

TIMES OF TURMOIL: EMERGING VISIONS FROM THREE YEARS OF *GLOBAL DIALOGUE*¹

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The ISA magazine, *Global Dialogue*, began as an 8-page newsletter published 5 times a year on-line. It appeared in the three official ISA languages (English, French and Spanish) plus traditional and simplified Chinese. That was in 2010. Three years later we have published over 200 articles with each issue now appearing in 15 languages, and some 40 pages long. In origin it was intended to be a vehicle for communicating between members and executive but today it creates dialogue among sociologists from all corners of the world. *Global Dialogue* is not an academic publication intelligible to the few but is designed to be open to all. The articles are short, accessible and diverse. *Global Dialogue* casts light on different sociologies from different places, divergent perspectives on pressing social issues, imaginations of what sociology should and could be, explorations of and debates about global sociology as well as reports on ISA activities, publications, and meetings.

This is the manifest content of *Global Dialogue*, but the collective process that lies behind its production is no less important. Over the last three years we have assembled teams of mostly young sociologists in some 13 countries who conscientiously translate our articles from English into their native language, often under the intellectual guidance of a dedicated senior scholar. Indeed, in some countries translating *Global Dialogue* has become an educational project of students in sociology seminars. More generally, the enterprise has depended on the enthusiasm of young sociologists to learn what other sociologists do in other places, to learn and cultivate a very different sociology than the one found in their text books or delivered by their teachers. In and through the act of translating they build a virtual community that comes in touch with living sociology. These young scholars are our future – local rooted but globally connected – organizing an inter-national community that recognizes global commonalities and differences in conditions of teaching and research, in theory and methodology, in the disciplinary and public standing of sociology.

The short life of *Global Dialogue* coincides with the resurgence of social movements – the Arab uprisings, new labor and land struggles, *indignados*, the student movement and the occupy movement. These all have their national and regional specificity but they are also closely connected and act as a mutual inspiration. How has *Global Dialogue* understood these social movements? This account of articles published in *Global Dialogue* sets out from broad visions of sociology as a vocation attuned to our times of turmoil. They represent a sociology *in* times of turmoil. It then turns to a sociology *of* turmoil that examines the social movements themselves from the standpoint of both their commonalities and their divergences as seen through a global lens. Finally, the essay addresses the question of a sociology *for* these times of turmoil that links

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the movements to the world-wide ascendancy of marketization, what I will call third-wave marketization. By declaring war on society third-wave marketization has threatened the material and existential foundation of sociology as well as stimulated diverse social movements battling to defend the integrity and viability of human existence. These times of turmoil are both a crisis and an opportunity for sociology, which is where we begin.

Imagining Sociology

It was in earlier times of turmoil that Max Weber authored his two classic essays “Science as a Vocation” and “Politics as a Vocation” – the one toward the end of World War I and the other, a year later, after the defeat of the German armies. They were first delivered as lectures at the invitation of students who listened intently to his divided vision of science and politics. In the same vein *Global Dialogue* asked some of the most senior and wise men and women of sociology, situated in different places in the globe and with different perspectives, to pronounce on their vision of sociology as a vocation.

Ulrich Beck (GD1.3) calls for a “cosmopolitan sociology” that leaves behind the conventional “national” frames of Max Weber and the other classics. We must abandon the “methodological nationalism” tied to what he calls “first modernity” that falsely represented particular national outlooks as universal. Instead we must recognize the new civilizational condition of “reflexive cosmopolitization” – “cosmopolitization” because we are irrevocably at the intersection of global forces and connections, and “reflexive” because we are ever more conscious of those forces and connections. In opposing Beck’s assault on “methodological nationalism,” Sujata Patel (GD1.4), while not denying the importance of the global, shows that national perspectives, and indeed national sociologies, are critical for colonies and ex-colonies, fighting against the hegemony of false universalisms.

Expanding on Beck’s notion of risk society associated with “second modernity,” Zygmunt Bauman (GD2.5) expounds on what he calls “liquid” modernity. His focus ranges from jobs to love, from migration to welfare, from democracy to human rights but wherever he casts his eye he sees the solid modernity of yesteryear melting into air. Today, he writes, the only certainty is uncertainty. Dispensing with all sociological determinisms, evolutionism and euphoria he points to the growing insecurity that infects everyday life.

The insistence on indeterminism has its silver lining. It leaves open possibilities that the world could be different, an imagination that sociology needs to recover from its more utopian past. In the hands of Erik Wright (GD2.5) such indeterminism becomes the opportunity to spell out what he calls “real utopias” -- a morally driven sociology that seeks out alternative institutions that challenge capitalism and its pathologies. His favorite real utopias are Wikipedia that points to collective self-organization of the production of knowledge, participatory budgeting in which citizens openly and transparently debate the use of municipal funds, universal basic incomes grant that guarantees all adult citizens a basic income making them independent of wage labor, and worker owned and managed cooperatives. Real utopias serve to demonstrate the existence of alternative institutions within contemporary societies, embryos of an another world. They keep alive the imagination that the world does not have to be the way it is, but they are opposed to the imaginary utopias that project frozen fantasies into an as yet

unrealized future. They call for a sociology that is explicitly founded in moral values – freedom, reason, equality – but seeking the expression of those values in existing institutions. It calls for an archeology of such institutions, examining the conditions of their possibility as well as their internal contradictions, and thus the conditions of their adoption and wider dissemination.

The project of real utopias foregrounds the realization of certain values – freedom, reason, equality – values that are systematically violated and ever more so in these times of turmoil. Sociology has generally been critical of the world it studies for violating the promises it upholds, but when it comes to violation through violence sociology is missing in action.² We normally think of violence as overt, erupting in gruesome atrocities of war, invasion, and genocide, but Jackie Cock (GD3.2) calls on us to also examine its more covert forms, what she calls “slow violence” that takes its toll over long periods of time, violating human existence behind our backs, but no less surely for that. She focuses on rising environmental pollution and malnutrition that eats away at human life. Sociology’s role, therefore, is to bring these invisible forms of violence to public attention, extending the meaning of violence, and making its examination even more urgent.

It is the urgency of the issues she dwells upon that leads Jackie Cock to embrace public sociology – a sociology that directly and openly confronts threats to planetary existence and that projects the findings of sociology as public issues. She makes way for public sociologists such as Randy David (GD3.3) who has devoted himself to sociological commentary in the media, print, radio and television, bringing sociology’s critical perspectives to wide audiences in the Philippines. He raises the question of the line between politics and public sociology and insists that the latter relies on sustaining an autonomous critical stance. Like Weber before him, he found that as a public intellectual he was not cut out to be a politician, ready to compromise on the values he defended.

Writing from India, André Betéille (GD3.2) is no less concerned with the public face of sociology and the independence of the sociologist, but focuses on the discipline of sociology, its capacity to go beyond common sense, particularly through the use of comparative method that has shaped his contributions to the study of inequality in India. He recognizes the challenges of public sociology in that, unlike natural sciences, for example, sociology cannot be so easily insulated from assumptions and judgments of common sense. Challenging common sense can, indeed, be a difficult task. Here we have to be inventive, getting people to interrogate their lives through collective enactment as in Augusto Boal’s “theater of the oppressed” (Soeiro, GD3.2).

Margaret Archer (GD3.1) echoes Betéille’s concern that we should not surrender our sociology to common sense. Starting from the premise that sociology has to take into account three factors – structure, agency and culture – she criticizes those who sensationalize their ideas by fixating on one dimension at the expense of the others. If we are to effectively diagnose the

²Not surprisingly, Latin America is an exception to this rule where violence has become the subject of many studies. In her address to the Latin American Sociological Association, Raquel Sosa (GD2.2) calls attention to an epidemic of violence across the continent. Ana Villarreal (GD3.3) focuses on the normalization of violence and how, in Mexico, kidnapping has been incorporated into everyday life. In the pages of *Global Dialogue* violence has figured prominently and frequently.

real problems of our era we must undertake the complex task of studying the inter-relation of all three dimensions. It is far too easy just to talk about discourses, structures, social movements as if they exist in a vacuum, separate from one another. Once again, we have to resist the temptation to submit to common sense. Dressing it up in esoteric concepts does not make it any more scientific. We cannot afford to offer one-sided exaggerations when the world is facing crises of catastrophic proportions. If we don't offer empirically plausible and original theories of our times of turmoil we will be left with a populist sociology, pandering to common sense, and not a public sociology.

Raewyn Connell (GD3.3), also committed to public sociology, is concerned with the relevance of the theoretical knowledge on which it is based. What goes by the name of universal theory is not manufactured in a vacuum but is responsive to the particular context of its production. In particular, she calls attention to how corporatization of the university is shaping the very research and teaching we do, forcing us into avenues we don't want to take. It is important to see ourselves, therefore, as part of a collective enterprise -- moreover one that does not stop at our workplace but connects us to fellow workers across the globe in a hierarchical division of knowledge production. At the top of this academic field are the major research universities of North America and Europe, themselves still insulated from the South, producing a knowledge that reflects that domination. She, therefore, advocates a Southern Theory, drawn from hitherto ignored thinkers that reflect the conditions of the South.³

These broad visions of sociology that have appeared in the pages of *Global Dialogue* take us beyond Max Weber in at least three ways.

- First, where Weber's treatment of turmoil was preeminently national, these visions aspire to be global in their awareness. They think of science, and sociology in particular, as produced in different places and responding to different social and political issues. Sociology becomes a self-consciously global enterprise.
- Second, they not only decenter the national, embedding it in a global context, but conceive of the national itself in different terms. By adding civil society and public sphere, absent in Weber's theoretical framework, as composed of organizations and institutions that are neither state nor market, they deepen the national framework and open up a distinctive standpoint for sociology. These visions, therefore, entertain the possibility of a public sociology that addresses civil society, developing a critical discursive and practical engagement outside the world of policy making and formal politics.

³ *Global Dialogue* has pursued sociologies in the Global South but at the expense of the sociologies of France and the United States, two national sociologies that famously project themselves as universal. We cannot ignore them not only because they are very influential but also because they are the source of theory and research that founds our discipline. (See Andre Petitat, GD2.4.) Our task must be to challenge their claims to universality, seek out what is genuinely universal in their sociologies, situate those sociologies back into the peculiar societies from which they spring, and to do all this by bringing them into dialogue with sociologies developed outside their orbit. That surely is one of the unrealized projects of *Global Dialogue*.

- Third, where Weber saw subaltern politics as manipulated and irrational, today we take far more seriously the rationality of social movements as well as the vision of what they are up to, even as they are also an expression and reaction to times of turmoil.

A sociology *of* turmoil, therefore, begins with the social movements of the last three years. Drawing on Weber we must recognize that these movements are of the right as well as the left, against as well as for the expansion of freedom. The claim of this essay is that market expansion, as the source of turmoil, involves processes of disembedding from society, that is a process of dispossession that affects politics, labor, finance, nature and knowledge. As I will show in the following sections, broadly speaking these dispossessions, separately or in combination, have been the impetus behind the Arab uprisings, labor movements, *Indignados*, Occupy Movement, environmental struggles and the student movement.

Political Dispossession: From Arab Uprisings to Islamophobia

There is some debate about when to date the beginning of the Arab Uprising. There are those who think it began with the US conquest of Iraq and the deposition of Saddam Hussein. Others think of it as prefigured by the Green Movement in Iran, the massive protests against electoral fraud in 2009 (See Simin Fadaee and Abbas Kuzami in GD3.3).

Conventionally, however, the inauguration begins a year later in 2010, with a round of social movements that caught the world by surprise in countries that seemed to have their populations firmly under control. It was the self-immolation of a Tunisian vegetable seller, Mohamed Bouazizi's, on December 17, 2010 that sparked a nation-wide movement to overthrow the Ben Ali dictatorship, which spread to other Arab countries, especially Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Bahrain and Syria with echoes in Jordan and Palestine.

Sari Hanafi (GD1.4) wrote a wide-ranging prescient analysis of these Arab Uprisings, pointing to their antecedents: economic and social grievances as well as their political animus; the social base in educated and unemployed youth as well as middle class professionals; and the supporting role of civil society organizations; their leaderless character as well as their internal fragmentation. He was agnostic about their future but insisted that the Arab world would never be the same, if there had been a revolution it was a revolution in consciousness. Arab populations would no longer have to settle for two unacceptable alternatives – military dictatorship and Islamic extremism.

Such was optimism at the beginning, expressed also in Mona Abaza's stirring account of the January 25 revolution in Cairo (GD1.4). This was followed a year later (GD2.3) with Samia Mehrez's more cautious optimism, celebrating the still unfolding "spectacle" of Tahrir Square while recognizing the rising tide of state violence. In her second contribution, two years after the first, Mona Abaza (GD3.3) describes the Muslim Brotherhood's redirection of the movement as marked by escalating violence. We are in the period of counter-revolution, the restoration of the dictatorial world of the Mubarakist past, only now the violence is shameless, ruthless and out in the open.

Counter-revolution was not the only possible outcome of the Arab Uprising. Vedi Hadiz (GD2.2) wrote about “New Islamic Populism,” which seeks a sort of class compromise between the Islamic street and a new bourgeoisie. Turkey is the locus classicus of that “passive revolution,” as Cihan Tugal calls it. There are elements of it in Indonesia. But during the Egyptian uprising when the Muslim Brotherhood first began to flex its muscles, there was much talk about the adoption of the Turkish model – talk that has since evaporated amidst the political domination of the Muslim Brotherhood and an open struggle with the military.

The Arab uprisings have also sent a shock wave through the sociology of Islam as we can see in the debate about the relation of Islam and modernity. Riaz Hassan poses the question: why do Muslim societies suffer from deficits of democracy, development and knowledge and draws on the available literature to pose some answers. He ends by wondering whether the Arab Spring can dislodge the heavy weight of history. Mohammed Bamyeh and Jacques Kabbanji (GD3.1) respond by calling into question the orientalist framework of “deficits” – the one opposed to its reductionism and the other to its culturalism. Both point to the Arab Spring as questioning the assumptions of Orientalist frameworks and creating an opening for alternative sociologies.

Nor should we forget another side of Islam that has been exacerbated by the Arab uprisings – Islamophobia in Europe and elsewhere. In an original deployment of Hirschman’s famous conceptualization of exit, loyalty and voice, Catherine Delcroix (GD2.2) investigates the responses of Muslims to their rejection by French society. There are those who leave for greener pastures, there are those who stick it out passively absorbing the blows of discrimination, but there are those who openly voice their opposition. Into the latter category falls those girls who defy French law and don their veils at school. This it turns out is not just in defiance of the state but also a rejection of the “loyalty” of their parents. Their turn to Islam is a reaction to the exclusivity of the French state.

Following a similar theme but in the German context, Helma Klutz (GD1.3) writes about the debate around “multi-culturalism,” triggered by Thilo Sarrazin’s anti-Muslim bestseller, *Germany Does Itself In* – a conservative tract written by a prominent political figure that points to the genetic basis of cultural decay and the threatened extinction of the German *volk*. We can dispassionately analyze the debate, but, she says, borrowing from Adorno, we can also enter into a public discussion about how to live difference without fear, a discussion that could benefit all by de-escalating hostilities.

Labor: From the Global Labor Movement to the Global Movement of Labor

The Arab uprisings are surely both new and unexpected, but what is happening to the solidarities of the working class during these turbulent years? *Global Dialogue* reported from China, Brazil, South Africa, and Mexico. Eddie Webster (GD1.5) set the stage with a South African perspective on global labor. From the beginning of the 20th century a deep racial fissure obstructed the development of the labor movement. Still a national movement was forged that contributed to the overthrow of apartheid but then had to face demobilization and global fiscal pressures. In the face of national retreat can labor form some sort of international solidarity. He identifies three approaches: humanitarian (defense of workers’ human rights), production-based

(connecting factories across the world), and regulatory (standardizing working conditions). There are possibilities, he says, in all three.

Pun Ngai (GD1.5) carries the ball to China, workshop of the world. She dreams of international solidarity, but the reality is a nightmare for Chinese labor, trapped in a spiral of degradation. Nonetheless, protest breaks out here and there from the second generation migrant workers, increasingly cut off from their rural base, trapped in their dormitories without access to basic services in an urban environment. Their plight is vividly described in Jenny Chan's (GD1.3) analysis of Foxconn factories in South China. It's difficult enough for Chinese workers to break out of their dormitories, never mind their cities, not to speak of connecting to workers in other countries.

A similar story can be told for Latin America. Mexican labor sociologist, Enrique de la Garza, (GD1.5) describes the problem posed by fragmentation due to the ever increasing numbers of informal workers in unregulated sectors, ranging from 40 to 70% across Latin America. Brazilian sociologist, Ruy Braga (GD1.5) is no more optimistic in his assessment of "Lulismo" – a strategy of state cooptation that manages to demobilize social movements, labor in particular. The working class is entangled in a range of social policies -- from "Bolsa Familia" and raising the minimum wage to affirmative action in university access and the extension of cheap loans – all of which dampen enthusiasm for collective solidarity within the country never mind beyond.

Still, Rob Lambert (GD2.2) holds out possibilities for a global labor movement, by building on the very successful SIGTUR (Southern Initiative on Globalization and Trade Union Rights) that brings together unionists from Brazil, Argentina, South Africa, South Korea, and Australia. But this will only be successful, he says, if labor politics turns from elite lobbying to more radical disruptive action.

We cannot talk about a global labor movement without talking about the global *mobility* of labor. Uprooted from national hinterlands, flooding into cities where they form enormous reservoirs of surplus labor, Southern migrants have also sought labor opportunities in the North. From the perspective of the North, the flood has posed questions of assimilation and integration, the focus of so many US immigration studies, but from the perspective of a global sociology the question is the transnational connections between sending and receiving countries. Aya Fabros (GD2.1) describes the transformation of a multi-story shopping center into an immigrant enclave in Penang, Malaysia where 1 in 4 workers are migrants from other parts of South East Asia. Invisible and down-trodden in the wider society, there in Komtar the set up their own food, welfare, health, funeral, legal centers to facilitate their survival in Malaysia and their contact with their home communities. Carolina Stefoni (GD3.2) describes a similar set-up in the center of Santiago (Chile) where Peruvian and Colombian migrants have taken over a disused shopping center. She describes the tensions created by the presence of foreign migrants in the historic and symbolic center of Santiago where executive and judicial powers are located. The presence of migrants call into question Santiago's claim to be a global city – clean, safe and orderly.

Eva Palenga-Möllenbeck (GD2.3) describes an even more complex situation in the borderland between Germany and Upper Silesia where Polish dual citizenship facilitates entry into the German labor market, even as Poland offers them more security and remains their home base. Migrant laborers may move and make their transnational communities but under conditions not of their own choosing, conditions that are often the product of historical relations between states. As the movement of labor has dramatically increased in importance, so it has posed challenges – both a threat and an opportunity -- for conventional labor movements.

Austerity: From the Indignados to Feminists

The labor movement faces serious challenges not because material factors are no longer important, but the opposite because material reality is becoming ever more important as the erstwhile proletariat becomes, in Guy Standing's language, a precariat. Material insecurity lies behind so many of the new social movements of the last three years, including the Arab Uprisings, but most emblematically it lies behind the mobilization against austerity in Southern Europe. We can begin with Teresa Sordé and Tatiana Santos's article (GD1.5) on the M15 movement (May 15, 2011). As they describe its manifestation in Plaça Catalunya its distinctiveness lay in the development of a participatory "dialogic" democracy with a daily General Assembly supported by commissions based on the more specific needs, requirements and concerns of the movement. This "real democracy" is promoted and expanded through social networks embedded in Facebook, Twitter, various blogs, the web and an online forum. Anyone can participate in these assemblages and in the voting that leads to decisions. This is a model of communicative democracy that had already been developed by the University of Barcelona sociologists at CREA (Institute for research into the Overcoming of Inequality).

It has also become the model for the Occupy Movement, emanating from New York's Zuccotti Park and spreading across the US and indeed reverberating across the world, but at the same time it has made the critique of finance capitalism central to its political activities, refusing to engage with electoral politics that has been hijacked by the 1%. As Markus Schulz (GD2.4) points out the new social movements have opened the doors to alternative futures, futures that appeared to have been closed down by the neoliberalism of the 1990s. We see the same democratic horizontalism, not just in Spain, Greece, Italy and Portugal, but also in the Israeli protest movement in the Summer of 2011 that brought massive numbers out against the austerity measures (Devorah Kalekin-Fishman, GD2.2).

But self-organized, disciplined participatory democracy has not been the only response to austerity. Boaventura de Sousa Santos (GD2.1) explains the riotous response in England to the combination of four factors: the brutal increase of inequality coinciding with a free for all individualism, rampant commercialization of everyday life, the continuing racism that infects urban UK (including the police force) as well as the violent denunciation of a democracy that bales out banks but not the marginalized youth with credentials but without jobs. The true disorderly, he concludes, are those in power not those on the streets. Sylvia Walby (GD2.5) paints a somewhat different picture of English austerity. She shows how women are suffering differentially from cut-backs in welfare and jobs and respond in creative fashion, for example, occupying banks and setting up crèches on their premises. They were part of the "Big Society Bail-Ins," a protest against cuts organized by the inventive group, *Uncut*. Inventiveness is the

hallmark of so many groups. Dora Fonseca (GD3.2) focuses on an inventive Portuguese movement, called the “Inflexible Precarious,” who combat precarity through autonomous organizing, separate from unions and parties, building a positive identity of the “precarious worker.” She describes the dilemmas of this group in trying to be effective in the political arena without developing hierarchical organization.

With regard to the struggles against austerity the postSoviet world presents an enigma of contrasts. On the one hand, the complex political situation notwithstanding, we can read the protests in January 2012 in Romania as a response to cut-backs in welfare and health services. Cătălin Stoica and Vintilă Mihăilescu (GD3.1) show how the response was influenced by the indignados and occupy movements. Something similar erupted in Sofia (Bulgaria) in the early months of 2013, sparked by withdrawal of subsidies for fuel. On the other hand, the protests in Russia and Ukraine seem much more focused on engaging directly with the state. Anna Temkina (GD3.1) in the case of Russia, Tamara Martsenyuk (GD2.5) in the case of the Ukraine and Gohar Shahzaryan (GD2.1) in the case of South Caucasus all show how the “gender question” has been politicized by the state and become a terrain of struggle not just around gender but around the very mean of democracy. Russia and the Ukraine are the exceptions that prove the rule for here the population retains a belief in market solutions to market failures because the state has never regained legitimacy since the fall of communism. Hatred of the state is only rivaled by love of the market.

Nature: Privatizing Land, Water and Air

In the long run the greatest turmoil will be created by the catastrophic destruction of nature and the struggles that this has already begun to engender. Struggles around land dispossession, especially for mining and timber industries as well as Special Economic Zones have caught fire in much of the Global South, from China to India, from Africa to Latin America. Kalpana Kannabiran (GD1.5) describes the struggles of India’s *adivasi* (scheduled tribes) to protect their forested lands and their sovereignty, calling for a broad reinvention of the meaning of development and a legal system that would recognize it. As long as the law is limited to the protection of private property, development and justice will be opposed and huge swaths of India’s population will suffer dispossession.

Two articles from Colombia point to the place of violence in these struggles over land, struggles that are not always between the appropriators and the expropriated, but among the appropriators themselves. Johanna Parra (GD2.4) describes the mafia type organization that controls the extraction of emeralds and how violence enters the most private realms, even of domesticity and child rearing, and all because the state fails to regulate the exploitation of mineral wealth. Nadia Rodriguez (GD2.4) underlines the impotence of the state to enforce its own laws, in this case the innovative and progressive Law of the Victims (2011), which calls for land restitution to some 4 million peasants who have been displaced in the internal wars of the last 50 years. She describes the obstacles the state faces in restoring land – obstacles that stem from resistance of the present owners, the concentration of land ownership in a powerful elite, the difficulty of the displaced to return to and survive in their original areas and even the difficulty of making restitution claims stick in court.

No less devastating are the struggles around water. As it becomes more scarce, often due to misappropriation, so the world, but especially the Global South, faces the dilemmas of rationing vs. the market. Shall water be distributed on the basis of need, understood as a human right, or on the basis of market principles and the ability to pay? As Esteban Castro writes (GD1.5), increasingly the solution has been privatization and the market solution which has led to greater inequalities in access to clean water denied to some 15% of the world's population. Of central concern in so many countries is the way the development of mining has contaminated water supplies. The diversion of waterways and the creation of dams that have flooded some places and created a drought in others together with climate change itself have made water supplies ever more precarious. The battle for clean water like the battle for clean air is just beginning.

Moving from struggles over land to struggles over water involves scaling up the challenges from a local to a regional level, but when it comes to air pollution and climate change we are dealing with an indisputable global challenge. Herbert Docena (GD2.2) writes of the way in which climate change negotiations has split the world in two – a Global South that expects punitive sanctions and compensation from the North that has been polluting the atmosphere for centuries and a Global North that rejects culpability and proposes solutions, such as the carbon market, that wipes out the historical record. But there is no evidence that the introduction of carbon markets, in other words buying the right to pollute, has had any beneficial effect on global warming. Reporting on Rio+20, Docena (GD2.5) writes how scientists, rather than discrediting conventional responses as inadequate, seek to forge alliances with and thus influence the major stake-holders. They keep their distance from the social movements fighting for more drastic intervention to save the planet.

Knowledge: From Commodification to Rationalization

The student movements that have spread across the world have a common object of concern: the privatization of higher education. This puts them into a close relation to the movement of the *indignados* and the occupy movement. Indeed, many of the participants in these last two movements are unemployed or under-employed graduates. Privatization has transformed the university from the guarantor of secure employment in the higher reaches of the labor market to the creator of a mass of heavily indebted precarious workers.

One of the last institutions to be humbled before market fundamentalism, the university is no longer viewed as a public good but as a private good which has to fund its own activities. This means it has to go cap in hand to rich alumni, to corporations willing to invest in research they will thereby influence. As best they can the university will garner as much research money as possible and seek returns through the patenting of its inventions such as they are. But the most secure form of revenue comes from students who now have to pay for their education with ever-increasing fees. The size of the fees is often calibrated to the market worth of the degree so that students in the professions – business, medicine, and engineering -- have to pay more than those in the arts and sciences, which they do ever-increasingly with low-interest loans. Whatever the terms of the loans, students or their families are often saddled with a life-long debt.

Yet here is the final blow. The jobs that students are able to secure after they receive their degrees have become more scarce and more insecure, and yet even these degraded jobs still require a university degree. So there is a spiraling competition among ever greater armies of students for jobs that are either disappearing or ever more precarious. Milton Vidal (GD2.4) describes the Chilean student movement which has been especially militant and popular. It is here that the experiment in neoliberalism has sunk its deepest roots and student fees are among the highest in Latin America. Unlike in the US where students have always worked their way through college and where loans are not a new phenomenon, in Chile only a small minority of students work while they attend college so that instead middle class parents bear the costs of higher education. In other words, the entirety of middle class Chile is implicated in privatized higher education (and much else) so not surprisingly the student protests have garnered massive resonance and support from the wider public which has to bear the debts from education as well as other privatized services. This is surprisingly different from the US where the student debt is carried by 40 million people to the tune of a total of one trillion dollars, but where students and ex-students assume these debts as an individual responsibility. When students protest the increase in fees, the public greets them with disdain as ungrateful kids.

Expanding the source of revenue through increasing fees is but one side of the story. The other side is cost-cutting. There are now moves across the world to treat the university as a corporation that seeks profit from cutting expenditures. This means limiting the number of secure or tenured faculty and increasing the numbers of part time, contract or temporary lecturers, recruited from the unemployed ranks of the PhDs. Laura Corradi (GD2.5) describes the creation of just such a class of contract workers within the Italian university scrambling every semester for the few positions that are on offer. These declassed lecturers do indeed join the precariat in their public protests. The situation of these contract workers become ever more difficult as they are subject to deskilling from new forms of distance learning that seek to replace humans with videos.

Transforming the university into a profit making enterprise has called forth an ever-expanding corps of professional and highly paid managers who develop new strategies of economizing on the production and dissemination of knowledge. These managers develop new strategies of governance within the university but also develop brigades of advertising agents who brand the university to attract students and business investment. In the United States that might mean developing sports teams and sports facilities, but in most places branding still takes place through academic credentials – the acceptance ratio, job achievement, and generalized standing as measured by professional evaluators. As a further development of branding, Robert van Krieken (GD2.4) calls attention to the parallels between the culture industry and higher education wherein the process of “celebrification” manufactures “stars” of great repute to boost the image of the university as well as its ranking.

When it comes to business investment, there are university rankings, national but also global. In an attempt to evaluate Chinese universities against what they considered to be the best in the world, i.e. American Ivy League, the Shanghai Jiao Tong University developed its own index that placed those same elite universities at the top of the pyramid. That same ranking system is now used by governments across the world. Universities compete to be in the top 50,

top 100 or more likely the top 500. Looking at this listing one can see just how heavily weighted towards the North, and the US in particular, is the global division of knowledge production – in the Shanghai ranking US universities count 17 out of the top 20, 40 out of the top 50, 54 out of the top 100 and 84 out of the top 200.

The rankings have grave implications for a discipline such as sociology where publishing in so-called international journals draws research away from local audiences not just through the requirement of fluency in English (Renato Ortiz, GD2.1) but also the need to conform to the research programs and agendas relevant specifically to the North. Elite universities, whether in the North or the South, are happy to play this game and, indeed, those endowed with social and academic capital can only benefit from it. It's rare for universities or disciplines in the North or the South to buck the system and so the boycott of the German Sociological Association of the national rankings by one of Germany's leading departments is a most significant development (Klaus Dörre, Stephan Lessenich, and Ingo Singe, GD3.3). So far their response is one of a kind.

Boycott is not really an option for most universities in the world since most never appear in the ranking. They are the untouchables of this world. They have to adopt alternative strategies of making money and here there are all sorts of innovative ploys. Satendra Kumar (GD3.3) describes an especially corrupt version in the state of Utar Pradesh, India. There the university uses its credentialing power to charge colleges for the right to offer degrees – colleges established by politicians with bogus programs to enroll “students” from villages in courses they never take. Being from backward castes these “students” provide state funding for the colleges and at the same time build a patronage following for the politicians upon whom they depend for their degrees and jobs. Here the college becomes at once an economic enterprise and political machine and education flies out of the window, while the university appropriates a new source of rent. This is no pathology of India's “underdevelopment,” you can find parallels in the US where for-profit universities milk their students of their government loans and in return provide unmonitored, impoverished education that offers little in the way of jobs. Indeed, the vast majority of students don't graduate and even those who do leave heavily in debt while businesses and banks run off with huge profits.

Third-Wave Marketization

The recent wave of social movements, described above, all have their own national specificity. Shaped by national political and economic terrains, they are also connected through social media that shapes their common discourse and common projects. Thus, over and above their differences they nonetheless share a number of features, in particular, their repudiation of electoral politics as expropriated by dominant economic classes, especially finance capital. This break with liberal democracy is expressed through an assertion of alternative modes of participatory democracy, which in turn accounts for the fragility and fluidity of the movements.

But can we make any further claims as to what lies behind these new social movements, what is impelling them? Addressing the European Sociological Association assembled in Geneva to discuss “sociology for turbulent times” Anália Torres (GD2.2) focuses on the policies of neoliberalism and deregulation that have given finance capital freedom to rampage across the world, tearing up the social fabric, weakening civil society and generating radical uncertainty.

The result is explosions of rage against deepening inequalities. Confirming these trends, Göran Therborn (GD2.1) offers a searing account of how inequality within nations, manifested in the concentration of wealth within a small elite, is outstripping inequality between nations. This resurgence of class, he argues, can lead in different political directions: toward a middle class retreat into consumption, middle class protest against crony capitalism, working class rebellion or multi-class alliances against the new plutocracies. This is surely an important backdrop to the social movements described above, but is inequality sufficient to explain collective organization?

Torres and Therborn take for granted the ascendancy of market fundamentalism, what many call “neoliberalism.” But this is not the first time markets have been ascendant under capitalism. In fact it is the third time – the first being in 19th century, the second in the early part of the 20th century and the third began in the early 1970s and continues to this day. This third wave of marketization affects the entire globe, but in ways mediated and often abetted by nation states that have set the *terms* and *context* of social movements but not necessarily their *driving force*. How should we think of marketization as the “driving force” behind the social movements we have witnessed over the last three years? What distinguishes this wave of marketization from previous waves? Following and extending Karl Polanyi (1944) I propose that marketization is experienced as a process of commodification – subjecting something to buying and selling -- and in particular the commodification of four crucial factors of production: labor, money, nature and knowledge. The movements described above can broadly speaking be seen as responses to the commodification of some combination of these entities – a process that threatens their viability as factors of production. When you commodify labor power you create a precariat that makes the delivery of labor uncertain; when you commodify money, seeking to make money out of money you create indebtedness; when you commodify nature you create a local ecological disaster with global repercussions; and when knowledge becomes a commodity, serving the short term interests of money, it can no longer solve the planet’s problems, problems created by the other commodifications. Moreover, one might add that the commodification of politics, which is far advanced in many countries, implies its expropriation from those it is supposed to represent.

Each wave of marketization involves a different articulation of commodified factors of production. Moreover, the first two waves generated a counter-movement of de-commodification, i.e. (re)regulation. The question is whether there will be a counter-movement to third-wave marketization and what its relationship to the social movements of the last three years might be. If the counter-movement to the first wave sprung from grassroots social movements, largely organized around labor, the counter-movement to second-wave marketization revolved around state regulation of the economy (fascism, social democracy, Stalinism), and the counter-movement to third-wave marketization may include local, national struggles but will have to reach a global scale to reverse the contemporary commodification of labor, money, nature and knowledge. And, even if social movements were to reach such a global scale, no mean achievement in itself, there is no guarantee that they will seek the expansion rather than contraction of freedoms.

But first we must be more precise in identifying the relationship between social movements and commodification. To turn something into a commodity requires “disembedding” it from its legal, political, or social context. So third-wave marketization

involves *de-regulation* of labor power through the removal of welfare, pensions, unemployment compensation, health benefits, and of finance through the removal of controls over banking, such as the separation of commercial and investment banking – regulations that were established in response to second wave marketization. Third-wave marketization, however, also involves the creation of new commodities through *dispossession* of access to land, water, and air as well as to free public education and open public knowledge. It is de-regulation and dispossession -- the *conditions* of expanded commodification rather than commodification itself -- that generate social movements. Sociology's first task, then, is to trace social movements back to third-wave marketization and forward to a feasible counter-movement.

The Fate of Sociology

We have a second task, however: to understand how sociology is shaped as an object of history -- how the object of study (third-wave marketization) becomes a subject determining sociology, overwhelming it. More than ever we cannot escape the way the conditions of existence of sociology as a scholarly enterprise are being transformed by third-wave marketization. Along with other disciplines sociology has to fight for survival in the university now subject, as we have seen, to hard budget constraints. In some countries the sociology degree becomes worthless in terms of job market returns and the discipline faces decline, especially as compared to the halcyon days of the 1970s. In a country such as the US where first degrees are not as important as second degrees sociology has maintained a high profile in the university (Bronwen Lichtenstein, GD3.2). In social democracies, such as Sweden, Norway and Finland, sociological perspectives are built into the state, very different from the situation in England where sociology has shallower roots and faces absorption into other disciplines (John Brewer, GD2.5). In the growing economies of the semi-periphery, such as Brazil, China, India and South Africa, sociology has maintained its public profile while in many places in the Global South it faces extinction.

In other words, the effect of third-wave marketization on sociology is heavily mediated by national political terrains. *Global Dialogue* offers a glimpse into national political legacies that have shaped the development of sociology:

- the legacy of dictatorship and violence in Peru (Nicolás Lynch, GD2.1) and Colombia (Ana Lucia Paz Rueda, GD1.2, Patricia Guerra and Fernando Cubides, GD2.3);
- the legacy of communism in Russia (Viktor Vakhstayn, GD2.3; N.V. Romanovsky and Zh.T.Toshchenko, GD2.5), Romania (Marian Preda and Liviu Chelcea, GD2.1) and China (Pielin Li, GD1.3; Liping Sun, GD1.4);
- the legacy of the American occupation in Japan (Shujiro Yazawa, GD1.3); and of a succession of external occupations in Taiwan (Michael Hsiao, GD3.2);
- the impact of settler colonialism in South Africa (Ari Sitas and Sarah Mosoetsa, GD2.1) and New Zealand (Tracey McIntosh, GD2.3)

In one way, however, third-wave marketization has had a direct impact on sociology, namely through the overwhelming presence of neoliberal ideology in which markets are seen as the solution to all problems. Here we might say that the standing of sociology as a discipline has suffered more than economics and even political science, a sprawling discipline that in recent years has sought to imitate economics. With its long history of anti-utilitarianism – stretching

from Marx, Weber and Durkheim to Parsons, Habermas and Bourdieu -- has been more or less impervious to such tendencies, making it more marginal but also more critical of market fundamentalism.

Why has sociology been so impervious? It is because sociology takes the *standpoint* neither of the economy nor of the state but of civil society, and its fate is therefore wrapped up with the fate of civil society. When civil society is under threat – as it is today – from a collusive relation of market and state, so sociology, too, is under threat. How, then, can sociology defend itself? One way is to openly engage with entities in civil society that are also suffering from market and state offensives, advancing public discussion that calls into question the reigning assumptions of our times, showing how third-wave marketization is causing times of turmoil. This is none other than the strategy of public sociology examples of which abound in *Global Dialogue*: the defense of sociologists suffering various degrees of political harassment in Belorussia (GD1.2), United kingdom (GD1.5), Turkey (GD1.4), Hungary (GD1.4), in Israel and Palestine (GD3.2); and more broadly linking up with the movements that are responding to the (re)commodification of labor, nature, finance and knowledge.

Public sociology has proven to be very controversial in almost all national contexts. There are many who consider sociology to be already too public and the appropriate response to external challenges is retreat to a professional mode. Establish sociology as a science and legitimate its presence as a discipline among other disciplines. This is the view of Piotr Sztompka (GD2.2), who argues explicitly for a singular, universal, context-free sociology. His “ten thesis on the status of sociology in an unequal world” sparked a debate in *Global Dialogue*. Thus, Nikita Pokrovsky (GD2.2) endorses Sztompka’s position and denounces sociologists who enter the public arena. For him the public sociologist is a dangerous enemy within.

Yet others retort that the differential conditions of knowledge production are obscured only at one’s peril. Tina Uys (GD2.2) expresses her suspicion of claims to universal knowledge masquerading as the generalization of a particular (northern) national experience. Fernanda Beigel (GD2.2) writes of the situation of “dependency” in global knowledge production by virtue of which certain theories come to dominate sociology. Cognizant of global inequalities and the unequal opportunities to produce science, Helga Nowotny (GD2.2) sees the future of knowledge as the erosion of boundaries, whether national or disciplinary. The striving for alternative knowledges becomes more necessary even as institutional pressures and inequalities make it more difficult. Continuing the debate Jeffrey Alexander (GD2.3) points to the coexistence of local knowledges, but that they are necessarily inflected with cosmopolitan striving, challenging any simplistic universalism. His “local cosmopolitanism,” although sensitive to context, does not imply any public engagement of sociology.

There are two inter-connected issues here: the plurality of sociologies on the one hand and their public engagement on the other. Were there to be a singular and universal sociology it would be advanced in Sztompka’s eyes by those who have the greatest academic capital in community with one another, talking and writing largely in English (but also French) in the elite universities of the Global North. If this sociology prevails as the only sociology then it will be increasingly reflect the interest of an academic elite cut off from publics both in those Northern

countries as well as the Global South. It will, thereby, spell the end not only of public sociology but of a subaltern sociology sensitive to the very issues thrown up by social movements, not least those of the last three years. Moreover, in the face of the hostility to sociology's abiding traditions, sociology may be doomed within the academy if it has no existence outside.

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