PERSPECTIVES

Contents

Theorizing across the Academy

Andrew J. Perrin, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

In my last letter, I explored the different ways we do "theory" in sociology. I suggested that that diversity—not just of theoretical approaches, but of the very roles of theory itself—is a kind of productive dissonance, rather than chaos, at the core. The fact that these disparate projects come together under the theory umbrella—and that, therefore, the same people often read and engage with all of them—results in intellectual cross-fertilization that would not have happened with a more organized core. This mirrors my view of our discipline in general: if our weakness is the fact that we have no stable core of topics, methods, or theories, it is also our strength. The relatively free—maybe even chaotic—interplay of ideas fosters creativity.

To pursue this idea further, I decided to ask some colleagues who do "theory" in other disciplines what "theory" meant to them and to their disciplines. UNC is a collegial place, and I knew many of these people through other channels, so I sat down with each to get a sense of how theory functions for them. I wanted to know two things: (1) What "theory" means in each of their disciplines; and (2) How theorists interact with colleagues in their disciplines. Here's what they had to say. I don't assume that each of them can speak for the full field of theory in her or his discipline, but each offers an interesting disciplinary perspective. Any mistakes in the paraphrases are my own fault!

Physics (Louise Dolan): Dr. Dolan explained that theory in physics is distinguished from experimental physics. Experimental physics provides "data about the real world;" theory synthesizes those data. The point is "not just to

have a bunch of information...but to describe what you see." In particular, she explained that theory is most active right now in conceptualizing things whose size is either extremely small or extremely large. These include condensed matter, elementary particles, and string theory, which seeks to describe "substrata" of matter.

She noted that even the quark—the smallest particle yet discovered—might be divisible in the same way, even though it can't be viewed. In other words, even a quark might have a substrate: the underlying stuff from which it is made. String theory is a way of conceptualizing that substrate, even though it can't be seen (the smallest we can measure, apparently, is 10^{-17} centimeter, while the quark's substrate is likely more like 10^{-33} centimeter.

She described an interplay between theory and experiment, but also noted that theorists have preferences even prior to data confirming or denying the theory. Theorists prize internal consistency and mathematical elegance because these imply a "deeper understanding" of the questions. In order to gain and maintain prestige, departments need a mix of experimentalists and theorists; a department cannot be considered strong, be ranked highly, or recruit good graduate students without a distinguished theory operation.

Communication Studies/Cultural Studies (Larry Grossberg): By contrast, Dr. Grossberg described the role of theory in communication studies and cultural studies as central; different subfields use different theories, but these theorists are also held together in part by

reading "the same broad discourses." Theoretical commitments are held similarly to political commitments; scholars identify themselves as being of one or another theoretical camp. Interviewees for jobs might be asked: "what's your theoretical position?"

This is particularly true in cultural studies, where theoretical debates are the coin of the realm. "Theory is our method," he told me, and theories are deployed pragmatically: "What is the problem you want to understand? What pays off?" Like physics, elegance is a value in itself; theories that appear applicable to many questions, or that illuminate old questions in new ways, are valuable. But unlike physics, there is little interest in data as confirmation or refutation of existing theory; here, theory's job is to explain data that are observed by providing a framework for understanding those observations.

Economics (Pat Conway): Even before I asked my first question, Dr. Conway outlined the role of theory in economics for me: "There are theorists, and there are those who use theory." Theory is a logical and mathematical approach in which theorists begin with axioms and reason from those to predict behavior and outcomes. For example, a theorist might begin with axioms about profit maximization and stable preferences and reason as to the influence of a given technology, practice, or regulation on the market.

Some theorists question the axioms, but this is rare; those questioning the axioms tend to be experimental and behavioral economists, such as those seeking to determine experimentally whether preferences are actually transitive. There are times, though, when the axioms change. Conway used the example of static utility maximization, which didn't "work" to

explain the observed world, so dynamic maximization was a necessary "tweak."

Meanwhile, disputes among theorists (including public figures like Paul Krugman) focus on how to incorporate different information such as productivity shocks and real business models. Krugman, in particular, is a theorist who seeks to understand macro-phenomena like financial shocks by reference to economic axioms and discoveries. Conway noted that these disputes can get very contentious: "standard playground rules for economics" can seem like nasty fights to outsiders. Like physicists and cultural studies scholars, economists like elegant models; extremely simple mathematical models that can be applied to multiple specific problems are the goal. Data are sometimes used to confirm or refute theory, but more commonly their role is to illustrate theory or to point to new theoretical questions to be resolved mathematically.

Within the discipline, Conway explained that theorists are the highest status scholars. They tend to come from the highest-status graduate programs, which in turn achieve and maintain that status through producing high-profile theory and theorists. Lower-status programs tend to be more empirical, testing and applying theory produced at higher-status institutions.

Political Science (Susan Bickford, Mike Lienesch, and Jeff Spinner-Halev): Dr. Spinner-Halev opened by saying that there are three senses of "theory" in political science. First, in "conventional" political science, scholars consider work "theoretically motivated" insofar as it seeks to answer questions that emerge out of existing theory. Second, game theory operates analogously to theory in economics, i.e., a formal theory predicting outcomes given assumptions; he labeled this

"positive theory." Finally, political theory addresses normative and historical questions that have political concerns at their heart. There is very little communication between positive and political theory; one of my informants said "I'm annoyed that they [positive theorists] call themselves theorists."

In general, political theory is carried out by theorists and in conversation with other theorists, though periodically empirical political scientists "believe that political theorists are saying something that can be tested." I asked whether those times were good or bad for theorists. "I think it's fine," said Dr. Bickford, but their mode of theorizing doesn't generally produce hypotheses so it's not the goal. Theorists are more likely to read empirical political science than vice versa, in large part because empirical political science is much higher status in the discipline and within departments. All three of my interviewees described this low status; departments have to have a political theory section in order to be ranked highly, but often political theory is "tolerated more than welcomed," said one.

English Literature (Florence Dore): Our interview began with my explaining that I was speaking with theorists around campus. "Am I a theorist? I don't know anymore," Dr. Dore said. She continued by paraphrasing Terry Eagleton (a prominent literary theorist), claiming that we are in a "post-theoretical moment" which implies closer engagement with literary texts themselves. Theory without grounding in literature, Dore said, is "an empty project." But trends within literary studies, such as the digital humanities and the turn to cognitive science, threaten to take the place of actual theory in literature. The impulse to translate art into science leaves "blind spots,"

such as "disavowing the paradoxical" in literature and theory.

Interestingly, Dore identified her entry into theory as "backwards," but described a path that was similar to the physics and economics examples above. She was working on research on music in literature, and in particular on ballads posited against technology. "Better read some Heidegger," she was told, to understand the relationship. Theory, in this case, provided a similar abstraction beyond the object of study to that in much more scientistic fields. Literary theory remains a central focus in the field, but Dore suggested that the boundary between theory within literature and theory outside (such as philosophy and social theory) was porous, and that most current scholars writing in theory do so with a strong connection to specific works of literature as well.

* * *

This little interdisciplinary tour around theory offered a few insights into sociology's own field. First, I could easily understand and identify with the approaches to theory each of my interviewees offered, even though some of them seem quite incompatible with one another. I think that's a function of the fact that sociological theory straddles the line between the humanities and the sciences, so sociological theorists can speak both languages. Second, the relative prestige of theory within each of the disciplines, and the degree to which theory is integrated into the core of the disciplines, varied widely. Third, and finally, there is a common thread among them: a concern with abstraction and generality that animates each of the disparate views of theory.

A CONVERSATION BETWEEN 2014 ASA THEORY SECTION AWARD-WINNERS

Using, Making, and Recovering "The Classics"

Christian Borch, Copenhagen Business School
Angèle Christin, The New School for Social Research

Christian Borch: What use can we make of the classics today? There are different ways of producing interesting sociological theory, and (re-)engaging with classical sociology is clearly not the only one. Indeed, some insist that in order to really create new sociological theory, we need to leave behind the classics. That was the view, for example, of Niklas Luhmann (1995: xlv), who dismissed recourse to classical sociology as a practice of simply "dissecting, criticizing, and recombining already-existing texts" without really rocking the boat. Omar Lizardo (2015: 8) echoed this reasoning in last year's Lewis Coser Memorial Lecture, where he described "the derivation of creative careful exegesis of the classics" as having been useful in a certain era, but not anymore. I am sympathetic to both arguments, but nevertheless believe that if one is a bit more modest than Luhmann (who wanted to provide sociology with an entirely new theoretical edifice), a return to the classics might not be that misguided.

Of course, there are various ways of reviving the classics for present-day theoretical purposes. Some produce interesting ideas by reinterpreting canonized texts by, say, Weber or Simmel. My own approach is to draw inspiration from the "misfits," i.e., scholars (or strands of thinking) who are, for various reasons, considered marginal to the discipline. Without pushing the distinction too far, one might say that I am interested in those theories that might well count as "classics" but which were never properly "canonized." Obviously, not all long-deceased misfits are equally

interesting. For example, as part of a larger project on the history of sociological crowd theory, I spent some time reading the German sociologist Theodor Geiger. Geiger was a leading voice in the Weimar era (and is therefore historically important), but he is widely forgotten today. This is, perhaps, not entirely unjustified: much of what he said appears today rather antiquated, as subsequent scholars have produced much more sophisticated ideas on similar topics (e.g. class society). Moreover, parts of Geiger's work, especially his writings on eugenics, are pretty discomforting to read – and therefore, unfortunately, also neglected in much commentary on Geiger.

By contrast, I am very inspired by Gabriel Tarde's sociology and believe it offers a rich reservoir of ideas that can be productively reutilized for contemporary theoretical purposes. Although there are also uncomfortable elements in Tarde's oeuvre, he nevertheless offers a highly interesting conception of imitation as the basic social bond, related to notions of suggestibility and somnambulism. To be sure, central Tardean notions were heavily criticized throughout the twentieth century (as well as in his own lifetime), but I think they have more to offer than the critics were willing to acknowledge. So, what we have here is a classical sociologist who, in my view, might help us to rethink how the social is constituted in rather fundamental ways.

Angèle Christin: The classics can also be a useful signaling device that indicates where an

argument might be heading, as well as a means of creating dialogue across specialties and even between disciplines. For example, my dissertation focuses on processes of quantification in the form of "clicks" in online journalism. Not everyone is interested in clicks, the internet, or journalism, but every sociologist and anthropologist knows about Marx, Simmel, and Weber's respective takes on commodification, monetization, and rationalization. Drawing on these classic theorists translates the project to a broader range of scholars beyond the immediate audience of sociologists of media and culture. One might argue, however, that this is the role not only of the classics but also of theory more generally – all types of theoretical work can bridge the gap between specialized fields.

Yet I also agree with you that it is essential to examine what counts as "theory" in different contexts and at different points in time. The differential success of Geiger and Tarde's theories of crowds (today, most sociologists know about Tarde, but many fewer know about Geiger) indicates that what sociological communities find relevant can change radically over time. Hence, it is important to conduct genealogies of theories that used to be "mainstream" but are now forgotten. To draw on Foucauldian concepts, only by excavating forms of subjugated and relegated knowledge can we understand the changing epistemological assumptions of the discipline – which is not only an interesting topic in and of itself, but also a good way to become more reflexive about one's own theorizing practices.

A complementary research program would be to study the circulation and transformation of what counts as "theory" across national borders. For most of the twentieth century, the European social sciences—and especially continental philosophy—occupied a central

place in the Anglo-American sociological tradition. Over the past thirty years, however, transnational flows of sociological ideas have become more complex: the United States exports as much theory to Europe as it imports from Europe. What happens when academic texts travel without their national context of production? There has been a significant amount of work on the circulation and redefinition of European social theory in the United States. There are fewer studies of how American theory is exported, reframed, and put to different uses in Europe.

More generally, I believe that this discussion poses the further question of the relationship between "theory" and "the classics." Drawing on Omar Lizardo's formulation, what is the difference between "living theoretical labor" and "dead theoretical labor"? Or, building upon Stefan Bargheer's (2014) observation that many texts now considered to be "theory" were originally empirical studies that "stuck" after they were applied to a variety of different cases, we might ask how and under what conditions "theories" become canonized as "classics"?

CB: To take the latter question first, one immediate answer is, of course, that a theory assumes the status of a classic if it provides an original and distinct conception of the social, which might include methodological prescriptions for how to conduct sociological analysis. It should be quite obvious, however, that this is an insufficient answer, since it does not explain why certain theories that do fulfill this criterion are not regarded as classics. If I may bring in Tarde again, he offers a distinct and original notion of the social but has never really been considered a classic — at least not in the way that, for example, Durkheim has. Why? Well, much of the explanation can be found in something as banal as power and

institutionalization: unlike Durkheim, Tarde did not gain strong institutional backing (Durkheim founded his own journal), just as his theory did not provide the kinds of solutions that were in political demand at the time (Durkheim's theory did). While other factors may explain why other theorists were never elevated as classics, these factors do seem to account for much of Tarde's destiny.

You make a very interesting point about the adoption of ideas across national contexts, and you are probably right to say that most scholarly attention to date has focused on how European ideas have been received by American scholars, rather than the other way around. I am myself guilty of mainly focusing on this "westbound" circulation of ideas—at least, that was the primary process I described in my book on the politics of crowds—but I would certainly welcome work that engages with the opposite translation. But interesting examples of context-bound theory translation take place within Europe, too. For example, some of my German colleagues tell me that Bruno Latour's work has a hard time being acknowledged as an original, distinctive sociological program in Germany, whereas his influence in, e.g., the UK is highly significant. According to my colleagues in German sociology, this is due in part to the hierarchical organization of the German academy, where full professors play a crucial role in defining the discipline and where more junior scholars are dependent on – and often work for – their professors. Not only can the acceptance of new approaches take a long time in such a system, such new approaches are also often filtered through the contemporary dominant schools of thought (as promoted by the professors), at times in ways that render the new theories less original than they actually are. So while Latour's ideas are certainly being discussed by some German sociologists, these discussions

tend to take place from the perspective of the already dominant theories. Thus, for instance, Luhmannian sociologists sometimes translate Latourian ideas into something recognizable to systems theory.

I mention this not only because it points to problems of theory translation in an intra-European context, but also because it might take us back to the discussion of "dead" versus "living" theoretical labor. What we see in such translation processes, where new theory is reinterpreted to fit the worldviews of existing theory, would for me count more as dead than living theoretical labor.

What would be your own response to the questions you posed about dead and living theoretical labor?

AC: These are great points. Your comment on Latour's reception in Germany brings to mind the question of the hybridization or adaptation of sociological theories to national contexts when they travel across borders. Theories and concepts are often put to different uses depending on the country of importation. This in turn frequently becomes a subject of intellectual disagreement, as the heated debates about the uses of Bourdieu in the United States (compared to its alleged "true" uses, say, in France) make clear.

But is this necessarily a bad thing? In the process of translating a theory into a different language and making it "fit" with local epistemologies, importers also *produce* theory: they draw attention to new aspects of the framework or provide original interpretations, which is, after all, an active theoretical process. So I wouldn't say that this adaptation constitutes "dead" theoretical labor. On the contrary, it seems to me that it is one of the mechanisms through which "normal science"

(to use Kuhnian terms) incorporates dissonant items, hopefully leading to a productive period of further theorizing. (What kind of theory will the Luhmann/Latour mix produce in Germany in the near future? Fascinating question!)

In my opinion, this conversation reveals several ways of thinking about theory-building in sociology. One might argue in favor of the circulation, hybridization, and amalgamation of concepts – what we might call the "syncretic" or "joyful mess" conception of theory-making—and hope that eventually something new will come out of it for the discipline. Or one might think instead that each theory should be taken on its own terms—we could call this the "exegetic" approach—with a close reading of the text and a careful use of the main concepts, which is certainly what theorists wish for their own work!

Both views of theory-making are essential, depending on the context. At times, one might feel closer to the "syncretic" approach—for example, when trying to make sense of a puzzling empirical issue. At other times, one might embrace the "exegetic" perspective—for example, when teaching a theory course. In my research, I feel closer to the syncretic side: I try to place concepts developed in France (Bourdieu on fields of cultural production, Boltanski and Thévenot on evaluation and justification) in dialogue with frameworks that flourished in the United States (neo-institutionalism, the production-of-culture perspective, STS, work on commensuration, etc.).

More generally, and to go back to your final question, I would argue that a theoretical framework needs three things to become "classical": an original and productive generalization about the social world (a necessary but not sufficient condition); a

dedicated set of entrepreneurs in charge of the institutionalization of the theory both in the country of origin and also in other countries (an increasingly important criterion in a globalized academic landscape); and the relative openness of the theory and its elective affinities (for lack of a better word) with existing sociological frameworks and changing political contexts.

For this reason, it is indeed fascinating to study cases in which theories failed to become classical (which brings us back to Geiger and Tarde); or examples where theoretical frameworks succeed differently depending on the country. Take the paradigmatic case of so-called "French theory," or more recently that of Latour or Piketty: their theories gained traction in the U.S. before coming back to France; through this transatlantic process, they were consecrated and turned into "classics" that every student needs to read.

This might be, at the end of the day, another essential use of the classics that we haven't yet talked about: inspiring students to adopt an analytical and critical lens on social problems through the works of classical theorists.

CB: You are right that theory translation might lead to a productive hybridization. I overstated my point or did or not sufficiently clarify my view on the specific translation of theory I referred to as dead theoretical labor. To the extent, as you suggest, that such translation would result in some form of actual hybridization or new interpretations, it could certainly be productive. What from my perspective is rather less productive is when theory translation takes place in a manner that is not really aiming at "incorporating dissonant items," to use your Kuhn-inspired expression, but rather at keeping a particular theoretical corpus intact in light of rival positions—or,

which is but a variation of this, when only those parts of a rival theory are taken into account which appear compatible with one's preferred theory.

I subscribe to your distinction between syncretic and exegetic approaches and would generally situate my own approach alongside yours, but with some nuances. First, while you are right to note that most theorists would probably like to see their own work being received in a faithful manner (i.e., not messed up with competing positions), I can think of hardly any interesting sociological theory which is not itself inherently syncretic. (Perhaps one should remember that eclecticism and syncreticism originally, before the pejorative reinterpretation of these terms in the 17th and 18th centuries, referred to a careful and independent selection of ideas!) This eclectic gesture is very much part of the sociological imagination, as Mills pointed out – and as Swedberg has called renewed attention to in his recent work on the art of social theory. I have made a similar point in relation to Luhmann: to work in the spirit of Luhmann, one cannot treat his theory as a "mummy," as some dead corpus of ideas that should be left undisturbed. Luhmann himself worked in the precise opposite way: he was highly eclectic, combining theoretical inspiration from Husserl, Parsons, Weber, cybernetics, biology, etc. So yes, I would certainly be in favor of a syncretic approach, and much of my own work proceeds in that spirit, drawing upon inspirations from a set of perhaps unlikely bedfellows, such as Luhmann, Foucault, Tarde, and Latour.

Second, while this suggests a preference for a syncretic over an exegetic approach—at least when the latter is primarily concerned with policing the interpretation of "what the master meant"—I also have sympathy for exegetic work, and this takes me back to the beginning of our conversation. While I agree with you that the classics are instrumental in providing students with a robust vocabulary with which to critically discuss social problems (and, one might add, in nurturing a sense of disciplinary identity), an exegesis of the classics may also contribute to new theory building. Since the canonization of some theories and the marginalization of others in part reflect the politics of theory, it makes sense to examine and challenge the dominant hierarchies. Digging out forgotten (or repressed) aspects of the classics or re-reading and reviving the misfits I talked about are ways of doing that which might lead us to new theoretical paths.

REFERENCES

Bargheer, Stefan. 2014. "The Use(fulness) of Theory." *Perspectives* 36(2): 13-15.

Lizardo, Omar. 2015. "The End of Theorists: The Relevance, Opportunities, and Pitfalls of Theorizing in Sociology Today." Pamphlet based on the Lewis Coser Memorial Lecture, delivered at the 2014 Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association in San Francisco. Available at: http://akgerber.com/OpenBook010.pdf

Luhmann, Niklas. 1995. *Social Systems*, trans. John Bednarz Jr. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.

The Pragmatic Maxim

Richard Swedberg, Cornell University

These days, one hears the name of Charles Sanders Peirce increasingly often in discussions among sociologists, and it is often in connection with the word "abduction" (e.g. Bertilsson 2009, Swedberg 2014, Tavory and Timmerman 2014). By this term Peirce roughly meant "coming up with new ideas", something that is absolutely vital for the scientist. More formally Peirce defined abduction as "the kind of reasoning which issues in explanatory hypotheses" (MS 857:4-5).

But there is much more to the work of Peirce than what he has to say about abduction, something that his reputation as a polymath as well as the foremost philosopher in the United States is a reminder of. In this brief article I will discuss one of Peirce's best-known achievements in philosophy, which is mentioned in every standard work on pragmatism. What I have in mind is the so-called *pragmatic maxim*, which is generally seen as expressing the very nature of pragmatism. The problem—as well as the reason for this brief article—is that there exists little agreement as to the meaning of Peirce's maxim. The maxim is expressed in a very short and enigmatic form, and it has been interpreted in many different ways. Peirce himself eventually got so upset with the way that William James and others interpreted it that he decided to use another term than pragmatism.

While James, Dewey and others viewed pragmatism as a full philosophy, applicable to all of the traditional areas of philosophy plus some other areas as well, to Peirce it was considerably more limited in nature. In his view, the main function of pragmatism was to help the philosopher and scientist to make her ideas clear and to reason well.

The maxim was originally published in 1878 in an article called "How to Make Our Ideas Clear." The first step in making an idea clear, Peirce said, is to locate individual instances of it. After this, you may proceed to the next step, which is to create a definition. Peirce's description of how to reach "the third degree of clearness" is what has become known as the pragmatic maxim:

> *Consider what effects, that might conceivably have practical bearings, we conceive the object of our conception to have. Then, our conception of these effects is the whole of our conception of the object.* (CP 5.402; emphasis added)

Most readers of Peirce's article are puzzled and perplexed by this formulation, and Peirce's attempt to explain it in the rest of his article just adds to the confusion. In this brief article I will argue that it is nonetheless worthwhile for sociologists to try to understand what Peirce meant with his maxim, and that there exist several clues for how to unpack it – but in his other writings. Peirce's maxim, I will also try to show, is very rich in implications; and these also extend to modern sociology.

The reason for the fame of Peirce's maxim is as follows. In a speech that William James delivered at Berkeley in 1898, he announced the existence of a new type of philosophy which he called "pragmatism." This term, he explained, had first been used by his friend Charles Sanders Peirce in the early 1870s.

James described what he called "the principle of Peirce, the principle of pragmatism" in the following way: "To develop perfect clearness in

our thoughts of an object, then, we need only consider what effects of a conceivable practical kind the object may involve – what sensations we are to expect from it and what reactions we must prepare" (James 1920:411-12).

This statement represents an attempt from James' side to make Peirce's maxim more accessible; and the same goes for his statement that "the ultimate test for us of what a truth means is indeed the conduct it dictates or inspires" (James 1920:412). But James, as we know, soon went much further in his argument about pragmatism and transformed it into a full-blown philosophy, closely linked to his theories about religion and morality. Many of the other pragmatists did the same.

The Reception of the Maxim

At first Peirce seems to have appreciated that his maxim was being cited and used, but he soon disagreed with the way it was interpreted. To mark this disagreement, he declared in 1905 that he was from now on going to refer to "pragmaticism" instead of to "pragmatism," hoping in this way to have created a term "ugly enough to be safe from kidnappers" (CP 5.414).

How then did Peirce himself interpret the pragmatic maxim? One way to approach an answer this question, I suggest, is to look at what Peirce said about the maxim over the years after 1878 (e.g. Misak 2010). These comments provide us with different clues for how to draw out the thoughts that Peirce had welded together so tightly in the original formulation of his maxim.

In my interpretation, Peirce made three major points in his comments. These three points, I suggest, are also of interest to sociology today:

(1) The maxim helps the scientist and philosopher to better understand the nature of concepts, and how these are to be handled when you do research. To just discuss different definitions of concepts, as metaphysicians do, is perfectly futile.

(2) The maxim helps the scientist and philosopher to avoid the errors of empiricism; and it does this by relying on a theory of signs.

(3) The maxim is part of the theory of logic; a science whose main task is to show scientists how to reason well. This can be done in several ways, especially by becoming better at abduction or coming up with new ideas.

By reading the following two quotes that come from texts by Peirce, the reader will hopefully get more of a sense for the way in which Peirce tried to explain to the reader what he meant by the pragmatic maxim in his writings after 1878:

> The method prescribed in the maxim is to trace out in the imagination the conceivable practical consequences,— that is, the consequences for deliberate, self-controlled conduct,—of the affirmation or denial of the concept; and the assertion of the maxim is that herein lies the *whole* of the purport of the word, the *entire* concept. The sedulous exclusion from this statement of all reference to sensation is specially to be remarked. Such a distinction as that between red and blue is held to form no part of the concept. This maxim is put forth neither as a handy tool to serve so far as it may be found serviceable, nor as a self-evident truth, but as a far-reaching theorem solidly grounded upon an elaborate study of the nature of signs. (1904; CP 8.191)

If you carefully consider the question of pragmatism you will see that it is nothing else than the question of the logic of abduction...if pragmatism is the doctrine that every conception is a conception of conceivable practical effects, it makes conception reach far beyond the practical. It allows any flight of imagination, provided this imagination ultimately alights upon a possible practical effect; and thus many hypotheses may seem at first glance to be excluded by the pragmatical maxim that are not really so excluded. (1903; Peirce 1997:249-50)

Making Sense of Peirce's Comments

What precisely did Peirce mean when he said that the pragmatic maxim was a way to counter metaphysics, and to do so by linking it to practical action? One way to get an answer to this question is to look at a passage in the work of Kant that discusses so-called pragmatic beliefs. The reason for consulting Kant in this context is that, according to Peirce, "the writer was led to the [pragmatic] maxim by reflection upon Kant's *Critic of the Pure Reason*" (CP 5.3).

In the following passage, where Kant introduces the term "*pragmatic belief,*" it is argued that a doctor who is trying to diagnose an illness must start out by looking at the symptoms of the disease. Once the doctor has settled on a certain diagnosis—and this is the point that interested Peirce—he will recommend that certain actions be taken:

The doctor must do something for a sick person who is in danger, but he does not know the illness. He looks to the symptoms, and judges, because he does not know of anything better, that it is consumption. His belief is merely contingent even in his own judgement,

someone else might perhaps do better. I call such contingent beliefs, which however ground the actual use of the means to certain actions, *pragmatic beliefs*. (A824/B852**)**

But even if Peirce felt that to improve our understanding of ideas and concepts, we must look to the actions they imply, he did not subscribe to empiricism. This type of epistemology was in his view faulty and should be replaced by an approach based on a theory of signs. According to Max Frisch, one of the most astute commentators on Peirce, "the sign-object-triad is the key to the [pragmatic] maxim for attaining the third degree of clarity" (Fisch 1986:327).

Peirce had developed his pioneering theory of signs a few years before the pragmatic maxim and always regarded it as his most important contribution. To appreciate Fisch's point about the close link between the pragmatic maxim and Peirce's semiotic, it is helpful to recall how Peirce defines a sign. *A sign* stands for *an object* and determines *an interpretant*. Translated into the language of the maxim, this becomes: the conception of something (an object) affects us (via a sign); and we (the interpretant) can conceptualize the practical effects of the original conception (a new object) – which in turn determines (via a new sign) our full meaning of the phenomenon (the new interpretant).

Finally, Peirce also argued that the maxim was part of his theory of logic, especially the part that deals with abduction. Peirce had a very broad concept of logic, which he equated with reasoning well in scientific and philosophical questions. It was very important in his view to establish *sound habits of reasoning*; the scientist must not only learn to handle deduction and induction well but also the most creative aspect of inquiry: *abduction*.

The Relevance of Peirce's Maxim for Sociology

Peirce's three main points about the implications of the pragmatic maxim are in my view of interest to modern sociology, and can be used to address some of the problems it faces. One of these has to do with concepts, and how to handle these when you do research and theorize. According to Peirce, a concept cannot be clarified and improved exclusively through discussion of its definition; you also need to know how it is used in empirical research and what kind of research strategies vis-à-vis its object it implies.

Peirce's second point has to do with the need to use a theory of signs in research; and also this can help to illuminate some problems that are central to modern sociology. Signs, in Peirce's view, do not only stand "for" something but are also directly linked to actors and their understanding. More precisely, signs affect the actors, who react by re-conceptualizing the signs when they think with their help. This represents a different and suggestive approach to the problem of agency and structure.

Peirce's third point may well be the most important for sociology today. Scientists and philosophers, Peirce says, need to develop solid habits of thinking and reasoning well, in order to do good research. This goes for all of the three main types of thinking that in Peirce's mind (and in his terminology) make up the scientific research process: coming up with new ideas (*abduction*), formulating hypotheses based on these ideas (*deduction*), and testing them against facts (*induction*). While modern sociologists have paid much attention to the last two of these, under the term of "method," they may also want to become better at what constitutes the very heart of theorizing well in sociology, namely abduction, or the process of how to come up with new ideas.

The idea of abduction constitutes the jewel in Peirce's thinking. It is true that Peirce changed his definition and approach to abduction over the years, but it is also true that its essence more or less remained the same. This is that what is truly new in scientific thought can only come about through some complex, primarily subconscious process of thought in the mind of the researcher. Sometimes Peirce referred to this process as "instinct" and at other times as "guessing." In his pragmatic maxim, Peirce also suggests that abduction is closely linked to *practice*.

REFERENCES

Bertilsson, Margareta. 2009. *Peirce's Theory of Inquiry and Beyond*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.

CP = *Collected Papers* by Charles Sanders Peirce, 1932-1968. 8 vols. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Fisch, Max. 1986. *Peirce, Semeiotic, and Pragmatism*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

James, William. 1920. *Collected Essays and Reviews*. New York: Longmans, Green and Co.

Misak, Cheryl. 2010. "The Pragmatic Maxim: How to get Leverage on a Concept." *The Harvard Review of Philosophy* 27:76-87.

Peirce, Charles S. 1997. *Pragmatism as a Principle and Method of Right Thinking*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Swedberg, Richard. 2014. *The Art of Social Theory*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Tavory, Iddo and Stefan Timmermans. 2014. *Abductive Analysis: Theorizing Qualitative Analysis.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Sociological Theory Meets "Folk" Theory: Randall Collins' "Four Sociological Traditions" in an American Classroom

Benjamin Moodie, Bates College

One of the pleasures of teaching sociological theory to undergraduates is witnessing the dialogue between what we teach and the "folk" theories of society that students bring with them to the classroom. For three semesters running, I have administered a brief survey on the first day of the sociological theory course at Bates College in order to introduce the course and probe my students' theoretical predilections and antipathies. Each semester, the survey has revealed students' preference for microinteractionism, the sociological tradition that is most indigenous to the American cultural context. I find that understanding their own "folk" theoretical inclinations helps my students adopt a more reflexive and intellectually receptive approach to the different theories on offer within sociology. It also provides an opportunity to reflect on the normative implications embedded in all social theories, helping to head off moral resistance that can cloud comprehension.

Theoretical Foundations of Sociology is a requirement for sociology majors at Bates College, and for many students it will be their only concentrated encounter with sociological theory. To help structure the conceptual terrain, I rely on Randall Collins's theoretical taxonomy in *Four Sociological Traditions*, which distinguishes conflict, rational/utilitarian, Durkheimian, and microinteractionist traditions (Collins 1994a; Collins 1994b). I pair "classic" texts with more recent research in order to convince students

of the continued intellectual vitality of each tradition. Most recently, for instance, I have assigned Marx and Weber as exemplars of the "conflict tradition" and Emmanuel Saez's 2013 Arrow Lecture at Stanford Universityfor insight into the contemporary evolution of inequality under capitalism.[1] For the "rational/utilitarian tradition," Mancur Olson's statement of the collective action problem is the "classic" reading (Olson 1965), with George Homans (1994 [1961]) and Robb Willer (2009) providing a complementary rational-choice-inspired etiology of social status. For the Durkheimian tradition, Mustafa Emirbayer's *Emile Durkheim: Sociologist of Modernity* (2003) provides an admirable pairing of original texts with subsequent work by theorists such as Pierre Bourdieu, Basil Bernstein, Mary Douglas, and Erving Goffman. Finally, for the "microinteractionist" tradition, I assign the Mead and Cooley excerpts in Collins's reader (Collins 1994c: 283-303) alongside Berger and Luckmann's *The Social Construction of Reality* (1967).

The questionnaire I distribute on the first day of class provides thumbnail sketches (without names) of each of Collins's four traditions. I ask students to evaluate how believable they are as a description of the social world, ranking them from most (1) to least (4) plausible. These thumbnail descriptions of the four

---

[1] Saez's lecture is available online at https://ethicsinsociety.stanford.edu/events/lectures/ethics-of-wealth-series/emmanuel-saez-income-inequality-evidence-and-policy

sociological traditions are faithful to Collins's taxonomy, although I conclude each with a sentence expressing my own sense of what each tradition implies for sociology's normative mission:

[Conflict tradition]

> History is best characterized as the struggle between various groups. Society is an ongoing contest between the dominant and the dominated in which everyone vies for their own interests. There is seldom enough to go around for everyone, and some things, like power or public acclaim, inherently favor some people at the expense of others. Hence, it's not surprising that even when people claim to be concerned about universal interests, they are usually advocating for their own agenda. Sociologists can improve society only by helping subordinate groups perceive and resist their domination.

[Rational/utilitarian tradition]

> "Society" is actually a collection of individuals, each of whom is pursuing basic, egotistical ends. People know best what they want, and most social activity can be boiled down to individuals trying to get what they want. Even though—or, more accurately, *because*—people are basically self-interested, they can get along pretty well as long as their incentives are properly aligned. Social scientific expertise is useful in designing optimal incentives.

[Durkheimian tradition]

> Human beings are social animals through and through. Try as we might to pretend that we're all rational individuals, our most fervent aims and ideals and our most basic emotional needs ultimately trace back to other people. This makes us inescapably normative, moralizing, creatures. Sociologists' role is to remind us of our dependency on one another while making our shared ideals fit social reality as closely as possible.

[Microinteractionist tradition]

> The entire social world arises out of meaningful social interactions between people. In fact, people come to understand *themselves* only by talking and cooperating with each other. Social institutions and roles are simply patterns of interaction that have gelled through familiarity and habit. Society is thus continually being made and re-made through the interaction of individuals. Sociology allows people to see that they can shape, and potentially improve, society through cooperative action.

I collect students' responses, but provide them with an extra copy of the thumbnail descriptions to use as a reference during discussion and throughout the semester.

For all three semesters that I have administered this mini-survey, students have ranked the four traditions with remarkable consistency (see Table 1). The microinteractionist tradition is the clear favorite. When I ask them to explain their preference in our subsequent discussion, many students remark that this perspective is attractive for its optimism about human nature and about the efficacy of cooperation amongst well-intentioned individuals as an antidote to society's shortcomings.

TABLE 1. RESULTS OF STUDENT SURVEYS

Sociological tradition	Average rank in 2013 (n=20)	Average rank in 2014 (n=13)	Average rank in 2015 (n=17)	Ordinal ranking (consistent across all three years)
Microinteractionist	1.1	1.3	1.8	1st
Conflict	2.6	2.5	2.3	2nd
Durkheimian	3.0	2.9	2.6	3rd
Rational/utilitarian	3.3	3.3	3.2	4th

Note: Lower numbers represent more *plausible descriptions of the social world.*

TABLE 2. ANALYTIC DIMENSIONS OF THE FOUR SOCIOLOGICAL TRADITIONS

	Egoistic	Pro-social
Collective	Conflict	Durkheimian
Individual	Rational/utilitarian	Microinteractionist

By contrast, they remark that the Durkheimian tradition slights individual agency and portrays human beings as "sheep-like." In making the conflict tradition their second most popular choice, my sense is that the students are implicitly balancing cynical and optimistic visions of society; as sociology majors, moreover, many of them are concerned about the oppression of subordinate groups. Finally, rational-choice theory's last-place ranking among my students may partly reflect their chosen major's intellectual distance from the model of *homo economicus* which anchors economic theory.

It is probably no accident that the microinteractionist tradition is my students' favorite since, in Randall Collins's (1994a: 242)

words, it is "distinctively American" in its origins. Mainstream American culture aligns with the microinteractionist tradition along two important analytical dimensions that, in my view, help to distinguish among the four traditions (see Table 2).

The first analytical axis concerns whether a tradition emphasizes social aggregates or individuals when explaining the social world. On this collective vs. individual dimension, American culture's voluntarism (Fischer 2008; Swidler 1992)—its assumption that groups are and should be formed by the voluntary entry of pre-existing individuals into a community—clearly aligns it with the individualist pole of this dimension—and with microinteractionism. The second analytical axis is a pro-social vs.

egoistic dimension: whether people's motives when interacting with one another are primarily (and primordially) competitive and exploitative, or cooperative and affiliative. Most Americans (particularly middle-class and well educated Americans) tend to value and take for granted fairness and friendliness in everyday interactions. In cross-cultural experiments, Americans tend spontaneously to adopt cooperative economic strategies even with anonymous strangers (Henrich, Heine and Norenzayan 2010). In its understanding of society as emerging from the (largely) cooperative interactions of individuals, microinteractionism is similarly pro-social in its basic assumptions.

At the end of *Four Sociological Traditions*, Collins argues that the imprint of national culture on the respective theoretical approaches has been progressively effaced by a blending of ideas in academia (Collins 1994a: 292 ff.). If this is true among professional sociologists, it seems not yet to have taken place in "folk" culture. The very predictability of student responses and their alignment with American cultural assumptions helps students realize that they are not embarking on an exploration of theory with a blank slate, but instead carry with them an implicit sociological vision that reflects the society they inhabit. The point here, however, is not that students are naïve "cultural dupes." In many ways, their theoretical preconceptions prepare them very well for life in America. They reflect widely shared norms and realistic default expectations of quotidian social behavior. Rather than being wrong, these theoretical intuitions are a point of departure to be made explicit and elaborated upon, and to be tested and contrasted with alternatives.

One helpful pedagogical consequence of this approach is that it brings to the surface the normative and aspirational dimensions of sociological theorizing. I have found that, when it is left unstated, the psychic difficulty of separating what we wish were true about society from what actually is true can interfere with students' ability to think clearly about social theory. In the classroom discussion that follows the "four traditions" ranking exercise, students often end up admitting that they chose the microinteractionist perspective not just because it seemed realistic, as I stipulate in the instructions, but because they *hope* that it is true. I emphasize to students that there is actually a good social reason for the difficulty we have separating "is" from "ought" when proposing visions of how society works: widely accepted visions of society tend to turn into (at least partially) self-fulfilling prophecies.[1] In other words, while some defensiveness about how society works may reflect pure wishfulness, it also reflects the sound intuition that beliefs about the motivations of others exert a powerful normative influence on behavior.

One way of disarming—or, perhaps, correctly orienting—this moral defensiveness about social theory is to suggest that each theoretical perspective describes an alternate universe that is likely to have at least some points of overlap with our own complex social world. By understanding how each version of social reality works, we are better equipped to see its points of convergence and divergence with our own society. Where it is truer than we might like, we can understand its internal logic and strategize how to manage or counteract it. Where it is both unappealing and unrealistic, we can rid ourselves from needless and potentially destructive cynicism.

---

[1] See Claude Fischer's discussion of this phenomenon at http://www.bostonreview.net/blog/claude-fischer-do-ideas-matter

We should expect that the folk theories which resonate most with students will vary by country, region, social class, ethnicity, gender, and the like. But in all cases, students will bring *some* moral and empirical assumptions to their encounter with social theory. Bringing those into the open, and pointing out that all theorists—no matter how brilliant and revered they may be—have such assumptions and build upon them, can make sociological theory seem less esoteric. It can also help students set aside the moral defensiveness that can impede the process of learning to use and evaluate different social theories as if they were tools in a mental workshop. After a good stint of explanatory work, we can always return to the moral aspirations we hold dear and ask how they apply in light of our newfound understanding. Students can thus look to sociological theory to enhance both their empirical and ethical grasp on the world.

REFERENCES

Berger, Peter L., and Thomas Luckmann. 1967. *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*. New York: Anchor Books.

Collins, Randall. 1994a. *Four Sociological Traditions*. New York: Oxford University Press.

—. 1994b. *Four Sociological Traditions : Selected Readings*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Durkheim, Emile, and Mustafa Emirbayer. 2003. *Emile Durkheim : Sociologist of Modernity*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub.

Fischer, Claude S. 2008. "Paradoxes of American Individualism." *Sociological Forum* 23(2):363-72.

Henrich, Joseph, Steven J. Heine, and Ara Norenzayan. 2010. "The Weirdest People in the World?" *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 33(2-3):61-83.

Homans, George. 1994 [1961]. "Social Exchange among Equals and Unequals." Pp. 135-44 in *Four Sociological Traditions : Selected Readings*, edited by Randall Collins. New York: Oxford University Press.

Olson, Mancur. 1965. *The Logic of Collective Action; Public Goods and the Theory of Groups*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Swidler, Ann. 1992. "Inequality and American Culture: The Persistence of Voluntarism." Pp. 294-314 in *Reexamining Democracy : Essays in Honor of Seymour Martin Lipset*, edited by Gary Marks and Larry Jay Diamond. Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage Publications.

Willer, Robb. 2009. "Groups Reward Individual Sacrifice: The Status Solution to the Collective Action Problem." *American Sociological Review* 74(1):23-43.

CURRENT EVENTS FORUM: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON ISIS

ISIS at the Mosul Museum: Material Destruction and Our Moral Economies of the Past

Fiona Rose-Greenland, University of Chicago

On February 26, 2015, the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) released a film showing a group of men destroying ancient sculptures in the Mosul Museum, the second-largest holder of antiquities in Iraq. In the aftermath of this destruction, scholars, policymakers, and heads of state have denounced the episode as an attack on "humanity's cultural heritage."[3] Despite their shared condemnation of ISIS, however, there is little agreement about either the core problem behind these events, or what to do about it. Some commentators blame religion, treating Mosul as an incident of iconoclasm promoted by radical Islam. Others frame the issue in humanitarian terms, wherein statue smashing is understood as part and parcel of ethnic cleansing.[4] Underpinning all of the framings is the belief that ISIS members are barbarians, equally savage in combat and at the museum. None of the competing explanations fully addresses the heart of the matter: conflicting valuations of past materiality.

In this essay, I use the Mosul episode to open a broader discussion about how we think about cultural objects from the past. While commentators argue that these events represent an attack on a shared human heritage, I argue that they instead point to a fundamental breakdown in the *very idea of* a shared heritage. Specifically, they reveal that we have situated ancient materiality in a moral economy that seeks to reduce the complicated social values of the past to a single, universal currency: "heritage." In the context of modern political and cultural disputes such as the one at Mosul, the inherent instability of this moral economy has been made clear.

First, let's review what we know about the events at Mosul.

On Thursday, February 26, the Islamic State posted the clip online.[5] The film opens with a bearded man standing at the Nergal Gate, one of the monumental entrances to the ancient city of Nineveh. The man faces the camera and, gesturing to the sculpture behind him, explains that past peoples worshiped "idols and statues" instead of Allah. The Prophet Mohammed

---

[3] See, for example, "UNESCO Director General condemns destruction of Nimrud in Iraq," UNESCO Media Services, March 6, 2015.
http://www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/single-view/news/unesco_director_general_condemns_destruction_of_nimrud_in_iraq/back/9597/#.VR1BHb_Y_Gz

[4] For instance, Zainab Bahrani has argued that "it's a form of ethnic cleansing because this is a region of the world—Mesopotamia has always been a multicultural, mutli-ethnic, multilinguistic and multireligious community, the entirety of the country. And what's happening now is that diversity is being wiped out. And it's a way of creating a terra nulla, if you will, a kind of an empty land that you can conquer and then claim that there was nothing there before." Zainab Bahrani speaking on *Democracy Now!* Feb. 27, 2015.
http://www.democracynow.org/2015/2/27/antiquities_scholar_islamic_states_destruction_of

[5] For a frame-by-frame analysis of the Mosul Museum episode:
https://gatesofnineveh.wordpress.com

removed idols with his own hands when he arrived in Mecca, the man continues. "We were ordered by our prophet to take down idols and destroy them, and the companions of the prophet did this after this time, when they conquered countries."[6] The camera then cuts to scenes of men working in small teams throughout the museum. Using sledge-hammers, pickaxes, and drills, the ISIS men reduce the sculpture to rubble.

The film shocks, as much for its clarity as its incomprehensibility. Didn't these guys get the memo? The sculptures are supposed to be their cultural legacy, their priceless and incomparable history. Targeting human "infidels" is brutal, but at least it is explainable by some geopolitical logic. Targeting ancient materiality, on the other hand, makes no sense. Just think of its value—as heritage marker, aesthetic gem, or tourist attraction.

ISIS did get the memo, and they sent it back. Yes, ancient materiality has a value, but not in the way of mainstream Western thinking. This repudiation is clear in the narrator's final sentence: "We do not care, even if it costs us billions of dollars."

It helps to think of these questions of value in terms of moral economies. *Moral economy* was used by E.P. Thompson (1964) to refer to a system of valuation and exchange of goods shaped by community mores rather than free-market profit motives. James C. Scott (1976: 3) elaborated the term in *The Moral Economy of the Peasant*. Explaining the centrality of a "subsistence ethic" to rural agricultural communities in Southeast Asia, Scott identifies

"[p]atterns of reciprocity, forced generosity, communal land, and work-sharing […]" as key features of local production and consumption. In both scholars' theories of moral economy, social values and shared ethics trump profit and operational efficiency.

Condemnations of the ISIS attacks reveal a specific form of moral economy, that of past materiality. Sustaining it is an ideal of pricelessness: namely, that old things are so symbolically important as to transcend monetized economic processes. The roots of this ideal can be traced at least as far as the Enlightenment, though antecedents can be identified in much earlier places and in non-Western contexts as well. It was only in the second half of the 20th century that the notion of a common human heritage was elucidated, codified, and policed. The 1954 Hague Convention, for instance, declares that "damage to cultural property belonging to any people whatsoever means damage to the cultural heritage of all mankind, since each people makes its contribution to the culture of the world."[7]

This particular moral economy of past materiality is now so commonplace that its novelty is obscured. Throughout time, old things have been venerated, traded, and preserved—as well as appropriated, maimed, and destroyed—by a range of people, acting on a plurality of motives and interests (Schnapp 1997). In their day, cultural objects existed in a nexus of economies, among them symbolic, political, and monetary. By contrast, we have distilled that complex of value practices to a

---

[6] Translation taken from the *International Business Times*: http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/iraq-isis-take-sledgehammers-priceless-assyrian-artefacts-mosul-museum-video-1489616

[7] Preamble to the 1954 Hague Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and its Protocols. For a historical and legal discussion of the 1954 Hague Convention, see Gerstenblith (2006).

single currency: historical data. This distillation was made possible by the rise of scientific archaeology in the late 19th century (Ceserani 2012),[8] and its conjunction with "heritage" was soldered in the fiery rhetoric of nationalism during the same period.

Heritage, however, is only one of several possible discourses that can be attached to objects (Byrne 2014). Other discourses—"art," "commodity", "political symbol," "rubbish"— are also present at any given time. Defining and protecting sculptures as "heritage objects" works only so long as everybody more or less agrees that they are worth saving. This assumption broke down with ISIS because its members looked at ancient sculptures and saw offensive symbols rather than priceless heritage.

Heritage is mutable, and it is always political. This is why successful efforts to protect historic cultural objects must improve on such bland imperatives as "take pride in your heritage" or "history is part of your identity." History isn't always a source of pride, and it is not necessarily interchangeable with heritage (Zubrzycki 2013). Consider again the smashed-up sculptures at Mosul. Ashurnasirpal II, king of Assyria from 883 to 859 BCE, was a notoriously harsh ruler who massacred civilians and bragged in a monumental inscription of annihilating dissidents and "[treading] upon the necks of his foes" (Taylor 2015). Now his monumental gate is missing, presumed looted or pulverized. Perhaps Mosul is just a case of delayed justice, in which one set of conquerors upends another. In this reading, history *is* part of local identity, but for an ironic

reason: by destroying the sculptures, ISIS made them relevant again.

The notion that destruction may abet revitalization is, at first glance, counterintuitive. Pulverizing a statue with a sledgehammer is bad for the statue as an object. It will break it, perhaps beyond repair, leaving behind mere fragments of a once-complete body. At the same time, however, the sledgehammer also transforms the statue as a *subject*. Suddenly, the statue becomes relevant in multiple dimensions as a contested symbol and a potential threat to the social order. The statue may cease to exist as a statue, but its bundled meanings are released through the act of shattering.

Object-destruction, therefore, may be symbolically productive. And there are clearly cases in which most of us would support the destruction or removal of cultural objects. After all, was toppling Saddam Hussein's statue in Baghdad in April 2003 an act of cultural vandalism? How about the destruction of pro-Nazi monuments in post-war Germany? This is why the insurgents' claim to be acting ethically by resisting idolatry cannot be dismissed out of hand. Categorical condemnation of cultural object destruction is unsustainable. If the Mosul action is to be opposed, it must be on the basis of a coherently argued position.

In many respects, ISIS's iconoclasm argument is wrong. The Mosul Museum statues portrayed secular leaders and mythical figures, and were never objects of religious worship. Further, there is absolutely no evidence that they encouraged idolatry among modern adherents of Islam. Islamic leaders across the globe have condemned ISIS's action on these grounds. More broadly, ISIS's program of cultural object destruction can be opposed in light of its place in a broader program apparently focused on

---

[8] The tight coupling of scientific archaeology and identity politics continues to this day (Rose-Greenland 2013).

the elimination of ethnic minority communities. International conventions, including the 1972 UNESCO World Heritage Convention, declare the preservation of practices, places, and things that link a community with its history a legal imperative, to be balanced with the right to religious expression. A position starting from this basic observation would allow a more robust defense of cultural objects that avoids the drawbacks of appeals to a "universal cultural heritage."

The moral economy of the past will not be abolished, and it probably shouldn't be. The solution, instead, is to improve it. We need to rethink the relationship between cultural materiality and living human societies, and we need to support economic and social justice in communities in which cultural violence is an easy response to poverty and loss. In this way, the Mosul Museum attack may be remembered, not as an end to the ancient statues, but instead as the beginning of a more sustainable framework for protecting past materiality in its diverse, complicated, and sometimes incomprehensible currency.

REFERENCES

Byrne, Denis. 2014. *Counterheritage: Critical Perspectives on Heritage Conservation in Asia.* London: Routledge.

Ceserani, Giovanna. 2012. *Italy's Lost Greece: Magna Graecia and the Making of Modern Archaeology.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Gerstenblith, Patty. 2006. *Art, Cultural Heritage, and the Law. Cases and Materials*, pp. 529-535. 2nd edition. Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press.

Rose-Greenland, Fiona. 2013. "Seeing the Unseen: Prospective Loading and Knowledge Forms in Archaeological Discovery." *Qualitative Sociology* 36(3): 251-77.

Schnapp, Alain. 1997. *The Discovery of the Past.* New York: Harry N. Abrams.

Scott, James C. 1976. *The Moral Economy of the Peasant: Rebellion and Subsistence in Southeast Asia.* New Haven: Yale University Press.

Taylor, Jonathan. 2015. The Standard Inscription of Assurnasirpal II. *Nimrud: Materialities of Assyrian Knowledge Production.* The Nimrud Project at Oracc.org: http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/nimrud/lives ofobjects/standardinscription

Thompson, E.P. 1964. *The Making of the English Working Class.* New York: Pantheon.

Zubrzycki, Geneviève. 2013. Aesthetic revolt and the remaking of national identity in Québec, 1960-1969. *Theory and Society* 42(5): 423-475.

Why Is Weber's Prebendalism Ignored?
Considering a Post-ISIS Islamic Caliphate

J.I. (Hans) Bakker, Brandon University

How can we understand ISIS? What would an Islamic Caliphate look like? I believe it is fruitful to use Max Weber's theory of traditional authority, particularly patrimonial prebendalism, to answer that question.

Some current scholars are skeptical of using classical theory by Western scholars to explain contemporary events outside of the West. Raewyn Connell (2007) criticizes much work on globalization as merely what she calls "metropolitan theory." She critiques the way the history of sociological theory is constructed, especially the use of the classics (Collins 1997), like Comte, Marx, Weber, Durkheim, and Simmel. She states (p. 64): "A body of writing about the global in which Weber is a major point of reference, but al-Afghani [1968] is not, defines itself as profoundly limited." There is a grain of truth in her argument, but for the most part she is profoundly misleading. Instead of "Southern Theory" versus "Northern" or "Metropolitan Theory," we need heuristic theory, no matter where it comes from. I cannot defend all of classical theory in a few words. But Max Weber's comparative-historical sociology and *Sozialökonomie* is far more useful than Connell and many "Southern" critics of the classics comprehend.

I propose taking a deeper look at "patrimonialism" than has been the case in previous work, taking Weber's *Economy and Society* ([1922] 1968) as a whole seriously, and focusing on "patrimonialism" as a whole rather than merely aspects of the ideal-type model.

Many sociologists are not familiar with the concept of patrimonialism, despite many presentations of Weber's views on the subject (e.g. Bendix 1977). It tends to be regarded by many sociologists as an "esoteric" concept, yet I argue it is a concept of wide applicability in many contemporary regions. Many sociologists claim familiarity with Weberian ideal-types such as the "Protestant ethic," "charismatic authority" and "modern bureaucracy," but, apart from a handful of Weber specialists, few have much to say about patrimonialism (Wertheim 1995). Patrimonialism is typically omitted or glossed over in textbooks on classical or contemporary theory. Because the term "patrimonialism" has not had clear lexical or operational definition, it has been employed in many different ways. This essay will clarify one possible use of the term, which I believe captures the general intention of Weber's mature work.

In the chronologically later part of *Economy and Society* (i.e., the part that is printed first in the English translation and the German versions), Weber developed pure ideal-types based on conceptual extrapolation from his detailed historical knowledge. Weber's ideal-types of "modern bureaucracy" and "charismatic authority" are well known, but few recognize the historical or pure ideal-type models of "patrimonial prebendalism" (for a discussion of "pure" versus "historical" ideal-type models, see Bakker 1997). This model of traditional pre-capitalist societies can be compared to "patrimonial-feudalism." A fully patrimonial-feudalist system is different from a patrimonial-prebendalist form of domination principally in that it includes baronial and/or monastic estates which are at least somewhat

militarily and legally independent of the centralizing rulership. Aristocratic land ownership was at one time "progressive" compared to a system of traditional bureaucratic office holders who had no independent military power. The historical realities which are accentuated through these pure ideal-types are tendencies; they often oscillate to some degree, with patrimonial-feudalism representing more centrifugal tendencies and patrimonial-prebendalism representing more centripetal tendencies in a traditional situation.

I have examined historical and contemporary evidence for the applicability of Weberian patrimonialism to the Javanese and Balinese parts of what is now called Indonesia, during pre-colonial, colonial, and recent times (Bakker, 1983, 1987, 1988). The key finding is that Weber's ideal-type model of traditional authority seems to fit the ideographical details of Javanese history fairly well (Bakker 2010). Indeed, it may be universally true (for all historical societies that have reached a certain level of bureaucratization) that there is an oscillation between prebendal and feudal aspects of traditional authority structures (Bakker 2012). My case-study material comes from the Indonesian archipelago, but I believe the essential idea has great relevance to the Middle East as well as mainland and insular Southeast Asia. It is also relevant to the study of both Indic and Sinitic Civilizations (Collins 1998). Most surprisingly (at least to some) is the fact that Weber's (1968 [1922]) "oscillation thesis" also applies to Europe, especially in terms of the ultimate failure of the patrimonial-prebendal Holy Roman ("Germanic-Italic") Empire and the Roman Catholic Ecclesia.

Ideal-Typical Features of Patrimonial Prebendalism

In Weber's mature work, patrimonialism is a key feature of pre-capitalist societies, a usage that corresponds to a general view on the "traditional societies" which immediately preceded modern capitalism. It is a viewpoint that Weber develops in his sociological analysis of domination or authority (*Herrschaft*). It can reasonably be argued that "The Sociology of Domination is the core of *Economy and Society*," which in turn is "the sum" of Weber's scholarly vision of society (Roth 1968: lxxxviii, xxxiii). Weber's analysis of traditional authority as patrimonialism, in turn, is a key component of his "Sociology of Domination," and his analysis of legitimate authority.

Weber, as is well known, distinguished between "traditional" and "modern" types of domination (as well as other types). That form of traditional domination which Weber called patrimonial domination is divided into two main types, as well as a number of antecedent "proto-patrimonial" types. The two main types are patrimonial prebendalism and patrimonial feudalism. Weber's ideal type model of patrimnonial prebendalism historically has at least six ideal type characteristics:

(1) All political legitimacy is held by one ruling group, usually just one ruler and his retinue (e.g. a "Sultan" or "Emperor" or "Tsar" etc.)

2) Provincial elites or traditional ''officials'' (prebendiaries, ministeriales) have no independent power base and, in the final analysis, owe their power to decisions made by the ruler. Such elite groups are not able to become local dynasties. Furthermore, there is no accepted "structure" of relatively independent elite groups within the "system." If a member of the provincial elite wants to maintain his own army, he must become the founder of a local dynasty or must take over as the ruler of the "nation." There is no halfway point between

acceptance of the ruler's total domination and rebellion against centralized rulership.

(3) Decision-making is ad hoc, and there are no rational-legal administrative codes (or only very loose ones). Major decisions concerning the "constitutionality" of a law are decided by "the ruler." Furthermore, the ruler can always promulgate a new set of laws without significant concern with legal or constitutional precedent. The ruler (or ruling oligarchy) can make significant life and death decisions without any consultation whatso-ever. There is nothing approximating a "jury of one's peers" for members of the elite, much less for ordinary, non-elite persons.

(4) All of the land and labor is held in "royal domain," although some rights to land and labor may be parceled out to members of the provincial elites or military for temporary use, subject to the ruler's decision to allow the situation to continue. Although there may be "money," there is no such thing as modern "capital." Hence, "land and labor" are the main sources of material wealth. (The concept of "land" here can also include all agricultural wealth, e.g. livestock, slaves, etc.)

(5) Subjects in villages are treated as collectively liable to the villages to which they are more or less permanently attached,

(6) Producers ("cultivators") are subject to servile labor (e.g., corvee). Those producers may be regarded as ''peasants'' in so far as they are not necessarily totally divorced from markets and may have some access to "money" through the sale of goods in such markets. However, such markets are not fully capitalized; the development of modern capitalism, and especially modern capitalist "free labor,'' is incipient, at best.

ISIS as a Prebendal Patrimonial Polity

An Islamic Caliphate, if established, would be a patrimonial-prebendal, imperial state. The Caliph would be the patrimonial ruler who would rule through a system of "prebends" involving appanage and a hierarchy of patron-client relationships. The structure of such a Caliphate, in other words, would be like the 12th century Roman Catholic Church and Holy Roman Empire in Western Europe. It would not be a global system. But it would be constructed in opposition to the emerging neo-liberal global finance capitalist world-system. It would be an Islamic "response" to capitalist imperialism (al-Afghani 1968).

It is not clear how long such a Caliphate could continue to survive. The idea that a 12th century Caliphate is possible is in essence the notion that a patrimonial-prebendal society can be re-instituted in the contemporary Middle East. Such a goal ignores the history of all hitherto-existing patrimonial-prebendal societies; the Ottoman Empire was last such society to be successful for hundreds of years. Patrimonial-prebendalism also continues in vestigial form in the current Roman Catholic Church, with a patrimonial-prebendal leader (the Pope) and a notion of celibacy that dates back to an authority structure no longer relevant in the 21st century. The earlier 12th century problem was that a priest or monk who had a child could become an incipient "feudal" landholder. Therefore, the clergy, who had many children, could not have legitimate children. Of course, there were situations where bastard sons did accumulate power, but they were the exceptions and the structure was prebendal rather than feudal. Today, for the most part, the Roman Catholic Church in North America and Europe is a denomination rather than a true *ecclesia*. The Spanish and Portuguese Empires were based in part on the

idea that a true patrimonial-prebendal system could continue to exist in the New world and in various other colonies.

In the space of a newsletter article, this is of course a quite simplified version of Weber's nuanced and complex presentation, and I encourage more scholars to continue to investigate the contemporary relevance of patrimonial-prebendalism to contemporary societies. Connell is quite incorrect to think that Al-Afghani, a defender of a patrimonial-prebendalist version of Islamic authority, is more relevant because he is a "Southern Theorist" and Weber is "merely" a classical theorist from the metropole. He did not merely contrast rigid polar types such as Tönnies' *Gemeinschaft* & *Gesellschaft* or German theories of *Naurvölker* versus *Kulturvölker* (Connell 2007). Instead, Weber developed largely historically-based ideal-type models which are immensely heuristic for sociologists living in any part of the world to use.

REFERENCES

'al-Afghani, Sayyid Jamal ad-Din. 1968. *An Islamic Response to Imperialism: Political and Religious Writings of Sayyid Jamal ad-Din 'al-Afghani*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Bakker, J. I. (Hans). 1983. "Village Liability and Common Land Use: Testing the Meitzen-Weber Hypothesis." Pp. 4-30 in *The Southeast Asian Environment*, edited by Douglas Webster. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press.

_____. 1987. "Class Relations in Java in the Nineteenth Century: A Weberian Perspective." *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* 8: 137-56.

_____. 1988. "Patrimonialism, Involution and the Agrarian Question in Java: a Weberian

Analysis of Class Relations and Servile Labour." Pp. 279-301 in *State and Society: The Emergence and Development of Social Hierarchy and Political Centralization*, edited by John Gledhill, Barbara Bender, and Mogens Trolle Larsen. London: Unwin Hyman.

_____. 2010. "Deference and Democracy n Traditional and Modern Bureaucracy: Refinements in Max Weber's Ideal Type Model." Pp. 105-128 in *Society, History, and the Global Human Condition: Essays in Honor of Irving M Zeitlin*, edited by Zaheer Baber and Joseph M. Bryant. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.

_____. 2012. "Weber's Oscillation Thesis: Patrimonial Prebendalism and Feudalism." *Perspectives* 34(1): 4.

Bendix, Reinhard. 1977. *Max Weber: An Intellectual Portrait*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Collins, Randall. 1997. "A Sociological Guilt Trip: Comment on Connell". *American Journal of Sociology* 102 (6): 1558-1564.

_____. 1998. *The Sociology of Philosophies*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap/Harvard University Press.

Connell, Raewyn. 2007. *Southern Theory: Social Science and the Global Dynamics of Knowledge.* London: Polity.

Giddens, Anthony. 2002. *Runaway World: How Globalization is Shaping Our Lives*. 2nd ed. London: Profile Books.

Weber, Max. 1968 [1922]. *Economy and Society*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Wertheim, W. F. 1995. "The Contribution of Weberian Sociology to Studies of Southeast Asia.'' *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 26 (1): 17-29.

Dissertation Spotlight

Erin F. Johnston (Princeton University)
Title: Learning to Practice, Becoming Spiritual: Spiritual Disciplines as Projects of the Self
Committee: Robert Wuthnow (chair), Paul DiMaggio, Janet Vertesi, Thomas DeGloma

In this project, I examine the dialectical relationship between practice and identity; between the process of acquisition and the process of becoming. To do so, I analyze the process spiritual formation in what Robert Wuthnow calls "practice-oriented spiritualities." Despite a growing body of research documenting the deeply social nature of contemporary spirituality and spiritual practice, little has been written about processes socialization in this emerging field. My dissertation brings these processes into relief drawing on more than two years of fieldwork, forty-five in-depth interviews and participatory immersion in two spiritual communities: a Catholic prayer house and an Integral Yoga Institute. In addition to their growing popularity, these organizations share a commitment to helping members acquire and maintain disciplined spiritual practices – Centering Prayer and Hatha Yoga, respectively. My dissertation elucidates the social organization of apprenticeship in these seemingly personal practices, and examines the constitutive role of learning to practice in transmitting shared understandings of the self, of spirituality and of the 'good life.'

Email: efjohnst@princeton.edu
Website:
https://sites.google.com/site/ejohnsto/home

Benjamin Lamb-Books (University of Colorado, Boulder)
Title: "Angry Abolitionists and the Rhetoric of Slavery: Minding the Moral Emotions in Social Movements"
Committee: Isaac Reed (chair), Janet Jacobs, Peter Simonson, Amy Wilkins, and Jennifer Bair

My research investigates the mutually constitutive interrelations of emotion and status inequality, i.e., how status inequality *feels* as well as how unequal emotional distributions constrain variable practices of coping with, resisting, and/or reconstituting status structures. In the dissertation, *Angry Abolitionists and the Rhetoric of Slavery: Minding the Moral Emotions in Social Movements*, I demonstrate the centrality of status inequality and status claimsmaking in activating the moral emotions (e.g., anger, reciprocity, shame, pride, contempt) that condition the 'hot cognitions' of injustice. Using nineteenth century newspaper records of public antislavery meetings, I was able to reconstruct the social production of moral emotions in contentious contexts, including the collective-emotional experiences of protest audiences. My ultimate theoretical goal is to better incorporate a 'human emotions' perspective into historical sociology and contemporary critical/cultural theory.

Email: Benjamin.Lamb@colorado.edu

Aliza Luft (University of Wisconsin-Madison)
Title: "Behavioral Variation during the Holocaust: The Case of the French Catholic Church"
Committee: Ivan Ermakoff (chair), Chad Goldberg, Pam Oliver, Bob Freeland, Laird Boswell

In August 1940, the French Catholic Church decided to formally endorse the Vichy regime's first anti-Semitic legislation, the Statut des Juifs. Paving the way for increasing discrimination, French bishops' decisions helped legitimize Vichy for civilians who looked to their religious leaders as moral authorities. However, two years later, in August 1942, a subset of bishops defected from this stance to protest on behalf of Jews. In turn, they delegitimized the Vichy regime and organized Catholic efforts to save Jews in France. My dissertation draws on a range of historical sources collected from 15 archives in 10 cities and 3 countries (France, USA, Israel) to analyze what motivated bishops' original support for Vichy anti-Semitism, as well as their defections from this stance two years later. Theoretically, the findings so far call attention to critical events that triggered a shift in how French bishops' thought about the war, to networks both inside and outside the Church that provided information and ideas about how to respond to unfolding events, and to the personal backgrounds of bishops who understood transformations in French political life through a lens shaped by their previous experiences. I combine process-tracing methods with network analysis and a prosopography to develop a theory of high-risk political defection.

E-mail: aluft@ssc.wisc.edu
Website: http://www.alizaluft.com

Nathaniel D. Porter (Pennsylvania State University)
Title: "Filling the Blank Pages of Group Culture: Book Purchasing Network Studies in the Sociology of Religion"
Committee: Roger Finke (chair), Alan Sica, Diane Felmlee, Stephen Browne

My dissertation uses book co-purchasing networks from Amazon.com to study shared ideas and culture in US religious groups. Religion is chosen because of the centrality of popular expression and consumption to the ongoing development of cross-group conversations and ideas, such as interfaith movements. I draw on a field theoretic framework which is distinct from both Bourdieu and neo-institutionalists in its network orientation and its focus on ideas and cultural objects as bearers of potential overlap and collaboration. Data are collected from Amazon's 'Customers who Bought this also Bought' feature. I use a combination of node, subgroup, and macro-structural approaches to understand group similarity and difference, as well as the paths through which ties are made. Early exploratory analysis has shown promise in distinguishing between nominal topic, as defined by the publisher or retailer, of books and the effective relationships of books to others, improving understanding of distinct types of irreligious individuals. Overall, I seek to help fill an overall gap between the sociology of formal knowledge and the qualitative study of everyday life, while simultaneously proposing an alternative to the standard opposition of field and network theories.

Email: ndp135@psu.edu
Website: http://nathanieldporter.com

2015 Junior Theorists' Symposium
University of Chicago, August 21, 2015
Conference Program

8:30 – 9:00 | Coffee and Bagels

9:00 – 10:50 | Race and Gender
- Clayton Childress (University of Toronto) – "Cultures of Inequality: The "Double Match" of Race and Meaning"
- Sarah Mayorga-Gallo (University of Cincinnati) – "Diversity as Ideology in Multiethnic Spaces"
- Jason Orne (University of Wisconsin – Madison) – "A Theory of Sexual Racism"

Discussant: Patricia Hill Collins (University of Maryland)

10:50 – 11:00 | Coffee

11:00 – 12:50 | The State and Globalization
- Anna Skarpelis (New York University) – "Insidious Racialization: Welfare State Development in 20th Century Germany and Japan"
- Ana Velitchkova (Centre for Social Conflict and Cohesion Studies) – "Multiple Language Carriers and Status: Political Organization and Embodied Competences in the Global Esperanto Field"
- Jeffrey Weng (University of California – Berkeley) – "Linguistic Modernity: The Limits of Ideology and State Power in the Creation of Modern Standard Languages"

Discussant: George Steinmetz (University of Michigan – Ann Arbor)

12:50 – 2:00 | Lunch

2:00-2:30 | Junior Theorist Award
Claire Laurier Decoteau (University of Illinois – Chicago) and Isaac Ariail Reed (University of Virginia)

2:30 – 4:20 | Culture
- Natalie B. Aviles (University of California – San Diego) – "Moving targets in the 'War on Cancer': toward a pragmatic event-based theory of organizational culture in the National Cancer Institute"
- Larissa Buchholz (Harvard University) – "The Rise of China in the Global Art Auction Market: A Global Field Analysis"
- Brad Vermurlen (University of Notre Dame) – "The Production of Marginal Culture: The Case of Calvinist Hip-Hop"

Discussant: Gary Alan Fine (Northwestern University)

4:30 – 5:45 | After-panel: On Abstraction
Kieran Healy (Duke University)
Virag Molnar (The New School for Social Research)
Andrew Perrin (UNC-Chapel Hill)
Kristen Schilt (University of Chicago)

5:45 – ? | Theory in the Wild: Beer, wine, and good conversation (off-site)

The Junior Theorists Symposium is an open event. In order to facilitate planning, please RSVP to juniortheorists@gmail.com with the subject line "JTS RSVP." We suggest an on-site donation of $20 per faculty member and $10 per graduate student to cover event costs. The exact locations will be announced later this summer.

2015 American Sociological Association Meetings
Chicago, Illinois, August 22-25, 2015
Theory Section Sessions

Joint Reception: Theory Section and Section on History of Sociology
Saturday, August 22, 6:30-8:30PM
>   Offsite: Roosevelt University, Room 418, Wabash Building, 425 South Wabash Avenue, Chicago, IL 60605

Theory Section Roundtables
Monday, August 24, 8:30-9:30AM
>   *Organizers:* Fiona Rose-Greenland (University of Chicago) and Daniel Hirschman (University of Michigan)

Theory Section Business Meeting
Monday, August 24, 9:30-10:30AM

Theory Section Invited Session: Lewis A. Coser Memorial Lecture and Salon
Monday, August 24, 10:30AM-12:10PM
>   *Session Organizer:* John W. Mohr (University of California, Santa Barbara)
>
>   *Presider:* Andrew J. Perrin (University of North Carolina)
>
>   *Panelist:* Marion Fourcade (University of California, Berkeley)

Theory Section Paper Session: The Promise and Pitfalls of 'Nuance' in Sociological Theory
Monday, August 24, 2:30-4:10PM
>   *Session Organizer and Presider:* Stephen Vaisey (Duke University)

Panelists
Kieran Healy (Duke University): "Fuck Nuance"
Natalie Brooke Aviles (University of California, San Diego) and Isaac Ariail Reed (University of Colorado): "Ratio via Machina: Three Standards of Mechanistic Explanation in Sociology"
Serena Liu (University of Essex): "Social Action, Social Structure, and Their Discontents: Bourdieu and an Alternative"

Theory Section Paper Session: Theory, Method, Data, and Representation
Monday, August 24, 4:30-6:10PM
>   *Session Organizer and Presider:* Andrew J. Perrin (University of North Carolina)

Panelists
Pepper Glass (Weber State University): "Explaining the Past While Studying the Present: History as Born and Performed"
Lynette Shaw, Nina Lyn Cesare, and Michael Hughes Esposito (University of Washington): "From Meaning to Behavior: Mental Representation, the Patterning of Social Life, and Cultural Analysis"
Matthew Chandler (University of Notre Dame): "Fuzzy Logic, Semantic Networks, and Theory Development in the Sociological Analysis of Texts"
Daryl Carr: "Unpacking Swidler's Tool Kit: Using Citation Networks to Theorize

Discussant: Andrew J. Perrin (University of North Carolina)

Theory Section Paper Session: Theorizing Inequalities

Tuesday, August 25, 8:30-10:10AM

Session Organizer: C.J. Pascoe (University of Oregon)

Presider: Matthew Norton (University of Oregon)

Panelists

Jeffrey Weng (University of California, Berkeley): "Linguistic Modernity: The Limits of Ideology and State Power in the Creation of Modern Standard Languages"

Francois Bonnet (CNRS) and Clement Thery (Columbia University): "Sociology and Political Science in the Patrimonial Society: Implications of Piketty's Capital"

Brian T. Connor (University of Massachusetts): "The Politics of Equals: Towards a Theory of Equality in Sociology

Louise Birdsell Bauer (University of Toronto): "Theorizing the Role of Symbolic Boundaries in Segmented Labour Markets: Clues from Inside the Academy"

Discussant: Ryan Light (University of Oregon)

Theory Section Paper Session: Theorizing the Social: Studies of Science and Technology

Tuesday, August 25, 10:30AM-12:10PM

Session Organizer and Presider: Sara N. Shostak (Brandeis University)

Panelists

Daniel Menchik (Michigan State University): "Acting as Neither Individual Nor Professional: Physicians' Constitutive Ambivalence in Adopting Complex Technologies"

Kathleen C. Oberlin (Grinnell College): "Enacting a Museum: How the Creation Museum Works as an Alternative Institution"

Zachary Webster Griffen and Aaron Panofsky (University of California, Los Angeles): "Value Added Modeling in Teacher Evaluation: A Case Study in Economic Imperialism?"

Rebecca Jean Emigh (University of California, Los Angeles), Dylan John Riley (University of California, Berkeley), and Patricia Ahmed (South Dakota State University): "The Prehistory of Population Censuses in the Italian Regional States"

Kristin Kay Barker (University of New Mexico): "Who Knows? Medical Expertise in the Internet Era"

Other Conference Announcements

The 8th Analytical Sociology Conference of the International Network of Analytical Sociologists (INAS) is being held this year from **June 12-13, 2015** at Harvard University. Conference theme: "Causal Inference and Mechanism-Based Explanation: Friends or Foes?" Conference website: http://hwpi.harvard.edu/inas2015/home

"Critical Realism: Reimagining Social Science." International Association for Critical Realism (IACR) 2015 Annual Meeting, **July 28-30, 2015**, University of Notre Dame, IN (USA). For more information on registration, location, costs, and travel arrangements, visit http://csrs.nd.edu/events/iacr2015/.

Member News and Notes
Spring 2015

BOOKS

Anderson, Kevin. 2015. *Marx aux Antipodes*. Paris: Éditions Syllepse. (Translation of *Marx at the Margins*)

Doubt, Keith. 2015. *Through The Window: Kinship and Elopement in Bosnia-Herzegovina*. Budapest: CEU Press.

Lee, Caroline. 2015. *Do-It-Yourself Democracy: The Rise of the Public Engagement Industry*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Manzo, Gianluca (ed.). 2014. *Analytical Sociology: Actions and Networks*, Chichester, UK: John Wiley & Sons.

Milner, Murray, Jr. 2015. *Elites: A General Model*. Polity.

Waters, Tony, and Dagmar Waters. 2015. *Weber's Rationalism and Modern Society: New Translations on Politics, Bureaucracy, and Social Stratification*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

ARTICLES AND BOOK CHAPTERS

Abrutyn, Seth, and Anna S. Mueller. 2014. "The Socioemotional Foundations of Suicide: A Microsociological View of Durkheim's Suicide." *Sociological Theory* 32(4):327-51.

Abrutyn, Seth. 2015. "Pollution-Purification Rituals, Collective Memory, and the Evolution of Religion: How Cultural Trauma Shaped Ancient Israel." *American Journal of Cultural Sociology* 3(1):123-55.

Abrutyn, Seth. 2015. "The Institutional Evolution of Religion: Innovation and Entrepreneurship in Ancient Israel." *Religion* DOI: 10.1080/0048721X.2015.1009864.

Anderson, Kevin, 2014. "Karl Marx and Intersectionality," *Logos: A Journal of Modern Society & Culture* 14(1).

Anderson, Kevin. 2014. "Ukraine: Democratic Aspirations and Interimperialist Rivalry," *New Politics* 15(1): 65-70. Spanish translation in *Viento Sur* (Spain, August 11); French translation in *Avanti* (Belgium, Sept. 26).

Anderson, Kevin. 2015. "The Paris Assassinations in Global Context," *The International Marxist-Humanist* (Jan. 12).

Ermakoff, Ivan. 2014. "Exceptional Cases : Epistemic contributions and Normative Expectations," *European Journal of Sociology* 55(2) : 223-243.

Goldstein, Warren S. 2014. "Reconstructing the Classics: Weber, Troeltsch and the Historical Materialists." *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* 26: 470-507.

Gunderson, Ryan. 2014. "Erich Fromm's Ecological Messianism: The First Biophilia Hypothesis as Humanistic Social Theory." *Humanity & Society* 38(2):182-204.

Gunderson, Ryan. 2014. "Habermas in Environmental Thought: Anthropocentric Kantian or Forefather of Ecological Democracy?" *Sociological Inquiry* 84(4):626-53.

Gunderson, Ryan. 2015. "A Defense of the 'Grand Hotel Abyss': The Frankfurt School's Nonideal Theory." *Acta Sociologica* 58(1):25-38.

Kalberg, Stephen. 2014. "Max Weber's Sociology of Civilizations: The Five Major Themes." *Max Weber Studies* 14 (2): 205-32.

Kearney, Matthew. 2015. "Are We Married Yet?" *The Progressive* 79(4):16-20.

Lamb-Books, Benjamin. 2015. "Abolitionists and the Eloquence of Abuse: Revisiting Status and Rhetoric in Social Movements." *Social Movement Studies,* DOI: 10.1080/14742837.2015.1037264

Luft, Aliza. Forthcoming. "Toward a Dynamic Theory of Action at the Micro-Level of Genocide: Killing, Desistance, and Saving in 1994 Rwanda." *Sociological Theory* 33(2).

Malczewski, Eric. Forthcoming. "On the Centrality of Action: Social Science, Historical Logics, and Max Weber's Legacy." *Journal of Historical Sociology*. (DOI) 10.1111/johs.12081

Malczewski, Eric. 2014. "This is Social Science: A 'Patterned Activity' Oriented to Attaining Objective Knowledge of Human Society." *Journal of Classical Sociology* 14(4): 341-62.

Menchik, Daniel A. 2014. "Simmel's Dynamic Social Medicine: New Questions For Studying Medical Institutions?" *Social Science & Medicine* 107: 100-104.

Mueller, Anna S., and Seth Abrutyn. 2015. "Suicidal Disclosures among Friends: Using Social Network Data to Understand Suicide Contagion." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 56(1): 131-48.

Reyes, Victoria. 2015. "Legacies of Place and Power: From Military Base to Freeport Zone." *City & Community* 14: 1–26.

Rodríguez-Muñiz, Michael. 2015. "Intellectual Inheritances: Cultural Diagnostics and the State of Poverty Knowledge." *American Journal of Cultural Sociology* 3: 89-122.

Stingl, Alexander I. 2014. "Digital Fairground: The Virtualization of Health, Illness, and the Experience of 'Becoming a Patient' as a Problem of Political Ontology and Social Justice." Pp. 53-92 in *Mediations of Social Life in the 21st Century,* edited by Harry F. Dahms. Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

Stingl, Alexander I. 2015. "Braining Your Life and Living Your Brain: The Cyborg Gaze and Brain-Images." Pp. 194-223 in *Neuroscience and Media: New Understandings and Representations*, edited by Michael Grabowski. New York: Routledge.

Stingl, Alexander I., and Sabrina M. Weiss. 2015. "Between Shell and Ghost: A Hauntology of Zombies in the Social Imaginary." Pp. 69-122 in *Vergemeinschaftung in Zeiten der Zombie-Apokalypse*, edited by Michael Dellwing and Martin Harbusch. Wiesbaden: Springer VS.

Turner, Stephen. 2014. "La Filosofía Política de la Ciencia: Una Perspectiva Histórica." Pp. 83-107 in *Aproximaciones a la Filosofía Politíca de la Ciencia*, edited by Ambrosio Velasquez Gomez and Carlos Lopez Beltran. Mexico, DF: UNAM.

Turner, Stephen. 2014. "Robert Merton and Dorothy Emmet: Deflated Structuralism and Functionalism." *Philosophy of the Social Sciences* 44: 817-836.

Turner, Stephen. 2014. "Teoria Social e Neurociência," *Tempo Social, Revista de Sociologia da USP* 26(2): 71-88.

Turner, Stephen and George Mazur. 2014. "Hägerström and the Project of De-Ideologization". Pp. 93-123 in *Axel Hägerström and Modern Social Thought* edited by Sven Eliaeson, Patricia Mindus and Stephen P Turner. Oxford: Bardwell.

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Aliza Luft's paper, "Toward a Dynamic Theory of Action at the Micro-Level of Genocide: Killing, Desistance, and Saving in 1994 Rwanda," was awarded the 2015 Candace Rogers Best Student Paper Award from the Eastern Sociological Society.

Michael Rodríguez-Muñiz will join the Department of Sociology at Northwestern University as an Assistant Professor in the fall.

Helmut Staubmann was honored with the George Sarton Medal for the History of Science by the University of Ghent, Belgium for his works on Talcott Parsons..