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Meet the Editors

The SASE Newsletter is created by a dynamic group of graduate students and early career scholars from both sides of the Atlantic, guided by SASE Executive Council member Jeanne Lazarus, and aided and abetted by the SASE staff.

We are pleased to introduce the Newsletter’s 2020 editors:

Laura Adler is a PhD candidate in sociology at Harvard University. Her dissertation examines how organizations set pay for new employees, identifying organizational practices and cultural ideas that reproduce and legitimate gender pay inequality. Past research has examined the preference for precarious work among aspiring artists, efforts to regulate the gig economy, and the cultural factors that shape whether people use their social networks to get a job. She has a Masters in City Planning from UC Berkeley and a Bachelors from Yale University.

Valerie Arnhold is a doctoral candidate at the Center for the Sociology of Organizations / Sciences Po, Paris. Her research interests combine organizational, political, and risk sociology in order to understand the changing role of nuclear accidents for the evolution of the nuclear industry and nuclear politics in France and, to a lesser extent, in Germany and the E.U. more broadly. Her dissertation is tentatively entitled “Beyond Apocolypse? Sociology of Nuclear Accidents and their Governance, 1986-2016.” Based on a multi-site ethnography accompanying the work of experts and regulators on the accident of Fukushima Dai-ichi in 2011, her dissertation shows how these public actors worked with sector-specific procedures and rules to progressively challenge the apocalyptic images of nuclear hazards, showing that they could be rendered “manageable” through the tools of nuclear safety. Her research therefore helps scholars to understand the ways modern states manage major hazards and crises: by transforming them into ordinary events. In addition, it uncovers several mechanisms regarding the role of the industry and sector-specific agencies in strategically shaping policy areas such as nuclear energy. Valerie holds an M.A. in European Studies from the University of Bath, Universidad Carlos III de Madrid, and Sciences Po as well as a B.A. in German-French studies.

Assaf S. Bondy is a sociologist studying the political economy of industrial relations systems in advanced economies, combining New Institutional and neo-corporatist theories with theories of intersectionality and agency. Currently he is a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Y&S Nazarian Center for Israel Studies at UCLA. His work so far has been dedicated to the study of changing conditions for collective action in labor markets, focusing on the context of the Israeli labor market. His latest publication, on patterns of coordination between company-level collective bargaining in new organizing sites, was published in 2019 (Hurt Publications). His current projects analyze collective-action strategies across different countries and sectors to reveal similarities and differentiation in changing forms of representation. Additionally, Assaf’s work investigates the relations between traditional and “new” actors in industrial relations, to understand sources of organizational and political change and their trajectories.
Florencia Labiano is a doctoral student at the Instituto de Altos Estudios Sociales in the Universidad Nacional de San Martín, Argentina. Her research interests intersect economic sociology and urban studies in order to address the social production of the "formal" rental housing market in Buenos Aires City. She makes extensive use of interviews and participant observations to study the moral-economic tension among the requirements and practices developed by landlords and real estate agents to select tenants. She also works with different sources on the transformations of symbolic value of homeownership status to make intelligible the supply, offer, and intermediaries’ dynamics within the rental housing market. She discusses the segmentation approach between the "formal" and "informal" and proposes to address this distinction as a product of the adequacy between landlords, tenants, housing, and the dwelling location in the city. More broadly, she seeks to think the coproduction of the city and the market. Florencia hold a B.A. in Sociology from the Universidad Nacional de La Plata, where she studied employers’ decisions in the construction industry labor market.

Erik Peinert is a sixth-year PhD candidate in political science at Brown University. His research interests broadly investigate the political economy of advanced industrial states and the politics of economic policymaking, specifically in the domain of competition and market power. His research draws from different disciplines, such as sociology, psychology, and economics, and his broader interests include business-state relations, institutional change, antitrust, intellectual property rights, and the politics of economic ideas. His dissertation seeks to understand why many industrialized countries have alternated in the long run between national policy regimes in favor of enforcing price competition on one hand, and supporting market power and domestic monopolies on the other. He has completed extensive archival field research in the United States and France, to track the changes in economic beliefs among political and policy leaders over time in both countries. Originally from Massachusetts in the U.S., he holds a B.A. from the University of California at Berkeley and an M.A. from Brown University.

Jeanne Lazarus is a tenured CNRS research fellow at the CSO in Sciences-po (Paris). Her research has focused on relationships between bankers and customers in French retail banks. She published L’Epreuve de l’argent in 2012, and edited several special issues on banking, credit and money management. The latest was co-edited with Mariana Luzzi «L’argent domestique: des pratiques aux institutions». Jeanne has also conducted research on the sociology of money and the consumption and monetary practices of the impoverished. She is currently studying the ways in which public policy structures household finances and conceives the protection of populations deemed to be at risk of financial insecurity, due to precarious employment and the withdrawal of social welfare provisions.
Interview with SASE President Nitsan Chorev

Nitsan Chorev, President of SASE for the 2019-2020 year, is the Harmon Family Professor of Sociology and International and Public Affairs at Brown University. Her research focuses predominantly on global political economy, development, and transnational sociology. Her most recent book, *Give and Take* (Princeton University Press, 2019), looks at the impact of foreign aid on industrial development, focusing on the pharmaceutical manufacturing industry in East Africa. In this interview, editor Erik Peinert discusses her intellectual background and most recent research, her plans for diversity and inclusion initiatives and greater North-South connections within SASE, and the unique role of SASE in conversations about development, in relation to this summer’s conference in Amsterdam.

Can you tell us about yourself and your intellectual background?

**Nitsan Chorev:** I’m a sociologist by training, but I was always interested in questions that are mostly discussed by political scientists. Development is one of my central interests. I have a joint appointment at Brown University, with the sociology department and the Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs. I was the Director of an undergraduate program in development, and I’m currently the Director of our Graduate Program in Development. In addition to development, some of my other sub-disciplinary interests include global political economy (in sociology it’s sometimes seen as part of global and transnational sociology), comparative historical sociology, and political sociology.

Development was not something I was thinking much about when I started, but retrospectively, it was in the background all along. My first book—based on my dissertation—was on trade policy in the U.S. It was really about the political struggles leading to the liberalization of trade and, by extension, to the current global economic order. I looked at political struggles in the U.S. but also at international trade negotiations. When I was analyzing international negotiations, I think I just assumed that the U.S. was getting more or less what it wanted, but already then I saw that even countries with less political or economic resources had ways of manipulating the rules, including rules that they haven’t chosen themselves. One example I was particularly fascinated by at the time was the use of the judicial rules at
the World Trade Organization to challenge American and European trade practices.

My second large project—a book on the World Health Organization—put the relations between the global North and the global South much more at the center of my analysis. I was particularly interested at the time in how North-South relations are mediated by international bureaucracies that, of course, have their own interests to pursue. (In general, I’m a historical institutionalist—something that comes out very strongly in both books, as both show that the institutional context, and those who make the rules, are indispensable to the eventual outcome.)

My third book, which came out in early December, again looks at the relations between North and South. But if the first book was about explicit conflicts (trade) and the second book was about implicit conflicts (because who doesn’t claim to want to improve global health?), this book is about a site that is supposed to be based on and lead to constructive relations: foreign aid. In this book, then, I’m not interested so much in what happens when countries in the global North are explicitly defending their interests but in what happens when countries in the global North are allegedly trying to help out. So, in this book I’m looking at international assistance—specifically, aid in support of local pharmaceutical production in East Africa—to see what happens.

That was actually my next question. Your new book, Give and Take, looks at the role of foreign aid in the creation and development of local markets, technology diffusion, and industrialization in East Africa. Could you go into a bit more detail about this project?

Chorev: Scholars love to hate foreign aid and I can see why. Many economists emphasize the very many failures and inefficiencies of aid. Anthropologists identify the ways by which, from its inception, foreign aid aims to serve the interests of donors rather than the recipients. Of course, these claims are often accurate. But I came to this question from a sociological perspective, which made me look at foreign aid quite differently. My perspective was informed by the literature on the developmental state in sociology and political science. At a time when many doubted the ability of the state to create economic growth and, more generally, improve people’s quality of life, the literature on the developmental state showed that there are at least some states that get it right, and identified what these states do. I wanted to do the same with foreign aid. Are there certain types of foreign aid that “get it right”?

It turns out that effective policies utilized by foreign aid are not necessarily different than effective policies utilized by a developmental state. (This is why in the book I call it “developmental foreign aid.”) Scholars of the developmental state emphasized the importance of reserved markets, conditioned subsidies, and learning. Similarly, I found that foreign aid was quite effective when it came with the promise of markets, the conditioning of access to these markets on certain performance standards, and technology transfer.

But, of course, foreign aid is not the state and aid cannot replace effective state policies. So, the book also looks carefully at the interplay between foreign aid and three domestic factors: state policies, the presence of local entrepreneurs with technical and managerial capabilities, and foreign direct investment. (I don’t take the presence or absence of local conditions for granted. The book looks at colonial legacies and the years following independence to explain the
presence and absence of these conditions in all three countries.

Finally, and in line with my previous projects, I find that recipient countries are hardly passive recipients of aid that is imposed on them. My analysis of the roots of the interest in local pharmaceutical production in the 1980s and then again in the 2000s reveals that in both times this was an outcome not of imposition but of negotiations between North and South.

Now I want to turn to SASE itself. Do you have any particular projects or plans for your time as President of SASE?

Chorev: As the current President of SASE, there are two issues that I would like to focus on and that happen to be quite compatible with each other. One is to make issues that are relevant to the global South—including “development”—more central. This is one motivation for this year’s conference theme, Development Today: Accumulation, Surveillance, Redistribution. The other is to make SASE more diverse and inclusive.

SASE is a vibrant, open, and welcoming association. If you look at the networks that make SASE what it is, you will see an impressively broad set of issues. Networks focus on industrial relations, welfare, governance, finance, markets, digital economies, and professions; networks also focus on civil society, gender, and alternatives to capitalism, as well as on globalization and socio-economic development, knowledge/technology, Asian capitalism, and Islamic economies. So clearly, while many of our members are fruitfully studying the global North, many others also study the global South. Similarly, if you look at the SASE conference themes in the last ten years or so, all of them (I think without exception) have a global orientation. When considering different themes for the upcoming conference in Amsterdam, I wanted to take this global orientation one step further and highlight scholarship that deals specifically with the experience of development. Now, I define “development” broadly, so I want our conversation to go beyond the narrower issue of economic well-being and be about a wide array of capabilities and rights. And I want the conversation to focus not only on the global South, but the global North as well. And, to be clear, talking about development or the global South doesn’t assume, of course, an analytical isolation of the global South from the global North or from global-historical transformations more generally.

So, one motivation for this year’s conference theme was simply to celebrate the scholarship on development among SASE members. Another motivation was that the uniqueness of SASE—specifically, its members’ international and interdisciplinary orientation to socio-economics and related issues—makes it a place where, I believe, novel ways of thinking about development can emerge. Global transformations change the experience of development as we study it, and SASE members are uniquely positioned to address the new questions that emerge as a result. The theme for the conference in Amsterdam highlights three issues that I believe require our attention in particular, in regard to accumulation, surveillance, and redistribution. We are familiar with all three. “Accumulation” stands for the extremely unsettled global order that we are experiencing at the moment, in which competitive practices of global and regional powers, both political and economic, necessarily affects the global South. “Surveillance” stands for the “smart” global order that is currently being created. Social scientists should be part of the conversation regarding the impact smart technologies are likely to have, including on inequities. “Redistribution,” in turn, stands for the fact
that the current global order is unapologetically unequal but there are also attempts being made to reverse that trend. Of course, the three issues are intimately connected, and I hope that the SASE sessions and panels that follow the logic of the theme will analyze those interactions. By pursuing these themes, I hope to move the scholarly conversation about development and the global South forward. Of course, there are many other equally important issues that will be discussed in Amsterdam.

As for the second issue, of diversity and inclusion: Last year, I was the co-chair of an ad-hoc SASE Working Group on Diversity. (The other co-chair was Sigrid Quack, who was just elected president for 2020-2021; Ginny Doellgast was the third member). This has been a step forward in SASE’s commitment to make our association more welcoming both for under-represented groups in the global North and for scholars from the global South. SASE is an international and interdisciplinary association—and it is these features that makes it so attractive to so many of us—but we have to make sure that by international we don’t mean only the U.S. and Europe, and we have to make sure that our community involves scholars from different backgrounds, institutional affiliations, and locations. We’ve already made some effort in that direction. SASE’s Women and Gender Forum, which was established in 2017, now hosts one of the Featured Speakers at the annual conference and is involved in many other important initiatives. All SASE programs and announcements include commitment to diverse participation. The Executive Council last year passed a number of related resolutions. In that context, of course I hope that a conference with a theme related to development would create interest among scholars from the global South, and would also encourage the participation of scholars who work on issues related to diversity and inclusion.

To someone who knows nothing about SASE, what is unique that can be gained by attending the SASE conference or getting involved in SASE that other academic associations and conferences don’t provide?

Chorev: I’ve mentioned some of the unique features of SASE already, but there are many others. Intellectually, we are quite unique in focusing on issues that relate to “socio-economics” (very broadly defined) with an entirely open-ended approach to the disciplines, methods, orientations, and questions that stem from one’s inquiry. But, really, what makes SASE unique in addition to intellectual focus is its organizational features. SASE is not very small any longer, but with around 1,000 members it is much smaller than the main (disciplinary) associations that most of us belong to, and it is impressively decentralized and open, which provides members a sense of intimate experience (through the research networks, that are responsible for the selection of papers for the conference) as well as space for intellectual and organizational innovation.

As I oversee the conference in Amsterdam, I get to observe the very many initiatives that make the conference what it is—including, for example, the Early Career Workshop and the Social Sciences for the Real World, to name only two. Incredibly, these initiatives do not come from “the top,” but rather they are the making of enthusiastic individuals who rely on SASE as a welcoming platform. Of course, the experience of openness is not shared by everyone equally—this is one of the issues that the Women and Gender Group, this year’s Membership and Diversity Committee, and the nominations committee, among others, attempt to address—but SASE’s amazing staff (Martha, Pat, and Jacob) are enthusiastically receptive to all ideas, as long as they hear about them. Recently, to improve our receptiveness to
members, the President before me, Akos Rona-Tas, initiated a members’ survey, and we’re now hard at work to address some of the ideas and concerns expressed in that survey.

I will give you one last, but particularly important, example of a members-driven initiative. Last year, members of SASE started a discussion regarding the environment and how to make sure that SASE is more environmentally-friendly. In response to members’ suggestions, the Executive Council established a Greening Working Group, which will consider various ways by which SASE can be more environmentally-responsible.

You’ve already touched on this a bit, but with the theme for this summer’s annual conference in Amsterdam being “Development Today: Accumulation, Surveillance, Redistribution,” can you speak a bit about why these issues are so important at this moment in time? Likewise, could you say a bit more about what SASE has to contribute to these conversations?

Chorev: In addition to what I’ve already mentioned, you raise the question: Of course, development is important to study, but why by SASE members in particular? I mentioned inter-disciplinarity before, as one of the special characteristics of SASE, but we need to concern ourselves not only with inter- but also intra-disciplinary divides. In most of the social sciences, the questions, theoretical approaches, and even methodologies that are used to study the global South are different than the ones used to study the global North. That makes no sense to me. The conversation instead needs to cross geographical boundaries in a way that would enrich all inquiries. Those who study cities in the global South, for example, would benefit from talking with urban scholars studying cities in the global North, just the way that those who study innovation in industrialized countries can learn from scholars who study innovation in industrializing settings. Just as an example, at the moment I’m studying the pharmacy profession in Kenya and Tanzania and it’s very clear to me that the sociology of professions could greatly benefit from looking at professions in the global South. And SASE is one great venue for such intra- and inter-disciplinary, cross-geographical conversations. More broadly, SASE offers its members intellectual (and social) bridges: across geographies, disciplines, methods, and research agendas. I really do believe that it is one of the most attractive features of SASE. It allows for small communities without intellectual isolation from broader conversations.

Interview conducted by Erik Peinert
For over five hundred years, Spain, Portugal, and the countries of Latin America have shared an intense history, politics, and culture. The Ibero-American region is the outcome of this connection, and not exempt from conflicts. With such heterogeneous national realities, the topics of international integration and varying development paths have been fruitful for scholars of socio-economics in the region, who critically address the validity and transformations of these North-South contrasts. The SASE Ibero-American regional meetings have highlighted these topics since 2013. By sponsoring this kind of periodic regional meeting, SASE expands the space of circulation for academic production in socio-economics. We thank Santos Ruesga, Julimar da Silva, and SASE Past President Akos Rona-Tas for their comments on the conference, on the origins of SASE-RISE, and on their expectations for the future.

The 4th SASE-RISE

The 4th SASE-RISE was held in the city of Heredia, near San José, the capital of Costa Rica, at the National University of Costa Rica, from 20-22 November 2019. More than 200 researchers from Latin America, Spain, the U.S., Japan, and South Korea met to discuss their research in more than twelve thematic roundtables, organized in nine parallel working sessions, as well as keynote lectures, panel discussions, and more. To access the general program, click [here](#).

This year’s theme was "Productive Transformation, Territorial Asymmetries and Social Exclusion in Ibero-America." Problems discussed included the impacts of contemporary capitalist exploitation on Latin American societies in general and the production of territorial inequalities in particular. According to Professor Rona-Tas, “While many topics overlapped with the themes discussed at the 2019 SASE meeting in New York, the conference in Costa Rica
reflected a distinctly different set of concerns.” One of the central issues was the exclusion/inclusion of peripheral workers as a consequence of the fluidity and flexibility of economies and the concentration in large agglomerations. According to Professor Da Silva, “The roundtables dealt with this general theme in various aspects: political, institutional, fiscal, monetary and financial, productive, poverty, immigration, and humanitarian.”

Although they covered diverse topics, the keynote lectures recalled the tension between global logics of economic governance and unequal local contexts. For instance, Doctor Ennio R. Céspedes and Doctor Fernando G. Laxe described the importance of infrastructure for territorial cohesion and development and the new policy challenges presented by the data economy; Doctor Enrique Dussel Peters discussed the importance of Chinese-Latin American relations and their evolution; Professor Rona-Tas addressed the upheavals in democratic stability and human rights produced by predictive technologies; and Professor Santos Ruesga described the informal economy in Latin America and its effects on social exclusion and development.

**Network M and the beginnings of SASE-RISE**

SASE-RISE is strongly intertwined with Network M, which gathers the members of SASE who publish in Spanish. Currently, Network M brings together more than 50 members hailing from or interested in Latin countries. It is organized by Professors Santos Ruesga and Julimar da Silva Bichara, both from the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid.

On the occasion of the annual SASE meeting in Madrid 2011, Professors Ruesga and da Silva expressed their concern about the low participation of Ibero-Americans in previous years. Committed to promoting that year’s event among their colleagues, they established Network M and start planning the first SASE-RISE. In 2013, Professor Ruesga, then a member of the SASE Executive Council, raised the possibility of holding a regional meeting biannually to increase the inclusion of scholars in socio-economics from Spanish and Portuguese speaking countries: "We thought that it would be interesting for SASE to make an additional effort in favor of a periodic meeting somewhere in the Ibero-American geography that would bring together those scientists, located in the field of socio-economics, and others who for various reasons could not attend the annual meetings.”

The aims of these reunions were threefold: to spread socio-economics as an analytical approach and research subject in the Spanish and Portuguese-speaking academic spheres; to develop a network of researchers that would function as an infrastructure for these events and subsequent exchange; and, finally, to promote the quality of scientific production and publication in these countries.

Prior to this fourth edition in Costa Rica, meetings were held at the Universidad Autónoma de México (Mexico City, Mexico, 2013), at the Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul (Porto Alegre, Brazil, 2015), and at the Universidad Tecnológica Bolívar (Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, 2017). More about these events is available [here](#).
Further steps

What are the outcomes of these years of SASE-RISE? Can the initiative be taken as model for other regions?

According to Professor Ruesga: "At this stage of the project, the Ibero-American meeting has consolidated itself as a meeting of social scientists of Spanish and Portuguese language, which hosts, on average, more than two and a half hundred academics, with numbers rising… After the first meeting, in order to start the preparatory work for following meetings, preliminary workshops were held. In addition to laying the logistical and organizational foundations for the regional meetings, these workshops gave rise to a small group of scholars from the area of socio-economics, who discussed the topics as thematic axes of each meeting, established common research projects, and published together".

For Professor Rona-Tas: “The personal interactions at these conferences are invaluable. I met many new colleagues and learned a lot both about their research and the larger context in which they practice their profession. I got a deeper understanding of Costa Rica, its economy, politics, and higher education. Being there, I also had the opportunity to discuss ideas informally, clarifying over coffee points I made in my lecture and reacting to my colleagues’ research. Had I participated remotely, none of this would have occurred.”

But there are some risks that arise from insularity, not only at an idiomatic level. As Professor Rona-Tas explained, while RISE does not drain participants from the Annual Meetings and could actually help to recruit for the SASE annual conference, it is important to be attuned to potential costs: “Intellectual fragmentation is a more difficult problem because there is a fine line between allowing intellectual diversity rooted in geographic differences on the one hand, and the balkanization of socio-economics on the other.” Nonetheless, SASE-RISE might provide a template for other regional meetings, for instance in Asia. But Rona-Tas recognizes that Latin America presents some distinctive features, including a common linguistic background, that are not available everywhere. Moreover, SASE-RISE relies on the entrepreneurial skills and determination of the individuals who organize it.

One option open to the SASE Executive Council is to hold a fifth edition of SASE-RISE in 2021, at the oldest university in the Americas, the Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos in Lima, Peru.

You can find photos from the 2019 SASE-RISE conference here.

Article by Florencia Labiano
SASE News

By-Laws Ratification and Special Election Results

SASE is pleased to announce that its new by-laws (which may be consulted here) were ratified on 30 September 2019. Following the changes enacted by these new by-laws, a special election was held for the position of President-Elect, to which the SASE membership elected Sigrid Quack. We are delighted by Professor Quack’s election, as well as the innovation in SASE’s organizational structure, which will give the President two years to prepare the Annual Meeting and an entire year to learn the ropes of the Presidency.

The next vote for President-Elect will take place in the spring of 2020, at the same time as the yearly Executive Council election.

Socio-Economics in a Changing World

Socio-economics is not a traditional field but rather a shared orientation: a concern for questions about the social roots and ramifications of the economy, a tendency to look for answers by transcending methodological and disciplinary boundaries, and a tradition of connecting ideas from different fields and geographic locations to generate new insights. This orientation is
particularly important in 2020, at the start of a new decade that promises to accelerate uncertainty and unpredictability at the national and global scale.

Editor-in-Chief Laura Adler spoke with Professors Sophie Dubuisson-Quellier (Sciences Po and Centre de sociologie des organisations, France), Alice Evans (King’s College London, U.K.), Mariana Luzzi (Universidad Nacional de General Sarmiento, Argentina), Margaret Peters (University of California, Los Angeles, U.S.), and Wei Zhao (École Supérieure des Sciences Commerciales d'Angers, France). Each scholar raised crucial issues and emphasized novel directions for future research, using a variety of formats and styles to convey their insights. Below, we synthesize their responses to highlight key themes and contributions.

To begin with a focus on substantive topics, which issues merit more attention within socio-economics than they currently receive?

- **Climate crisis**: At the global scale, Evans emphasized the pressing issues of climate breakdown and variation in social and political responses to the environmental crisis. In particular, she stressed the need for more research on the causes of progress, including studies of places that have made significant improvements or have implemented effective regulation, providing lessons for other states and social movements.

- **Social movements and the economy**: Dubuisson-Quellier pointed to the need to extend the exploration of a fundamental issue: the connection between social movements and the capitalist system. Citing room to build on the insights of Viviana Zelizer, Luc Boltanski, and Eve Chiapello, she argued that we should focus on advancing the understanding of how social movements force economic institutions, organizations, and markets to change.

- **Gender, domestic labor, and childrearing**: At the personal scale, Peters explained that the value created in the process of childrearing still receives little attention in socio-economics. Alongside other types of less-visible work, like domestic and emotional labor, childrearing is a critical source of value in society, with connections to other facets of the economy that deserve greater scrutiny.

- **A more ambitious socio-economics**: For Zhao, the primary shortcoming of socio-economics has been its willingness to accept a marginal position in explaining the same phenomena as economists. Socio-economics can realize its potential by picking up the project started by Weber and continued by Parsons: a comprehensive understanding of how social order emerges in modern capitalist society, encompassing phenomena at the micro scale, such as the relationships among internal departments of a corporation, and at the macro scale, acting as a “science of history” to describe the coevolution of economic organization with social meanings, values, norms, and laws.
How might scholars collaborate across disciplinary and international boundaries to address these new concerns?

- **Crossing disciplinary boundaries:** In recent years, socio-economics has grown into a substantial field around the world, but Luzzi points out that there remains a need to increase the engagement between scholars of socio-economics and other fields. Dubuisson-Quellier noted two areas where socio-economics can learn from other disciplines. From management studies, we have the opportunity to develop the understanding of ethics, corporate social responsibility, and how organizations work internally, including how decisions are made, how corporate power develops, and how competition affects organizational behavior. By engaging with cultural theory, she noted, we can advance the understanding of consumption and consumer behavior, and how these shape the economy.

- **Crossing national boundaries:** Because the U.S. is a work-centered and individualistic culture, Peters observed, in the U.S. socio-economics tends to imply issues related income and usually focuses on the individual level, rather than engaging questions of group or collective status. U.S. scholars can develop a stronger understanding of socio-economic status by exploring with cultural variation in the meaning of both socio-economics and the notion of status. These benefits are coming to the fore in a book project, for which Peters is collaborating with other researchers to understand how conceptions of dignity vary across social contexts, including how social relations like connections with family and community endow us with dignity.

- **Focus on phenomena, not schools of thought:** Innovative theory often arises when scholars adopt a “bottom-up and down-to-earth” approach, starting from the empirical phenomenon without imposing particular concepts or theories. This is the strength of contemporary French socio-economics, according to Zhao: where American and Chinese scholars often follow particular theoretical innovations, French and other European researchers develop novel insights by drawing from multiple disciplines to explain a well-observed issue.

- **Changing the professional incentives:** The value of cross-disciplinary and cross-national research is immense, Evan explains, but there are obstacles facing scholars who try to conduct this type of research. While interdisciplinary scholarship has fantastic intellectual pay-offs, is not always individually rational: crossing disciplines may lead to novel insights that are challenging to introduce into traditional disciplinary conversations and disciplinary journals, conferences, and committees may overlook or devalue interdisciplinary research. For the benefit of socio-economics, we should build communities of scholarship where interdisciplinary research—and the work required to engage across disciplinary borders—is valued.
Which methodological and theoretical developments deserve greater attention in the field?

- **Wider embrace of disciplinary methods**: As a field that encompasses multiple disciplines, socio-economics provides its scholars the unique opportunity to embrace methods from other disciplines. From the field of development, Evans explained, other scholars can learn to leverage comparative analysis, which improves both general theorizing and sharpens insights into specific cases. From political science, Peters notes, scholars can reap the benefits of progress in experimental methods.

- **A new theory of the state**: For Dubuisson-Quellier, there is a pressing need to enrich the theory of the state, which is too often limited to a Weberian perspective that disproportionately focuses on the U.S. model of a “weak state” that uses only coercive regulation. New theories are needed to study contemporary global problems. She highlights that the work of historians points to a more diverse set of ways in which economic organizations are porous to the state and its priorities.

- **Social norms and norm perception**: To understand global issues like climate change—including successful and failed attempts to address it—Evans notes that we need to advance the study of social norms and, specifically, the issue of norm perceptions: how our beliefs about what others expect or value shapes our individual and collective behavior. Norm perception can enable or constrain collective action. In Evans’s words: “If activists never see radical reform, they may underestimate resistance, lower their ambitions, and despondently comply with the status quo. Yet if activists observe peer mobilization, securing concessions, they may gain collective efficacy, and mobilize relentlessly.” If socio-economics hopes to chart a path toward addressing global crises, understanding how individuals, groups, and social movements learn from one another is essential.

- **A global perspective**: As Zhao put it: “A viable economic sociology should be applicable to every economy in the world.” As a field, he argues, our goal should be to develop theory that can shed light on many different economic arrangements, so that theory developed in Europe can help explain transformations in the Chinese economy, while Chinese theorizing can help to illuminate developments in the Americas. This can have benefits within and beyond socio-economics: “In an economically globalized world, theory is the best carrier of international cooperation of social sciences.”

- **More data**: Any efforts to leverage collective resources and expand the amount, enhance the quality, and broaden access to data will be a boon to all researchers, but especially those who are interested in issues that cross disciplinary boundaries. Peters notes the importance of current efforts in the areas of inequality and migration to access more data and merge datasets to enrich analysis.
Today’s students will be the leading scholars of the next generation. Their interests both reflect the current world and foreshadow the scholarship to come. We asked which topics are particularly interesting to students today.

- **Financialization and digitalization**: Dubuisson-Quellier explained that students are increasingly interested in the changing infrastructure of the economy, including the rise of financialization, the response to the 2008 financial crisis, and the growing dominance of digital companies, digital socializing, and digital currencies. Luzzi noted that financialization has also drawn attention in Latin America, particularly in the context of the financialization of household economies and new forms of welfare.

- **Migration, inequality, environment**: Peters explained that the three interconnected issues of migration, inequality, and the environment reflect students’ engagement with both local contexts—for instance, in Southern California, where the U.S.-Mexico border is proximate and wildfires are increasingly ferocious—but also the global context, as students emphasize the salience of the Syrian refugee crisis and the broad social trend towards growing inequality.

- **Money and monies**: In Argentina, Luzzi explains, students are increasingly interested in money, its uses, and its forms, including the issue of monetary plurality. As in California, these interests have arisen in response to recent developments in the local area: in addition to international topics like cryptocurrency, students in Argentina are responding to the multiplicity of monies including the use of the U.S. dollar, the invention of alternative currencies in Argentinian states, and the return of local barter networks.

*Interviews conducted and edited by Laura Adler*
Socio-Economics in a Changing World: Interview with Mariana Heredia

Professor Heredia is a Professor of Sociology at the University of Buenos Aires. She received her PhD in Sociology from the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (EHESS-Paris). In addition to teaching at the University of Buenos Aires, Professor Heredia is a Researcher of the Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas (CONICET) and teaches at the Instituto de Altos Estudios Sociales (IDAES/UNSAM), where she currently heads the Masters in Economic Sociology.

We asked Professor Heredia to reflect on the how Argentina has developed a distinctive approach to socio-economics, the historical roots of regional trends, and what she expects Latin American scholars will contribute to socio-economics in the coming years.

**What are the most prominent issues in socio-economics in Argentina today?**

**Mariana Heredia:** Social science is a constant dialogue between new phenomena and theoretical knowledge. Argentina’s persistent instability, radical economic change, and social creativity have made it into an extraordinary social laboratory for socio-economics. For instance, it is one of the few countries that has failed to generate a stable currency and it has suffered from high inflation or hyperinflation for the past 50 years. This means that it experimented with all kinds of monetary institutions, from hard pegs to currency controls. It has experienced large and periodic devaluations. Within the current economic memory of its citizens, deposits have been confiscated and there have been bank runs, bank freezes, and debt defaults. The country has toyed with all types of institutional arrangements, from privatization of social security to extreme import controls, with approaches ranging from laissez-faire to heavy-handed interventionism. It has seen experiments in barter clubs, multiple exchange rate regimes, production subsidies, and digital banks.

These experiences foreground pressing issues in socio-economics, which can be approached using a similarly rich range of theories. Argentina has its share of U.S.-trained economists with PhDs from top universities and officials who have worked in IFIs, but it has also developed its own brand of “heterodox economists” with alternative explanations and theories of inflation, growth, and state deficits, and with different prescriptions for business-state relations and specific economic sectors. To this mix we can also add a rich
interdisciplinary tradition of work across anthropology, history, and sociology on all areas of economic sociology.

What has made the study of socio-economics in Argentina distinctive?

Heredia: The advantage of a peripheral position is that it offers scholars more room for eclecticism. Social science students in Argentina are familiar with European classics: you cannot become a sociologist without reading Marx, Weber, and Durkheim. But beyond this classic foundation, the rest of the curriculum is very open and diverse. You can find Raymond Boudon, Pierre Bourdieu, and Bruno Latour referenced in an Argentinian paper. This would be a sacrilege in a Parisian monograph. Scholars can place themselves at the intersection of different fields (e.g., Sociology of Development, Sociology of Markets, and Studies of Science and Technology)—fields that are often separate, with little interaction in the U.S.

In Argentina, French sociology also has an important influence. There are more scholars with PhDs from French universities in our field than from British or American ones, and the translation of French authors is much more frequent than that of Americans. This link explains why general theories of action are more common in local work than middle range theories. Rational choice perspectives are also less common in sociological analyses than in the Anglo-Saxon field.

The choice of substantive area of research also takes a different path than in the U.S. and Europe. Even though there are similar trends, including a new focus on issues such as gender and the environment, the main driver for scholars in Argentina is still the public problems: inflation, deficits, elites, the popular economy, and rising poverty. There are, of course, creative new research topics and areas. Even though Argentina is very receptive to new theoretical trends from abroad—from Piketty to financialization—there is less emphasis locally on theory building and theoretical dialogue.

How would you describe the approach to interdisciplinary research?

Heredia: The particularities of the Latin American academic sphere are more salient to scholars in Argentina than issues of interdisciplinary lines. The borders between academia, think tanks, policy research centers, and government officials are often blurred, with constant movement between them. The siren song of government action often seduces scholars and shifts their research agendas and publishing objectives. Both economic and symbolic rewards can be substantially higher in these other areas.

Are there specific obstacles confronting the advancement of socio-economics in Argentina today?

Heredia: There is often a missing link between global categories and interpretations, on the one hand, and descriptive research and findings, on the other. Instead of analyzing how global problems are presented or redefined in the Argentinian case, there is a simplified juxtaposition of imported theory and local data. This juxtaposition takes two forms. One is selective data-collection to support foreign theories. Certain hypotheses regarding the existence of fields or the search for distinction in upper classes (proposed by Bourdieu) or the possibilities of high tax reforms (proposed by Piketty) have been imported and reproduced with little criticism and attention to local realities. The second is to present local findings as simple deviations from conventional knowledge. The idea of “low quality” democracies, “underdeveloped” fields, or
“weak” institutions prevents many researchers from discovering the specificities of their objects. These simplified analyses stop at what something is not, instead of looking to advance more affirmative characterizations of local objects.

In my view, overcoming this simplified juxtaposition is one of the most pressing challenges of Latin American socioeconomics and social sciences in general. Yes, there are a lot of cases of “weak” or “failed” institutions, but why stop there? The interesting question is what we can learn about banking systems from a system that almost collapsed yet kept going. How is confidence rebuilt? Or how can we understand sustained market exchanges in a context of persistent price-instability? Which kind of markets develop in different sectors in unstable and hierarchical capitalism? Beyond the description of the formal and informal sector, what are the gateways between them? What does it mean to be rich in a middle-income country with a volatile economy and politics?

**How has the study of socio-economics changed in Argentina in the last twenty years?**

**Heredia:** There has been a slow but constant professionalization of academic disciplines since Argentina’s return to democracy in 1983. A history of the Argentine academic field would take too long for this short piece. Suffice it to say that there have been more resources and more scholarships and positions in all fields. In this period, charismatic professors were gradually replaced by more professionalized PhD-scholars in several academic circles. Essays were progressively replaced by papers or books as the main products of social science research. Undergraduates have different career models to follow. Institutions are more open, and success doesn’t depend as much on personal networks. Finally, there is a new generation of scholars that earns their living as researchers and professors with a relative freedom of speech and production together with some economic stability.

In this academic transformation, socioeconomics became more empirically based and shifted from being the alter-ego of mainstream economics (and even a synonym of heterodoxy or Marxism) to a more complex and autonomous subfield with its own agenda and with enriching exchanges between economists, sociologists, anthropologists, and political scientists. Nevertheless, a deep segmentation persists.

**Where do you see opportunities to enrich the study of socio-economics through more cross-regional discussion and collaboration?**

The SASE Annual Meeting has become the most enriching opportunity for cross-regional discussion and collaboration. There are also small networks of exchange, but they do not cover such a range of topics and perspectives. Unfortunately, regional spaces for exchange (e.g., CEPAL, CLACSO, ALAS) have not achieved the academic demands and recognition of consolidated central forums. Latin Americans continue to depend on U.S. or European institutions to meet and exchange ideas about their region. For several years, I have participated in a blog (https://estudiosdelaeconomia.com/) that encourages such exchange and there is a group of Latinx-American scholars interested in socio-economics working in connection with each other. Our Masters in Economic Sociology encourages the visit of foreign scholars, but nothing can replace the existence of exciting forums and common projects, as there were once in Río or Santiago in the 1960s.

*Interview conducted by Laura Adler*
In November 2019, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) released a report analyzing the structures, functions, and effects of collective bargaining and other mechanisms of workers’ voice throughout its member states. The new report, “Negotiating Our Way Up: Collective Bargaining in a Changing World of Work,” provides an insightful political-economic analysis of industrial relations, addressing both challenges for and trajectories of collective interest representation. Through rigorous comparative analysis, the report develops important insights into the contributions of collective bargaining and, in particular, of wage coordination mechanisms for linking national economic performance (e.g., growth, employment, and productivity) with socio-economic inequality.

On the occasion of this report, our editor Assaf Bondy interviewed one of the leading researchers behind the effort, Dr. Andrea Garnero. Dr. Garnero joined the OECD in 2014, after serving as assistant for economic affairs to the Italian Prime Minister and as an economist to the European Commission. He is a labor market economist at the Directorate for Employment, Labor, and Social Affairs of the OECD. In his work, Dr. Garnero focuses on the minimum wage and collective bargaining in OECD countries. He has been a member of the French minimum wage expert commission since 2017.

In what follows, we provide an overview of the recent report followed by the interview with Dr. Garnero. In addition to explaining the position of the OECD in political-economic policymaking, this piece aims to underline the recent change in the organization’s orientation toward collective interest representation as a central vehicle in socio-economic development.
Summary of the report

The report synthesizes information on the OECD community, reaffirming and refining previous findings about the effects of collective bargaining on socio-economic inequality and inclusion. It convincingly argues that these mechanisms are increasingly important in the face of emerging challenges, from technological change to an aging population, insofar as they provide all stakeholders with opportunities to contribute input, yielding more socially inclusive responses.

In the report, the OECD presents an aggregate analysis of previous research of industrial relations, scrutinizing the intertwining effects of known structural variables on economic performance. But it also goes further to support workers, offering a novel perspective on possible links between different mechanisms of workers’ voice and the quality of work, broadly defined, including health and safety, training, and anti-discrimination policies. The focus on non-monetary aspects of job quality is, in itself, an important development in this analysis, stressing facets of work and their socio-political design that had largely been neglected thus far.
Together with other recent OECD reports on industrial relations, this report attempts to go beyond traditional emphasis on flexibilization and “marketization,” underlining the importance of coordinating structures and inclusive policies. On the one hand, there remains a major (and controversial) focus on flexibility as a central component in economic growth; but on the other hand, significant emphasis is given to free and autonomous collective bargaining as a crucial vehicle for inclusive development.

While the report is important for this shift in emphasis and the use of new measures, it almost completely neglects the environmental crisis. In failing to address climate change—including its origins, risks, and possible solutions through collective bargaining—the OECD misses a crucial opportunity. Collective bargaining actors are potentially radical change agents in modern society, with the chance to propose a liberating vision for human life. The OECD can take advantage of this opportunity by linking these two issues in future reports.

Scholars of collective representation, industrial relations, and labor regulation will find the report of great interest. In addition to serving as a source of quantitative information, it also proposes new directions for qualitative work, to further expand knowledge on diverse trajectories of collective interest representation in a changing world of work. By highlighting the report, we hope to encourage more innovative research on the issues it identifies, including additional empirical tests of its claims and further theorization of its findings. Finally, we hope that the report will inspire critical work and progressive policies, to further improve the quality of work and life during these challenging times.
In recent reports, the OECD promotes new perspectives on labor market regulation and particularly on industrial relations. Can you describe these new perspectives?

Andrea Garnero: One can find the most up-to-date and complete view in the OECD “Jobs Strategy” publication, (updated for the 3rd time one year ago). The original OECD Jobs Strategy of 1994 emphasized the role of flexible labor and product markets for tackling high and persistent unemployment—the main policy concern at the time.

The new Jobs Strategy continues to stress the links between strong and sustained economic growth and the quantity of jobs, but also recognizes job quality, in terms of both wage and non-wage working conditions, and labor market inclusiveness as central policy priorities.

The main message of the new OECD Jobs Strategy is that while policies to support flexibility in product and labor markets are needed for growth, they are not sufficient to simultaneously deliver good outcomes in terms of job quantity, job quality, and inclusiveness. This also requires policies and institutions to promote job quality and inclusiveness, which are often more effective when supported by the social partners.

[The new report, “Negotiating Our Way Up: Collective Bargaining in a Changing World of Work,”] provides the most up-to-date and complete panorama of the state of industrial relations around the world. The report’s conclusions show that collective bargaining, when based on mutual trust between social partners and designed so as to strike a balance between inclusiveness and flexibility, is important to helping companies and workers respond to demographic and technological change and adapt to the new world of work.

It seems that the orientation of the OECD toward labor market regulation has been altered in recent years. If this is the case, what are the causes and goals of this change?

At the OECD, we are in a constant process of analysis and reflection, and the global financial crisis did not pass unnoticed.

Since the publication of the OECD’s Reassessed Jobs Strategy in 2006, and even more since the Jobs Strategy of 1994, OECD economies (as well as emerging economies) have undergone major structural changes and faced deep shocks: the worst financial and economic crisis since the Great Depression; continued weak productivity growth; unprecedentedly high levels of income inequality in many countries; and substantial upheaval linked to technological progress, globalization, and demographic change.

In light of these major changes, and the central role of labor policies in addressing them, OECD Employment and Labor Ministers in January 2016 called for a new Jobs Strategy that fully reflects new challenges and opportunities to continue to provide an effective tool to guide policy makers. The goals of this new perspective are three:

1. Promoting an environment in which high-quality jobs can thrive;

2. Preventing labor market exclusion and protecting individuals against labor market risks;

3. Preparing for future opportunities and challenges in a rapidly changing economy and labor market.
How do these reports promote change in the political-economic policies of member or non-member states?

This is also another novelty of the latest Jobs Strategy: to support countries in building stronger and more inclusive labor markets, the new OECD Jobs Strategy goes beyond general policy recommendations by providing guidance for the implementation of reforms. A full chapter is dedicated to the political economy of reforms. And now specific country analyses are being undertaken to better forecast the effect of implementation of the Jobs Strategy at the national level.

Countries also ask for our help when discussing or preparing reforms in this field. The Government in New Zealand is working on new Fair Pay Agreement, basically reintroducing some form of sectorial bargaining, and the OECD work is cited plenty of times in their papers.

What kind of external feedback do you receive on these reports?

Before publications, all OECD reports are discussed with delegates of member countries as well as colleagues and academic or external experts.

The new Jobs Strategy and our work on collective bargaining and workers’ voice has attracted quite a lot of attention in the media as well as in the research and policy community. We are often asked to speak about it, both by governments and by unions and employers, in public events and in closed-door meetings.

From your perspective, what is the role of the OECD in producing research and recommendations?

From my experience here, the OECD plays an important role in shaping the general narrative, building a consensus on the priorities, and identifying the correct instruments for achieving these priorities.

In the 1990s, the OECD promoted the flexibilization of labor markets. More recently, we were among the first international organizations to highlight the risk linked to rising inequalities, well before it was fashionable. The OECD builds a bridge between academic research and policymaking, using what is done in academia, extending it, and, most importantly, distilling the main policy implications.

For us, academic research is our primary input. We use it to inform our analysis, to set the priorities for our own work. It’s the basis for any work we do. We start from there, we try to get the main messages, expand it where needed and, as I said, distill and develop the main policy implications, in ways that are as practical as possible.

Article and interview by Assaf Bondy
The Marie Skłodowska-Curie program, funded by the European Union, has allocated over one billion euros to support more than 10,000 researchers across all scientific disciplines in the E.U. and partner countries. The program includes multiple grants, including travel grants to support exchange between researchers from different countries, funding for educational programs such as joint research training and doctoral programs in the “innovative training network,” and scientific and educational events that aim to bring research closer to the public. The most widely known grant is the “Individual Fellowship,” which provides a full-time salary, as well as travel and family expenses, for two to three years to “experienced researchers” holding a doctoral degree or at least four years of full-time research experience. These competitive fellowships aim to help recipients get back into a research career after a break or return to Europe after a stay in a non-E.U. country. The fellowships, which support work in all disciplines, are provided to a “host organization” generally in a different country than the one in which the candidate worked previously. Host organizations are mostly in the E.U. (“European fellowships”), but a smaller part of the global funding is also attributed to non-E.U. host organizations (“Global fellowships”). Providing full funding over multiple years to early-career researchers, the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship offers an attractive funding opportunity for researchers in the social sciences, who often struggle getting a permanent job after completing a PhD.

The application consists of a 10-page research proposal, written in collaboration with a supervisor from the host organization, and the applicant’s CV. The research proposal consists of three parts, reflecting the official admission criteria: “Excellence” (quality, novelty, supervision of the host organization), “Impact” (career prospects of the researcher, dissemination of results), and “Implementation” (coherence of the work plan, management, institutional environment). Early career scholars are sometimes hesitant to engage in the uncertain
application process due to the competitive nature of the fellowships, and while some international universities offer institutional support for the application, many do not.

The SASE Newsletter has collected testimonies from successful applicants in different stages of their projects, asking their advice on the experience of applying to and earning a Marie Curie Individual Fellowship in social sciences:

- **Chiara Destri** started her Marie Curie Individual Fellowship at Sciences Po in 2019. Her project, “Voting Citizens and the Ethics of Democracy,” follows a one-year post-doctoral fellowship at the European University Institute, funded by the Max Weber program, and a PhD in political science (specializing in political theory) from the University of Milan.

- **Kjolv Egeland** is a post-doctoral fellow, currently funded by a Marie Curie Individual Fellowship, at CERI, Sciences Po in Paris, working on a project titled “Strategic Narratives and the Global Nuclear Order” (2019-2021). He received a PhD from Wadham College, University of Oxford, in 2018 in the area of nuclear security studies.

- **Bernhard Forchtner** is an Associate Professor at the University of Leicester. He was a Marie Curie fellow at the Institute of Social Sciences, Humboldt University of Berlin, from 2013 to 2015, conducting a research project titled “Appropriating the ‘Legitimate’: Far-right Discourses on Ecology.” He holds a PhD in sociology and linguistics from the University of Leicester (2011).

**When did you decide to apply for a Marie Curie Individual Fellowship? What led you to apply?**

**Chiara:** I decided five months prior to the official deadline and one year after completing my PhD. Since I expected to fail on the first round, I wanted to have as many tries as possible. At the same time, I waited one year after my PhD because I didn’t have a strong project at the beginning. My first post-doctoral fellowship helped me to understand my research question better… I think the best opportunity that a Marie Curie affords you is to pick your own topic and choose the people you will work with… A true exchange with the host institution is key. If you think there is a team you would really love to work with, then a Marie Curie is an excellent way to do it.

**Kjolv:** I actually was not aware of the fellowship until my current supervisor suggested I apply.

**Bernhard:** I applied in 2012, during a one-year post-doctoral fellowship at the Humboldt-University of Berlin, and started my Marie Curie fellowship in 2013. The professor I was working with in Berlin, and with whom I still publish, Professor Klaus Eder, encouraged me to apply. A close friend had also applied successfully and was very helpful. Without this support, I might not have applied, though the very generous and prestigious nature of the fellowship was, ultimately, motivation enough.
What resources helped you to succeed in the application process? What difficulties did you encounter?

Chiara: I spent my first post-doctoral year as a Max Weber fellow at the EUI. There were classes on project writing and a very good team of people tasked with helping you improve your scientific writing. Furthermore, my proposal would not have been the same if not for the contribution of my supervisor, who was kind and committed enough to read all of the Excellence section and give me great feedback. I would also suggest preparing a first draft of the application way in advance, so that other people can review it. In my case, both Sciences Po administrative staff and other scholars read my proposal before submission. The most difficult part is to identify the right institution and the right supervisor for your project. The second difficulty is to engage the supervisor with your project, and in that there is a little bit of luck involved.

Kjolv: I was invited to a “Marie Curie Meetup” in Paris a few months before the application deadline. The organizers of the Meetup explained how the application process worked and gave us a few tips. That helped a lot. After that, I also received a lot of help developing my research proposal from my now-supervisor and advisors at Sciences Po.

Bernhard: I had no institutional support, but I had successfully applied for PhD programs and, thus, had an idea of what to expect. Without this experience, and support from others, it could have been difficult to think appropriately about aspects beyond the scholarly—though in an academic career, one must learn how to write grant proposals and applications at some point anyway!

Could you briefly describe the research project you pursued during the fellowship and the partner universities?

Chiara: The research project I will be pursuing in the coming two years at Sciences Po and under the supervision of Professor Annabelle Lever is called VoiCED (Voting Citizens and the Ethics of Democracy). It is a project in normative democratic theory and its aim is to provide a diversified theory of political obligation for citizens, political parties, and elected representatives, by taking into account how these political actors relate to one another. The Cevipof (Center of political research) fits nicely with the project because of its focus on electoral studies and voting behavior. Professor Lever has written extensively on the ethics of voting and democracy.

Kjolv: My project explores the formation and projection of the politico-cultural narratives that help to constitute the “global nuclear order.” I investigate the emergence, projection, and contestation of what I call the “strategic narrative” of nuclear order in Europe. This narrative emerged in the 1960s as the ideological foundation of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, displacing alternative visions of nuclear politics such as comprehensive disarmament and a supranational European nuclear community. Navigating between the alleged extremes of immediate abolition and unrestrained proliferation, policy elites in Europe and North America converged on the goal of freezing nuclear politics in its current form. For the narrators of nuclear order—influential policymakers and defense intellectuals—the primary task of any diplomatic process should be to avert disruptive changes and secure stability through managerial control. To that end, they promoted the ideas that nuclear weapons are indispensable for the maintenance of peace, that extended nuclear deterrence provides a bulwark against
proliferation, and that nuclear risks are controllable. This narrative has since been solidified through official government communication and incorporation into high-school textbooks, policy discourse, print and broadcast media, and other cultural products. Since the end of the Cold War, however, the narrative of nuclear order has collided with attempts at developing an image of Europe as a human-security oriented normative power. More recently, the prevailing narrative is under pressure both by norm entrepreneurs and technological developments that challenge the sustainability of deterrence.

**Bernhard:** My project (“Far-Right Eco”) explored environmental communication by far-right actors in Europe. At the moment, this topic—especially regarding climate change—is quite present in the public sphere, but it was less central at the time. We tend to associate environmental concern with the political left, although the connection between “the people” and “the land” is important to far-right thought. Indeed, far-right concerns over the environment have both a long history and roots in far-right ideology. My project explored why such environmental concerns for “the homeland,” the local and particular, does not always translate into concerns over global anthropogenic climate change. While not all far-right actors are climate-change skeptics, many are, especially when compared to the European mainstream. Climate policies are often associated with an agenda of “the liberal/cosmopolitan elite” who don’t understand “the little guy,” and far-right groups are thus opposed. At times, far-right actors simply reject the thesis of anthropogenic climate change and/or climate-change policies because the topic is perceived as “left-wing.” The Humboldt-University of Berlin provided a very good environment in which to explore this topic, as my mentor, Professor Klaus Eder, has long worked on environmental issues and the question of identity.

**How did you organize your work? How much time do you spend in home and partner countries for example? How much time is dedicated to teaching versus research? Or fieldwork versus writing?**

**Chiara:** I am still flexible concerning the organization of my work, as I just arrived at Sciences Po. Ideally, I think it is important to spend time at the host university, especially if one wants to teach and to establish fruitful collaborations with other scholars. For the time being, I am focused on research and article writing, but I hope I will manage to teach during my second year. Another important part of the Marie Curie is the dissemination and public communication side of the project, so quite some time and effort go into setting up a website, sending papers out for conferences, and organizing workshops.

**Kjolv:** I’ll be doing archival work in Brussels, and there’s travel for conferences and workshops, but most of my time will be spent doing research in Paris. My team at Sciences Po (“Nuclear Knowledges”) is great, so I’m keen to maximize my time in Paris. I’ll be doing a bit of teaching next semester.

**Bernhard:** Although I also did interviews with experts and far-right individuals, I spent most of my time analyzing sources and doing archival research in Berlin. One of the mistakes I made was to spend a bit too much time collecting data. We have all experienced this: delving into a topic, dealing with sources, one wants to know and collect more and more and more. However, I probably should have started to write articles earlier. I also taught a few courses, which took time, but as universities are increasingly concerned with the quality of
teaching (and rightly so), this was time well-spent.

**How did this period help you as a researcher in the next steps of your career?**

**Bernhard:** Without this opportunity, I would have not been where I am now. The resources provided by the Marie Curie fellowship have enabled me to research and publish in the area and have consequently helped me to get a job. Since the beginning of 2016, I have worked at the University of Leicester and have just been promoted to Associate Professor. I have just published an edited volume titled *The Far Right and the Environment* and, as I type these words, return from an exciting conference on “Political Ecologies of the Far Right,” where I was invited to give a keynote. All of this would not have been possible without the Marie Curie fellowship.

**Do you have any advice for other young scholar attempting to get a Marie Curie fellowship?**

**Chiara:** Identify a research question that is timely and compelling. Single out an institution that fits with the project and a supervisor who is internationally renowned for her or his work on the topic. The perfect balance is rare, but I think one should take into account the following things: (1) the appropriate fit between the supervisor, the institution, and your project; (2) the supervisor’s availability and whether (s)he shows interest in the project and gives you feedback; (3) the international reputation of the supervisor and the host institution; (4) the distinctive contribution that you could provide to the institution; (5) the terms of employment that the host institution can offer you (office space, facilities, research funds, etc.). Once you have settled on a project and on a partner university, write a first draft in advance and share it with as many people as you can find, giving you time to review all the comments. Then fingers crossed and good luck!

**Kjolv:** Take the “Impact” and administrative parts of the application seriously.

**Bernhard:** Just try it and have all the complexity of your project present in the proposal—while being aware that the main objective and its significance have to be made clear in the first few lines and should be featured throughout the application. This is, of course, true for all applications, but it is something junior scholars, who have often devoted a long period to one project, might not consider enough. I did not, and I thus benefited very much from sharing the proposal with senior colleagues. It is your proposal—but without support and discussions with others, it is unlikely to fly.

*Article and interviews by Valerie Arnhold*
Let’s Not Cede Patriotism

Amitai Etzioni is a University Professor and professor of international affairs at The George Washington University. His latest book, Reclaiming Patriotism (University of Virginia Press and available online as a free download), addresses the question of how to advance civic nationalism. His newest video, Patriotism is Love of Country, can be found here.

Originally, my book was called In Defense of Patriotism. My editor said he loved the manuscript, but allowed that the title gave him much grief. My liberal, supportive wife felt that I should reconsider the title, and my lefty Yalie granddaughter stated flatly that she would not read “such a right-wing book.” They sighed with relief when the book was renamed: Reclaiming Patriotism. This title communicates that I do not favor embracing nationalism, but seek to rekindle love of country—one definition of patriotism—in order to curb the divisiveness that is paralyzing the government and tearing apart society.

As I see it, many good people recently did to patriotism what many liberals did to family in the Sixties; they wrote it off as an obsolete institution that had to be undone, with the other elements of the old, patriarchal order. The mood of that time is well-captured in a movie, Kramer vs. Kramer, in which a mother abandons her young child, leaving him with his father so that she can fulfill herself. The implication was that she could not do so within the context of a family. The conservative reaction to liberalism, which set in during the late Sixties and has not ceased yet, has made much political hay, especially among working-class people, by wrapping itself around the family. Eventually, liberals came around to recapture the family, pointing out that they favor an egalitarian family—and one that could be between two persons of the same gender—but were not anti-family.

These days, too many on the left equate patriotism with nationalism, which they in turn believe to be jingoistic, involving an aggressive foreign policy combined with authoritarianism at home. They have ample reason for concern, given the way nationalism has fueled Brexit and is leading half a dozen other E.U. members to retreat from the post-nationalism community. Hungary, Poland, and Italy are among the nations that are reestablishing their national borders, increasingly rejecting policies advanced by the E.U. community, turning away asylum seekers, and developing authoritarian traits. The rise of right-wing national parties in France, Sweden, Denmark, Holland, and even Germany is threatening the democratic foundations of these
nations. No wonder progressive people seek “globalist” policies, such as promoting human rights, havens for asylum seekers, and the free flow of goods across national borders.

Moreover, one can readily show that the world would be much better-served if we could move to a post-nationalist world, given that many of the problems nations face require global treatments. Avoiding wars, controlling climate change, stopping epidemics, curbing human trafficking, and enhancing economic growth all would benefit greatly if one could significantly enhance global governance. However, the sociological fact is that the loyalty of most people, their sense of identity and community, continues to be greatly invested in their nations—and that no one has been able to come up with ways to transfer this loyalty to even a regional community like the E.U., let alone a community at the global level.

As a result, public leaders who ignore or downplay nationalism end up inflaming it. A much more realistic approach is to tame it by promoting what some call civic nationalism or patriotism. One can express love of country while rejecting the idea that our nation is superior to other nations and hence we ought to force our values on other people—just as we can love our spouse but not insist that everybody else admire her or him too. Americans can appreciate that the nation’s history is bending toward justice, that one group after another has gained rights, without denying that none have received their due. Americans can acknowledge that there is racism, chauvinism, and homophobia in the country that must be addressed, without agreeing that the nation is consumed by white supremacy or dominated by bigotry. Love of country does not mean ignoring flaws but does mean that we refuse to allow it to be defined by them. It calls for major reforms, but also for rejecting the rhetoric of revolution that entails tearing down the prevailing institutions and forming radically different ones.

I faced the difference between rejecting aggressive nationalism and embracing “good” nationalism in a minor but telling incident: the publisher of my book, a highly respected university press, adamantly refused to put the image of the flag on the cover of Reclaiming Patriotism. The publisher held that the flag would signal that it was a jingoistic book. I felt that the flag symbolized that which unites us a nation and that we should not cede it to nationalists. I pointed out that President Obama was wearing it on his lapel. Megan Rapinoe—openly gay, fiercely critical of Trump and his policies—wrapped herself in the flag during her victory lap in France when her team won the 2019 Women’s World Cup. However, I failed to carry the day.

We had best recall that we are members of the great national family of the United States and that we face a shared future, which calls on us to curb our differences and relearn how to work together. We should make it clear that because we are critical of the U.S., because we seek a more perfect union, does not mean we love it less, and hence we should not let anybody deny our patriotism. We can vigorously protect our right to burn the flag—but fly it high.

Article by Amitai Etzioni
Recent PhDs in Socio-Economics: New Research Paths

Emerging scholars—including graduate students, post-doctoral researchers, and junior faculty—are vitally important members of the SASE community, building on existing theories and identifying the subjects that will shape the field in years to come. We asked some recent graduates to share summaries of their dissertation work with SASE readers. The topics are diverse, ranging from public employment bureaucracies and insurance evaluation to the working lives of Native fathers, covering the vast range of issues confronting scholars of socio-economics today.

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Arjen van der Heide, the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Societies, PhD (2019) from the University of Edinburgh

The emergence of a new transatlantic financial order since the 1970s, characterized by unprecedented financial market volatility, posed significant challenges for U.K. life insurers. Whereas life insurers were historically at the forefront of quantifying forms of “diversifiable risk,” such as mortality risk, the quantification of non-diversifiable risks, such as financial market risk, required novel methods borrowed first from mathematical risk theory and later from modern financial economics. The appropriation of new methods was accompanied by concomitant changes in the design of insurance products—a process that fundamentally changed what insurance companies are and what they are for, leading some to suggest that contemporary life insurers are facing an “identity crisis.”

Based on 44 oral-history interviews, supplemented by documents, I investigate how life insurers evaluate the economic worth and risks of insurance contracts and how these practices coevolved with broader changes in the industry. I combine insights from economic sociology with sociological research on professions, insurance, and scientific knowledge to argue that the evolution of insurance as a mechanism for managing financial uncertainty can only be understood in conjunction with the evolution of the methods that insurers use to evaluate the economic worth and risk embedded in insurance contracts.

On the one hand, I find that developments in the market field may create new opportunities and challenges in the epistemic field of actuarial science. Although modern financial economics was long rejected by the actuarial profession, the changing structure of governance in the market field gave proponents of modern finance theory the upper hand in the epistemic field, too. On the other hand, I argue that changes in life insurers’ epistemic machinery shaped what life insurance is and does. With the institutionalization of modern finance theory in contemporary life insurance arrangements, risk is increasingly perceived as a commodity to be managed not through mechanisms of solidarity but rather charged for explicitly and hedged in financial markets. In this context, seemingly technical issues such as discounting acquire significant
political salience. The evolution of U.K. life insurance can be understood only by considering tensions and conflicts in the epistemic field of actuarial science, attempts to influence the “rules of the game” in the market field, and the interrelations between the two.

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**Multinational Corporations in Local Politics: Actors, Relations and Corporate Political Actions (Argentina, 2003-2015)**

*Alejandro Dulitzky, PhD (2018) from National University of Buenos Aires*

Despite the economic relevance of multinational corporations, especially for developing countries, their involvement in politics has received little attention. This thesis draws from the sociology of organizations, economics, the sociology of elites, and studies on political action to study how, when, and why multinational corporations participate in local politics, using both qualitative and quantitative analysis.

I examine Argentina during the Kirchner’s government (2003-2015). Foreign capital has always played a central role in Argentina’s economy but, during this period of what has been called a “left turn” in Latin American politics, the government showed a marked tendency toward state intervention, a low commitment to international relations, and a preference for local over foreign capital. Although it is possible to identify a small decrease in the role played by multinational corporations, there was no decline, but rather an increase in aggregate FDI during the period, suggesting that the retreat of multinational corporations had more to do with local political dynamics than with a shift in global capital movements. I ask: to what extent did the economic policies deployed by the Kirchners condition the political strategies of multinational corporations—and at the same time, what role did foreign corporations have in the decisions made by the government?

I analyze the relationship between corporations and local politics through four lenses: their collective organization, the makeup of their leadership, their relationships with the government during the period, and their political actions. My research is based on primary and secondary sources, including in-depth interviews, public documents, and newspaper articles, among others. These data are used to create a sample focused on 73 corporations from 2003 to 2015, including 86 national business associations, 158 track records of company leaders, 78 public policies put in place by the governments with direct impact on these companies, 1,667 public hearings involving public officials and business representatives, and 491 statements in the press by corporate leaders.

I use this data to elucidate the relationship between multinational corporations and local politics. First, foreign companies give a central role to collective organization in their political strategies. Second, chief managers are chosen with the global needs and interests of the corporation in mind, disregarding the particularities of the local scenario. Finally, I find no indication that the political actions of multinational corporations are substantially different from those of other big private corporations such as local multinational, national, or mixed companies.
Tribal Lands, Tribal Men, and Tribal Responsibilities: World Renewal Fathers with Criminal Records and Their Perceptions of Work and Fatherhood On and Off-Reservation

Blythe George, Postdoctoral Researcher at University of California, Berkeley, PhD (2019) in Sociology from Harvard University

The spatial concentration of inequality is one of the most enduring findings in the social sciences, yet these theories do not encompass the experience of rural tribal reservations. Reservations are home to deeply intransigent forms of poverty and unemployment, and have been for generations, underscoring the need to expand existing theories of marginalized labor force attachment to include tribal reservations. Comparing the experiences of men who live on and off the Yurok and Hoopa Valley tribal reservations in northwestern California, this dissertation answers the question: How do tribal fathers with criminal records conceive of work and fatherhood?

Using over 130 hours of in-depth interviews with 35 individuals, buttressed by two years of participant observation and administrative record review, I find that this population is distinguished by their “world renewal worldview.” This cultural tool-kit fosters strong labor force attachment, especially for jobs in the natural resource industries that resonate with tribal fathers’ conceptions of world renewal masculinity, including the expectation to provide for their families through stewardship of the area’s natural resources. Their commitment to work is in tension with a post-decline local economy and frequent co-occurring substance dependencies and experiences of trauma, particularly on-reservation. Nonetheless, tribal fathers secure work using individual initiative and the generosity of social networks, exemplifying the process of “survivance.” While fathers differed in employment status, most described active and intense involvement with their families, including children and domestic partners.

With this investigation, I provide a new lens to studies of concentrated disadvantage by describing how the “reservation” represents both a physical space and a social institution that shapes contemporary inequality. Additionally, I provide nuance to existing theorizations of how structural and cultural forces influence labor force attachment, social networks, and fatherhood in marginalized communities.

* * *


Hadrien Clouet, post-doctoral researcher at Centre de Sociologie des Organisations (CNRS - Sciences Po), PhD (2019) from Sciences Po

An overwhelming majority of French and German jobseekers request full-time jobs when they register with the public employment service (PES), yet many end up with a part-time job, despite
the fact that part-time employment is not explicitly favored by either French or German PES. My thesis explores this paradox, finding that the reasons for the prevalence of part-time employment lie in the labor organization of the agencies and in the programming of matching software, which lead caseworkers to promote part-time job offers. I use three sources of empirical material: archival records (national, municipal, and administrative archives); eight months of ethnographic research inside two German and two French employment agencies; and data analysis on a bank of job offers.

The first part of the dissertation traces the public regulation of jobseekers’ working time. After the invention of “unemployment,” German and French reformers fought from 1918 to 1939 for casual workers to be classified as unemployed, leading to the creation of a “cumulative scheme” in which unemployed people may work for a short time and keep both their unemployment benefits and a certain amount of income. During the 1960s, part-time work gradually replaced casual work in this system. The “cumulative scheme” shifted from an instrument of support to an instrument of incentive. Yet the concept of financial incentives for nonstandard jobs is unpopular even today, for both unemployed people and their caseworkers.

The second part of the dissertation explains the bargaining that takes place over jobseekers’ working time. If few caseworkers use the official benefits system, how and why do they discuss their clients’ working time? I show that they invite jobseekers to reduce the working-time sought when they belong to social groups that are overexposed to part-time employment, especially in Germany, thus reproducing inequalities, particularly gender inequality. They also promote part-time employment when it suits the quantified activity monitoring. This is notably the case in the German agencies for long-term unemployed.

The third part of the dissertation focuses on the political dimension of software used to match job offers with people. It highlights elective affinities between matching criteria and employment forms. Criteria differ in Germany (users can only choose between “part-time” and “full-time”) and in France (users choose weekly hours, e.g., “25-35 hours”). Thus, German users are not able to reject job offers under a certain hourly floor. Moreover, each system involves but masks relations between working time and other employment characteristics, like wages or contracts.

Across these chapters, the dissertation reveals pervasive working-time conflicts within unemployment agencies, explaining why some caseworkers promote part-time employment and how the internal organization of public employment services directly regulates labor markets.

* * *

Negotiating Insecurity? A Comparative Study of Collective Bargaining in Retail Food in Canada, Germany, Sweden and the United States

Sean O’Brady, Assistant Professor at DeGroote School of Business (McMaster University), PhD (2018) from Université de Montréal

This thesis examines the effects of collective bargaining strategies on economic risk in low-skilled service work. I examined how unions and managers confronted pressures driving wage instability, scheduling uncertainty, and the erosion of traditional employee benefits in food retail.
internationally. The research is based on qualitative case studies of collective bargaining dynamics in eight supermarket chains across four countries—Canada, Germany, Sweden, and the United States—over time (1980-2016). Nearly 100 interviews were carried out and complemented by an assessment of collective agreements and other documents.

The first contribution is a conception of risk. I highlight how risks unfold through trends in generosity (levels of resources), individualization (shifts away from models where risks are borne by employers or the state), and segmentation (the extent to which risks are relegated to certain types of workers). I show how institutional and organizational pressures affect these dimensions in different ways. The second key contribution pertains to the effect of collective bargaining strategies on risk. Union mobilization was most effective at resisting the pressures that drive risk. This is especially true where union mobilization can enforce common labor standards across firms through sectorial or pattern bargaining. I also show that management strategies are embedded in contexts shaped by institutions and power, and that collective bargaining can nudge managers toward high-road strategies with respect to risk. The thesis concludes by insisting that unions, employers, and the state should rethink their approach to issues that matter to risk, such as the lack of support for sectorial bargaining in North America.

* *

Nations as Destinations: Analyzing Tourist Source-Markets as Local Fields of Global Circulation

Tim Rosenkranz, PhD (2019) in Sociology from the New School for Social Research

This dissertation examines national imagination—the ongoing cultural production of the nation—as an economic activity of national development that takes place in global markets outside of the nation-state’s territorial borders. Based on 16 months of field research, this study analyzes the practices and relations of such expanded national imagination through a global ethnography of national destination marketing in tourism in India and the United States. I show how national destination marketing constitutes a global commodification process that transforms the nation into an object of the work of the national marketing agencies, the evaluations of extra-national professional intermediaries, and the demands of potential consumers in global markets.

In an accelerating global circulation of mobile resources, from capital and labor to consumers such as tourists, the production of an attractive image has become an economic asset for nation-states. To manage their image production, nation-states have instituted official marketing organizations, called National Tourism Offices (NTOs). The German NTO, for example, has marketing offices in New Delhi for the Indian market and in New York for the U.S. market. These NTO-marketing branches cooperate with the local travel industry to manage, produce, and circulate desirable national narratives meant to attract potential tourists. I have analyzed the marketing activities of 45 different nation-states in India and the U.S.

This case study establishes a link between the commodification and the cultural intermediation of national imagination within global markets. It contributes to current global approaches to the nation that show how the expectations of global consumers frame national policies of development and produce or amplify social inequalities. Instead of conceptualizing such
perceptions as externalized global market forces, my research focuses on how these expectations are professionally managed and produced through extra-national cultural intermediaries and local experts with their own economic interests. Advancing the socio-economic understanding of commodification and commodity production, I theorize that the nation as tourist destination presents an *imagined commodity*: Although it never manifests as actual property for exchange in global markets, the nation nonetheless becomes the object of complex, contingent, and continuous social relationships of imagination and evaluation in a global process of production and consumption.

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Multinational Corporations in Local Politics: Actors, Relations and Corporate Political Actions (Argentina, 2003-2015)

Alejandro Dulitzky, Centro de Investigación para los Trabajadores- Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas (CITRA-CONICET), PhD (2018) from National University of Buenos Aires

Despite the economic relevance of multinational corporations, especially for developing countries, their involvement in politics has received little attention. This thesis draws from the sociology of organizations, economics, the sociology of elites, and studies on political action to study how, when, and why multinational corporations participate in local politics, using both qualitative and quantitative analysis.

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Have you finished your PhD project? Is the end in sight? Do you want the world to know about your research? The SASE newsletter is looking for presentations of finished, or nearly finished, PhD projects on socio-economic topics. Let us know about the theoretical insights and empirical results that have resulted from those years of hard work. Wherever you come from or whatever your topic, as long as it is related to socio-economics, we would love to hear from you. Send us an abstract of approximately 400 words sketching the research and results, and we will feature it in the newsletter (space permitting).

Send submissions to saseexecutive@sase.org
SASE is an international organization with members around the globe, reading thousands of books related to socio-economics every year across topics and languages. To get a sense of what is on SASE members’ minds, the newsletter editors asked some of the voracious readers that make up our association to recommend a few books they are reading (or re-reading) and to tell us a bit about them.

José Ossandón, Copenhagen Business School

Daniel Fridman, *El sueño de vivir sin trabajar* (Siglo XXI, 2019; previously published as *Freedom from Work*, Stanford University Press, 2016)

This book is an ethnographic account of people in Argentina and the U.S. who followed a financial self-help program. The promise of the program was to convert those who participated (which means reading the books, playing board games, participating in the seminar) from dependent employees to autonomous investors. Theoretically, it is a story that contributes to the understanding of governmentality and performativity, but perhaps the book’s main accomplishment is Fridman’s own self-discipline as a storyteller. This is a book that respects and does not patronize the lived experience of self-converted neoliberals.

Philip Mirowski and Edward Nik-Khah, *The Knowledge We Have Lost in Information* (Oxford University Press, 2017)

The authors trace a very important but often unnoticed transformation in recent economics. The market is not what it used to be. The key concept is information: the market is now understood as an information processor. Economists, however, do not have a shared understanding of what information is or does—what we have is different schools of information economics. What these schools share is that their market is very different to the market of neo-classical economics: here economic actors have only a partial and limited perspective, the key agency is not the entrepreneur but the market itself, and economists see themselves as market designers.


There is a recent interest in what we could call the figure of the “market organizer.” This means that sociological analyses of markets are not only about entrepreneurs, consumers, or competition, but about those whose work it is to make markets work. Automating Finance, by Juan Pablo Pardo-Guerra, re-tells the history of the stock exchanges in London and New York from the perspective of the work of back-office engineers. What we get is a fresh version of automation and an account where the border between market and formal organization is almost indistinguishable.

With a group of colleagues, I recently started a reading group of the new translation of Weber’s *Economy & Society*. For now, I can highly recommend the introductory text by the translator, Keith Tribe. Tribe’s text is like a book within the book. It is also an exemplar of academic effort and dedication, and, perhaps, one the best available introductions to Weber’s work.


Finally, I am halfway through Caitlin Zaloom’s *Indebted: How Families Make College Work at Any Cost*. The object of the book is what Zaloom calls the “financial student complex”: the multilayered system developed around student loans in the U.S. The book uses an ethnographic sensibility to construct a public intervention that both opens up the black box of the complicated financial student complex and makes the reader feel the existential situation of those affected by this quite mad approach to helping students.

Mariana Luzzi, Universidad Nacional de General Sarmiento

Ariel Wilkis (ed.), *El poder de (e)valuar: La producción monetaria de jerarquías sociales, morales y estéticas en la sociedad contemporánea* (UNSAM Edita-Universidad del Rosario, 2018).

This edited volume gathers the work of 12 Argentine scholars trained in very different fields, from economic anthropology to art history. Their research is on diverse topics, including financial trading, foreign exchange illegal markets, real estate markets, gambling, medical services, sex work, art auctions, armed forces litigation, and economic reparations for state terrorism victims. What they share is a common interest in valuation and especially in the ways in which monetary valuations are entangled to moral evaluations. The book is not only the first contribution to the valuation studies field that has been published in Spanish but also a very interesting example of how socio-economics can also provide new perspectives to other fields of social research, such as legal studies or art history.
Mark Granovetter, Stanford University


I recommend to SASE readers a remarkable book by the German sociologist Arndt Sorge, The Global and the Local: Understanding the Dialectics of Business Systems. Sorge poses the question of how actors draw on the set of institutional patterns laid down, especially in Germany, from medieval times to the present, to create arrangements that meet their current needs. Patterns that have been superseded do not disappear, but lie dormant as sedimented institutional memory that actors can draw on many decades and even centuries later. Sorge also chronicles how the turmoil of war and invasions, as in the Napoleonic era, further complexifies the menu of institutional possibilities that actors may draw upon. In my own book, *Society and Economy: Framework and Principles* (Harvard University Press, 2017), I draw heavily on Sorge’s scholarship in my argument about how pragmatic actors pick and choose from this menu, in a kind of bricolage, to deal with problems they define and want to manage. Typical pragmatists, they are less concerned with the quest for consistency attributed to actors in the “varieties of capitalism” literature than with getting things done. Yet they are heavily constrained by the menu that history has set out for them. As Marx observed, people make history, but not just as they please, rather under circumstances transmitted from the past. As sociologists, we have the responsibility to elaborate just how this takes place, especially if we are not persuaded that dialectical materialism provides sufficient answers. Sorge’s book provides an excellent starting point.

Sophie Dubuisson-Quellier, Sciences Po and Centre de Sociologie des Organisations


I recently read *The Familiarity of Strangers: The Sephardic Diaspora, Livorno, and Cross-Trade in the Early Modern Period*, by Francesca Trivellato, which was translated into French in 2016. Trivellato is a historian but her questions and methods resonate with what we do in economic sociology. In her book, she studies a specific diaspora of traders, Sephardic families from Livorno in Tuscany during the 18th century, who built large international trading networks that connected Eastern Mediterranean cities to Portuguese Asia through Lisbon and Aleppo. She demonstrates that these networks circulated information about market prices and opportunities for profit, but also market conventions, convincing other traders to engage in these very long-distance relationships and building trust. I found of particular interest the detailed analysis that Trivellato provides of the commercial correspondence that fosters both legal customs and social norms for trade relationships and ensures control of the agents in the network. It echoes what I observed several years ago in the case of trading relationships between large retail companies and their fruit and vegetable farmer suppliers. Despite the existence of many different contractual instruments, frequent discussions by phone or email were absolutely necessary to build trust and make other actors’ behaviors predictable. Today, studying discussions within trading relationships may prove very useful for understanding the power dimensions of market relations.
Mariana Heredia, Universidad de Buenos Aires


Special Issues on Thomas Piketty

Pablo Lapegna, *Soybeans and Power: Genetically Modified Crops, Environmental Politics, and Social Movements in Argentina* (Oxford University Press, 2016)


It’s hard to pinpoint just a few books out of the rich production in recent years. There are three books, however, that made an impression. First, *Carbon Democracy*, by Timothy Mitchell shows an amazing ability to join Science and Technology Studies with a geopolitical analysis of inequalities. His unique point of view, together with his erudition, produces one of the most interesting works of decolonization studies I have read. I also appreciated the several special issues on Thomas Piketty including one in the *British Journal of Sociology* (2014), an anthology by Boushey, Delong, and Steinbaum (2017), a special issue of *Annales, Histoire, Sciences Sociales* (2015), and a policy report by the CATO Institute (2017). These writings reveal the potential of socio-economics today. Capital without Borders, by Brooke Harrington, is a good example of how to construct a path to study the difficult subject of the wealth of the 1%. Pablo Lapegna’s *Soybeans and Power: Genetically Modified Crops, Environmental Politics, and Social Movements in Argentina* is an excellent ethnography of peasants facing the growing genetically modified crops business and the political challenges they face. Finally, Mariana Luzzi and Ariel Wilkis’s *El Dolar: Historia de una moneda Argentina, 1930-2019* is a long-term cultural analysis of the rise and spread of the use of U.S. dollars in Argentina.

Moisés Kopper, Max Planck Institute for the Study of Societies


As a scholar working at the intersection of political and economic anthropology, I have always been interested in how markets and their associated infrastructures—technologies, instruments, pedagogies, and expertise—are deployed to achieve certain political ends.
I am currently finalizing a manuscript, Architectures of Hope, in which I look into the imbrications of different forms of hope and the contentious implementation of social housing programs. As I wrote this book, I paid more and more attention to the subtle ways in which state interventions and absences not only bear effects, but also modulate the affects of the people we work with. Guerrilla Marketing: Counterinsurgency and Capitalism in Colombia, by Alexander L. Fattal, presents a rich ethnography of how market technologies, in particular marketing and branding, are actively deployed by the Colombian

Rebecca Bryant and Daniel Knight, *The Anthropology of the Future* (Cambridge University Press, 2019)

Lately, there has been no shortage of books and articles tackling the issues of future-making, prediction, futurity, and fictional imaginations. How we conceive of the future, particularly its intersections with pressing issues such as climate change, algorithms, and artificial intelligence, have become core concerns of sociological and anthropological inquiry. Conceptual clarity in this emerging field remains fuzzy. However, advancements have been made in books like The Anthropology of the Future, by Rebecca Bryant and Daniel Knight, which devotes entire chapters to concepts like hope, expectation, anticipation, speculation, potentiality, and destiny, all in an effort to analytically tease them apart.


The problem of actionable time, or how to create the conditions to mold, repurpose, and steer the future into particular orientations at the present, is also tackled in the book The Future of the World: Futurology, Futurists, and the Struggle for the Post-Cold War Imagination, by Jenny Andersson. In it, the sociologist centers on the problem of prediction in the aftermath of World War Two—that is, how experts and activists imagined the Cold War and post-Cold War, how they envisioned tools to act upon the foreseeable future, and the methods they devised to change that world. The book is a fascinating intellectual history of these legacies and the varieties of futurism and future-making they entail. Additionally, it has the merit of bringing together a variety of hitherto unexplored archival data.


Lastly, I began reading Brazil Apart: 1964-2019, by Perry Anderson. I have been in search of scholarly and perhaps more conjunctural accounts of the political, economic, and social events that transpired in Brazil in recent years, including the sharp turn toward far-right politics materialized in the 2018 election of Jair Bolsonaro, a fervent admirer of Brazil’s military dictatorship.
Anderson’s book is an excellent point of departure: it offers a lucid and insightful balance of Brazilian political economy since the 1990s, cutting through major macropolitical events, including the re-democratization of the country in the late 1980s; the instauration of the Plano Real in 1994, which stabilized the economy and controlled inflation; the unique combination of neoliberalism and social protection programs of the Lula years (2003-2010); the rise of Brazil’s international profile as the leading voice of the BRICS under Dilma Rousseff (2011-2016); and, finally, the gradual falling apart of the Left, the deepening of corruption investigations that put away some of the most prominent and influential figures in the country, the complete stagnation of the economy, the controversial ousting from office of the Workers’ Party, and the ascension of a new age of right-wing sympathizers. Anderson covers essential elements leading up to this “socio-political drama without equivalent in any other major state.” It is a fundamental reading to those interested in understanding the consequences of the expansion of conservative populism underway in different parts of the world today.

If you would like to contribute a book review to “On the Bookshelf” in the future, contact admin@sase.org.
Socio-Economic Review

Originating in the Society for the Advancement of Socio-Economics (SASE), Socio-Economic Review (SER) is part of a broader movement in the social sciences for the rediscovery of the socio-political foundations of the economy. Devoted to the advancement of socio-economics, it deals with the analytical, political and moral questions arising at the intersection between economy and society.

Articles in SER explore how the economy is or should be governed by social relations, institutional rules, political decisions, and cultural values. They also consider how the economy in turn affects the society of which it is part, for example by breaking up old institutional forms and giving rise to new ones. The domain of the journal is deliberately broadly conceived, so new variations to its general theme may be discovered and editors can learn from the papers that readers submit.

Chief Editor Gregory Jackson
Editors Bruno Amable | Nina Bandelj
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