# RC25 NEWSLETTER

## 2ⁿᵈ Quarter 2023 | VOLUME 26

*Edited by Anna Odrowaz-Coates & Idalina Odziemczyk-Stawarz*
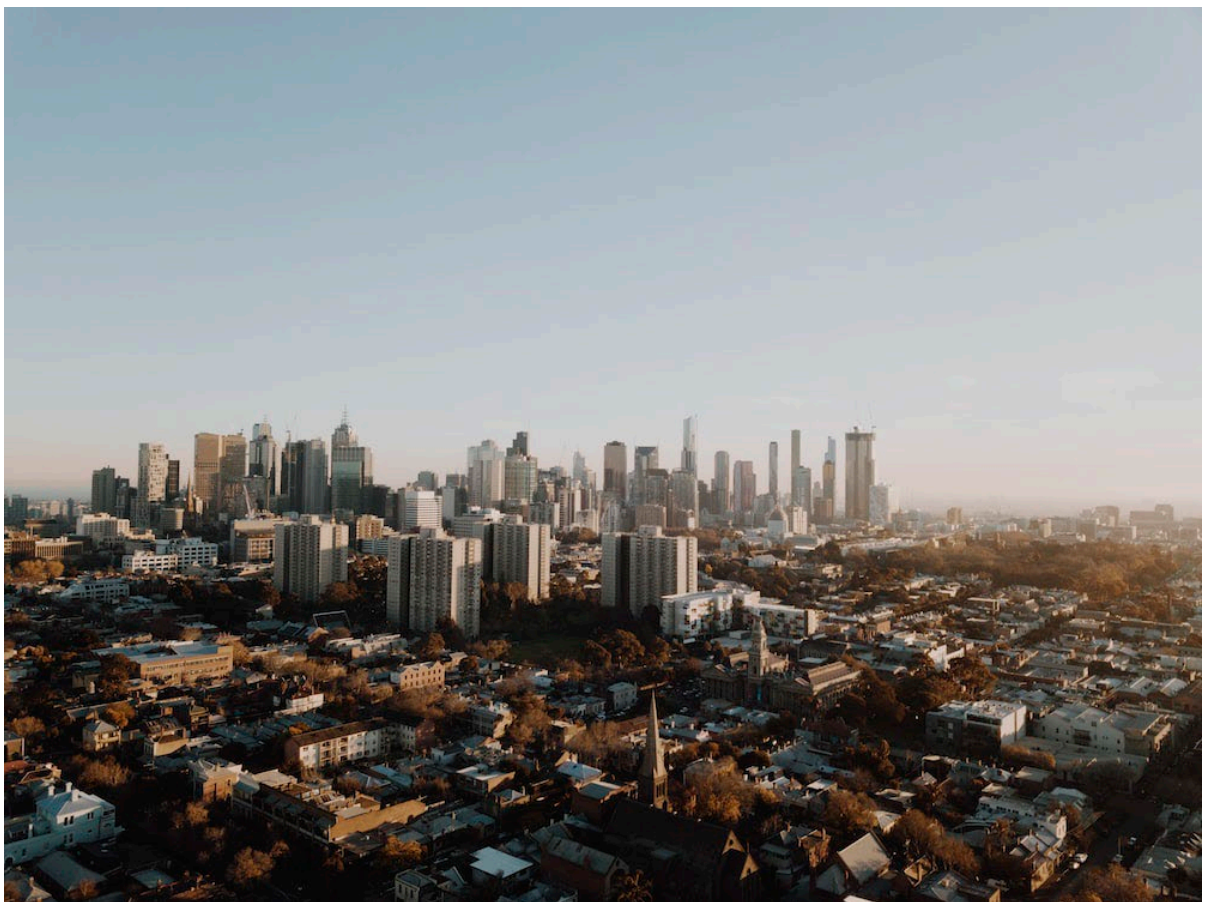


Photo of Melbourne by Simona Sergi from: https://unsplash.com/photos/EUlRrbisKj8

## Highlights:

- **ISA Congress in Melbourne is just behind the corner.**
- **Upcoming Elections: ISA & RC25**
- **Members' news and reflections**

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# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear RC25 members,
Dear Colleagues,

The Melbourne World Congress of Sociology is almost there, with several key moments, such as the elections for instance, not solely for ISA, but also for RC25. The past five years[1] were full of crisis and challenges, and/but we manage to keep the RC its path, including with the Nairobi conference.

For the forthcoming years, several challenges are still ahead, notably the consolidation of a scientific community toward language and society. While we may expect difficulties in travelling – several colleagues, including several who usually receive funding for their participation in international conferences, are not able to do so currently; some sessions were particularly impacted, i.e., specific thematic seem more impacted too – how to build bonds between all of us too? How to support our members with virtual events to cope with the financial difficulties, but also the consequences attached to flights toward climate change? These challenges will belong to the forthcoming executive board.

In the meantime, we hope you may enjoy your scholarship and the Congress, in person or online, as Visio conference tool should give access to all registered participants to numerous sessions. And, of course, do not hesitate to submit your original work to *Language, Discourse & Society*.

Enjoy these unique places where "looking at language rather solely through it" is celebrated.

Kind regards,
Stéphanie Cassilde

# UPCOMING ELECTIONS

## ISA ELECTIONS

**The election of the ISA officers for the period July 2023 – July 2027** is upcoming and will take place during the XX ISA World Congress of Sociology held on June 25 – July 2 2023, in Melbourne, Australia.

List of nominees can be found here:
https://www.isa-sociology.org/uploads/imgen/1476-isa-elections-2023-2027.pdf

## RC25 ELECTIONS

**The election of the RC25 officers for the period July 2023 – July 2027 is ongoing already with the first step until May 15ᵗʰ**, i.e., the reception of self-nomination forms.

All RC25 members in good standing both toward RC25 and ISA are eligible and received the email with the form. Please check your spam and/or send us an email if you did not receive it (we use ISA mailing list; if you changed your affiliation and that it was not updated on ISA website, please let us know).

There are six board positions; secretary, newsletter editor, webmaster and treasurer are positions that can be filled by a main officer and a co-officer.

As previous elections, the executive board asked a confidence person to be a witness of the overall procedure; we warmly thank Celine-Marie Pascale, one of our previous RC25 president, to accept this role.

Self-nominations forms should be sent to our secretary Beatriz Xavier (xavier.beatriz@gmail.com), CC Celine-Marie Pascale (pascale@american.edu) and RC25 president's email (president@language-and-society.org).

The 16th of May will be used to program all candidates in the platform and disseminate all self-nomination forms to members in order to inform their vote. Then, from May 17ᵗʰ 2023, to June 17ᵗʰ 2023, the elections will be opened using "election runner" to ensure anonymity. Results shall be valid if one-third of the eligible votes are expressed.

# ISA WORLD CONGRESS OF SOCIOLOGY

Preliminary Program is now available:
https://isaconf.confex.com/isaconf/wc2023/meetingapp.cgi



## XX ISA World Congress of Sociology

### Melbourne, Australia | June 25-July 1, 2023
Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre

**Resurgent Authoritarianism:**
*Sociology of New Entanglements of Religions, Politics, and Economies*

www.isa-sociology.org

# Plenary Sessions

## Plenary Sessions

### Monday, 26 June 2023

**14:00 - 15:20** 🕐

> **PLENARY**
> 14:00 - 15:20
> PLII.1 Inequalities Created in Neoliberal Economies
> 📍 MCEC - Plenary 2 (Ground Floor)

> **PLENARY**
> 14:00 - 15:20
> PLI.1 Postsecularity or Multiple Secularities?
> 📍 MCEC - Plenary 1 (Ground Floor)

### Tuesday, 27 June 2023

**14:00 - 15:20** 🕐

> **PLENARY**
> 14:00 - 15:20
> PLII.2 Individual vs. Collective Rights to Life under Neoliberalism
> 📍 MCEC - Plenary 2 (Ground Floor)

> **PLENARY**
> 14:00 - 15:20
> PLI.2 Toward Broader Horizons of Secularity
> 📍 MCEC - Plenary 1 (Ground Floor)

### Wednesday, 28 June 2023

**14:00 - 15:20** 🕐

> **PLENARY**
> 14:00 - 15:20
> PLIII.1 Populism: Local Forms of a Global Phenomenon
> 📍 MCEC - Plenary 2 (Ground Floor)

> **PLENARY**
> 14:00 - 15:20
> PLIV.1 Brutalizing Authoritarianism
> 📍 MCEC - Plenary 1 (Ground Floor)

### Thursday, 29 June 2023

**14:00 - 15:20** 🕐

> **PLENARY**
> 14:00 - 15:20
> PLIII.2 Populism and its "Others": An Intersectional Approach to the Construction of the "People"
> 📍 MCEC - Plenary 2 (Ground Floor)

> **PLENARY**
> 14:00 - 15:20
> PLIV.2 Knowledge, Authority and Post-factual Era
> 📍 MCEC - Plenary 1 (Ground Floor)

# Presidential Sessions

## Presidential Sessions

### Sunday, 25 June 2023

**17:30 - 20:15** 🕐

PRESIDENTIAL

17:30 - 20:15
Opening Ceremony and Presidential Address
📍 *MCEC - Plenary 2 (Ground Floor)*

### Monday, 26 June 2023

**08:30 - 10:20** 🕐

PRESIDENTIAL

08:30 - 10:20
Liberalism, the Other and Religion
📍 *MCEC - Plenary 2 (Ground Floor)*

### Friday, 30 June 2023

**14:00 - 16:00** 🕐

PRESIDENTIAL

14:00 - 16:00
Building a Just Post-COVID-19 World
📍 *MCEC - Plenary 2 (Ground Floor)*

## RC 25 Sessions

| Monday, 26 June 2023 |
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### 10:30 -12:20 🕐

**RC25**
10:30 - 12:20
**Language, Religion, and Linguistic Rights in Times of Crisis**
5 papers (in person)
Session Organizer: Ovgu Ulgen, University of Montreal, Canada, Chair
*MCEC - 111 (Level 1)*

### 17:30 -19:20 🕐

**RC25**
17:30 - 19:20
**Language As a Tool for Oppression and Resistance within Institutional Practices**
4 papers (in person), 2 papers (virtual)
Session Organizers: Frida Petersson, University of Gothenburg, Sweden; Co-Chair
Johan Lindwall, University of Gothenburg, Sweden; Co-Chair
Beatriz Xavier, Coimbra Nursing School, Portugal, Chair
*MCEC - 111 (Level 1)*

| Tuesday, 27 June 2023 |
| --- |

### 8:30 -10:20 🕐

**RC25**
8:30 - 10:20
**Discourse Analysis Methodology and the Role of Written Narratives in Sociological Research**
4 papers (in person), 2 papers (virtual)
Session Organizer: Anna Odrowaz-Coates, Maria Grzegorzewska University, Poland, Chair
*MCEC - 111 (Level 1)*

### 15:30 -17:20 🕐

**RC25**
15:30 - 17:20
**Everyday Practices of 'Othering': Ongoing Developments. Part I**
4 papers (in person), 1 paper (virtual)
Session Organizer: Stephanie Cassilde, Ronin Institute for Independent Scholarship, Belgium
Chair: Magdalena Lemanczyk
*MCEC - 203 (Level 2)*

### 17:30 -19:20 🕐

**RC25**
17:30 - 19:20
**Everyday Practices of 'Othering': Ongoing Developments. Part II**
4 papers (in person), 1 paper (virtual)
Session Organizer: Stephanie Cassilde, Ronin Institute for Independent Scholarship, Belgium
Chair: ??
*MCEC - 203 (Level 2)*

### 19:30 -20:50 🕐

**RC25**
19:30 - 20:50
**RC25 Business Meeting**
*MCEC - 111 (Level 1)*

| Wednesday, 28 June 2023 |
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### 8:30 -10:20 🕐

**RC30**
8:30 - 10:20
**Language and Work: The Post-Pandemic Evolutions of Categorizations Toward (Un)Employment and Working Conditions**
Session Organizer: RC30
*MCEC - 203 (Level 2)*

**10:30 -12:20** 🕐

**RC25**

**The Interplay of Language, Migration and Mobility: Policy and Practice**
3 papers (in person), 2 papers (virtual)
Session Organizers: Magdalena Lemanczyk, Institute of Political Studies, Poland, Co-Chair;
Rika Yamashita, Kanto Gakuin University, Japan, Chair
*MCEC - 111 (Level 1)*

**15:30 -17:20** 🕐

15:30 - 17:20
**RC05**
**Everyday Practices of 'Othering': Ongoing Developments. Part III**
Session Organizer: RC05
*MCEC - 203 (Level 2)*

**17:30 -19:20** 🕐

17:30 - 19:20
**RC25**
**Language and Immigrant Generations: New Entanglements**
4 papers (in person)
Session Organizers: Amado Alarcon Alarcon, University Rovira i Virgili, Spain, Chair
Cecilio Lapresta-Rey, University of Lleida, Lleida, Spain, Co-Chair
Roland Terborg, Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico, Mexico
*Crown - CCH1 (Level 2)*

## Thursday, 29 June 2023

**8:30 -10:20** 🕐

8:30 - 10:20
**RC25**
**Media, Social Exclusion and Audience Empowerment**
4 papers (in person), 1 paper (virtual)
Session Organizer: Nadezhda Georgieva-Stankova, Trakia University, Bulgaria,
Chair: ??
*MCEC - 111 (Level 1)*

**15:30 -17:20** 🕐

15:30 - 17:20
**RC25**
**Language, Religion, and Linguistic Rights in Times of Crisis**
4 papers (in person)
Session Organizers: Keiji Fujiyoshi, Otemon Gakuin University, Japan; Chair
Miwako Hosoda, Seisa University, Yokohama, Kanagawa, Japan
*MCEC - 203 (Level 2)*

**17:30 -19:20** 🕐

17:30 - 19:20
**TG04**
**Language of Risk. Part I**
Session Organizer: TG04
*MCEC - 204 (Level 2)*

## Friday, 30 June 2023

**8:30 -10:20** 🕐

8:30 - 10:20
**RC25**
**Language on Health Under COVID-19 Pandemic. Part II**
6 papers (virtual)
Session Organizers: Keiji Fujiyoshi, Otemon Gakuin University, Japan; Chair
Miwako Hosoda, Seisa University, Yokohama, Kanagawa, Japan
Chair: Mark Seilhamer
*MCEC - 203 (Level 2)*

**10:30 -12:20** 🕐

<div style="RC25">

10:30 - 12:20
**Discursive Discourses of Political Violence**
3 papers (in person), 2 papers (virtual)
Session Organizers: Everlyn Kisembe, Moi University, Kenya; Co-Chair
Gatitu Kiguru, Kenyatta University, Kenya;
Phyllis Mwangi, Kenyatta University, Kenya, Chair
*MCEC - 111 (Level 1)*

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**15:30 -17:20** 🕐

RC25
15:30 - 17:20
**Language on Health Under COVID-19 Pandemic. Part III**
4 papers (in person)
Session Organizers: Keiji Fujiyoshi, Otemon Gakuin University, Japan; Chair
*MCEC - 111 (Level 1)*

## Saturday, 1 July 2023

**8:30 -10:20** 🕐

RC25
8:30 - 10:20
**Intersections of Gender, Sexuality, and Age (Youth) Looking at Language**
4 papers (in person), 2 papers (virtual)
Session Organizers: Rika Yamashita, Kanto Gakuin University, Japan; Chair
Chandrabali Dutta, HIRALAL MAZUMDAR MEMORIAL COLLEGE FOR WOMEN, India, Co-Chair
*MCEC - 111 (Level 1)*

**10:30 -12:20** 🕐

RC25
10:30 - 12:20
**The Functional Perspective of the Regional Languages in the Modern World**
4 papers (in person)
Session Organizer: Musa Yusupov, Chechen State University, Russian Federation
Chair: Musa Yusupov, Chechen State University, Russian Federation, Missing, musa_y17@hotmail.com
Panelist: Cristina Boboc, Ghent University, Belgium, cristina.boboc@ugent.be
Discussant: Erhan Guneysu, Anglia Ruskin University, United Kingdom, eg527@pgr.aru.ac.uk
Chair: ??
*MCEC - 111 (Level 1)*

**12:30 -14:20** 🕐

RC25
12:30 - 14:20
**Language on/of Youth Under COVID-19 Pandemic**
4 papers (in person)
Session Organizers: Keiji Fujiyoshi, Otemon Gakuin University, Japan;
Asami Senoo, Otemon Gakuin University, Japan, Missing
Chair: ??
*Crown - P1 (Level 1)*

**14:30 -16:20** 🕐

TG04
14:30 - 16:20
**The Language of Risk. Part II**
Session Organizer: TG04
*MCEC - 203 (Level 2)*

## Research Council & Election Meetings

**Sunday, 25 June 2023**

**10:30 -12:30** 🕐

10:30-12:30
**Research Council: Business Meeting**
Venue: Crown M12

**Monday, 26 June 2023**

**21:00 -23:00** 🕐

21:00-23:00
**Election Speeches by the Candidates for President and Vice-Presidents**
**Open meeting for all congress participants.**
Venue: MCEC, Plenary 1

**Wednesday, 28 June 2023**

**21:00 -23:00** 🕐

21:00-23:00
**Assembly of Councils: Business meeting and Elections of the ISA President and four Vice-Presidents**
Venue: MCEC, 104

**Thursday, 29 June 2023**

**21:00 -23:00** 🕐

21:00-23:00
**Research Council: Election of 8 members of the ISA Executive Committee**
Venue: MCEC, 216

**Friday, 30 June 2023**

**17:30 -19:30** 🕐

17:30-19:30
**Training Session for the newly elected RC/WG/TG officers**
Venue: MCEC, 104

# Overall schedule

| Melbourne 2023 | 08:30-10:20 | 10:30-12:20 | 12:30-13:50 | 14:00-15:20 | 15:30-17:20 | 17:30-19:20 | 19:30-20:50 | 21:00-23:00 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Sunday 25 June** | | *Research Council Business Meeting (delegates only)* 10:30-12:30 | | *Council of National Associations Business Meeting (delegates only)* 14:00-16:00 | | Opening Ceremony, Presidential Address, Prize Giving and Reception | | |
| **Monday 26 June** | Presidential Plenary I | RC, WG, TG | Integrative Sessions | Semi-Plenaries & Australian Thematic Sessions | RC, WG, TG Associations Sessions | RC, WG, TG Ad Hoc Author Meets Critics | RC, WG, TG Professional Development Sessions | *ISA Officers Election speeches (open meeting)* |
| **Tuesday 27 June** | RC, WG, TG | RC, WG, TG | Integrative Sessions Spotlight Session | Semi-Plenaries & Australian Thematic Sessions | RC, WG, TG Associations Sessions | RC, WG, TG Ad Hoc Author Meets Critics | RC, WG, TG Professional Development Sessions | |
| **Wednesday 28 June** | RC, WG, TG | RC, WG, TG | Integrative Sessions | Semi-Plenaries & Australian Thematic Sessions | RC, WG, TG Associations Sessions Past Presidents Session | RC, WG, TG Ad Hoc Author Meets Critics | RC, WG, TG Professional Development Sessions | *Assembly of Councils* *Business Meeting President & Vice-Presidents Elections (delegates only)* |
| **Thursday 29 June** | RC, WG, TG | RC, WG, TG | Integrative Sessions Spotlight Session | Semi-Plenaries & Australian Thematic Sessions | RC, WG, TG Associations Sessions | RC, WG, TG Ad Hoc / *Council of National Associations Elections (delegates only)* 17:30-19:30 | RC, WG, TG Professional Development Sessions | *Research Council Elections (delegates only)* |
| **Friday 30 June** | RC, WG, TG | RC, WG, TG | Integrative Sessions | Presidential Session II & Installation of New President | RC, WG, TG Associations | RC, WG, TG / Ad Hoc *Training Session RC officers* | | Farewell Party 21:00-23:00 |
| **Saturday 1 July** | RC, WG, TG | RC, WG, TG *New EC Meeting* *(members only)* | RC, WG, TG 12:30-14:20 *Induction session new EC officers* 12:30-14:00 | RC, WG, TG 14:30-16:20 | Spotlight Session | | *The out-going & new Executive Committee Dinner (members only)* | |
| **RC, WG, TG = Research Committees, Working Groups, Thematic Groups sessions** | | | | | | | | |

| Melbourne 2023 | 9:00 | 10:30 | 12:30 | 14:00 | 15:30 | 17:30 | 19:30 | 21:00 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Friday 23 June** | Publications and Finance and Membership Committees (members only) till 13:00 | | | Research Coordinating and National Associations Liaison Committees (members only) 14:30 -18:30 | | | | |
| **Saturday 24 June** | Executive Committee (members only) till 13:00 | | | Executive Committee (members only) 14:30 - 18:30 | | | | |
| **Sunday 25 June** | | Research Council Business Meeting (delegates only) | | Council of National Associations Business Meeting (delegates only) 14:00-16:00 | | | | |
| **Monday 26 June** | | | | | | | | ISA Officers Election speeches (open meeting) 21:00-23:00 |
| **Tuesday 27 June** | | | | | | | | |
| **Wednesday 28 June** | | | | | | | | Assembly of Councils Business Meeting President & Vice-Presidents Elections (delegates only) 21:00-23:00 |
| **Thursday 29 June** | | | | | | Council of National Associations Elections (delegates only) 18:00-20:00 | | Research Council Elections (delegates only) 21:00-23:00 |
| **Friday 30 June** | | | | | | Research Committees Training Session (delegates only) | | |
| **Saturday 1 July** | | New Executive Committee Meeting (members only) | Induction session of newly elected EC officers | | | | The out-going & new Executive Committee Dinner (members only) | |
| **Melbourne 2023** | 9:00 | 10:30 | 12:30 | 14:00 | 15:30 | 17:30 | 19:30 | 21:00 |

# RECENT PUBLICATION BY RC25 MEMBERS

**Papers:**

**Jasso** Guillermina (2022) *Notes on the History of 'Social Science Research': In Celebration of Its 50th Anniversary.* Social Science Research 108
https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssresearch.2022.102780 .

**Odasso** Laura, **Geoffrion** Karine, *Doing family Online. (In)formal knowledge circulation, information-seeking practices, and support communities.* Family Relations 72 (2), 2023, pp. 389-405
https://doi.org/10.1111/fare.12865

Abstract:

Objective: Drawing on the theory of polymedia and on the role of information and communications technology (ICT) in (re)defining the articulation between the private and the public, this introduction reflects on what ICT does to and for families around the world. Background: Through the development of networking platforms, video call applications, personal sites, and collaborative information platforms, ICT has changed the way people live, love, and interact. It has also afforded new ways to "do family."

Method: By featuring studies from a variety of national and regional contexts (Canada, Chile, Ghana, Greece, Moldova, South Korea, Ukraine, the Netherlands, the United States, and Turkey), it establishes a dialogue between disciplines and a fruitful cross-fertilization of research topics, methodologies, analyses, and theoretical perspectives.

Results: This special issue explores (1) the nexus among family life, relationships, and ICT, and (2) the relation between the everyday lived experiences of family members and the broader social structures that circumscribe the width and breadth of those experiences.

Conclusion: The contributions show the porosity of the boundary between public and private spaces. Alternative forms of expertise and parenting norms are emerging online. ICTs are integrated into parents' information–seeking and sharing practices, and emotional support. They sustain relationships between family members across distance. However, inequalities regarding access to the Internet and computer literacy still jeopardize digital citizenship and democratization.

Implication: The contributions in this special issue highlight the need for better structuring of interventions and policies to support families by using up-to-date ICT systems and creating mentorship programs and digital mediation for family professionals and beneficiaries.

**Susen** Simon (2023) *Towards an Ontology of Contemporary Reality?*, Theory, Culture & Society, Online First, pp. 1–23.
https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/02632764221143943

**Book Chapters:**

**Jasso** Guillermina (2022) On the Essential Unity of Mathematics, Science, and Art: The Justice Evaluation Function and the Golden Number." [in:] Nima **Rezaei** (ed.), *Transdisciplinarity*. Integrated Science, Vol 5. Cham, Switzerland: Springer, pp. 57-84 https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-94651-7_4 | https://rdcu.be/cZCNh .

**Odasso** Laura, *Heterosexual Marriage-Related Regimes*. [in:] Mary Romero, Research Handbook of Intersectionality, Edward Elgar Publishing Lrtd, 2023, pp. 253-273. https://www.elgaronline.com/display/book/9781800378056/book-part-9781800378056-27.xml

Abstract:

To empirically explore what an array of intersectional projects and related methods concerning intimate citizenship consist of this chapter proposes a reflexion at the crossroads of migration, politics of belonging, and regimes of intersection. Firstly, I identify important transversal issues and methodologies that marked scholarship on intimate citizenship and lay the groundwork for remaking an intersectional intimate citizenship's project. Secondly, yet little explored through the prism of intimate citizenship, I posit that migration is an illuminating domain for understanding the manifold intersections of domains of powers drawn by the interplay of borders and social boundaries. Public discourse around the migration apparatus and the subsequent social representations outlines the specific matrix of inequalities and domination that impact, expose, and reshape (some) the geography of intimacies on the way to gain full national membership and belongingness. Thanks to empirical case studies concerning binational heterosexual unions and the manifold discourses surrounding them, I propose empirical scenes that help to capture the micro, meso, and macro levels of an 'intersectional regime perspective' (i.e., securitization, economization, humanitarianism of migration) along with more investigated lines of oppression, which concern the public intimate life of 'Others' and their beloved ones in every day. The conclusion suggests avenues for future research and advocates for reinforcing the dialogue with civil society.

**Books:**

"*School Journey as a Third Place*" by Zoe **Moody**, Ayuko **Berchtold-Sedooka**, Sara **Camponovo**, Philip D. **Jaffé**, Frédéric **Darbellay**; Anthem Press.

If you would like to know more about the book, please click here to see the advanced information sheet or visit the book's webpage here.

### Book Summary

Journeys to school are an important time and space of transition between homes and schools for children around the world. This book comprises various chapters providing insights on children's experiences of this essential part of their lives and schooling experience. In an interdisciplinary and intercultural perspective, international leaders focus on how children from very different contexts travel between their homes and their schools and how this transitional space impacts their daily lives and interactions with their environment.

## About the authors:

**Zoe Moody** is Professor at the University of Teacher Education Valais and Senior Research Associate at the Centre for Children's Rights Studies, University of Geneva.

**Ayuko Berchtold-Sedooka**, PhD, is Research Associate at the Centre for Children's Rights Studies, University of Geneva, and Expert in educational resource production, at éducation21

**Sara Camponovo**, PhD, is Research Associate at the Centre for Children's Rights Studies, University of Geneva.

**Philip D. Jaffé** is Professor at the Centre for Children's Rights Studies, University of Geneva, and a member of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.

**Frédéric Darbellay** is Associate Professor at the University of Geneva and Head of the Inter- & Transdisciplinarity Unit at the Centre for Children's Rights Studies.

Information provided by Anthem Press. **Book review is welcome** from the RC25 ISA. If anyone is interested to write the review for Language, Discourse & Society please contact acoates@aps.edu.pl for further details.

## Edited Volumes:

*Social pedagogy for social inclusion and children's rights discourses* (2022), edited by Anna Odrowaz-Coates

The publication is the outcome of the International Scientific Conference: *Discourses of Childhood and Social Education* that took place in Warsaw on 2-3 of June 2022. It is co-financed from the conference grant from the Ministry of Education and Science "Excellent Science" DNK/SP/513983/2021, also co-financed by the Maria Grzegorzewska University in Warsaw and is an Educational Resource for the UNESCO/Janusz Korczak Chair International Summer School 2022 organized under the Patronage of the Polish Commission for UNESCO and UNICEF Polska.

Full text available in open access:
http://www.aps.edu.pl/media/4c2enggf/
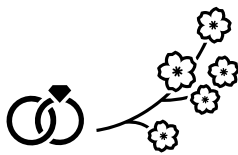social_pedagogy_for_social_inclusion_e-book.pdf

## MEMBERS' NEWS

On January 1, 2023, our dear Professor Celine-Marie Pascale, retired from full time employment. She is now Professor Emerita at American University! https://cmpascale.org/

We wish Celine-Marie prosperity and joy on her new path and have a cheeky hope that we will benefit from her having a bit more time. ☺

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Also, a big congratulation to our colleague Idalina Odziemczyk-Stawarz, the co-editor of the newsletter in recent years, who, observing the family name change, clearly has a reason to celebrate! All the best to you and your loved one from our RC.

# MEMBERS' REFLECTIONS[1]

**Social Science Shortcomings in the Study of Language and Culture**

*written by prof. Mahmoud Dhaouadi, Tunisia.*

## Language and Culture

The concept of culture in contemporary social sciences *has missed to emphasize* that (1) language is the cornerstone for culture emergence and that (2) culture has transcendental features. This hypothesis needs to be highlighted. Language, thought, religion, knowledge/ science, myths, laws, cultural values, and norms are called by us *Cultural Symbols/CS,* a concept which, unlike the social science concept of culture, claims that *language is the founding component of culture.*

The scientific spirit should look for the origin of *CS*. The human language appears to be the most legitimate force behind the emergence of CS, because It is hard to imagine the existence of the remaining elements of the CS like religion, science, thought without the prior presence of the spoken language *at least*. This is why we consider *language as the Mother of all CS*. Given the central role of language in the birth of the CS, it becomes strongly appropriate to endorse the widely cited description of philosophers and social thinkers who have seen Man as a speaking animal. We would like to frame this in a linguistic Cogito: *I use language; therefore, I am human*. Language as a distinct human feature can also explain the human race`s domination on this earth and beyond through its sophisticated intriguing complex CS.

## Tylor's silent on language

Despite language centrality in the making of culture, its famous definition makes *no explicit mention of language* as the initial spark for the very culture emergence and its sustaining process .The debate on the origin of culture is widely discussed by social scientists. There is hardly a consensus that language is the first determining factor for the emergence of culture (Dortier, J.F.: L'origine des cultures in Les Grands

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Dossiers, *Sciences Humaines*, no.1, 2005-2006:26-94). The anthropologist Edward Bernard Tylor (1871) defined the concept of culture as follows: "Culture or civilization… is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society". Tylor's classical definition does not include *language* while it is *the founding agent* of culture emergence and continuing presence, as seen in our definition of CS. As such, the relation between language and culture is of an organic nature. So, Tylor`s definition is not fully adequate because of its negligence to *explicitly* mention language as a founding component and part of culture existence.

## CS Transcendental Dimensions

Like Tylor's silence on language, modern social sciences remain also *mute* on other dimensions of CS which are expected to enrich and enhance, for instance, the outlook of cultural sociology. The space here does not allow to spell out even most of them:

(a) CS has *neither weight (weightless) nor volume* in the material sense of the word. That is, CS does not have material nature, but they have rather *transcendental/spiritual nature*. The following examples are illustrations:

1) Sending letters and documents by fax and e-mail reach their destination much faster than if they were mailed by regular or even rapid mail. This can be explained by our concept of weightless and no volume of CS: the process of sending letters and documents electronically and by fax *eliminates* from them the factors of weight and volume. With the intrinsic absence of weight and volume in the CS, it becomes easy to understand why CS can move with high and unbelievable speed through time and space. CS having no material weight and volume may also help also how it is possible to put the enormous written material of tons of books in few small electronic Flash Disks whose weight and volume are too small. This is possible because CS (words of the books) has by their very intrinsic nature no volume and weight. As such, it *hardly needs huge material vast space* to be contained in it. In philosophical and religious views, CS belongs to the spiritual and non -material world of humans.

2) Because of its transcendental nature, *CS is not affected by the reduction factor* when we give from them to others. For example, when we give 50 dollars from our capital to others as charity contribution; this act reduces our capital. But the situation is quite different if we give others parts of our CS: thought/ideas, knowledge/science or teach them our languages or spread among them our religious beliefs and cultural values and norms.

3) *CS has* longer *lifespan* throughout time. Ideas, religious beliefs, cultural values, and norms have long lifespan potential of survival which may last for semi-eternity. Consequently, human language has a potential eternalizing affect which impacts all CS and, thus, make them strongly qualified to be *spiritual/ transcendental*: non-material in their very deep essence. This outlook on the long lifespan of CS helps explain the phenomena of the so called *eternal human thought* of philosophers, scientists, scholars, religious thinkers of various civilizations since time immemorial. Their thought potential eternity can be accounted for, first, by the use of spoken and written languages which have the eternalizing input as seen before, and second, by the fact that human thought belongs to the transcendental universe of CS.

4) CS can charge humans with fantastic strong energy potentials that enable them to meet and defy the great challenges in human life. In the human long history, cultural values like freedom, equality, justice etc.… have proven to charge human individuals, groups and larger communities with *great power* that defies the enormous material power of their adversary. The victory of Third World countries in the 20th century in their fight for independence from Western colonial occupation is an illustration of the imposing role of CS in the liberation of the colonized societies.

## A Potential Explanatory Hypothesis

Positivism's *pro-quantitative* and dislikes for qualitative parameters appear to be behind social science's stand on language and the transcendental dimensions of culture as outlined. This Positivism made leading anthropologists even ask: "is culture real?" (*The Concept of Culture*/Leslie White, 973: 26).