Marcos' overthrow in February 1986, the so-called EDSA Uprising. In fact, the failure of the "EDSA Republic" – named for the Manila highway where mass protests were mobilized to topple the Marcos dictatorship – was a condition for Duterte's success.

Duterte's path was paved by a deadly combination of elite control of the Philippines' electoral system, continued concentration of wealth, neoliberal economic policies, and Washington's insistence on foreign debt repayment. By the time of the 2016 elections, a yawning gap had opened between the EDSA Republic's promise of popular empowerment and wealth redistribution, and Philippine reality: massive poverty, scandalous inequality, and pervasive corruption. Add to this the widespread perception of inept governance during President Benigno Aquino III's administration, and it is not surprising that more than 16 million voters, some 40 per cent of the electorate, saw the tough-guy, authoritarian approach which Duterte had cultivated for 30-plus years as mayor of the southern frontier city of Davao as precisely what the country needed. As the novelist Anthony Doerr said of pre-war Germans, Filipinos were "desperate for someone who can put things right."

Moreover, the EDSA Republic's discourse – democracy, human rights, and rule of law – came to seem a suffocating straitjacket for many Filipinos overwhelmed by a sense of powerlessness. Duterte's discourse – a mixture of outright death threats, coarse street-corner language, and frenzied railing, combined with disdainful humor directed at an elite he called "coños" or cunts – proved an exhilarating formula for his audience, who felt themselves liberated from stifling hypocrisy.

### > A Fascist Original

Duterte's campaign of extermination, his mobilization of a multiclass base, and his concentration of power

have left the Philippines' US-style separation of powers in tatters. These features of his reign mark him as a fascist – but of an unusual kind. If the conventional fascist takeover starts by violating civil liberties, moves to a grab for absolute power, and then to indiscriminate repression, Duterte reverses the order, first ordering wholesale killings, and reducing attacks on civil liberties and a lunge for absolute power before mopping-up operations in a political arena without facing significant opposition. This is blitzkrieg fascism.

Another distinctive feature of Duterte's approach has been his invitation to traditional left politicians to serve in his administration, a coalition that would have been unimaginable in classical fascist regimes. Rather than treating the left as his implacable enemy, Duterte is confident he can control it; meanwhile, the Communist Party and the National Democratic Front have been only too happy to enter his administration, hoping to reverse years of declining influence.

Though a novice at foreign policy, Duterte has demonstrated an instinctive grasp of the dynamics of Philippine nationalism. Moves like calling former US President Obama a "son of a bitch" – after the then-American president had criticized Duterte's extra-judicial executions, and his openness towards China – seemed politically risky, given that pro-Americanism has been considered deeply entrenched in the Philippines. Surprisingly, however, Duterte's moves provoked very little protest, instead eliciting much Internet support. As many have observed, ordinary Filipinos may feel admiration for the US and US institutions, but there is also a strong undercurrent of resentment at US colonial subjugation of the Philippines, at the unequal treaties that Washington has foisted on the country, and at the overwhelming impact of the "American way of life" on local culture. Here, one need not delve into Hegel's complex master-servant dialectic to understand that the "struggle for recognition" has been an under-

current in the US-Philippine relationship. Duterte has been able to tap into this emotional underside of Filipinos in a way that the left has not. Like many authoritarian predecessors elsewhere, Duterte has been able to effectively splice together nationalism and authoritarianism.

### > **Populist in Rhetoric, Fascist in Substance**

Though much of his rhetoric is populist, however, Duterte makes no pretense that he will use the masses as a battering ram for redistributive reform. Rather, like classic fascists, he seeks to balance class forces while projecting an image of being above class conflict. During his campaign, Duterte promised to end contractual labor, curb the mining industry, and turn over to small coconut farmers the taxes unjustly collected from them by the Marcos regime; but those promises have remained largely unfulfilled while the country's key elites have positioned themselves as his allies. But while in the long term, delivering social and economic reforms will be central to maintaining support for his authoritarian project, the lack of progress so far seems unlikely to dent Duterte's popularity in the short or medium term.

For the moment, opposition to Duterte among the elite and state institutions is weak. Similarly, the Catholic Church hierarchy, formerly a strong advocate of human rights, has been hesitant to take on a popular leader; the Church lacks credibility due to internal corruption and to its bull-headed stance on family planning. What opposition there is has come from isolated figures – including Senator Leila de Lima, now jailed on trumped-up charges that she is on drug lords' payroll; from a section of the media; and from human rights groups like the coalition I-Defend.

### > **Duterte, Philippine Society, and Sociology**

Duterte may be politically reprehensible, but his personality and its

contradictions have drawn much interest from social scientists. Some have asked about the intersection of socio-historical trends and personality. A recent *New York Times* profile described how Duterte was greatly affected when a Jesuit priest sexually molested him in high school – a revelation that Duterte himself raised during the 2016 election campaign. Later transferred to Los Angeles, the offending priest went on to sexually abuse children, with no effort on the part of his superiors to discipline him or turn him over to the law (though the Jesuits were finally forced to pay a \$16 million settlement with the victims). Given the psychological damage that is likely to have been inflicted, is the Philippines now paying for the crimes of a child predator?

Sociologists might also ask, in philosopher John Gray's words, how "what we see as the unalterable features of civilized life vanish in the blink of an eye." Especially after the 1986 EDSA Uprising, the Philippines was regarded as a showcase of liberal democracy. Many argued that in overthrowing Marcos, Filipinos reasserted longstanding values they had internalized during the American colonial period, of individual rights, due process, and democracy. The liberal-democratic constitution of the EDSA Republic seemed to crystalize these national political values. But suddenly, in the space of less than a year, most Filipinos express strong support for a man whose central agenda is the extra-judicial execution of a certain category of human beings; many have served as Duterte's "willing executioners," to borrow Daniel Goldhagen's description of Germans during the Nazi era, or at least as his "willing accomplices." To some, seeing many compatriots cheering Duterte on in his bloody campaign is inexplicable as well as tragic. To others engaged in the behavioral sciences, however, it seems time to shed the assumptions that our people are civilized beings or creatures with compassion; instead perhaps we must approach

contemporary Philippine society with the same lens that Goldhagen proposed for studying Germany during the Nazi period:

*[T]his period can be approached [...] with the critical eye of an anthropologist disembarking on unknown shores, open to meeting a radically different culture and conscious of the possibility that he might need to devise explanations not in keeping with, perhaps even contravening his own common-sense notions, in order to explain the culture's constitution, its idiosyncratic patterns of practice, and its collective projects and products. This would admit the possibility that large numbers of people [...] might have killed or been willing to kill others [...] in good conscience.*

### > **Comparative Genocide**

Meantime, the body count continues to mount. Duterte's war on drugs has already claimed more victims than most genocidal campaigns in Southeast Asia's recent history, behind only Pol Pot's extermination of nearly 3 million Cambodians in the 1970s, and the 1965 massacre of nearly a million Indonesians following a failed coup against the Sukarno government. Recently, Duterte told the country, with characteristically sinister humor, that 20,000 to 30,000 more lives might have to be taken to cleanse the country of drugs. Having learned to take Duterte seriously even when he seems to be joking, many observers expect this figure to be an underestimate. ■

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# > The Medical Surveillance of Gulf Migration

by **Ayaz Qureshi**, Lahore University of Management Sciences, Pakistan



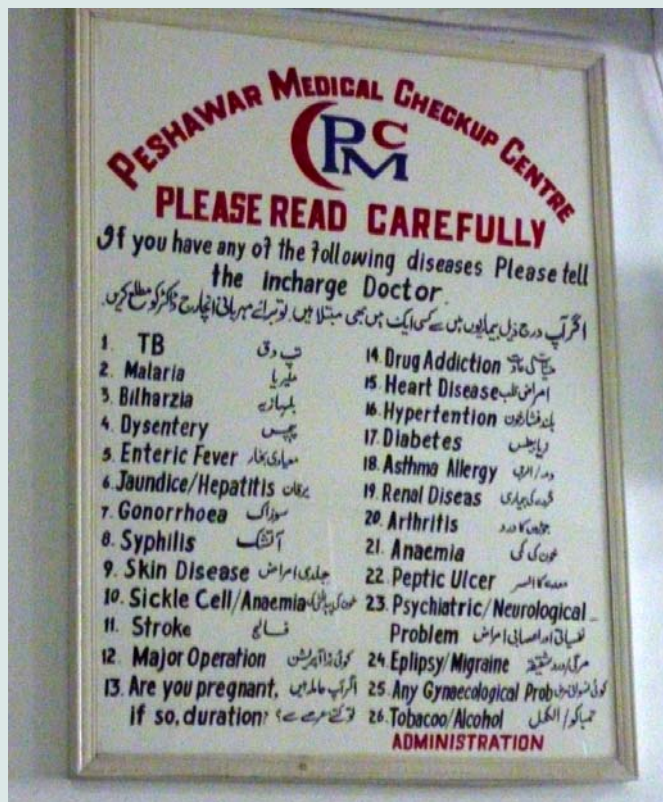
*In Peshawar, intending migrants queuing up outside a medical screening center. Photo by Ayaz Qureshi.*

Over the past three decades, as more and more developing countries have sent their citizens overseas to work, Pakistani citizens have been recruited as laborers to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) – Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. But to be granted a visa to the GCC, labor migrants are required to produce health certificates at the time of departure from Pakistan – certificates which can only be obtained from GCC-approved medical screening centers. Crowds of aspiring migrants throng these approved medical screening centers, located in a few big cities, where they are screened and tested for deformity or diseases. Only those bodies are

selected that have no trace of a disease or infection, past or present, with no signs of physical weakness.

The GCC states have no qualms about requiring sending countries to sift through the hundreds and thousands of aspiring migrants and select only the best bodies. Countries like Pakistan, competing for Gulf remittances with its neighbors India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, and regional giants like Malaysia, do not dare to object. Although Pakistan's government prizes labor migrants as valuable economic assets because of the remittances they send – describing them as informal ambassadors who carry a moral responsibility to remain true to their Muslim and Pakistani

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In Peshawar, a poster in a medical screening center for intending migrants. Photo by Ayaz Qureshi.

identity – Pakistani citizens in the GCC receive little meaningful support from their country’s diplomatic missions, which are anxious to increase Pakistan’s visa quota.

Stories of irregularities at these centers and malpractice in the screening process abound. Most of these stories convey a sense of exploitation of the aspiring migrants, their frustration with screening results, which are often proved wrong by other private or government laboratories, and a sense of abandonment by the state into the hands of the businesses who declare them “fit” or “unfit” for migration.

Together, the centers form a strong cartel, with regional and central Gulf Approved Medical Centers Associations which look after the business interests of each of their members by maintaining a monopoly over the screening process, disallowing competition between members by equally distributing the numbers, and protecting center staff against possible attacks from individuals declared medically “unfit” for migration or attempts by Pakistan’s government departments to regulate them. Screening standards are set by the GCC secretariat in Saudi Arabia and the conditions of the screening centers – the laboratory equipment, space and personnel – are also supposed to be monitored by the GCC secretariat through annual inspections.

Unlike the classic examples of medical screening of migrants at the point of entry, as at Ellis Island and Angel Island in the United States, the screening of Pakistani labor migrants to the GCC takes place in Pakistan itself. And while this form of medical screening is less visible than the

often-criticized testing processes used at places like Ellis Island, this form of medical screening is equally invasive.

Afraid of failing to pass these screening processes, some aspiring labor migrants fall into the hands of exploitative hustlers who have (or claim to have) connections with those working inside the screening centers. Others, who fail to obtain health certificates even through these informal means, try different channels of migration, often falling into the trap of illegal land, air and sea migration.

Even after obtaining a clean bill of health – sometimes after several rounds of testing and at great financial cost – another round of medical screening is required when the migrant arrives in the Gulf region. Any workers who fail this last test are sent back. If they are allowed to enter the GCC, they must undergo annual comprehensive medical screening to renew their permission to stay.

Ironically, epidemiological evidence suggests that migrants often develop infections like TB and HIV during their stay *within* the destination countries – as testified by policies of compulsory annual testing as a precondition for the renewal of work permits in the GCC, because of the arduous conditions of transit and labor they find themselves in. For example, in the case of HIV transmission, it is because of the lack of economic and cultural citizenship which leaves them living in cramped labor camps and with few ways to enjoy pleasures other than going to sex workers.

Anyone identified as HIV positive at any stage is detained and deported, often without informing the individuals or their country’s diplomatic mission of the actual reason for deportation. Some workers have been sent back on “surprise leave” by their employers, and are never recalled; some of these returnees have not been allowed to collect their belongings, settle their affairs with co-residents/workers or even collect their passports and outstanding wages from employers before being whisked away to crowded detention centers. Many arrive in Pakistan with only a one-page Emergency Passport as proof of identity; some are then detained by immigration authorities to confirm their Pakistani citizenship, a process that can last for weeks, ending only when family members find a local patron to secure their son’s release.

The world is seeing more and more protests over “health citizenship” rights, as people call on governments to provide access to health care and challenge the insidious ways in which medical practices and diagnoses have been used to limit the rights of individuals. In Pakistan, however, labor migrants have not shown any signs that they are ready to mobilize or engage in this type of collective action, and the government continues to cooperate with the GCC states by letting their agents line up potential migrants like cattle, to be sorted through on the basis of their health. ■

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# > Economic Participation and Violence against Women

by **Nida Kirmani**, Lahore University of Management Sciences, Pakistan



Karachi women engaging in commerce.  
Photo by Nida Kirmani.

**D**evelopment agencies and international financial institutions argue that increasing women's economic participation will lead to both economic growth and women's empowerment – a win-win situation. Further, it is often assumed that women who are economically active will be less vulnerable to gender-based violence.

Based on fieldwork in Lyari, Pakistan – one of Karachi's oldest working-class settlements – my research tests those assumptions against a more

complex reality. With only 22% of women in paid employment, Pakistan has one of the world's lowest female labor force participation rates. My field site, Lyari, mirrors national level statistics, but while most employed women in Pakistan work in agriculture, most of Lyari's working women are employed as low-paid domestic workers in more affluent parts of the city or as teachers in government and private schools. While the rate of paid employment amongst women may be low, there is a dramatic increase over previous generations – though the

jobs available to women in today's neoliberal economy are generally low-paid, insecure and unregulated.

But being “economically active” does not necessarily translate into “empowerment.” As Naila Kabeer argues, market forces often reproduce gender inequality, through unequal wage rates and hiring practices. Similarly, while policy makers often assume economic engagement gives women control over their own incomes or access to social and legal support, and that greater financial

independence allows women to exit abusive relationships, reality is more complicated; the effects of women's economic participation depend on the nature of their employment, power relations within their families, and the dynamics within their respective communities.

Does earning an income protect women from gender-based violence – estimated to affect between 39% and 90% of all married women in Pakistan, with the vast majority of cases going unreported? Are working women better able to resist common forms of economic or material exploitation by employers who pay women lower wages or who deny them pay altogether? Do women who earn wages gain greater control over household resources or their own earnings?

My discussions with women in Lyari reveal a complex relationship between women's paid employment and experiences of domestic violence. For some women, earning an income provided them with the ability to leave or at least imagine leaving an abusive marriage. But even for wage-earners, the social pressure to remain – especially if children are involved – remains a powerful deterrent to leaving a violent marriage.

Many women described the double burden of paid work and domestic responsibilities as its own form

of violence: paid work sometimes increased household tensions, as even unemployed men often expected their wives to fulfill domestic responsibilities, sometimes leading to arguments and even violence. Most women in low-paying jobs would stay home if they could afford to, and some resented their husbands' failure to support them financially. While some women recognized that earning offered some level of independence, and while a few said they enjoyed being away from home, most would prefer not having to face the double burden of earning and caring for the household.

For the handful of women who had higher-paying, more secure forms of employment, economic activity was framed as a choice rather than a necessity, and as a source of personal fulfillment. However, this did not come without social and psychological costs: women who worked outside the home before marriage – especially if they traveled outside of their neighborhood and earned relatively well – were often subject to gossip, taunts, disapproval and scorn, causing great emotional distress for them, threatening their reputation and putting their ability to find a marriage partner at risk.

On a positive note, the research revealed a generational shift. Many older women spoke about remaining

in violent marriages, framing suffering as a mark of patience and virtue. Younger women, however, often expressed disapproval of violence, suggesting women should leave abusive marriages, either by returning to their natal homes or, more rarely, by establishing an independent household. While divorce is still frowned upon, and many women still feel pressure to remain within violent marriages, more and more women seem to be formulating strategies of resistance within constrained circumstances. Certainly, access to an independent income helps women to leave violent marriages even if it does not guarantee that they can do so.

Overall, my research suggests that women's economic engagement does not guarantee empowerment. While it can strengthen women's bargaining position, outside employment comes with costs. Women in Pakistan are entering the labor market in greater numbers, but they do so at a time when there are few well-paid, secure employment options available. To really empower women, employment must be accompanied by wider structural changes: women need jobs that are well paid and secure, gendered power relations within the home and the community must shift so that domestic responsibilities are shared by men, and women's increased mobility and independence must become widely accepted. ■

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# > Divorce in the Diaspora

by **Kaveri Qureshi**, Lahore University of Management Sciences, Pakistan



*A Pakistani wedding in the UK, the bride waiting apprehensively for the groom. Photo by Kaveri Qureshi.*

**T**hirty-eight-year-old Sukaina is a Londoner of Pakistani heritage. Married at eighteen to a cousin in Lancashire, Sukaina had three children by her mid-twenties. But even before her third child was born, her marriage went irreparably awry. Her husband started working as a taxi driver. With the erratic working hours and freedom of mobility that the job entails, he resumed a premarital relationship with a White British girlfriend, went back to drinking alcohol, and according to

Sukaina, progressed to hard drugs. For six months, Sukaina held back from telling her parents about her marital problems because “for my family it was a dream come true, that she’s ended up with somebody in the family and they’re happy and there’s three beautiful kids and it’s just perfect. So I thought I can’t break their hearts.” Even when she did turn to her parents for help, it was another two years before she left her in-laws’ home in Lancashire and returned to London, and two years more before she applied for divorce.



British Pakistanis, like other families of South Asian heritage, have long been viewed as bastions of the traditional family, with almost universal marriage and very little divorce. Stories like Sukaina's have remained invisible, hidden by normative stereotypes about "strong family values." Outsiders often describe British Pakistani families in similar terms. In 2007, after spending two days with a Pakistani family in Birmingham, then-Conservative leader David Cameron praised the British Asian family as "incredibly strong and cohesive" saying, "I found myself thinking that it is mainstream Britain which needs to integrate more with the British Asian way of life, not the other way round."

Using data from the Fourth National Survey of Ethnic Minorities, carried out in the mid-1990s, quantitative sociologist Richard Berthoud found a rate of separation and divorce among ever-married British South Asians of 4%, a rate less than half that of White British adults (9%) and less than a quarter of Black Caribbean adults (18%). Berthoud viewed British South Asians as "old-fashioned," "loyal to their communities' histories and traditions," resisting the trend towards individualization. However, data from the UK's Quarterly Labor Force Survey for 2010-13 shows that today roughly 10% of British Pakistani Muslims and Indian Sikhs are separated and divorced, as are about 8% of Bangladeshi Muslims, 7% of Indian Muslims and 6% of Indian Hindus in Britain – compared to 20% of White British, 27% of Black Caribbean and 23% of mixed ethnic ever-married adults in Britain. Although South Asians remain less likely than other adults living in Britain to admit to social surveys that their marriages have broken down, marital breakdown has increased among Pakistani and Bangladeshi Muslims and Indian Sikhs to levels close to those that prevailed in the White British population twenty years ago, in the mid-1990s – a time when Anthony Giddens' concerns over Britain's "separating and divorcing society" became a subject of broad discussion.

Based on an ethnographic study carried out between 2005-7 and 2012-14 in London and in the provincial English city of Peterborough, I argue that increased marital breakdown is changing family life in the Pakistani diaspora, beginning with rising numbers of men and even more women who resist encouragement to remarry. Of the 52 divorcees I interviewed, 30 had remarried by the end of my fieldwork, but 22 had not, and only six of the 22 who remained single were men. Sukaina, for example, had remained single for many years after her marriage broke up, and insisted that she wanted to stay that way. Sukaina suffered clinical depression for a good number of years after her marriage ended, but with support from her siblings, she was able to complete an adult education course, qualify as a Teaching Assistant, and start work, supplementing and eventually replacing most of the social security ben-

efits she had relied on. No longer the good daughter-in-law her parents had "groomed" her to be, Sukaina ignored her parents' advice about remarriage for many years. "At first I hated men, really hated them, I couldn't stand the sight of them or the smell of them," she said. Some divorcees told me that they remarried in order to provide a "proper" two-parent family for their children, but in Sukaina's as in many other cases, cautiousness about introducing a step-father into her already care-worn family was a powerful deterrent to remarriage.

If some women and men now choose to live outside of marriage after divorce, those who do remarry seem more likely to choose their own partners. Of the 67 primary marriages described by my informants, 58 were described as conventional arranged marriages, and only 9 were love marriages. By contrast, of the 49 remarriages I was told about, only 20 were conventionally arranged, 9 were arranged love marriages where the match was engineered by the couple but presented to the rest of the world as an arranged marriage, and fully 20 were self-arranged love marriages. Thus, remarriages seem much more likely to involve significant courtship and intimacy before marriage. These self-chosen remarriages were also eventually supported by divorcees' wider families.

Sukaina's experiences illustrate another tendency: remarriages often cross racial, ethnic, caste and religious lines. After nearly a decade living without a partner, Sukaina fell in love with Sukhwinder, an Indian-heritage Sikh divorcee. Sukhwinder agreed to convert to Islam, and the couple married in a small Islamic ceremony attended only by one of Sukaina's sisters and three male witnesses. This shift towards consensual relationships sounds inherently appealing to liberal politics, but Sukaina was nagged by deep dissatisfaction: Sukhwinder hadn't shown any signs of being serious about his conversion to Islam, nor had he taken off the turban that identifies him as a Sikh. As a result, Sukaina hadn't found the courage to tell her parents about her second marriage and was contemplating "calling it a day."

I found secondary marriages were frequently unstable. Nine of the 30 remarried interviewees were in second marriages that had broken down or were onto their third marriage, and several others of the second and third marriages in my study were ridden with conflict –reminding us how little light the sociology of divorce has so far shed on repartnering. We need research not only on divorce but also on informal relationships and successive remarriages, as well as research on how marriage norms change over contexts of migration, transnationalism and diaspora, where the tendency has been to see the "left-behind" culture as static. As my research suggests, this has neither been the case in the past, nor in the present. ■

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# > Islamophobia and the British Security Agenda

by **Tania Saeed**, Lahore University of Management Sciences, Pakistan



Illustration by Arbu.

**B**ritain's educational institutions are increasingly being drawn into the state's security agenda. Under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (CTSA) 2015, educational institutions have a "statutory duty" to report students considered "at risk" of being radicalized. The signs or symptoms of this "radicalisation" are difficult to define; what is clear is that the "vulnerable" student is most likely to be a Muslim. Even more problematic, non-violent extremist thought can also render one suspect, if these ideas are believed to contradict "British values" – with the effect that these ideas are more likely to be silenced within universities, rather than challenged or debated.

The Counter-Terrorism Act 2015 was introduced a decade after the London bombing of July 7, 2005, though other counter-terrorism policies have also focused on educational institutions. Muslim students are quite familiar with being considered "suspect." According to a British government report, *Prevent Strategy* (2011) security personnel were already working with educational institutions to monitor students "at risk." A handful of cases – an alumnus of a London university, Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, attempted to target a plane bound for the US; another ex-student, Roshonara Choudhry, stabbed a British politician to avenge the people of Iraq; young students have run away to join ISIS – prompted greater apprehension for the educated Muslim identity. But the new law makes university surveillance a legal obligation. Instead of engaging with Muslim students, the policy alienates them, ironically creating an atmosphere of increased insecurity. While the Muslim male is perceived as a more immediate threat, the Muslim female oscillates between being seen as either a victim or a radical, hidden in plain sight behind the veil.

A study undertaken between 2010 and 2012 explored biographical narratives of 40 young Muslim female students and alumni of British universities, examining their experiences of Islamophobia and the British state's security agenda. Conducted at a time when the British Muslim Pakistani identity was considered highly suspect, the study included both British students with a Pakistani heritage and non-British Pakistanis studying in England; and Muslim women whose clothing expressed different "degrees of religiosity," ranging from a face veil (*niqab*), a head scarf (*hijab*) with a long gown (*jilbab*), the traditional Pakistani tunic (*kameez*) with pants (*shalwar*), to practicing Muslims without any physical identifiers. The study focused on the experiences of Islamic Student societies (ISocs) which had been criticized for failing to counter radicalization on campuses. Welfare officers, representatives of student unions and heads of Islamic student societies were also interviewed.

Female experiences varied based on physical appearance. Not surprisingly, the niqab attracted attention; young women described being yelled at or called extremist or "Osama bin Laden's wife," with the veil becoming a physical marker of an alien religion and identity. Respondents

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described being the target of racial slurs that revealed more about the speaker than the target – especially in instances where the term “lesbian” was used as an insult directed towards a niqab- or hijab-wearing Muslim. Used as an insult, the term reflects the heteronormative bias of the Islamophobe, where the Muslim woman further becomes abnormal as she practices segregation. By contrast, Muslim women who wore no obvious religious identifiers felt they were never “Muslim enough” for the non-Muslim gaze, and felt they had to justify their beliefs. The Pakistani appearance, however, provoked stereotypes of the culturally oppressed, uneducated Pakistani female, a victim of a primitive culture that supports honor killings and forced marriages.

Students struggled with these experiences both off and on university campuses, but members of ISocs were especially singled out. Male and female ISoc members often had to defend themselves, not only against university administrations that were suspicious of student events and speakers, but also against self-proclaimed “moderate” Muslims. Respondents described how “moderate” Muslims often avoided ISoc events out of fear of being labelled extremist through association, while ISoc members described being called terrorists, expressing suspicions that they had been monitored by intelligence agencies or infiltrated by spies. Many respondents also described how a fear of being labelled extreme led to self-censorship, as some students avoided political campaigns out of fear of being considered radical.

The Pakistani-Muslim nexus also revealed another kind of vulnerability, whereby the Pakistani Muslim became “hyper-securitized” at a time when the Pakistani identity was viewed with greater suspicion due to the “war on terror” being fought on Pakistani soil. Some students may have avoided political causes linked to Pakistan but still engaged in causes related to the Arab Spring or Palestine; others described lying about their nationality, especially after July 7, 2005.

These findings revealed that different Muslim communities may experience the security discourse differently not only based on their religiosity but also on ethnic or national identities. The US President Donald Trump’s 2017 Muslim ban on certain Muslim countries, like the focus of the

global counter-terrorism agenda on Syria and the adjoining region, testify to different responses faced by different Muslim identities in an evolving socio-political context.

If the degree of religiosity shaped levels of suspicion and discrimination encountered in daily life, the study also showed that young students actively attempted to raise awareness to counter stereotypes. Through the “Islam Awareness Week,” or simply by challenging preconceived ideas about Islam, groups of Muslim students attempted to change attitudes. While some students rejected the burden of asserting “normality” or innocence, one cannot discount efforts made by both Muslim and non-Muslim students to resist the spreading security agenda.

Many universities were aware of a “duty of care” towards students, namely, their duty to ensure “freedom of speech” and a “statutory duty” to inform on any student considered “at risk” of radicalization. However, such “duty of care” has been compromised at times, as in the case of Mohammad Umar Farooq, a Staffordshire University student who was reported to authorities by university personnel for reading a textbook on Terrorism Studies; Rizwaan Sabir who was reported for downloading an Al Qaeda manual (a document that was already available in book stores) for research; and instances of school children wrongly reported to authorities.

Universities will continue to be drawn into the state’s security agenda, as evidenced by the adoption by the Higher Education Funding Council for England of a strategy to implement universities’ “statutory duty” under CTSA 2015. Muslim students interviewed for this study expressed a willingness to talk with security personnel, provided they are not constantly under suspicion. They recognize that although most young British Muslims reject groups such as ISIS, the problem is nonetheless important to tackle. Indeed, most respondents were willing to take up this challenge within the university. However, by rendering all Muslim students suspect, by reinforcing a culture of insecurity where controversial views are shunned without being challenged, the university creates an atmosphere where Muslim students become vulnerable to Islamophobia and discrimination, so that universities are at risk of failing in their “duty of care” toward Muslim students, and are in danger of becoming just another cog in the state’s security apparatus. ■

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# > The Politics of Infrastructure

by **Amen Jaffer**, Lahore University of Management Sciences, Pakistan



*Waste pickers scramble to find recyclables before an Ozpak waste truck collects the trash from these skips.*

*Photo by Khurram Siddiqi.*

Since the last decade of the twentieth century, the Pakistani economy has been transformed by privatization and deregulation – a neo-liberal economic order which has been sustained through governments of different political parties and a military dictatorship. Yet despite an overarching consensus among the political elite, the current Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government is distinguished from other regimes by a key focus on infrastructure. Since the 1990s, PML-N governments have built their economic policy and political strategy around “developing” infrastructure – including, most recently, an emphasis on the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), touted by the government as a “game changer” that will radically uplift Pakistan’s economic fortunes.

Pakistan’s government promises that these new road, rail and energy projects – mainly funded by loans from the Chinese government and often built by Chinese companies – will bring in foreign and local private investment, creating new jobs and economic opportunities for Pakistanis.

But this economic strategy is based on the assumption that large-scale infrastructure spending alone boosts economic activity – despite shaky evidence from previous examples, including the limited usage of the Lahore-Islam-

abad Motorway, constructed under a previous PML-N government in the 1990s.

Mounting evidence from around the globe indicates that large infrastructure projects primarily benefit foreign investors and large corporations. In a country with crumbling public services, where education and health systems consistently rank among the world’s worst, such skewed spending priorities ignore the real needs of the citizenry. Even in terms of infrastructure, projects like the CPEC largely focus on the infrastructural needs of big corporations, ignoring and even damaging the so-called informal sector, where most of Pakistan’s poor are employed, thus exacerbating Pakistan’s already considerable economic inequality.

Take, for example, Lahore’s solid waste management scheme. In 2010, the Government of Punjab privatized the collection, transportation and disposal of Lahore’s waste, establishing the Lahore Waste Management Company (LWMC) as a public company. This company subsequently outsourced operations to two Turkish multinational companies, Ozpak and Albayrak, paying approximately USD 20 for every ton of garbage deposited in LWMC’s dump sites. Ongoing construction of new roads and the expansion and redesign of older ones have greatly benefited the opera-



*A settlement of waste pickers where they sort the trash they collect in the city. Photo by Khurram Siddiqi.*

tions of Ozpak and Albayrak, because the reconfigured road network allows their fleet of garbage trucks and other machinery to operate more efficiently.

One of Ozpak's operational centers is located near the Lahore Ring Road (LRR), a newly constructed six-lane highway. Trash from a number of localities is collected and transported to Ozpak's center by a fleet of garbage collection trucks, mostly full-size imported garbage trucks fitted with technology for lifting and compacting trash. (For narrower lanes, the company uses a few smaller, locally assembled pick-up vans retrofitted with specialized technology.) Once the trash is brought to the Ozpak facility, mechanical loaders shift it onto large dumpster trucks to transport it to the LWMC-owned dump site of Lakhodar, which is also conveniently located on the Ring Road. Clearly then, the LRR is a central piece in the operation, bringing Ozpak tremendous savings in fuel, time and manpower.

Ozpak's technologically sophisticated operations contrast sharply with "informal" garbage collectors and waste pickers, who gather waste and recyclables from around the city, transporting it on foot, donkey carts, bicycles and motorbikes. Some of them collect trash door-to-door for a small monthly fee while others sift through trash piles on road-sides and in dumpsters, searching for recyclable items. Importantly, while Ozpak does not permit waste pickers to enter its facility, most government-operated trash centers and dump sites are open to waste pickers, who perform the dirty work of separating and sorting recyclable items – bottles, paper, cardboard, plastic, or metal – from trash. These recyclables are then sold to small recycling businesses that further sort them before selling them onward to small industrial units who turn them into useable materials.

However, although they are the backbone of the recycling industry, performing highly demanding labor under the

most intolerable and often dangerous conditions, waste pickers are located at the bottom of this economy, earning extremely low and unpredictable incomes and suffering the social stigma and discrimination attached to their profession. Unsurprisingly, most of them belong to the lowest groups in Lahore's social hierarchy.

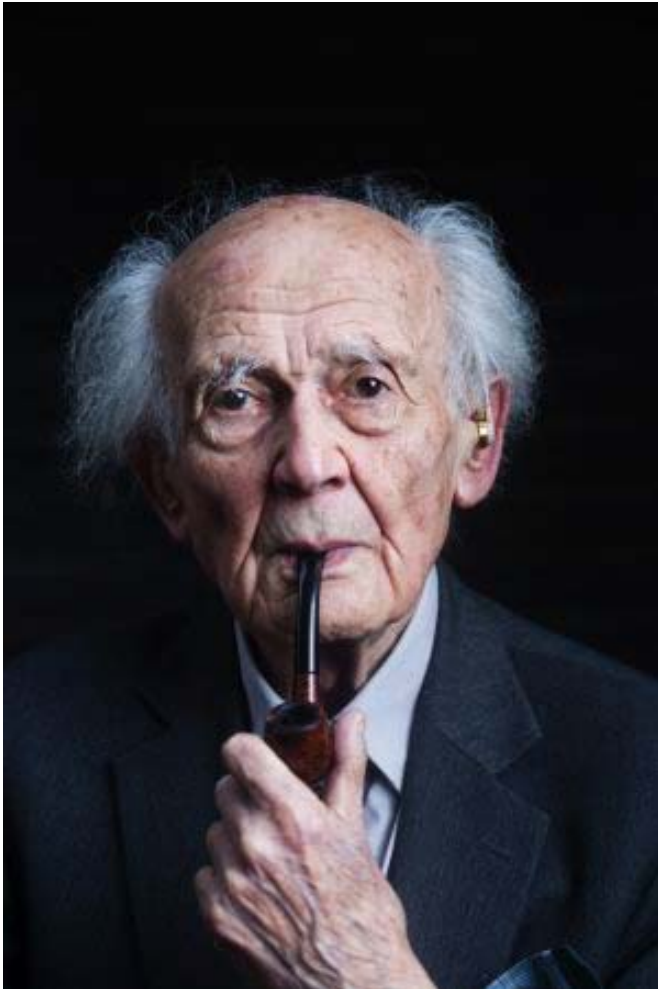
Adding further misery to already precarious lives, the transformation of Lahore's road infrastructure has directly and indirectly challenged the meagre incomes of waste pickers. Lahore Ring Road, for example, has adversely affected waste pickers in several ways. First, their dominant modes of transport – donkey carts and bicycles – are not allowed on the LRR, forcing waste pickers to travel on highly-congested side roads. Second, waste pickers' work requires them to frequently cross the LRR, forcing them either to travel long distances, since crossings are located many miles apart, or to take the risks involved in crossing on foot at non-designated locations in fast oncoming traffic. Thus, rather than facilitating waste pickers' work, the new highway becomes a barrier and an additional burden. Indirectly, the LRR also advantages waste companies whose interests often clash with those of waste pickers. In some neighborhoods, households have stopped paying waste pickers to collect their trash, as waste companies now collect it from their street. Further, waste companies' collection methods make the trash less accessible for pickers by reducing the time they have to sift through it; the companies consider pickers' recycling work a hindrance that slows down their operations.

Thus, infrastructural developments in Lahore's roads have helped waste companies earn guaranteed and increasing profits while waste pickers face new economic challenges. While efficient waste management in a large and expanding city like Lahore requires garbage trucks and associated technology, the privatization of this sector has been conducted without regard for the livelihoods of poor and marginalized citizens, adding to their woes.

Solid waste management is just one of many industries where new public infrastructure has exacerbated Pakistan's inequalities: economically marginalized groups have had no say in planning and design. Nonetheless, there is reason for optimism: some low-income communities have turned infrastructure into a central pillar of citizenship. Our research reveals that a number of these mobilizations have used protests and other political strategies to successfully demand improved infrastructure in low-income areas. The longstanding alliances that have channeled Pakistan's public resources towards corporate interests through infrastructure projects are therefore likely to face new political challenges from the citizenry. ■

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# > Zygmunt Bauman's Moral Vision



| Zygmunt Bauman.

**T**he Polish sociologist Zygmunt Bauman has died at the age of 91, bringing to an end his remarkable career as one of the contemporary world's leading sociologists. It is very difficult to sum up the life and work of such a vital figure, but it is entirely true, as Keith Tester put it, that "the likes of Zygmunt Bauman will never be found in the world of academia again. He is one of that generation of Central and Eastern European intellectuals who literally lived through the disasters of the twentieth century. He experienced what others only write about."

Born in 1925 to a Jewish family in Poznan, Poland, Bauman and his family were forced to flee to the Soviet Union in 1939 to escape the invading Nazi armies. Four years later he joined the Polish army in the Soviet Union, fighting on the Eastern Front. Though he was wounded, he returned to the fight to join in the battle for Berlin in 1945.

In post-war Poland Bauman earned rapid promotion, becoming an army captain and a political officer. At this stage he appears to have been quite an idealistic Communist, but his faith in the Party suffered a severe blow in the early 1950s, when he was removed from the Armed Forces during an anti-Semitic purge. He quickly switched to an academic career, and in 1954 he became a lecturer in social science at Warsaw University. He made a successful career in sociology, publishing on a wide range of topics; by the mid-1960s he occupied the Chair in General Sociology at Warsaw University.

However, Bauman appears to have already been viewed as a revisionist Marxist by the authorities, especially after he produced some pieces that seemed skeptical about aspects of state socialist societies, including an article on the limits of planning. His position was far from secure, and in another anti-Semitic purge of academics in 1968, he and five other professors at Warsaw University were sacked. Later that year Bauman and his family left Poland. After a series of temporary academic posts in Israel, Australia and Canada, he eventually settled in Britain. From 1971 until his retirement, he was professor of sociology at the University of Leeds.

Once securely based in Leeds, Bauman quickly established himself as a familiar figure in British sociology. His knowledge of several European languages as well as his



grasp of philosophical and sociological theories meant that he was very well prepared to assist in an explosion of interest in continental theory. In the 1980s Bauman was considered a key figure in the exploration of what was then called “post-modernity.” However, Bauman quickly began to realize the risks of being bracketed into what was then being established as a rather apolitical and even reactionary intellectual framework.

In order to maintain a critical attitude towards the emerging social order at such a liminal moment, he settled instead on the exploratory image of the “liquid modern.” Starting with *Liquid Modernity* in 2000, Bauman explored the impacts of marketization and individualization which have characterized the broader neoliberal project, always sensitive to the pain and damage that these processes have inflicted upon so many.

The central focus of all Bauman’s later work has been the character of modernity itself. The pivotal book highlighting this analysis is his award-winning study of *Modernity and the Holocaust* (1989), a pioneering work of sociology for which he was awarded the Amalfi Prize. The book focuses on the immense capacity for evil that lies within the modernist project through the “rationalized” organizational ca-

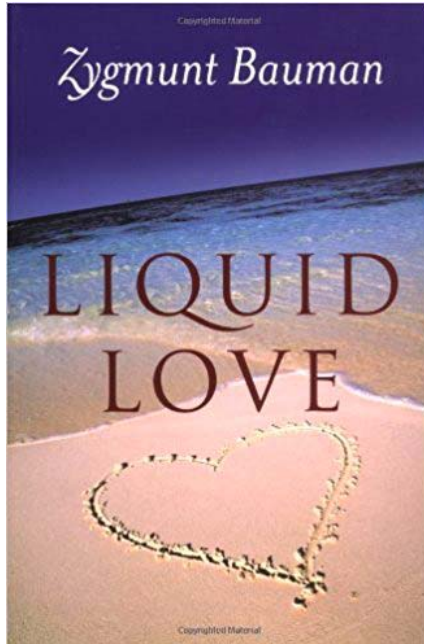
capacity unleashed in modern societies. From then onward, all his work carried an overt moral charge.

After publishing *Postmodern Ethics* in 1993, Bauman became influential in raising the significance of the sociology of ethics. His profound skepticism toward conventional sociological accounts of morality, provoked by the profound horrors of the twentieth century – some of which he had witnessed personally – led him to a sustained intellectual engagement with the work of the philosopher and theologian Emmanuel Levinas. This project encouraged Bauman to develop what one may call a moral phenomenology, in which the sources of moral action are understood as fundamental, constitutive of what it is to be human and prior to the processes of socialization.

Bauman’s work on ethics has been deeply controversial, often viewed as challenging for sociologists. But Bauman’s sociological (rather than philosophical) focus on the damaging power of institutions and their tendency to limit and atrophy the moral capacity of human agents is both brilliant and urgent. His work will continue to be read by all sociologists who hope the discipline will be more than mere administrative science. ■

**Peter McMyllor**, University of Manchester, UK

# > Zygmunt Bauman, the Skeptical Utopian



**Z**ygmunt Bauman's biography could be easily molded into a dominant narrative of twentieth-century Polish intelligentsia. After the traumatic experience of war, fascinated by the communist project, this generation was briefly involved in attempts to repair real existing socialism, before discovering its unchanging, totalitarian nature. Later, the same intelligentsia would be involved in the overthrow of communist rule in 1989. Finally, it enjoyed its victory, taking up the role of teaching the people how to use the difficult gift of freedom.

Happily Zygmunt Bauman does not fit into this story or the trajectory that lies behind it. Although he was immersed in history, he never followed its main currents. While sensitive to changing historical contexts, he managed to retain his own voice.

His perspective can be defined as skeptical utopianism: analyzing social order, Bauman always revealed those elements of utopia which serve

to maintain structures of domination, but he also called on utopia to strengthen his critique and advocate for social change. The roots of this perspective lie deep in Bauman's experience in post-war Poland and radiate outward to his later work.

## > Stalinism, a heterogeneous experience

At least in Poland, the dominant account of the post-war intelligentsia's commitment to Stalinism can undoubtedly be found in the *Captive Mind*, by Czesław Miłosz who would later win the Nobel Prize for Literature. The book presents Poland's educated strata as deprived of religion and ravaged by nihilism. Communism filled this void, offering a comprehensive explanation of the world and giving intellectuals some hope for its reconstruction. Marxism was complicated enough to seduce the minds of refined men, providing a sense of proximity to both political power and the people. Miłosz describes commitment to communism and Stalinist practices in quasi-religious terms, thus explaining the zeal of young intellectuals and their investment in the promise of the new system.

The story may partly correspond to the experience of a new cultural elite deeply involved in Stalinism, but it certainly cannot be used to understand all the roads that led to Stalinism or the various ways of experiencing it. For us it is particularly significant in relation to Julian Hochfeld, a figure of highest importance for the young Zygmunt Bauman and the entire circle of Marxist sociologists at the University of Warsaw, including Jerzy Wiatr, Maria Hirszowicz, Włodzimierz Wesołowski and Aleksandra Jasińska-Kania.

At the beginning of the 1950s, Hochfeld called for the removal of sociology

from the University as a bourgeois science, one that should not be tolerated in a socialist state. Hochfeld did not necessarily match Miłosz's description; he was a pre-war scientist and activist in the Polish Socialist Party (PPS), who after the war hoped it would be possible to run independent socialist parties under communist rule. When it was clear that Stalin planned to eliminate all parties that remained independent of Moscow, Hochfeld urged the PPS to join together with the Communist Polish Workers Party, which finally happened in 1948 with the establishment of the Polish United Workers' Party. Hochfeld's commitment to Stalinism stemmed not from ideological zeal but from a strategic choice in the face of shrinking political room for maneuver. His hopes that he would be able to continue his political activities in the new party proved futile, however. Despite being a member of parliament he quickly became marginalized, although he continued to criticize the system as part of his academic activities, especially when Stalinism ended after 1956. Hochfeld called for analysis of the mechanisms of alienation under socialism, sought to take into account the role of parliament as a complement to the principle of democratic centralism, and created the one and only socialist academic journal devoted to politics: *Socio-Political Studies*.

The experiences of his mentor had some influence on Bauman's understanding of the reality of actual socialism. Although Bauman was unambiguously on the side of socialism in the Cold War conflict between capitalism and socialism, his writings and attitude express some reservations. Following the path outlined by Hochfeld, Bauman fights on two fronts. He criticizes capitalism as a socialist sociologist, and refuses to be satisfied with the shape of socialism: he points to its deficiencies without reducing these

to the persistence of the old capitalist devices and habits.

### > A socialist critique of socialism

In the books Bauman wrote before 1968, both capitalism and socialism are treated as industrial societies. This means they are characterized by production on a mass scale, the development of the working class, and large bureaucratic organizations. Thus, the socialist society cannot be understood entirely in isolation from knowledge of capitalist societies.

Bauman's works from this period are characterized by his effort to critically assimilate the scientific heritage of Western sociology to Polish culture, in order to create a theoretical framework for analyzing socialist society. Of course this society differs from capitalism in terms of the organization of ownership, mechanisms of establishing hierarchies and the idea of modernization, which under capitalism happens under the dictate of the capitalists, rather than directed by a socialist central planner. On both sides of the Iron Curtain, however, we experience the degeneration of power, alienation of labor, and a diminished sense of the links between individual biography and collective life. Therefore, Bauman argued in his popular 1964 *Sociology in Everyday Life* (later the basis for *Thinking Sociologically*) that sociology should critically follow these processes, speaking not only to decision-makers and the elite, but also to ordinary people.

The risky character of Bauman's path was soon to be revealed. In 1965, he stood up for students facing repression in connection with the release of *The Open Letter to the Party* – a revisionist critique of actual existing socialism written by Kuron and Modzelewski. Bauman became suspect as a potential threat to single-party rule. Three years later, as the government sought legitimacy in the face of student protests, Bauman's expulsion from the university was a key symbol of "courage" in the fight against so-called troublemakers and Zionist influences. Like thousands of other people of Jewish descent, Bau-

man was forced to leave Poland and begin life in exile.

### > The utopian role of the sociologist

Bauman's expulsion from Poland marked the beginning of his longest period of silence (apart from writing directly about anti-Semitic events in Poland and a general book on culture). His first book, an effort to formulate the task of criticism in new situations, was *Socialism: The Active Utopia*, which defined Bauman's subsequent research program and his perspective as a critical sociologist. Unlike many representatives of the Polish intelligentsia, such as Leszek Kołakowski, Bauman did not reject altogether the utopian promise of socialism in favor of anti-totalitarianism.

In *Socialism: The Active Utopia*, Bauman calls for awareness of the increased role of culture in the organization of contemporary social life, noting the importance of the individual in constructing the social order and in emancipatory struggles. This awareness requires first, recognition that not all social phenomena are determined by the processes of production, and second, that not all types of domination and oppression – here Bauman mentions the Holocaust – stem from unequal access to property. At the same time, the focus on the individual which is characteristic of modern consumer societies and of movements advocating for social change sometimes blinds us to two important forms of domination: global asymmetries between the center and the periphery as well as between rich and poor within the nation-state.

Bauman's subsequent activity can be considered a continuation of the project sketched in *Socialism: The Active Utopia*. His widely-read and recognized books on modernity and postmodernity reveal skepticism towards utopia. The belief that it is possible to create a predictable and transparent society has historically proven to be a source of violence organized by the state against those who do not fit a vision of a pure society. In contemporary post-modern societies, such dangerous visions have generally been abandoned,

but that does not mean we can ignore the negative consequences of utopian ideas at the center of contemporary culture – including beliefs about a universal ability for individuals to freely create themselves, choosing from a wide range of possibilities provided by the market. Bauman describes the appeal of this utopian promise in *Modernity and Ambivalence*, but he also discusses its risks, including a sense of constant inadequacy, the frenetic activity of a subject which seeks authentic identity, a dependence on expertise, and finally, the danger of reducing other individuals to the elements offered by the market.

In addition to the negative consequences of living in a system of consumerist society, Bauman persistently pointed to those who are excluded from it. Too often, those excluded remain invisible, as effective institutional and symbolic tools keep them beyond the horizon of the consumerist experience. These are the poor, the homeless, immigrants and refugees, whom Bauman referred to as wasted lives. The role of criticism, he argued, is to keep them in sight, reminding us that the excluded are people who need assistance, protection and respect. The bond which can connect us to them cannot be based either on our material interests or on the political advantage that may stem from an alliance with the excluded. Rather, it is ethical, based on the impulses associated with the experience of the community of all the people.

Defining his task as purveyor of this utopian impulse, Bauman set himself in opposition to a large part of the East European intelligentsia, which has defined its role as witness and instructor to societies trying to keep pace with inevitable social change. Bauman showed that although sociologists should understand the dynamics of social life, they should also take the side of those placed on society's margins, and deprived of their humanity. ■

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University of Warsaw, Poland



# > Remembering

## Zygmunt Bauman



Zygmunt Bauman with Peter Beilharz.  
Photo by Sian Supski.

**W**hen the Emperor departs, there is often mourning, and some gloating. Is this an interregnum? Was Zygmunt Bauman an emperor? I don't think so. He was a late-comer to fame, a reluctant celebrity, hopeless at the ten-second grab. Understanding, as he would say, does not come in bite-sized pieces. His was an untidy prominence. He was an insider/outsider.

Bauman's first book in English, on the British labor movement, appeared in 1972. He was marginalized for this effort by Edward Thompson, and he remained invisible or peripheral for many years. He was ignored by his

colleagues, then bagged for self-plagiarism, for a sociology that he allegedly "made up," analyzing often by metaphor rather than by duly-authorized data bank, and his communist past was questioned; surely he was guilty of something. His epigones wanted him off the stage, out of their sunlight.

Yet Bauman was read and heard around the world by many, many people in many lands, for whom this encounter, in person or on the page, was transformative. Perhaps this is the source of the jealousy. Bauman stepped aside from footnotes and went to the issues. He no longer wrote for colleagues who might read his work serially, but rather

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wrote for punters, for the commuters of everyday life. His was the data of life, of the experience of the twentieth century and its successors; he urged us to take on the problems of the world as our own, all of us. The job of intellectuals was to ask questions, not to provide answers for those who really owned these problems, whether to do with poverty, forced mobility and suffering, or with love, loss and loyalty.

Perhaps I might tell a story here. For if Bauman was not a storyteller, then he was certainly a conversationalist. For 25 years, I visited Bauman annually in Leeds. The last time I saw him was in 2015, for his ninetieth birthday. I was working at Stellenbosch in South Africa. And there he popped up, in South Africa, like an old mole, before we headed off to Cape Town, flew to Manchester, then to Leeds over the Pennines by train. (I missed his last birthday; we were in Chengdu, where we had been invited to talk about the Baumans, Zygmunt and Janina. The Chinese are also keenly interested in Bauman.)

Before leaving for China, I was working on a paper for Bauman for the *Revue Internationale de Philosophie*. One of the attractions his work holds is that even after 30 years, I have not yet exhausted his interests. When I borrowed a copy of *Legislators and Interpreters* (1987) from the Stellenbosch University Library, I discovered to my pleasure that it was heavily annotated, every page. The next text I revisited was *Liquid Modernity* (2000). Chapter 3 is “Time/Space.” This fell open on the page where Bauman turns to South Africa – in fact, to Somerset West, near where I was living and working. Its subject? Gated housing, elevated to an art form here in South Africa. The project he engages with – the hilariously entitled “Heritage Park” – remains incomplete, located across a great concrete and mesh divide, the N2 freeway, from Lwandle, a black township of significant pride and achievement. Here we are, masters and slaves, tourists and vagabonds; Bauman’s optic extends from Leeds to South Africa.

He frowned, and asked, mischievously (for there was always mischief), had I stolen the book from the library?

I said no, I had borrowed it. And there we are, inspecting it together, on the last occasion I would ever share his company at Lawnswood Gardens. A long way from Somerset West, and yet, also, maybe not. Modernity travels with its dark side.

It was my privilege, among others, to be Bauman’s interpreter. As he said, my job was to put order into the chaos of his work. He was a compulsive writer; witness the 58 or so books in English. This is a rich legacy of nimble engagement with the signs of his times, with problems of everyday life which he characterized as “liquid modern.”

So this would be my advice to any newcomer, just pull any topic or thread from Bauman’s texts and see what unravels. Perhaps like Simmel, he was a sociological impressionist, the analyst of life in fragments. But he always followed Marx, so that his interest might be described as one that lies in culture and its relationships, its asymmetrical relations of production and distribution. And then, like Gramsci, he never gave up on the sense that we could do better.

Now that it is over, how might we characterize his work? Across the path of my engagement with Bauman, I have made several attempts to characterize his work: a critique of modernity as excess, a sociology of surplus populations, a theory of alternative modernities, including Nazi Germany, or a sociology of waste. More conventionally, it might be described as a critique of modernity without illusions; an East European critical theory – and the east bit matters here; or a Weberian Marxism. There are many other projects here, including a critique of classificatory reason. More recently, his work might be described as a diagnosis of the times, a critique of the signs of the times, a series of warnings delivered in the spirit of hope.

Was he an example? Absolutely; but he was not a leader. His example was to make it clear that we each need to go our own way. That is the only way to keep alive the hope of critical sociology. ■

**Peter Beilharz**, Curtin University, Australia

# > Sociology in Non-Sociological Times

by **Howard Ramos**, President of the Canadian Sociological Association and Dalhousie University; **Rima Wilkes**, President-Elect of the Canadian Sociological Association and University of British Columbia; and **Neil McLaughlin**, McMaster University, Canada



| Photo by Ariane Hanemaayer.

**I**n the last few years the world has witnessed the rise of nativism, xenophobia, the Brexit vote, and the election of Donald Trump. It is filled with post-truth, fake news, and stories that blame individuals for larger social problems. Overly simplistic, primordial, and individualistic assessments of social problems thrive, affecting the cultural environment in which sociologists live and work.

Increasingly, sociological approaches are dismissed by world leaders. French Prime Minister Manuel Valls, for instance, said that the discipline is a “culture of excuses,” while Canada’s former Prime Minister Stephen Harper was fond of saying that it was not time to “commit sociology”

when asked about the underlying causes of terrorism or violence against Indigenous women. It would seem that sociology is out of sync with broader trends.

Many leaders and policymakers, along with many others outside academe, fail to see the usefulness of sociology. Attempts to understand the social origins and causes of violence, or to mitigate the conditions that create refugees, poverty, and other forms of inequality, are increasingly dismissed as naïve or accused of pandering to violence and extremism. This sentiment has led to department closures in Asia as well as Latin America, and it has meant that the discipline plays second fiddle to other social sciences, particularly economics and psychology.



We believe that sociology has an important role to play in the coming years. The world's most pressing problems demand analysis of broader structural and historical dynamics, including through sociological reason and analysis.

But to do this effectively, the discipline needs to change with the times. Sociologists need to be more diverse, not just in terms of the people practicing the discipline, but also in the theories, ideas, and practices they adopt. Many outside the discipline see sociology as overly moralistic, offering predetermined prescriptions to social problems that only appeal to those on the political left.

We will benefit from insights from other disciplines, from being open to conservative voices, and from embracing experimental and cutting-edge methodologies such as non-parametric modelling, machine learning and adaptive systems modelling, as well as new forms of visual analysis and interpretative qualitative analysis. Doing so will open the discipline to new audiences.

Sociologists also need to engage broader publics, including those who disagree with their conclusions. Sociologists are often accused of using opaque jargon and sociologisms like “socially constructed” that come across as irrefutable arguments. To avoid being labelled “elite” and out of touch, we need to translate our knowledge into everyday language that appeals to those outside the academe.

It is also important to identify opportunities for sociological intervention and to act quickly. Sociologists must ap-

preciate what has changed across societies, focusing on emerging social problems rather than being stuck in what the discipline thinks it knows, which is largely based on theories built to address the industrial revolution or, later, the experiences of the baby boom.

We need to engage longstanding issues facing societies around the world, such as class inequalities or reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and decolonization, as well as issues that have been largely missed by the discipline's mainstream, including climate change adaptation, the rise of artificial intelligence and robotics, changing norms and expectations around gender and inter-sexuality, or the rise of autocracy around the world.

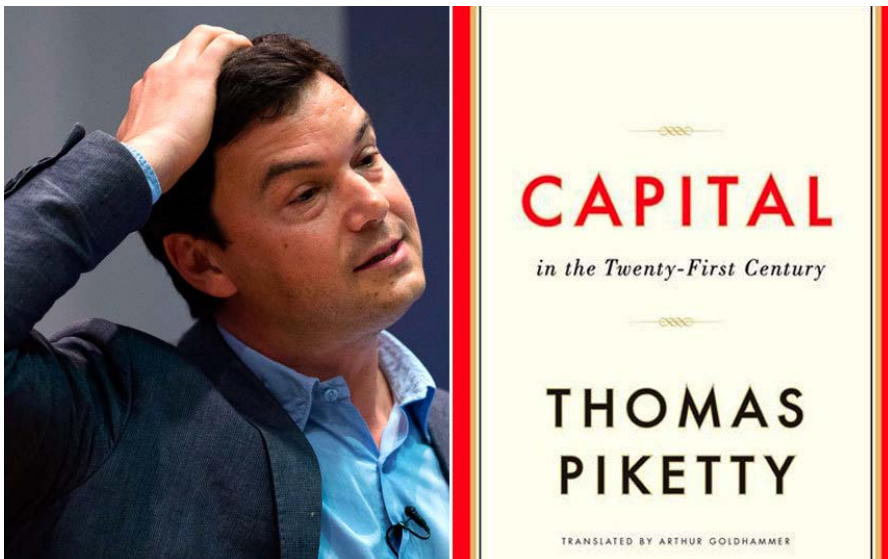
In this issue of *Global Dialogue*, Canadian sociologists Daniel Béland, Fuyuki Kurasawa, Patricia Landolt, Cheryl Teelucksingh and Karen Foster show how sociology contributes to public policy and knowledge mobilization, and the insights it can offer to our understanding of underlying injustices around citizenship and environment. Even in non-sociological times, sociologists can, do, and should lead the way.

With humility about the limits of our knowledge, respect for those with whom we disagree, and openness to being surprised by our own conclusions, sociologists can help cultivate the social literacy needed to navigate our current times – and in that process, will help to devise sustainable solutions to many of the world's most pressing social problems. ■

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# > Committing Sociology in Public Policy

by **Daniel Béland**, Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy, Canada, and President of ISA Research Committee on Poverty, Social Welfare and Social Policy (RC19)



*Thomas Piketty, insurgent economist of inequality – Are economists stealing sociologists' thunder?*

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**I**n most of the world, sociology has a lower profile within policy circles than economics – a status reflected in former Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper's dismissive call against “committing sociology.” As a sociologist who works in a Canadian policy school, I interact with economists on a daily basis and routinely use their work in my own scholarship. What is striking about economics, the most prestigious social science discipline within policy circles, is its capacity to speak to concrete policy problems using sophisticated theoretical and methodological tools.

But while this focus on policy implications is a strength of mainstream economics, the discipline has its blind spots. Key among these is its tendency to exclude topics that sociologists and other social scientists have long recognized as crucial, complicating interdisciplinary dialogue about public policy.

Still, if sociologists hope to enter the world of policy, if they want their work to shape policy debates, and if they want to make the discipline relevant outside academe, they need to take a page from economists. Sociologists need to identify the potential policy impact of their research, and to figure out how to disseminate these policy implications to policymakers.

This task is especially important because economists are making huge inroads into areas of research once dominated by sociologists. Despite important exceptions (in Canada one would think of John Myles regarding social policy and Gérard Bouchard and Victor Satzewich regarding immigration policy), sociologists are not generally seen as particularly legitimate or prominent sources of policy advice – even in relation to inequality, a research area long dominated by sociologists writing about class, income, gender, or ethnic inequalities. Until recently,

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most mainstream (*i.e.* non-Marxist) economists did not pay much attention to inequality since it did not fit well within neoclassical models. Recently, however, economists have started to tackle inequality, offering clear policy recommendations aimed at reducing it; Thomas Piketty's book, *Capital in the Twenty-First Century* (2013), has received significant attention from policymakers worldwide. Because it is written by a well-regarded economist, and because of the dominant position of economics within policy circles, Piketty's work is generating more attention than the work of the many sociologists who have previously published on rising inequalities.

Despite or perhaps because of this, sociologists need to make an extra effort to reach out to policy advocates and decision-makers. Sociologists tend to offer more critical and historically-grounded perspectives on inequality than economists (*i.e.* scholarship that discussed asymmetrical power relations and their evolution over time in concrete policy areas), which is why it is so important that their unique voice be heard within policy circles in debates about inequality. More generally, regarding inequality and beyond, applied policy work should be valued more within the discipline if sociologists want to play a more direct role in shaping the world around them.

If we learn to approach policymakers with concrete policy proposals in hand, they may see how relevant sociology is in tackling one of the greatest problems facing the world today. Sociologists should also engage with economists while being as determined as they are to offer practical solutions to the problems of the day. This means that sociologists working on inequality should think more carefully about the policy context (*i.e.* the actual programs at hand such as Canada's Guaranteed Income Supplement for older people and the country's federal equalization system) of their recommendations, and consider issues such as financing and implementation – to which both economists and decision-makers pay close attention.

The second research area where sociologists have traditionally dominated – and where economists are now entering – is the analysis of norms and identity formation. While Piketty may be the new face of economics in de-

bates about social inequality, Nobel Laureate in Economics George Akerlof and his colleague, Rachel Kranton are the champions of what they call *Identity Economics* (2010). Identity economics focuses on the study of cultural norms (about issues such as gender relations and the treatment of children and older people) and how they shape human behavior, two issues strongly associated with sociology as a discipline.

Although it is not as well-known as Piketty's work outside of academic circles, the emergence of identity economics is a significant phenomenon because, even more than inequality, norms and identity have historically been neglected by mainstream economists. From an interdisciplinary standpoint, it is good news that at least some economists have finally discovered norms and identities, as this could lead to rich interdisciplinary dialogue. Akerlof and Kranton's work could show sociologists how academics who work on these issues can generate concrete solutions to a host of policy issues. For instance, studying how younger people see themselves in relationship to adults can help improve educational attainment or formulate more effective antismoking policies. Sociologists may have put forward similar policy prescriptions in the past, but identity economics reminds us that social norms and identities are major issues for policy research. This realization should encourage more sociologists working in the area to design and promote new policy solutions derived from their empirical analyses.

These examples suggest that mainstream economists are finally paying closer attention to important social phenomena – issues that sociologists have long studied. These new opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration also represent a challenge for sociologists working in these areas who want to make a difference: These sociologists and their colleagues in other subfields of the discipline must step up their game to actively promote their policy advice outside academe. They must use both traditional and social media to reach out to ordinary citizens, advocates, and decision-makers, to ensure that “committing sociology” becomes an imperative in policy debates, rather than something politicians can simply brush aside with contempt. ■

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# > Precarious Noncitizenship in Canada

by **Patricia Landolt**, University of Toronto, Canada and member of ISA Research Committee on Sociology of Migration (RC31)

**S**ociology remains a crucial voice in public debate because it challenges common-sense understanding of pressing social issues. Consider, for example, migration and immigration. In Canada, and other settler countries, immigration is commonly understood as a permanent move, with the goal of increasing the country's national population. The sociology of migration shows, however, that temporary migration is increasing, and policies that promote migration are leading to precarious noncitizenship. A sociological lens offers counter-hegemonic interpretations of the current immigration system and its impact on social inequality.

Globally, legal status and citizenship are critical determinants of well-being and mobility. But they also create inequality. In recent years states have responded to increased global migration by creating new legal categories for non-citizens, institutionalizing authorized trajectories of non-citizenship, leading migrants to spend years in an uncertain legal status, and often pushing migrants towards illegalization.

Pathways and access to citizenship are increasingly restricted, while extralegal systems for detaining and deporting migrants have proliferated. This global shift differs from country to country, but in Canada, the changing relationship between temporary and permanent immigration has led to the rise of precarious noncitizenship, expressed in immigration, labor markets and the experience of work.

Precarious noncitizenship refers to temporary or limited legal status and the associated experiences of differential inclusion. Precarious legal status means that a person has only a temporary legal right to be present in a country, with limited or no access to state entitlements. Most importantly, precarious noncitizens are deportable; the state can forcibly detain and remove precarious noncitizens from the national territory.

Precarious noncitizens live, work, study, and raise their family in a country where their right to be present, to work and to access state resources is curtailed by law. In Canada the population with precarious legal status includes all categories of temporary migrant workers, international students, refugee claimants, people on special visas, and anyone who is out of status. In 2010 there were between 1.2 and 1.7 million precarious noncitizens living and working in Canada, a country with a population of 34 million.

In Canada there has always been a tension between wanting some immigrants for long-term population growth, and wanting other immigrants as a short-term labor supply. Historically, the balance between long-term and short-term goals was resolved through a two-track immigration system. One track was for temporary migrants who come with significant restrictions on where they could work, whether they could bring their families, and how long they could stay. Migrants on this kind of temporary track include Chinese men who migrated to work on the railway in the 1880s, Caribbean women who came to work as domestics in the 1950s, and Mexican workers who came to do seasonal agricultural work in the 1970s. A second track has offered permanent settlement to immigrants selected through the Federal Point System, on the basis of education, official language ability, and family ties. Until the 1990s, these two tracks were organizationally and discursively separate; the first track bringing noncitizen, temporary workers was largely hidden from view, while the second track bringing immigrants for nation building was very visible. The latter was the focus of our collective celebration of the Canadian model of immigration.

In the 2000s federal immigration policy broke with the established two-track system. First, the eligibility criteria for independent skilled immigrants were narrowed to select people with more wealth, higher educational attainment, and clearer indicators of official

**“precarious noncitizens are woven into Canada’s social and economic fabric”**

language proficiency. Second, the eligibility criteria for the entry of refugees, asylum seekers, and family-class immigrants were narrowed. Third, skill requirements for temporary foreign workers were loosened to allow for high-skill and low-skill occupational categories. Finally, new mechanisms were established to enable select temporary migrants to transition to permanent residence. Employers are the primary intermediaries determining whether noncitizen workers transition from temporary to permanent immigration. In brief, there was a narrowing of the track for direct permanent immigration, a widening of temporary migration tracks, and new mechanisms created to allow some temporary migrants to switch to the permanent immigration track. As a result, temporary entries to Canada now consistently outpace permanent entries.

The new relationship between temporary and permanent migration impacts Canada’s work and labor markets, as precarious noncitizen workers are a new, more visible fixture on the economic landscape. Until the 1990s, temporary migrant workers were concentrated in seasonal agro-industrial production, the urban, high-skill service sector, and home-based care-work, but this pattern has changed. By 2011, temporary workers were present in every province and territory of the country, in large and small urban centers and in rural areas. Along with this geographic diffusion came occupational dispersion and downgrading. In 2005 the

top five occupations listed for temporary foreign workers were classified as high-skill and were concentrated in the creative industries. In 2008 the top occupations were low-end food service work and construction.

Precarious noncitizen and citizen workers with distinct sets of rights in relation to the state and employers now work beside each other at workplaces throughout Canada, but we know very little about these mixed-legal status workplaces. Almost certainly, the presence of deportable noncitizen workers in the labor market has some impact on all workers. Data from other countries points to a generalized erosion of the floor on labor standards and workplace conditions.

Precarious noncitizenship changes the balance of power between workers, employers and the state, and between citizen and noncitizen workers. In particular, deportability limits the noncitizen workers’ ability to claim and exercise rights in the labor market. Of course, this difference between citizens and deportable noncitizen workers was as true 100 years ago as it is today. The difference between then and now, in Canada, is the centrality of precarious noncitizenship, including the growing numbers of people affected, the changes in the two-track immigration system, and the extent to which precarious noncitizens are woven into Canada’s social and economic fabric. ■

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# > Committing Sociology

## through Environmental Justice

by **Cheryl Teelucksingh**, Ryerson University, Canada



*Demonstrators rally against shale gas exploration in New Brunswick, Canada.*

**W**hile cities around the world are seeing a rise in racism and nativism, this trend appears to have bypassed Toronto. This might be surprising, since Toronto is also one of the world's most multicultural cities, and, like other major cities, it is also host to both the best and worst of urban conditions.

Over the last year, there has been a rise in urban protests around the world, and Toronto has been no exception. Contention arising from the 2016 American election; protests by victims of Flint's water crisis; massive Indigenous-led action against the pipeline at Standing Rock, North Dakota; or Black Lives Matter's challenges to a post-racial panacea that never existed. Each is an example of protest led by millennials driven to social media and the streets.

Similar tensions and mobilization have also emerged in Toronto, where the majority of the population is for-

eign-born and many are racialized. For some, it has been shocking to see a rise in racist incidents in a city long known for its culture of multiculturalism. Toronto's Black Lives Matter movement delayed the city's major Gay Pride parade in protest against police violence, and the city's Tamil refugees blocked one of its major highways, reminding residents of the extent to which racialized people are socially and spatially segregated in the city's suburbs.

Rather than simply treating these events as separate political and economic tensions calling for different forms of activism or intervention, it is crucial for sociologists to see linkages across activism, action, and issues in order to press for policy reforms. I argue that environmental justice offers an umbrella for sociology to do just that.

Environmental justice is both a theoretical framework and a social movement that seeks to merge issues of social justice



into environmental movements. By broadening the traditional and exclusionary notions associated with conservation, to more inclusive views of environmentalism, environmental justice integrates a wide range of social and environmental problems, from health, housing, and urban planning to policing.

As an approach to activism, environmental justice draws on protest strategies associated with the civil rights movement – blockades, petitions, and media campaigns – to fight for proactive social and environmental policy. Inspired by Robert Bullard’s seminal work, environmental justice has become an exemplar of a community-oriented sociology that is responsive and relevant to today’s interrelated social, political, economic, and environmental concerns.

In its early form, environmental justice focused on highlighting the uneven spatial distribution of environmental risks experienced by marginalized, racialized, lower-income and Indigenous peoples. In Canada, this has involved attaching a name to the ongoing colonial legacy of poor infrastructure and the lack of consultation with Indigenous peoples in decisions about land and resource that impact their communities. In this regard, shared concerns about land rights, health, and risks to ecosystems create links across social justice issues – and making for an obvious connection between Indigenous protests about oil sands development in Alberta and the Dakota Access pipeline protest at Standing Rock.

Environmental justice in urban centers, including Toronto, has also provided a framework to question the status quo and move toward solutions to the uneven processes of urban development. Such trends are linked to systematic disinvestment in racialized lower-income communities, resulting in less green space and fewer healthy food options, as well as a lack of affordable housing, less access to public transit, and greater amounts of policing and social stigma.

Canadian environmental sociologists, like others around the world, are examining how environmental nongovernmental organizations, the media, and government policies frame and respond to the needs of marginalized Canadians. Their work illuminates how environmental injustices become apparent when we ask who gets what and by what means.

Inequities in access to resources and power cross many of the current streams of activism, and can unite them. In Toronto, and globally, white privilege is associated with economic, social, and environmental advantage. Historical patterns of decision-making have reinforced existing power structures and maintained the status quo, so that while good neighborhoods improve, poor neighborhoods become more rundown.

More recently in Toronto, environmental justice has been used as a banner for protests against the tar sands ex-

pansion of Alberta’s dirty oil, and against globalization’s growing inequalities. As multinational corporations relocate manufacturing facilities to less-developed countries, where wages are lower and environmental regulations are less stringent, globalization links the poor and racialized – those who are vulnerable to environmental injustices in their workplaces, homes, and communities – locally as well as globally.

Climate change is a global concern for sociologists doing environmental justice work. In Canada, the politics of climate justice are complicated by Canada’s reliance on fossil fuel as an economic engine, whose beneficiaries tend to view the effects of climate change or concerns about pipeline expansion as distant and manageable. In contrast, in less-developed nations that are more vulnerable to natural disasters, often with poorer infrastructures, larger coastal settlements, and greater dependency on subsistence fishing and agriculture, the impact of climate change caused by carbon emissions seems more immediate. Thus, there is a pressing need in Canada to frame local energy decisions in the context of global consequences.

Taken together, these examples show that there are at least three aspects of environmental justice that could inform “committing sociology” in these times of crisis and protest.

First, sociologists need to be open to interdisciplinary approaches. Environmental justice draws on qualitative, quantitative, spatial and legal methods, and bases itself in theoretical frameworks from geography, law, urban planning, public health, and sociology. Some environmental justice research has focused on uncovering the narratives and experiences of those suffering from environmental risks, racism, and other often-ignored oppressions. These hidden narratives are an important starting point for studying the process of change.

Second, sociologists need to advocate social and environmental policy reforms from government and private sector stakeholders. Our understandings of social and environmental problems are continually evolving, and climate justice interventions are required at both local and global levels to protect vulnerable populations disproportionately impacted by the health, economic, and environmental risks associated with climate change.

Finally, beyond the implementation of policy, there is a role for sociologists to play in monitoring and evaluating new policies from the perspective of marginalized communities, a task that would benefit from an intersectional approach. By using an environmental justice lens, sociologists can help to strengthen the relationship between policy and the construction of a more social just world. ■

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# > Sociology in a Time (Never Quite) Like Any Other

by **Karen Foster**, Dalhousie University, Canada



*Spotted on a home in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, February 2017.  
Photo by Karen Foster.*

**T**o many, 2016 marked the end of the world as we knew it. The populist revolts represented by the Brexit vote and Trump's electoral victory, the violence of Duterte in the Philippines, and a resurgence of authoritarian governments and political parties have shaken the neoliberal democratic capitalist order. Alongside political currents, we have seen the spread of "fake news," and a growing backlash against "political correctness" across the globe, heralding what some view as a new, "post-truth" era.

It seems that facts do not matter as much as opinions and emotions. Compassion for "others" is at an all-time low and we risk repeating some

of the worst anthropogenic atrocities the world has ever seen. Sociology becomes a major target of derision in political times such as these, but if we apply the sociological imagination, we may see hidden nuance, and therein hope, and clues about what to do next.

It can be very easy to see the ruptures in history, and very hard to see continuities. Sociology and its siblings have declared many breaks, ends and beginnings before – the End of Work, the End of History, and even the end of Sociology itself! Upon further investigation and with the passage of time, however, these claims have been tempered. With every rupture, there are always threads of continu-

ity. Foucault's pronouncement rings true: every moment is "a time like any other, or rather, a time that is never quite like any other."

Our task as sociologists – especially for those of us who do historical sociology – is to trace the threads that may link what is happening now with what came before, so that we may not miss hidden causes or misattribute blame to intervening variables. The liberal democratic society whose loss we may well be forced to mourn partly carried within it the seeds for its own destruction; rebuilding it exactly as it was is not the answer.

Even the apparent transformation of sociology's relationship to society – via

the governing state, civic organizations, or through the university – must be properly historicized and critically assessed. Our discipline's practitioners and ideas have had a fickle relationship with power, never fully “in” with elites but never totally “out” either.

Sociologists, for example, were among the first experts the US government recruited to *literally* redraw national boundaries in post-WWI Europe. But several of these, including the University of Chicago's W.I. Thomas, were booted out of their positions and publicly shamed when their ideas about internationalism, national identity, and the social order conflicted with the Allies' vision of internationalism.

Importantly, Thomas and other sociologists rejected by post-war policy-making circles did not fret about how to adapt sociology to their government's agenda. They did not compromise what their research had shown to be true in order to be of service to government. They *did*, however, work directly with the poor, immigrants and other people on the margins, actually creating institutions to protect them and advance their interests.

Some of sociology's entanglements with government and social movements were horrendous. The eugenics movement comes to mind as a stark and shocking example. Even entanglements that seem comparatively benign, such as our discipline's centrality to the mid-twentieth century Human Relations School, implicate sociology in human suffering – in this case, the

toll the industrial organization of work has had on people and society.

These are the kinds of historical examples that need to be examined if our worst fears about authoritarianism and fascism in the contemporary period come true. We are presently worried about sociology as a *practice*. If the worst happens, it is as a *profession* that we will need to review, refine, and strengthen our codes of ethics so that we do not put our skills and knowledge at the service of injustice. Sociologists have been experts *on* authoritarianism, but they have by no means always resisted it.

Sociologists need to also acknowledge that sociology has never been a homogenous, monolithic discipline with a singular relationship to the forces and institutions that direct social life. As a multifaceted body of knowledge, methods, and theories, it does not fall in and out of favor all at once.

Consider the fact that in the wake of the American presidential election, just when we believed that no one wanted to hear a sociological explanation, sociologist Arlie Russell Hochschild's *Strangers in Their Own Land*, analyzing the typical Trump voter, became a *New York Times* bestseller.

Hochschild's latest work is, among other things, a work of rural sociology, a sub-discipline which offers ample opportunities to influence public policy. Policymakers working in peripheral communities, where the costs of globalization always seem to outweigh

the benefits, are acknowledging that some of their foundational assumptions – for example, the desirability of economic growth at any cost, the viability of export-dominated economies, and the very notion that bigger is automatically better – are no longer helpful or tenable. They have also experienced what happens when public or institutional policy pays no attention to collective behaviors, values, norms, and beliefs.

A critical mass of people, academics, and policymakers worldwide are building alternative economic ideas, and a growing body of scholarship and activism is questioning, on ecological and economic grounds, the endless pursuit of economic growth. Internationally, a burgeoning community is working to destabilize the measures of economic success, like GDP, that have guided so much domestic and international policy. Such destabilizing efforts have the potential to open up “other worlds” – though they also have the potential to be put toward the same tired ends they are meant to critique.

That is why the work of the sociologist is never done. There is still a hunger for sociological knowledge. If we sense that our ideas have lost traction, or that our discipline has fallen from some higher rung, we need to be more precise about what has actually changed. That precision will only come via the quality of mind that makes sociology something coherent despite its heterogeneity: through the sociological imagination. ■

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# > Engaging the Media in Troubled Times

by **Fuyuki Kurasawa**, York University, Canada and Board Member of ISA Research Committee on Sociological Theory (RC16)



Moreover, engaging with the media makes for better public and professional sociologists. It simultaneously enables us to encounter a wider range of ideas, opinions, and experiences than would be otherwise available, compelling us to reflect upon, frame, and present our work to audiences unaccustomed to academic discourse.

From a global perspective, the Canadian experience offers valuable lessons. Its two dominant, linguistically-based public spheres encompass and mirror the two most common ways in which media organizations view sociologists around the world – and, conversely, illustrate the two strategies through which sociologists participate in public debates via news outlets, as professional specialists, or as public intellectuals.

In English-speaking Canada, as in the rest of the Anglo-American world, professional sociology is a more prevalent mode of disciplinary practice. Here, news outlets primarily solicit sociologists as specialists on a precise topic receiving coverage (say, the settlement of Syrian refugees, or social media-fueled bullying in high schools). At the same time, consistent with American and British tendencies, Anglo-Canadian sociology remains confined to a relatively subordinate public standing vis-à-vis

**T**o invite sociologists to engage with the media at this particular moment hardly appears propitious. A proliferation of populist nationalisms and religious fundamentalisms is emboldening politicians and celebrities – categories that seem increasingly blurred in our infotainment era – to openly profess hostility towards or ignorance of any type of expertise. Sociologists may confront political animus or popular indifference, for we reveal inconvenient truths that may puncture, undermine, or squarely contradict cherished dogma, or naturalized, (profanely or theologically) sacred, and seemingly self-evident common sense about the social world.

A call for media engagement will also run up against a widespread belief within the sociological community that sees media organizations as in-

struments of corporate or state power, or which considers sociologists who work with news outlets to be craven, shallow, and publicity-seeking dilettantes uncommitted to serious scholarly work. Over the last few years, too, a multiplication of “how-to” guides for academics interested in public outreach via social media platforms, has inadvertently fostered a perception that conventional media is sliding into the waste bin of cultural and technological obsolescence.

Whatever kernels of truth may lie in these arguments, disengagement from the media will deprive sociologists of access to the means of mass communication. The reach of mass media remains unrivaled – at the very moment that sociological perspectives on crucial social, political, cultural, and economic debates need to be heard more broadly.

economics, psychology, or political science, whose practitioners have traditionally enjoyed a greater presence on prestigious national television and radio panels or in newspapers of record.

In French-speaking Québec, on the other hand, sociology occupies a public role that rivals, and often surpasses, its professional one – much as it does in Latin America and continental Europe where the discipline benefits from a relatively high degree of socio-cultural esteem and intellectual prestige. Sociologists have contributed in significant ways to the articulation of the social and cultural foundations of francophone Québécois collective identity and nationhood since the anti-clerical and modernizing “Révolution tranquille” of the 1960s. As a result, sociologists in Québec tend to be viewed as public intellectuals and generalists. Frequently, journalists or hosts approach sociologists to opine on broad social and political questions, asking, “what do you, as a sociologist, think” about a given topic?

Although the above observations are derived from the Canadian context, the dual character of sociology’s positioning – either as a specialized profession or a public intellectual pursuit – is generalizable to many other settings. Moreover, because their risks and rewards differ, each of these modes of practice calls for a distinct set of strategies of media engagement – and each offers valuable lessons for all practitioners.

In the Anglo-American world, where the legitimacy of sociology is less well established and principally grounded in professional specialization, three tenets could help in efforts to publicize the discipline:

- **Understand your positioning.** Study the ideological and professional terrain of your national media fields to grasp what role you may be asked to play. Why are producers or journalists soliciting you; to what ends is your expertise being requested; and how will your statements be framed in an article or during an appearance?

- **Embrace a varied diet.** Apply media sociology’s analytical principle of representative sampling to the interviews that you grant by speaking with less prestigious or consecrated news sources such as community radio stations, smaller newspapers, and so forth. This will allow you to reach an audience that may not be as familiar with, and may be intrigued by, a sociological vantage point on a particular topic.

- **Opinions are cheap, but (sociological) facts are hard-earned.** In the age of social media, everyone has an opinion and a platform from which to broadcast it. Your *differentia specifica* as a professional specialist, then, stems from your ability to draw upon research findings and cite facts to counter popular misconceptions, as well as locate a particular event within its broader socio-historical and comparative context.

For places such as Latin America, continental Europe, and francophone Québec, where the sociologist regularly performs the role of public intellectual and where media engagement veers toward professional specialization, I offer two proposals:

- **Shape the encounter.** Since journalists or producers will normally conduct a pre-interview with you and value your advice highly, take the opportunity to mold the angle that the

story will take. Suggest alternative lines of inquiry, recommend another person to be interviewed, or follow up by sending reports, data, or even (note!) a refereed journal article or book on the subject.

- **Keep your eyes on the prize.** Given that you will be viewed as a public intellectual, it will be tempting to make sweeping pronouncements about the state of the world or speculate about causal ties. Instead, steer the interview back to matters that touch upon your areas of expertise. Do so in a concise manner that focuses on key points, offering an analysis that is accessible yet neither diluted nor “dumbed down.”

A final point applies across all settings: *timing is everything*. Tight deadlines and fleeting newsworthiness are sacrosanct for the media. You need to find a balance between accommodating their last-minute requests and your own schedule. Reporters, producers, and editors cannot and will not wait for you to find the time to grant them an interview or publish your op-ed piece once their story is filed or has faded from public consciousness.

Rather than suggesting that sociologists should become bloviating windbags or tiresome pundits, I have argued for renewed collaboration with the media. It behooves us to cultivate sociology’s twin purpose as a public vocation and a professional discipline, an alternative to the kind of public relations spin, entrepreneurial platitudes, or cynical opportunism that too often passes as wisdom in these troubled times. ■

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# > US Universities

## A New Site for Immigrant Struggles?

by **Sandra Portocarrero** and **Francisco Lara García**, Columbia University, USA



*US university students demanding that their campus be a sanctuary for undocumented students.*

**O**n June 15, 2012, the Obama administration announced the creation of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, changing US immigration policy to allow roughly 1.7 million young undocumented immigrants who entered the United States as children to receive a renewable two-year administrative relief from deportation. DACA also extended work permit eligibility to these young

undocumented immigrants, and provided greater access to higher education. Most residents in the United States take for granted freedoms such as the privilege of walking without fear of deportation, of applying for jobs, or getting an education. DACA extended these freedoms to the young and undocumented, allowing people who consider the United States their home to enjoy these privileges with peace of mind, at least during the deferral period.

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Following Donald Trump's election as President of the United States, peace of mind was traded for anxiety. Fear stemming from the anti-immigrant rhetoric that characterized Trump's campaign spread like wildfire. Most immediately, DACA beneficiaries feared that the protections extended by the Obama administration would be summarily rescinded. But the feeling of anxiety goes much further: migrants of all statuses fear that new draconian immigration restrictions might affect them all.

These fears were confirmed on January 27, 2017, when the President signed an executive order barring people from seven majority-Muslim nations from entering the country. Due to the order's broad language and uneven implementation, immigrants of all nationalities and legal statuses – including refugees and American citizens – were caught up in a hectic rollout, sparking protests across the country. All immigrants, whether they were refugees, student visa holders or permanent residents, woke up to a United States where the likelihood that they might be questioned, detained, and even barred from entering the country had risen sharply. State Department directives even restricted entry for US citizens who held dual nationality with the countries named in the ban.

Overnight, vulnerability seemed to have been expanded to include not only the undocumented, but almost anyone with an immigrant label. Although a Federal District Court in Seattle moved quickly to block the order, the entire episode suggested that the Trump White House's immigration policy would pay little attention to distinctions – a concern underscored on March 6, 2017, when the President's new executive order blocked citizens of six predominantly Muslim countries from entering the United States, one of the harshest interventions in immigration policy in generations.

Nowhere have these conflicts become more apparent, perhaps, than

in US colleges and universities. Institutionally, both public and private American universities concentrate increasingly heterogeneous groups of migrants within their faculty, administrative personnel, and student bodies. The Obama administration's DACA program expanded this diversity: DACA recipients, finally able to enroll in college, join universities whose halls are filled with international students and whose classrooms are led by a professoriate composed of the most educated migrant class. No other contemporary institution gathers so many people of varied classes, races and ethnicities, or of such diverse immigrant status.

Thus, it is unsurprising that universities across the country joined the many voices objecting to the travel ban. On February 13, 2017, an amicus brief drafted by sixteen US universities, including all Ivy League universities, was filed in the US District Court for the Eastern District of New York, challenging the executive order. The brief asserted that "safety and security concerns can be addressed in a manner that is consistent with the values America has always stood for, including the free flow of ideas and people across borders and the welcoming of immigrants to our universities."

Similarly, the American Sociological Association (ASA) issued a statement on January 30, 2017, opposing Trump's initial executive order, and including suggestions for how to effectively implement collective action. As sociologists, the ASA reminded us, we are embedded in a large network of organizations, a network that can be more effective if we become proactive and collaborate. At a moment when an individual with hostile anti-immigrant rhetoric has been elected President of the United States, academic institutions have been pushed to evolve from observers to active participants in the fabric of society, reflecting, as Michael Burawoy put it<sup>1</sup>, the unique position that universities hold in today's world, simultaneously inside and outside society, simultane-

ously participant in and observer of society. Put differently, these public statements turned the field of sociology into a field of power.

Sociologists would do well to pay attention to emergent dynamics between different immigrant groups on university campuses – a new phenomenon that is perhaps peculiar to the collegiate setting. Today, institutions that employ or represent immigrants typically advocate for migrants of a specific economic profile and educational level: for example, agricultural chambers lobby for policies guaranteeing cheap and plentiful agricultural workers and undocumented day-workers, while tech firms in Silicon Valley want to expedite the recruitment and hiring of highly-skilled engineers and computer scientists. But the American university, by assembling such a diverse assortment of otherwise different immigrant groups, has unusual potential to serve as the organizing site for immigrant social movements or efficient resistance to the Trump agenda. Alternatively, the failure of cooperation to materialize would be instructive, as well, revealing the limits of intersectional collaboration and the challenges of building robust solidarity networks across immigrant groups.

All in all, as American civil society responds to the challenges of the Trump era, sociologists will have to pay close attention to cross-migrant group dynamics within universities. It may be too early to gauge their larger significance, but when the times comes, we will need an approach that theorizes the unusual position of the American university, remembering that universities are multidimensional spaces at the intersection of divergent interests. ■

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<sup>1</sup> "Redefining the Public University: Developing an Analytical Framework," *Transformations of the Public Sphere*, Social Science Research Council, 2011.



# > Introducing the Argentinian Editorial Team

by **Juan Ignacio Piovani**, member of ISA Research Committees on Futures Research (RC07) and Logic and Methodology (RC33), **Pilar Pi Puig** and **Martín Urtasun**, National University of La Plata, Argentina

**W**e joined *Global Dialogue* (GD) in 2016, following five years of impeccable Spanish translation performed under Majo Álvarez Rivadulla's supervision in Colombia. Since then, each issue of GD has offered both a challenge and an opportunity to learn: after several weeks of intense work we are left with a great sense of accomplishment.

Translating is never straightforward. As the Romanian team recently noted, an initial problem involves new words that have not been yet formally translated. But given that Spanish is widely used both in academe and international organizations, we rely on many sources – articles, reports, white papers, etc. – to search for Spanish equivalents of English sociological and political neologisms. However, the very fact that Spanish is so widespread also poses specific challenges. Spanish is the official language in 21 nations, with almost 500 million native speakers worldwide. Every region, even in scholarly circles, has its own distinctive version of the language, in which the same concept may be differently phrased. In order to tackle this problem we spend a lot of time debating the best way to convey a rather “neutral” Spanish, or how to be fair to local and regional linguistic variants.

Yet the complexities of multiple forms of enunciation and reception go well beyond one specific language. For example, trying to translate an English word that has an apparently “transparent” Spanish equivalent – liberal – proved complicated when used to depict a politician's ideological leaning. Our first option was the Spanish term *liberal*. But both in Spain and most Latin American countries *liberal* has a neat conservative connotation. An alternative was to use the word *progresista* (progressive), but in many Latin American contexts, this word evokes leftist thought. Thus, it would have been utterly inappropriate to use *progresista* to refer to a politician who may be open-minded regarding family values, for instance, but still supports neoliberal

eral economics, extensive military intervention and similar policies (as some so-called liberals in developed nations tend to do). Translating this kind of term involves a deeper investigation of various alternatives and their implications.

Another problem that we regularly face relates to nouns' genders, which are dealt with very differently in English and Spanish. Of course GD's editorial team is aware of women's struggles worldwide, and the journal includes articles about women's rights, gender issues and feminist debates in different countries. Many critics maintain that Spanish (and other languages) have gender biases; thus, some authors – especially when addressing gender inequalities and related topics – may adopt deliberate writing strategies to tackle such biases. But as we often translate English texts previously written in third languages (in which gender biases might be more obvious), an author's subtle word choices meant to challenge biases and sexist writing in the original language can be unwittingly obscured in our translations.

Unlike other editorial teams, we chose to concentrate our workload among a rather small group at the Department of Sociology of the National University of La Plata. Once we receive the English version of GD, Pilar and Martín share out the articles according to thematic affinity and personal interests. Translators translate each article on their own and then crosscheck their work with each other. Later, Juan revises all translations thoroughly and comprehensively. Throughout this process we receive Lola Busuttil's invaluable advice. Her sound competence in several languages and long experience in translation is crucial for helping us improve the Spanish version of GD.

Participating in GD has been very enriching, both for developing our translation skills as well as putting us in touch with an immense variety of social topics and contexts. *Global Dialogue* helps us know the world better, and in so doing it stimulates our sociological imagination.



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**Pilar Pi Puig** studied Sociology at the National University of La Plata (Argentina). She is currently a PhD student in Social Sciences at the same university. Her research is framed within the sociology of the environment, and her interests are environment, poverty and inequality in urban contexts. She works at the Department of Sociology, where she participates in several research projects regarding methodological issues in the study of poverty and inequality. Pilar is also involved in extension programs in deprived neighborhoods of the city of La Plata and in various exchange activities with colleagues from the University of Wuppertal (Germany).

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**Martín Urtasun** studied Sociology at the National University of La Plata (Argentina), where he is currently pursuing doctoral studies in Social Sciences with a scholarship granted by CONICET. Martín conducts research into the current “preemptive” security policies based on technological devices, particularly urban video surveillance. He follows an ethnographic approach theoretically informed by pragmatic sociologies and by the studies of science, technology and society. He is also interested in popular education, and participates both as teacher and activist in a People’s High School for adults, organized within a social movement.

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