FEATURE ARTICLE

Reflections on the Charlie Hebdo affair.

These reflections raise for me difficult questions concerning the critical role of cosmopolitan thought, the political character of jihadi Islamism and its relation to Islam, the abstraction of categories like ‘the Muslims’ and ‘the Jews’, the role of national and nationalist elites, the troubling spectre of what we might call inverted Islamophobia, and not least the complicated nature of relations between Islamophobia and antisemitism. European sociology should not evade criticism of idealised narratives, but it should also be open to criticism of the critics themselves.

Read more on pages 4-11.

EDITOR’S MESSAGE

As we prepare for the 12th ESA Conference in Prague this coming August with its focus on Differences, Inequalities and Sociological Imagination, we are reminded that Europe today remains a divided place with inequalities becoming more pronounced following the economic crisis and the rising prominence of populist and radical right wing politics. Both in my native Britain and my current home, Finland, UKIP and the Perussuomalaiset have emerged as a political force with anti-EU, anti-immigration (arguably xenophobic) and explicitly nationalist agendas. People across Europe have experienced the pains of “austerity measures” and long-term periods of recession that have seen the role back of the welfare state, hitting the most vulnerable the hardest. So, what can our discipline offer in such a political climate?

This is no small question: it cuts to the heart of the kinds of sociological knowledge we, as sociologists, produce today. Though reclaiming the sociological imagination, our discipline may provide an important critique that is vital for understanding of the social and political tensions at play in our evermore-interconnected world. In his call to embrace a sociological imagination, C. Wright Mills (1959:7) defines this imagination as “the capacity to shift from one perspective to another—from the political to the psychological; from the examination of a single family to the national budgets of the whole world … It is the capacity to range from the most impersonal and remote transformations to the most intimate features of the human self—and to see the relations between the two.”

With most of us practicing our craft at university institutions that increasingly operate according to the logic of “publish or perish”—a culture that privileges rankings tables and citations indexes—, we often forget the importance of the knowledge we produce in providing an alternate voice—contrasting ways of thinking about a world that is again becoming increasingly divided. With this in mind, we turn to the content of our current issue, which in a variety of different ways reflects the important ways in which our discipline may provide a critical viewpoint on society in the months and years to come.

In this issue of European Sociologist we begin with a message from our president, Carmen Leccardini, in which she discusses the meeting of National Associations that took place in Paris in November 2014. In this address, Carmen Leccardini highlights the key aspects of our shared discipline and fallout of Horizon 2020, which entails funding cuts to the Social Sciences and Humanities at a time in which our societies face substantial challenges.

Following our President’s Message, the Viewpoint section of our newsletter includes a collection of short sociological reflections upon the terrorist attacks that rocked Europe in recent weeks. This includes an introduction by Robert Fine, followed by contributions from Karin Creutz and Marko Juntunen, Ghassan Hage, Farhad Khosrokhavar, Tariq Modood, and, last but by no means least, Ali Qadir. Following this, our Perspective section by Louise Corti considers the possibilities associated with the archiving of qualitative data—a practice that many research-funding bodies insist upon when funding sociological research. Alongside these regular features, this issue includes an introductory letter by Michalis Lianos, the new editor of European Societies; a symposium report by Aleksandra Zamarajewa dedicated to the memory of Richard Grathoff; a report on the Bielefeld Graduate School’s 6th Annual Seminar titled “A New ‘Social Question’ or ‘Crisis as Usual’? Historical and Sociological Perspectives on Inequalities” by Heidi Käkelä and Cleovi Mosuela; and a tribute to the memory and works of Stuart Hall by Iain Chambers.

If you wish to contribute to the next issue of European Sociologist, please email the editor at newsletter@europeansociology.org.

Peter Holley
March 2015

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In November 2014, thanks to the work of the Chair of the Council of National Associations, Roberto Cipriani, ESA organized a meeting in Paris with the National Associations on the issue of ‘Research and Teaching in Europe’. Craig Calhoun, Director of the London School of Economics and President of the International Institute of Sociology, took part in the meeting, together with Lionel Thelen, representing the European Research Council. Welcome addresses were given by Michel Wieviorka, ISA Past President and director of the Fondation Maison des Sciences de l’Homme in Paris, Sari Hanafi, ISA Vice President and Carmen Leccardi, ESA President. I would like to summarize the main issues I raised on that occasion.

The theme chosen for the meeting was one that has special significance and resonance for our community: discussing ‘Research and Teaching in Europe’ means exploring how our discipline is practiced on this continent, and therefore talking about our identity. And as always when we talk about identity, the temporal dimension is of strategic importance. In other words, the challenges we face today have to be interpreted from a historical perspective. On one hand the past – where we come from, the path that has taken us into the second decade of this century, and our legacy. On the other hand, it is important to look to the future – the horizons that are opening up before us, their reach (as we know, having a short, medium or long term temporal horizon conditions the construction of social action), and the tasks they entail for the community we are honoured to be a part of, namely the European Sociological Association.

ESA is an academic association that was founded in the early 90s and now numbers just short of two thousand sociologists from the European Union and beyond (more than fifty nationalities are represented). Although the first European conference of sociology was held in Vienna in 1992, and the first president, Sylvia Walby, was elected in 1995, the idea of a European association of sociology took shape - not by chance - between 1987 and 1989. It was a crucial period for the history of Europe. The political (and symbolic) geography of the European continent that emerged from the Second World War was about to change radically. The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 not only marked the end of the confrontation between two social models, i.e. Soviet and liberal/democratic; it also concluded a historical era. These developments unleashed a torrent of reflections, questions, and lines of inquiry, and above all hopes. This new scenario was the focus of European sociology, and ESA guaranteed its institutional expression.

Twenty-five years on, the European and international landscape has changed radically. Globalization is no longer a concept confined to social analysis but the day-to-day experience of all – as is the relationship with ICT. Also as a consequence of the dramatic economic crisis of recent years, social inequalities have increased exponentially. Migrations from the South to the North of the world, and from the east to the west of Europe, mean we need to rethink the concepts of difference and social integration. Sociology, together with the other social sciences, has to engage with this complex scenario and the challenges to collective life that it raises. In short: the objectives of the ESA – to provide keys for interpreting processes of change so as to render them intelligible – have not changed. What has undoubtedly, and radically, changed is the social scenario within which this project is pursued.

In this new global scenario, I believe that sociology can maintain its multifaceted identity as a discipline that aspires both to acquire a systematic knowledge of the social world and at the same time to expose and critique the established order and the apparatus of power. To accomplish this we must necessarily draw on our discipline’s extraordinary theoretical and methodological legacy. According to Alfred Whitehead, “A science that hesitates to forget its founders is lost”. As Merton asserts (and if I remember correctly, Whitehead’s aphorism is the epigraph to his book Social Theory and Social Structure) the legacy of the classics has a point when we engage with it, discuss it, and - why not? - openly reject it. But it remains an essential point of reference for sociological practice, in terms of both research and teaching. As for the latter, I believe that in today’s multiple, segmented panorama of sociological teachings and disciplines it remains important to enable direct contact with the classics. This is undoubtedly more time-consuming than studying them from a secondary analysis. In this case too, as for the big questions regarding democratic practices – such as deliberative democracy – more time needs to be spent. In our high speed society the importance of this should not be overlooked, in both this and other fields connected to the craft of sociology.

In relation to research, as we all know, the methods and techniques that sociological research has at its disposal depend on the type of empirical problem being tackled. It is vital that young sociologists, from undergraduate students to PhD students and post docs, are encouraged to take an open, even eclectic approach – following in Simmel’s footsteps – to questions of theory, methodology and research. There
has never before been such a plurality of approaches, perspectives and methods, without any single dominant paradigm. I do not see this scenario as one of fragmentation and crisis in terms of either theory or methodology. With regard to the former, as Craig Calhoun and Michel Wieviorka recall in their ‘Manifesto for Social Sciences’, globalisation and individualization are opening new arenas, in which entirely new theoretical questions are emerging. From the second point of view, that of methodology, I believe that methodological pluralism is the natural consequence of the growing variety of issues being studied. In my view, the variegated panorama of approaches and methods is not symptomatic of a crisis of sociology, but rather points to the new challenges that our discipline is called to take up.

But when it comes to research on a European level, there are widespread feelings of dissatisfaction. The figures in the new EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation Horizon 2020 – which covers the period from 2014 to 2020 – are clear proof of how the social sciences and humanities are undervalued. We have already discussed the cuts in the SSH budget from the 7th Framework Program to Horizon 2020, in the very period when Europe is facing demanding economic, political and cultural challenges. This effectively denies the contribution that disciplines like sociology can make towards guaranteeing processes of social inclusion, fostering forms of public debate and improving the quality of civic culture in society. A petition was launched by ESA in March 2015 to protest against the devaluing of the specific forms of knowledge that belong to the discipline we practice - as well as other disciplines within SSH - to the advantage of forms of knowledge associated with potentially greater economic returns in the here and now. It is important that we collect a good number of signatures before the Prague conference: signing the petition and encouraging colleagues and friends to sign is one concrete way to assert a vision of sociology as a form of knowledge, with an inherently critical approach, that cannot be regimented.

Carmen Leccardi
March 2015

Click here to sign ESA's petition.

The 12th Conference of the European Sociological Association

Differences, Inequalities and Sociological Imagination

Between August 25th and 28th, 2015, ESA’s 12th conference will take place in the beautiful city of Prague in the Czech Republic.

Our confirmed plenary speakers include:

• Professor Emeritus Zygmunt Bauman (University of Leeds)
• Professor Gurminder K. Bhambra (University of Warwick)
• Professor Emeritus Arlie R. Hochschild (University of California, Berkeley)
• Professor Christopher T. Whelan (Queen’s University Belfast & the UCD Geary Institute)

Please click here for more information and to take advantage of the discounted early registration fee.
On behalf of the European Sociological Association let me welcome readers to this discussion forum on the Charlie Hebdo affair. We hope that this collection of sociological opinion pieces will help us all with the difficulties of understanding these events and meeting the challenges they raise for European sociology.

Under the register of ‘Je suis Charlie’ a demonstration of an estimated million and a half people was held in Paris in January 2015. Elsewhere in France it is estimated that another million and a half people went on the streets. It was one of the largest public protests in French history. The dis-information now being circulated that the funeral service for victims of allied bombing in Paris 1944, attended by Marshall Pétain, was of equal size, instructs us only to ignore fascist propaganda. These demonstrations were held in protest against the murders of 10 editors and cartoonists of a left wing magazine, Charlie Hebdo, for having published cartoons representing the prophet Mohammed, of one security officer and one (Muslim) police officer for having been in the way, and of four (Jewish) shoppers in a Kosher supermarket for being Jewish. The murderers were supporters of a jihadi Islamist movement, Al Qaeda in Yemen.

The affirmative view of the Paris demonstration is that it manifested popular support for freedom of expression and religious tolerance and opposition to fundamentalism, racism and the assassin’s veto on critical discourse. The demonstration had a cosmopolitan face, which was more or less pronounced depending on whether freedom of expression was defended as a universal value, a European value, or a Republican value. From a cosmopolitan point of view, the protest seemed to belie the assumption of some sociologists that the cosmopolitan outlook is the ideology of an elite of ‘frequent flyers’.

The critical view, by contrast, emphasises the culpability of ‘the West’ and the partiality of its treasured ‘freedom of expression’. It focuses in part on the hypocrisy of national leaders linking arms in defence of the right of freedom of expression, which more than a few of these leaders violently suppress in their own countries. While the critique of double standards is in some cases fully justified, a show of adherence to freedom of expression may still be better than no show at all. At least it reveals a conflict between the masks of freedom some rulers wear and the repression they practice. It also focuses on the dangers of Islamophobic appropriation of the protest. It is argued that support for freedom of expression was strong only because it protects the expression of anti-Muslim sentiments, and that movements against the ‘Islamicisation of Europe’ bring to the fore a murkier reality beneath the elevated language of rights. Islamophobic appropriations of the protest certainly exist across Europe, exploiting confusion between contemporary Islam and jihadi islamism. They signify the dangers of all categorical thinking. However, the solidarity expressed in the Place de la République with the victims had a normative significance that seemed also to resist Islamophobia – witness the participation of many Muslims and the many refusals to countenance any discourse blaming Muslims for what was done in their name. Islamophobia cannot be explained by the behaviour of some Muslims, any more than antisemitism can be explained by the behaviour of some Jews.

This is not to say that the murders were merely the result of few rotten apples or a handful of criminals who happened to
be Muslim. A dance of death is being played out in a swath of societies, including those with majority Muslim populations, between religious fundamentalism and state authoritarianism. In a globalised world this dance of death is not containable within the regions of its provenance. In this context there is a real danger in Europe that those who seek a global confrontation between Islam and the West may gain the upper hand over those who seek dialogue and conviviality.

The murders themselves had an explicit antisemitic dimension: four Jews were murdered in the kosher supermarket because they were Jews; the one woman editor of Charlie Hebdo who was murdered was seemingly murdered because she was Jewish; the murder of Jews in Paris came after the murders of four people in the Jewish Museum in Brussels and before that the murders of a teacher and three students in a Jewish school in Toulouse. It was followed by the murder of another Jew outside a synagogue in Copenhagen. All these murders were committed in the name of one or other kind of Islamic fundamentalism. It is not Islamophobic to recognise the antisemitic traits displayed by Islamic fundamentalists.

Justified concern over Islamophobia does not justify either erosion of solidarity with the victims of the killings or failure to recognise the destructive impulses of the victimisers. Some radical intellectuals paint a global picture of Arab-Muslim persecution and poverty, rage and despair. This is all too recognisable in some instances, not least in the Parisian banlieues, but it belies the social differentiation and political plurality of Muslims both in France and more widely. The ‘Arab Spring’ was a struggle for democracy. More troubling for the fight against Islamophobia is the homogenised image of Muslim rage and despair that intellectuals of the left sometimes paint: it seems to mirror the Islamophobia that declares that blind rage is in the ‘culture’, if not ‘genes’, of Arab-Muslims. Equally troubling is the response that the cartoonists and editors of Charlie Hebdo brought their problems on themselves by gratuitously offending Muslims. Whatever we may think of Charlie – its self-image is antiracist, anti-authoritarian, anti-clerical and generally anti-establishment – the view of Muslims as generically offended and as wholly unreflective in their reactions also seems to offer an inverted image of Islamophobia. It challenges its conclusions but maintains its categorical frame of reference.

A more self-critical argument we find within the radical intelligensia is that ‘the West’ has forfeited the right to lecture anyone on freedom of expression because of the double standards ‘we’ have shown in ‘our’ relations to the Arab-Muslim world. We may agree that the role of big powers, including Russia’s unyielding support for the monstrous Syrian regime, has been equivocal at best and dreadful at worst. We may or may not agree, for instance, with American bombing of Serbian forces in the 1990s even if it was designed to put an end to the slaughter of Muslims, or now with American bombing of ISIS to save the Yazidis and Kurds. We may or may not think that ‘the West’ betrayed the democratic Syrian opposition and democratic movements elsewhere in Arab countries through its non-intervention on their behalf. However, the role given to radical intellectuals, to translate murderous attacks on outspoken critics of jihadi Islamism and on Jews into a language of political argument they broadly endorse, seems to convey a diminished view of the capacity of most Muslims to think for themselves.

These reflections raise for me difficult questions concerning the critical role of cosmopolitan thought, the political character of jihadi Islamism and its relation to Islam, the abstraction of categories like ‘the Muslims’ and ‘the Jews’, the role of national and nationalist elites, the troubling spectre of what we might call inverted Islamophobia, and not least the complicated nature of relations between Islamophobia and antisemitism. European sociology should not evade criticism of idealised narratives, but it should also be open to criticism of the critics themselves. These interesting times pose challenges for European sociology, the meeting of which will doubtless require courage, cleverness and good judgment.

Robert Fine
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Feelings of injustice enhances radicalization

The attacks in Paris and Copenhagen have sparked an intense debate about freedom of speech, anti-Semitism and the radicalization of Muslim youth. The reactions that followed the attacks in different parts of Europe and North America show worrying signs, which have not yet been highlighted in the public debate.

The discussion is guided by a concern for new terrorist attacks, but only the Charlie Hebdo attack was clearly linked to international terrorism. The biggest problem in the public debate is the presumption that within every Muslim lingers a religiously motivated potential for violence. Researchers agree, however, that there is no causal relationship between religiosity of Muslims and extremist thinking – religiously devout Muslims are not prone to acts of terrorism, or to accept violence as a tool for political or religious purposes.

A comprehensive study by the Pew Institute in 2008 indicated that religious Muslims are more likely to condemn violence than secular ones. Similar conclusions were drawn by the British intelligence service MI5’s study (2008) of several hundred radical groups and persons belonging to these group’s spheres of influence. According to this study, Muslims who have a more accepting attitude towards violence are not particularly religious.

The path to radicalization in the UK mainly follows four tracks. Almost a tenth of the radicalized had experienced a close person’s death, for some migration without family members had created a sense of rootlessness, the remaining had a criminal or drug-related background. Especially prison experiences were a factor in increased susceptibility to extremist organizations. Only a few of the radicalized individuals had received an intensely religious upbringing – MI5’s study notes that a religious home was unusual, for instance, with American bombing of Serbian forces in the 1990s even if it was designed to put an end to the slaughter of Muslims, or now with American bombing of ISIS to save the Yazidis and Kurds. We may or may not think that ‘the West’ betrayed the democratic Syrian opposition and democratic movements elsewhere in Arab countries through its non-intervention on their behalf. However, the role given to radical intellectuals, to translate murderous attacks on outspoken critics of jihadi Islamism and on Jews into a language of political argument they broadly endorse, seems to convey a diminished view of the capacity of most Muslims to think for themselves.

Three young Muslims were killed on February 10th on a university campus in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, USA, and in Canada a 28-year-old Muslim man was shot to death through the
door of his home. The media has not dealt with these attacks as hate crimes against Muslims. Thousands of Muslims in the West have expressed deep frustration on social media: why are these cases not treated as terror acts against Muslims?

The experiences of threat and fear of any community or group must be taken seriously, whether it be Jews, Muslims or ethnic minorities. However, it is important to be aware that tensions between communities can increase if the society is perceived as unfair in its effort to protect.

Many Muslims in Europe feel threatened from two sides - they live in fear of both the jihadists and of Islamophobic radicals. It should be remembered that the overwhelming majority of the victims of ISIS, al Qaeda and similar organizations are Muslims perceived in radical circles as “heretical”. European Muslims’ conflicting emotions is increased by the awareness of inducing fear in people when boarding a plane, getting on the subway or moving in crowds.

As a result of the attacks, the Muslim population has borne a collective responsibility for the events. Muslim societies are expected to condemn the violence and distance themselves from radicalism. Muslim communities or individuals, however, are just as responsible for the terrorists’ activities as non-Muslim Europeans or North Americans are of the violence directed against Muslims after the attacks.

A constant experience of injustice and exclusion only creates new recruitment opportunities for radical organizations. Terrorism researchers have emphasized that jihadist organizations offer community, identity and a life mission by appealing to a sense of victimhood. ISIS may seem like an attractive option when young people feel that they cannot find work and acceptance in Europe because of their religion, and that membership of a group is an opportunity to change the world. Thus, these organizations focus on recruiting young people living with a conflict of values. There is no point in trying to attract individuals with strong religious beliefs to the war fronts. According to research by the US Carnegie Institute up to a quarter of the European warriors who left for Syria are illiterate in a religious sense – a large part have never visited a mosque, and cannot recite a single verse from the Quran.

An atmosphere that focuses on threats and accuses Muslims, as well as overlooking their persecution and the discrimination they encounter, only increases support for radical organizations. In this sense, the European media plays straight in the hands of radical jihadist organizations. In the effort to combat radicalization an important step is to create an inclusive society. We must also engage in an analytical and fact-based discussion that reveals stereotypes and simplistic models of thinking.

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Not Afraid

There is a close relation between satire and secularism as the latter came to emerge in Europe. Secularism as is well-known gained strength historically as a reaction to an era of European inter-religious violence and massacres. It was not only a desire for the separation of Church and State as the classical formula has it. It was also an attempt to keep religious affect out of politics. This was in the belief that religion, because it was faith rather than reasoned thinking, produced too much of a narcissistic affect: a belief unable to ‘keep its distance’ from what it is believing. It was thought that this narcissism was behind the murderous intensity of religiously driven conflicts. Being able to laugh at yourself literally means being able to not take yourself overly seriously, which in turn was crucial for both: a) the de-intensification of the affects generated by the defense of what one believes in and b) the relativisation of one’s personal beliefs, which as Claude Levi-Strauss argued, is crucial for thinking oneself comparatively and in relation to others (the opposite of narcissism).

There is no doubt that the Islamic fundamentalists of today represent the worst of modernity’s narcissistic tendencies. They look at the history of colonialism and the relation between the Christian colonial west and the colonised Muslim world and think, quite rightly, that the colonial world has offered them a rough deal, victimised them and treated them as shit. And, as they see it, this is so despite the greatness of their civilisation. So, they think they owe the non-Islamic world nothing. They are totally immersed in their Islam, take it overly seriously, and defending it in precisely the religious narcissistic murderous way that secularism has aimed to distance us Westerners from.

So, on the face of it, it appears as if Charlie Hebdo, and the ‘Je suis Charlie’ people identifying with it are involved in exactly this kind of struggle against the Islamic fundamentalists. Unfortunately, this is not the case. And when I say, unfortunately, I really mean it. Like many French-schooled people, I grew up with bandes dessinées and the humour of Cabu and Wolinski was part of the ABC of my socially acquired sense humour. So, affectively, part of me wants to say ‘Je suis Charlie’. Like some of my close family members who are infuriatingly Islamophobic, pro-Israeli and to the Right. They are part of my history and I still love them and love re-uniting with them. I am seriously devastated by the murders. So part of me wants to believe that to say ‘je suis Charlie’ is not to agree with them but to defend the space from where they have written. But, and once again, unfortunately, I don’t believe that space is what it appears to be.

It is worth remembering that if the secularists/satirists were right about the nature of religious political identification and emotions at the time of Europe’s religious wars, they were wrong in thinking that those irrational and murderous emotions were either essential or specific to religion. As the histories of western nationalism and colonialism, and particularly the histories of fascism, show over the top, murderous, let’s take ourselves very seriously beliefs could easily be generated by all forms of communal identification. This is even true when ‘secular democracy’ and ‘satire’ become themselves a ‘serious’ form of phallic communal identification.

The fact is, as I argue in Alter-Politics (MUP, 2015) – yes I am plugging my new book, here –, ‘democracy’, ‘tolerance’ and ‘freedom of speech’ can all become and are increasingly becoming in the Western world a kind of fin d’empire colonial racialised strategies of phallic distinction. They are what westerners ‘flash’ to the racialised Muslims to tell them: look what we have and you haven’t got one or at best yours is very small compared to ours. And this is at the very same time where Western societies are becoming less democratic, tolerant and committed to freedom of speech.

The same can be said of ‘satire’. Here, paradoxically, ‘satire’ which was precisely, as I have argued above, the means of taking one’s distances from oneself in order to relativise and think relationally about oneself becomes the very means of producing a western narcissism aimed at making of oneself an object of one’s own desire in a period of decline. Charlie Hebdo’s humour with its total obliviousness to the colonial histories and relations of power in which they were dispensing their satire is a prime example of this phallic narcissism: we’re so funny that being ‘satirical’ and ‘funny’ is our identity. And you morons who can’t even take a joke don’t even know what being satirical and funny means. Unfortunately, it is more so in this sense that all those valiant defenders of free speech assembling around the western world holding their ‘je suis Charlie’ sign are totally correct. Indeed, ils sont tous Charlie, in all its colonial narcissistic splendour. So oblivious of the reality in which the Muslim other exists today that they even make a point of valiantly declaring that, unlike the Muslim people of Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Syria and Palestine who are being murdered at varieties of speeds with varieties of techniques by the thousands, they, the ones attacked by three armed militants are heroically looking the murderers in the eyes and telling it to them straight: they are ‘not afraid’.

Professor Ghassan Hage
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Adrien Fauth, Flickr
Prisons and radicalization in France

The two terrorist attacks that caused 17 deaths among the French people were the results of a radicalization that bears four main features. The people who perpetrated them were from the French poor suburbs, the so-called banlieues, where there is a concentration of populations mostly of North African origins, with a higher rate of joblessness and criminality, and a double antagonism of the ethnic and religious differences toward the rest of the society. Many spend part of their youth in the prisons and those who become Jihadists are “born again” Muslims with no previous Islamic culture, having gone through a deep uprootedness in terms of their cultural identity before being attracted towards Radical Islam by a guru, through the Internet or the influence of their buddies. Last but not least, once radicalized, they need to make the initiatory trip to the Islamic countries where Jihad is paramount: Afghanistan and Pakistan (the case of Mohamed Merah who killed seven people in March 2012, 3 Muslim military and 4 Jews), Syria (Mehdi Nemmouch who killed 4 people on May 24th, 2014, in the Jewish Museum of Brussels), Yemen (Cherif Kouachi who killed 12 people in Charlie Hebdo attacks on January 7th, 2015, with his brother, Said) and Iraq. The trip confirms his identity to the Jihadist and in some cases in my field research I witnessed how they

For the disaffected youth of the poor suburbs, their stay in prison serves them first as a rite of passage to adulthood. Some are proud to be jailed and once out they claim legitimacy due to their stay in prison. They build up ties with more seasoned criminals of the same origin and in the large prisons close to the cities, they find people from the surrounding banlieues. Muslims in France are around 8 percent of the population but in prison, their number is somewhere around half of the inmates. In the large short-term prisons (maisons d’arrêt), their rate is even higher and in my interviews many “White people” (Frenchmen of European origin) claimed that they did not feel at home in those jails, mostly populated by the “Arabs” (Frenchmen of North African roots).

Short term prisons are in a dire situation overcrowded and understaffed. In most cells of some 9 square meters there are two and sometimes three prisoners, one prison guard supervising some 100 inmates (in the long term prisons, Maisons centrales, one guard is in charge of around 30 inmates). Surveillance is at best sketchy if the prisoner does not show external signs of Fundamentalism like the long beard, a proselytizing attitude, an aggressive behavior towards the guards, and disrespect towards the official Muslim minister. Radicalized inmates have learned to avoid those pitfalls: they do not even go to the collective Friday prayers where they exist, they do not make any ostentatious attempt at proselytizing and usually tone down their antagonism towards the guards in order not to attract their attention.

Prisons in France and in many parts of Europe have become in part a substitute to mental hospitals. Since closing the latter in the 1970s, many of those who should find there their place are locked up in prisons: up to the third of the prison inmates have psychiatric problems, around 10 percent having serious mental illnesses. Some of them fall pray to radicalization by those who seek accomplices who can be manipulated, once outside prison. Psychopaths can assume an active role in radicalization as well and in some cases in my field research I witnessed how they pushed towards the radicalization of the fragile inmates who were under their spell.

Many of the Jihadists in France have had family and mental problems. Merah was declared psychologically fragile by the prison psychologist with violence among the members of his family being chronic, the Kouachi brothers were raised in a social care institution, as was Mehdi Nemmouche who spent some time there before joining his grandmother.

Prisons are not fearsome to them. There, their hatred of society becomes entrenched in their soul. Guards constantly complain about their aggressiveness, their lack of elementary social manners and a habit of being in a constant tug of war. Prison is where they discover their irrevocable fate as religious radicals, devoid of the fears of other prisoners. Hate (la haine) becomes the keyword describing their attitude towards society. They feel victimized and believe that all the normal doors for social promotion are closed to them. They take upon themselves their destiny as indefinitely relapsing into crimes and living part of their life locked up behind bars, once out starting anew their deviant activities.

Radical Islamization is mostly the transfer of their hatred into the spiritual realm of the sacred sphere they call Islam. Usually, they lack the elementary notions of Islam, do not know how to perform daily prayers, their preference going towards those aspects of Allah’s religion that are related to the holy war. It is usually after radicalization in prison that they endeavor to amend their flimsy knowledge of Islam, spending long periods reading the standard biography of the Prophet translated into French and the Koran in French. Very few push their motivation up to the level of learning the Arabic language, with the help of some other inmates. Converts are in particular overzealous in this matter, showing to the others their faith and surpassing the “Arabs” in the knowledge of the holy verses they learn by heart and quote in order to awe the others and push them towards Jihad. Prison becomes a place where novice jihadists compete with each other and jostle to prove their knowledge of the Word of God, quoting in Arabic verses and giving their view on Jihad in a magisterial manner.

Since there is a dire scarcity of Muslim ministers (some 160 whereas at least three times more is needed), these self-proclaimed “ulama” become references for other prisoners who ask for religious guidance in a setting where despair pushes them towards religion. Islam is the more attractive as the religion of the oppressed: it has an anti-imperialist side (anti-American, anti-Western), a capacity to say what is forbidden and allowed (haram versus halal), whereas Christianity has lost the aptitude to give them details of what they should eat, how to wash themselves, how to organize their sexual life and how to relate to the others. These young generations are looking for moral principles that vindicate their opposition to the society and Jihadist Islam fulfills that role perfectly. It is more than sheer heroism, it is a way of life that brings meaning to their split identity and provides them with a sacred goal, flattering their narcissism at the same time by giving them concrete ideals to imitate that will make them celebrities: Merah had become an icon in prison during my research in 2011-2013, the Kouachi brothers are going to replace them in the same manner as Merah replaced in the memory of the new generations Khaled Kelkal, who killed 8 people in in the Parisian metro at Saint Michel in 1995, having become had an idol for them as I witnessed it in my empirical research in 2000-2003.

Jihadism changes a feeling of being despised by that of being feared, giving a last chance before death to take revenge against those who show contempt towards them.

Professor Farhad Khosrokhavar
Director of Studies at the Ecole des hautes études en sciences sociales (EHESS) in Paris

Jihadism changes a feeling of being despised by that of being feared, giving a last chance before death to take revenge against those who show contempt towards them.
In remembering the Charlie Hebdo attack we must not forget the responsibility that goes with free speech.

The fact that for a number of days the air-waves and the ether was dominated by discussions flowing from the massacre at the Charlie Hebdo headquarters is what one would expect. Moreover, that for many within hours the intellectual discussion was about freedom of speech is also not surprising. After all there is only one opinion about the murders, that it is unjustifiable. Freedom of speech on the other hand, and its relevance to this case, is a matter of controversy.

Despite the rhetorical declarations that any legal limit on speech is intolerable and that we must resist those who propose such legislation, many limits already exist and some have been rightly initiated by liberals. For example, in Britain since 1986 we have had an incitement to racial hatred law, and since 2006 incitement to religious hatred legislation. The latter is actually much weaker than the former, though a stronger version has been in force in Northern Ireland since 1970 – British politicians having concluded quite quickly that you cannot really get two communities to co-exist peacefully without curbing the right to insult each other.

I think our existing legislation, which is not very strong and not very often used and rarely leads to convictions, is about right and sends an important signal across society of what is publicly unacceptable. In any case it was very clear from the discussion that changing the law was not an issue. Indeed, the swirling and heated debate and the declarations of ‘Je suis Charlie’ (in so far as they were about freedom of speech and not just shock that journalists should be murdered) were not about law at all.

For example, in contrast to some of their European counterparts British newspapers chose not to reproduce any of the Charlie Hebdo cartoons. Yet, the reason attributed to this was not because they would be breaking the law. Rather, they were said to be acting out of fear or out of not wanting to give Muslims unnecessary offence. It cannot be denied that fear of violent retaliation must have been a factor, but the important point is that those who chose not to republish offensive cartoons did not fail to exercise their right to free speech – see, for instance, The Observer’s justification of its restraint.

It has been said that “in its cartoons, Charlie Hebdo did not discriminate. The magazine lampooned all and sundry in its cartoons: racists, bigots, right-wing politicians, the uber-rich, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and more.” Yet there is a world of difference between satire against the powerful (‘speaking truth to power’) and against the powerless, where it becomes not just a form of bullying but risks becoming racist.

Charlie Hebdo published many images of Muslim-like characters, some of them acting violently. Not all of them are meant to be of the Prophet Muhammad, but it is not always clear which are. Those that are of the Prophet of course break an Islamic self-proscription, but the message can be confusing. Focusing on say the armed figure threatening to come and take revenge before the end of January, what is the message? Muhammad is a terrorist? Islam is a terrorist religion? Muslims are followers of a terrorist? Or suppose that the picture is simply meant to represent the generality of Muslims, in the way that, for example, the 1920s Nazi magazine, Der Stürmer, would have a cartoon of a Jewish financier, the undesirable qualities of whom – heartless, exploitative, greedy and so on – was meant to be about Jews as such.

A third possibility is that the cartoon and others like it represent only Islamic terrorists; in which case they are inoffensive and not just satirical but embody a form of political defiance against terrorism. However, the success of such a cartoon depends upon it being clear to all readers of that the cartoon that it cannot be mistaken to be about all Muslims or about a figure dearly revered by many Muslims. Such a cartoon then will have a very broad appeal.

So, the ‘free speech’ argument of recent weeks has not really been about the right to free speech, but about how to exercise the responsibility that goes with free speech. I see no reason to celebrate those who abjure this responsibility or exercise it carelessly, heedless of the consequences of their actions. The defence of Charlie Hebdo – that they did not target Islam but everybody and anybody – is not impressive if the assumption is that targeting minorities and weak groups and being willing to use and strengthen stereotypes and racist imagery is ok, as long as the satirists in question also satirise the powerful.

None of this of course justifies any form of violence let alone the murders of last week, but it at least identifies some of the relevant issues, especially those which are about the uses of freedom and of being mindful of how images can reinforce social divisions.

Professor Tariq Modood
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Hunting(ton) for cartoons

From armchair discussions to Twitter battles, and from media clashes to academic debates. Analyses of the Charlie Hebdo affair peaked shortly after the event and, just as quickly, died down again. So, how do we still bring up the matter in other contexts, and international news TV keeps viewers updated with any progress the French police is making or with sporadic anti-Hebdo protests around the Muslim world. But it seems that a good enough explanation has been found to sake the inquisitiveness of most.

This explanation is rooted in a ‘clash of civilizations,’ the infamous thesis put forward by Samuel Huntington in 1993 that future wars will take place not along political-ideological lines but along civilizational ones (Huntington 1993, 1996). The Danish cartoons furor of 2005 was readily framed in that self-fulfilling prophecy. It now appears that Huntington’s legacy is made to order for European magazine satire on Islam. Just as in 2005, the commentary around the Charlie Hebdo murders and explosive aftermath is polarized on a civilizational axis: Western freedom of speech vs. Muslim sensibilities about their religion. The ready-made frame is easy to adopt for news-bite media as well as trained and expectant audiences. The media framing, in turn, just as easily takes on a life of its own, feeding predictable political responses of Islamic protests and European far-right demonstrations. Just on February 14, a Muslim Dane shot two people in Denmark in connection with the Danish satirist involved in the 2005 cartoons. The following day, a leading British newspaper, *The Guardian*, carried the story with the title: “Copenhagen killings: Bewildered Europe struggles to defend freedom of speech and religion” (Tisdall 2015). Further analysis in the days to come will doubtless be framed in the clash thesis, with less and less explanation required for trained audiences around the world.

The framing is correct as far as it goes. But it doesn’t go very far. Of course there is a tension between freedom of speech and civil respect for others’ sensibilities. Yet, it is just as easy to note that nobody has ever protected complete freedom of speech. In his novel *Immortality*, Milan Kundera pointed out that the right to freedom for an action has never equaled the duty to perform that action. Just because one is allowed to say that one does, in fact, say anything. In his analysis on the Hebdo affair, Mahmood Mamdani suggests that there is a difference between internal blasphemy (which might be liberating) and external bigotry (which is never helpful) (Venkat 2015).

Whether a critique is emic or etic, the point is that the right to freedom of speech has always been tempered by morality expressed as civility. Everybody agrees that certain lines should not be crossed; the only debate is where that line should be. It’s a shifting boundary. In the late 1940s, German satirists were tried and convicted for war crimes on the grounds of anti-Semitism and Nazi collusion, and after the Rwanda genocide three journalists were tried for crimes against humanity on account of hate speech. In Britain, there are laws against blasphemy too (although these only apply to offences against the dominant Christian denomination). Today, it would be difficult to imagine justifying satire in Europe that targets black people or homosexuals by making fun of essential characteristics. And, it would be well-nigh impossible to justify making fun of evolution theory or the ideal of democracy in North America. As Talal Asad puts it, “we know (or should know) that “free speech” inhabits a structured space” (Asad 2015).

So, freedom of speech in and of itself is not the civilizational flash point it is readily made out to be. What’s missing in the *Charlie Hebdo* commentary is a bit of reflexivity. Why do we take it as self-evident that the world is divided into civilizational blocs at war with each other? Why is it so natural to view this as a clash of civilizations polarized along axes of freedom vs. civility? And what do we miss out? Perhaps we would gain more by taking a step back from the now-natural assumption of a clash of civilizations and ask why we look no further.

One answer to this question is broadly rooted in phenomenology, or the approach to the ‘thing’ as it appears to us. So, how does it appear to us? First off, we are by now well-conditioned to think of countries as more or less hermetically sealed containers into which the world’s population is divided. From there, it is but a small step (of technological advance in communication and transport) to think of the countries as divided into different civilizational camps. The image is similar to the way different proud regiments are arrayed in the same army opposing other armies, also comprising equally ‘unique’ regiments. The more imaginative might even suggest that we do away with the regimental structure and just think of soldiers in one army.

Of course, this metaphor shows how artificial this construction is. Nation-states are relatively recent emergent onto the world order, and there is nothing at all ‘natural’ about them. And a whole sub-discipline of sociology is dedicated to showing that they are far from hermetically sealed. Not only are nation-states criss-crossed by transnational linkages of ideas, peoples and policies, but also their very constitution in such similar fashions is governed by a shared imagination, as highlighted by world society theory (Meyer et al. 1997). As Benedict Anderson (1991) pointed out, nations are ‘imagined communities.’ Yet, the imagery of a nation-state as a natural entity is constantly brought across our doorsteps, reinforcing its banality. Now the European Union has raised the geographical and cultural stakes by bringing advertisements of regional/ civilizational solidarity to our television sets!

The next element in how Hebdo appears to us has to do with the fact that Huntington’s thesis is scientific. To recognize this, we must first dispel the equally common idea that academics is an ‘ivory tower.’ Social scientists, in particular, are very much part and parcel of the tussle of politics, from streets to summits. In the same way that media frames are linked to politics so also social science theories both inform politics and are in turn informed by them. They are part of the same social continuum. Scientists, as well as politicians, media professionals, and even citizens are all involved in the great game of “epistemic governance,” or the making of collective decisions by taking into account how others construe the social world (Alasuutari and Qadir 2014).

This becomes apparent when we realize that theories are built on the same conceptual foundations as media or other political discourses. Unlike mathematical theories, social science theories use the same language that is in play in the media, political debates, and our kitchens (although, it might pay us to question this also-natural assumption about mathematics). According to American social theorist Richard Brown (1989), this is because all theories are essentially founded on metaphors: making sense of a complex reality by transposing it to another domain. At root, Brown suggests, there are a limited number of metaphors by which humans make sense of social reality, and social theories both inform politics and are in turn informed by them. They are part of the same social continuum. Scientists, as well as politicians, media professionals, and even citizens are all involved in the great game of “epistemic governance,” or the making of collective decisions by taking into account how others construe the social world. From that perspective, Huntington’s ‘clash of civilizations’ thesis is certainly one such. The clash theory is firmly grounded in the root metaphor of social conduct as a game. Huntington worked on this root metaphor to elaborate an imagery of competition. This imagery is naturally connected with a popular conception of the world as divided into competing blocs, along the lines of Thomas Hobbes’ famous description of human nature as *Bellum omnium contra omnes* – war of all against all. A natural corollary of this imagery is community-building. If the world is divided into competing blocs, then it becomes natural to build solidarity with ‘your’ bloc, similar to how it is natural to support ‘your’ national Olympics.
team or local hockey club. In this sense, Huntington’s theory is ‘successful’ not because it directly explains anything in society, but because it elaborates an imagery of competition that is, itself, grounded in a very powerful root metaphor of social conduct as game.

When the imagery of competition is combined with the extension from nation-state to cultural civilization, we have a complete social framework to explain the Hebdo affair in terms that we will readily appreciate. All that remains is for actors to make the connections obvious of which the competing teams are in this particular case. One final element remains: that of the moral axis projected onto the conflict. The reason for this is a bit more complex and elaborating it would require further space. Briefly, the reason is grounded in the phenomenology view that human perception is fundamentally informed by morality: in a sense, we all have moral spectacles that place any phenomenon on a sort of scale. Very often, this scale is informed by the academic presumptions inherent in the theory at stake, in this case civilizational. In all cases, though, the scale is about transcendence, whether explicitly as in domains of faith or implicitly as in secular domains.

So, the clash theory is especially successful in the Hebdo case because it appeals to us, not that it appeals to us because it is successful in explaining social reality. A fundamental feature of the perspective I have used to describe this, is that there is nothing more ‘real’ hiding behind this construction. Of course, the Hebdo assassins had political motivations, money, guns, safe houses, etc. The point here is that, they participate in the same imagery of society as divided into civilizational competing blocs. As Talal Asad notes, “the widespread violence perpetrated by heavily armed Western states and lightly armed jihadists is a symbiotic relationship if ever there was one” (Azad 2015). Not only these active actors, but others also join into the same imagery, for instance the media. The imagery feeds into and out of the thoroughly stale yet ubiquitous discussion on Muslim “integration” in an apparently homogenous West committed to transcendence of free speech.

All of this doesn’t take away from the reality of the murders of the Hebdo staff. What I am arguing for here is that the Hebdo murders and following commentary are deeply interconnected by virtue of sharing in the same imagery of society. It is the same imagery that connects related debates about, for instance, Muslims and/in the West. The interconnections also force recognition that social scientists are implicated in the affair, more so since the Hebdo murders followed the extensive commentary of the Danish cartoons, and followed similar commentary on the unfolding ISIS activity. The modern world is far more interconnected than we care to admit. It is not just a matter of connectivity via ICT and cheap airfares, but of connectivity across different sectors of society working on the same cultural scripts and metaphors. As academics, we now need a far more nuanced social theoretical approach to the world around us, a world that we are part of. Social scientists are not somehow removed from politicians, media professionals, activists of one kind or another, and so on. Our theories are connected to popular and political frames, just as those are connected with the theories. While the classics believed that social science reflects on society, the new canon is that social science reflects society. We can now say that reflection is also intervention.

In short: it’s a small world after all … much smaller than we thought.

**Dr. Ali Qadir**

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Research fellow at the Institute for Advanced Social Research, University of Tampere
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**References**


Caring and sharing: How ESA can support the storage of and access to qualitative research data

Across the disciplinary spectrum, researchers’ responsibilities towards their own research data and their use of others’ data are set to change. Research funders are increasingly mandating open access to research data; governments internationally are demanding transparency in research they support; the economic climate is requiring much greater re-use of data; and concerns about data loss call for more robust information security practices. All these factors mean that researchers need to improve, enhance and professionalize their skills in managing research data to meet the challenge of producing the highest quality research outputs that can be shared and reused in a responsible way.

For the experienced researcher there is likely to be a degree of upskilling to plug gaps in current knowledge, especially to refresh and update their knowledge in areas of rapid technological changes or in changes in legislation relating to the governance of research data or the ethics of research. Techniques for revisiting data that researchers have not collected themselves are also new methodological tools to add to their existing capacities.

Managing and sharing data has many intrinsic benefits as well as being relevant to open-government remits and transparency agendas on the one hand, and on the other to the increasing number of sharing mandates that are specified by funders, institutions and publishers. An increasing number of funders and publishers round the world are demanding that data be made available for sharing, and this is likely to become an even more prominent practice in future.

Significant funds dedicated to opening up data for research purposes - from government administrative data to data underlying research outputs to commercial sources - have emerged in the past 5 years. The rise of ‘Big Data’ initiatives sponsored by Western governments has also pushed to the fore the issue of how to look after and manage data. In the UK, we have seen funding specifically dedicated to secondary analysis projects, with the aim of demonstrating the value of secondary data from large-scale government investments in data creation-activities and with the intention of maximizing opportunities for exploiting those data (ESRC 2013, http://ukdataservice.ac.uk/use-data/secondary-analysis/sda.aspx). Since less and less money is available for new data-collection pursuits, it is important to explore the optimal use of data that already exists.

But are ESA members ready to share data from their own research and to use data derived from their friends or foes? Even if not all respond to this idea with enthusiasm, we would call upon some to be early adopters. And help is at hand to support those with positive inclinations towards sharing.

Support for researchers in sharing their data

The researcher sitting on valuable data stores does not need to go the sharing journey alone. There is an established European network of social-science data archives that support data creators and users. The Consortium of Social Science Data Archives (CESSDA) is recognized and supported by the EC as a vital infrastructure to promote European research data infrastructure. The UK Data Archive, which houses the former Qualidata unit and which runs the UK Data Service for the UK Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), and the Irish Qualitative Data Archive (IQDA), are two such members of this experienced data-archiving club who can offer support, training and capacity building. These archives, as ‘trusted digital repositories’, have expertise in negotiating rights management, providing safe access to data, documenting and contextualising data and preserving data for the longer term. And this relates to many flavours of data: not only to survey data but also qualitative and mixed methods data.

Further, they can offer ESA members support in this area. This might include: an enhanced awareness of benefits, challenges and techniques; how to cost data sharing into research bids; and how to gain a competitive edge in bidding by providing impact through creating data products. They can help them better realize the potential of sharing data from large and cross-national projects.

There is a real problem with wasted opportunities in sharing cross-national qualitative studies. An example is the European Identities project, where despite fantastic data having been collected, none could be shared because the original consent arrangements had not considered multisite access or sharing later on. However there do already exist very good protocols for sharing cross-national data, such as the example set by the European Social Survey.

The ESA itself could, if it decided to do so, play an active part in these developments, with the help of the existing archive centres. It could:

- provide an advocacy role for data-sharing in expensive projects;
- insist upon upfront agreements about which archive will hold all data and under what conditions they can be accessed;
- encourage shared protocols for its members for data sharing, data usage and data citation;
- partner with CESSDA archives to enable promotion/training and guidance for ESA members;
- promote extended secondary data analysis skills.

These could be achieved through ESA-sponsored guidance, and even dedicated training ‘upskilling’ sessions that night include bursaries for participants.

From the horse’s mouth

There is nothing like first-hand testimony to reassure people about tasks and activities that might seem onerous, or even, at first, out of the question. Below we provide three case studies of how senior researchers have successfully archived data from empirical fieldwork-based studies they undertook. These are by no means small studies, but involve sometimes large-scale and detailed qualitative investigations, some with a longitudinal component. These reflections, openly published on the UK Data Service’s website, testify that sharing data reaps benefits beyond the original data collection and initial analysis, and that once these leading researchers had embarked on their data-publishing journey, they found that the experience was not as painful as they might have envisaged."

Louise Corti
Associate Director of the UK Data Archive

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Case study 1: Professor Pat Caplan, UK anthropologist. Archiving complex anthropological data ten years after the research finished

The research: In the 1990s the ESRC funded an interdisciplinary research programme, ‘The Nation’s Diet’. Two of the projects involved, both titled ‘Concepts of Healthy Eating’, were based in the Department of Anthropology at Goldsmiths. They looked at people’s conceptions of the relationship between food and health in two projects: in an inner city area, Lewisham, and in a rural area of Pembrokeshire.

The data: The two projects used a wide variety of methods including participant observation, semi-structured interviews, food-frequency questionnaires, seven-day food diaries, and the analysis of large quantities of secondary data. While a variety of publications resulted from these projects, much data remained available and it was decided to archive as much of the material as possible, including ‘work in progress’ such as annual reports.

Archiving challenges: When these projects were conceived and carried out, archiving was not yet the norm or an ESRC requirement. Pat Caplan, the Principal Investigator and depositor, made the decision to archive the data ten years after it had originally been collected and this raised some specific challenges.

She found that, although one dataset had been codified and anonymised during the project, the second Welsh dataset required further work to anonymise the data. Moreover many people appearing in the Welsh dataset would, as things stood, be instantly recognisable, since the set was derived from work in a small community. It was therefore not just a question of changing their names, but in some cases of also removing place-names and other information. In a few instances, the data was of such an intimate and personal nature, given by people whose identities it was difficult to conceal, that the decision was made to remove some sections from interviews.

Early on, the decision was made not to archive either the tapes of the interviews or any photographs, in the interest of preserving the undertakings of confidentiality which had been made at the outset of both projects. However, virtual copies of all interviews (which by then had all been anonymised) and food diaries were placed in the UK Data Archive, as well as hard copies of the food-frequency questionnaires. In the process of preparing the data for archiving, Pat aimed to finish the project by tidying and systematising it, making its data intelligible to others, and thereby prolonging its life.

This aim included the hope that others might find the data of use, either comparatively with their own work, historically as being part of a particular time, or as obviating the necessity to re-invent the wheel and ask questions which had already been asked and answered.

Reuse publications and outputs: In a short paper, Pat Caplan answered.

Case study 2: Professor Jane Elliot, UK sociologist. Sharing qualitative data from a long-running longitudinal cohort study

The research: The National Child Development Study (NCDS) is a continuing longitudinal study that follows the lives of all those living in Great Britain who were born in one particular week in 1958. Conducted by the Centre for Longitudinal Studies (CLS), the aim of the study is to improve understanding of the factors affecting human development over the whole lifespan. It collects information on physical and educational development, economic circumstances, employment, family life, health behaviour, wellbeing, social participation and attitudes. The qualitative interviews involved explored the respondents’ whole life stories as well as detailing their lives over the week prior to the interview, so that researchers could get a sense of their professional and leisure activities.

The data: Quantitative longitudinal data were combined with a qualitative investigation of a sub-sample of the NCDS cohort when they were aged 50, resulting in the The Social Participation and Identity Study. This was the first attempt to interview members of a national, longitudinal cohort study in depth, with the possibility of linking such biographical narratives to structured survey data collected throughout the life course. Interviews were conducted with a sub-sample of 220 NCDS cohort members resident in Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales). The data collection includes interview transcripts, interviewer observation summaries, gender-identity diagrams and life-trajectory diagrams of 50 Welsh, 115 English and 55 Scottish participants.

Archiving challenges: The research team were very keen for the data to be archived and for other researchers to make further use of the rich data that they had collected. They felt that despite the ethical concerns that some researchers have with sharing data, in fact it was unethical to take up respondents’ time and not fully exploit the resulting data. They found the biggest challenge to archiving was the anonymisation process. The research team had always planned to anonymise the interviews they collected, but had not considered how time-consuming it would be to do this. They found it was not enough to simply change the names of the people they were interviewing but that they needed to also change the names of some places or identifying features about families. The UK Data Archive was able to advise and assist on this work.

- Listen to Professor Elliot’s interview [here](#).
- View Professor Elliot’s data collection, ‘Social Participation and Identity, 2007-2010: Combining Quantitative Longitudinal Data with a Qualitative Investigation of a Sub-Sample of the 1958 National Child Development Study’ [here](#)
Case study 3: Dr. Sheila Henderson, UK sociologist. Archiving qualitative longitudinal data from young people

About the research: Inventing Adulthoods is a qualitative longitudinal study of young people growing up in five areas of England and Northern Ireland at the turn of the 21st century. Its rich biographical material, contributed by young people who were 11 - 17 years old at the start of the study, provides a unique window on most aspects of growing up during an important period of social change in the decade 1996 - 2006.

About the data: The data sources considered for possible archiving for a showcase dataset were:

- 6 rounds of interview data, coded and stored in NVivo;
- questionnaire data, coded and stored in SPSS;
- a ‘big picture’ database providing an ‘at a glance’ overview of case data according to key topics and themes of the study;
- NVivo analyses for interview rounds 2 and 4;
- summary narrative analyses of locality based on narrative analyses of individuals.

With such a rich and complex project the research team was concerned with contextualising the study historically and providing a taster for the cross-sectional aspects of the Inventing Adulthoods dataset. Data was collected in waves of fieldwork and organised and coded cross-sectionally so that historical time – the chronological passage of events that frame the entire data set - provides the common thread that gives each successive wave a distinct and contemporary character.

Archiving challenges: The research team decided to archive this dataset so that other researchers could access it and help realise its potential for methodological and theoretical advancement. They were mindful of balancing the archiving of their data with not compromising participants’ privacy and trust.

One of the biggest challenges to archiving here was the development of a system for anonymising transcripts that maintained richness and detail, as well as the flow of participants’ words and stories. There were also issues around managing data, selecting cases, discussing and gaining consent for archiving with respondents and anonymising data which needed to be taken into account. They identified a number of key steps that helped them think through their processes:

- Read Dr. Henderson’s paper here
- View Dr. Henderson’s data collection, ‘Inventing Adulthoods, 1996-2006’ here

• The case studies are taken from the Depositor Stories area of the UK Data Service website here

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Dear Colleagues,

As the new Editor of European Societies, I would firstly like to thank my predecessor Göran Therborn for his hard work.

As a member of three academic communities and cultures (Greece, France, UK), I have been involved in European research for over twenty years and feel comfortable with the scope of the journal (you can find more about me [here](#)).

European Societies is a symbol for the European sociological community and I feel honoured to be entrusted with its development over the years to come. There is no doubt that this responsibility represents a considerable workload at a time when it becomes increasingly difficult for all of us to invest time and effort in anything that does not improve our individual bibliometrics. Bibliometric impact is also a major consideration for a journal editor. My position on this is that *European Societies* should focus on quality and plurality at the same time. Its remit is not to compete for the highest possible impact factor by contributing to the Matthew effect of established themes and reputed authors but to continue with publishing high quality research and offering everyone who works on Europe a fair chance. On this particular matter, I am appealing to you to talk about the journal in your professional settings and to encourage colleagues to submit their work. Making the journal more accessible to colleagues from Eastern and Southern Europe is a definitive challenge that I am working on. In epistemic terms, I plead for cautious innovation and interdisciplinarity. To that end a new statement of “Aims and Scope” has been drafted.

To ensure plurality at the receiving end, I have asked colleagues with diverse experience and research interests to form with me an editorial team, so as to guarantee both a broad scope and a high processing capacity for the journal. I am grateful that all of the colleagues below immediately accepted to give their time and become Associate Editors.

- Michelle Dobré, University of Caen, France
- Valentina Hlebec, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia
- Felix Ngunzo Kioli, Maseno University, Kenya
- Olga Kuzina, National Research University – Moscow, Russia
- William Outhwaite, University of Newcastle, UK
- Barry Smart, University of Portsmouth, UK
- Marco Verweij, Jacobs University – Bremen, Germany
- Agnes Skamballis, at the University of Essex, remains the administrator of the journal and we both constantly liaise with the Taylor & Francis team.

*European Societies* is a journal that – via ESA – directly reflects the scientific legitimacy of the European sociological community. It is, I think, clear to all of us that sociology has not been able to establish the profile of an epistemic domain that should determine political and economic decision-making. This is deeply paradoxical, particularly at times when citizens all over the globe have become aware that social priorities are not necessarily well served by the naturalisation of economic processes and the ‘urgent’ political decisions that these processes lead to under the vague umbrella concept of “crisis”. I believe that many of you will agree that the public policy recommendations of our research projects mostly remain forgotten in the drawers of bureaucratic institutions. It is my view that *European Societies* can contribute to increasing the influence of sociology as a showcase of exploitable knowledge that must publicly claim scientific legitimacy and determine political conscience. You can find some of my ideas on the epistemic context of the journal in my first editorial [here](#).

I am looking forward to some exciting years of reading cutting-edge work on Europe and encourage you all to consider *European Societies* as an ongoing shared project. Finally, I count on you as possible reviewers for submitted articles. Our thorough double blind review process often takes articles through two revisions and it is only thanks to a large number of rigorous reviewers that we can maintain the high standards of the journal.

Michalis Lianos

Professor, University of Rouen – Haute Normandie
Summer school

*Gender Equality and Quality of Life. Policy-making in times of new gender regimes*

Call for applications

**Dates:** 30.08.2015-04.09.2015

**Organiser:** Institute of Sociology, Jagiellonian University

**Project Partners:** Center for Gender Research, University of Oslo
Institute for Health and Society, University of Oslo
Chair of Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine, Medical College, Jagiellonian University

**Venue:** Institute of Sociology, Jagiellonian University, 52 Grodzka Street, 31-044 Krakow, Poland

**Application Deadline:** 30 April 2015

**Notification of acceptance sent out by:** 15 May 2015

**Fee payment:** 14 June 2015

**Course Director:** Prof. Beata Kowalska, Institute of Sociology, Jagiellonian University

**Course Faculty:**
- Prof. Charlotte Koren, University of Oslo
- Prof. Øystein Gullvåg Holter, Centre for Gender Research, University of Oslo
- Prof. Jeff Hearn, University of Huddersfield
- Dr Trine Rogg Korsvik, Centre for Gender Research, University of Oslo
- Ewa Krzaklewska, Jagiellonian University
- Barbara Limanowska, European Institute for Gender Equality
- Dr Zofia Łapniewska, London School of Economics and Political Science
- Prof. Isabel Marcus, Buffalo Law School
- Aleksandra Migalska, Jagiellonian University
- Prof. Angela Miles, University of Toronto
- Prof. Svein Mossige, University of Oslo
Description
The summer school focuses on exploring the relations between gender equality and quality of life. Studies of gender equality impact on quality of life are not conclusive – we cannot assume linear and unidirectional relation between gender equality and quality of life. This relation is shaped by cultural and institutional context in each country and the individual strategies adopted by the citizens. During this summer school we will try to explore the relation between as well as develop a policy recommendation and policy toolkits for policy-makers, both in Poland and Norway.

The summer school consists of lectures, roundtables and workshops, which will introduce intersectional perspective on gender equality and quality of life. It will provide current research and debates as a basis for challenging discussion related to the following topics:

- Gender regimes and economic constraints of neoliberalism
- Gendered Violence
- Men and gender equality
- Women’s movement and activism
- Inequalities, intersectionality and quality of life

Detailed programme of summer school is available on a website: www.geq.socjologia.uj.edu.pl/summer-school

The participants will explore various dimensions of gender equality in different context, discuss case studies related to each area and learn how to develop tools for critical assessment of gender equality policies.

Teaching methods
The course will consist of roundtables with experts who will offer an insightful analysis in discussed topics. Each roundtable will consist of three presentations, touching upon the international debate on the discussed topic as well as describing Polish and Norwegian research and policies in each of the spheres mentioned above. During the afternoon sessions, the participants will take part in workshops focused on policy toolkit for Poland and Norway. The work will be based both on the outcomes from the GEQ project (survey, qualitative study) as well as participants’ research or PhD projects. Each participant will also present a paper based on her/his work related to gender equality in small discussion groups. Those methods will be accompanied by open discussion with scholars, practitioners and activists.
Key readings
Key readings will be send by email to all participants no later than one month before the beginning of the summer school.

Assessment
To complete the summer school, the participants have to:
1) Participate in all activities of the summer school (roundtables and workshops aimed at presenting participants’ presentation and developing toolkit). The total amount of contact hours: 45
2) Prepare a presentation based on the paper sent during the application process
3) Prepare a peer review to an assigned presentation.

Having successfully completed the course, all participants will receive a Certificate of Attendance and 4 ECTS credit points.

Eligibility
The course is designed for 20 PhD students and early-stage researchers, up to 4 years after receiving PhD. Applicants should conduct a research on gender equality and quality of life. Students from Poland and Norway will be preferred although also other may apply.

Procedure of application
The candidate will be chosen on the basis of her/his CV and submitted paper (10 pages including bibliography, font: Times New Roman, 12, 1.5 spacing; more information about requirements available on our website: www.geq.socjologia.uj.edu.pl/summer-school). Please include keywords at the end of the abstract text.
This paper will be later discussed during small discussion groups.
CV and paper should be sent by 30 April 2015 on the e-mail address: geq@uj.edu.pl. The result will be announced by 15 May 2015.
Oral presentations will be allotted 20 minutes, followed by approx. 40 minutes for questions.

Fee
- Applicants from Central and East-European countries\(^1\): 50 Euros
- Applicants from Europe and worldwide: 100 Euros

The fee shall be paid by 14 June 2015. Information about fee payment will be send to all accepted participants.

Contact
For more information, please e-mail Ewelina Ciaputa (GEQ project coordinator) at geq@uj.edu.pl or visit www.geq.socjologia.uj.edu.pl/summer-school

\(^1\) Meaning: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Macedonia, Kosovo, Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, Albania, Greece, Turkey, Czech Republic, Poland.
The summer school is organized by the Institute of Sociology, Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland as a part of the research project "Gender equality and quality of life - how gender equality can contribute to development in Europe. A study of Poland and Norway" (GEQ) in cooperation with the Institute for Gender Research (STK) at the University of Oslo, Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine Chair at the Collegium Medicum JU and the Institute of Health and Society (Helsam) at the University of Oslo.

The summer school has received funding from the Polish-Norwegian Research Programme operated by the National Centre for Research and Development under the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2009-2014 in the frame of Project Contract No Pol-Nor/200641/63/2013.

Life-World, Intersubjectivity and Culture: Contemporary Dilemmas

In Memory of Richard Grathoff

On September 25th and 26th, 2014, the University of Warsaw in Poland hosted ‘Life-World, Intersubjectivity and Culture: Contemporary Dilemmas’, an international symposium organised under the patronage of the Polish Sociological Association in memory of Richard Grathoff, the eminent German sociologist and phenomenological philosopher with very deep and seminal thoughts.

Richard Helmut Grathoff was born in 1934 in Unna and died in 2013 in Oerlinhausen, North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany. After graduating courses in maths from Heidelberg and Göttingen he moved to the USA. At the New School for Social Research – a university which served as a new model of higher education and later provided a haven for academics whose lives and careers were threatened by the Nazis – he studied under Aron Gurwitsch, Albert Solomon, Thomas Luckmann, and Peter L. Berger and received his PhD in 1969. His doctoral thesis The Structure of Social Inconsistencies: A Contribution to Unified Theory of Play, Game and Social Action won the Albert Salomon Memorial Award and was published in 1970. In 1978, soon after his return to Germany, he joined the newly-established Bielefeld University. Its Department of Sociology held a unique position in the Federal Republic as the only...
Richard Grathoff was an extremely important figure in the foundation of qualitative sociology in Germany. Thanks to his acquaintanceship with key scholars of interpretive research approaches in America, he brought to Germany such stars as Goffman, Garfinkel, Cicourel, Sacks, Schegloff, Gumperz and others, with some of the meetings between the American guests and their younger German colleagues taking place in Grathoff’s house. He was also the engine of first three pivotal conferences providing young Polish scholars with fellowships enabling them to study abroad and rendering other forms of humanitarian assistance to Poles. Grathoff earned appreciation and gratitude in Poland, which resulted in his being granted an honorary membership in the Polish Sociological Society, also by virtue of his vigorous efforts to popularise the thoughts of Florian Znaniecki, whom he had met in person while studying in New York. The collection of belongings to the Znaniecki estate (letters, manuscripts, personal documents), located in Bielefeld with a duplicate of the archive in Polish Poznan, was the result of a international research project made possible by Richard Grathoff.

The strong connection between Richard Grathoff and his Polish friends was the impetus for a symposium marking the first anniversary of his death, organised in Warsaw. Having flown in from the United Kingdom, Professor Dennis Smith (University of Loughborough) captured our attention in his presentation Prisoners’ Dilemmas and the Social Phenomenology of Humiliation. Focussing on four famous prisoners – two avant-garde writers, Oscar Wilde and Jean Améry, and two radical politicians, Nelson Mandela and Aung San Suu Kyi – Smith offered some theoretical insights regarding the phenomenon of humiliation which can be applied to the analysis of both individuals or groups subjected to this type of maltreatment.

Professor Thomas Eberle (University of St Gallen) presented different strands of a complex relationship between phenomenological life-world analysis and interpretive sociology. Speaking about Richard Grathoff’s version of ‘phenomenological sociology’ or ‘social phenomenological research’, Professor Eberle attempted to relate this position to others and offered us his own proposal on the use of the phenomenological method in qualitative research. Speaking to the title Life-World as an Object of Theory and as a Life-Horizon, Professor Tadeusz Szwabel (University of Warsaw) pursued the idea of the essentially non-objective character of the ‘objects’ of social sciences and humanities by tracing attempts to propose concepts intended to overcome objectification (e.g. life-horizon, ethos, Heidegger’s ‘thing’, Gadamer’s ‘conversation’ or ‘game’).
model of interaction and through the intentional structure of intersubjectivity and thus could not overcome the égological solution of the problem of intersubjectivity, which she further disclosed with references to theories of Heidegger and Levinas. The presentation stimulated lively debate and discussion concerning alternative approaches to this subject area.

Professor Fritz Schutze of the University of Magdeburg presented research on the phenomenon of typifications and classifications. Focussing on artificial classifications superimposed by state socialist powers, he criticised the widespread belief that these existed only ‘in the stratosphere of ideological combat’ and had very little to do with the reality of everyday life. Empirical research, such as autobiographical interviews, implied that they exerted a considerable impact on real-life situations, especially within the processes of mutual typification by and of East and West Germans. Professor Steven Vaitkus (Marianne Weber Institute) outlined Schütz’s and Jasper’s notion of symbolic transcendence and its importance for an analysis of culture and intersubjectivity, using as examples such contemporary issues as digital money, religious fundamentalism, and new democracies. Then, at the end of a stimulating but long day, Professor Elżbieta Hałas (University of Warsaw) presented her research on the changes in the state symbolism in Poland after the fall of Communist regime. She referred to Alfred Schütz’s observation that social communities and institutionalized relations are not within the reach of the individual person’s everyday experience - they are only symbolically accessible constructs of commonsense thinking. Analysing Polish parliamentary debate in 1989 as a political performance Professor Halas invited us to consider change of the country’s name and emblem as attempts to symbolically express the systemic transformation.

The 2nd day of the symposium started with a presentation by Professor Hubert Kno-blauch (Technical University of Berlin), who gave a sketch of communicative constructivism, a theoretical proposition, which builds on the interpretive approach and particularly on the phenomenological tradition. Pointing to aspects such as the consideration of objects and technologies as part and parcel of communicative action, he hinted at the notion of the communication society as a way to characterise major current societal developments. Professor Marek Czyżewski (University of Lodz), applying phenomenological analysis to the knowledge-based society, concluded that it includes not only some elements of the worlds of science and of daily life, but also significant features of the world of Don Quixote as reconstructed by Alfred Schütz and commented on by Richard Grathoff.

Professor Rafał Wierzchosławski (University of Lublin) brought us back to reflect on the contributions of Florian Znaniecki (The Social Role of the Man of Knowledge) and Alfred Schütz (The Well-Informed Citizen) to the sociology of knowledge in the context of the Milieu analysis sketched by Richard Grathoff and to consider their significance for modern debates as well as the applicability of the social phenomenological method to expert studies. Ulf Matthiesen (Humboldt University of Berlin), criticising the decade-long dominance of ‘post-Fordist’ macro- and micro-analyses in urban theory and research, proposed a fresh research-oriented interpretive urbanist counter-paradigm based on Richard Grathoff’s intense reflections on ‘soziale Typik als soziale Struktur der Lebenswelt’. With characteristic vigour, Professor Tilmann Allert (Goethe University, Frankfurt) shared the findings of his research on the hospitality industry and gave a presentation stimulating interest in the use of the phenomenological concept of positionali- sation in sociological analysis. Professor Sławomir Mandes (University of Warsaw) brought the conference to a resounding close with his impassioned presentation on The Influence of Phenomenology on the Sociology of Religion, in which he paid particular attention to the question of how phenomenology has changed the understanding of religion within religious studies.

In summary, the conference excited and intellectually challenged its participants. It was a genuine tribute to Richard Grathoff and his work: an opportunity to meet in order to explore the relevance of his ideas to a wide range of fields of research of contemporary society. It also served as a platform for meetings between scientists from different countries united by Grathoff’s ideas as well as (for some) by the experience of having worked with him at different stages of their careers. Academics and students alike appreciated hearing the contributions of international scholars, particularly by those who have few such opportunities in their everyday work. All of the participants enjoyed the beautiful settings of the symposium, which included the modern university library with a roof garden providing hospitable opportunities for walks and endless discussions.

All of the participants enthusiastically supported the emerging idea of organising regular biennial events on Richard Grathoff’s legacy. With this in mind, we encourage you to follow upcoming announcements, and we look forward to spending time with you.
A New ‘Social Question’ or ‘Crisis as Usual’? Historical and Sociological Perspectives on Inequalities

Organizer: Bielefeld Graduate School in History and Sociology, Bielefeld University

Date and venue: June 4th–6th, 2014, Bielefeld

Social inequalities, injustices and crises have always been significant themes for historical and sociological research. Since the beginning of the financial crisis of 2007 they have also featured in public and scientific debates. Despite recent increased attention, some central questions remain unanswered: under what conditions do social inequalities become an issue of scientific consideration, public attention, protest or political intervention? Are we facing a ‘new social question,’ or can recent developments be better understood if they are regarded as ‘crisis as usual’?

Of particular importance for the issue of social inequality was the ‘social question’ in the 19th century. In the wake of industrialization, the ‘social question’ involved social injustices such as poverty in emerging national welfare states. Today, sociological perspectives on inequalities and conflicts are different in that they span the gamut of social categories such as class, gender, ethnicity, legal status/citizenship and religion. However, historians point out that not all of these aspects are new. The consensus appears to be that the ‘old social question’ and contemporary social problems are due to normative evaluations of the illegitimacy of social inequalities. Within this framework, the Bielefeld Graduate School in History and Sociology organized its 6th Annual Seminar from June 4th to 6th June, 2014, with the title “A New ‘Social Question’ or ‘Crisis as Usual’? Historical and Sociological Perspectives on Inequalities” to encourage transdisciplinary discussions on this topic. It brought together 150 scholars from varied disciplines.

Opening the conference with an argument against the popular use of the notion of “crisis”, Loïc Wacquant (University of California Berkeley) laid the groundwork for subsequent contributions. Beginning by establishing the etymology of the term as a moment of judgment and a transitional phase between established and emerging orders, he went on to present the case of the contemporary urban precariat as a self-perpetuating phenomenon and a new social question. Social inequality in Western Europe and the United States can be linked to the transformation of the concept of the ghetto from a vehicle of social organization to a stigmatizing zone of decreasing life opportunities. Wacquant argued that the emerging marginalized urban areas in Western Europe cannot be seen as ghettos, but rather “anti-ghettos” that suffer from multiple forms of destabilization.

The first day of the conference was also honored to serve as host to a photographic exhibition from a project by Hermine Oberück and Gertraud Strohm-Katzer. Oberück and Strohm-Katzer spent a number of years creating portraits of 70 individuals with immigrant backgrounds through photography and interviews. The authors of the project elaborated on the similarities and differences of issues expressed by their participants, the difficulty of integrating into German society and offered reflections on their own roles as culturally comparative researchers.

The second day of the conference delved into empirical studies from diverse perspectives and analytical discussions on the overall question of social inequalities and/or crisis. In the first keynote lecture of the day, Thomas Faist (Bielefeld University) set the tone for a critical engagement with to the terminology of social questions and its power for understanding life chances. He claimed that there is indeed a transnational social question, a truncated and displaced one, in relation to migration and spatial mobility in the contemporary European context. The dynamism of movement and counter-movement of economic liberalism and political populism produces not only very selective immigration policies but also fuels political conflict around migration, which is tied to manifold issues such as taxes, wages, crime and social justice.

Keynote Speech: Lifting the Veil of Crisis: Structure and Transformation in Urban Marginality, Prof. Loïc Wacquant, PhD, Berkeley/Paris Photo credit: Thomas Abel/BGHS

The first part of the second day dealt with what is arguably one of the most traditional forms of crisis: revolutions. Contributions offered glimpses into the revolutions in Ukraine and Algeria by means of case studies and elaborated on new forms of digitalized activism. In addressing the issue of values and inequality in the current Ukrainian revolution and subsequent war, Svitlana Khutka showed that there is no revolutionary change in Ukraine because its two main requirements, shifts in personal values and change in the structure of the elite, are not fulfilled. She hypothesized that the transition experience decreases the correlation of civic political involvement and post-materialist values, especially evident in transition countries where higher level of declared protest activity readiness is higher and is better explained by economic and structural than political individual differences and values.
In the second contribution, Thomas Serres (Université Jean Monnet-Saint-Étienne) provided the example of a quotidian situation of crisis in Algeria and argued that the fear of potential disorder suggested by a revolution is being used to ensure the status quo. This can be explained through the logic of “the dialectic of order and crisis,” where uncertainty provides possibilities for both radical change and perpetuation of the system. Revolution and reaction remain locked in an uncertain embrace.

Rainald Manthe (Bielefeld University) proposed the concept of global microstructures for studying the digitalized interaction of transnational social movements. He reckoned an interaction perspective allows for the analysis of two types of interactions in social movements - meetings and protests - under one analytical framework. This sheds light on their specific dynamics, similarities and differences. Manthe suggested taking into account both the face-to-face-interactions transpiring at demonstrations and meetings and computer-mediated communication, especially in social media like Facebook, blogs or Twitter.

Taking a historical perspective in the context of France, Sarah Haßdenteufel from (Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main) addressed the conference question as to how far the concept of exclusion reflects the transformation of social problems from the 1960s and how it acquired political attention in the 1980s. The emergence of the concept of social exclusion exemplifies how concepts describe, capture and address social inequalities. Haßdenteufel’s contribution shifted the focus of the conference from the tangibility of concrete case studies of crisis back to questions of terminology, preparing the stage for the subsequent keynote speech by Angelika Poferl (Fulda University of Applied Sciences).

Poferl’s speech approached the topic of human rights and their connections to questions of social inequality from a perspective based on a sociology of knowledge and a social constructivist approach. Her claims were two-fold: first, the development of a language of human rights makes it possible to de-legitimize social inequality and to create pressure to justify given situations and conditions; and second, the frame of reference of human rights foregrounds the experience of human vulnerability of human dependency.

The next part engaged with issues of social inequality and social justice by highlighting the positions of disparate actors, such as migrants, marginalized minorities, citizens as researchers and women. In the first contribution, Anna-Lisa Müller (Universität Bremen) argued that the transformation of contemporary societies - and thereby also structures of social inequalities - have a spatial dimension. Through the example of international migration she queried the social, political, economic and spatial dimensions of transmigrants and their interrelations with notions of inequality against the backdrop of equality.

Against the backdrop of increasing religious diversity in the last decades in the U.S., Aletta Diefenbach (Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main) asked how far Islam pushes for egalitarian ideas and how organized American Muslims express critique towards the socio-economic situation in New York City. She proposed that there is no causal link between religiosity and social inequality. Sorin Gog (University of Helsinki) elucidated how processes of Europeanization, especially the transition from socialism to capitalism, produce hegemonies of transnational capital and welfare. These devaluate national forms of capital and institutions, producing new social exclusions, widespread peripheralization of poverty and ghettoization. Presented was the case of the Roma or Gypsies in Eastern Europe, which suggests that new EU member states have undergone an unequal and unbalanced process of integration leading to increased inequality.

Vando Borghi (Università di Bologna) focused on the concept of Informational Basis of Judgment in Justice, or “the capability approach”. This he argues to be a valuable tool in collating and exploring possible exchanges among scientific strategies for accentuating the role of citizens’ qualitative experience and knowledge so as to pursue a deeper cognitive justice. He pointed out that the relations among social justice, information and processes of knowledge-making are critical terrains for understanding the social and institutional contexts of the free expression of the human right to research and information, and further to the pursuit of individually valued and freely defined life projects. This right is a collective responsibility, shared both by researchers and citizens.
The day culminated with a keynote speech from Sylvia Walby (Lancaster University), who aimed to narrate the crisis using the United Kingdom as the focus, to put democracy back on the sociological agenda in relationship to finance and to analyze gender as a multi-level system in relation to governance of finance. Walby argued that the financial crisis is a change path and can be described in two ways: as a cascading crisis and a gendered crisis. The cascade of the crisis from one institutional domain to another has led to a critical turning point in which the trajectory of the gender regime shifts away from a slow increase of gendered social democracy into rupture and a neoliberal trajectory. In contrast to class, it is rather the tipping point of the gender regime in the UK, which gives evidence to the intensification of an already existing neoliberal trajectory.

Delivering the first presentation and keynote lecture of the third day of the conference, Elmar Rieger (University of Bamberg), who aimed to narrate the crisis using the United Kingdom as the focus, to put democracy back on the sociological agenda in relationship to finance and to analyze gender as a multi-level system in relation to governance of finance. Walby argued that the financial crisis is a change path and can be described in two ways: as a cascading crisis and a gendered crisis. The cascade of the crisis from one institutional domain to another has led to a critical turning point in which the trajectory of the gender regime shifts away from a slow increase of gendered social democracy into rupture and a neoliberal trajectory of the gender regime. In contrast to class, it is rather the tipping point of the gender regime in the UK, which gives evidence to the intensification of an already existing neoliberal trajectory.

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Delivering the first presentation and keynote lecture of the third day of the conference, Elmar Rieger (University of Bamberg) problematized the contemporary state of sociology as a social science. He evoked a comparison between the late Antiquity and the Hellenistic Period and the late 19th century and contemporary society by comparing the most prominent social theories of these respective eras as reflections of the societies they were produced in. Arguing that sociology no longer deals with a theory of the society, but rather topics that converge on questions of social policy, he contrasted its usefulness to tackling contemporary forms of inequality.

Following Rieger’s keynote lecture, the participants of the conference dealt with the connections between social class and the crisis. Topics ranged from the German labor unions’ policies and actions during the oil crisis of the 1970s to questions of class and recognition in Hungary and further to the academic disinterest showed for class terminology among German researchers. All three contributions stressed the importance of class considerations in addressing the current situation. Sebastian Voigt (Institut für Zeitgeschichte München-Berlin) began by arguing that a comparison between labor unions’ policy decisions during the Oil Crisis of the 1970’s aids in contextualizing the central issues of the late 2000s and the 2010s. One of these issues was elaborated upon in Ákos Huszár’s contribution, which problematized the issue of class in Hungary from the perspectives of social esteem and self-esteem. Huszár, who came from the Hungarian Central Statistical Office, found large differences between ideas of the self and ideas of social standing and proposed analyzing the results further in a temporal and international context to gauge the relative society-wide significance of these discrepancies.

Expanding upon Huszár’s concerns, Carina Altreiter (University of Vienna) argued that, while social class as a term has fallen out of sociological vogue, it remains an important influence on current research. She exemplified the phenomenon in relation to the 1998 concept of “labor-power entrepreneur” (Arbeitskraftunternehmer). Because the labor-power entrepreneur has not currently been discussed in the context of a class-informed habitus, Altreiter argued that certain trends in the 21st century workforce are being overemphasized at the behest of others, thereby skewing analysis.

Next the topic of the conference turned to the varied discourses of the crisis and their consequences on social inequality. The papers delivered all presented evidence of the adverse effects of unchecked privileged discourses, regardless of whether these rely on economic, sociological or political logic. Blagovesta Nikolova (Bulgarian Academy of Sciences) presented a paper on the trapping consequences of social inequality discourses. She argued that addressing social inequalities on the basis of economic aspects ties these inexorably to monetary evaluations. Attempts to eradicate inequality suffer from the uncritical adoption of monetized language, which tends to isolate and externalize the problem.
Tomasz Warczok argued that social scientific discourse enforces the Post-Soviet inequality of the social structure of Poland. This discourse serves to assign a brand of maladjustment and backwardness on the working class, whose struggle against these classifications further legitimates them and establishes an unequal societal status quo. Lastly, Manish Tiwari from the Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi presented a case study of the Dalit political party BSP in Uttar Pradesh. Tiwari showed how caste identity has been used as a political rhetoric, sometimes with adverse effects, and argued that regardless of its seeming strengths current rhetoric based on caste identity in India suffers from empty populism.

The conference attendees were also fortunate to have the chance to hear a contribution by Svitlana Khutka on the state of the Euro-Maidan and the Ukraine during the elections. She quoted research data and polls showing the popularity of various alternatives to pacify the situation in Ukraine. Presented were views from both the Ukrainian and the Russian side, illustrating the often-diverging interpretations of the crisis.

The last part of the conference was devoted to economic perspectives on the crisis. Here the discussion turned to the political uses of crisis thinking, to the factors contributing to the crisis and to its origins in Greece. Ben Merriman (University of Chicago) presented the case of contemporary American conservatism and the Tea Party as a political movement of often overestimated influence. Viewing the phenomenon as largely misunderstood, Merriman pointed, firstly, to evidence suggesting that the Tea Party is temporary and politically opportunistic congealing of conservative interests. Secondly, he demonstrated a lack of scholarly attention to the diffusion and adoption of new conservative policies. Together, he argued, these factors have led to a systemic overestimation of Tea Party and related political movements.

Following Merriman, Luigi Droste (University of Münster) presented the case of linking the dynamics of real estate markets with those of financial crises from the 19th century until present day. Tracing the history of multiple real estate bubbles leading to crises in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, he argued that shared characteristics between the two markets serve to aid the understanding of economic crises, practices of speculation, household debt and social inequalities. Droste exhorted future research to treat economic crises as more than credit “booms” and “busts”. Finally, the contribution by Panagiotis Manolakos (Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences, Athens) argued that the Greek experience of the late 2000s financial crisis should be seen in the context of both failed national political transformations, 1996-2009, and the architecture of the euro as a currency. Manolakos elucidated the developments leading up to the eruption of the crisis of the Eurozone and the reasons that exacerbated the Greek situation in ways that transformed it into a national crisis within a global crisis.

Wrapping up the discussion on economics and the conference as a whole, the keynote lecture of Hartmut Kaelble, who spoke on the topic of economic history and the development of social equality and inequality in Europe between the 1950s and the 1970s. During this time the income levels and the forms of social inequality tied to them reduced all over Europe, in the United States and Japan, leading to the development of the Kuznets-curve. The conclusions Kaelble drew pointed to little evidence of the reduction of overall social inequalities as a consequence of the narrowed income gap and argued that while the period cannot be seen as entirely historically unique, neither can it be used directly as a policy guideline without misrepresenting the current social climate.

It is challenging to draw conclusions from the rich discussions and diverse talks but with no doubt, they have generated historical and sociological reflections with regard to rethinking theoretical and methodological questions about contested and sometimes even obfuscating terms such as social inequalities and crisis. The 22 contributions illustrated the importance of discussing certain historical periods as a way to reflect on current social, political and economic conditions. Several overlooked yet significant concepts such as space, transnationality, finance, human rights and social justice have been advanced in order to understand life chances in contemporary societies.

By Heidi Käkelä and Cleovi Mosuela

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If Stuart Hall became a professor of sociology after joining the Open University in 1979 he was clearly also far more than that. His name will be forever associated with the foundation and expansion of British cultural studies between the 1960s and the 1980s. It was the development of that trans-disciplinary approach to the analyses of contemporary culture that has left its most profound mark not only on the disciplinary protocols and pretensions of sociology, but also in the fields of anthropology, historiography, ethnic studies, visual culture and the modern arts. 

Stuart McPhail Hall was born in Kingston, Jamaica in 1932, a black subject of the British Empire. He travelled from the periphery of a colonial empire to its centre in 1951, taking up a Rhodes Scholarship at Oxford to study English literature. Abandoning a PhD on Henry James, Hall was quickly drawn into new left politics and the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, subsequently becoming one of the founders of the journal New Left Review. His constant critical engagement with the ongoing processes of cultural formations meant that his political activity was never easily absorbed into existing organisations and positions. This remained true to the end of his life. In the early 1960s he taught in a secondary modern school and in adult education, and in 1964 published, with Paddy Whannel, The Popular Arts. In this early trajectory we can already discover the condensed agenda of what came to characterise Hall’s particular contribution to the study of modern society and culture.

What stands out through Hall’s life is the centrality of education and culture to understanding modernity. In particular, it led him to consider the field of culture not as abstract or neutral but as a contested ground where the culture of power and the power of culture form, mould and discipline individual lives and collective identities. Hall’s commitment to a democratic pedagogy was tellingly developed in adult education rather than in strictly academic environs, as was also the case with Raymond Williams and E.P. Thompson. It was then theoretically refined and expanded in the open seminar structures he generously promoted and encouraged at the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham between 1964 and 1979, and subsequently disseminated in the team taught multimedia courses he coordinated and wrote for thousands of students at the Open University. The publications emerging from this approach – Resistance through Rituals (1975), Policing the Crisis (1978), Formations of Modernity (1992), Questions of Cultural Identity (1996), along with many others – were all the result of collective research and writing.

To understand the peculiar intellectual force and critical energy that Hall’s work consistently displayed it is crucial to understand that while much of his life was embedded in Englishness and British metropolitan life, his intellectual formation and biographical trajectory brought an edge to all of that which native Britons often found difficult to replicate. Just as Frantz Fanon, another boy with a ‘sound colonial education’ (Derek Walcott) crossed and confuted French colonial culture and metropolitan thought, Stuart reshuffled the cultural pack, dealing non-authorised versions of modernity, and betting on a possible series of belongings that drew British culture into unsuspected deals involving diaspora, creolisation and the uncertainties attendant on claiming identity: whether national, racial, social or sexual. In his personal and political journey from the perceived periphery of the metropolitan world, Stuart Hall’s path had necessarily to disturb and radically rewrite the intellectual and institutional script while redrawing the cultural map of being ‘English’. Like Fanon, Edward Said and Jacques Derrida, it was inevitable that he would remix the cards he had been handed by colonialism and the culture of the ‘mother country’. Here he always remained highly attuned to the political policing of the crisis of hegemony and the intersecting of the media and the languages of authoritarianism that led to his coining of the term ‘Thatcherism’ and his more recent analyses of neoliberalism.

So, while Hall was deeply committed to capturing the profound political sense of British culture and its everyday life, his cultural itinerary was also and always an undertaking that was nurtured by his roots/routes from elsewhere. This latter dimension has been beautifully captured in John Mattymattmattmat, Wikimedia Commons
Akomfrah’s recent film *The Stuart Hall Project* (2013). Offspring of the violent colonial formation of the Caribbean, of a diaspora initiated by the Atlantic slave trade and subsequently legitimised by an imperial order, his critical gaze unavoidably had an oblique edge that cut into and across more provincial, home-grown, understandings of the historical and political powers exercised by metropolitan European culture.

This particular biography not only fuelled Hall’s critical tussles with Marx, Althusser, Foucault and British sociology, while enveloping them in a subtle understanding of cultural formations and power influenced by the work of Antonio Gramsci, but also led to developing a deeper, postcolonial, current that increasingly tugged at his attention. To suggest that this critical inheritance haunts his influential pronouncements on race, identity, politics, nationalism and the black arts that he did so much to foster in his later years is to understand why Stuart Hall was never merely an academic nor a scholar with a private biography. His charismatic presence and voice was also broadcast in television talks and documentaries such as the BBC2 series *Redemption Song* (1996).

To use a phrase that these days sounds increasingly wooden in English, Stuart Hall was a committed intellectual. His intellectual militancy was tied to understanding the complex making and mutations of the modern world. As a pioneer of trans-disciplinary thought and research, his work was destined to travel far afield. It laid the foundations for transnational itineraries – from Naples to Shanghai and Rio De Janeiro – like the unauthorised blue lines traced over the globe in the sounds of his beloved Miles Davis. The critical cut his work has operated on the body of European culture has provided and provoked another set of coordinates with which to map, navigate and negotiate a world that is now irreducible to the concerns of London, Paris, Berlin or Washington. The increasing attention that Hall gave to the question of race and identity in his later life led to promoting the black arts as the recovery of a refused archive and its unacknowledged centrality to the making of modernity and contemporary Anglo-American and European society. He was directly responsible for setting up INIVA (Institute of International Visual Arts) in 1994 in London, which now houses the Stuart Hall Library.

In his detailed understandings of how the British Empire had fallen in upon the centre (that is, of how the ex-colonial world has fallen in upon the West), Stuart opened up a critical path in which the particular and the planetary increasingly resonate in a political and cultural scenario that we have yet to understand in all its consequences... that is, if we dare to follow him into what he always considered to be a critical space ‘without guarantees’.

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