Newsletter June 2019

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RC14 news

Forthcoming activities

Media Narratives of the Crisis: Contemporary Representations
Athens (Greece), November 7 – 8 2019
Website of the conference: www.fimenarratives.com

IV ISA Forum of Sociology
Porto Alegre (Brazil), July 14 – 18, 2020
Abstract submission deadline: **September 30th, 2019**

RC 14 Sessions for the IV ISA Forum of Sociology

<u>**Session 1:**</u>

**Civic Engagement, Political Consumerism and Participatory Communication:
New Challenges of Social Media at 21st Century**
Many claims have been made about the emergence of a digital turn that has radically transformed the possibilities for politics through traditional, modernist and postmodernist binaries of subject/object, state/society, politics/economics, public/private, consumption/production, time/space, mind/body, labour/leisure, culture/nature, and human/post human. This turn has run through several phases, beginning from cybernetics, databases, artificial intelligence, personal computers, at 20th century, up to social media, targeted digital advertising, self-quantification, big data, and cloud computing, at 21st century. This session will develop interdisciplinary assessments of the digital's impact on society. It will interrogate the claims of both positive features and critical rethinking of social media activities. "Digital optimists" assert that Internet and social media create new forms of community and solidarity, creative innovation, participatory communication, social activism, and distributed democracy. "Digital critics" argue that digital technologies have not brought only positive change, but have rather engendered controversial phenomena as political consumerism, purchasing practices, and at the same time extended domination through new forms of control as well as networked authoritarianism, digital divide and new digital alienation 2.0, or the rise of the surveillance society.

Presenters will engage with the possibilities, potentials, pitfalls, limits, and ideologies of digital activism through social media practices. And participants are welcomed to explore main challenges of Internet participatory culture, futures, places and possibilities of critique in the age of digital subjects and digital objects.

Session Organizer: Oksana Lychkovska, oksanalychkovska@gmail.com

Contesting Digital Formations: Power, Values, and Visions
ISA Research Committees Futures Research (RC07), Sociology of Communication, Knowledge and Culture (RC14), Sociology of Science and Technology (RC23) are planning one or more Joint Sessions.

Digital formations, including the Internet, social media, big data, artificial intelligence, and robotics are reshaping the world. They bring joy and productivity gains, but they also unleash new inequalities and unprecedented risks of surveillance, turbulence, and disruption.

The new digital technologies have global reach but are not globally uniform. Diverse social actors cooperate, compete, or are in conflict over the social shaping of digital formations. Outcomes vary according to differential access to resources, capacities, political-legal frameworks, and changing constellations of forces.
This session aims to compare digital formations in different sites, regimes, and regions. Papers are welcome that address questions such as: Who contests the power of Alphabet, Amazon, Apple, Facebook, and Microsoft? How are election campaigns and their outcomes being shaped by access to big data? How do algorithms reinforce inequalities, and who controls them? What ethics can shape and control artificial intelligence? Who captures the benefits of productivity gains, who loses out, and on what factors does this depend on? How does China maintain its cyberwall and implement its social credit system? How can smaller countries and subaltern groups maintain distinct digital pathways? What are the dominant trends, probable and possible scenarios? What social actors contest current trajectories? What values are in play? What are the alternative visions for the short and long-terms? And what are the major tasks for sociological research?

Session Organizer: Markus Schulz, markus@markus-s-schulz.net

Cultural Consumption Studies in the Global South

Cultural Consumption studies in the Global South face epistemological challenges related to diverse social and cultural contexts, distant from the Western and Northern traditional perspectives on cultural studies. They also deal with methodological difficulties, due mainly to the multiple social and cultural realities of these countries, as well as the lack of resources of the cultural sector.

Post-colonial and decolonial studies aim to focus on the different realities within the Global South, which don´t accept the traditional and colonial perspectives from the North. The reality of the Global South is marked by the diversity and coexistence between different ways of thinking, educating and dealing with society: the new, fruit of development and economic independence, and the old, heritage of poverty and domination. This articulation between traditions and modernities generates a heterogeneous reality, which embraces contemporary forms of intercultural mixtures.

Given these aspects, studies of Cultural Consumption in the Global South require specific reflections and adaptations in relation to epistemological and methodological models used in the North. We welcome papers that address these issues and challenge us to think deeply about cultural consumption in the Global South.

Session Organizer: Viviane Riegel, vivianeriegel@gmail.com

Desafíos De Las Plataformas Digitales a Las Políticas y Gestión Cultural
El desafío de las políticas culturales se plantea cada vez más en el ámbito audiovisual digital. Las denominadas plataformas OTT "Over The Top" audiovisuales -Netflix, Amazon, Disney así como en el ámbito de la música Youtube- vienen creciendo aceleradamente tanto en Estados Unidos, América Latina como en Europa con consecuencias relevantes para todas las fases de la producción audiovisual y con particular incidencia sobre los mecanismos de circulación, distribución, acceso y forma de consumo cultural de la población.

Esta problemática permite analizar por una parte las nociones de política cultural asociada a la soberanía cultural e identidad cultural y, por otra, la transformación de las prácticas, usos sociales y gustos culturales vinculada a la transformación del consumo cultural mundializado que constituyen nuevos modelos de valoración social de los productos audiovisuales.

En este contexto surgen varias preguntas. ¿Qué estrategias resultan más adecuadas para impulsar la apreciación o valor social de las producciones locales/nacionales ancladas cada vez más en el ámbito digital? ¿En qué medida plataformas y redes digitales constituyen oportunidades de ampliar el acceso social a la música y al cine regional? ¿Cuáles son las posibilidades de esta nueva generación de servicios audiovisuales de promover un espacio más diverso? ¿Qué riesgos de dominio cultural plantean las plataformas de origen norteamericano como agentes hegemónicos de acceso audiovisual global?¿Qué papel tienen los organismos internacionales, regionales y nacionales públicos para regular los espacios audiovisuales?

Session Organizer: Rosario Radakovich, rosario_radakovich@yahoo.com

Digital Authoritarianism in the Age of Globalization
Digital media has a liberating potential for those who have a critical position to the authoritarian rulers in many countries. The use of the internet has enabled people to have access to unfiltered and uncontrolled information in authoritarian countries and in some degree, it has led to new challenges to the authoritarian regimes such as in Tunisia or Egypt in 2011 during the Arab spring. In this sense, the digital media facilitates opportunities for journalists, subordinated people and activists to undermine authoritarian information control and develop alternative virtual communications and communities. However the authoritarian governments around the world are tightening control over interactivity of their citizens and restricting their access to the information. The control of the information flow and online communication have become requisite for "networked authoritarians" to maintain their repressive systems. For this purpose, these regimes use well-sophisticated multiple methods, policies and technologies to surveillance their populations to identify critical voices and pre-empt the potential challenges.

This proposed panel aims to explore the methods that authoritarian regimes employ to build their digital authoritarian system in order to establish hegemony over the society. Researchers are kindly invited to contribute to the conference through submissions of their research abstracts.

Topics of interest for submission include, but are not limited to:
The Internet and state control in authoritarian regimes
Social movements, the Internet and state.
Digital authoritarianism, democracy and freedom of speech
Self-censorship and digital silence

Session organizer: Janroj Yilmaz KELES, J.Keles@mdx.ac.uk

European Elections, Social Networks and New Political Communication Style

Elections to the European Parliament have long been considered "second class" elections (Reif & Schmitt, 1980). Two main factors have been put forward to justify this assessment: the persistent low level of participation in this vote in most European Union countries and the weakness of the European Parliament in relation to the competences and powers of the different national parliaments

In the context of thin ideologies (Cas Mudde 2004, 2017), arrival in power of Emmanuel Macron ('hors-parti' representative) and adoption of a new populist communication style (Aalberg 2018) by traditional and populist parties as well, we propose to analyze the disruptive character or on the contrary, more classical character of this political communication at the European level. The main research question will focus on the character of political communication within the countries of the Union :either the classic political communication or, on the contrary, with the increased growth of social networks the innovation and creativity based on hybridization of voices, contents and styles.

It will be significant to analyze how we move from the public discourse "of" an organization (the communication generated by the entity itself, which speaks about itself and disseminates the information that it considers relevant) to the public discourse "about" an organization (all the information available that is circulating in the communicative system but also the information that other parties, other groups and other people have spread about the party/leader/group).

Session organizer: Daniela Frumusani, danifrumusani@yahoo.com

Media, Democracy and Development: Historical and Present Connections
In 1949, Daniel Lerner proposed a relationship between new media and the modern mentality in the Third World. Although much criticized, his insights survive and influenced optimistic views of the impact of television and the internet around the globe. Here, we ask a different question: what is the impact on the imposition of restrictions on the press and on book culture in general, in countries that had been witnessing reasonable economic development? Do restrictions on the functioning of the media in the formative period of a nation have long-term impacts on economic development? Conversely, can a limited labor market, with few formal vacancies in competitive firms, discourage investment in education? What is the impact of low literacy and education rates on political culture and on the nature of the public sphere in a modern society? In this session, we would like to examine the multiple relationships between economic development, adoption of new media, and written culture and education.

We are interested in studies on so-called developing countries, and in particular those where there have been restrictions on the printing press, such as colonial Brazil and the Ottoman Empire, or which somehow differ from the Northern European and North American model of media development. We welcome papers using a variety of methods, particularly those bridging interdisciplinary gaps. Our goal is to discuss the problems of development, education, and the media pointing to new paths in the understanding of the apparently intractable obstacles to achieving a free and just society.

Session organizer: Heloisa Pait, heloisa.pait@gmail.com

Session 8:

Presente y futuro de la sociología como ciencia y profesión en un mundo en cambio. Un diálogo global de experiencias entre ALAS e ISA

Los Grupos de Investigación RC07 Investigación sobre el Futuro, RC14 Sociología de la comunicación, del conocimiento y de la cultura; RC16 Teoría Sociológica; RC18 Sociología Política, buscan motivar desde nuestras diversas experiencias el diálogo sobre el nuevo papel de la sociología y rol del sociólogo/a en este mundo diverso. Destacar las experiencias y nuevos desafíos de inserción laboral y profesional como su aporte teórico político en las políticas públicas, en la opinión pública y en la vida cotidiana de diversos grupos sociales subalternos, que implica más y nuevos desafíos en las prácticas de la producción del saber sociológico y de su oficio, en los compromisos sociales y públicos, entre otros estrechamente unidos a las otras ciencia al servicio de la vida social en un diálogo entre la Asociación Latinoamericana de Sociología (ALAS) y la Asociación Internacional de Sociología (ISA). El objetivo de la sesión es presentar distintos aportes, perspectivas e iniciativas que se están elaborando tanto desde la ALAS e ISA para atender los retos futuros del desarrollo de la sociología en nuestros países con una visión global prospectiva en permanente cambio.

Session organizer: Miguel Serna, miguel.serna@cienciassociales.edu.uy

Reproducing Medical Knowledge That Obscures the Environment's Impact on Health

Over the last five decades environmental health researchers have produced extensive knowledge about the impact of toxicant exposure on human health. However, as Phil Brown et al. (2001) and others have shown for print media, such information rarely makes its way into mainstream depictions of disease, which tend to depict disease in biologically reductionist terms that obscures the role of environmental pollution. This glaring discrepancy has important social implications. On the one hand, obscuring the health-damaging effects of pollution shields pollution producers and the politicians who support them. On the other, concealing the information prevents workers and those living near pollution production to protect themselves, thereby condemning them to higher rates of disease and shorter lives. These problems underscore the significant connection between knowledge and power.

This session is geared towards building on Brown et al.'s (2001) ground-breaking work. Towards that end, we invite papers that consider other influential agents who produce pollution-obscuring depictions of disease (such as governments, the medical profession, non-profit patient support groups, etc.), the social processes through which they continue to produce individualizing disease discourses, the contextual, cultural and structural factors that enable them to do so, the unequal impact of the problem, and/or what is being done to address this social problem.

Session organizer: Manuel VALLEE, m.vallee@auckland.ac.nz

<u>Session 10:</u>

Revisiting the Role of Digital Media in Social Movements
The advent of digital media has been observed to create opportunities for social movements to thrive in different regions of the world. The growing popularity of mobile technologies and social networking sites, in particular, has allowed activist groups and active citizens to self-mobilize and self-organize without being confined by mainstream media and traditional organizations. However, adopting new media and information technologies in collective or connective action requires citizen activists to operate under different premises and may expose them to police surveillance and internal conflict. The question remains about whether and how digital media empower or constrain the capacity of social movements.

This session seeks to revisit the contemporary relationship between digital media and social movements. It solicits submissions to discuss and debate about the role of digital media in recent social movements. In particular, we would like to address the following research questions: What is the role of digital media in the processes of mobilization and collective action? What are the opportunities and challenges of using new media and information technologies for political development and progressive social change? How does digital media adoption promote and/or hinder the advancement of diverse social and political agendas? At the theoretical level, how should we conceptualize the ways in which digital media expand and/or alter our understanding of contemporary social movements? Contributions are welcome from various methodological approaches and geo-political contexts.

Session organizer: David DUENAS-CID, david.duenas@gmail.com

Taste and Cultural Practices in the Prism of Intersectionality

he sociology of cultural practices has long emphasized class social relations in the analysis of stratification of tastes or inequalities in the face of culture. Recent works have placed greater emphasis on gender, race or generations in the social structuring of cultural practices and tastes. However, there is still little research that crosses these different forms of social differentiation. In connection with the theme of the forum, this session aims to host papers that sociologically study taste and cultural practices from the perspective of the intersectionality of power relations. The papers will deal with the effects and, better still, the interactions of at least two differentiating factors, two power relations, whether it is gender, social class, generation or racial or territorial assignment. Empirical research-based presentations will be preferred, regardless of the methods of investigation used (archival research, ethnography, statistics, discourse analysis, image analysis, etc.).

Session organizer: Wenceslas LIZE wenceslas.lize@gmail.com

Television: Productions, Representations and Receptions

Even if Internet has concurred an important part of audiences worldwide, television is still today a dominant media that plays a crucial role in every day dramaturgy not only through its productions but also through the representations projected by it.

Social representations are fundamental in the understanding of everyday life and in social stratification. Democracy, inequality, gendered roles, knowledge and culture are determined and valorized by the representations that are dominant in every society. Television, is a media that is in constant dialogue with society and as a result, television products adapt their discourse to these representations. Thus, the study of such representations as well as their reception by the public is of a great importance for social scientists.

The discipline of Cultural Studies aims to enlighten the process of reception and of interpretation of media and cultural contents by the public. Stuart Hall, the founder of Cultural Studies, pointed out that the different kinds of public, decode media messages in a different way (according to their ideologies and standards). David Morley (and others) added more factors influencing the decoding (such as gender, age, social level, cultural background etc.). The reception, far from being a passive activity, is a dynamic process that depends on several aspects and demands a constant actualization.

In this session, we invite abstracts for papers that address any aspect of this kind television related researches. Presentations may address various topics related to production processes, representation analysis and/or the reception of television contents.

Session organizer: Dimitra Laurence Larochelle, larochelle.laurence@gmail.com

<u>Session 13 :</u>

The Conflict of Values in the Socio-Cultural Space
In the modern world, there is a gap in the social and cultural development of peoples and countries, a lot of threats to the establishment and strengthening of democracy appear, the achievement of people's well-being, inequality, a divergence of value ideas about the structure of social and political life are growing. Value contradictions are observed at the global, regional and local levels. The conflict of values, not only interests, creates geopolitical tension, but more often it manifests itself recently in the local space, especially in places where the number of migrants is increasing. This often provokes intolerance, physical and psychological violence, various types of xenophobia. Sociology is designed to delve into the nature of these phenomena, to seek answers to contemporary challenges, ways to harmonize interests, sociocultural integration, and to reveal the boundaries of pluralism of cultural values. Reports may include not only questions about the role of the social sciences, but also the media, the social network in developing a culture of communication, adapting the styles and lifestyles of different groups and individuals to the new environment.

Session organizer: Musa Yusupov, musa_y17@hotmail.com

Globalization, Communication and Cultural Change : Conceptual Issues and Empirical Reality

Globalization refers to widening, deepening and speeding up of worldwide interconnectedness in all aspects of contemporary social life. New communication technologies facilitate the process of globalization in such a way that the fields of interactions are cutting across the boundaries of communities and nation-states. In cultural field, in order to analyze this process, three conceptual frameworks have been developed, namely, differentialism- focusing much more on barriers that prevent flows that prevent flows that would serve to make cultures (and much else) more alike; convergence- process I which barriers are much weaker and the global flows are stronger, with the result that cultures are subject to many of the same flows and tend to grow more alike; and hybridization- in which external flows interact with internal flows in order to produce a unique cultural hybrid that combines elements of the two. Thus, globalization of culture can be analyzed in terms of the movement of objects, signs and people across region and intercontinental space. It can be mapped in terms of the geographical extensity of these movements and intensity or volume of such movements relative to the national and local as well as in terms of the speed-the velocity or rapidity at which images or ideas can be communicated from one place to another. The globalization of culture is facilitated with new communication technologies leading to diverse types of encounters such as homogenization, contestation, hybridization and indifference at the global, regional, national and local levels.

Session organizer: Virendra Singh, etdrvps@gmail.com

Session 15:

Environmental Aesthetics and Socio-Territorial Conflicts throughout Media
The world and Weltanschauung are changing as a result of scientific and technological advances. Therefore, by analyzing the configurations of human social life throughout the evolutionary history of humanity, we find that "technology transfer" has always been an interaction between nature and culture for all possible realizations of human civilization, as stated by Wolfgang Welsch (2012) concerning Darwin's evolutionary aesthetics. In these ways, more complex environmental crises and climate change can be understood through aesthetics and communication, with the coexistence of humans and nonhumans under the digital process as the most appropriate relationship. In theory, an agreement to combat climate change according to the industrial and financial aspects of the world through technologies of communication and artistic practices can integrate art with a social critique on the Internet as collective intelligence due to the influence of images. However, this agreement could present images of a nostalgic return to nature artificially, valuing biodiversity through broadcasted visual arts, and so contesting the fact. Also, to this end, we confirm art—the subject of the study of aesthetics—in terms of creation, seeking innovative solutions, especially in the understanding of our development with concepts of equality, freedom, and democracy. In this respect, two aspects of cultural transformation are important—technique, in which the term "art" is included, and knowledge to separate facts based on perception when considering the attraction of images, which was always emphasized in the communication process and language development.

Session organizer: Christiane Wagner, christiane.wagner@malix.univ-paris1.fr

Session 16:

Postmodern Mythologies: The Contemporary Society (reflected) in Media Narratives

The sociological analysis places the social representations and beliefs in the center of "sociality" (often indicating their relation with archetypes). This aspect conduces to take into consideration the mythic dimension of any social existence and intends to reveal the dominant myths of an era (of a culture, a generation or a class). The contemporary imaginary (the symbols expressing the contemporary life) exists everywhere: in politics and official ceremonies but also in everyday "commonplace" practices and behaviors (in familiar objects, encounters, popular entertainment and narrations).

In this frame, we consider as an ideal field of analysis of the contemporary symbolisms and of the supporting/ corroborative theories and ideas of the contemporary social organization, the different "media narratives". Referring to the "narratives" (in R. Barthes' sense), we include not only the political, economic or social analysis in the information journals and magazines (printed or audiovisual), but also the narratives related to the "explanation" and/or "symbolization" of the contemporary habits and attitudes (such as games, life-style and reality shows and even popular artistic products) in mass or "social" media (taking into consideration that the "image" plays a primordial role in nowadays symbolisms).

This session invites media analyses which "reveal" how essential issues of the contemporary beliefs on existence (such as the meaning of "superpower", the fantasies on the identities and "otherness" or of "social control", the issues related to "duration", the "dangerous impulses" etc.) are understood and expressed in the contemporary media narratives (in any media, anywhere).

Session organizer: Christiana Constantopoulou,
christiana.constantopoulou@panteion.gr

Members' publications

Paul Lopes. Art Rebels: *Race, Class and Gender in the Art of Miles Davis and Martin Scorsese.*
For more information: https://press.princeton.edu/titles/13349.html

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If you want to share any information with RC14 members please contact

Dimitra Laurence Larochelle at larochelle.laurence@gmail.com

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Thank you!!!

Dimitra Laurence Larochelle, Newsletter editor