



NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2006

RC 09

SOCIAL TRANSFORMATIONS AND SOCIOLOGY OF DEVELOPMENT

This issue of our Newsletter serves three purposes: 1) to give you a report on the XVI World Congress of Sociology, Durban, South Africa, 2) to update you on new activities of our RC, and 3) to provide information and resources on our common research topic of social transformations and sociology of development. We encourage and welcome the submission of short responses or book reviews for the next Newsletter issue. (Please send them to Nina Bandelj, the RC09 Secretary at nbandelj@uci.edu)

Conference Report

XVI World Congress of the International Sociological Association

Durban, South Africa, July 23-29, 2006

The RC 09 activities during the Durban Congress, which were comprised of 15 sessions (14 research committee regular sessions and one Integrated Semi-plenary session), attracted at least 10, most often about 30 interested scholars for the regular sessions and about 100 participants for the integrated semi-plenary session. In each session, four to six papers were presented, so that there was some time to discuss interesting aspects with the presenters and the audience. The 14 sessions meant a real challenge to most of the chairs, as they most often had to chair several sessions. We will try to enlarge the chairing of the sessions to other RC 09 members during the Midterm Conference in September 2008 in Barcelona (Spain) and at the next World Congress of the ISA in Goeteborg (Sweden) in July 2010 insofar as we have now more than 100 members a fact that will permit us to distribute the different tasks better than before.

About 20 interested members and participants in the Congress attended the Business meeting. We provide the minutes of the meeting below, which will give you some information on the topics of the very constructive discussions. As a result of this meeting, we have decided to start a list serve for RC 09 members that will permit an exchange among RC09 members, more frequent and immediate than the Newsletter information on conferences, publications, call for papers, research projects, job openings, etc. Mustafa Koc will coordinate the list serve that will start soon (see below). Moreover, it was suggested to start an online-journal of RC 09 on *Social Transformations and Sociology of Development*. The incoming board will check this option and inform you as soon as possible on the final decision.

The Reception that we organized at Joe Kools before the Beach Party was a real success with about 60 to 100 members and accompanying persons from three Research Committees (RC 09, 10 and 36). This casual occasion was also a chance to meet and exchange some words with the incoming ISA president Michel Wieviorka, and some other prominent members of the international sociological community like Jeffrey Alexander, Nikolai Genov, Lauren Langman, and Ewa Morawska.

Minutes of RC 09 Business Meeting, Durban 25 July 2006

The meeting was convened on Tuesday, July 25, from 18:00-20:00, during the XVI ISA World Congress in Durban, South Africa. Ulrike Schuerkens, RC09 President, served as the chair of the meeting. The items of the agenda included: 1. RC09 activities report for the interim period since the previous World Congress, 2. issues related to the coming election, 3. proposition to change the fees for the RC09, 4. announcements regarding coming events and conferences, and 5. other issues that attendees raised from the floor. In reporting on the RC09 activities, Ulrike Schuerkens stressed the significant growth of the membership in our RC09. While in January 2004, there were 59 members, by July 2006 this figure was up to 109. Regarding the geographical distribution of members, they come from 39 countries, including Africa, Asia, Western Europe, Central and Eastern Europe, North America, South America, and the Middle East. Willfried Spohn, Vice-President of RC09 commented that he is very happy to see the growth in membership but he stressed that it is important to build the infrastructure of the RC so that we can have enough active members to organize and run sessions and mid-term conferences.

Ulrike Schuerkens announced that the forthcoming conferences can be organized during the International Institute of Sociology Meetings (in 2008) and the Mid-term Conference of the International Sociological Association (in Barcelona in September 2008). The next ISA World Congress of Sociology will take place in Goeteborg, Sweden, in July 2010. When discussing possible session topics to be organized at these conferences by RC09, several attendees showed interest and willingness to organize sessions. Dieter Neubert commented that it would be interesting to have papers from different world regions on a common topic, which would be also interesting for possible subsequent publication. Willfried Spohn seconded this idea, underscoring that it is important to build a common core research program within the committee.

Discussing the activities of RC09, Mustafa Koc, RC09 Executive Board Member suggested that it would be useful to establish a listserv for more immediate communication with members

about various topics of common concern and announcements. Willfried Spohn suggested that we could explicitly ask members what their current research interests are and what they expect of RC09 through such a listserv. Among possible other activities of RC09, it was also proposed that RC09 starts an e-journal. Mustafa Koc reported of an e-journal that RC40 has established, a journal that functions well and that it is also possible to find support from big publishers such as Blackwell or Kluwer for such a project. Other attendees expressed general support for this idea but it was agreed that such a project requires effort and resources and that we should carefully evaluate the possibility. When the list serve is established this can also be discussed, and those who are willing to commit to the project can be identified. It was proposed that the incoming RC09 Board takes on this task.

Another issue discussed was the current fee structure of the committee. Ulrike Schuerkens proposed that we raise the fees in order to have more resources for RC09 activities, noting that the current fees have not been raised for many years and are among the lowest fees compared to other RCs. Mustafa Koc stressed that if the raise is done, we should tie it to some concrete deliverables. An e-journal could be one of them. Peter Chua suggested that perhaps we should keep the fees for category C countries constant and only raise category A and B country fees. It was agreed that this issue will be put for consideration to the general membership via the Newsletter.

The upcoming elections for a new RC09 Board were discussed. Ulrike Schuerkens suggested nominations for positions with descriptions of candidates. Mustafa Koc suggested that we should have a nominations committee to do this task. As the nominations procedure has not been institutionalized in the past, Nina Bandelj, RC09 Secretary, asked if anyone from the members present at the meeting wanted to serve on the nominations committee. Since nobody volunteered, it was agreed that the current RC09 board will serve as a nominating committee for this year but the issue should be revisited in the future.

Among the various issues, Ulrike Schuerkens reported that she is putting together a third edited collection, which will involve contributions from RC09 members, tentatively titled *Transformation of Local Socio-Economic Practices and Globalization*.

We thank everyone who took the time to come to the meeting and hope to have a still larger forum at the next World Congress in 2010.

Minutes were taken by Nina Bandelj, RC09 Secretary.

**Announcement of the start of RC 09 List-Serve,
coordinated by Mustafa Koc, Ryerson University, Canada**

We are very pleased to announce that RC09 is going to have its own listserv to facilitate more effective communication among its members, and a more immediate way to share conference notices, job announcements and other relevant information related to the committee's activities. The site is going to be hosted by Ryerson University in Canada and moderated by Professor Mustafa Koc. You will be receiving notices with more information as soon as the site is operational.

New and Recent Titles

Amineh, Mehdi Parvizi and Henk Houweling 2005. *Central Eurasia in Global Politics. Conflict, Security, and Development*. (2nd ed.) Brill, Leiden.

Appelbaum, Richard P. and William I. Robinson (eds) 2005. *Critical Globalization Studies*. Routledge, New York, London.

Bensa, Alban 2006. *La fin de l'exotisme. Essais d'anthropologie critique*. Anarcharsis, Toulouse.

Chossudovsky, Michel 2003. *Mondialisation de la pauvreté et nouvel ordre mondial*. Écosociété, Montréal.

- Copans, Jean 2006. *Développement mondial et mutations des sociétés contemporaines*. Armand Colin, Paris.
- Eisenstadt, S.N. 2006. *The Great Revolutions and the Civilizations of Modernity*. Brill, Leiden.
- Ester, Peter, Michael Braun, and Peter Mohler (eds) 2005. *Globalization, Value Change and Generations. A Cross-National and Intergenerational Perspective*. Brill, Leiden.
- Evers, Sandra J.T.M., Marja J. Spiereburg and Harry Wels (eds) 2005. *Competing Jurisdictions. Settling Land Claims in Africa*. Brill, Leiden.
- “Globalisation et illicite en Afrique”, *Politique africaine*, 93, mars 2004.
- Jensen, Nathan. 2006. *Nation-States and the Multinational Corporation: A Political Economy of Foreign Direct Investment*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Mbabazi, Pamela and Ian Taylor (eds) 2005. *The Potentiality of ‘Developmental States’ in Africa: Botswana and Uganda Compared*. Codesria, Dakar.
- North, Douglass. 2005. *Understanding the Process of Economic Change*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Perrons, Diane 2004. *Globalization and Social Change*. Routledge, New York, London.
- Podobnik, Bruce and Thomas Reifer (eds) 2005. *Transforming Globalization. Challenges and Opportunities in the Post 9/11 Era*. Brill, Leiden.
- Pronk, Jan P. et al. 2004. *Catalysing Development? A Debate on Aid*. Blackwell, Oxford.
- Therborn, Göran and Habibul Haque Khondker (eds) 2006. *Asia and Europe in Globalization. Continents, Regions and Nations*. Brill, Leiden.
- Tiankui, Jing, Masamichi Sasaki, and Li Peilin (eds) 2006. *Social Change in the Age of Globalization*. Brill, Leiden.
- “Travail et mondialisation: Confrontations Nord / Sud”, *Cahiers du Genre*, Special Issue coordinated by Jules Falquet, Helena Hirata and Bruno Lautier, 40, 2006.
- Tonkiss, Fran. 2006. *Contemporary Economic Sociology: Globalisation, Production, Inequality*. London: Routledge.
- van Binsbergen, Wim and Peter Geschiere (eds) 2005. *Commodification. Things, Agency, and*

Identities (The Social Life of Things Revisited). Lit, Münster.

van Binsbergen, Wim and Rijk van Dijk (eds) 2005. *Situating Globality. African Agency in the Appropriation of Global Culture*. Brill, Leiden.

Yan-jie, Bian, Chan Kwok-bun, and Cheung Tak-sing (eds) 2006. *Social Transformations in Chinese Societies*. The Official Annual of the Hong Kong Sociological Association.

Call for References to be published on RC09 Website

We ask you to suggest interesting books or your own publications to be included in a list of references published on our website. This would provide wide exposure and permit interested scholars to have a quick overview of our research topics. We also expect this list to be a useful reference for teaching and research in the field of Social Transformations and Sociology of Development. Please e-mail your contributions to nbandelj@uci.edu.

RC 09 Board Elections

This year is the RC09 Board Election year. Very soon you will receive the election ballot via e-mail but will be asked to send it back via postal letter or fax to the ISA Secretariat, where the votes will be counted. The address to mail or fax the ballot is:

Ms. Izabela Barlinska
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Faculty of Political Sciences and Sociology
University Complutense
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Spain
Fax: +34-91 352 4945

News from our Members

Send us your news! We would be delighted to receive more information on your current research projects, recent publications and teaching experiences in order to inform other members of RC09 and to encourage collaborations among our members.

Book Reviews

Altermondialisation, économie et coopération internationale, by Louis Favreau, Gérald Larose and Abdou Salam Fall (eds), Presses de l'Université du Québec and Karthala : Sainte-Foy and Paris, 2004.

Reviewed by Flaviene Lanna

This volume is a collection of more than thirty articles that treat the possibility of another kind of globalization as the free market economy. The origin of the book was an International Meeting at Gatineau (Québec, Canada) in September 2003: “*Le Sud... et le Nord dans la mondialisation, quelles alternatives?*”¹ The book reviewed here is the first one of three books: the second one is about globalization and civil society, states, democracy and development; the last one is about popular economic initiatives and local development in Africa.

The editors of the three books underline that different networks are built worldwide, that are supported by local initiatives, such as those reunited in the World Social Forum. These movements are based on civil society and they try to create a mobilization in the international

¹“South and North in the globalization, which alternatives?”

arena. According to the authors, societies and states look nowadays for another development and a plural economy characterized by new forms of political democracy. The authors ask the questions if there is an international citizen movement that creates alternatives to the free market economy and what about the strength of these alternatives regarding the current trends.

In the 1990, after the end of the Cold War, many changes were realized. There were some threats but also some new opportunities. The book tries to show the main directions of these new initiatives originating in international solidarity. Local networks of social economy and their international relays, such as values of justice, democracy and development, could be spread over the whole world. According to the editors, a fair globalization depends on the dynamics of civil society.

A social economy is for them international solidarity (not just humanitarian assistance or technical cooperation) where NGOs from the North are associated to projects in the South that are based on local communities. The NGODs (Non-governmental organizations of development) displayed in this volume mainly tackle three topics: a) the support of micro-projects destined to employment, health, housing, and education; b) the defense of social rights; and c) the self-organization of local communities.

According to the editors, there are different types of intervention: international assistance (humanitarian assistance or emergency assistance); financial, technical, and professional support; and projects linking the North and the South, the South and the South, and the South and the North (an example for the last one is the fair trade movement). According to the authors, cooperation between the North and the South has changed over time. From 1950 until 1970, it was linked to religious groups and interventions were considered as a “civilizing” mission. From 1970 until 1990, there was a process of secularization inside the NGOs that empowered them due to the development of their own services. From 1990 until 2000, cooperation in some small local projects turned to longer partnerships. During the last ten years, cooperation has focused on the economy, with some preferences for education and communitarian organizations.

Some movements, such as RIPESS (Réseau intercontinental de promotion de l'économie

sociale et solidaire²) and GESQ (Groupe d'économie solidaire du Québec³) have played a major role in the promotion of an international cooperation, and have turned to the development of an economy that focuses on the social sphere and on the protection of the environment. To conclude, the editors believe that democracy and development, social movements and alter-globalization are keywords in order to change society in the right direction.

The book is divided in four parts. The first one shows the innovations of international cooperation, namely a sustainable development in the sphere of environment, economy, and society. The second one treats the importance of social movements and civil society for an economic development. The third one displays some experiences of the creation of international networks in a framework of international solidarity. The last one discusses alter-globalization from four different standpoints: the World Social Forum, the social economy and natural resources in India, relationships between NGOs from the North that operate in the South, and, finally, the new paradigms of development.

The interest of this book is based on the possibility to compare different opinions on alternatives to globalization, exposed by authors belonging to various disciplines. Unfortunately, the fact of having chosen a 'description' instead of a 'discussion' limits the value of the book. Yet the book seems to tackle promising transformation processes.

La mondialisation vue d'ailleurs. L'Inde désorientée, by Jackie ASSAYAG. Editions du Seuil, Paris, 2005.

Reviewed by Marina Forzani

This essay is the result of an international research project that followed on the book *L'Inde. Désir de nation* published in 2001, which focused on nationalism and Nation-State building in South Asia. Jackie Assayag suggests in this book a critical and epistemological reflection on the notion of globalization without focusing on the European or western world.

² Intercontinental Network for the Promotion of the Social Economy characterized by Solidarity. .

³ Québec's Group of Economy characterized by Solidarity.

As globalization is exposed to various dynamics, it is possible to suggest the existence of several globalizations related to each continent. The choice of India gives Assayag the opportunity to avoid a western-centered approach of globalization and to consider its different meanings.

The main argument of the book is that modernity and globalization are not only the products of the West, but that they are also the results of complex and longstanding interactions with other cultural and social worlds. This is why he tries to restore the idea of geography of modernity, but to avoid its cliché, calling for a broader and finely shaded approach of the notion.

His intention is to study and question the social, cultural, economic, and political transformations going on in India, and to observe the relations between global and local that allows him to highlight the imaginary and symbolic dimensions of this “great transformation”.

He suggests analyzing these transformations by tackling four phenomena. The first one is the industrial beauty market that he evokes with the discussion of the controversial organization of the election of Miss World in Bangalore in 1996. According to the author, this event permits to observe the “glocalization” process defined as the link between local representations and trans-national cosmopolitanism. He shows that *“the industrial market of beauty is organized around the female body and by the relationship between man and woman as well as by national and sexual matters in a resolutely patriarchal society”* (Translation MF).

The second phenomenon he tackles is the expansion and reconstruction of the middle class in a society that is strongly stratified by the caste system. He provides a genesis of this middle class and defines it according to its type of consumption and not according to the manner this class is included in the production process. Assayag asserts this class’ important contribution to the social, cultural, and political construction of modern India, and he analyzes its members’ confrontation to production and consumption changes, life styles, and the representations linked to the region, the nation, and international and trans-national exchanges.

A third case study is dedicated to social representations of biotechnologies and their influence on the agricultural sector. The author emphasizes how social actors perceive the globalization of agro-chemistry, how they consume, how they discuss globalization and how they fight against it. He also insists on its cultural, social, political, economical, and “socio-dramatic” dimensions in order to underline its different meanings.

By tackling topics such as poverty and peasantry debts, the mobilization of anti-globalization farmer leaders and unions (in particular their fight against the WTO politics or the GMOs), he highlights a change of context and scale with “*a change from a culture of ecological proximity to a broader technological and commercial framework open to the region or the nation as well as to other countries.*”(Translation MF) He underlines thus the need to take into account the complex intertwining of local factors and the specific reception of these “global” phenomena.

The last chapter entitled “Consumption, national-Hinduism and media” deals with mass consumption and the transformation of the visual, advertising, and ideological landscape that operates since the 1980s in a double dynamic: a quest for modernity and a return to tradition. These phenomena are at the origin of new patterns of relationships between individuals and communities, religion and society, community and political parties, civil society and the state. Assayag emphasizes the mechanisms of appropriation and particularizing of national and foreign products, as well as the behaviors and mythologies they create and that go hand in hand with the exchanges and circulations of individuals, and the links between cultures and populations.

The process that consists in looking into regional diversity allows avoiding a perspective, which usually means the existence of a core world, represented by Europe and the United States beside local phenomena. Globalization could be actually defined as a complex set of conflicting processes that develop in various ways and orientations. In adopting such an off-centre approach, the author highlights a non-linear process and underlines dynamics of local and non-western globalizations. He describes them as “*a universalism that reinvents the difference*” (Translation MF) and as an element of power and accumulation, and therefore as a source of inequality and violence. To conclude, this book gives an idea of the links of the sub-continent to other regions and to globalization.

***Démocratie et gouvernance mondiale. Quelles regulations pour le XXIe siècle?* By Carlos Milani, Carlos Arturi and Germán Solinís (eds). UNESCO – Karthala, Paris, 2003.**

Reviewed by Perrine Poupine

The book reunites articles on discussions held during the first worldwide Social Forum, which was held in Porto Alegre in January 2001. As part of this event, a meeting, called

«Democracy and worldwide governance: challenges for the 21st century», was organized by UNESCO with the collaboration of the Latin-American Institute of Advanced Studies of the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil. Regrouping a dozen researchers and specialists of different countries, the book aims at tackling international regulation authorities and the conditions necessary to institute a « worldwide governance » founded on democratic principles. The challenge is to define the roles given to the United Nations, states and NGOs. The debates invite us to think on the notion of governance.

I present here two contributions of the book that tackle the notion of governance, a notion that was imported from management studies at the end of the 1980s into international institutions, such as the World Bank in order to characterize the process by which actors of different levels (multilateral, regional, national, local, or governmental) define aims and policies, and share responsibilities, or in other words find a consensual mode of regulation that partly disengage states.

Guillermo Aureano, a political scientist at the University of Quebec, by analyzing international politics on the worldwide problem of the traffic of narcotics, mentions two moments, respectively 1998 and 1999, when a dialogue had been created between governments, intergovernmental institutions and NGOs. We should know that the international regime of control of drugs is very influenced by the prohibitionist policy of the United States. The question of the technical effectiveness of resolutions was put aside up to now such as « a so-called determination to create structures of negotiation in order to define goals and joint action plans ... between the different actors. They have [never] defined multi-structural dimensions of control, while transparency, responsibility and participation of the "civil society" are the three axes on which lean the supporters of governance » (Translation PP).

Annik Osmont considers urban governance, and the policies of foreign assistance set up by the World Bank. Urban development is today conceived, according to the productive logic of foreign assistance, as an aspect of economic development and assistance, which interests the World Bank that has progressively emphasized new modes of interventions in the urban area, in a search for maximum efficiency.

A transversal question of this book is the notion of governance. Popularized by international institutions during the last decade, governance characterizes a policy process that implies the

state as well as local authorities (labor unions, business, societal actors, such as NGOs and citizens' movements). It is conceived as an ideal teamwork without political conflicts and conflicting power relations. This "pacified" vision hides an important strategic risk pointed out by Carlos Milani and German Solinis. The introduction of the term of "governance" at the end of the 1980s in the World Bank vocabulary corresponded to the experts' determination to ask states to implement plans of macroeconomic and structural reforms. Since then, the World Bank has set up modern administrative instruments that deny power to local positions.

This book deals with the participation of "civil society" in the regulation of worldwide governance that prefers democratic practices. We can regret the lack of critical distance to this notion in the book and that there is no real historical appraisal of the concept even if the various contributions are very heterogeneous. If governance belongs to the vocabulary of decision-makers, actors of development processes unfortunately often use the notion without a critical understanding. To conclude, the book appears as a discourse on representative democracy and participative democracy to the advantage of technocratic and hegemonic governance.

Membership

We are happy to report that RC09 membership is growing steadily. Please encourage your colleagues and friends to join as well! Members receive RC09 Newsletter and can participate in the committee's conferences and other activities organized by the RC. Furthermore, RC09 members benefit from the network on scholars interested in the topic of *Social Transformations and Sociology of Development*.

The application form can be found on the International Sociological Association website: http://www.ucm.es/info/isa/memb_i/index.htm

Proposal for the Change of the Current Fee Structure

During our Business meeting in Durban, the board discussed with the members participating in the meeting the possibility to raise the RC09 fees. We have decided to ask our members what they think on this possibility before we will take a final decision. We suggest the following **new fee structure**:

Discount fees for students and C countries: 15 US \$ for a period of 4 years;

Fees for A and B countries: 30 US \$ for a period of 4 years.

As some of you may remember, RC 09 fees have been the same for more than 10 years. The current amounts of 10 and 20 US \$ correspond to the lowest possible ISA RC fees. We have now 105 members (while in 2002 this number was only 25), which means a rather important task of coordination for the board members. Moreover, we publish regularly the RC09 Newsletter with Book reviews, a report on recent and coming RC activities and a section on New Publications. This will soon be augmented by a listserv, which will permit us to contact each other on a more regular basis and to exchange information on new publications, Call for papers, research projects and further information or discuss topics related to *Social Transformations and Sociology of Development*. Moreover, we would like to prepare more RC09 publications, and we are currently discussing the possibility of a RC09 e-journal, all of which would require additional funds.

We suggest that you send to the RC09 Secretary (nbandelj@uci.edu) a short response on whether you agree with this small raise of the fees or whether you have any objections. We know that probably nobody likes to pay more than necessary, but we think that the proposed changes of the fee structure are justified.

If this Newsletter was of interest to you and if you wish to contribute to our activities, please send us some information about yourself, such as your scholarly interests, your university affiliation and titles of recent publications. E-mail to nbandelj@uci.edu.

We look forward to reading you and wish you a successful start of the new academic year!

This Newsletter was prepared by Ulrike Schuerkens and Nina Bandelj.