



Social Transformations and  
Sociology of Development

## RC09 Sessions at the IV ISA Forum of Sociology Porto Alegre, Brazil, 14–18 July 2020

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### Program Coordinators

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### Sessions

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Migration Tendencies in the Global Era

Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience Planning in Coastal Megacities

Corruption in Education and Health Sectors across the Globe

Eco-Villages As Alternative Models for Sustainable Development?

Global Management Practices in Emergent Economies

History and Sociology Meet Development and Democracy

Innovative Research in the Sociology of Development

Redistributive Policies That Target Poverty and Inequalities: Exploration of Socially Inclusive Vs. Socially Corrosive Transformations

Research Frontiers on Gender and Development: Exploring Development, Work and Inequality from an Intersectionality Perspective

Social Media and Political Mobilisation: Findings and Methodological Challenges

The Informal Sector: Interrogating Persistence, Impediments, and Policies

The Infrastructure of Development? Chinas Belt and Road Initiative in the Global South

Understanding Development: Perspectives from the Global South

University Training in Social Transformations and Sociology of Development

Whose Voice? How Loud? Who Listens? Political Voice during Social Transformations

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## Sessions

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### **Migration Tendencies in the Global Era**

Language: English, French and Spanish

Session Type: Oral

Universal history has been marked by migratory circuits, determining the world's demography as well as the social history of populations by cultural and technological loans. Migrants are influential agents of socio-cultural and political change both in their society of origin and that of destination. In the current global era, democracies appear to be leading away from universal rights—the progressive political overrepresentation of parties from the “right” political sphere in Europe and America accentuates a whole series of legal measures against international immigration. In this session, we invite researchers to participate with presentations that strive to spark new dialogues and to analyse current and new contemporary migratory tendencies, including but not limited to recent themes of transnational migrations such as social rights, feminine migration, political-environmental migration, technological migration and so forth.

#### **Session Organizers**

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### **Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience Planning in Coastal Megacities**

Language: English

Session Type: Oral

Coastal megacities pose several challenges for climate change adaptation and resilience planning. High densification of population, rapid expansion of the economy, consumption driven lifestyles make coastal megacities, especially those in the Global South which are highly vulnerable to climate change impacts such as sea level rise, heat stress, floods, and extreme weather events. In particular, these climate change-related hazards affect the most vulnerable groups—urban poor, women, the young and elderly and PWDs—in rapidly urbanizing cities with weak infrastructural and economic bases. Meanwhile, coastal megacities like Metro Manila and Mumbai in Asia or Rio de Janeiro in Latin America and their governments have constructed climate adaptation and mitigation policies to reduce the exposure and vulnerability of vulnerable groups/communities to climate risks. But the governments' twin goals of climate risk reduction for the poor/vulnerable groups and continued capitalist development or business continuity of the private sector through resilience planning, highlight the resulting contradictions of these urban policies. Decentralized and privatized urban governance regimes seem to perpetuate social fragmentation, exclusion and inequality in these megacities. Through case studies and/or illustrative examples of these contradictory processes, this session hopes to unpack the complexities of this “double exposure” to climate change impacts and economic globalization of coastal megacities in the Global South. This session invite abstracts that highlight the contradictions resulting from climate change adaptation initiatives for and by vulnerable groups alongside their governments (local-national) drive for climate risk reduction and continued trajectories of economic development and expansion.

#### **Session Organizer**

Emma PORIO, Ateneo de Manila University, Philippines, eporio@ateneo.edu

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## **Corruption in Education and Health Sectors across the Globe**

Language: English

Session Type: Oral

Corruption in education and health sectors remarkably vary between and within countries across the globe. Defined broadly as misuse of entrusted power for private gains, corruption in public sector can take different forms, from bribery, informal payments and embezzlement in economic transactions to favoritism, cronyism, and nepotism in professional relations. In its old, new and emerging forms, corruption has harmful effects on development, effectiveness and efficiency of public services. Research shows that compared to other institutions, corruption in education and health sectors has a more direct influence on a general well-being and overall trust levels of citizens. Malfunctioning education systems contribute to the reproduction of social inequalities in a society and corrupt healthcare deepens the unequal chances for long and healthy lives. This session welcomes papers that offer the new theory developments on studying public sector corruption, ideas of how to measure corruption, as well as empirical tests of causes and consequences of corruption in education and health sectors. This session seeks for country case studies from both developed and developing countries, as well as cross-national analysis of this persistent puzzle of corruption differences.

### **Session Organizer**

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## **Eco-Villages As Alternative Models for Sustainable Development?**

Language: English

Session Type: Oral

While Western-style development has been criticized for their hegemonic character, international and national development actors have continued to promote a "neoliberal" development paradigm. Amidst this tension, resistance against conventional development has gained prominence. Activists are not just offering alternative models but explore new ways to pursue sustainable forms of living and modes of production in a prefigurative manner. Thus we are witnessing an increasing number of initiatives creating eco-villages as alternative spaces of development to establish new values, norms, forms of sustainable and social and economic solidarity. While some eco-villages explicitly position themselves against neoliberal development, others adopt common spiritual or religious ideas based on alternative concepts of nature. This is not a local phenomenon. Rather, we observe that eco-villages use transnational networks and spaces for thinking about their visions of a sustainable future on a global scale.

We seek contributions which investigate the prefigurative politics inclined in the projects and relating it to new and alternative ideas of how democratic procedures can ensure alternative ways of sociality. We are further interested in how the very idea of development is negotiated between the involved actors, e.g. the people living and running the village, local politicians and administrators, the state, business partners. We also seek contributions displaying innovative empirical perspectives on eco-villages, probing new methodological approaches. Therefore, we are calling for both conceptual as well as empirical contributions that shed light on the relationship between "new" and "old" development ideas from a structural and from an actor-centered perspective.

### **Session Organizers**

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## **Global Management Practices in Emergent Economies**

Language: English

Session Type: Oral

In this session, we want to explore the type of management approaches that are practiced in selected emerging countries. Papers presented in this session will explore how companies, subsidiaries, and enterprises become profitable and grow in emerging countries by incorporating globalized norms and standards of management with the local ways of doing business. These processes of adaptation are considered as glocalization or hybridization.

We want to demonstrate how hybrid and innovative forms of private companies' management can be shaped by the mobility of people, capital, goods and knowledge. We also want to demonstrate that local business practices (traditions, social networks, so called "poor" governance, and "insufficient" managerial skills) are not obstacles to development but may create economic opportunities.

Understanding of this new approach to management can be achieved through the following strategies:

- Collaborative empirical research across cultures by applying similar research approaches;
- By examining the background, the education and the career of business leaders and managers of industrial and commercial enterprises of selected countries;
- By collecting ethnographic data and producing business related and organization-based case studies from which it will be possible to develop a theoretical framework on how business is conducted, and organizations are managed in emergent economies.

This will allow advancing a cutting-edge, empirically grounded theoretical framework on business and management practices in emergent countries. We will accept papers that present research on the above described topics.

### **Session Organizers**

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## **History and Sociology Meet Development and Democracy**

Language: English

Session Type: Oral

This session will explore the relationship between knowledge and social processes in the context of debates on development and democracy in Asia and Latin America. The session welcomes papers that aim to examine the globalization of disciplinary knowledge production from the perspective of history and sociology. Of particular interest are comparative papers analyzing the impact of transnational academic networks, discourses and practices on shifting notions of democracy and development in these two regions.

### **Session Organizers:**

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Veronica MONTECINOS, Pennsylvania State University, USA, vxm11@psu.edu

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## **Innovative Research in the Sociology of Development**

Language: English

Session Type: Oral

This is an open topic panel in the Sociology of Development. It is open to any new research finding in any sub-area of the discipline. These would include the theory of development, gender and development, globalization and development, population and development, the state and development, the political economy of development, race and ethnicity and development, environment and development criminology and development, conflict and development or any other reasonable sub-area not mentioned here. It is open to all sociological methodologies, qualitative or quantitative, micro or macro. It is open to all theoretical perspectives. It can involve the Global South or the Global North and any region or country within those. It can involve any historical period, including the present day. If you have good work you want to present at Porto Alegre, and the other panels just don't fit, feel free to submit your work to this session. We are looking for the most exciting and newest advances in the Sociology of Development. If your material is original and important, we want to see it.

### **Session Organizer:**

Samuel COHN, Texas A and M University, USA, s-cohn@tamu.edu

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## **Redistributive Policies That Target Poverty and Inequalities: Exploration of Socially Inclusive Vs. Socially Corrosive Transformations**

Language: English

Session Type: Oral

This session explores social policies that target poverty and inequalities within development transformations and trajectories that occur during our current era of authoritarian, anti-redistributionist, classist, racist, and misogynist political irruptions and interruptions.

We complement the work being done by RC09 scholars on the problem of political voice, inequality, development, and social transformations with qualitative and critical analysis of redistributive policies and categorization processes. These policies and processes include, among others, consequential and relational effects of conditional cash transfers (CCTs), categorical equalisation and categorical differentiation or cleavage. We interrogate their proposed role as compensatory and palliative income redistributive measures, and as socio-economic redistributive measures with potentially socially transformative effects.

Redistributive programmes rose to prominence in the 1990s and 2000s, but since the 2010s they have experienced reversals and unanticipated dynamic transformations towards anti-inclusionary and reactionary trajectories. Whereas some redistributive policies are publicized as inclusive, they tend to ignore intersectionality and other inherent social realities (such as sexism and racism), and through means intended and unintended, these policies can become socially corrosive. This session aims to uncover and explain how policies and process dynamics create political path-dependencies.

### **Session Organizer**

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## **Research Frontiers on Gender and Development: Exploring Development, Work and Inequality from an Intersectionality Perspective**

Language: English and Spanish

Session Type: Oral

The relationships among economic growth, gender, development, work and equality/inequality are crucial in gender and development research. It is important, however, to approach these issues with intersectionality in mind: Social class, race-ethnicity, disability, family structure and geographically linked traditional constraints vs. opportunities affect female vs. male life outcomes. Specifically, productive and reproductive labor and intersectional characteristics remain critical for understanding how and why gendered well-being and societal position change over time. Some scholars view work as a path to independence and recognition that can elevate women's status vis-à-vis men. Others emphasize that the kind of work women do, under what conditions, and the rewards this labor secures are highly variable, reflecting intersectional inequalities. Another crucial factor is whether the work generates income under the woman's control. If affirmative, she has greater equality; if not, she may be appreciated but not more equal. We invite contributions from scholars studying intersectionality, women's work, gendered labor and equality, very broadly conceived. We welcome papers addressing questions, such as: How is women's work, and its relationship to development, changing? To what extent do work, employment and income mitigate or exacerbate gender equality/inequality for different intersectional subgroups? Do these patterns vary within the Global South and/or across the North-South divide? How do institutions, e.g., the state and the labor market, plus regional factors shape the relationships among gender, work, inequality and development? How—and where—does women's work and economic empowerment vs. disempowerment promote—or harm—development? Papers welcome in English or Spanish.

### **Session Organizers:**

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## **Social Media and Political Mobilisation: Findings and Methodological Challenges**

Language: English

Session Type: Oral

Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, blogs etc. are now an important part of political mobilisation, means of protest and may be decisive factor in elections. What produces the specific power of social media campaigns? How do we deal with the fact that social media offers the possibility of fictional characters and/or radicalised political positions enunciated? How to research social media with new ethical challenges? Do we need a new set of mixed methods? Especially contributions that combine findings and the critical discussion of methods applied are welcome.

### **Session Organizer**

Dieter NEUBERT, University of Bayreuth, Germany, [dieter.neubert@uni-bayreuth.de](mailto:dieter.neubert@uni-bayreuth.de)

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## **The Informal Sector: Interrogating Persistence, Impediments, and Policies**

Language: English

Session Type: Oral

The informal sector has long been viewed by development actors as something that would disappear once low-income countries achieved sufficient levels of economic growth or modern industrial development. Clearly this is not happening. Persistent mass unemployment in diverse countries with sustained, positive growth rates suggests that the informal sector is both here to stay and likely to get larger. In a context of scarce and diminishing formal employment opportunities, informal sector employment is the primary way that an increasing majority obtain their livelihoods across the global South.

The purpose of this panel is to interrogate the persistence of the informal sector, the potential impediments to entering and moving within it, and the policies that endeavor to shape it. Contributions that offer empirically-grounded, both quantitative and qualitative, perspectives on the informal sector, its relations, and its prospects are encouraged.

### **Session Organizer**

Brian DILL, University of Illinois, USA, [dill@illinois.edu](mailto:dill@illinois.edu)

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## **The Infrastructure of Development? Chinas Belt and Road Initiative in the Global South**

Language: English

Session Type: Oral

Chinas One Belt, One Road strategy entails an ambitious program of international infrastructure investments which aim to develop Chinas western provinces while expanding Chinese trade and influence across Europe, Asia, and Africa. The infrastructure projects serve as large injections of capital which reshape existing fields of contestation towards an external engagement. Which local and regional actors can secure an advantage? Will the already marginalized be further excluded? These questions will play out differently in different regions and political contexts.

Can states of the Global South, with their often limited organizational capacity, channel these large scale infrastructure projects into delivering inclusive prosperity under a legitimate political order? In Pakistan, Baloch insurgents claim that Gwadar port will further reinforce Punjabi dominance, while the Orange line metro in Lahore has encountered opposition from civic groups highlighting the risks to a UNESCO world heritage site. In Kashgar, state directed projects have attracted Han migrants to a region largely populated by the Uighur Muslim minority group. In Sri Lanka, the 99 year lease of the Hambantota port to China as part of a debt-equity swap represents a cautionary tale for other countries tempted to accept Chinese debt financing for expensive infrastructure projects.

How will this wave of infrastructure projects serve to achieve goals of state transformation and human development? We encourage the submission of empirically grounded studies of the development impact of infrastructure projects under the BRI.

### **Session Organizer**

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## **Understanding Development: Perspectives from the Global South**

Language: English

Session Type: Oral

This open session seeks to contribute to understanding development broadly defined. This will include all possible ways of exploring the meaning of development as experienced in the developing countries through grassroots initiatives by local actors and conceptual/discursive formulations emanating from regional/local sources of scholarly entities including universities, research organizations, NGOs, etc. Papers focusing on how these understandings are shaped by the local-global interactions of structures and processes will be particularly welcome. Papers may be conceptual, empirical, or both offering critical assessment of conventional knowledge about development and new conceptualization.

### **Session Organizer**

Hasan MAHMUD, Northwestern University in Qatar, Qatar, hasan.mahmud@northwestern.edu

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## **University Training in Social Transformations and Sociology of Development**

Language: French and English

Session Type: Oral

This session intends to discuss recent training of the next generation of sociologists in social transformations and sociology of development at universities worldwide.

Some of the possible themes:

What are the topics that should be included to educate the next generation of sociologists? What are possible PhD subjects in these troubled times? What is particular for your geographic region? How can we precise the changes over the last decades in this field? What are the main authors to be discussed? What are the professional challenges in this field? How do globalization, global financial flows, mass movements, and popular political parties influence social transformations? What are the differences and similarities of social transformations and Sociology of development in the Souths and the Norths? Papers should be based on recent or planned university training on social transformations and sociology of development. Presentations from experienced and young scholars are looked for. The intention is to clarify this field of research and the necessary and possible educational outcomes for universities worldwide.

### **Session Organizers**

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## **Whose Voice? How Loud? Who Listens? Political Voice during Social Transformations**

Language: English

Session Type: Oral

Today political expression is plentiful, electronic, and varied, yet around the world, democracys stakeholders are concerned about a decline in democracys well-being, the precariousness of the world economy, and the stubborn persistence of inequalities. Political voice can be defined as the expression of needs and interests within the political system. Expression varies in form and magnitude, depending on position in the political power structure (e.g. everyday citizen, elite, NGOs, lobbying group), demographics and identity (urban/rural, intersections of gender, race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, and class, among others), and country and time. Voices desired audiences are the decision-makers who wield power at particular stations within the regime and everyday citizens who are swayed by political voice.

Social transformations impact the expression of voice; some groups voices are silenced during crises, and some previously marginalized groups suddenly emerge as vocal leaders. During change, conventional channels of voicing ones interests might be ineffective, necessitating new and (re)invented means. Transformations offer new avenues for proximity: the protest outside a decision-maker's window is loud but distant, whereas the voice of the lobbyist who whispers in the ears of decision-makers is publicly quiet but closer to the decision.

We ask social scientists to assess critical questions in political voice today: *Whose voice? How loud is that voice? Who is listening?* We seek papers bolstered by empirical analysis that address these questions. They can be quantitative or qualitative, comparative or case studies, and about any place in the world. We seek novel approaches and new insights.

### **Session Organizers**

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