

Introduction

Sari Hanafi and Chin-Chun Yi

We live in a turbulent world of social inequality, violence and injustice. Cases of severe poverty coupled with recurring outbursts of state repression, conflict, displacement, states of military occupation and spaces of exception, as well as global and local military insurgencies and resistance, abound. Despite their substantial divergences along a continuum, they occupy different points along the passage from the rule of law to the 'law of rules'. Our world is in a time of turmoil, full of Trumps and mini-Trumps, yet we believe in the potential contribution of critical sociology to address many of the above critical issues. Can these issues be addressed independently of our vision of what kind of society and humanity we want? Or perhaps independent of what kind of sociology we want?

This volume will build upon the work done through the International Sociological Association (ISA) and includes reflections on different traditions of sociology (Patel, 2009) and challenges for sociology in an unequal world (Burawoy, 2010). The volume moves beyond the realm of ideas, and well into the domain of application, with a focus on how different national and regional sociologies can circulate, exchange, co-construct, and enter into dialog and controversy. It stresses the importance of locality, translatability and social embeddedness of knowledge production, and has a distinctive, global recognition beyond the dominant West. It tackles broad theoretical and methodological issues involving empirical case studies into local knowledge to identify novel strands in theory and methodology, along with their future epistemic prospects and/or limitations.

While this volume emphasizes the power structure in knowledge production, it does not consider the relation between the centre and the periphery as one of simple one-way domination. It discusses other approaches that revolve around concepts such as multicultural sociology, post-colonial global sociology, cosmopolitanism, and multiple modernities. Contributors highlight local struggles and traditions of social philosophy in contrast with professional practice engaged in doing science in Latin America, as

well as post-colonialism in contrast with post-authoritarianism in the Arab world.

The volume also focuses on the internationalization of social science with a special effort to present its local and regional relevance. As many problems become global, international collaborations become an important academic activity in sociological production. Two processes build local engines of globalization. The first process is an institutionalization process where ‘capacity building’ becomes a reality. Through the ‘national science’ period, scientific research has been closely linked to universities, in addition to national public research organizations.

The second process at work is the building of the national scientific community. In general, this process relies on whether the political system is willing to invest in funds for research. Since the growth of a strong national scientific community requires substantial and continuous support in various terms, governments need to go beyond the nominal or minimal financial provision in order to attain the goal. Unfortunately, relatively few social scientists are involved in large international scientific projects and intellectual debates.

Three Conditions for Sociologies to be in Dialogue

This volume highlights three necessary conditions for sociologies to be in dialogue:

The first condition is to deconstruct the binary logic of the antagonistic categories, such as tradition/modernity, East/West, universalism/contextualism, religious/secular, indigenous knowledge/transplanted knowledge, empirical sociology/normative sociology, etc. Such rigid categories often lead to identity politics, which is uncondusive for sociological dialogue. Chapters 4, 5, 10, 14 and 16 provide excellent reflection on how to go beyond such dichotomous categories and to create what Nancy Fraser called a ‘field of multiple, debinarized, fluid, ever-shifting differences’ (1997: 25).

The second condition is related to the first one: the necessity to reach a cross-cultural consensus on universal concepts. If we want at the same time to be universalist and contextualist, how do we reconcile the local and the universal? If salient concepts in social science claim universality, like social class or human rights, their universality will be possible only through an overlapping cross-cultural consensus, and not by generalizing or universalizing values embedded from the Euro–American context. For instance, is the democracy

universal? Yes, it is, but not as a model to be exported (Guénard, 2016), nor as a concept with teleos, but as a historical experience (Rosanvallon, 2008) with its normativity, which results from the collective historical learning process (inherently open-ended) that can be traced back to the French Revolution, to the 1980s in Latin America, the 1990s in Eastern and Central Europe, and finally the 2010s in some countries in the Arab world. What is universal, thus, is an *imaginary* of desire for democracy, whose traces are in the slogans raised by demonstrators branding liberty, justice and dignity. Another good example is the universality of gender equality as an imaginary. It is in a sense universal, but how it is to be implemented in a specific time–space should be conceptualized, especially considering how it would enter into competition with other values, such as family solidarity. Elham Manea (2016), in her *Women and Shari'a Law: The Impact of Legal Pluralism in the UK*, criticizes legal pluralism in the UK for allowing the Muslim courts to operate as a parallel system. Even though problems occur in these courts, one will not question the virtue of legal pluralism (as a competing value) as these courts play a significant role in reducing social conflicts within the family and the community. A request will thus be raised to have more state control of these courts, rather than their dissolution. One can also think of Nancy Fraser (2012), who considers the social class issue and sharing wealth as a value competing with the meritocratic equality that is adopted by the mainstream feminism movement. What we witness today is not the crisis of the universality of concepts such as democracy or social inequality, but the crisis of imagination, i.e. how to transform the imaginary of democracy into a workable model in a given context. This normative universalism is light, and does not preclude the existence of what Armando Salvatore spoke of as ‘different patterns of civility’ (2016). Thus we need to keep the encounter between different forms of knowledge production, without framing this debate as only about emancipation from the colonial condition and Western knowledge production hegemony. We argue that the post-colonial approach is not sufficient to account for the problems of knowledge production. It should be supplemented by what Sari Hanafi calls in Chapter 11 a ‘post-authoritarian approach’. This means considering not only the impact of colonialism, but also the impact of local authoritarianism. (See Chapters 6, 7, 8, 9, and 13 in this volume.)

The third condition is the necessity to link knowledge production at the international and local levels. It should be emphasized that it is important not to oppose the internationalization of knowledge to its local relevance and anchors. Whether one likes it or not, English has become the lingua franca necessary for any conversation with peers at the global level. Publications should be both in English and in other, local languages. Sari Hanafi (2011) summarizes this dilemma as ‘publish globally and perish locally vs. publish locally and perish globally’ and has called for bridging between these two scholarly spheres

through multi-lingual publications. The call for more sociological dialogues from the publication aspect has also received voices of support from scholars in different regions. (See Chapters 2, 3, 18, and 19 in this volume.)

In brief, the chapters of this volume address the processes that tremendously impact how sociologies enter into global dialogue and mutual learning, and how sociologies converse with local public(s). Contributors come from a range of different perspectives, theoretical positions, and methodological approaches, and most importantly, represent different geographical regions of the sociological community. In this regard, all regions are represented: North America (Canada), Latin America (Brazil, Mexico and Venezuela), the European Union (Italy, Poland, Portugal and Spain), non-EU and Central Asia (Azerbaijan, Croatia, Hungary and Russia), East Asia and the Pacific (Australia, Japan, and the Philippines), the Middle East and North Africa (Lebanon, Palestine and Syria), and South Asia (Bangladesh). We regret that sub-Saharan Africa is missing in this volume.

Therefore, all these three conditions are proposed to be necessary for constructing a more appropriate framework for understanding the mix of micro and macro perspectives that characterize global sociology today. This framework should always be sensitive to power structures, from anywhere these structures may come, and always raise questions such as ‘Whose voice?’ and ‘Who becomes silent?’¹ In practical purposes, we propose a framework that is in line with the construction discussed in the *Sociological Theory Beyond the Canon* (Alatas and Sinha, 2017): reading Ibn Khaldoun along with Max Weber, Fatima Mernissi along with Nancy Fraser, and José Rizal along with Frantz Fanon, rather than only one side. In this volume, readers will find that the chapters have applied these multiple framework layers as we propose.

This Volume

This volume is divided into five interrelated parts. Below we will summarize some of the main ideas of the contributors.

Part I Trends in Internationalization of Sociology (North–South and South–South)

Paola Borgna provides an excellent example from Italy regarding the recent internationalization of Italian sociological scholarship, undertaken

in order to conform with the international academic ranking system. The academic journals act as drivers of globalization, establishing themselves as a place of dialogue and potentially international discussion. According to Borgna, in order to internationalize sociology, it needs to be thought of as *Globish*, a term coined by Jean-Paul Nerrière. He alludes to the divisive function of English in post-colonial societies; it is the language in which the educated middle class conduct their intellectual discourse, becoming 'a supra-national means of global communication'. Yet, this process does not come without secondary effects. Becoming a globalized researcher comes with a price, in terms of content. These pathways to internationalization are related to international competitiveness, and threaten to draw research away from issues and problems of local and national importance, which in turn undermines the goal of international journals of sociology of being not only global but also multicultural.

Tom Dwyer and Carlos Benedito Martins also emphasize language as a key structuring variable for the internationalization of sociology. For Brazil, this means that a first tier of internationalization occurs with other Portuguese-speaking countries. A second tier is conducted in Spanish – it involves regional neighbors and Spain. The third tier involves interactions with sociologists who use other European languages. These three tiers have their own institutions, scientific journals, and flows of students and professors. However, being part of the BRICS nations (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa), they internationalize their scholarship with mostly non-European associates. This new horizon of sociology's internationalization is mainly characterized by South–South collaboration, and the opening of lines of teaching, research and student exchange.

Dan Woodman, while acknowledging that sociology is increasingly forced to reckon with the legacy of its past (and present) in colonizing societies, proposes relational approaches that recognize old connections, and create new bridges between 'North' and 'South'. This approach goes beyond 'Southern' or 'subaltern' trends. He applied this to the sociology of generation, showing how it is possible to link the experiences of Australian youths to global trends, as current young generations around the world are increasingly diverse and interconnected. For him, however, the sociology of generations risks universalizing the experiences of the few to the many. The concept of global generations has been perhaps too simplistic, but a global dialogue about generations has the potential to forge new insights, especially if we think of universality as an imaginary.

Anna Wessely analyzes knowledge production in the post-communist era. She unfolds a very interesting, lasting debate among Hungarian sociologists as to whether Central European sociology is 'lagging behind' Western Europe's, and thus needs to 'catch up' or if there are local and regional cultures that should be taken into account. The idea of 'catching up' is closely related to the factual experiences of losing out in international competition, and the notion of progress. She argues theories should be evaluated on the basis of their heuristic value and not the location of their emergence. They may emerge in the East or the West, so the local sociology can be always in conversation with other contexts, and this is one of the major messages of this present volume to enable sociologies to be in dialogue.

Part 2 Emerging New Local Sociologies

Dennis S. Erasga argues that 'sociology by Filipinos' represents a burgeoning nativist stance, embracing the 'culture as canon and critique' standpoint. In fact, this double view of culture is due to the fact of having a deeply colonial history, and having suffered several homegrown dictatorships. For Erasga, the lived experience of Filipinos is used as a litmus test in the application of sociology as a discipline, and not the other way around. The 'culture as canon and critique' approach is thus dissimilar to either 'raw nativism' or 'reactionary indigenization' movements in social sciences that are gaining grounds in many epistemic circles in the Asian region and encouraging the identity politics in knowledge production.

Roberto Briceño-León provides an excellent survey of the development of sociology in Latin America. There have been permanent tensions between the tradition of social philosophy and a professional practice engaged in doing science. These tensions are clearly seen between offering a product that has universal validity or, on the contrary, the construction of the singular scientific object that differentiates, and sometimes opposes, any claim to universality. Briceño-León proposed a Mestizo sociology that assumes a pluri-paradigmatic position, rescuing the redeeming aspects of Marxism and functionalism, and the theories of social learning and psychoanalysis, as it has done in methodology by combining qualitative and quantitative techniques, the survey, and life stories.

Fernando Castañeda Sabido brings another example from Latin America, specifically from Mexico. For him, sociological debates about the paths of development in Mexico sparked reflections on modernity and its paradoxes,

in particular the way in which inclusion and exclusion intersect. He examines this dynamic through the analysis of a fundamental book in the development of Mexican sociology: *La Democracia in México*, by González Casanova. This book built an agenda for subsequent generations of political scientists and sociologists. There are two issues that make this book important: first, he naturalizes sociology to Mexican reality, and second, he forges the theme of internal colonialism. The last theme resonates so much of the call that Sari Hanafi makes in Chapter 11 about the importance of looking to the local dynamics, especially when the state is authoritarian.

Mikhail F. Chernysh examines the problematics of justice in the Russian society. He argues for the uniqueness of the Russian case, as social change can be regarded as a unique phenomenon of transition from a socialist distributive society to a capitalist society based on raw material production and exports. The transition created numerous points of tension and breakdowns in institutional structure. A hybrid system of institutions has emerged that symbiotically combines formal institutions and informal rules that regulate daily economic and political interactions. The informal system of institutions consisting of living 'by the notions' is undermining formal institutions and often uses them as an enforcement mechanism for informal norms.

Chih-Jou Jay Chen reviews Taiwanese sociology's road to professionalization and engagement, along with the impacts from the development of Taiwan's democratization and national identity since the 1950s. He also unfolds the debates surrounding indigenization vis-à-vis internationalization that have evolved over time, and how institutions and individuals have developed strategies to cope with them. He argues that although the debates are ongoing and unsettled, the relations between internationalization and indigenization are more of dialectic than a dilemma. They indeed coexist.

Part 3 Sociology in a (Post-)authoritarian Context

Sari Hanafi argues that the intersection between the social sciences and post-colonial studies is not without problems, and reflects a crisis among the Arab left which espouses post-colonialism as a singular perspective, and whose members distort it while projecting it into the Arab context. He highlights two features of the Arab left: firstly, the tendency to be excessively anti-imperialist, and secondly, being anti-Western. He suggests that this post-colonial approach should be complemented by a post-authoritarian approach.

While his chapter focuses on the debates in the Arab world, it conducts some comparison with Latin America.

Kheder Zakaria describes what happened to the practice of sociology in Syria during the time of the Assad family's protracted authoritarianism. In his estimation, Syrian sociology was marginalized and devalued as a science. 'Sociological research' was either directed at secondary issues, or issues in which the authorities and security apparatus showed interest. Essential social problems were neglected. Sociology was unable in this context to rescue civil rights and freedoms from the severe assault of the Syrian regime.

Rufat Guliyev reflects on another transitional society, Azerbaijan, from the communist regime to the post-communist one. Modern processes there are associated with democratization, and market reforms have exacerbated national sentiments, increased the desire for ethno-cultural identification, and increased interest in ethno-national culture among all social groups in the country. The role of national self-consciousness, expressed in reflecting the national features of life, as well as in the heightened interest in the past with all its merits and demerits, with its frequent idealization, has sharply increased. The initial feelings of belonging to a particular nation, ethnic group, and confessional community, and zealous attitude to all differences in this realm were aggravated. All these processes are expected results of the democratization of public life, and of liberation from the formerly dominant communist ideology. This author argues this ideology was incapable of harmoniously combining the two contradictory tendencies towards national self-identity and integration and unification with other peoples. With the failure of the old communist ideology to understand Azerbaijani society, one could wonder with Guliyev whether sociologists there are capable of emancipating their sociology from the persistent authoritarian context.

Jasminka Lažnjak, from a country which went through transition – Croatia – provides an interesting analysis regarding Central and Eastern European (CEE) sociology, which was marked for decades by a socialism–post-socialism dichotomy which turned the region into an 'epistemic enclave'. Beyond these dichotomies, the East–West divide produced Eastern sociology as more policy oriented, and Western sociology as more theoretically and paradigmatically oriented. This CEE knowledge production rested on social problem solving, and scientists were recruited to policy-based research, while knowledge in the West was the result of fundamental research programs. However, in the last decade post-colonial and

de-colonial options replaced and reconstructed knowledge production. Her salient analysis is based on the recent debate on the most prominent (local) theory of egalitarian syndrome, as an example of the complex and dynamic relationship between locally relevant and internationally recognized sociology, and this feeds well our reflection on sociologies in dialogue.

Part 4 When Sociology Becomes Public

Kazuo Seiyama redefines slightly the concept of public sociology in such a way that it is 'public' not because it emphasizes the relation to the public, but because it pursues 'public values'. This means that the term 'public' in public sociology is not the public as the target of addressing sociology, but as the value to be explored in sociology. He takes the welfare reform in Japan as an example of the complexity of the position of sociology compared to the other disciplines. For him, welfare is typically a sociological question in the sense that, in contrast to economics as a science of efficiency, sociology is a science searching for a desirable communal society. Arguments of how to reform the welfare system should, for him, overcome the barren confrontation of ideological positions, and explore a realistic and desirable solution. Any investigation on welfare systems should be both normative and empirical. Rethinking the reason for the revolutionary paradigm change in sociology which occurred around 1970s, it becomes clear that the social world, the research object of sociology, is a meaning world and inherently normatively constructed. Hence, sociology must be a normative, as well as empirical, science.

Terry Wotherspoon addresses what Canadian processes of reconciliation between Indigenous people and non-Indigenous people represent in the context of broader challenges associated with sociological practice and knowledge in a changing world. Sociologists are increasingly called upon to defend their disciplinary practices and the social or economic value of their contributions, while they also have obligations to diverse publics and communities. Reconciliation processes draw attention to some of these challenges; they are oriented to foster mutual respect for and understanding of relationships among Indigenous and Western knowledge traditions, histories and social circumstances, but they are grounded in contradictory relationships in which indigenous rights and status are embedded within white settler colonial structures. These circumstances, within a single national case, are strongly intertwined with factors motivating sociologists to seek ways to engage in global dialogues and establish connections

that bring together sociologies and sociological knowledge from diverse national contexts. Both cases point to the need to foster relational understandings that explore how sociological activity may be intertwined, positively or negatively, with relations of domination and subordination at both local or regional, and global levels.

Tomasz Korczyński et al. describe the production of knowledge in the public domain through the case study of Polish attitudes towards recent migration into Europe. They compare the stance of the media to that of the Polish sociological community. They argue that the ‘voice of Polish sociologists’ is a part of the critical tradition of the open society. The basic assumptions of the authors are that sociology was able to question rigid and established social hierarchies, to postulate greater equality, and to cross ethnic and cultural boundaries, as well as to defend minority rights and to request the redistribution of power. This stance is significantly different from the media discourse.

Manuel Fernández-Esquinas et al. explain the development of Spanish sociology over the last 40 years as closely linked to the construction of a pluralistic society. Through the construction of a scientific community of sociologists and professional associations characterized by a growing variety of theoretical and methodological standpoints, the authors analyze how sociology has permeated civil society organizations and established itself in the market. However, challenges and dilemmas have emerged when knowledge was transferred to a broader public.

Part 5 Hurdles for the Dialogue: Challenges of the Institutionalization of Sociology

João Teixeira Lopes et al. argue that although the institutionalization of sociology in Portugal was only possible after the revolution of 1974, it is currently characterized by a remarkable vitality, noticeable for instance in the number and diversity of the members of the Portuguese Sociological Association, as well as the participants at its national conference. However, as for other sociological communities in Europe, significant challenges have also emerged, not only resulting from the expansion and diversification of sociologists, but also from the economic crisis, the austerity policies, the growth of social science’s specializations, and policies favoring business, law, health and engineering in research and the labor markets. In spite of all these hurdles, Portuguese sociology, these authors point out, has its own singularity due to two features. On the one hand, there is a

strong associative culture (articulating training, science and research, and a variety of academic and non-academic professional profiles, throughout the Portuguese Sociological Association). On the other hand, it is characterized by openness to international dialogues, carried out with a diversity of centre and peripheries of scientific production, thus assuming an important role as a post-colonial platform between Europe, America and Africa.

Abaher El Sakka examines the practices and perceptions of Palestinian sociologists in an attempt to historicize the social sciences in Palestine, and to clarify divergent visions and positions both normatively and epistemologically. While there is a clear desire on the part of the Palestinian scientific community to be engaged with the global academy, being in occupied territories poses a serious challenge to their interaction with international colleagues.

Shaikh Mohammad Kais critically examines the nature of current problems of sociological education in Bangladesh, specifically the problematic issues of teaching sociology at a tertiary or university level. He points out the importance of challenging working conditions of the sociologists in impeding knowledge production.

Thanks

This edited book is the outcome of some of the proceedings of the Fourth ISA Conference of the Council of National Associations, under the title ‘Sociologies in Dialogue’ which was held on 8–11 May 2017 in Taipei (Taiwan). It was sponsored by the National Association Liaison Committee of the International Sociological Association and hosted by the Taiwanese Sociological Association and the Institute of Sociology, Academia Sinica (one of the leading centres for scientific research in Asia). We earnestly thank all the organizers.

Note

1 See for instance the excellent work of Vrushali Patil and Bandana Purkayastha (2018), who track the transnational assemblage of Indian rape culture.

References

Alatas, S.F. and Sinha, V. 2017. *Sociological Theory Beyond the Canon*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Burawoy, M. (ed.). 2010. *Facing an Unequal World: Challenges for a Global Sociology*. Taipei: Institute of Sociology, Academia Sinica: Council of National Associations of the International Sociological Association.
- Fraser, N. 1997. *Justice Interruptus: Critical Reflections on the "Postsocialist" Condition*. New York: Routledge.
- Fraser, N. 2012. *Feminism, Capitalism, and the Cunning of History: An Introduction*. Available at: <https://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/halshs-00725055/document> (accessed 17 February 2020).
- Guénard, F. 2016. *La Démocratie Universelle. Philosophie d'un Modèle Politique*. Paris: Le Seuil.
- Hanafi, S. 2011. University systems in the Arab East: Publish globally and perish locally vs. publish locally and perish globally. *Current Sociology*, 59(3): 291–309.
- Manea, E. 2016. *Women and Shari'a Law: The Impact of Legal Pluralism in the UK*. London: IB Tauris.
- Patil, V. and Bandana, P. 2018. The transnational assemblage of Indian rape culture. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 41(11): 1952–1970.
- Patel, S. (ed.). 2009. *International Handbook of Diverse Sociological Traditions*. London: Sage.
- Rosanvallon, P. 2008. Democratic universalism as a historical problem. *Books & Ideas*, April. Available at: www.booksandideas.net/Democratic-Universalism-as-a.html (accessed 17 February 2020).
- Salvatore, A. 2016. *The Sociology of Islam: Knowledge, Power and Civility*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.