



Newsletter

January 1999

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From the Secretary

First, I'd like to express my thanks to all of you who thought I could fit your expectations for the job as the new secretary. I'll do my best to fill this new role seriously and with some vitality. Here's the first result, the slightly redesigned newsletter (special thanks go to Robert Rothschädl from

roro+zec). What you could find in it is listed in the contents paragraph above. I'd like only to add an invitation to all members of RCHS to participate as active as possible to the coming issues.

C.F.

RCHS Executive Council Election

Our elections have now been completed, and finally we have a full new Executive Council. Special thanks to Stina Lyon (School of Education, South Bank University, London) who has kindly agreed to do the administrative work in connection with this ballot.

The new members of the Council are:

President Dirk Kaesler
 Vice Presidents Martin Bulmer
 Donald Levine
 Secretary Christian Fleck

EC members Charles Crothers
 Sven Eliaeson
 Susan Hoecker-Drysdale
 Hans Joas
 Hans-Peter Mueller
 Jill Niebrugge-Brantley
 Dick Pels
 Jennifer Platt
 Antoni Sulek
 Luigi Tomasi

Letter from the President, No. 1

Why (still) History of Sociology?

by Dirk Kaesler

It is with some pride that I gladly follow Igor Kon, Steven Lukes, Tom Bottomore, Kurt H. Wolff and Lewis A. Coser in the office of President of the RCHS. Allow me to welcome you all with some words on my personal understanding of why we as sociologists deal with the history of sociology, and why we should continue to do so.

We are less than one year away from the year 2000. The world-system is in turmoil and in crisis. The symbolism of 2000 matches the reality. Sociology, some hundred years ago, set out to help human beings to observe, understand, foresee, and solve problems of their societies. Does sociology still serve these aims? And what does dealing with the history of sociology, of all themes, have anything to do with such aims?

In order to sketch some of my answers to these questions it might be helpful to distinguish these five questions:

- (1) What has become of the 19th century programme of the *sciences morales* in relation to the development of academic *sociology* since the turn of this (outgoing) century?
- (2) Why has academic sociology distanced itself from its cause to contribute to a "moral improvement" of society?
- (3) Should academic sociology reclaim the profile of a modern "moral science"?
- (4) What could be the agenda for sociological intellectuals in the 21st century?
- (5) Why is the sociological occupation with the history of sociology essential for the preservation of the intellectual heritage of sociology?

(1) Around the year 1850 the international scholarly enterprise called *sciences morales*, *Moralstatistik*, etc. - which meant not much more than the empirical research of manners of people, of their *mores* - was one of the dominant paradigmatic programmes in the formation of the social sciences. This was the time when the contours of a modern industrialised and capitalistic economy and society in most European and North American nations slowly became visible. To understand these processes that stood behind these changes became one of the major concerns not only of politicians and scholars, but also of ordinary people. The success of the natural sciences during the 19th century led to the as-

sumption that historical and socio-economic developments are governed by a system of laws.

This system of laws had to be found out, and the *sciences morales* promised to offer a clear view of such laws. With the application of quantitative research methods social science became to be regarded as a means for coming to grips with these most confusing and disturbing developments that changed the whole world. The usage of the term *moral* never was very precise and varied from author to author. It never aimed at the development of new norms or morals but rather tried to report and systematise social developments that could be observed. The data of moral statistics covered all human social actions, the term *Moral* was used synonymous with "social".

It was the Belgian Adolphe Quetelet (1796-1874) who has been regarded as founder of these ideas to analyse social facts with the help of mathematical methods. According to him the usage of science lay in the possibility of developing preventive practical-political measures that had to be gained by the empirical study of social conditions. In 1835 the two volumes of his famous *Essai sur l'homme et le développement de ses facultés, ou Essai de Physique sociale* was published, a compendium of most of his quantitative research on all kind of areas of social phenomena. With this Quetelet was searching for "laws" that govern the whole of human societies. He was not so much interested in individual behaviour but rather in "typical" human behaviour. He was searching for general patterns that stood behind the fragmentary complexity of individual behaviour. Quetelet himself tried to reach a level of high abstraction and therefore demanded the analysis of great numbers of cases. If there were laws in social reality, he argued, then the mathematical calculation of statistical probabilities on the basis of the great number would be feasible.

Looking back it can be said that Quetelet had lost a sense of proportion in his strive for social laws. Everything that seemed to show some statistical regularity was treated as social law. Quetelet did not even search for plausible connections between purely statistical phenomena and social reality. The observation of statistical regularities did not proof any laws of human behaviour because Quetelet did not have a theoretical framework.

With the appearance of Auguste Comte's (1798-1857) six volumes of his *Cours de philosophie positive* in 1839-42 which included the programme of his *sociologie* a serious counter-concept to Quetelet's concept of *physique sociale* appeared on the scene. Comte also wanted to research society from a natural scientific point of view, against all metaphysical speculation and with a stronghold in the ideas of the Enlightenment.

In many European nations a third development blurred this situation even further: the development and gradual institutionalisation of official statistics organised by state agencies. This development which also took place as of the beginning of the 19th century became relevant for the formation of academic sociology. Quetelet, after having become the director of the Belgian Statistical Commission developed and marketed a model for the organisation of state governed statistics. In Germany, for example, several *Statistische Büros* were founded and became the main organisations for the collection and publication of a growing amount of statistical material.

In the case of Germany, it was the founding figure of Ferdinand Tönnies (1855-1936) who successfully fought for a pragmatic combination of social statistics and academic sociology with his own concept of *Demographie* as his version of empirical sociology. For him the pure collection of quantitative social facts was nothing but a method of organising data without any analytical or theoretical value. Empirical social research for him was to combine quantitative data with qualitative dimensions, to distil "living cognition", *lebende Erkenntnis*, out of the "cemetery of numbers" which he saw in the heaps of statistical material of state official statistics.

(2) In order to answer the question why academic sociology has distanced itself from this type of *sciences morales* and statistics we will have to look very briefly into the historical path our discipline has taken. If one looks at the situation of sociology one hundred years ago one sees the picture of one original concept of sociology regardless of necessary differentiation within national traditions of sociology, such as in France, the United States of America, and in Germany. As the result of some of the main ideas of the Enlightenment 19th century sociology was an exciting and orchestrated intellectual enterprise which comprised many different academic disciplines, generations and national traditions. In the centre of this international and cosmopolitan project "sociology" we may identify two convictions:

On the one hand the believe in science which would help human beings to better understand and explain their world. On the other hand stood the strong belief that academic sociology was to contribute to the moral improvement of society and that the preceding discourses on the "Good Order" of societies, especially those from the realm of theology and philosophy, could and should be replaced by human reason. God as the source of historical development was to be replaced by scientific reason of mankind who took history in their own hands.

It is banal to point to the fact that such ideas were substantially connected to the dramatic changes within societies of Europe and North America, processes we generally label as the beginning of "modernity". The sociological quest for a "Good Society" tried to understand these processes of change and to find some adequate reactions to them. Regardless of whether such

adequate reaction was sought in secular republican education, in social reforms or in the formulation of sociology as a critical enterprise for an intellectual understanding of modernity the basic task of scientific sociology was defined as to identify and diagnose those characteristics that were regarded as determining the "modern" system of society.

It is part of our heritage in sociology that such enterprise, calling itself "sociology", began with Auguste Comte to whom we not only owe the name of our discipline but also the legacy of some central ideas that are relevant still today. What then did this French philosopher and mathematician, the founder of "Positivism" and enemy of all metaphysics, have in mind with his project *sociologie*?

First of all it was to adopt the model of the natural sciences in their exploration of nature to the exploration of society and human beings in society. There was this strong, emphatic belief in science and scholarship in Europe after the French Revolution which is so hard for many of us to understand, not to mention to share, which stood at the cradle of Western sociology. Sociology was there to scientifically research and understand humans, - like physics was there to analyse and understand nature. The program of Comte was basically the transfer of the model of biology or physics to that of sociology. In the very same way the natural sciences did research those laws that ruled and determined nature, sociology was to research the laws of society, i.e. how societies functioned. Human societies and humans in societies were, that was the basic belief, as researchable as nature was by biology and physics.

This concept of a Comtean *physique sociale* stood at the starting point of the intellectual project called "sociology", certainly at the cradle of it's original, the French version. This model was based on plenty of preconditions: the orientation on the scientific model of physics, a very special concept of "laws" and a somewhat restricted answer to the crucial question: What is the purpose of science? Like the natural sciences who did not pursue research for its own sake alone but to master and control nature, sociology's task was to control and administer society, and that meant the control of the human beings that formed it.

The task of scientific sociology thus became to predict the behaviour and social action of human beings. As physics, besides trying to understand nature, strove for the possibility of predictions, scientific sociology tried to achieve the same aim: not only the question why an apple falls from a tree had to be answered, scientific research had to find the laws that govern the apple's falling. If we have answers to this question we can apply this knowledge to mastering flying objects in general, such as cannon balls, to make them fly the way we want them to cause certain effects.

It was a quite simple program following the device: *Voir pour savoir, savoir pour prévoir, prévoir pour prévenir*. First you observe what is

happening: apples fall from trees, humans form coalitions. Then you try to explain what is happening by formulating hypotheses which in the end lead to the formulation of laws. On the basis of knowing these laws you try to make predictions of future events: apples will fall because of special conditions, humans will form certain coalitions with a specific probability. And only then prevention becomes possible: the knowledge of the governing rules and their likelihood makes it possible to take certain measures, such as depositing boxes under the tree so that apples will fall into them, or trying to encourage humans to associate in such a way which is in the interest of society.

According to these ideas a concept of social science was formulated according to which its task it was to master and to manipulate society, following the motto of Francis Bacon: *Ipsa scientia potestas est*, knowledge itself is power. The programme of Auguste Comte brought this heritage to the new science of sociology: its aims were to scientifically observe, describe, analyse and predict the course of the lives of human beings. If out of these scholarly efforts predictions are made that foresee unpleasant developments we would like to prevent we will use this knowledge rather than our intuition. Like physics is there to govern nature, sociology will be the tool to govern human society and history.

Surely this kind of programme was no small contribution to foster human knowledge: it was a radical programme even including a hidden assumption of superiority. It meant that that science which would strive for such aims would, in the long run, become not just another discipline but the "queen of science", at least of the human sciences. This science would not just offer its modest contribution to the furtherance of human wisdom, this science would become the science of sciences.

This was, in an extremely condensed version, the foundation programme of sociology of only about one hundred years ago. Its traces still can be found in many ways and forms in sociology of to-day. There still are many members of our discipline who support this basic concept and want to fulfil it, at least eventually. Certainly, it is not formulated in these crude terms to-day but we encounter still the basic convictions that stand behind this programme.

I know - and hope - that such ideas can be found in the minds of most of our students. Because of such motives they decided to study sociology, instead of economics, jurisprudence or medicine, all those respected disciplines that have as their aim professional job qualifications. Sociology still is that intellectual enterprise where one can learn about human beings and about society. And the ultimate aim of such learning is to help human beings to understand themselves as members of societies, to understand the working of societies and their history, to help them cope with society and not only remain a victim of social pressures or so-called historical laws. To this very day sociology attracts people who se-

arch for knowledge and instruments to understand society and to gain that intellectual power that stems from knowledge and to use it actively to change society.

Why then is there this recurring feeling of a "crisis"? I think that one of the most crucial reasons for the atmosphere of discontent is the fact that the sociological quest for a "Good Society" has been banned from the scientific agenda of academic sociology almost totally. This, I argue, has led to some sort of an intellectual paralysis of sociology. The original belief in science, in former times almost grotesquely strong, changed to a style of complete subjectivity and the well-known mentality of "anything goes".

Of course, students of sociology in their first year have to learn that scientific sociology is not to be mistaken for social-work, social politics, not to mention socialism. Regardless of the fact that sociology has become an analytical and empirical science, in distance to its former sense of moral mission, the old motif of its creation can still be reconstructed. The dream of a "Good society", a human society, the search for an ethical basis of sociological research has always been the "spirit in the machine" of the social sciences, as Irving Louis Horowitz has pointed out. This "spirit" still lingers in some heads, regardless of the "scientific turn" of academic sociology.

(3) What then could be the task of sociology as a modern "moral science", as the institutional basis for "moral awareness"?

Behind this question stands the much more fundamental question: What kind of sociology is necessary for the 21st century? What I have in mind is not only a sociology of the 21st century but one for the 21st century. And that means a sociology for those human beings who will make that step into the next century.

Let me first mention briefly some inner-sociological prerequisites which I regard as self-evident: most important is the necessary end of the paradigmatic separation of the infamous micro- and macro-version of sociological theories, as well as the end of the split between quantitative and qualitative methods in social research. Ever since the intermediate theoretical and empirical work of Max Weber, Emile Durkheim, Norbert Elias, Pierre Bourdieu, Anthony Giddens and Jürgen Habermas, such splits should become part of the historical past of proto-sociological concepts.

By now the necessity of a self-reflexive sociology should be as obvious as the demand for a sociology sceptical and critical of all forms of domination in whatever domain.

Leaving such self-evident requirements for a future sociology aside I would like to turn to my main concern which is much more problematic: the re-turn of scientific sociology from a *wert(urteils)freie*, a "value-judgement-free" enterprise to a *wertbezogene*, a "value-related" one.

It seems to be easy to say that sociology should ask for the "Good society". But are there

sociological standards for the "goodness" of a society, for a society orientated towards the furtherance of the well-being of humans? Is it really the last word of sociology in this respect to only denounce such asking as nothing but the outcome not of rational search for scientific truth, but of irrational longing, as Theodor W. Adorno wanted us to believe?

If sociology, I would like to argue, as an intellectual and scholarly enterprise dismisses the intellectual co-operation in the construction of a "Good Society", the formulation of the programme of a "good social order", the inner liquidation of the enterprise sociology which began with such enthusiasm and hope in the 19th century is immanent. Sociology will lose its inner legitimisation if it stops reaching out for the "Good Life" and terminates the co-operation in the creation of an "utopian realism".

Sociology in the future will have to ask questions like these:

- * What does a "human" live in society mean?
- * What makes humans into "moral" beings?
- * What kind of morals can sociologically be justified?
- * What kind of social conditions will have to be fulfilled to enable humans to lead moral lives?

The enormous pretension of Comte to make sociology the main guiding science surely has to be abandoned by the end of the 20th century. But the almost total detachment of sociology from philosophy and political philosophy will have to be scrutinised again. Not in terms of "going back" but in the sense of re-opening the systematic discourse with them. Maybe sociology historically could only develop by its emancipation from these traditional moral sciences. But now, after a hundred years of emancipation it should be possible to think anew about dealing with morals in a scientific way free of morals. I am not talking about a "sociological turn" of ethical discourse but rather about the necessity for sociology as a discipline to participate in the attempts to find therapies of moral orientation for human beings who not only lost orientation but are desperately seeking for it.

In the historical beginning of sociology it certainly was not totally without justification when the Founding Fathers of our discipline, like Emile Durkheim, tried to construct sociology as a "moral science" in conscious separation from moral-philosophy. The programme of an empirical social scientific research of morals can only be questioned if it can be shown that human beings whose morals are researched rather search for points of orientation than for scientific analyses of their moral standards. Durkheim's agenda might have come to an end: humans who have become insecure in their moral orientations will not find great help by a mystification of morality or the offer of a cult of "individualism". This certainly offers no help in the desperate search for moral integration for individuals or for society. The moral disorientation of individuals and societies cannot be clari-

fied by a social-scientific research of its destruction.

If one wants to resume sociology as a "moral science" one has to find answers to the question where the standards of morals may be. The question for "standards" of truth, justice, morality, and the perspectives of a "human society", a "Civil Society", will not be substituted by perspectives of pluralistic orientation. Of this we do have enough these days, like perspectives of gender, of race, of classes, of cultures, of religions, of ideological positions. The intellectual-scientific reaction to this fragmentarization of our various world-experiences must not be the capitulation in an either cynical or nihilistic world view, nor must it lead to the return to a technical fetishism in social research, nor to an empty game of "theoretical" debates. The challenge for sociology will be to help and participate in the construction of new forms of a value-consensus in a world so complicated and differentiated like ours of to-day.

(4) What I am trying to depict here is the agenda for sociology as a sort of hotbed and training camp of intellectuals, of sociological *savants*, empirically grounded, using the whole of sociology's theoretical achievements and supporting the development of a socio-political and ethical conscience. Intellectuals who do not distance themselves from social reality, trying to accept responsibility by intervention in political debates and conflicts. Of course, such sociological intellectuals would not stand apart from general political fights for power, they instead become crucial participants of them by using their intellectual and rhetorical capabilities to reach out for power themselves.

Following a common sense model of intellectuals it is the times of "crises" which call for intellectuals to put forward their critical diagnosis and their enlightening vision for future development. Where, so to speak, is the Marx, Weber, Durkheim of our times? At the turn to the 21st century we will have to accept the sobering judgement that the "classical" intellectual like in the Dreyfus-model does not exist any more. Following Raymond Aron and Jean Paul Sartre alike it may be said that the modern intellectual is a *spectateur engagé et enragé*. An engaged observer and an enraged critic of society, the intellectual as an advocate of the universal who speaks in the name of humankind in the face of the pervasive individual pursuit of particular interests. The intellectual as the protagonist of a general morality who fights with *Zivilcourage* for freedom, tolerance and solidarity, the partisan of the underprivileged who articulates injustice and argues for fairness and tolerance.

All these tasks the modern sociological intellectual is able to meet thanks to status and social position located in occupations close to the media informed public, like artists and writers, journalists and university professors, nevertheless *freischwebend*, in the sense not belonging to a political party or an interest group. Always precarious the modern sociological intellectual enjoys an in-

dependent status granted by the right of freedom of speech in and by the public.

Such a "plantation" of sociological intellectuals could, in my opinion, only be set up in universities as places of the education of neither technocrats nor ideologues. The old motto of the German educator Wilhelm von Humboldt, popularised by the German sociologist Helmut Schelsky: *Bildung durch Wissenschaft*, education by science, might have become even more important to-day than ever. This will be needed to enter the necessary interdisciplinary discourse, to pursue a multicultural and global orientation and to construct an ecological responsibility.

What I want to ask for myself and our discipline is to strengthen the interest and engagement in public affairs, and to leave the protecting walls of our ivory-towers of the universities. The intervention by sociologists in the political arena and in the media dominated discourse on values could and should be improved strongly.

What I am thinking about is the dialogue, first of all within sociology itself about the possibility of a sociological discourse about values and morals. But also a dialogical co-operation between sociology and the disciplines of the traditional "value specialists", like political philosophy, comparative religious studies, and theologies. If the co-operation of sociologists in the construction of a rational, non-religious ethics, should be the aim of sociology at all, it will not be realised without such dialogue. In such a dialogue sociological intellectuals could show whether we have something to offer or not. The principles of this dialogue will have to be a serious effort of understanding each other, the acceptance of the differences, a "poli-

tics of acceptance". It could be the dialogue of the 21st century.

(5) If we/some of you agree with this vision of future academic sociology of remaining/becoming the hotbed and training camp of sociological *savants*, empirically grounded, using the whole of sociology's theoretical achievements and supporting the development of a socio-political and ethical conscience, you will agree that being familiar with the history of sociology is indispensable. As sociologists who do research on the history of our discipline we are well prepared to play the role of guard and keeper of the canonical wisdom of more than hundred years of great intellectual achievements, in empirical findings, concepts, and theories. We, as the Research Committee on the History of Sociology, have a honourable duty to fulfil for the discipline of sociology, as long as it is still alive. The 21st century will show whether this product of the 19th century will survive and in what forms.

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Why History of Sociology? A Mini-symposium

For the following section I invited the members of the new Executive Committee to present their views and ideas regarding our common enterprise. All RCHS members are asked to contribute further comments, critics, replies etc.

C.F.

Sven Eliaeson

In response to the request from our new secretary I would like to stress the nexus "the utility vs the interpretation of the classics". It might seem like well trodden paths but it remains though a permanent problem which calls for some further bridge-building between theorists and historians. The danger of presentist "overextensions" requires an alert attitude and in especially Max Weber studies lots of gun powder has been wasted from erroneous attempts to tell the classic author what he ought to have meant in order to fit into our retrospective concerns, instead of trying to accomplish the best interpretation given the terminology and problem horizon of his own days. However, pure contextualism is no sa-

tisfying remedy; rather provides mementoes to avoid misrepresentations.

If the spell of pure contextualism should be followed we might produce a lot of arid history which does not fit into a meaningful cumulative discourse. It is simply very difficult to overlook what we know about the development after the time of the classic we try to contextualize and maybe we are inevitably prisoners of our own language community. Yet, if we allow leeway for "chronological imperialism" or reduce the classics to mere tool-boxes from which to pick shining loose parts, like "charisma", we also risk a loss of the live contact with the classics, their main asset after being a certain resistance to the modes of the day, reaching us over the centuries. I like to think that a "whiggish contextualism" could be developed but maybe it just saves us from some errors instead of really solving this perennial problem.

My personal interest - except for Max Weber and his context - focus on the long line of secularization, i.e. the trend to analyze with the metaphor of rational economic actor as the basic model and with anti-natural law and calculability as central tenets, from Machiavelli, over Hobbes and Bentham to Weber and Gunnar Myrdal. I am also interested

in Max Weber's "Swedish relatives" Gunnar Myrdal and Axel Hägerström (the radical "value-nihilist" who said that there is no science in morals, only on morals) and their varying modes of value-incommensurability. The very notion about such a trend as secularization as seminal in our search for roots illustrates the problem above, since it has an intrinsic teleological or retrospective element, which Quentin Skinner hardly would endorse.

Charles Crothers

Involvements in the History of Sociology

Rather tentatively in 1949, but in full array in 1967, Merton developed a dualistic methodological position in which he suggested that the history and the systematics of sociological theory would each obtain a higher standard of excellence if they were pursued as separate, albeit parallel and indeed overlapping, exercises. Each needs to be judged by their own standards. However, the degree of membership overlap between ISA sections on the history of sociology and on theory is one (far from conclusive) indicator that this lesson is yet to be learned. Given the severe degree of ancestor-worship in Sociology, many self-identified theorists see their work as simultaneously falling within the history of sociology. But the problems of confusion of purpose particularly lie with theorists, in my view, as many do not hold an effective vision of a reasonable division-of-labour in sociology. For example, theorists often contribute (in effect) to more substantive areas of inquiry in sociology without adequate cognisance of the existing literature in the field into which they are intruding. Fortunately, there is a hard-core of historians of sociology (which even more fortunately includes a small coterie of 'professional historians') which ensures that there is a core program within the history of sociology which meets sound standards of historical scholarship. One important check which historians of sociology impose on the amalgam historian-theorist approach is to insist that the history of sociology is not merely the history of sociological theory, but also includes substantive inquiries and methodology.

There are two main motivations I personally have for delving into the (relatively recent) history of sociology. One is the general point that it provides a useful 'strategic research-site' for understanding the social influences on the development and utilisation of social ideas: it allows the development of a comparative/historical understanding of modes and forms of social knowledge. Secondly, delving into past developments of sociological knowledge provides a useful rehearsal before entering the lists in current theoretical struggles. For example, to pursue my own contemporary interest in theories of social structure, it has been useful to first gain a better grasp of how ideas of social structure have developed in earlier sociologies. Similarly, I have a (vicarious) nostalgia for the 'golden era' of sociology of the 1950s and 1960s, and so a detailed treatment of how the 'Columbia Tradition' operated during that period may throw up lessons for how contempora-

ry sociology might regain some of the momentum and success of that earlier period.

However, my main interest is not in the history of sociology as such, but finds no other institutional home which is as sympathetic. This interest is in the (internal and external) shaping of trends in contemporary sociology. What are the current hot topics in Sociology? Who are the hot names? Do national sociologies differ from each other? What is the effect of changing funding regimes or of publication opportunities which are altering? To what extent do policy elites take up ideas propounded by sociologists? How does 'popular sociology' resonate with other popular ideologies? Such work is in part a more systematic version of 'professional gossip', and in part a very serious monitoring of trends in the multifold aspects of the content of sociology, and the factors influencing this. There is no reason why such work should not be just as systematic as the history of sociology. This area of interest could be termed sociology of sociology (or certainly the recent history of sociology) and it continues to generate a considerable literature, although this is often a relatively 'soft' and 'fugitive' literature. But it has no ready institutional home within the ISA structure. Sometimes special sessions are devoted to these concerns: eg at Montreal in 1998 there was a session on the 'Most important sociological books of the 20th Century'. Because of its historical continuity with recent history, sociology of contemporary sociology is (I hope) a useful adjunct to mainstream history of sociology.

In particular, for those of us from particular peripheries, there is often a nationalist inflection to our studies in the sociology of sociology. We are particularly interested in local uniquenesses and opportunities for our national (or regional etc) sociology, and the extent to which it is circumscribed by or linked to more international trends in sociology emanating from the core.

Short Intro's of new Members of the EC

Sven G. O. Eliæson

Current position: "Högskolelektor" (Senior lecturer, Associate Prof. equivalent) in Political Science, Social Science Dept (Public administration branch) Univ of Karlstad, Sweden and Docent in Political Science at the University of Stockholm from January 1996

Visiting professorships or scholarships respectively at: University of South Florida, St. Petersburg, FL, Center for Interdisciplinary Studies in Culture and Society, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL, Political Science Dept., University of Chicago, Chicago Committee on Social Thought, University of South Florida, Tampa, FL, Dept of Philosophy, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München, Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Kommission für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte.

Recent Publications:

Fourth edition of Boglind; Eliæson; Månson: Kapital, rationalitet och social sammanhållning. Sthlm: Prisma, 1995. Revised fourth ed., 1998.

"Interpreting the Classics. Max Weber's contribution to the Secularization of Social Science", in Matthies, Jürgen & Palonen, Kari (Hrsg): Max Weber: Stadt, Politik, Geschichte. Beiträge des Symposiums an der Universität Jyväskylä, 19--20.2 1993. Jyväskylä 1995.

"The Utility of the Classics. The Estate of Weber Unsettled", pp. 45-77, in Jahrbuch für Soziologiegeschichte 1993. Opladen: Leske & Budrich, 1995.

Review of Turner, Stephen & Factor, Regis: Max Weber. The Lawyer as Social Thinker. London & New York: Routledge, 1994. In Acta Sociologica, No 2, 1996.

"Rapport från Amerikanska sociologförbundets årsmöte i Toronto, augusti 1997", p. p. 65-73 in Sociolognytt, Våren 1997.

"Politisk kultur i USA - och Sverige", in Smedjan, spring 1998.

Forthcoming publications:

Max Weber's Methodologies? Interpretation and Critique. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1998.

"Max Weber. A Sonderweg-democrat re-contextualized", in Stephen P. Turner (ed.): Max Weber. A Reader's Companion. London: RKP, 1999.

"A Present-Day Classic? Interpreting Weber", in Palonen, Kari (ed.): Titel ännu oklar, antologi som bygger på doktorandkurs i Virrat september 1996, utkommer 1998 eller 1999.

Review of Anter, Andreas: Max Webers Theorie des modernen Staates. Herkunft, Struktur und

Bedeutung. Berlin: Duncker & Humblot 1995, in Zeitschrift für Politik (forthcoming).

Dick Pels

I have changed from a professorship in the Social Theory of Knowledge at the University of Groningen to a Professorship in Sociology in the Dept of Human Sciences at Brunel University, West London. However, I will retain my appointment as Research Affiliate at the Amsterdam School for Social Science Research. In the foreseeable future, in fact, I will be commuting between London and Amsterdam, which will remain my home.

Few recent publications:

'Karl Mannheim e la sociologia della conoscenza scientifica. Verso nuovo obiettivi', Studi Perugini, No.4, luglio-dicembre, 1997, pp. 185-218 (transl. of 'Karl Mannheim and the Sociology of Scientific Knowledge: Toward a New Agenda', Sociological Theory 14:1, 1996, pp. 30-48)

'Rondom Elias' (Around Elias), in Anne Gevers (red.), Uit de zevende. Vijftig jaar politieke en sociaal culturele wetenschappen aan de Universiteit van Amsterdam, Amsterdam: Het Spinhuis, 1998, pp. 73-85.

'The Proletarian as Stranger', History of the Human Sciences, 11:1, February 1998, pp. 49-72.

'Fascism and the Primacy of the Political', Telos 110, Winter 1998, pp. 39-70.

'Bevoorrechte nomaden. Over intellectuele vreemdelingen en vreemde intellectuelen', De Gids 10, oktober 1998, pp. 711-721.

Property and Power in Social Theory. A Study in Intellectual Rivalry. London: Routledge, 1998, 316 pp.

Luigi Tomasi

received his Ph.D. in Philosophy from the Catholic University of Milan and in Sociology from the University of Trento (Italy), where he now works. He is currently Visiting Professor of Sociology at the Royal University of Phnom Penh (Cambodia). He has been closely associated with the Committee on Social Thought at the University of Chicago and studied under Edward A. Shils, one of the most outstanding social scientists of the twentieth century. The editor and author of numerous articles and several well-known monographs on the history of American sociological thought, his most recent publication on the subject is:

The Tradition of the Chicago School of Sociology, Ashgate, Aldershot, 1998.

Other books:

Suicidio e società. Il fenomeno della morte volontaria nei sistemi sociali contemporanei, Angeli, Milano, 1987.

L'apporto de Frédéric Le Play all'elaborazione teorica ed all'investigazione empirica nella sociologia contemporanea, Reverdito, Trento, 1991.

The Contribution of Florian Znaniecki to sociological theory, Angeli, Milano, 1994.

Le catholicisme social de Pierre Guillaume Frédéric Le Play, Angeli, Milano, 1994.

Robert E. Park and the melting pot theory, Reverdito, Trento, 1994.

Teoria sociologica ed investigazione empirica. La tradizione della Scuola sociologica di Chicago e le prospettive della sociologia contemporanea, Angeli, Milano, 1995.

Recent Publications by Members

Christian Fleck

(series editor) Kurt Blaukopf, Unterwegs zur Musiksoziologie. Auf der Suche nach Heimat und Standort, comments by Reinhard Müller, Graz, Wien: Nausner & Nausner 1998 (= Bibliothek sozialwissenschaftlicher Emigranten, vol. 4).

'Soziologie,' in: Claus-Dieter Krohn et al., eds., Handbuch der deutschsprachigen Emigration 1933 - 1945, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft 1998, p. 893-904.

'Deutschsprachige sozialwissenschaftliche Rockefeller Fellows 1924-1964,' in: Newsletter des AGSÖ, Nr. 17, p. 3-10.

'Marie Jahoda (geb. 1907). Lebensnähe der Forschung und Anwendung in der wirklichen Welt,' in: Frauen in der Soziologie. Neun Porträts, eds. Claudia Honegger & Theresa Wobbe, München: C. H. Beck 1998, pp. 258 - 286, 326-333 and 382-387.

The choice between market research and sociology, or: What happened to Lazarsfeld in the United States?, in: Jacques Lautman & Bernard-Pierre Lécuyer, eds., Paul Lazarsfeld (1901-1976). La sociologie de Vienne à New York, Paris: Editions L'Harmattan 1998, pp. 83-119.

Uta Gerhardt

'American sociology and German re-education after World War II', pp. 39-58 in ed. G. Giles, Stunde

Null: The End and the Beginning 50 Years Ago, Washington DC: German Historical Institute, 1997.

German Sociology: Th. W. Adorno, M. Horkheimer, M. Weber, G. Simmel and Others, New York: Continuum (German Library no. 61), 1998.

'Talcott Parsons und die Re-Education-Politik der Amerikanischen Besatzungsmacht', Schweizerische Zeitschrift für Soziologie 24: 121-151, 1998.

'Charismatische Herrschaft und Massenmord: Eine soziologische These zu Goldhagens Theorem des freiwilligen Mordes an Juden', Geschichte und Gesellschaft 24: 505-540, 1998.

Elzbieta Halas

(ed.) F. Znaniecki, Education and Social Change, Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1998.

'Dialogical vs. hegemonic models of interactions between national culture societies', pp. 57-64 in ed. A. Gasparini, Nation, Ethnicity, Minority and Border: Contributions to an International Sociology, Gorizia, 1998.

Bryan Turner

(ed.) The Early Sociology of the Family, London: Thoemmes Press, 9 volumes.

Two new Encyclopaedias

At the end of this century and millenium one could observe a lot of traffic in doing 'best of' and 'the most wanted' lists. Here are two more serious endeavors which may be of interest for the audience of the RCHS newsletter.

Encyclopédie historique de la pensée sociologique - Historical Encyclopaedia of Sociological Thought

Editors: Raymond Boudon, Mohamed Cherkaoui, and Bernard Valade.

To be published simultaneously in French and English by Presses Universitaires de France.

La sociologie des origines a une ambition: produire du savoir. C'est là un des desseins communs à Durkheim, Weber, Le Play, Pareto et les autres. Mais dès les débuts aussi les divergences ou du moins les différences apparaissent. Pour certains, la sociologie vise à produire des données, pour d'autres à expliquer des phénomènes sociaux, pour d'autres encore à aider à la décision politique en imaginant des solu-

tions à des problèmes sociaux. Certains sont positivistes, d'autres s'opposent au positivisme.

Certaines théories, comme celle de l'échange, sont d'un niveau de généralité et d'abstraction tel qu'elles permettent de subsumer des phénomènes sociaux très variés comme la théorie de l'échange. D'autres, comme la dissonance cognitive, sont en revanche plus locales et ne portent que sur un ensemble de phénomènes limité. Il en est des concepts comme des théories: ils peuvent être distingués selon les mêmes critères d'abstraction et de généralité.

L'histoire de la pensée sociologique est ici conçue à la fois sur le mode historiographique et sur celui de la réflexion épistémologique. Elle est certes un compte rendu raisonné du passé mais elle a aussi et surtout pour objectif d'identifier et de définir les programmes, les théories et les concepts propres à son domaine. Elle en montre également le développement et la cohérence interne et propose une analyse des contextes dans lesquels ils ont été produits. Elle se doit enfin d'étudier les relations que la sociologie entretient avec les autres disciplines connexes comme la philosophie, l'économie, la psychologie, la démographie ou l'histoire en accordant une attention particulière aux emprunts de concepts, de méthodes et aux conditions dans lesquelles ont lieu ces échanges.

Modestie mise à part, le projet consiste à écrire une histoire de la pensée sociologique qui serait l'équivalent de *l'Histoire de l'analyse économique* de Schumpeter, qui estimait que l'histoire était surtout celle des aspects scientifiques de la pensée économique. Il en attendait trois avantages.

1. Des avantages pédagogiques tirés de la confrontation entre le projet intellectuel proposé aujourd'hui par les sciences sociales et celui des époques antérieures. Ce point indique que, si progrès il y a, il ne peut assurément pas être linéaire.
2. L'histoire de la discipline était également, à ses yeux, une source d'inspiration et la matrice de nouvelles idées.
3. Elle était enfin ce laboratoire où l'étude des modes de fonctionnement de l'esprit humain est rendue possible

Certes la sociologie n'est pas l'économie. Celle-ci est en partie unifiée autour de programmes bien définis; celle-là plus éclatée. En sociologie, les tentatives d'unification partielle sont largement contrebalancées par la grande diversification de la production. On comprendra donc que même si le projet schumpeterien nous guide, il ne peut à l'évidence être réalisé de façon solitaire. Pour toutes ces raisons, l'histoire de la pensée sociologique sera collective: elle réclame le concours de plusieurs compétences. Sans doute faut-il s'attendre à des différences et parfois même à des divergences d'interprétation; mais elles sont précisément l'expression de l'état de notre discipline.

Par ailleurs, l'éclatement de la sociologie, les évolutions très contrastées et parfois presque

singulières de ses théories, concepts' méthodes et sous-domaines, la grande souplesse qu'exigent ces différences d'interprétation interdisent tout exposé linéaire des thèmes qui ne relèvent pas d'un traitement purement factuel ou historiographique. Or si l'histoire est conçue ici comme narration de faits, elle est aussi et surtout comme sociologie de la connaissance sociologique.

On essaiera de satisfaire à l'exigence encyclopédique en recourant à l'ordre alphabétique des rubriques: auteurs (e.g. Durkheim), matières comme théories (e.g. fonctionnalisme), concepts (e.g. classes sociales), écoles historiques (e.g. école écossaise), sous-disciplines (e.g. sociologie de l'éducation) relations interdisciplinaires (e.g. économie et sociologie), grands domaines sociaux (e.g. démocratie), méthodologie et épistémologie (e.g. compréhension).

Certaines rubriques ne seront pas subdivisées; d'autres sujets le seront forcément c'est-à-dire distribués en autant de questions qu'il est nécessaire pour respecter le principe pluraliste précédemment énoncé. Il en sera sans doute ainsi de nombreuses entrées-auteurs comme des entrées-matières. Il nous appartient de les prévoir et d'en fixer les limites lors de notre prochaine réunion de travail.

International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences

Editors-in-chief

Neil J Smelser, Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, Stanford, CA, USA

Paul B. Baltes, Max Planck Institute for Human Development, Berlin, Germany

Publisher: Pergamon

Scheduled for publication in 2001

Aims and Scope

The emergence and development of academic disciplines and fields are typically celebrated through the creation of works of reference. The first multi-volume *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences* (15 volumes) appeared between 1930 and 1935 under the editorship of Edwin R A Seligman and Alvin Johnson, both economists. Its successor was the *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* (17 volumes) published in 1968 under the editorship of David Sills, a sociologist. The logic of time alone - one such encyclopedia every one-third century - suggests the appropriateness of a new reference work in the social and behavioral sciences for the turn of the century.

The scientific and intellectual dynamics of the social and behavioral sciences yield a similar and even more compelling logic. Since the 1960s there has been:

- A staggering growth and specialization of knowledge in the various disciplines. Dozens of new subfields have appeared in all of them, and none has avoided some sense of "identity crisis" bred by specialization and fragmentation.
- A corresponding scientific and intellectual ferment. All of the social and behavioral sciences
- have been affected profoundly by the computer and information revolutions and their ramification into theory construction, data analysis, and publication and dissemination of data and knowledge.
- An increase in interdisciplinary connections and activities. An expanded interest in the policy and applications of social and behavioral science knowledge pushes research in interdisciplinary directions.
- An internationalization of the social and behavioral sciences in response to the dynamics of globalism and internationality.
- A necessary but still incomplete rapprochement between the social and behavioral sciences on the one side and the biological life sciences on the other. Whereas in the past the social sciences neglected if not shied away from biological/genetic perspectives,

recent decades -with the advent of the new and environment-sensitive genetics - have witnessed a growing commitment to a proactive collaboration between the life sciences and the social sciences.

The aim of the *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences* is nothing less than to provide state-of-the-art coverage of the knowledge developed to date, including the dynamics and complications just noted. It will be produced in such a way that it will be of value to all interested and potentially interested parties - scholars inside and outside the disciplines represented, students, those concerned with policy and applications, and laypeople generally.

Overarching Topics

Institutions and infrastructure David L Featherman, Institute for Social Research, AM Arbor, MI, USA

History of the social and behavioral sciences Peter Wagner, University of Warwick, UK

Ethics of research and applications Robert McC. Adams, University of California, San Diego, CA, USA and Jürgen Mittelstrass, Universität Konstanz, Germany

Biographies Karl Ulrich Mayer, Max Planck Institute for Human Development, Berlin, Germany

Methodology

Statistics Stephen E Fienberg and Joseph B Kadane, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA, USA

Mathematics and computer sciences A A J Marley, McGill University, Montreal, Canada

Logic of inquiry and research design Thomas D Cook and Charles Ragin, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL, USA

Disciplines

Anthropology Ulf Hannerz, Stockholm University, Sweden

Archaeology Margaret W Conkey and Patrick Kirch, University of California, Berkeley, CA, USA

Demography Jan Hoem, Stockholm University, Sweden

Economics Orley Ashenfelter, Princeton University, NJ, USA

Education Franz E Weinert, Max Planck Institute for Psychological Research, Munich, Germany

Geography Susan Hanson, Clark University, Worcester, MA, USA

History Jürgen Kocka, Freie Universität Berlin, Germany

Law Marc Galanter, University of Wisconsin Law School, Madison, WI, USA and Lauren B Edelman, University of California, Berkeley, CA, USA

Linguistics Bernard Comrie, Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, Leipzig, Germany

Philosophy Philip Pettit, Australian National University, Canberra, Australia

Political science Nelson Polsby, University of California, Berkeley, USA

Clinical and applied psychology Terence Wilson, Rutgers University, Piscataway, NJ, USA

Cognitive psychology and cognitive science Walter Kintsch, University of Colorado, Boulder, CO, USA

Development, social, personality and motivational psychology Nancy Eisenberg, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ, USA

Sociology Raymond Boudon, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris, France

Intersecting Fields

Evolutionary sciences William Durham and Marcus W Feldman, Stanford University, CA, USA

Genetics, behavior, and society Marcus W Feldman, Stanford University, CA, USA

Behavioral and cognitive neuroscience Richard F Thompson, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA, USA and James L McClelland, Center for the Neural Basis of Cognition, Pittsburgh, PA, USA

Psychiatry Melvin Sabshin, University of Maryland, Baltimore, MD, USA and Florian Holsboer, Max Planck Institute of Psychiatry, Munich, Germany

Health Ralf Schwarzer, Freie Universität Berlin, Germany and James House, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA

Gender studies Paula England, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ, USA

Religious studies David Martin, Woking, Surrey, UK

Expressive forms Wendy Griswold, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL, USA

Environment/ecological sciences B L Turner, Clark University, Worcester, MA, USA

Science and technology studies Sheila Jasanoff, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, USA

Area and international studies Mary Byrne McDonnell, Social Science Research Council, New York, USA

Applications

Organizational and management studies Alberto Martinelli, Università degli Studi di Milano, Italy

Media studies and commercial applications Michael Schudson, University of California, San Diego, CA, USA

Urban studies and planning Eugenie Birch, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA, USA

Public policy Ira Katznelson, Columbia University, New York, USA and Kenneth Prewitt, Social Science Research Council, New York, USA

Modern cultural concerns Richard Allan Shweder, University of Chicago, IL, USA

An International Advisory Board includes some 90 outstanding social scientists from all over the world.

Printed edition to comprise: 26 volumes, over 5,000 signed articles, 18 million words of text, 104,000 bibliographic references, alphabetical organization with extensive cross-referencing throughout, comprehensive name index and multilevel subject index, classified list of entries

Electronic edition also comprise: Thesaurus of terms in the Social and Behavioral Sciences, links to abstracts of 50,000 references, supplementary graphical, sound and video material.

Klassiker der Soziologie

Herausgegeben von

Dirk Kaesler

München: C. H. Beck 1999

Erster Band: Von Auguste Comte bis Norbert Elias

Dirk Kaesler: Was sind und zu welchem Ende studiert man die Klassiker der Soziologie?

Michael Bock: Auguste Comte (1798-1857)

Ralf Dahrendorf: Karl Marx (1818-1883)

Michael Kunczik: Herbert Spencer (1820-1903)

Maurizio Bach: Vilfredo Pareto (1848-1923)

Cornelius Bickel: Ferdinand Tönnies (1855-1936)

Birgitta Nedelmann: Georg Simmel (1858-1918)

Hans-Peter Müller: Emile Durkheim (1858-1917)

Hans Joas: George Herbert Mead (1863-1931)

Dirk Kaesler: Max Weber (1864-1920)

Rolf Lindner: Robert E. Park (1864-1944)

Erhard Störling: Robert Michels (1876-1936)

Hans Leo Krämer: Die Durkheimianer Marcel Mauss (1872-1950) und Maurice Halbwachs (1877-1945)

Rainer Geißler und *Thomas Meyer*: Theodor Geiger (1891-1952)

David Kettler und *Volker Meja*: Karl Mannheim (1893-1947)

Hermann Korte: Norbert Elias (1897-1990)

Martin Endreß: Alfred Schütz (1899-1959)

Zweiter Band: Von Talcott Parsons bis Pierre Bourdieu

Klaus Allerbeck: Paul F. Lazarsfeld (1901-1976)

Richard Münch: Talcott Parsons (1902-1979)

Stefan Müller-Doohm: Theodor W. Adorno (1903-1969)

Karl-Siegbert Rehberg: Hans Freyer (1887-1960), Arnold Gehlen (1904-1976), Helmut Schelsky (1912-1984)

Joachim Stark: Raymond Aron (1905-1983)

Karl-Dieter Opp und Reinhard Wippler: George Caspar Homans (1910-1989)

Lewis A. Coser: Robert K. Merton

Andreas Hess: C. Wright Mills (1916-1962)

Robert Hettlage: Erving Goffman (1922-1982)

Rudolf Stichweh: Niklas Luhmann (1927-1998)

Axel Honneth: Jürgen Habermas

Cornelia Bohn und Alois Hahn: Pierre Bourdieu

Members' Work in Progress

Bote de Jong

Rethinking Durkheim's social fact: a contemporary critic;

Karl Mannheim as a crisis sociologist: between diagnosis and remedy.

Jennifer Platt

Gender and the sociological labour market in Britain since World War II

News and Notes

The University of Wisconsin-Madison's Libraries now have a scheme, funded by the Friends of the Libraries, under which each year two or more grants-in-aid of \$1000 are offered for a month's work using the Libraries' resources. Applicants are expected to have a PhD or demonstrate solid intellectual accomplishment, unless they are graduate students who have completed all requirements except the dissertation; foreign scholars are eligible. Completed applications should be submitted by March 1; for application forms, write to Friends of the UW-Madison Libraries Award Committee, 976 Memorial Library, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WI 53706, USA, or contact John Tortorice, on fax 608-265-2505 or e mail tortoric@doit.wisc.edu.

The Libraries' archival holdings include the papers of John L. Gillin, T.C. McCormick, Howard P. [n.b. not Howard S!] Becker, Kimball Young, William H. Sewell, and Don Martindale, as well as other materials about the department of Sociology.

Mellon Resident Research Fellowships, 1999 - 2000

The American Philosophical Society Library is accepting applications for short-term residential fellowships for conducting research in its collections. The Society's Library, located near Independence Hall in Philadelphia, is a leading international center for research in the history of American science and technology and its European roots, as well as early American history and culture. The Library houses over 6.5 million manuscripts, 190,000 volumes and bound periodicals, and thousands of maps and prints. Outstanding historical collections and subject areas include the papers of Benjamin Franklin; the American Revolution; 18th and 19th-century natural history; western scientific expeditions and travel including the journals of Lewis and Clark; polar exploration; the papers of Charles Willson Peale, including family and descendants; American Indian languages; anthropology including the papers of Franz Boas; the papers of Charles Darwin and his forerunners, colleagues, critics, and successors; history of genetics, eugenics, and evolution; history of biochemistry, physiology, and biophysics; 20th-century medical research; and history of physics. (The Library does not hold materials on philosophy in the modern sense.)

The fellowships, funded by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, are intended to encourage research in the Library's collections by scholars who reside beyond a 75-mile radius of Philadelphia. The fellowships are open to both U.S. citizens and foreign nationals who are holders of the Ph.D. or the equivalent, Ph.D. candidates who have passed their preliminary exams, and inde-

pendent scholars. Applicants in any relevant field of scholarship may apply. The stipend is \$1,900 per month, and the term of the fellowship is a minimum of one month and a maximum of three, taken between June 1, 1999 and May 31, 2000. Fellows are expected to be in residence for four consecutive weeks during the period of their award.

There is no special application form and this notice provides all the essential information needed to apply. Applicants should submit the following: (1) cover sheet stating a) name, b) title of project, c) expected period of residence, d) institutional affiliation, e) mailing address, f) telephone numbers, and e-mail if available, and g) social security number; (2) a letter (not to exceed three single-spaced pages) which briefly describes the project and how it relates to existing scholarship, states the specific relevance of the American Philosophical Society's collections to the project, and indicates expected results of the research (such as publications); (3) a c.v. or resume; and (4) one letter of reference (doctoral candidates must use their dissertation advisor). Published guides to the Society's collections are available in most research libraries, and a list of these guides is available on request. Applicants are strongly encouraged to consult the Library staff by mail or phone regarding the collections.

Address applications or inquiries to: Mellon Fellowships, American Philosophical Society Library, 105 South Fifth St., Philadelphia, PA 19106-3386.

Telephone: (215) 440-3400.

Applications must be received by March 1, 1999. Notice of awards will be mailed by May 1, 1999.

The planned consortium of social theory programmes has now been set up, and its Web page can be found at

<http://www.SOCIALTHEORY.ORG>

The "Archiv für die Geschichte der Soziologie in Österreich (AGSOe)" has established a Web page. The address is:

<http://www.kfunigraz.ac.at/sozwww/agsoe/>

Pat Duffy Hutcheon (duffyhut@istar.ca) wrote:

I wonder if your readers would be interested in my new website. It was created for me by an American social theorist who read LEAVING THE CAVE and became so enthusiastic that he apparently decided to try to make my work more widely known. He phoned out of the blue and offered me virtually unlimited Internet space, and at no cost to me. The site is now ready for viewing, although I intend to add at least twelve previously

published articles during the coming year. If you would like to take a look, the URL is as follows:

<http://humanists.net/pdhutcheon>

Bryan Turner has been appointed to the Chair of Sociology at Cambridge (in succession to Anthony Giddens); from November his address

will be Faculty of Social and Political Science, Free School Lane, Cambridge CB2 3RQ, England.

Irmela Gorges now has e mail. Her number is: Irmela.Gorges@fhv.Verwalt-Berlin.de

Impressions of the World Congress

by **Philippe Couton**

Although I had attended a previous World Congress of Sociology, the Montreal Congress was different for a number of reasons. Most importantly, I was to present a paper in a session. From passive observer I had become an active participant. My overall perception of the event was also different. I am now completing my Ph.D. and, in an appropriate Mertonian anticipatory socializing mode, tend to view these gatherings of sociologists through the more professional lens of an aspiring sociologist. The state of the discipline, the evolution of subfields and individuals, and other such concerns are now almost as important a part of the conference experience as the sociological lore on display. Lastly, the fact that I live in Montreal and did not have to travel to attend the congress gave it a slightly different feel. I enjoyed the convenience, but at the same time missed the excitement of novelty and discovery.

Despite these singularities, approaching such a massive event is always a daunting affair. Poring over the program with a friend on Monday morning over a cup of coffee outside the Convention Center we each devised a different strategy to select the sessions we wished to attend. He looked for topics outside his usual specialty to perhaps discover new directions, while at the same time making sure he was not missing the sessions most relevant to his area. I went straight to the back of the book, looking for familiar names. In the end, sessions and times were highlighted, schedules compiled, notes compared, and we set off in different directions. At the table next to us, a group of young, apparently Scandinavian sociologists were going through the same process. The name "Jeffrey Alexander" came up repeatedly in their otherwise impenetrable conversation.

I managed to attend at least two sessions a day, although a mild bout of presentation anxiety forced me to stay home rewriting sentences and rehearsing my 15 minutes of exposure at the quadrennial global gathering of sociologists. The bewildering number of presenters and topics

makes it difficult to come away with a general impression of the event. Rather, it was an opportunity to witness the great diversity of our discipline. The multiplicity of theoretical approaches and substantive areas within sociology is not new, but it becomes even more visible when it is compounded with numerous different national traditions.

It is important for a thesis-writing student to be removed from the often narrow confines of one's research interest and habitual influences, even only for a week-long conference. The symposia in particular were often the occasion for stimulating, high-powered debates on important cross-disciplinary topics. I inevitably found myself wishing that this sense of overarching debate would trickle down more consistently into the more specialized sessions. The need for specialization of course precludes this most of the time. Nevertheless, more efforts at divulging the general significance of particular, and sometimes arcane, cases under sociological investigation would be nice.

RC08 is fortunate in that ideas form a big part of the history of sociology. Ideological, theoretical, and methodological debates often cut across temporal and geographical boundaries, lending many of the committee's sessions an undeniable coherence. Presentations that seemed widely different on paper often turned out to be complementary, and proved fertile ground for debate. This was even truer of sessions in which participants actually tried to address the question at hand, which happened with commendable regularity.

Lastly, the most important part of the congress naturally occurred outside the walls of the massive Palais des Congrès, or the hallways of UQAM: around a beer with co-participants, or at a barbecue with fellow students. Going home every night made it less likely to encounter forlorn sociologists in hotel lobbies or around Chinatown, although the most significant debates did occur at informal gatherings. It might be a good idea to encourage these practices more systematically.

Dues Information

The basic RCHS subscription is US\$10 for one year, or \$30 for 4 years. For students, however, it is \$5 or \$15. This reduced rate also applies to others from non-OECD countries who would have difficulty in paying the full rate; if unable to arrange even the reduced rate, please write to the Secretary to explain the circumstances and ask for free membership. RCHS is a Research Committee of ISA, so RCHS members are expected to be ISA members.

There is also a facility for paying to the central ISA, which enables those who wish to do so to use a credit card; a copy of their form is attached to enable you to do this, and it can be used even if you are not then also paying the ISA subscription - *though only if you are an ISA member*. Here - with apologies for the complexity, which our need to avoid our account's high foreign-exchange charges makes necessary - is how to pay if *not* doing so via the ISA. **Only people using a British bank account should send their dues to the past-secretary, Professor Jennifer**

Platt; this can be done either by sending a cheque made out to "RCHS Platt", or by direct transfer to Girobank account 12 574 8302. (The cheque should be in £ sterling, with the dollar amount translated into the equivalent at the tourist rate of exchange; at the time of writing, that is c. £6.08 or £18.24.) **All other members should send the money to Prof. Dirk Kaesler**, Universität Marburg, Institut für Soziologie, Am Grün 1, D 35037 Marburg, Germany, or, in continental Europe, to minimize bank charges use the Postal Giro Service: Postgiroamt München (BLZ 700 100 80), Account 822 22-809 Kaesler RCHS. He will inform the Secretary, so only one letter is required. **Please think at the same time of sending news of publications, meetings, work in progress etc., plus any address changes.**

Membership in the RCHS is open to anyone interested in the field. You become a member as soon as your application form and money have been received by the secretary.

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