In this issue...

- Remarks from RC09 Co-Chairs, p. 2
- RC09 Pandemic Interviews, p. 3
- Sociology and Covid 19, p. 9
- Book Review, p. 10
- Member News and Publications, p. 12
- Announcements, p. 19
Remarks from the RC09 Co-Chairs
Ulrike Schuerkens and Habibul Khondker

Dear colleagues,

What a year, 2020, we are bidding goodbye! Numerous lives lost, (1.5 million and counting) livelihoods in peril, poverty and starvation making a comeback, despair and gloom dominating public discourse. Yet, as vaccines are appearing, there is light at the end of the proverbial tunnel. Though doubts linger about the distribution of the vaccine, especially in the developing world, it is also a time for optimism. It is time for a reset.

What is the post-pandemic world going to look like? Business as usual? As we scan the news media, nothing seems to have changed. Wars continue, as does selfish politics, racism rages on, assault on global cooperation, missing out on the big picture, failure to learn the lessons that the pandemic offered, albeit inadvertently.

The important lessons to derive from the COVID-19 pandemic is that there is no substitute for global cooperation and global solidarity in handling catastrophes like a pandemic. There is an urgent need to focus on the ecological balance and sustainability at the global scale. And, of course, addressing the problem of inequality worldwide, in every country and region of the world. It is also a time for renewing a call for global justice.

If the COVID-19 pandemic can be addressed by global cooperation, from sharing the DNA sequencing to protocols of treatment and sharing of vaccines, then the world can cooperate on other pressing global issues as well: most importantly, the global warming and the growing social inequality.

Social sciences, especially, sociology needs to be more vocal and public-spirited to renew the call for global solidarity and public education urging people to think broadly overcoming structural racism, demanding equal rights and justice. In an interconnected world, a problem anywhere is a problem everywhere. In similar vein, a solution everywhere should be the priority for solution anywhere.

This interesting Newsletter has been prepared by Joshua Dubrow, Brian Dill, and Almendra Orbegoso as Guest Editors. We thank the three colleagues for this Newsletter on social development and social transformations with impressions on the current situation from several world regions, a book review, and news from colleagues on publications, grant programs, and conferences.

Let us wish you a peaceful end of the year period with season’s greetings for 2021. Hopefully, this New Year will improve the hard-hit socio-economic conditions in the world that have severely been affected in 2020 by the pandemic and its consequences.

Best regards,
Habibul Khondker & Ulrike Schuerkens
RC 09 Co-chairs
In this pandemic email interview, we asked Dr. Noy about how her teaching and research has changed. This is Dr. Noy’s response. — eds

This pandemic has been trying for all of us. I don’t remember where I first read that we’re all in the same storm, but we’re not in the same boat, which rings true for COVID19. This is something that development sociologists have long been arguing, and painfully aware of. The same events or processes, like pandemics, build on existing systems, institutions, and inequalities—globally, nationally, locally—and therefore have differential effects. Our social and professional lives have been reshaped in so many ways. I transitioned to teaching remotely, which posed particular challenges but also provided opportunities for engagement in different ways: breakout rooms with notes taken allowed me to carefully review what students wrote and discussed after class in ways that in-class discussion sometimes obscures. In terms of research and other professional opportunities, many conferences have transitioned online, which again, creates some opportunities for participation that may have otherwise required too much travel, or been too expensive, but the online format can also obstruct the personal connections and relationships built in the in between moments before and after sessions, as well as of course within them.

In terms of my research, my work as a development sociologist is centered on questions of power and in particular, the relationship between national governments and international institutions—focused on the World Bank—and the implications for national policies and outcomes. The crises facing us globally, whose ill-effects and costs are distributed unevenly and often most keenly felt by the global South, require rigorous methodological and conceptual attention. In my work, I focus on the barriers and opportunities for promoting equity and investing in comprehensive health and social policies. Like many of us development sociologists, I’m fundamentally interested in figuring out who decides what development means and what it should look like, the debates and stakes for how development should be pursued and promoted at the global, national, and local levels, and the consequences of these decisions for equity, and people’s well-being and rights. So far, I am continuing to work with secondary and already collected original data on my development sociology research, but the pandemic poses unique challenges for fieldwork, and everything remains delayed and uncertain. My focus is on remaining healthy and safe, and keeping my communities the same: family, students, colleagues, neighbors, and beyond.

Shiri Noy is an Assistant Professor of Sociology at Denison University. Contact: shirinoy.com, snoy@denison.edu. Some of Dr. Noy’s recent publications are:


Mikołaj Pawlak, University of Warsaw, Poland

1. The Covid 19 pandemic has continued since March 2020. What are your reflections on the functioning of Polish society and its institutions during the pandemic?

The pandemic is a very interesting period for social research because it is possible to notice the extreme form of social processes which are always there but they are taken-for-granted and by so not easily noticeable during the “normal” times. The most striking for me is the obsession with being agentic. Most of the formal institutions during the pandemic are in a desperate need to signal that they are doing something concerning the Covid-19, regardless it makes sense or not. Being agentic, signaling that you are the actor, you are capable of changing something in the world is the condition and expectation of modernity. Yet, the pandemic revealed it to the bright light: state and local agencies, private companies and non-governmental organizations have been occupied with doing something about the pandemic. Non-action is not an option for anyone.

On the level of politics, I find pandemics as a sobering reality check. Polish governmental management of the pandemic situation is a failure. Polish healthcare system which was in very bad condition for the last years is collapsing. This is tragic but I always see the glass half full: the pandemic is a period when post-politics is suspended. Decision-makers who were so far successful at creating public images, amplifying social attitudes, and sometimes fear-mongering currently have to start solving problems of life and death. Polish populist government which was successful in various forms of propaganda is compromised by its inability to respond to the crisis in a coherent manner.

2. What do you think will be three of the most transformative long-term consequences of the Covid 19 pandemic for Poland?

I do not think that the Covid 19 pandemic will have larger transformative consequences for Poland. Writing our recent book on the 2015 refugee crisis with my colleagues we learned from the literature on crises that they are sites of hyper-projectivity: intensive preoccupation with imagining how the future will look like and how the crisis will change the world. Actually, often these hopes and fears are not becoming real and crises only rarely have transformative consequences.

I expect that the familiarity with online communication and less paper-work, not meaning less bureaucracy, will remain with us after the pandemic. The bureaucracy will be still with us but in an electronic form.

In connection with the question of how society is functioning during the pandemic, I hope that the change brought by the current crisis will be the decrease of support for the current populist government. I do not believe that we are going to be liberated from the dangers of populism for a long time but at least the current regress of Polish democracy will be hopefully stopped.

3. How has your teaching and research changed?

My teaching has changed profoundly as my university is doing all the teaching on-line. I lack direct contact with students and especially the
Mikołaj Pawlak, continued...

possibility to read their non-verbal reactions during classes. Teaching is much harder when you do not see if students are interested or bored, resonating with your illustrations, or even more confused by them.

My research is not very much affected by the pandemic. I mostly conduct desk research, so the analysis of the policy documents or statistics produced by various institutions is the same now as before. Another technique I often use is an individual in-depth interview with informants holding positions in organizations – for them being interviewed by Zoom or similar application is currently natural, this is where most of their interactions occur presently.

Dr. hab. Mikołaj Pawlak is an assistant professor of sociology at the University of Warsaw, where he serves as head of Chair of Sociology of Norms, Deviance and Social Control. He is also Vice-President of the Polish Sociological Association. He recently co-authored a book published by Routledge “Ignorance and Change: Anticipatory Knowledge and the European Refugee Crisis” and authored a book “Tying Micro and Macro: What Fills up the Sociological Vacuum?”. 

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1. The Covid 19 pandemic has continued since March 2020. What are your reflections on the functioning of European societies and its institutions during the pandemic?

I am disappointed with some segments of European societies, and US society for that matter. There are different people in every society. There is no such thing as a homogeneous nation. But the percentages of Europeans and Americans who are not cooperating, for all kinds of reasons, and are thus contributing to the spreading of the virus, are shocking. While the active protestors are relatively few, those who sabotage the efforts of the healthcare system are many. According to an interview on Spanish TV in the summer, only 40 percent of those who must report for a PCR test after having been in contact with a sick person do indeed show up. I know quite a lot of people in Bulgaria who have tested positive but continue to go out shopping. Some even schedule appointments with their hairdresser. European and American cultures do not focus much on self-discipline and self-sacrifice. They teach self-indulgence and hedonism and for now it seems that nothing can change that focus.

This is just one thing. I was equally amazed to learn the results of surveys of Europeans from different countries, and Americans, sharing their views of the epidemic. Large percentages believe that there is no virus, that there is a virus fabricated by Bill Gates and the CIA to reduce the world’s population, or to enrich the pharmaceuticals, that the virus was launched by the US Democrats to stop Trump from getting reelected, etc. This is an indication not only of distrust in the institutions but also of inability to think logically and rationally.

For now at least, East Asia seems to be doing much better than Europe and the US. The East Asian countries have a very different culture, focusing on self-control. That seems to give them an advantage in dealing with the pandemic.

2. What do you think will be three of the most transformative long-term consequences of the Covid 19 pandemic for Europe?

For now, it appears that working out of home is here to stay, whenever it is possible. According to some analyses, office workers are not less productive when they work out of home and employers are happy with that arrangement. Other than that, there is no clear indication for now that we are going to see major social transformations. We are unlikely to learn anything from our bad behavior. If we were capable of learning, we would start preparing for future pandemics. They are certain to strike sooner or later since the world’s population is increasing, international travel is expanding, and we are putting increasing pressure on nature. Some future epidemics will be much more devastating than COVID-19. To minimize their effect, for one thing we should prepare for living in a world without any mass gatherings. But I realize that this is a Utopian proposal.

3. How has your teaching and research changed?

I teach mostly online. That is a crippled form of education but we have no other choice. My research has changed for the better. I have more
Michael Minkov, continued...

time for research and have been able to produce a couple of articles that I consider very important.

Michael Minkov, is professor of modern cross-cultural anthropology at Varna University of Management (VUM), Sofia campus, Bulgaria, and a regular visiting professor at the University of Tartu, Estonia, with a grant from the Estonian Ministry of Education. He holds a PhD in social anthropology from the University of Sofia (Kliment Ohridski), Bulgaria, and an MA degree in linguistics, also from that university.

Minkov's main research interests and main publications are in the field of national cultures and societal differences. He was a close academic associate of Geert Hofstede and has written a number of articles in which he proposes a radical revision of Hofstede's model of culture.

Minkov has supervised and carried out a number of large-scale studies of culture across many countries, or across the regions of single countries, commissioned by the UK multinational MediaCom, the EU, the national government of Kazakhstan, and the national government of the Philippines.

Publications:

Main monograph:

Most recent articles:


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1. The Covid 19 pandemic has continued since March 2020. What are your reflections on the functioning of Peruvian society and its institutions during the pandemic?

The central government reacted in time with strict lockdown measures. However, the country’s deep structural problems such as economic and social inequalities that are translated into informal labour (informality rates in Peru are more than 70%) made it difficult for the vast majority to comply with quarantine. The problem was the thought that there is a homogeneous Peruvian society, whereas the cultural and territorial diversity was not appropriately taken into account.

2. What do you think will be three of the most transformative long-term consequences of the Covid 19 pandemic for Peru?

Digitalization has transformed all spheres of social life. The most notorious will be telecommuting, long-distance education and digital consumption.

3. How has your teaching and research changed?

I have had to adapt the way I research. For example, fieldwork no longer requires going to a certain place, but rather using digital or remote communication tools such as phone calls, messages, audios, video calls and photos shared through WhatsApp. While this has been a severe change for us doing qualitative research, it has also taught us to stay in touch with people, even in times of great transformations. As for teaching, the digital world has pleasantly forced me to know and use innovative and interactive methodologies to explain difficult topics to my students, such as developing projects through social media.

Gabriela Arrunátegui Martínez is a sociologist from Pontifical Catholic University of Peru (PUCP). She works as Research Assistant of the project Growing with Rural Schools of Peru (CREER) of the Group for the Analysis of Development (GRADE) and as an assistant teacher at the PUCP. Winner of the 2019 research grant from the Economic and Social Research Consortium (CIES) with the research titled “Reintegration and permanence in the labour market with gender equality? scope and limitations of the Cuna Mas Day Care Service in young mothers from Lima”. Her research agenda, both academic and applied, focuses on education, gender and social justice issues.

Contact: g.arrunategui@pucp.edu.pe
Since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic in Wuhan, China in January 2020, scholars have discussed the pandemic from a wide range of disciplinary and intellectual vantage points. Insights about the social, economic, and political impacts have come from academic fields ranging from public health, environment, culture, governance. While the global pandemic clearly calls for scholarship from those working in the hard sciences, social scientists are uniquely equipped to analyze and understand the relationship between Covid-19 and society. I argue that there are five reasons that sociologists are particularly well positioned to offer unique and important insights.

First, sociology takes a broad perspective, a holistic view of society incorporating knowledge generated in related fields that other specialized disciplines may leave out. To be sure, Covid-19 is a public health crisis: in public health, health is clearly a scientific issue, a subject for the scientists to deal with and they deal with numbers and data and experimentation. The public in public health is in the realm of sociology. The broader perspective that sociology offers is likely to capture the public aspect of the Covid-19 response.

Second, the sociology of disaster, a sub-field in our discipline, is concerned specifically with disasters and crises. The accumulated knowledge in this sub-field, which has traditionally examined single event disasters, may be used to explore the multi-level crisis we are currently confronting. Moreover, the sub-field of medical sociology may be put to service.

Third, social theorists, most notably Ulrich Beck, have devoted attention to the crisis as an aspect of modern or advanced modern society. Such a theoretical framework can be pressed into service in understanding Covid-19, especially its longer-term consequences.

Fourth, Covid-19 is clearly a global crisis that cries out for a global approach. Solutions are likely to come from research and information sharing based on global cooperation and understanding. Sociologists specializing in global and transnational sociology are particularly well positioned to document and explain the consequences of the current Covid-19 crisis.

Last but not least, sociology's longstanding concern with inequalities is relevant to understanding a pandemic that will be remembered as a watershed event, one that has greatly exacerbated existing social and economic problems. The pandemic calls for a new social contract as it has revealed deep fissures in society along both class and ethnic lines. In the USA a disproportionally high number of victims are from the Latino and African American communities. Members of these economically disadvantaged communities have also been the bulk of the frontline essential workers - bus drivers, police officers, health workers - who have borne the brunt of the crisis as evidenced by higher mortality rates.

Sociologists need to join the fray by arguing that sociology is no longer a bystander of the crisis.

Sociology, broadly defined, is a field that is better prepared to enhance our understanding of the pandemic and to prepare for future disastrous events of such magnitude. Let us rise to the challenge.
This is an important book about the contemporary issues of climate migration, displacement, and health. As members of RC09 are well aware, climate change, health hazards, and migration are topics of considerable concern in the present day social order. This volume has clearly discussed various problems pertaining to climate migration (aka “climigration”) with examples and case studies. Climigration occurs in response to two broad categories of climate-related changes in the environment.

The book focuses on the physical and mental health-related causes and consequences of climate change-related migration. It also seeks to place climate change-related migration in the broader context of cultural change and human evolution by viewing migration as a means of adapting to environmental change and considering the biological and cultural changes associated with migration. The author interrogates the ways that climate change and its impacts on the physical environment have and will continue to be both directly or indirectly related to the voluntary and forced migration of millions of people around the world. Directly, this migration has been precipitated by rising sea levels or prolonged drought that has made the land simply uninhabitable. Indirectly, migration has been precipitated by civil conflicts or extreme poverty, both of which have been consequences of changes in the physical environment. In either instance, such transformations have resulted in profound changes in health and well-being. This book also examines the causes and consequences of population displacement that are related to climate change in the recent past, the present, and the near future. Specifically, it analyzes two forms of population displacement, one that occurs in the aftermath of a natural disaster, such as a hurricane, typhoon or massive wildfires, and another that is the result of a longer-term change in environment, such as prolonged droughts, persistent flooding or a gradual rise in sea levels.

The book is divided into three parts. Part one focuses on the displacement that is occasioned by natural disasters. It considers both the acute and long-term impacts of climigration. With respect to acute climate-related events, the author argues that Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath reveals four important lessons related to population displacement and climate-related extreme weather events. Wildfires in California and elsewhere, in contrast, are typically viewed in the context of long-term drought. The prospect of continual drought in fire-prone areas resulting from climate change means that both wildfires and displacement will be a fact of life for vulnerable individuals and communities for the foreseeable future.

Part two illustrates the displacement that is linked directly to changes in the environment. The author asserts that long-term climate related events will have a wide range of effects including, impacts on economies, politics, mental and
physical health, social isolation, and discrimination. He also argues that the factors that motivate people to climigrate are not just environmental but also social and cultural.

The third part of the book concerns responses to climigration, with chapters focused on the requisite policy responses to climate-related displacement. The author contends that a policy perspective is required to address both the causes and consequences of climigration. For example, he maintains that there is a need for policies designed to prevent the need for displacement. He also argues for the necessity of policies that regulate and manage the process of displacement. Finally, the author insists that we need policies to address the health-care needs of climigrants. Such an array of policies are required regardless of the causes of climigration. That is, they are necessary in situations where climigrants are fleeing immediate danger associated with acute weather events, like hurricanes, floods, and fires, as well as migration impelled by longer-term threats to land, livelihood, and habitability often associated with sea level rise, droughts, and temperature increases.

This book analyzes a variety of fundamental questions concerning climigration. For example, how should we refer to people displaced by climate change? Should climigration be considered a form of adaptation? Palinkas argues persistently that while forced climigration is, by definition, not voluntary, so-called voluntary climigration is not really a choice if there are little or no resources to facilitate the move and if potential host communities are unwilling or unable to assist in resettlement. Thus, the perspective that climigration is a form of adaptation should not be taken to mean that the adaptation is necessarily positive or that the inability to remain in one’s community of origin or to relocate without experiencing social conflict or psychosocial distress is the fault of the climigrant.

The book also asserts that there is substantial evidence that displacement itself poses a public health threat. Studies have repeatedly demonstrated, for example, that the stress and uncertainty associated with climigration in correlates with increased incidence of mental and behavioral health problems. In his discussion of Asia and Africa, the author argues that illegal climigration also is associated with threats to safety and well-being due to exploitation by human traffickers, unsafe modes of transportation, and risk of detention and deportation.

The author ultimately argues that addressing climigration in the future will require the development and implementation of new forms of research-practice and academic-community partnerships, new sets of partners and new forms of collaboration based on principles of equity, respect, diversity, transparency, debate, and compromise. Meeting the needs of people at each stage of the climigration process must be founded on the integration of global knowledge with local experience.

On the whole, this is an engaging book that will be appreciated by members of RC09 and social scientists in general.

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K. O. Adebayo


Abstract

This case study explored the motivations and strategies of Nigerian medicine traders in responding to the health-care demands of co-migrants in China using observations and interview data from two Nigerian medicine traders in Guangzhou. The medicine traders initially responded to a ‘divine call’ but they shared similar economic motivations to survive, served predominantly African clientele and relied on ‘flyers’ and family networks to source for medicinal commodities between Nigeria and China. They were similar and different in certain respects and their undocumented statuses affected them in Guangzhou. The case study showed how survival pressures produced African health entrepreneurs in China. https://doi.org/10.33182/ml.v17i6.963

Award

K. O. Adebayo is winner of the first edition of Rahamon Bello Best PhD Thesis in African and Diaspora Studies Award for my doctoral research, entitled “Migration and Settlement Experiences of Nigerians in Guangzhou, China”.

Event

Lesley Nicole Braun, from the Institute of Social Anthropology at the University of Basel, Kudus Adebayo, from the Institute of African Studies at the University of Ibadan, and Xin Jin, from the Department of Human Geography at Utrecht University, will participate as discussants in ‘African Mobilities in China Online Mini-Symposium’ on Dec 18, 2020.

Aleksandar Bozic


Abstract

This study aims to enhance the understanding of the nature of collaboration between public and nonpublic actors in delivering social services and achieving social innovation in a fragile context, with an emphasis on the role of civil society organisations (CSOs). The paper focuses on Bosnia and Herzegovina, a Southeastern European country which has faced a turbulent post-conflict transition and experienced challenges in its social welfare policy and practice.

This study uses institutional theory, particularly new institutionalism and institutional networking, as a lens through which to understand public and nonpublic collaboration and social innovation within a fragile context. This study adopts a sequential mixed-method approach. Data were derived from 15 semi-structured interviews with representatives from local CSOs, international donors and public institutions, as well as a survey of 120 CSO representatives. The findings revealed that collaboration and social innovation in a fragile welfare context have been initiated primarily by nonpublic actors and developed within the triple context of relations between public, civil and foreign donors’ organisations. In such a context, coercive, normative and mimetic isomorphisms act as leading drivers, but also as potential barriers of public–nonpublic collaboration and social innovation. They are triggered by influences from multiple actors, challenging power relations and external pressures on local CSOs.
Member News and Publications

The paper contributes to the growing research interest in the role of nonpublic actors in the provision of public services and public social innovation, but examines these issues from the perspective of a fragile context, which has thus far been overlooked in the literature.

Sam Cohn

This is a note from the author — eds.

« Gloom and Doom from Sam Cohn »

Samuel Cohn has a new book coming out on Societal Death. The book is titled All Societies Die: How To Keep Hope Alive. Historically, no known nation or empire has lasted longer than 1000 years. If one dates the Western European-American world system from the economic growth in the low countries in the fourteenth century, the modern world system is between 600 and 700 years old. So we are middle-aged at best, and just turning geriatric at worst.

All Societies Die lays out a new theory of societal death and supports it with the development experience of the Global North and the Global South both historically and contemporaneously. The book is being published by Cornell University Press and comes out in April of 2021. Mark it on your calendar and start dropping hints about what you want to get for Easter.

For development sociologists who want an advance peek at what is coming, Sam Cohn also keeps a website. The title is Samuel Cohn: Global Social Trends. No self-promotion at all in that. It is a public sociology website with material written for a general audience. However, it has extensive sections on societal death, on development, on gender and on current events. It covers not only my own work but the work of some of the best authors working in macrosociology or heterodox economics today. New material comes out every Wednesday. You can find the website at https://www.samuelcohn.net/.

Intellectual stimulation guaranteed. Wisdom and insight? You be the judge.
Member News and Publications

Dawson, Andrew


Abstract

This paper examines the role of bilateral foreign aid in supporting the diffusion and enactment of common models and institutions of the rule of law among aid-recipient low- and middle-income countries. We ask whether aid targeted at security-sector reform and the rule of law influences the adoption of constitutional and legal reforms over time (institutional diffusion), and whether aid also supports more effective implementation of the rule of law, writ large (legal reach). We use event history and fixed-effects panel regression models to examine a sample of 154 countries between 1995 and 2013 to answer these questions. Our findings suggest that aid does increase the likelihood of adopting several rule of law reforms, but its effect on increasing the depth or quality of rule of law over time within countries is much less substantial. These findings suggest that though aid may play a role in supporting the diffusion of models contributing to state isomorphism among countries, it is less effective at increasing the pervasiveness and quality of such model’s implementation. This discrepancy between the effectiveness of bilateral aid in promoting law on the books versus law in action in aid recipient countries calls into question the current approach to rule of law reforms.

Zophia Edwards


Applying the Black Radical Tradition: Class, Race, and a New Foundation for Studies of Development

Abstract

In recent decades, it has become clear that the major economic, political, and social problems in the world require contemporary development research to examine intersections of race and class in the global economy. Theorists in the Black Radical Tradition (BRT) were the first to develop and advance a powerful research agenda that integrated race–class analyses of capitalist development. However, over time, progressive waves of research streams in development studies have successively stripped these concepts from their analyses. Post-1950s, class analyses of development overlapped with some important features of the BRT, but removed race. Post-1990s, ethnicity-based analyses of development excised both race and class. In this chapter, I discuss what we learn about capitalist development using the integrated race–class analyses of the BRT, and how jettisoning these concepts weakens our understanding of the political economy of development. To remedy our current knowledge gaps, I call for applying insights of the BRT to our analyses of the development trajectories of nations.
Su-Ming Khoo


https://bristoluniversitypress.co.uk/covid-19-in-the-global-south

See also


I have also been doing various things on decolonizing development with the Convivial Thinking collaborative and have several blogs on that platform, a Special Issue on “In the Middle of Decoloniality” Special Focus in the African journal Acta Academica on decolonizing development and “How do We Know the World.” I have just joined a related COST Action on Decolonizing Development Research, Teaching and Practice (CA19129).


Khoo, S., Vered, A (2020) Including the ‘invisible middle’ of decoloniality, Journal of International Women’s Studies Special Issue: Decolonial Interventions, 21, 7, 225-238


And with the Connected Sociologies Curriculum project (this is for first year undergrads or general public) I have this lecture on Colonial Dispossession and Extraction https://youtu.be/ZV438ca9A88

Paolo Parra Saiani


Abstract

The volume summarizes some of the contributions presented at the International Summer School Human development for all: social sciences in dialogue for inclusive societies that took place in Chile between January 9 and 12, 2019. This initiative emerged from the international networks Social-One and Psy-Com, in partnership with the Center for Social Conflict and Cohesion Studies of
Chile, under the auspices of the Department of Psychology of the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile.

The global scenario shows numerous signs of intolerance, exclusion, and deep conflicts in social coexistence. There is a need to consider the challenge of developing societies that embrace diversity and pluralism in the face of inequalities. An inclusive society aims at promoting both individual and social growth by enhancing everyone’s full active participation in social life, irrespective of age, sex, race, ethnicity, disability, origin, religion, economic, or other statuses. Because we understand social inclusion as a process of improving the terms on which individuals and groups take part in society, our focus is on the study of factors and social mechanisms that cultivate both abilities and opportunities for disadvantaged groups. The authors of this collection come from different disciplines since the concept of human development cannot be correctly examined without a prosperous connection of various fields of knowledge.

Ulrike Schuerkens

Ulrike Schuerkens has been nominated as French MC Member of the COST Action “Decolonising Development: Research, Teaching and Practice” (DecolDEV) CA19129 (2020-2024) and a co-leader of the Working group 1 on Development Research.

The COST Action DecolDev takes on the challenge to reconstruct development after its deconstruction in a non-Eurocentric manner which is aware of epistemically unjust relations of power. It works towards a resetting and diversification of the structures, institutions and spaces in which knowledge about and for development is produced, shared, contested and put into practice. Decolonisation of knowledge about “development” cannot mean to maintain a paternalist binary of those already “developed” and those “less developed” but must scrutinize the structures and institutions that maintain power imbalances and the ideas that support paternalistic relations and assumptions of superiority according to intersectional (read: gendered, racialized, classed etc.) objectification of the Other.

The Actions’ points of departure are the following three areas and their corresponding challenges and questions:

1. Development Research
2. Development Teaching
3. Development Practice

For more information on the project: https://www.cost.eu/actions

Globalizations Special Forum

The journal Globalizations (https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/rglo20/current) is in the process of publishing a special Forum on whether a single integrated theory of globalization is possible (or even desirable). The forum is edited by Prof. B. Axford. Contributions are in the process of being published online – some are already published in the journal’s website, inclusive of the articles by HH Khondker and V. Roudometof.

Call for Papers: Simulation and dissimulation

Guest editors:

Steffen Roth, Full Professor of Management, La Rochelle Business School, France, and Adjunct Professor of Economic Sociology, University of Turku, Finland. Corresponding proponent: roths@excelia-group.com and steffen.roth@utu.fi
Member News and Publications

Michael Grothe-Hammer, Associate Professor of Sociology, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Norway

Jari Kaivo-oja, Research Director of Futures Studies, University of Turku, Finland, and Adjunct Professor of Planning and Management Sciences, University of Helsinki, Finland

Kristof van Assche, Full Professor of Planning, Governance, and Development, University of Alberta, Canada

Harry F. Dahms, Full Professor of Sociology, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, United States of America

Background

This special issue focuses on the often precarious relationship between evidence and simulation, a topic that has been in need of close examination at least since the early 1970s, when the pioneers of futures studies developed or replicated the first global system dynamics models and computer simulations such as the “World3” model of Meadows et al. (1972).

Ever since, simulations have been applied to a broad spectrum of areas and topics, ranging from business strategy development, to aerospace and aviation engineering, traffic management.

On the one hand, simulations clearly help explore alternatives scenarios (Booth et al., 2009), theorise long waves (Forrester, 1976), anticipate or avoid undesirable short-, medium- or even long-term developments, or replace tests and experiments that would otherwise be unfeasible or dangerous. For example, simulations of nuclear weapons have been deemed sufficiently strong, reliable, and predictive to replace the testing of those weapons.

On the other hand, the 2007-2008 financial crisis had already underscored the tremendous impact and risks of economic models and financial simulations, and simulations also have played a key role in the 2020 coronavirus crisis, with the results of model or simulation applications often having been confused with, or deliberately presented as evidence. More concretely, in the current crisis, simulations have been or are being used to

- Detect, define, and assess the risk/extent of the COVID-19 pandemic,
- Guide and justify the selection and implementation of the risk mitigation strategies, and
- Assess the efficiency of the risk mitigation strategies.

In situations where problem definition, method choice, and success measurement are all based on simulations, however, we are confronted with the question of how we can at all distinguish between a simulated and an actual crisis …

Read the full CFP at http://derroth.com/2020/09/15/cfp-simulation-and-dissimulation/

Empirical Globalization Research

Professions, medical practices, and travelling knowledge

Conference hosted by the DFG-project

“Glocalization of medical professional knowledge and practice” (Glopro)

March 25th and 26th 2021 at the University of Duisburg-Essen, Duisburg Campus

Organizers: Prof. Dr. Tao Liu, Benjamin Quasimowski and Dr. Ilka Sommer, Prof. Dr. Anja Weiß, Sarah Weingartz
Global Studies comprises a wealth of theoretical and empirical approaches. World systems theory, world polity theory, world society approaches, along with historical institutionalism and the sociology of global and transnational fields offer fruitful theoretical perspectives. Yet, dialogue between different approaches is rare and Global Studies is divided between macro and micro approaches.

The conference works toward an empirically grounded sociological meso-social perspective in Global Studies by combining a theoretical interest in emerging global and transnational forms with empirical studies of meso-social forms and situated practice. These studies employ various research methods, such as the analysis of global microstructures, transnational surveys, comparative statistics, global ethnographies, and the study of assemblages. They yield important insights and concepts bridging theory, methods, and empirical material with a world wide scope.

Please send your abstract to ilka.sommer@uni-due.de and benjamin.quasinowski@uni-due.de until December 16th 2020.

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Announcements

“The International Sociological Association (ISA) announces the organization of the VIII Worldwide Competition for Junior Sociologists. The winners will be invited to participate in the XX ISA World Congress of Sociology, which will take place in Melbourne, Australia, in July 2022.

By Junior Scholars we mean people who obtained their first Master’s degree (or an equivalent graduate diploma) in sociology or in a related discipline, less than 10 years prior to March 31st, 2021. In case of joint or multiple authorship, this rule applies to all authors of the submitted paper.

Candidates must send

- An original paper that has not been previously published anywhere.
- The paper should be no more than 6,000 words in Word format.
- An abstract (maximum 500 words) with five key words must be included in the paper.
- Notes and the bibliography should appear at the end of the text.

The papers should focus on sociological issues. The phenomena examined may be social, economic, political, cultural or of any other kind, but their interpretation or analysis must show a sociological orientation (for instance, through the identification of social processes underlying the phenomena under scrutiny, critique of common sense interpretations or of well-established theories, etc.). Empirical research papers must go beyond descriptive reporting of results to broader, analytical interpretations.

Papers will be judged according to:

- perceptiveness with which issues are treated
- the adequacy of the methodology implemented and the quality of the empirical materials presented
- the consistency with which an analytic framework is used
- the originality of ideas
- the clarity of style

An electronic file of the paper and a cover letter (in .doc or .pdf) should be e-mailed as an attachment to Dr. Ayse Sakta at sakta@metu.edu.tr by March 31st, 2021.

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