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This 'last' issue of the E-Bulletin carries the following essays 'Beyond National Boundaries' by Surendra Munshi, Biju Paul Abraham, and Soma Chaudhuri, 'Rizal and the Sociology of Colonial Society' by Syed Farid Alatas and 'Academic Dependency and Scholarly Publishing among Social Scientists in Selected Universities in Nigeria' by Ayokunle Olumuyiwa Omobowale. The 'In Conversation' segment features Maila Stivens in discussion with Seuty Sabur, while Arnab Roy Chowdhury's reflects on the recently concluded ISA World Congress 2010.

The ISA E-Bulletin was launched in July 2005. From its inception, the document was intended as a forum in which ISA members could not only present their work but also engage in scholarly debates and discussions. The issues that have been published thus far have fulfilled the first of these functions but the second remains to be followed through. Almost six years and 17 issues later, it seems timely to think about how this document and concept can be reconfigured and taken forward both in terms of its content and its wider dissemination. To begin, a name change is crucial to reflect perhaps a new identity of the publication and the alternative I propose is 'ISA E-Forum for Sociology.' The second more fundamental change is for this publication to not just be electronic but to truly 'go digital.' For a non-print publication in this day and age, a website or a blog or 'going live' in this day and age is critical. The idea of going digital is to also allow readers to be more interactive and for their opinions and reflections to be rendered more immediately. I am also optimistic that this might be further helpful in jumpstarting a discussion forum of sorts. I expect some of these changes, in particular the name change and the digitization, to be take effect from the March 2011 issue.

I welcome your feedback and thoughts on these initiatives and, as always, look forward to your contributions.

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Beyond National Boundaries¹

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¹ Reprinted with permission from Sage, Chapter 5 'Beyond National Boundaries' of the book, *The Intelligent Person's Guide to Good Governance* pp 104-131. In Surendra Munshi, Biju Paul Abraham, and Soma Chaudhuri, 'The Intelligent Person's Guide to Good Governance' 2009 / 212 pages / Paper: Rs 270 (9788178299310), SAGE Publications.

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The landscape of governance has been dramatically transformed since the early 1990s by the process of globalisation. Moving beyond the nation-state, governance in a globalised world involves multiple actors at different levels of decision making – global, national and local. The ever increasing integration of national economies with the global economy has also considerably hastened the process of policy integration at a global level. Domestic social and economic policy no longer reflects purely national concerns. Policy is influenced and in certain cases even dictated by the contours of international treaties and agreements negotiated by multilateral institutions. This globalisation of public policy has opened up numerous possibilities while creating new uncertainties for nation states.

These opportunities and uncertainties also affect individuals who are increasingly caught up in an environment where their future is affected to an unprecedented extent by events and processes unfolding outside the borders of their nation-state.

Globalisation as a concept is still very poorly understood and responses to it vary widely. Three approaches to the process can be discerned. Some downplay its importance and point to the greater significance of regionalisation as an integrative process. Others argue that national and local institutions are still strong enough to resist any attempt to reform or change them to fit global patterns. Yet another group sees globalisation not as a novel phenomenon, but as a long standing historical process (Rosamond 2003). All these three approaches allow dealing with challenges of globalisation only partly. They do not provide for responding to all the challenges that are posed by the process. While regionalisation is an important aspect of economic integration, regional institutions are not as significant in the process as global ones. Deepak Nayyar (2006) argues that while national and local institutions in some states may be capable of responding to the challenges of globalisation, most states, particularly those in the developing world, are unable to deal with all its consequences. Treating globalisation as part

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of a historical process of integration also ignores important differences between earlier phases of globalisation and the present one. Unless states develop the capability to meet these challenges, both at the global and the national level, mere reforms at the national level will fail to achieve the objectives of good governance.

The Global Setting

The pace of globalisation has increased because of the interaction of a number of factors. Ali Farazmand (2001) argues that the most important impetus to the process has been the saturation of traditional markets and the availability of surplus funds for investment in the hands of large multinational firms. This has led them to seek greater trade and investment opportunities abroad as well as support from home governments to encourage and sometimes force through greater liberalisation in countries with restrictive investment and trade regulations. The process of globalising capital and trade has also been helped by rapid developments on other fronts. The increase in capital flows has been made possible by technological changes (instant fund transfers, secure transactions), institutional changes (shift from public ownership to private and joint ownership) and political changes (most notably the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe) (Swank 2001).

The volumes of both capital and trade flows have seen significant increases in recent years. The volume of private capital flows to developing countries alone increased to about 620 billion US dollars in 2006 as compared to about 50 billion US dollars at the beginning of the 1980s (Institute of International Finance 2007). Worldwide foreign direct investment flows have also increased quite dramatically, rising from about 134 billion US dollars in 1970

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to 1.3 trillion US dollars in 2006 (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development 2007). The total volume of global trade in goods has increased from 579 billion US dollars in 1973 to 11.76 trillion US dollars in 2006 (WTO 2007a). If trade in services is included, total world trade stood at 14.47 trillion US dollars in 2006 (WTO 2007b).

It has been argued that the greater mobility of capital and the increase in international trade have shifted the power balance in the relationship between private businesses and national governments. While those who owned capital needed government support for investment and profit when capital was relatively immobile, its increased mobility has meant less dependence on governments for finding avenues for profitable investments. Capital shifts around diverse global locations looking for profitable destinations for investment. Governments which seek to increase control over their economy risk losing investments since capital would then flow out of their countries into alternative, more liberal investment environments. This increases the pressure on countries to further liberalise trade and investment policies (Swank 2001).

The reduced role of national governments in economic policy has not been caused by the liberalisation of trade and capital flows alone. It is also a consequence of an increase in global regulation. Two of the most striking features of globalisation have been the increasing number of international agreements that impact domestic rules and regulations and the proliferation of multilateral organisations that negotiate and implement such agreements. It has been noted that these are inevitable consequences of the liberalisation of trade and investment. The liberalised flow of trade and investment creates the need for global regulations in multiple trade and investment disciplines, both to reduce costs associated with such trade as well as to resolve disputes. In the area of trade, for example, global agreements

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on the binding of tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade reduce product costs in export markets and provide a more stable trading environment for firms. Such binding of barriers also reduces uncertainties associated with rapid changes in trade policy (Trebilcock and Howse 2005). The increase in regulation has not been restricted to areas directly related to trade alone. International regulation has also increased in trade-related areas such as intellectual property rights (IPRs) protection standards and foreign investment rules. International IPR standards have been justified with the sole objective of preventing the possibility of reduced standards in one country providing an opportunity for firms within the country to sell products without paying the necessary royalties or fees to those who were otherwise entitled to such payments (Maskus 2000). International standards for foreign investment regulations have also been negotiated to ensure that domestic regulation did not result in regulations that gave undue protection to domestic firms.

There is also increasing pressure to negotiate more international agreements in areas where the negative consequences of increasing integration of global economies are most deeply felt. Kym Anderson (2000) has argued that such pressures are bound to increase in areas such as regulation of labour and environmental standards. As global trade and investment flows increase there is growing concern that this benefits states where the standards of labour and environmental protection are low. Lower standards benefit firms since it reduces cost of production and the price of products. However, it also leads to conditions under which labour is exploited or the sustainability of growth is compromised.

While global regulations are undoubtedly needed and many more are likely to be negotiated, there are major concerns regarding the consequences of these regulations that have emerged and which need to be addressed. First, there is increasing criticism of the process by which international agreements are negotiated and adopted. Second, there is

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concern that multilateral institutions which negotiate agreements that lead to increased economic integration seem oblivious to their negative consequences for some countries and regions. Finally, it is argued that those who negotiate global agreements are not held accountable for the consequences of their actions. The legitimacy of global regulation is diminished by the fact that many agreements are negotiated by ‘diplomats, bureaucrats and functional specialists’ often under conditions of secrecy. Decision making processes in various international organisations do not make enough information on proposed agreements available to citizens of its member-states. Not much public debate takes place on issues before decisions are taken. This is a reflection of the lack of a shared vision and common political culture. Global institutions can establish such processes only when there is a shared vision and a suitable culture is developed (Nanz and Steffek 2004: 317).

As the impact of global agreements on domestic regulations increases, questions regarding the impact of these agreements on its member-states are also being raised. Such concerns relate primarily to the fact that many do not seem to benefit from these agreements which do not encourage sustainable development, especially in the developing world. While globalisation is a multi-dimensional process its economic impact has been the one most directly felt. Those who favour increased globalisation for its economic implications point to the increased opportunities for commerce and the creation of new markets for products traditionally sold within national boundaries. Increasing world trade has also brought about global economies of scale and greater global competition and this in turn has led to improvements in production efficiency. Those who oppose globalisation, however, argue that it is precisely these economic implications of globalisation that are detrimental to many developing countries. The concern with greater efficiency at reduced costs sees firms either

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shifting to greater automation or transferring work abroad (outsourcing), thus creating the possibilities of social problems for both developing and developed countries.

Greater automation leads to the retrenchment of labour or reduced job creation, and in the case of outsourcing, jobs move to a country where wages are lower, leading to an unhealthy competition among countries to keep these costs low. A study of the impact of trade liberalisation on poverty levels shows that, while the data is ambiguous on whether increased poverty levels can be attributed to trade liberalisation alone, there is evidence to show that the poor in all countries are less able to benefit from the opportunities created by policy reform. It also points out that, while the negative effects of liberalisation on employment and wages cannot be proved unambiguously in all cases, evidence exists to show that it has happened in certain sectors in different countries. It is important to be aware of the impact of liberalisation on the domestic economy so that measures necessary to protect vulnerable groups are taken (Winters et al. 2003).

The impact of trade liberalisation on poverty levels and wages might be ambiguous, but there is a greater unanimity of views on its impact on the sustainability of growth. Greater efficiency and larger markets lead to overexploitation of scarce natural resources and this very often leads to rapid depletion of natural resources. Environmental experts have argued that globalisation is encouraging exploitation of natural resources and altering the environment in a manner that is unsustainable (Rees 2002). This warning has implications for nations that depend on the export of a single or few natural resources as a link to the global economy. Depletion of resources effectively reduces their ability to benefit from the economic consequences of globalisation. Indeed, the very process of globalisation might increase their marginalisation from the global economy.

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The negative impact of global regulation also raises issues of accountability. Jan Scholte (2004) points out that norms of accountability followed in domestic governance systems are not applicable in an international setting. In any democracy, those who are elected to govern are accountable to those who have elected them for their actions. While successful governance is rewarded with a renewed mandate for office, electoral setbacks follow failures. When the damage caused by poor governance can be attributed to individuals, penalties such as removal from office or prosecution might follow. International organisations, however, lack such forms of democratic accountability.

It has been argued that nation-states that are members of such organisations need to ensure greater accountability within international organisations and also be accountable themselves for positions that they take within these organisations. Domestic accountability for positions taken in international organisations also becomes relevant in the context of the evidence that liberalisation has different implications for different economies. Three major challenges face governments as they try to address concerns relating to such accountability. First, they need to be accountable domestically for the positions they take on global issues, just as on national issues. Second, they have to operate in a manner that takes into account the interests of all the people who are affected by their actions. Third, they need to be subject to international legal obligations just as their nations are subject to certain obligations under international regulations (Slaughter 2004).

Concern relating to the manner in which international organisations negotiate agreements, their lack of accountability and the negative impact of many of these agreements inevitably raises issues concerning reform. The need for more rapid integration of national economies through international regulation has to be reconciled with the need to address

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concerns that have emerged within nation states about the impact of such regulation. It is here that the role of global institutions becomes significant.

Global Institutions

Global institutions have played a significant role in the globalisation process. The impact of multilateral institutions has been felt most significantly in two areas: international trade, including investments, and international finance. International trade and investment regulations began to have significant impact on domestic economic policy with the creation of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1995. The impact of International Financial Institutions (IFIs) such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Bank for International Settlements (BIS) was felt most deeply by states that approached them for funding or had to adopt international financial standards that they had developed.

The creation of the WTO in 1995 was a significant event in the history of global institutions. Created as an organisation that would lay down the basic rules of international trade, the agreements that constituted the WTO very soon came to symbolise what was good and what was problematic about international institutions taking decisions with regard to national regulation. WTO agreements which laid down international standards for trade regulation ensured that member-states significantly reduced both tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade between themselves, creating a domestic policy environment that was conducive for foreign trade and investments. Though WTO agreements deal only with matters related to global trade, member-states take on certain obligations with regard to domestic regulation in trade and trade-related areas. This is to prevent a situation where domestic policy creates conditions in which goods and services from abroad are prevented from entering domestic

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markets in order to protect domestic industries. Such policies are not considered to be *trade creating* and are therefore discouraged by WTO agreements.

Four major concerns have arisen about WTO agreements and their impact on member-states. First, the agreements are not negotiated and adopted through a process where the democratic consent of those affected by the impact of such agreements is obtained. Most governments, particularly those from developing countries which participate in the negotiations process, do not understand the full implications of these agreements. Domestic debate on the impact of such agreements is almost non-existent. Second, the agreements are implemented in a manner that negatively affects the functioning of normal democratic processes in member states. Agreements have to be complied with, not just by national governments which negotiate and approve them but also by regional entities and local governments which may not approve of the agreements. Third, once a member-state joins the WTO it undertakes to abide by all its agreements. Even if there is a subsequent change in government the new government cannot amend its commitments under WTO agreements to take care of national concerns, unless such amendments are approved by the entire WTO membership. Since such approvals are often impossible to obtain the only option available for nonimplementation is to leave the WTO altogether. Most countries are reluctant to do so for fear of the negative implications for its international trade. They are thus forced to remain committed to WTO agreements even when they feel that the agreements are not beneficial to them. Finally, there is concern regarding the values that the WTO represents. The working of the WTO is seen to suffer from a 'democratic deficit'. Negotiations on agreements are conducted solely by government representatives without the participation of stakeholder groups. The process of resolving disputes between member-states regarding trade policies

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which have important implications for various domestic stakeholder groups are also held behind closed doors (Howse 2003).

The WTO plays a significant role in setting minimum standards not just for trade but, as noted earlier, for trade related aspects of domestic policy as well. These include such areas as IPRs, investment regulations and health and safety standards. Pressure is building to bring additional areas such as labour laws and environmental regulations under WTO agreements. It has been argued that some of these standards are First World standards made mandatory for Third World countries without any consideration of their impact on or suitability for these countries. IPR and food safety standards increase the cost of products to consumers in poorer countries and those affected by such standards have very little voice in decisions taken regarding such regulation (Busch 2003).

Such concerns also exist with regard to IFIs that play a significant role in the process of globalisation, namely, the IMF, the World Bank and the BIS. As seen earlier in Chapter 1, there is concern about the impact of conditionalities for loans imposed by the World Bank and the IMF on developing countries that accept them. These conditionalities very often stress liberalisation of domestic rules for both trade and investment. In both the World Bank and the IMF, decision-making is based on weighted voting where G7 countries have almost a 40 per cent share of the votes. In the case of BIS which sets international norms relating to bank lending across borders the core membership is again constituted by 10 member-states of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (Fратиanni and Pattison 2001). Though BIS norms are not mandatory for all countries, banks in most countries are forced to accept them because of their reliance on international banks and international financial markets for funds and other inter-bank transactions. Concerns relating to IFIs are not restricted to their prescriptions but include their lack of accountability. Josphe

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E. Stiglitz (2003b) refers to the inability of the IMF and the World Bank to fix accountability even though their prescriptions have, more often than not, exacerbated rather than solved economic crises. He argues that this inability arises from the fact that the two institutions work to achieve a large number of objectives and entrust large and diverse sets of people with achieving them. In conditions of such diffused responsibility those taking decisions often favour private interests over organisational objectives. It becomes difficult to develop systems which allocate incentives and penalties appropriately to ensure individual accountability. Carlos Castro (2004) similarly identifies in the developmental interventions of the World Bank an attempt to protect private interests. The prescriptions of the World Bank for economic growth and sustainable development stress secure property rights and the reduction of government subsidies to enable market forces to operate freely.

There are certain common themes that run across concerns raised regarding existing global institutions. The primary concern relates to the negative local impact of decisions taken by these institutions. Related to this point is the criticism that even when a negative impact can be discerned *ex ante* these institutions either ignore it or remain oblivious to it. Neither is the consultation process that precedes decisions comprehensive enough, nor are decision-making processes sufficiently democratic to make it possible to recognise and address negative consequences of global agreements. There is also the issue of accountability. Global institutions are currently structured in a manner that allows those who are entrusted with the task of negotiating global treaties and regulations to escape penalties for not implementing agreements in good faith or for negotiating bad agreements in the first place.

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Reforming Global Governance

The need for improved global governance will only increase as greater economic integration introduces even greater complexities into the globalisation process. Thomas G. Weiss (2000) argues that global governance institutions will have to move away from their traditional emphasis on inter-governmental issues and evolve participatory decision-making mechanisms encompassing regional institutions, civil society groups and private business interests if they are to be effective. Any response to the challenges of globalisation will require both the reform of existing institutions as well as the creation of new ones.

Nayyar (2002) envisages a central role for the United Nations in the new global governance architecture and calls for the reform of the organisation to enable it to play a role in international economic governance. Reforming the United Nations, he argues, should start with reforming its Security Council. Its composition reflects the post-World War II world rather than current economic and political realities. Nayyar also suggests independent financing of the United Nations and a reduction of its financial dependence on the United States to enable it to function more independently. He argues that the global governance architecture is incomplete for 'missing institutions' will need to be created to meet emerging challenges of global governance (p. 356). Moreover, he advocates the creation of three new institutions—a 'Volunteer Peace Force' to intervene in local conflicts and to cope with humanitarian crises; a 'Global Peoples Assembly', directly elected by citizens of member-states of the United Nations for ensuring that popular concerns are reflected in the work of the United Nations and an 'Economic Security Council' (ESC) which could serve both as a consultative body for international economic decisions and also as a global economic regulator (p. 360). The need for an ESC was earlier stressed by Mahbubul Haq

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(1995) who envisaged four roles for this counterpart to the United Nations Security Council. He expected it to play a leading role in responding to global economic crises, creating a system for providing advance warning of an impending crisis, ensuring adequate availability of funds for development, and also taking over ‘policy leadership on macroeconomic management’ from the IMF and the World Bank (pp. 194–97). It is significant that both Nayyar and Haq suggest a greater role for the United Nations in responding to the challenges of globalisation. This suggestion reflects a belief that the institutions that currently play a major role in setting the rules and regulations that govern the process of globalisation are too closely aligned to OECD countries. Countervailing institutions need to be created so that developing countries play a greater role in decision-making.

Apart from the creation of new institutions there is also the challenge of ensuring that existing institutions respond to national and local needs. Any reform of existing institutions involves the recognition that multiple stakeholders and multiple institutions are now critical players in the process of global governance. Global governance mechanisms need to expand in order to encompass these multiple stakeholders and institutions. Four sets of actors now play a significant role in the process of global Governance – international organisations, nation-states, private business and civil society institutions. For reforms it is also important to recognise that decision-making in the process of global governance involves stakeholders at global, national and local levels. As the process of increasing economic integration unfolds, mechanisms of global governance will have to evolve so as to ensure that the needs and concerns of stakeholders are met at all levels.

How can international organisations reform themselves so that they can meet current and future challenges? Pierre Jacquet (2007) has suggested five guidelines for international organisations: clarity of mandates, political support, coordination of action, subsidiarity and

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solidarity. Jacquet argues that international institutions are currently handicapped by the lack of clear mandates and this leads to one of the two possible undesirable outcomes. It tempts international organisations at times to interfere in areas where they cannot play any positive role. In other instances it allows them to ignore aspects of control and regulation in which they need to be heavily involved. Once mandates are clear the political support of governments and non-governmental institutions involved in domestic political processes is important for achieving greater legitimacy and acceptability.

Apart from clarity of mandates and political support, international institutions also need to coordinate their actions to ensure that multiple international agencies do not involve themselves in regulation of similar or related domains. Jacquet points to the global regulation of labour and environmental standards as one example where coordinated action could mitigate some of the problems associated with increased global regulation. The inclusion of minimum standards of environment and labour regulation in the WTO could be accompanied by the strengthening of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the creation of a new World Environment Organization (WEO) which would enable coordinated responses to emerging concerns.

By advocating the creation of a new WEO Jacquet joins Nayyar and Haq in highlighting 'missing institutions', but it is done this time from the perspective of developed countries. Problems of globalisation in these countries are related primarily to the negative externalities of lower standards in developing countries. Jacquet also argues that the principle of subsidiarity needs to be enshrined in the institutions and processes of global governance. Rather than see regional, national or local regulation as intruding on the global domain, global institutions need to recognise that there are areas where regulation is best done at more subsidiary levels. Such decentralised decision making could complement rather than

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challenge the work of global institutions. He suggests the acceptance of a principle that is enshrined in the working of the European Union and has ensured that the organisation does not interfere in matters which are best left to the member-states to address. Finally, Jacquet argues that the success of such institutions would also depend on the solidarity that they demonstrate with countries that are at the margins of globalisation, both by helping them to globalise with least pain and by not requiring them to abide by global regulations that would negatively affect them.

The suggestions for reforms made by Nayyar, Haq and Jacquet, when seen individually, seem to reflect essentially the concerns of the specific worlds that they inhabit individually. However, there are complementarities in terms of suggestions that reflect an understanding of the concerns of each other. The creation of a 'Volunteer Peace Force' that Nayyar advocates does address the concerns that exist in the First World about man-made humanitarian disasters in the Third World. Jacquet's advocacy of subsidiarity and solidarity reflects concerns in the developing world regarding undue interference by developed countries in their economic and political affairs and the marginalisation of many developing countries in a globalised world.

Responding to local and national needs addresses only one aspect of the problems caused by globalisation. The second major task that needs to be undertaken is to ensure that democratic processes that are part of decision-making in a national context are reflected in international institutions as well. Three methods by which international institutions could ensure greater legitimacy for their decisions have been suggested. The first is 'deliberative decision-making'. It is argued that since a world government is not yet in sight and global elections to select negotiators for international agreements do not constitute a practical solution, greater deliberations on issues could be a viable remedy. Knowledgeable

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independent experts could be asked to reach a consensus on divisive issues before international organisations reach agreements that have a global impact. Here the importance of technical expertise for international negotiators is stressed. There will be greater popular acceptance, it is argued, of such agreements because of public trust in independent experts who deliberate on these issues. This in turn will contribute to increasing the democratic legitimacy of global institutions.

The second method that is suggested is ‘public deliberation’. Here a ‘public sphere’ is envisaged as a wide network of citizens who use modern means of communication to form opinions on divisive issues for reaching a consensus or providing considered views that can assist in the negotiation of international agreements. Such public spheres could extend across national borders. While it is true that everybody affected will not participate in such consensus the presence of the opportunity that everybody has to participate would enhance the legitimacy of international agreements that are negotiated.

The third method that is suggested is the participation of civil society groups in international deliberations. Civil society groups could act as a ‘transmission belt’ and communicate the views of citizens to international organisations. Civil society groups here could perform two roles in this respect. They could perform the more traditional function of representing citizens’ views before international organisations in a systemic manner. They could in addition play a more novel role of explaining the constraints on decision-making at an international level to citizens and also explain the implications of agreements in easily understandable ways. These methods can, however, succeed only if certain changes are brought about to the existing mode of functioning of both international organisations and civil society groups.

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International organisations need to be more transparent in their functioning and allow civil society groups access to both documents and meetings. Civil society groups, on the other hand, need to go beyond the role of advocacy groups and be willing to take on board the diverse views of different stakeholders even if they do not go with their own views. Civil society groups that are taken over by sectional interests or are created by sectional interests need to be identified and kept away from such deliberations (Nanz and Steffek 2004).

While stressing the importance of democratising global institutions it is also necessary to address Eric J. Hobsbawm's (2004) warning of the dangers of too much democracy in international institutions. Hobsbawm points to the European Union as an example of how democracy might actually be counterproductive in certain transnational contexts. The European Union fails in the test of democracy and is widely seen as suffering from a 'democratic deficit' because of the nature of its decision making and its lack of democratic accountability. Unlike other democratic states or organisations where directly elected representatives legislate policies and laws, most decisions in the European Union are taken by the European Commission which is responsible to member-states, but not directly to the people. In Hobsbawm's view, it was this 'democratic deficit' that made the European Union successful in achieving complete economic integration between its member-states and developing as an effective international institution. The European Union was most successful at a time when democracy within it was restricted to member governments deciding on issues through consensus or qualified voting. The problem of democratising international politics became apparent the moment the European Union sought to extend the right of decisions to the public through elections or referenda. While this is undoubtedly true, it must be borne in mind that the negative consequences of the agreements of the European Union pale in comparison with the negative consequences of agreements negotiated by the IMF, the World

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Bank or the WTO. The European Union could be criticised for not involving the European public in decision-making processes or for protecting special interest groups like, for instance, European farmers. These agreements, however, have not resulted in an increase in the levels of poverty in Europe nor in a significant decline of local industry.

The role played by European governments has been crucial in ensuring that this does not happen. While they may not have directly involved their citizens in decision-making processes involving crucial decisions they have been sufficiently alert to the potential dangers of agreements and negotiated crucial amendments or 'opt outs' from agreements. It has been pointed out that national governments have ensured that agreements of the European Union are flexible enough to allow such national concerns to be addressed in the agreements (Phillipart and Edwards 1999). The European Union provides a good example of how strong nation-states could play a role in ensuring that institutions of global governance work effectively to advance and protect the interests of its citizens even if institutions of international governance are not sufficiently democratic.

A world that is becoming increasingly integrated needs strong and effective states more than ever before. The need is most acute for developing countries that have to develop both proactive and reactive capabilities to adapt to an integrated world. How can countries of the developing world respond to the process? Farazmand (2001) identifies four types of responses that developing countries can have towards integration; inaction, resistance, adoption and innovation and adaptation with resistance. The first response does not challenge the status quo and the state follows the process of globalisation, exploiting its benefits and accepting its costs. In the second response the state tries to resist the process of globalisation, often with limited success. The third response involves changing domestic structures to cope with the process of globalisation so that the state can adapt to it. The fourth option involves

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the state adapting to globalisation, while at the same time retaining the option and the ability to challenge it. Here the state develops the capability to understand the consequences of integration for its economy and society and develops and implements an appropriate response.

This need to explore options in terms of response is a theme that Nayyar (2000) has discussed as well. He recommends a strategic approach for developing countries trying to cope with the process. Two options, according to him, are available to governments. The first is a proactive one where a government frames public policy in a manner that ensures that the benefits of growth are equitably distributed. This requires countries to formulate economic policies keeping social issues in mind. The second is a reactive approach where a government identifies the negative impact of globalisation and tries to counteract it with national provisions. This could be done by increasing social spending on marginalised communities which are not able to participate in the globalisation process. He characterises this approach as ‘correctives’, and the former as ‘interventions’ (p. 19). Nayyar argues that correctives have to be formulated and implemented carefully if they are to have any impact. The primary objective of the correctives is to create markets where none exist. This involves in many cases bringing markets, both national and global, to the marginalised people or, alternatively, connecting the marginalised people with markets through the development of infrastructure that gives them physical access. It is important to ensure that existing markets are expanded to include all those who might conceivably participate. Primary education and adult literacy could play an important role in this regard. It is in this context that Nayyar brings in the role of the state. By providing the correctives and formulating the interventions the state could, he argues, ensure that disadvantaged groups are not just brought into the process of globalisation

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but also enabled to take active part in it. This applies to ensuring a balanced regional growth as well.

It is necessary for a more equitable distribution of employment opportunities and wealth. Equitable growth could reduce some of the problems of uneven growth such as the increasing migration of people from rural to urban areas and the consequent disparities in levels of growth. This could also involve increasing the assets of the poor to enable them to enter markets with their products. Nayyar suggests land reforms for increasing the asset base of the poor. He argues that in a globalised world there is a need to approach the state-market debate not in terms of state or market control since both have their own strengths and weaknesses. Both are prone to failures and the choice need not be between one and the other. The attempt should be to reassess the role of the state and its relationship with the market. Rather than competition, he calls for complementarities, developed in a cooperative manner and capable of withstanding shifts in the balance of power between the market and the state in a dynamic way. As Nayyar says, 'The real question is no longer about the size of the State or the degree of State intervention. The question now is about the nature of State intervention and the quality of the performance of the State' (p. 21).

In addition to global institutions and national governments, private business is important for improving global governance. Large multinational corporations (MNCs) are becoming ever more important in the global economy and their impact on the nation-state has been quite considerable. However, they are still primarily governed by national, not global regulation. This creates a particular problem for states that are so dependent on large MNCs for internal investment that their ability to regulate the behaviour of MNCs is circumscribed (Brean and Kobrak 2007). States often compete with each other to reduce domestic standards in order to attract additional investments. Such competition has led to the dilution of

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conditions under which investments are made and allowed corporations to play-off nations against each other in order to extract maximum benefits for themselves.

Such evasion has been to the detriment of domestic workers, environmental sustainability and state revenue. Rapid cross-border flows of capital owned or controlled by large private financial organisations has been a source of concern. Volatility in global financial markets has led to a number of economic crises in the 1990s (Mexico, Southeast Asia) and in 2000 (Argentina). There is obviously a case for regulating financial flows to ensure that uncontrolled capital movements do not lead to economic crisis (Giddens 2000a), just as there is a need for enforcing regulations meant to protect national interests.

The enforcement of international standards for global businesses, moreover, is needed to ensure that global trade and investment happens in a manner that avoids the negative effects of competition for trade and investment. It is needed to ensure that any competition for investment does not result in a dilution of standards in areas critical for sustainable development. However, the development of such global standards faces severe obstacles. It is resisted not just by corporations who currently benefit from the lack of such regulations but also by states that would see the imposition of such standards as a threat to rapid economic growth. The imposition of standards that would constrain investments by global firms could also be resisted by many developing countries that may see them as thinly disguised attempts by more developed nations to stem the flow of trade and investment towards developing nations. This reluctance to have enforceable global standards extends to areas such as labour and environmental standards that have been suggested to protect the interests of workers and the environment in developing countries.

The importance of civil society groups which have become increasingly active in global governance is in keeping with the increasing diffusion of power, away from national

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governments towards both sub-state entities (regional and local government) and also supra-state entities. Scholte (2004) argues that civil society groups have already had a positive impact on the way global institutions make policy that affects citizens of nation states. Global institutions have changed their operating practices to take into account the increasing activism of civil society groups. They now disseminate information on their activities through their websites and provide information to civil society groups in an effort to increase transparency in their functioning. Liaisons with civil society groups have increasingly become a standard feature of all international organisations. The process of involving civil society groups in global governance has both benefits and pitfalls. Though international agencies consult civil society groups, these are mostly 'Northern, urban, elite, English speaking civil-society professionals' (p. 216). They are also most active in areas such as environment protection, prevention of child labour and protection of human rights. Though these issues are of concern to developing countries, there is a suspicion that these concerns are being raised by the governments of developed countries and civil society groups to protect the interests of Western companies and their workers. There is a need to develop stronger civil society groups in developing countries who could engage with the institutions of global governance to reflect the concerns of developing countries in areas such as agriculture and the issue of free movement of labour. The need for more coordinated global action is vividly illustrated by the twin crises of high food and energy prices that the world recently faced. Faced with high oil prices governments around the world provided high levels of subsidies to biofuels, leading to a diversion of foodgrains towards production of biofuels. The effects of such diversion combined with the increasing demand for foodgrains worldwide, drove prices even higher forcing governments to impose trade restrictions to restrain prices. The twin crises could not be solved by national governments on their own for

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it required coordinated action in terms of investments in appropriate agricultural technologies, reduction of barriers to trade and reduced consumption of energy resources.

Multiple steps need to be taken to ensure that the mechanisms of global governance meet the challenges of globalisation. Existing institutional structures call for reform. New institutions need to be created to undertake tasks that cannot or should not be done by existing institutions. There is need for reforms in the governance structure of these institutions and also their decision making process. Governance structures, moreover, will need to reflect current realities by giving effective representation to developing countries. Decision making needs to be more inclusive and transparent. The challenges posed by globalisation cannot be met by global institutions alone. Nation-states need to develop the capability to understand the implications of greater economic integration and to respond in ways that protect domestic interests. Private business and civil society groups will need to play their roles as well. Involvement of a large number of actors in the process by which global regulations are framed means that the process has to be supported by democratic principles if it is to be effective. It is here that the issue of democracy becomes important.

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Rizal and the Sociology of Colonial Society

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Introduction

The Filipino thinker and activist, José Rizal (1861-1896) was probably the first systematic social thinker in Southeast Asia. While he was not a social scientist, it is possible to construct a sociological theory from his thoughts, a theory that focuses on the nature and conditions of Filipino colonial society, and the requirements for emancipation.

But why speak about the sociology of José Rizal particularly when Rizal himself did not claim to be a sociologists or a social scientist? There are at least two significant points that can be made to justify and contextualise the need for a Rizalian sociology. First of all, it can be said that there *is* a sociology to be found in the works of Rizal. If sociology is defined as the study of society in terms of social processes such as contact, isolation, competition and co-operation, or in terms of social integration and social change, the literary, political and journalistic writings of Rizal do contain sociological ideas that can be reconstructed into a sociological theory of colonial society.

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The need for the construction and elaboration of Rizal's sociology of colonial society is all the more felt when it is realised that the register of classical sociological theorists is exclusively Euroamerican, as if to say that there were no thinkers in Asia, Africa and Latin America who systematically and creatively reflected on fundamental issues of sociological concern in the nineteenth century. Here, I refer to the context of Eurocentrism.²

Most of the discourse in sociological theory is informed by the traits of Eurocentrism, that is, the subject-object dichotomy, the dominance of European categories and concepts, and the representation of Europeans as the sole originators of ideas. In most sociological theory textbooks or works on the history of social thought and social theory, the subject-object dichotomy is a dominant, if unarticulated principle of organization. When Euroamericans theorise and write on the nature of society, they are the knowing subjects. When non-Europeans appear they do so usually as objects of study of the European theorists featured and not as knowing subjects. Most students and scholars of sociology imagine that in the nineteenth century, that is the formative period of the development of sociological theory, it was only Europeans such as Marx, Weber, Durkheim and others who were thinking about the nature of society and its development and that there were no significant sociological contributions from thinkers in other parts of the world during the same period. It seems fitting, therefore, to provide examples of social theorists of non-European backgrounds

The social thinker under consideration here, Rizal, raised original problems and treated them in a creative way. He wrote on topics and theorised problems that should be of interest to those studying the broad ranging macro processes that have become the hallmark of classical sociological thought and theory. Rizal lived during the formative period of sociology but theorised about the nature of society in ways not done by Western sociologists.

² For a detailed discussion on the problems of Eurocentrism, see Alatas (2006).

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He provides us with a different perspective on the colonial dimension of the emerging modernity of the nineteenth century.³

Rizal's Sociology

Rizal was born into a wealthy family. His father ran a sugar plantation on land leased from the Dominican Order. As a result, Rizal was able to attend the best schools in Manila. He continued his higher studies at the Ateneo de Manila University and then the University of Santo Thomas. In 1882, Rizal departed for Spain where he studied medicine and the humanities at the Universidad Central in Madrid.

Rizal returned to the Philippines in 1887. This was also the year that his first novel, *Noli Me Tangere (Touch Me Not)* was published. The novel was a reflection of exploitative conditions under Spanish colonial rule and enraged the Spanish friars. It was a diagnosis of the problems of Filipino society and a reflection of the problems of exploitation in Filipino colonial society.

His second novel, *El Filibusterismo (The Revolution)*, published in 1891, examined the possibilities and consequences of revolution. As Rizal's political ideas became known to the authorities, he and his family suffered many hardships. His parents were dispossessed of their home and the male members deported to the island of Mindoro. Rizal himself was finally exiled to Dapitan, Mindanao from 1892 to 1896, implicated in the revolution that broke out in 1896, tried for sedition and executed by a firing squad on 30 December 1896 at the age of thirty-five. Rizal lived a short life but was an extremely productive thinker, unsurpassed by anyone in Southeast Asia, perhaps even Asia. He wrote several poems and

³ For an initial attempt to construct Rizal's sociology see Alatas (2009).

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essays, three novels, and conducted studies in early Philippine history, Tagalog grammar, and even entomology.

If we were to construct a sociological theory from Rizal's works, three broad aspects can be discerned in his writings. First, we have his theory of colonial society, a theory that explains the nature and conditions of colonial society. Second, there is Rizal's critique of colonial knowledge of the Philippines. Finally, there is his discourse on the meaning and requirements for emancipation.

In Rizal's thought, the corrupt Spanish colonial government and its officials oppress and exploit the Filipinos, while blaming the backwardness of the Filipinos on their alleged laziness. But Rizal's project was to show that in fact the Filipinos were a relatively advanced society in pre-colonial times, and that their backwardness was a product of colonialism.

The choice of the starting point for the construction and elaboration of Rizal's sociology is arbitrary. We may begin with a predetermined framework for what constitutes sociology as a field of enquiry and proceed to fill in the Rizalian content. Another approach, the one adopted here, would be to elaborate a specific sociological theory of, say, the development of colonial society with attention to problems identified and discussed by Rizal. I begin with Rizal's critique of the myth of the indolence of the Filipino.

The Nature of Colonial Society and the Myth of Indolence

The basis of Rizal's sociology is his critique of the myth of the indolent Filipino. It is this critique and the rejection of the idea that the backwardness of Filipino society was due to the Filipinos themselves but rather to the nature of colonial rule, that provides the proper

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background for understanding Rizal's criticisms against the clerical establishment and colonial administration. Rizal noted that the Spaniards blamed the backwardness of the Filipinos on their indolence. The Spaniards charged that the Filipinos had little love for work. As Syed Hussein Alatas noted, the unwillingness of the Filipinos to cultivate under the *encomenderos* was interpreted out of context and understood to be the result of indolence, which was in turn attributed to their nature (Alatas, S.H. 1977: 125). Rizal, however, made a number of important points in what, according to Syed Hussein Alatas, was the first sociological treatment of the topic (Alatas, S.H., 1977: 98).

In Rizal's treatment of the myth of Filipino indolence in his famous essay, "The Indolence of the Filipinos", he defines indolence as "little love for work, lack of activity" (Rizal, 1963a: 111). He then refers to indolence in two senses. First, there is indolence in the sense of the lack of activity that is caused by the warm tropical climate of the Philippines that "requires quit and rest for the individual, just as cold incites him to work and to action" (Rizal, 1963a: 113). Rizal's argument is as follows:

The fact is that in the tropical countries severe work is not a good thing as in cold countries, for there it is annihilation, it is death, it is destruction. Nature, as a just mother knowing this, has therefore made the land more fertile, more productive, as a compensation. An hour's work under that burning sun and in the midst of pernicious influences coming out of an active nature is equivalent to a day's work in a temperate climate; it is proper then that the land yield a hundredfold! Moreover, don't we see the active European who has gained strength during winter, who feels the fresh blood of spring boil in his veins, don't we see him abandon his work during the few days of his changeable summer, close his office, where the work after all is not hard – for many, consisting of talking and gesticulating in the shade beside a desk – run to watering-places, sit down at the cafes, stroll about, *etc.*? What wonder then that the inhabitant of tropical countries, worn out and with his blood thinned by the prolonged and excessive heat, is reduced to inaction? (Rizal, 1963a: 113).

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What Rizal is referring to here is the physiological reaction to the heat of a tropical climate which strictly speaking, as Syed Hussein Alatas noted, is not consistent with Rizal's own definition of indolence, that is "little love for work". The adjustment of working habits to the tropical climate should not be understood as a result of laziness or little love for work (Alatas, S.H. 1977: 100).

There is a second aspect of Rizal's concept of indolence that is more significant, sociologically speaking. This is indolence in the real sense of the term, that is, little love for work or the lack of motivation to work.

The evil is not that a more or less latent indolence⁴ exists, but that it is fostered and magnified. Among men, as well as among nations, there exist not only aptitudes but also tendencies toward good and evil. To foster the good ones and aid them, as well as correct the bad ones and repress them would be the duty of society or of governments, if less noble thoughts did not absorb their attention. The evil is that indolence in the Philippines is a magnified indolence, a snow-ball indolence, if we may be permitted the expression, an evil which increases in direct proportion to the square of the periods of time, an effect of misgovernment and backwardness, as we said and not a cause of them (Rizal, 1963a: 114).

The weakness of Rizal's argument is that he did not make a distinction between the lack of activity induced by the tropical climate of the Philippines and which he mistakenly referred to as indolence, and indolence in the true sense of the term, that is, the lack of motivation to work. Rizal's important sociological contribution, nevertheless, is his raising of the problem of indolence to begin with as well as his treatment of the subject-matter, particularly his view that indolence is not a cause of the backwardness of Filipino society. Rather it was the backwardness and disorder of Filipino colonial society that caused indolence. Indolence was a result of the social and historical experience of the Filipinos under

⁴ Indolence in the first sense, that is, the lack of activity.

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Spanish rule. Rizal examined historical accounts by Europeans from centuries earlier which showed Filipinos to be industrious. This includes the writing of de Morga. Therefore, indolence must have social causes and these were to be found in the nature of colonial rule.

Prior to colonial period, they were not indolent. They controlled trade routes, were involved in agriculture, mining and manufacturing. But when their destiny was taken away from them, they became indolent. This position reflected Rizal's concern with the state of Filipino society prior to the colonial period. Rizal noted, for example, that the Filipinos

.....worked more and they had more industries when there were no *encomenderos*, that is, when they were heathens, as Morga himself asserts...the Indios, seeing that they were vexed and exploited by their *encomenderos* on account of the products of their industry, and not considering themselves beasts of burden or the like, they began to break their looms, abandon the mines, the fields, etc., believing that their rulers would leave them alone on seeing them poor, wretched and unexploitable. Thus they degenerated and the industries and agriculture so flourishing before the coming of the Spaniards were lost...(de Morga, 1890/1962: 317 n.2).

The theme of indolence in colonial scholarship is an important one that formed a vital part of the ideology of colonial capitalism. Rizal was probably the first to deal with it systematically. This concern was later taken up by Syed Hussein Alatas in his seminal work, *The Myth of the Lazy Native* (1977), which contains a chapter entitled "The Indolence of the Filipinos", in honour of Rizal's essay of the same title (Rizal, 1963a).

I take this essay of Rizal to be the basis of his sociology of colonial society. His critique of the idea of indolent Filipinos suggests to other themes of sociological relevance which he himself developed. These are:

1. The need to critically assess dominant colonialist views, which Rizal extended to the study of colonialist history;

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2. The need to examine the real causes of the backwardness of Filipino colonial society.

Both of these themes are discussed in what follows.

The Critique of Colonial History

During Rizal's time, there was little critique of the state of knowledge about the Philippines among Spanish colonial and Filipino scholars. Rizal, being well-acquainted with Orientalist scholarship in Europe, was aware of what would today be referred to as Orientalist constructions. This can be seen from his annotation and republication of Antonio de Morga's *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas (Historical Events of the Philippine Islands)* which first appeared in 1609. Morga, a Spaniard, served eight years in the Philippines as Lieutenant Governor General and Captain General and was also a justice of the Supreme Court of Manila (Audiencia Real de Manila) (Morga, 1890/1991: xxxv).

Rizal republished this work with his own annotation in order to correct what he saw as false reports and slanderous statements to be found in most Spanish works on the Philippines, as well as to bring to light the pre-colonial past that was wiped out from the memory of Filipinos by colonization (Rizal, 1890/1962: vii). This includes the destruction of pre-Spanish records such as artefacts that would have thrown light on the nature of pre-colonial society (Zaide, 1993: 5). Rizal found Morga's work an apt choice as it was, according to Ocampo, the only civil history of the Philippines written during the Spanish colonial period, other works being mainly ecclesiastical histories (Ocampo, 1998: 192). The problem with ecclesiastical histories, apart from the falsifications and slander, was that they "abound in stories of devils, miracles, apparitions, etc., these forming the bulk of the voluminous histories of the Philippines" (de Morga, 1890/1962: 291 n. 4). For Rizal,

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therefore, existing histories of the Philippines were false and biased as well as unscientific and irrational. What Rizal's annotations accomplished were the following:

1. It provides examples of Filipino advances in agriculture and industry in pre-colonial times.
2. It provides the colonized's point of view of various issues
3. It points out the cruelties perpetrated by the colonizers.
4. It furnishes instances of hypocrisy of the colonizers, particularly the Catholic Church.
5. It exposes the irrationalities of the Church's discourse on colonial topics.

While space does not permit us to discuss all of these points, an example would suffice to illustrate Rizal's position with regard to the reinterpretation of Filipino history: on the point of view of the colonized in a section where de Morga discusses piracy perpetrated by the Moros of Mindanao, Rizal notes that:

This was the first piracy of the inhabitants of the South recorded in the history of the Philippines. We say "inhabitants of the South: for before them there had been others, the first ones being those committed by the Magellan expedition, capturing vessels of friendly islands and even of unknown ones, demanding from them large ransoms.

If we are to consider that these piracies lasted more than two hundred and fifty years during which the unconquerable people of the South captured prisoners, assassinated, and set fire on not only the adjacent islands but also going as far as Manila Bay, Malate, the gates of the city, and not only once a year but repeatedly, five or six times, with the government unable to suppress them and to defend the inhabitants that it disarmed and left unprotected; supposing that they only cost the islands 800 victims every year, the number of persons sold and assassinated will reach 200,000, all sacrificed jointly with very many others to the prestige of than name Spanish Rule (de Morga, 1890/1962: 134 n.1).

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Rizal goes on to note the Spanish plundering of gold from the Philippines, the destruction of Filipino industry, the depopulation of the islands, the enslavement of people, and the demoralization of the inhabitants of the islands had never been seen as misdeeds among the Spaniards (de Morga, 1890/1962: 134 n.1).

Rizal's Assessment of the Real Causes of Backwardness

Rizal noted that the 'miseries of a people without freedom should not be imputed to the people but to their rulers' (Rizal, 1963b: 31). Rizal's novels, political writings and letters provide examples such as the confiscations of lands, appropriation of labour of farmers, high taxes, forced labour without payment, and so on (Rizal, 1963c). Colonial policy was exploitative despite the claims or intentions of the colonial government and the Catholic Church. In fact, Rizal was extremely critical of the "boasted ministers of God [the friars] and *propogators of light(!)* [who] have not sowed nor do they sow Christian moral, they have not taught religion, but rituals and superstitions" (Rizal, 1963b: 38). This position required Rizal to critique colonial knowledge of the Filipinos. He went into history to address the colonial allegation regarding the supposed indolence of the Filipinos. This led to his understanding of the conditions for emancipation and the possibilities of revolution.

The Enlightenment and Emancipation

Rizal was in Spain at the time the country was being challenged by Enlightenment ideas. At the Universidad Central de Madrid, where he was enrolled, Rizal witnessed controversies between liberal professors and staunchly Catholic scholars (Bonoan, 1994: 13). As a result, Rizal began to develop greater commitment to the idea of the freedom of thought and inquiry (Bonoan, 1994: 17). In a letter to his mother in 1885, Rizal states:

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As to what you say concerning my duties as a Christian, I have the pleasure of telling you that I have not ceased believing for a single moment in any of the fundamental beliefs of our religion. The beliefs of my childhood have given way to the convictions of youth, which I hope in time will take root in me. Any essential belief that does not stand review and the test of time must pass on to the realm of memory and leave the heart. I ought not to live on illusions and falsehoods. What I believe now, I believe through reason because my conscience can admit only that which is compatible with the principles of thought...I believe that God would not punish me if in approaching him I were to use his most precious gift of reason and intelligence (Rizal, 1959: 224, cited in Bonoan, 1994: 19).

The backwardness of colonial society is not due to any inherent defects of the Filipino people but to the backwardness of the Spaniards, including the Church. Emancipation could only come from enlightenment. Spanish colonial rule was exploitative because of backwardness of the Church in that the Church was against enlightenment, the supremacy of reason. The European Enlightenment was good for Filipinos, while Church was against it because it established reason as authority, not God or the Church. Thinkers such as Marx, Weber and Durkheim were products of Enlightenment but recognized that reason had gone wrong. Modernity which was a creation of reason was unreasonable because it was alienating, anomic and ultimately irrational. It is interesting to note that Rizal who was also writing in the nineteenth century had a different attitude to the Enlightenment and to reason (Bonoan, 1994). His writings do not show disappointment with reason and he was not dissatisfied with modernity in the way that Marx, Weber and Durkheim were. This is probably because for Rizal, the Philippines was not modern enough and was kept backward by the anti-rational Church.

This results in the emergence of the *filibustero*, the “dangerous patriot who should be hanged soon”, that is, a revolutionary. The revolution, that is, breakaway from Spanish rule and Church is inevitable and the only means of emancipation. Rizal’s second novel, *El*

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Filibusterismo (The Revolution) is a prescription for revolution. The *Noli Me Tangere (Touch Me Not)* of 1887 suggests the need to displace the civil power of friars. This can be seen in the way the characters are presented in the novel. The villains were the Fransiscan *padres*. But the civil and military power exercised by the Spanish Captain General, a colonial officer, is rational and progressive. Elias, a noble, patriotic and selfless Filipino dies in the novel, while the indecisive aristocrat Ibarra survives. In the sequel, *El Filibusterismo*, there seems to be a shift in Rizal's thinking. The villains are the Dominican priests as well as the Captain General who turns out to be a mercenary. The revolution fails, reflecting Rizal's assessment of the readiness and preparedness of the Filipinos for revolution. He saw those who would lead a revolution as working out of self-interests rather than on behalf of a national community (Majul, 1999: 19). Rizal was reluctant to join a revolution that was doomed to failure due to lack of preparation, the egoism of the so-called revolutionaries, and the lack of a cohesive front. Nevertheless, his very actions and writings were revolutionary and he was executed for treason against Spain.

Rizal's thinking of the plight of the Filipinos was not detached from his concerns with the rationality of Christianity. This was because the Catholic Church was a fundamental part of Spanish colonial rule in the Philippines. Rizal's sociology of colonial society at the same time provides us with an account of the complicity of the church in the exploitation of the Filipinos, and the need for the church to be influenced by the ideas of the Enlightenment

Conclusion: The Meaning of Alternative Sociologies

An autonomous social science tradition is defined as one which raises a problem, creates concepts, and creatively applies theories in an independent manner and without being dominated intellectually by another tradition (Alatas, 2002: 151). Social scientists that

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operate within such a tradition are practitioners of what I call alternative discourses in the social sciences. With reference to the Asian context, I had previously defined alternative discourses as those which are informed by local/regional historical experiences and cultural practices in Asia in the same way that the Western social sciences are. Being alternative requires the turn to philosophies, epistemologies, histories, and the arts other than those of the Western tradition. These are all to be considered as potential sources of social science theories and concepts, which would decrease academic dependence on the world social science powers. Therefore, it becomes clear that the emergence and augmentation of alternative discourses is identical to the process of universalizing and internationalizing the social sciences. It should also be clear that alternative discourses refer to good social science because they are more conscious of the relevance of the surroundings and the problems stemming from the discursive wielding of power by the social sciences – and with the need for the development of new ideas. Alternative is being defined as that which is relevant to its surroundings – is creative, non-imitative and original, non-essentialist, counter-Eurocentric, autonomous from the state, and autonomous from other national or trans-national groupings (Alatas, 2006: 82).

The example of the works of José Rizal has brought out a number of features of autonomous or alternative discourses in sociology. These can be listed as follows:

1. Attention to Rizal suggests alternative research agenda, undetermined by interests in the world social science powers. On the agenda would be research topics such as the study of laziness and indolence, and the ideologies around them; and the study of religious revival in the context of various types of solidarity or social cohesion and state formation.

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2. Attention to Rizal also reverses the subject-object dichotomy in which the knowing subjects in social thought and social theory are generally Western European and North American white males. In this paper, however, Rizal are not regarded as mere sources of data or information, but are seen as knowing subjects providing us with concepts and theories with which we may engage in the reconstruction of reality.
3. Attention to Rizal therefore suggests the need to replace the domination of European-derived categories and concepts with a multicultural coexistence of the same. The idea is not to displace European-derived concepts but to create the conditions for concepts from various civilizational backgrounds to be known and utilised.

The idea behind promoting scholars like José Rizal and a host of other well-known and lesser known thinkers in Asia, Africa, Latin America, Eastern Europe as well as in Europe and North America, is to contribute to the universalization of sociology. Sociology may be a global discipline but it is not a universal one as long as the various civilizational voices that have something to say about society are not rendered audible by the institutions and practices of our discipline.

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Academic Dependency and Scholarly Publishing among Social Scientists in Selected Universities in Nigeria⁵

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Abstract

In recent times, an overt reality in Third World academy is increasing dependency on the First World. Recently, with the introduction of the impact factor system, the consequent categorization of journals and other dissemination outlets on the basis of the “local” and “international” has further structured scholarly dissemination outlets unequally. Within the last one decade, international publication has become an official regulation that scholars have to satisfy in most Nigerian universities. The study attempted to investigate the possible implication of knowledge dissemination dependency on social science scholarship in Nigeria. The study was carried out in three of the Nigeria’s foremost Faculties of the Social Sciences including the ones of the University of Ibadan, Ibadan; University of Lagos, Lagos and Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife where indepth interviews were conducted. The data generated were subjected to content analysis.

⁵ An earlier version of this paper was presented at the II Workshop on Academic Dependence “The Challenge of Constructing Autonomous Social Sciences in the South”, Mendoza, Argentina 3-6 November 2010.

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Introduction

As far back as the 1960s, following the classic contributions of the dependency school of thought propounded by Latin American social scientists (Kapoor 2002, Howe 1981), the social reality of Third World social science academic dependency has dawned on many Third World scholars. Notable social scientists such as Alatas (1974, 1972) described the impact of Western social science scholarship on the Third World as depicting the “the captive mind” while Claude Ake (1979) described Western social science as imperialistic. Both scholars described the imperialistic nature of Western social science scholarship, which has also been diffused, adopted and internalised by many Third World scholars. Western scholarship rather attributes Third World underdevelopment to primitiveness thus foreclosing the debilitating effects of colonization and neo-colonization on the Third World. The use of Western theories, methodologies and applications in social research in the Third World therefore makes Third World scholarship a disadvantaged partner in its dependent relationship with First World scholarship, even as the traditions and cultures of the Third World are generally explained within the precincts of the “coarse”. The consciousness raised by the dependency school generated ground breaking researches and findings emphasising the pivotal role of indigenous culture in the sustenance of Third World (Africa in particular) social structure. Consequently works such as that of Nigeria’s Professor Akiwowo on the *Asuwada* Theory of Sociation were published (Akiwowo 1986a, 1986b).

Against the initial, though limited successful advances made at finding alternative channels of dissemination for Third World scholarship through local channels with international patronage (e.g. CODESRIA’s *Africa Development* and University of Ibadan’s *African Notes*), Third World social science dissemination outfits are now quite increasingly disadvantaged and side-lined in the scholarly world. They are increasingly taking on the toga

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of the “substandard” as against the notions of “high” quality attributed most especially to journals located in the Western world. This has of course further entrenched what Alatas (2003) described as the global division of labour in academics where Third World scholars remain dependent on the First World not only for ideas and their media, education technology, research grants and skills (p. 604), but also for the dissemination of research findings that will be considered of good quality. Hence Arowosegbe (2008:23) rightly states:

Importantly, one major area of Africa’s dependence has been in knowledge production, appropriation and dissemination, a situation, which undermines the continent’s ability to maximise its democratic potentials and development agenda...This is reflected mainly in the notion that Europe and North America largely define and must continue to determine the orientations and research directions governing the social science vocation together with the modes of engagement within its respective disciplinary fields. Instances of this dependence are found not only in the theories, paradigms and methods of seeking knowledge that dominate the fields of enquiry and practice but also in the kind of literature and scholarship that define the various disciplinary vocations.

Lately, the seeming exclusive preserve of Western scholarship to determine quality of dissemination outlets has been and is being depicted in the dichotomy of the local-international dissemination outlets and the impact factor system. The impact factor system attempts determining the scholarly quality of journals and other dissemination outlets globally (see Punjabi 2010, Beigel 2009, Brumback 2009, Pringle 2008, Luyt n.d.). In fact, Garfield (2003: 365), emphasising the importance of the impact factor system claims that:

It is very easy, in many countries, for entrenched researchers to hide their ineffectiveness by publishing in local journals with little or no external peer review...

This notion, of course, represents the conviction of those favouring the global assessment of the quality of journals and other publishing outlets using the impact factor system and indeed

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publication in journals of high impact factor is also an integral consideration in the ranking of universities aside other considerations such as international faculty.

This therefore somewhat explains the reason for a change from the primary focus of academic scholarship in Nigeria (especially as regards scholarly publishing). Up to the late 1990s, the scholarly focus was principally quality research and publishing of findings (both empirical and theoretical) irrespective of the geographical location of journal or book publisher. The recent trend has been the emphasis on so called “international publication” by university administrations and managements. Of course, the context of “international publication” gives preference to journals and book publishers located in the Northern hemisphere such that academics whose works are published in Western scholarly dissemination outlets (including journals and book publishers) somewhat attract admiration within the Nigerian academic circles.

The current emphasis on international publication has brought a new dimension into the social relations of knowledge production and dissemination in the academia such that the Nigerian academic community is dependent on Western publishers for the dissemination of research findings that would be adjudged of good quality within Nigerian social science circles. Seemingly, this type of academic dependency is a basic feature of educational capitalism that has become the bedrock Western educational system (see for example Peters 2009, Peters and Besley 2008, Benner 2003), standardising its publishing channels through the impact factor system and thus bringing the global academy and channels of knowledge dissemination under the domination of Western academy at the expense of Third World journals and scholars (Beigel 2009, Alatas 2008, 2003, Arowosegbe 2008a, 2008b, Ekeh 1980, Offiong, 1980).

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The focus of this paper is the possible implication of knowledge dissemination dependency on social science scholarship in Nigeria. Thus, the research (1) examines the social relations of the quest for international publishing, (2.) finds out the implication of international publishing on local social science dissemination outlets, (3) probes the implication of international publishing on the career of social scientists and (4) concludes and proffers a possible solution to the international-local dichotomy challenge in social science scholarship in Nigeria.

The study was carried out in three of Nigeria's foremost Faculties of the Social Sciences including the ones at the University of Ibadan, Ibadan; University of Lagos, Lagos and Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife where indepth interviews were conducted. In each University, interviews were conducted with junior and senior academics (i.e. Junior Cadre: Assistant Lecturer to Lecturer 1 and Senior Cadre: Senior Lecturer to Professor), members of the Faculty Promotion and Appointment Committee in each Social Science Faculty and the editor of at least one journal domiciled in each Faculty of the Social Sciences. A total of 25 in-depth interviews were conducted. Data collected were subjected to content analysis.

Social Relations of the Quest for International Publishing

Dissemination of research findings in scholarly outlets remains an essential and integral part of academic development. Research and dissemination of findings of course develops, sustains and gives the academic world its vibrancy and dynamism, which have enhanced the World's development. Research findings left un-disseminated may not be worth more than a scribbled note left on the reading table or placed among books in the shelf. Once a valuable research has brought forth interesting findings, an academic seeks to publish. Ideally, an academic desires to regularly research and disseminate/publish findings. In fact, within

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academic circles, the saying “publish or perish” holds true and drives an academic who is worth being recognised among the peers of academics and also desires career progression to regularly design and conduct researches and publish findings in good dissemination outlets.

Within the last one decade in Nigeria, the international-local dichotomy in dissemination outlets has raised academics’ consciousness beyond just publishing irrespective of the standard and global location of journals, book publishers and other scholarly dissemination outlets. This is due to the institutionalisation of international-foreign publishing requirement by university administrations. For example, Nigeria’s premier university, the University of Ibadan, revised its promotion guideline in 2004 giving preference to considerable publication in foreign journals as requirement for promotion to the senior cadre (including Senior Lecturer, Reader (Associate Professor) and Professor). I was a doctoral student at that time and I could recall that many scholars who were affected overtly and covertly protested and accused the University Senate and Management of embarking on a witch-hunting exercise. Still, many accused the professors that made and approved the decision as the privileged class who had “climbed up the ladder and had removed the ladder so that the junior ones would not be able to climb up”. Some others claimed it was the handiwork of senior professors at the verge of retirement who aimed at retaining their jobs on contract by denying qualified scholars promotion to the rank of full professors. A subsequent promotion guideline in 2007 modified the context of the “international” but emphasised the need for foreign publication still. The promotion guideline states thus in bold fonts:

Though journals of international standard may not necessarily be location bound, the fact remains that all the journal articles of candidates should not be totally local. A reasonable number of articles should, at least, be published off-shore and should be international. This means that some of the journal articles should be published outside the country...A candidate being put up for promotion to the grade of Senior Lecturer and up to the grade of Professor should have a reasonable

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number of journal articles published outside the country. (University of Ibadan 2007: 5.)

Indeed, a basic feature of this regulation is the emphasis on publication beyond Nigeria's boundaries. Interviewees opined that insistence on foreign publications has direct relationship with the need for quality. Thus giving insight into what informed the regulation, a professor in the University of Ibadan states:

There has always been emphasis on international publication. But the new rule is because of some academics who are not ready to publish even locally. Some float journals to publish themselves and earn promotion. When they become professors, the journals die. In order to forestall this and raise the standards of publications among academic staff members, the University now emphasises international publishing more than ever before.

IDI/University of Ibadan, Ibadan/04 August 2010

Likewise another professor at the University of Ibadan states:

The world is a global village. A professor in the University of Ibadan should also be recognised as one globally. The reason for insistence on foreign publication is for quality control. Many people are not working thoroughly. The review process of foreign journals is very thorough. The review process for journals located in the United States of America, United Kingdom and other Western nations is usually very thorough. I once sent an article to an Australian journal. The review process was hectic. They called me several times to follow up the review process. There was little access to the internet. At the end, when the publication eventually came out, I was very delighted...Many people wrote me asking for offprints. Many also referred to the work.

IDI/University of Ibadan, Ibadan/26 July 2010a

At the Obafemi Awolowo University, a respondent states:

The way and manner publications are handled in Nigeria is below global standard...Due to the economic situation of the country, most of the hitherto well established publishing outfits have folded up therefore leaving the publishing environment in a bad state. In view of the on-going policy of my university, it is obvious that local publishing has

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been relegated to the background and thus, the in-thing is foreign publication.

IDI/Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife/06 August/2010

Finally, a social scientist at the University of Lagos further gives insight thus:

...as an academic, we are required to publish, not only locally, but also internationally. At a certain level in your career as a lecturer, for you to move forward or get promoted, there is a number of publications you must have in international journals and if you do not have it you would not be able to move forward [i.e. be promoted] and that is why every academic will endeavour to publish in international journals because it is one of the requirements...most lecturers appreciate it because it makes one a 'global-person' [someone who can be reckoned with globally], that one is not just a local champion. If one is able to get ones work in an international publication, it makes you confident that you are accepted not only in your locality, but abroad, so that people outside the country can see your works, they can cite you [i.e. as a point of reference] and it is good for you as an academic.

IDI/University of Lagos, Lagos/27 July 2010a

Quality assurance is a major factor for preference for foreign publishing outlets. The interviewees unanimously agreed that foreign publications and especially those published in Western countries are of better quality. The quality is reflected in the review process that is often described as rigorous, presentation of methodology and research findings and the quality of print. Whereas most Western journals publish without asking authors to pay a dime, a common feature of most journals in Nigeria is the payment of manuscript processing fees (between ₦ 1,000 (\$6) and ₦ 2000 (\$13) depending on the journal) and publication fees (ranging between ₦ 5,000 (\$33) and ₦ 40,000 (\$270) depending on the journal) by authors whose manuscripts are being reviewed (processing fee) and/or have been accepted (publication fee). Due to the fact that these journals are self-financed, they can hardly survive if authors are exempted from the payment of processing and publication fees. More often

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than not, journals are undersubscribed as libraries and many academics could hardly invest in regular subscription for journals due to economic constraints. Thus, publication of journals is hardly a profitable endeavour. Of course, this has implication for objective review processes as regards quality assurance in the production of many journals.

Indeed, there are many journals in Nigeria's academic circles that have survived the test of time and have remained relevant internationally; many others however fall within the precincts of the substandard. Journals deemed as substandard are often sarcastically termed. At the University of Ibadan, such journals are called *Agbowo*, *Dugbe* or *Ajgunle* journals. In real terms, Agbowo, Ajgunle and Dugbe are social spaces/communities that have taken slum-like nature and have fallen within the precincts of the substandard and underdeveloped. Agbowo is a community just across the University of Ibadan. Though a recent development, the failure of town-planning officials to enforce proper planning in housing arrangement has turned Agbowo to a slum-like environment. Ajgunle was a slum in metropolitan Lagos, Nigeria. It was a place depicting a peak of human degradation where residents lived in an overpopulated filthy environment. Dugbe was a major market in the city of Ibadan attracting customers from all over Southwestern Nigeria in its heydays. At its peak, the market depicted a rowdy and filthy environment. The market was eventually moved to a new location and renamed Aleshinloye market in the 1990s. The real-life social situation of the "conceptualised" terms of *Agbowo*, *Ajgunle* and *Dugbe* used sarcastically to describe journals that are considered substandard even before the institutionalisation of the "international" regulation, by Nigerian academics therefore describe the untoward quality of such journals.

Attempt at ensuring Nigerian scholars disseminate findings rather in high quality journals informed "international" and in fact "foreign" regulation at the pain of stagnancy in

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career progression if unachievable. This is tied to the notion that foreign and in fact Western journals are of high quality. Indeed, this overtly and grossly observation shows the degree of dependency in formulating journal standard. Attention is not on how the right standards could be set domestically for journals' evaluation and standardisation. Rather, the focus is on where the journal is domiciled. Hence, at the University of Ibadan for example, academics must compulsorily indicate the country of domicile of the journals where they have published in their curriculum vitae, while virtually all other universities studied indicated the volume of publications that must be foreign or "off-shore" in promotion regulation guidelines.

Foreign publishing has thus suddenly become a "status symbol" indicating the quality and "class" of an academic's pedigree and career. In the quest to satisfy "international-foreign" regulation many thus opt for online journals and journals domiciled abroad (especially in South Asia) that charge as much as \$500 and more. The situation is back to "square one" as many of such journals do not also dwell essentially much on quality. Even authors are asked to nominate their reviewers and manuscripts are sent to the nominees. The insistence on international publishing without clearly institutionalising acceptable standards has encouraged a new phase of academic capitalism where seemingly substandard publishing outlets located abroad simply make huge profits out of scholars quest to be published internationally at a fee. Quality is again thus compromised while the work, which has not been subjected to adequate quality control, is ironically accepted as "international" and thus, sufficiently good for career progression.

Whereas the proponents and implementers of the "international" rule in scholarly dissemination may have rightly done so in order to achieve quality control and decorum in scholarly publishing, it also shows a carry-over of superiority Nigerians generally concede to whatever is foreign (or imported) and especially Western, irrespective of its actual quality.

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Indeed, the “international-foreign” regulation expressively grants preference to publishing outlets outside Nigeria with grave consequences to local journals and other publishing outlets. This we now turn to.

International Publishing and Local Dissemination Outlets

The codification of the international publishing rule seemingly presents and institutionalises the dominance of international journals and other publishing outlets. It further entrenches a centre-periphery structure in scholarly dissemination outlets. Western journals are appreciated as the major and best journals with high impact factors while those of the Third World are the inferior, depending on the First World journals for standards. And since local academics seek acknowledgment and acceptance of their scholarship through publishing in Western journals that are considered top-of-the-grade, the local dissemination outfits are exposed to possible abandonment and reserved to receive low quality manuscripts. According to the editor of one of the leading Social Science journals in Nigeria:

My experience is not really good. We receive a lot of manuscripts that are not good. The insistence on offshore has not stopped the manuscripts from coming. But many of them are not good. Another problem here is peer review. People are not ready to review. It is possible that the good articles are sent outside while those that are rejected are brought back in...We cannot publish as at when due because we do not get good manuscripts...

IDI/University of Ibadan, Ibadan/26 July 2010a

Another interviewee corroborated the assertion above thus:

Preference for foreign publishing has reduced demand for local works drastically while foreign works are promoted. Authors’ patronage of local journals has fallen in favour of foreign journals because they feel publication of their manuscripts in foreign journals brings them more recognition and better prospects. Thus, the publication of local journals over the years has reduced because of low patronage.

IDI/Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife/10 August/2010

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Still another social scientist states:

The implications of foreign publication regulation on local journals are enormous. Positively, it may encourage local journals to enhance the quality of the local journals. Negatively for example at the University of Ibadan, scholars have little credence for local journals. Scholars hardly patronise them as outlets of first choice. Local journals stand the possibility of dying out...In the last one decade it has been challenging for local journals because many scholars are not patronising them and many of them are not even online. Many have stopped publishing regularly because of low patronage. The cost of production has also increased and many local journals now charge exorbitant fees that also discourage local scholars. For example, the first time I published my two articles in a local journal, I paid only ₦ 4000 [\$12] each. Now the same journal charges more than ₦ 30,000 [\$ 202]. In another journal where I paid ₦ 10,000 [\$67] to publish, just about 5 years ago [2005], the publishing fee has increased by between 70% and 75%.

IDI/University of Ibadan, Ibadan/26 July 2010b

A clear reality and consequence of foreign publication regulation is that local journals will continue to lose patronage as scholars opt for foreign journals. Indeed, going by simple socio-economic rules, the loss of social value will negatively impact local journals as they lose competitive demand to the foreign journals. Once again, therefore, knowledge produced in the Third World, if accepted as sufficiently good, becomes knowledge raw materials driving the First World scholarly dissemination industry. As the Western journals with good impact factor continually receive competing manuscripts from all over the world, their editorial processes are able to identify the best out for publication through rigorous review processes. As the best journals, they are thus the prime targets of libraries, scholars and other audiences who would seemingly validate their collections, researches and scholarly inputs through copious references to the papers published in the journals. The combination of all these would continually enhance their (Western journals) impact factor while local journals move to the doldrums. The process looks quite objective. It is however made possible by the

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relegation of local journals by university administrations, consequent disenchantment with local journals and their untoward conceptualisation within the precincts of the substandard; consequent loss of attraction of good quality manuscripts and thus loss of patronage by local scholars who desire to be read beyond the confines of the “local”. The preference for foreign journals especially as regards point of first and preferred manuscript submission and publication negatively impacts local journals, further impairs their quality, makes the chances of satisfying the requirements of good/competitive impact factor almost impossible while they continue on the descent to collapse; first starting with irregular publishing till they cease printing. Thus, supposedly hitherto good local journals die in the Third World. Not necessarily due to lack of local expertise and scholarship, but due to competition with more technological advanced, financially viable and supported First World journals that have been globally sanctioned as the standard through the impact factor and consequent Third World university management and scholars’ preference for them. Once again, the continued outward supply of “knowledge raw materials” (i.e. data and manuscripts from the Third World) snuffs out “knowledge processing and producing factories” (local journals) in the Third World. When the processed knowledge (i.e. peer reviewed and accepted manuscripts) are eventually produced outside their primary sources, the end-product (i.e. published articles) also remain largely out of the reach of local scholars who may be oblivious to the findings sourced from local data but published in the Western world. Even when they are aware, perhaps through the internet, the cost of access is often prohibitive. And thus again, lack of access to current literature impairs the quality of their productivity and lessens the chance of getting published in foreign journals that are considered of good standard. This of course has implications for the career of local social scientists. This we now turn to.

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International Publishing and the Career of Social Scientists

Beyond the primary goal of contribution to knowledge, a common reality in global scholarship is that publishing has implication for the career of scholars. The notion of “publish or perish” simply means an academic who fails to publish puts his/her career in jeopardy. Increasingly, new standards are being created and publishing just anywhere is increasingly being discouraged. In place are regulations stating just where to publish, preferably putting in consideration the preference for the “international” and “impact factor”. Thus, international publishing is a challenge that Nigerian scholars have to surmount.

According to a respondent:

...the implication of international publishing is positive in the sense that it enables us to know the standard that is always acceptable in the foreign areas so that the local community can benefit and again it enables one to know that he is accepted internationally and his work is accepted internationally. It has a kind of symbolic impact on the writer in terms of being accepted as a scholar... if you are not able to publish either in the local or foreign journal there will be stagnation. Recently, the person may not be able to advance beyond the level of a senior lecturer. That is where he is going to be, he would not be promoted to a professorial level if he does not have publications in foreign journals to his credit, so if you are not writing, that is the easiest way to perish in the academics

IDI/University of Lagos, Lagos/27 July 2010b

Still another respondent states:

International publishing has both positive and negative implications for the career of social scientists. Those who publish in foreign journals will be known and recognised through their works published especially outside their immediate environments. But these ones may not contribute to knowledge in the immediate environment. They may be celebrated outside, but they will have little relevance locally. Unfortunately many of the foreign journals are locally unavailable...Publishing in foreign journals has positive implication for career progression. It enhances quick rise as at when due. But publishing in only local journals translates to no promotion in line with the new

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promotion requirements. To move from one stage to another there are certain requirements, which must be satisfied. These requirements strategically include publication in foreign/international journals.

IDI/University of Ibadan, Ibadan/22 July 2010

Furthermore, another social scientist states

It has a very high value, for the fact that it enhances promotion, compared to domestic publication...when you publish internationally your promotion is faster. And because of this, people would prefer to send their publications outside, so foreign publishing is highly valued...The basic fact is that in Nigeria we believe in paperwork, everything here is paperwork and before you can get promoted. We give more value to articles that come from outside than inside. So if people want to assess articles, they can throw away domestic articles or publications and take foreign publication because they know that foreign publication is more accepted outside especially in terms of its credibility...

IDI/University of Lagos, Lagos/13 August 2010

Another interviewee also states:

Once a work has been published in an international journal, it opens doors for research, recognition and collaboration with other scholars outside ones locality. It brings progress in the career of scholars and also brings about increased association especially with those outside the country who might not know you personally but like your work...There is no great fear of career retrogression even though publication in foreign journals takes a long time. For example, I submitted a manuscript to a foreign journal in 2006. It was accepted for publication only recently this year [i.e 2010].

IDI/Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife/2 August 2010

Further corroborating the assertion above, yet another respondent states:

The implication of publishing in foreign journals is just fantastic. If a local scholar publishes in an international journal, it is a boost for him. It means he can compete internationally. It is also a measure of satisfaction seeing someone has cited one's work. A scholar who publishes regularly in international journals experiences rapid career progression...The main disadvantage of publishing only in foreign journals is that it takes a long period of time to publish in these journals. It takes an average of 3 to 5 years from the period of manuscript submission to actual publishing. [With such a long period of waiting], a scholar who is promotion minded may not have enough publication to move to the next level.

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Hence he continues patronage of local journals whose publication period are not always more than one year...For those who do not publish in foreign journals, they will remain local champions. This may not mean they are not good scholars, the only disadvantage is that they may not be regarded as world class scholars because they may not be read beyond their immediate scholarly environment.

IDI/University of Ibadan, Ibadan/26 July 2010b

The interviewees generally acknowledged international publishing as having the potential to “internationalise” local authors, enhance possible collaboration with foreign scholars and boost career advancement. Of course, since local publication outlets are continually debased, continual publication in local journals means the career of a social scientist is deemed within the precincts of the “local” with little global/international worth. In his/her institution and among comperes, his/her intellectual worth is confined within the precinct of the local with little or no respect irrespective of the quality and quantity of publications as long as his/her publications are all local. Thus, in reality publishing in international/foreign journals certifies the competence of scholars. International/foreign journals that convey such honour and prestige on scholars are not those based in Third World countries of the Southern hemisphere. They must be journals of international repute located in the Northern hemisphere. Of the 2178 journals listed in the Social Science Citation index, none is domiciled in Nigeria. Likewise, except for three journals located in South Africa (including *Lexikos*, *Perspectives in Education* and *South African Journal of Psychology*), no other African journal was found good enough to be included (see Thomson Reuters 2010 at http://thomsonreuters.com/products_services/science/science_products/a-z/social_sciences_citation_index). Journals located in developed countries of the Northern hemisphere have become those whose standard have been quantified through the impact

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factor and they are the ones that actually seemingly “certify” the scholarship of local social science scholars in the Third World.

It should be noted however that “certification” in this sense is relative. A scholar who publishes in high impact factor international journals may still not be celebrated within his discipline depending on which journal he/she has published. Nigerian (in fact African) scholars hardly publish in their respective core disciplinary journals. Rather, there are many Nigerian sociologists, political scientists, psychologists, economists, demographers, mass communicators etc. who publish in African Studies journals and other multidisciplinary journals other than the core disciplinary journals. Career-wise, even though Nigerian scholars publishing in African studies and multidisciplinary journals may be celebrated locally as international scholars, in reality, they are transformed into African studies and “multidisciplinary” scholars in international realms. As sociologists, psychologists, economists, political scientists, demographers etc. and in general, social scientists, they are of little relevance internationally.

Thus, increasingly the Nigerian/African social sciences are debased even as local social science journals increasingly lose out in the global competition for scholarly relevance. Many aspiring local scholars suffer double jeopardy of failing to publish in standard international journals and having to continually publish in derided local journals who suffer quality loss due to undue competition with foreign journals that are able to attract the better manuscripts. This new phase of academic imperialism increasingly puts the career of the “local” scholar on the line even as Nigerian social scientists who are able to publish in non-core disciplinary journals have their core-scholarship reframed within the precincts of area studies/multidisciplinary scholarship. The international-local dichotomy is indeed a challenge that must be addressed.

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Conclusion and Way Out

Increasingly, scholarly dissemination outlets located in the developed nations are being accepted as the standard and those that are qualified to be international indeed. Since failure to publish internationally in good quality journals attracts sanctions, which include most especially career stagnation in terms of promotion, scholars strive to publish in foreign journals by all possible means. Aside from the fact that this phenomenon has impacted negatively on local journals, the desperation to publish internationally at all costs has also evolved so called international journals that publish manuscripts for a fee even when standard review processes are hardly followed. Nevertheless, they are accepted as “international” still in local circles. Other scholars are also able to publish more in area studies and multidisciplinary journals at the expense of seemingly “abdicating” the social sciences their core areas of training, specialisation and scholarship. For fee charging “international” journals whose review processes are below standard, the articles published there may not attract career advancement globally in real terms. They are presumed to be publications with low quality still, by the more serious minded scholars. Huge fees may have been paid; such publications will not enhance scholars’ careers still beyond the local realm. Area and multidisciplinary journals of adjudged international reputation may enhance the scholarship and careers of Third World/Nigerian social scientists, but the scholars will be limited still because they will not be considered as core social scientists but social scientists with scholarly skill in African studies and multidisciplinary issues as the case may be. Thus, among the compeere of international social scientists still, they will be relegated.

The Nigerian social science scholarship is at a precarious state. The dichotomisation of the international-local scholarly dissemination outlets and consequent institutionalisation

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of foreign publication policy at the pain of career stagnation has negatively impacted local journals as scholars rather send their manuscripts to foreign journals as preferred dissemination outlets. Local journals thus continually lose in the competition with their better funded and seemingly more advanced counterparts in the First World. As local journals continue on the downward slope to collapse, dissemination outlets that may present counter and/or alternative view from the Third are actually dying. The death of local journals is tantamount to loss of voice of Third World social science scholarship. They now have to depend on First World dissemination outlets for their thoughts and voices to be heard. Of course, more often than not, they are heard in the streams of First World discourse devoid of local originality. Indeed, this further entrenches the dominance of the developed world even in scholarly dissemination in the new world order. Hence, Nigerian and Third world social sciences will remain dependent and peripheral, always bending to the scholarly expectations of journals in the developed world that are adjudged of high impact factor and of good standard.

Nevertheless, it is important to state that Nigerian/Third World academy of social scientists must find a way out. The responsibility of stock taking and quality assurance should not be abdicated to social scientists in the developed world. Third World national social science associations and academic faculties should also take the front stage in standardising local journals for quality assurance with the aim of making them globally competitive and providing the essentially needed alternative dissemination outlets of global standard. It must start with the enhancement of the so-called local journals. Just as a respondent states: “we must recognise that we cannot come out of dependency without improving our journals and promoting them. Quality and standard must be improved. We need a lot of investment of time and efforts to improve the quality and sustenance of local journals” (IDI/University of

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Ibadan, Ibadan/04 August 2010). University administrations must support and promote local journals even in promotion activities. This will enhance local content in scholarly dissemination and evaluation of scholarship. It will also attract good quality manuscripts that could be published as local journals may regain relevance as journals of preference and “first submission” once again. Finally, as much as local journals should be put on the internet to widen their coverage and enhance access and patronage, there should be collaboration between social scientists in the Southern hemisphere. The exchange of scholarship within and among developing world social scientists will further enhance the quality of scholarly output and journals in the Third World.

Above all, it is important to note that the global academy is one, but Third World scholars are disadvantaged and unequally placed vis-à-vis their First World counterparts. The unbalanced placement is further entrenched through the debasement of Third World journals even in the Third World. The one-some global academy ought to emphasise scholarly dissemination both locally and internationally. A scholar’s contribution should have relevance both locally and internationally. This of course could be achieved through the promotion of local dissemination outlets alongside the international. Thus, Third World scholarship would become both globally and locally relevant and acceptable.

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In Conversation with Maila Stivens

Interview by Seuty Sabur on November 9, 2010 in Singapore

Maila Stivens obtained her Ph.D. in social anthropology from the London School of Economics, the University of London. She is currently the William Lim Siew Wai Visiting Fellow in the Cultural Studies program, National University of Singapore. She was previously Director of Gender Studies at the University of Melbourne. She has taught anthropology at University College, University of London and gender studies at the University of Melbourne at both undergraduate and post graduate levels. Her research interests include globalisation, modernity and postmodernity in social theory, especially relationships with gender and childhood, the position of children, especially in the Third World, gender, relations globally, global/transnational feminisms, and human rights, with special reference to gender. Her main publications include *Why Gender Matters in Southeast Asian Politics* (editor, 1991); *Malay Peasant Women and the Land* (with Jomo Sundaram and Cecilia Ng, 1994); *Matriliny and Modernity: Sexual Politics and Social Change in Rural Malaysia* (1996); *Gender and Power in Affluent Asia* (jointly edited with Krishna Sen, 1998); and *Human Rights and Gender Politics: Asia-Pacific Perspectives* (edited with Anne-Marie Hilsdon, Martha Macintyre and Vera Mackie, 2000).

Seuty Sabur graduated in anthropology from Dhaka University. She obtained her second MA from Hiroshima University, Japan. She is pursuing her doctoral degree in sociology at the National University of Singapore. For the past few years her core research interest has been the 'Metropolitan Middle Class of Bangladesh' – their lifestyle, changing gender role and their social and transnational networks. Her core teaching interests include the following: Critical social theories, Methodology, Gender and Anthropology.

Seuty Sabur (S.S): How did you come to be involved in Anthropology?

Maila Stivens (M.S): Originally my interest was piqued as a ten year old by travels from England to Australia via West and South Africa. So I thought I would like to do anthropology when I got to Sydney University. An academic careers adviser there, however, told me that I could not possibly be an anthropologist because I was 'a girl', 'and you have to be 'tough', a

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'bit of a boy scout' and 'like camping'. This discouragement only increased my resolve, and the story was good fodder for later feminist anthropology groups that I joined.

After the honours year in anthropology, I embarked on a two-year study of middle-class kinship in Sydney, interviewing 70 families in in-depth interviews for what was then an 80,000 word thesis for a Masters. I was inspired by the studies of kinship in London by Raymond Firth and his colleagues, and Peter Willmott and Michael Young at the Institute of Community Studies, and interested in the then very much-neglected middle classes. Tiring of the sexism of Sydney University, I decided to put all my field notes into a trunk and to set off back to England, where I worked for the Institute of Community Studies in Hampstead as a team leader/interviewer. I ended up writing up the thesis first in London and then on the slopes of the Sumatran Mt Merapi volcano, where my partner Joel Kahn was doing his fieldwork for a Ph.D on Minangkabau at the LSE. I had studied Indonesian and Malay studies at the University of Sydney, as part of my degree, and greatly enjoyed Michael Swift's anthropology lectures on the Malay peasantry, so this was something of a closing of a circle. In Sumatra, I became very interested in matrilineal social organisation and its implications for women's situation, so I decided later in the 1970s to do a Ph.D on this at LSE and returned to the Minang 'daughter' society, Negeri Sembilan in Malaysia, for fieldwork there.

S.S: So your book on matrilineality, *Matriliny and Modernity*, was the product of your field work in Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia?

M.S: Yes. This was not simply an academic exercise, however. I was a member of several discussion groups including the feminist group the London Women's Anthropology Group, and the group which became the editorial collective of the journal *Critique of Anthropology*;

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the latter included postgraduates from the various bits of London University where anthropology was taught. A number of matriarchy study groups had sprung up in the UK and they were very hopeful that anthropologists studying matrilineal societies would tell them that such societies were fully-functioning matriarchies. I was invited to address some of these groups, but they got very sad and disappointed when I delivered myself of the pronouncement that while I thought such female-centred social organisation could on occasion confer considerable advantages, even a version of 'autonomy', Negeri Sembilan could not be seen as a matriarchy, a mirror image of 'patriarchy' (a concept about which I have many reservations). Not surprisingly, the invitations gradually dried up. There are anthropologists like Peggy Sanday (writing on Minangkabau), however, who are still very optimistic about the possibilities for women's autonomy within matrilineal orders.

S.S In essence, you problematised the concept of women's autonomy. I had similar problems in articulating ideas of affluent middle class women's autonomy, given the patriarchal structure in the Bangladeshi context. It was tricky and it may even seem like someone trying to defend patriarchy by valorising women's autonomy within that structure. But I argued that these women are the pivot of the family, maneuvering the social relations – reconfiguring patriarchy.

M.S: The effects of uxorilocal residence can be very interesting, with men marrying into their wives' village or clan section, and being strangers in their wives' locale. In Negeri Sembilan for example, women were the 'owners' of formalised land titles and houses within what I saw as a reconstituted matrilineal social organisation following the British colonial incursions. I did indeed see such practices as conferring a range of social advantages and even on occasion

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independence and autonomy, even while the rural economy was fading away. I was also interested in how such female-centred organisation was always viewed in the literature as anomalous and unstable, a deviation from an expected male-centred social and gender order. But it has struck me, and others of course, that many rural dwellers in contemporary global contexts are living a version of these kinds of arrangements, with older women often left in charge of the rural economies, while men and younger women are absent on labour migration.

S.S: You then began teaching anthropology at University College, London? What was that like?

M.S. Yes, for ten years, from 1977 to 1987. There I inaugurated what was as far as I know the first dedicated, single-lecturer feminist anthropology course in the UK. There was a similar course in Cambridge but that was delivered by a consortium. My course, “Gender and Society”, was very popular, and lots of fun.

S.S: Who were the members of the ‘London Women’s Anthropology group’?

M.S: It was probably a bit of a floating population but it included Elisabeth Croll, Janet Bujra and Patricia Caplan. We approached all the women staff in anthropology departments in the London University colleges to join us in discussing women’s issues and they all refused except for Phyllis Kaberry. She was the most wonderful woman, very warm and funny. She had done pioneering work on women in West Africa and Papua New Guinea. She was a reader at UCL at that time, while Mary Douglas was professor. One of those who refused,

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said something like, if I recall it correctly “I did it all on my own; I don’t understand why do you need a group.”

S.S: That implies that the idea of sisterhood was non-existent for these scholars.

M.S: They were from the pre-Second Wave Feminism generation, of course, and anyway worked in a very individualistic system. This is very much back with us, not that it ever really went away except for some small sections of academia, notably within feminist circles

S.S: I am trying to feel the vibe of activism during the 1960’s and 1970’s. I am trying to understand the trajectory of anthropology as a discipline. It is always intriguing to engage in a discussion with anthropologists from different generations, not to mention the difference in geographical location. To put it simply, how individuals with different ontological positions create or contribute to varieties of epistemologies.

M.S: It was an interesting time. People were energetically engaged in various intellectual collaborations. As I said, I was part of the discussion group that became the founding editorial group of the journal *Critique of Anthropology*: I was also, later on, involved with the Subordination of Women project at the Institute of Development Studies, Sussex, headed by Kate Young which is credited with inventing GAD – Gender and Development. Kate, Olivia Harris and Felicity Edholm, within the *Critique of Anthropology* group, produced the influential article ‘Conceptualising Women’. Olivia and Kate later moved away from *Critique*, arguing that it was not feminist enough. Olivia was interviewed some years ago, and

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said that she had actually then moved on from feminist anthropology to other things after some years, however. Later in the early 1980s, I also belonged to a British Sociological Association group run by Haleh Afshar, which produced a series of edited collections mainly dealing with the Women in Development/ Gender and Development field.

S.S: I was about to ask what went wrong after the vibrant 1960's and 1970's. Because I do understand the historical context and under which circumstances that type of scholarly comradeship was possible. I won't be wrong saying that intellectually, one couldn't ask for anything more than living those moments, having so many interesting individuals as colleague. But by the end of the 1970's many of these schools of thought are seen by some as fragmenting. How do you read that era now?

M.S: Are you asking about Critique of Anthropology, because it of course went on to become a very well-established journal?

S.S: I am asking about the British trend in general.

M.S: It is essentially what everybody has written about, isn't it? You had a growing series of postmodern and postcolonial challenges to the notion of universal woman, patriarchy. All those challenges, however, complicated in very interesting ways some of the claims made by some of the branches of the women's movement and produced new versions of postmodern politics. To do them justice, feminist anthropologists were always standing to the side saying it is 'complicated', and arguing for gender relations rather than women being the object. I remember our groups arguing very strongly that gender relations are relational. We were, I

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suppose, going against the radical feminist arguments about women, patriarchy and men and finding ourselves somewhat marginalised within some feminist circles at that stage. But feminist scholars have of course continued to try to work in collaborative ways. For example, in the Asian Studies field, the Women's Caucus, later Forum, within the Asian Studies Association of Australia has provided an energetic collaborative focus for conferences and publications on women in Asia —and in the Nordic countries the Gendering Asia network operates in a similarly energetic way.

S.S: After UCL, you moved back to Australia in 1988?

M.S: I moved to Melbourne University to head the Women's Studies, later Gender Studies program. This program was pioneered by a group of highly energetic and committed women including Patricia Grimshaw, the noted historian, and Norma Grieve, from Psychology. They had lobbied hard over a number of years for an interdisciplinary program, which was finally established formally in 1988. They, with a group of sympathetic academic continued to be a great support to the program. In terms of research, I continued my work in Malaysia, following up on the former rural dwellers, who were now joining the newly developing middle classes. I had Australian Research Council money to research into issues of public and private among these newly affluent classes, interviewing members of the new Malay middle classes in Penang and KL. So this was another turn of the circle, back to the middle classes. That work in turn has sent me back yet again to looking at issues of family and 'family values', which I have been working on both in the Southeast Asian context and globally.

Because of my work on the new middle classes, I was also approached as part of the 'New Rich' project at Murdoch University to co-edit the *Gender and Power in Affluent Asia*

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volume, with Krishna Sen. This was another rewarding collaborative project. A main aim was to document and analyse some of the relationships between gender and the shifts of power accompanying Asia's new affluence - a term we preferred to the 'new rich'-- by concentrating on the reworkings of 'public' and 'private'. We weren't looking at the 'effects' on 'women' of the dramatic economic and social changes in the region, nor did we want to 'add women and stir'. I emphasised how I saw the modernising and globalising of Asia as systematically gendered processes, with gender relations central to the making of middle classes, modernity and globalisation in the region; and I saw representations of gender as occupying a central place in the contests about the meanings and identities accompanying these processes.

As part of all this work, I also collected a great deal of material on children and childhoods, and most recently I have been drawing this together into a project on the cultural politics of new childhoods in Singapore and Malaysia, developing Sharon Stephens' key point that 'the child' and childhoods have become increasingly powerful focal points of contests around national, racial, ethnic and class boundaries. I have been exploring the extensive moral 'panics' around children in these countries, and documenting the ways in which a range of social groups, institutions and agencies, including children themselves, imagine and theorise these new childhoods, and the political workings of these imaginaries in the New Asia.

Those themes about 'engendering' knowledges within an Asian context have been major themes in my research. In writing about the gendering of Asia I have been very interested in the adventures of the concept 'gender' in Asia, and the epistemological arguments about what term to use in various Asian languages. Madhu Kishwar has written about what she sees as the one way traffic in the label 'feminist' in South Asia (Why I do not

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Call Myself a Feminist, *Manushi*, No. 61, Nov-Dec 1990), I think those movements are more complicated than the one-way movement she alleges, however, especially when you look at the long history of women's movements understood very broadly. But it is clear that gender has often been re-read as 'women' especially within the gender and development 'industry'.

S.S: I always find it interesting how radical approaches like 'Gender and Development' are appropriated by UN agencies, how women's movements have been consumed and bureaucratised by these agencies. How would you problematise the symbiotic relations among local and global development agencies? What would be your position regarding universal human rights?

M.S: I co-edited a book on 'Human rights and Gender Politics' when a group of us in Melbourne were struggling with these issues. We started out doing that book because we were appalled by what was happening in the former Yugoslavia. We were watching TV and weeping at the revelations about rape camps and ethnic cleansing; at the same time we were highly sceptical about the widespread western angst about how such things could happen in the 'civilised' world. But I soon became interested in why feminists were homing in on human rights discourse as a pre-eminent global space for feminist action, and why there was a resurgence of these universalist claims more generally, just when many feminist intellectuals and activists had become very wary about universalising discourses and claims made for 'universal woman'. It was clear that this was part of a highly significant reassertion of universalisms: the slogan 'Women's Rights are Human Rights' was part of a larger body of similar claims to 'human rights', with many struggles being renamed as human rights claims, including feminisms, disability rights, children's rights, indigenous people's rights,

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queer rights and so on. Many of us wondered if the women's human rights push was simply a neo-colonial move, an attempted reinvention of a left politics in crisis. One answer to that question is to move beyond the polarities of the sterile arguments about human rights/universalism versus particularism cultural relativism, to look at how claims to rights are embedded in highly specific local contexts and struggles, which have their own very specific histories. Diane Elson (one of the original members of the Subordination of Women group) has underlined how human rights has 'no final and completely fixed meaning, so it can be understood in ways that are consistent with a post-structural feminism committed to continual contestation and disruption, provided that the latter also recognises the importance of a commitment to equality' ('Women's Rights are Human Rights': Campaigns and Concepts', in Lydia Morris, ed. *Rights: Sociological Perspectives*, London: Routledge, 2006.) These ideas have been complemented by work on the possibilities of transversal politics and grounded cosmopolitanisms, which hold out many optimistic scenarios about the future of gender struggles. Such work can provide very helpful frameworks for thinking about the relationships between local and global NGOs.

If you want to be depressed, however, you can follow Angela McRobbie's and Rosalind Gill's arguments about a postfeminist subjectivity having taken over, leaving feminists little discursive space but the profoundly problematic reflexive modern 'choice'. The West has been flooded with media discourses and ideologies all proclaiming that we are living in a postfeminist age, complete with versions of raunch culture. Nonetheless, there is great enthusiasm for versions of women's rights movements in Asia at least, and many gender studies programs are flourishing there too. Many of my students in Melbourne doing gender studies, many from Asia, for example, have also been very enthusiastic about gender studies. They realised that they were surrounded by claims that women 'had come a long

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way': girls had been doing better in school than boys in Australia and elsewhere; women formed a large proportion of the students entering the university, and there is a substantial increase in white collar women in general, not least in Asia. Francis Fukuyama even told us that the 'future is female' and Manuel Castells argued that we were amidst a gender revolution. But my students knew that they were soon coming up against all sorts of glass walls and ceilings. There is an interesting problem here, how far this postfeminist sensibility can be understood to be at work globally; while there are long and complex histories of women's movements globally, most places did not go through the specificities of second-wave feminism at the time that women in Euro-America, for example, did; young women's enmeshment in the global consumerism at the heart of ideas about the 'smart', 'savvy', 'sexy' and 'spirited' 'babe' of postfeminist discourse has its own very specific, local histories.

S.S: But be it anthropology or gender studies, I think we are more aware about our positionalities, which intersection we are coming from. I think this awareness can provide a glimmer of hope. People like Gayatri Spivak, Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Uma Narayan, Lata Mani, Kumkum Sangari, Gloria Anzaldúa and Audre Lorde all of them questioned the authority/domination of white middle class women inside the feminist movements. And we saw how these scholars advocated for particular historicity, intersectionalities. I am in my 30's and I want to be hopeful about these changes.

M.S: I am interested to know whether you are hopeful.

S.S: We are working for the knowledge producing industry at the end. I don't really think we can escape the production system. When one is being active in the feminist movement on the

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ground, one can't help but become pragmatic. No matter what one's ideological inclination is – towards Marxism or post-structuralism or post-feminism – one needs a strategy to continue activism. And this strategy involves funding. Choices have to be made whether one wants to approach international activists, or accept the fund from 'liberal' donor agencies. One cannot escape the logic of capital in our time.

M.S: Women have forced all kinds of political spaces open. On the other hand, same-sex struggles have been having a tougher time making such political spaces, given the legal and social strictures so many faces. Some feminists have argued that extreme pragmatism is the best way to go, to deal with, and within, the state. This question of strategy vis-a-vis the state was an abiding concern within second-wave feminism, with accusations of liberal feminism leveled against those who chose such paths. But if you look at some groups, like the 'Sisters in Islam' in KL, they have managed to achieve an enormous profile by being very careful, persistent and strategic in plugging away, making claims for rights carefully grounded in dialogues with local 'culture'.

S.S: I was reading Saba Mahmood's *Politics of Piety: the Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject*. And she talks about how human agencies are created through submission/bodily practices. This probably presents us with a picture of how feminine power can work within a given system.

M.S: Again, we can come back to the initiatives of proponents of grounded human rights or grounded cosmopolitanisms, working on very carefully thought through, reflected- upon

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versions of rights claims. This is a very different vision from those promoting a grand anti-patriarchal theory of women's human rights, for example.

S.S: I have one last question for you. If you had to summarise your life, how would you describe yourself as a feminist/anthropologist/feminist anthropologist?

M.S: That is a very difficult question. I did spend more than half of my teaching career in the Gender Studies Program at the University of Melbourne, rather than in an anthropology department. One does not go into teaching in feminist anthropology or gender studies and expect a particularly quiet life—not that any academic situation today represents anything like that medieval ivory tower/cloister model. Feminist anthropology and gender studies have both provided intellectual excitement; gender studies has provided some freedom from disciplinary turf wars, but it usually also provides a measure of everyday stress, given the tenuous position that many women's/gender studies programs more generally have had to contend with, and the ongoing tensions around a politically-engaged scholarship. We had a thriving one in Melbourne University, with large numbers at both undergraduate and graduate levels, including Ph.Ds. But the university had a restructure combined with a budgetary crisis, so the program was moved a number of times in as many years, and it is not that thriving anymore. In protest, the students even produced a highly professional musical about the restructure model, the 'Melbourne Model', in which an imagined Director of Gender Studies was one of the stars! They very clear-sightedly did not see Gender Studies as a great career move in the corporatised university. I think one real problem with this kind of

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corporatisation is that many people and departments in self-defence return to strict disciplinary boundaries. This has often been the case in Australia and the UK.

But I definitely see lots of vigour and enthusiasm about gender issues in different places, not least in the contests about names for the programs – ‘Women, Gender and Sexuality studies’ is a common template today showing the expansion of the original briefs. There is always been a great enjoyment in having young and enthusiastic women and men coming to do gender studies. I found some of the young men quite touching – about ten percent of the classes were male. I imagine it took some courage for eighteen men in a class of hundred and eighty to turn up in large lecture theater: some told me that they wanted to understand this feminism that seemed so important to their girlfriends – I hope they then saw it had something to do with them as men, too; and the gay men were very anxious to explore issue of gender and sexuality. So you have a significant and interesting group.

SS: Thank you very much for you time.

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Reporting a Conference: XVII ISA World Congress of Sociology (Gothenburg, 11-17 September 2010)

A ‘Don Quixote’ in the Middle of Intellectual Inferno: Travels and Travails of a ‘Third World Sociologist’⁶

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Introduction

This paper is intended to be a deep academic reflection and introspection on the recent ISA XVII World Congress of Sociology, which I have attended. The problem associated with these kinds of pieces is, however, the impossibility of writing them cloaked by the “rhetoric of impersonality” (Berger 1990) so often associated with the standard canon of professional academic publications in the social sciences. Without adapting such a style of writing, I probably put myself at the risk of not being accepted as a serious scholar by both peers as well as professional sociologists. Yet, fully aware of such a misreading, I cannot help but suspend those fears at the moment to blur those hermetic boundaries deliberately created between different styles and genres of academic writing. More so because, every bit of

⁶ My sincere thanks to ISA RC-24 (Environment and Society) who partially funded me to attend the ISA XVII World Congress 2010, to Professor Vinita Sinha who provided me a generous opportunity to write in this ISA E-Bulletin, and to Christopher Navarajan Selvaraj for the time that he takes to review my paper each time with pleasure. “Aristotle almost said, friendship is the highest good” (Rabinow 1989).

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information, thought and suggestion that I will present in this paper, inadvertently has to be skimmed from heterogeneous and unreliable sources such as the fading memory and the highly subjective and interpretive experiences that I have of the conference; therefore, writing such an objective piece will not be much helpful anyway in maintaining the veneer of a ‘dis-embedded’ experience. Furthermore the cracks, ambivalences and disjointedness so typical of miscellaneous and stray thoughts are clearly visible in this paper.

Therefore with all its caveats and novelties (if any), this will be, unapologetically, a ‘fuzzy’ piece which borders upon multiple genres of writing – of reportage, of travelogues, of itinerary, of academic writings, of prose, of poetry and of ‘hypomnemata’(Foucault 1984), of self-organization of memory and of self-reflexivity – all too self-consciously designed and purposefully done in a way to challenge the hegemonic, ‘narrative structure’ and ‘narrative strategies’ (Bhaya Nair 2003) of academic social sciences, both of ‘western’ and ‘non-western’ varieties.

The ‘Gothenburg Spirit’

The XVII International Sociological Association world congress was held in Goteborg or Gothenburg, in Sweden from 11th to 17th July. The overarching theme of the conference was ‘Sociology on the move’. Besides the American Sociological Association conference, the ISA world congress is considered as one of the must attend conferences in the life of an academic sociologist.

The city of Gothenburg where the conference was organized is in itself an interesting place by virtue of its prolific history of anti-capitalist and social democratic traditions (Milner 1989): most recently exemplified by its civil society’s active participation in protest

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movements at the EU summit protest in 2001, better known as the Gothenberg riots (Wahlstrom and Osskarson 2006), and the pirate demonstrations that were organized more recently in 2006. Moreover, Sweden has a proud 'democratic' history originating from the Second World War when it 'chose' 'neutrality' in the war and social democracy over Nazism. This was a 'tipping point' that further decided and reinforced its warless history and its social democratic rule in the following years in a 'path dependent' manner (Milner 1989).

The striking 'national romantic' and 'neo-classical architecture' of Gothenburg city is a treat for the eyes. However, apart from these glittering facades of bourgeoisie and middle class aesthetic sensibilities, the over-crowded proletarian wooden quarters in the city district Haga is a must see for the sociologists. Moreover, situated at the heart of the Scandinavia, between the major capital cities, Gothenburg is dubbed as the 'event capital of Europe'. The excellent night-life of the city and the amicability of its denizens are collectively termed as the 'Gothenburg Spirit'. All these specialties make it further a fascinating location at which to organize the ISA World Congress.

'The ISA XVII World Congress of Sociology'

The ISA World Congress is regarded as one of the two largest sociological conferences (the other being annual conference of the American Sociological Association) in the world. It is a gala event, with a scholarly and a carnivalesque temperament, where sociologists from all over the world present their work.

In terms of the quality of papers presented, it is certainly an excellent place to acquire knowledge and to comprehend the directionalities of the 'sociology on move'. It is also one of the best places to encounter the varieties of 'cutting edge' research that is taking place throughout the world in the discipline of sociology. If I were to enumerate the 'Functions of

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World Congress' (a la Stinchcomb's *Functions of Classic*, 1982), the ISA World Congress of Sociology plays many functions for those who actively take part in such a congregation of 'academic theology', although not all the functions are intensely academic.

Those more academic functions include learning about the new frontiers of research, novel theorizations, and methodologies that are being worked upon in the 'scientific' field of Sociology. Further, these papers are presented amidst an erudite scholarly audience coming from the various parts of the world, including those 'star theorists' whose works we admire and regularly cite in our references to render our texts academic credibility.

A cluster of prolific scholars in the field of sociology such as Alain Touraine, Ulrich Beck, Manuel Castells, Sylvia Walby, Peter Evan, Hans Joas, Wolfgang Knobl, Jeffrey Alexander and many more were present. I have mainly attended sessions with RC-24 and RC-35, which were very well organized and where the papers presented were most interesting. The best part of the conference was, however, the plenaries in which the most famous and the erudite in the field presented their work. The 'author meets critic' format proved to be the basis of some of the most innovative sessions that were planned.

The world congress is also a place for professional activities such as building active social networks and aligning oneself to certain 'schools of thoughts'. On a lighter note, the festive nature of the conference makes it rather interesting, as here we meet old friends, snap a few photos, go on city tours, and enjoy wining and dining.

On 'Social Exclusions' and the 'Sociological Exclusions'

The conference was a huge success with around five thousand registered participants, a large part of whom came from 'developing countries' and the 'third world' (though these two terms have become passé, rather a misnomer, still to use them as a shorthand of presenting a

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complex reality in simple words is useful) including India and Brazil. A fairly interesting preliminary research can be done on this world congress based on some of the information available in the ISA website and the conference 'Book of Abstracts' (2010). I gather data from these twin sources as a representative sample of analysis to preview the recent trends in the world sociology.

I have taken two indicators (which are the major ones available in these two sources) from which I draw certain tentative postulates. First, I consider the national distribution of participating sociologists in the world congress; second, I evaluate the recent trends and topics of research in Sociology. Though methodologically it may sound naïve, and the limitations include the fact that I do not have comparative data sets for analysis across the years, I will nevertheless present the preliminary findings. If we employ the data set (on the ISA website) that provides us with details on the number of registered participants as well as their various countries of origin, we can read an interesting phenomenon. I have put the number of participants in the bracket after the nation states and divide them into four groups.

Group I countries, from which more than two hundred participants each came, were the United States of America (514), Germany (424), UK (399), Sweden (343), France (231), Spain (203) and Japan (205). Collectively, they represented approximately 46 per cent of the total participants. Group II countries, from which more than hundred participants, came were Australia (162), Canada (176), Russia (111), Netherlands (116), Portugal (151), Italy (195) and, surprisingly, Brazil (185), India (120) and Mexico (118). Collectively, they represented 26.6 per cent of the total participants. Group III countries, from which thirty to hundred participants came, consisted of Austria (72), Belgium (66), Finland (94), Norway (90), Poland (89), Korea (36), Romania (28), South Africa (61) Greece (35), Hong Kong (31),

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Taiwan (37), Turkey (46), Ireland (29), Iran (38), Israel (61) and China (31). Together, they represent 16.85 per cent of the total participants. Group IV consists of those countries from which participants came in lower numbers. They consisted of the African, Asian and the Middle Eastern countries along with some small countries in Eastern Europe who together made up the remaining 10-13 per cent of the participants.

We can see some surprising and some not so surprising trends here. In terms of the number of participants, the USA, Germany and UK are the major players in the world sociological scene; all in all, they represented 26 percent of the total participants. The caveat is that the conference was held in Europe and most of the countries in Europe are close to each other and well-connected by transport and therefore it must be an impetus to participate in the conference. The data from Sweden is quite obvious in this regard as the conference was organized there itself. About Japan, it can be said with some level of certainty, that their presence was expected as the next world congress is going to be held in Yokohama.

Countries like Brazil and India and African countries i.e. a major part of the 'third world' collectively represented around 20 per cent of the total participants; this is quite a significant surge in number from this part of the world, thanks to the ISA organizers who have used their funding to invite the participants from these parts of the world. A whopping 60 percent of the total participants were from Europe. The other 20 percent came from the other parts of the world.

Though the conference, which can be taken as a representative of the world sociological scene, is still overwhelmingly dominated by Germany, USA, UK, and collectively by Europe, we can see a clear trend of the rise of Asia and Latin America in the field of Sociology which ostensibly accompanies the overall growth of their national economy, science and technology. The BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India and China), is

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an acronym which symbolizes the shift of the global political economic power and the tilting of the geopolitical power towards the rising third world from the erstwhile G7 groups (O' Neill 2001). With this in mind, we see that approximately 9 percent of the conference participants collectively represented BRIC, though strangely China with 31 participants had the lowest participation among them. Despite the 'global university' and the tertiary education drive that the Chinese government has taken and considering the size of the nation and number of universities that it has, might their lower participation perhaps reflect the secretiveness and nervousness of the Chinese government in opening up its growth and development scene to the world? Does the general sociological scene in China reflect the non-liberal nature of the state in China helplessly? Does the Chinese government not want to expose its 'grumbling underbelly' to the sociological 'gaze'? Perhaps I won't be stupendously wrong in saying that.

On the other hand, the fewer number of participants from the eastern European countries and the small players in Europe might be because sociology is still not practiced in the English language there or perhaps because the sociological scene is still not so vibrant there. Somebody who is an expert in sociology of Eastern Europe can perhaps shed some light on this.

Some of these aforesaid recent developments and the emerging trends clearly show that indeed 'Sociology is on the Move' and that there is a 'democratization' and 'globalization' in the field of sociological knowledge in the 'periphery' and the 'semi-periphery', which is emerging relatively fast and threatening to 'de-center' the erstwhile 'hegemons' in many ways. This mirrors the general trend in society, polity and economy. As the Global Modernity (Petrovic & Schmidt 2010) proponents very aptly proclaim the changing nature of the world with the rise of Asia and Latin America, this has resulted in the

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contours of power being leveled down and heterogenized by the new multiple centers of growth that are simultaneously reducing the inequalities among the nations. If this is indeed the case, it is most certainly a welcome trend and I will deal with this in the later part of this paper. That being said, the extremely low participation of the African countries and the Middle Eastern and Islamic countries (except Iran), in general, shows a very sorry trend in this aspect. This again obviously reflects a general trend of socio-economic ‘development’ (no matter how we define it) and growth of science and technology in these countries, but apart from that it reveals something more scandalous.

As we discuss the growth of Asia and Latin America, we talk less and less of Africa and the Middle East (visible only in international security and terrorism literature) as if these ‘regions’ have become invisible or non-existent. Still, a number of genocides and pogroms continue to be organized in Africa, thousands of people die each day there out of hunger, a number of economies fail. Yet, we continue to act and think that the moment these people go away from the scene, somehow the world will become similar convergent and homogenous; and so we persist in our focus on our ‘theorylands’, our ‘hermeneutias’ and our ‘epistemologias’. The more we make our language abstruse and illogical, our lexicons heavily indebted to linguistics, natural sciences and mathematics, and the more we make it translucent and impenetrable, the more we are delighted that we as ‘scientists’ have ‘objectively’ and ‘conceptually’ – through our strategic deployment of ‘semantics’ – distanced ourselves from our ‘object’ of study and therefore we can ‘feel’ nothing. The more this discourse of negligence subsumes the already marginalized, the more the marginalized are entrenched in and relegated into painful and silent invisibility.

This reflects a general failure of the dominant political and economic discourses and of social sciences which marginalize those who do not speak (and sometimes ‘refuse to

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speak') in the language of "modernity". The representatives of African Countries, the Middle-Eastern countries, and the Islamic nations were conspicuous by their absence or, at best, their feeble presence in this conference. The failure to include them shows that when the 'rational articulation' of social phenomena becomes economically and politically impossible, its academic representation and reflection also becomes problematic. These trends question the mode of professionalization going on in Sociology now and it speaks about the 'sociological exclusions' that is operating hand in hand with the 'social exclusions'.

'Funds, Fads and Fashions in Global Sociology'

Similarly, if we analyze the second indicator of the popular and emerging trends of research areas in sociology going by the classification of the number of abstracts according to subject index presented in the 'Book of Abstracts' and taking it as a sample, the most popular themes are in and around these few topics like – Adolescence, Activism, Aging, Attitude, Career, Children, Cities, Citizen, Citizenship, Civil Society, College Student, Conflict, Consumer, Consumption, Cooperation, Corporation, Cultural Capital, Cultural Pluralism, Democracy, Discourse , Economic Crisis, Economic Development, Globalization, Governance, Market and many more related concepts and areas of specialization. Some of these above words and phrases also act as catch words in attracting funding and success in graduate school admissions.

It is most normal for sociological focus to move towards such a terrain of 'avant-garde' concepts and 'cutting edge' methodology. However, the field of popular research does show an overall shift towards 'apolitical' concepts and an overall 'cognitive acceptance' of what I call 'post-1989' sociology. This demonstrates the recent trend of research being

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produced and directed at the behest of the state and in line with market driven agendas, where sociology becomes more and more a tool of administrative research, public policy and business studies. Indeed, this is one of the findings of Misha Petrovic (2010), who in his ISA 2010 presentation in RC-35 predicted that the ‘trends in global sociology’ (Sohoni & Petrovic 2010) will be increasingly of interdisciplinary, project and fund driven in nature. This may very well be true, but the immediate question should be this: can a sociologist ‘uncritically’ accept such a trend, where the ‘invisibility’ of the already marginalized will further increase? I will discuss this in further detail later in this paper.

‘Sociology on the move’ also signifies the current changes around the world in the global political and socio-economic transformations, and an appeal to the sociological and social theory to catch up the pace of that change. As I have cursorily mentioned before, Southeast Asia and South Asia are ‘growing’ and increasingly becoming the global centers of a socio-economic transformation, bringing about a ‘new world order’ (Drezner 2007) (or a ‘new world disorder’ as the anti-globalization literature says [Tododrov 2005]) and a shift in the ‘balance of power’. The current bail-out crisis in Greece and the looming economic crisis over many of the European countries have also signaled the onset of these changes.

Ultimately, only time will reveal if these trends are a part of the usual ‘Kondratieff cycles’ (Wallerstein 2000): the crests and troughs of global capitalism that shift their positions and vantages of operations after a period of few decades; or, if these are some fundamental changes that have occurred in the structure of world political economy. Certainly, a great deal more research has to be done to study the growing economy and transformations that are taking place in these places. On the other hand, amidst this euphoria of economic development, industrialization and ‘progress’, we should make this opportunity another pretext to look into the old debates haunted by the ‘Specters of Marx’ (Derrida 1994)

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over the still persistent inequalities of classes and new emerging antagonisms about race, identities, and multiculturalism.

With the bailout crisis in Greece (a continuation from the Subprime mortgage crisis in USA that resulted in the world economic tumult of 2007 to 2010 that affected a major part of the western world) and with the looming danger of economic downturn, there is also the flight of capital, which is being slowly followed by a flight of populations from Europe to other parts of the world, such as the sudden movement of population from rural areas to the urban centers and from the dying cities (such as Detroit in US, Ivanovo in Russia or Wittenberg in Germany) to the emerging hubs like Hong Kong and Shanghai. It is also pointing towards a political tumult that has already begun to rear its head in the form of the resurgence of populist right wing sentiments and the conservative ideas and hatred that is emerging in Europe towards migrants and the Muslims i.e. the 'others'. These far right Ideologies are trying to regenerate a racist fervor even as economic problems are increasing, pointing clearly towards the limits of liberal doctrine of capitalism and modernity (Cox 1997).

I end this section with an experience that I had in the conference. In the hostel international student house, the place where I was staying in Gothenburg, I met a person from Greece who was in the midst of searching for a job in Sweden after the recent economic crisis in Greece. He said that "more and more people are moving out as fast as possible, sometimes alone or sometimes with their family from Greece" and told me that "my dream is to see a refrigerator full of food in my home". He also added: "Now I am feeling so bad for the people of India, as I know in many places there, they stay hungry all day". I really felt sad for him about these recent mishaps and at the same time became cognizant of the ambivalence, irony, and aporia of this 'moment of realizations', where we transcend our personal 'life-

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worlds' only in these moments of intense personal crisis that brings in empathy and solidarity for the 'far-other' who is in similar crisis. Usually, and most unfortunately, it is this very moment which also lends itself to an antithesis and resurgence of 'provincial gloom' and feelings of hatred and scapegoating of the 'near-other', that gets translated into the domestic *realpolitik*.

'Sociology on the Move (away?)'

In this exultation of the economic development of South Asia and Southeast Asia, we should not remain oblivious to the fact that the fast economic development in Southeast Asia and, more generally, in the case of the "late-late development of the third world" has been packaged with the rule of authoritarian governments (Kohli 2004): the ongoing human rights abuses of the state in China and Burma are blatant examples. This also reflects the neo-liberal phase of capital, in which the immense "primitive accumulation" and "accumulation by dispossession" (Harvey 2003) at the expense of "nature" and "human rights" abuses is going on to colonize the last bit of water, land and forest in the hands of the plebeians and the immense backlash that is emerging against that. I believe it has great implication for politics, economics, and environment. Therefore, 'political ecology' or 'third world environmentalism' is equally if not more important than the 'Eco-modernization' (Mol 2001) and 'climate change' discourse. With due respect to these highly rigorous and important research areas, the problem as I have previously outlined is that much of the sociology moves by fads, funds and fashion, driven more by 'funds', 'interest', 'novelty', 'avant-garde'-ness and 'cutting edge' practices than by real world importance or significance. Fully comprehending the importance of these themes, some of the above problems that I mentioned

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of which more than half of the humanity living in the 'developing world' is facing at present should also be the central themes of at least some of the plenaries and talks.

If we take films to adequately mirror the wider changes in the society, we can see such films like *Avataar* and *District 9* as the spill-over of the "liberal American guilt" (Islam 2010) and as an attempt at mild apology for the injustices and exploitation that most of the developed nations have perpetrated on various communities and cultures to obtain the 'unobtainiums'. These films have reminded us that the role of the intellectual in a society is not that of complicity; rather s/he plays the role of a critic, an ardent one, to resist forms of exploitations and injustices that prevail in our daily life through their research and writing.

I firmly believe that a complete devastation and the control of the social sphere cannot be achieved by this 'mega system' of capital without a major backlash, as Karl Polanyi in his *Great Transformation* (1944) has adequately reflected upon decades ago. I have largely seen a near absence of these topics being discussed in the World Congress. If sociology wants to 'move', with the times, it must chart and account for some of these relatively non-changing entities such as resistant cultures and communities.

While with some recent welcomed trends we can see that indeed 'Sociology is on the Move' and there is no reason why it should not be by following the trail of the fast changing world about which it theorizes, "Sociology on the Move" should not signify the 'move' away from the 'real' world. The world which is not in our immediate vicinity and the world which raises discomfort in our standards of civility and modernity should not be relegated from the field of study. This will in no way help much in the long run, I believe.

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The 'Unbearable Lightness' of (the 'Sociological') Being

The debate between realism and constructivism is an old debate. This debate between academic excellence in terms of producing theoretical knowledge of high sophistication and elegance, to interpret the world as it is, or to imaginatively institute an 'alternative public discourse in sociology' and engage with the real world problem, as a test of sociological salience and significance, is what Michael Bouraway calls "*Public Sociology*" (2005). This is to bring back 'alternative imaginations', to exhume the possibilities of constructing in theory and in practice a 'life', lived and practiced outside the auspices of 'Capital'.

Whatever I saw and comprehended in the conference is limited – it was not virtually possible for me or for anybody to attend all the parallel sessions that were going on. There was an ongoing tension, hidden and subterranean – a cold war between these two strands of philosophy, the one who has already accepted the 'rule of capital' and propagates, what I call, its post-1989 sociology. Such a sociology is not critical of the existing order itself, but concentrates on policies and programmes with the intention to produce the 'human face' of Capital: of improving the standards of living and sensitizing the rest of the 'sociological peers' of the benefits of living under the auspices of capital. They are certainly doing their best by doing high-end research and this is by no means disparaging their rigorous analysis. On the other hand, there are the die-hards radicals, those whose voices are to some extent fading (but they have always made brilliant comebacks before) and who seek to bring back the radical edge in Sociology.

I realize, though, the facile nature of such a distinction, and the 'epistemological violence' that it perpetrates on the myriad of sociological voices and their subjectivities.

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However, this heuristic and analytical dichotomy is still helpful in reflecting that hidden tension in the field.

I can also understand that prejudice, presumptions, presuppositions and interest hails from multiple sources, and directions of research leap from various backgrounds such as the place that we have experienced or lived in, the countries of origin, the places schools and academies in which we are trained and the culturally imbibed values and the problems that we prioritize and think are of outstanding importance. The research agendas that we choose these days, more often than not, are commanded by projects, funds, fads and fashions. This is a rather complicit trend rising in the field of sociology unfortunately, where the dictates of the state, industry and the market commands and funds sociological research and public policy.

In Europe and other parts of the world, more and more ‘doctoral studies’ programme are coming up and graduate students are increasingly being appointed as research assistants in ongoing projects (in similar fashion to the rise of state funded science laboratories and university science departments). This can be on the one hand helpful for increasing employability of more and more educated student groups, but it can also be considered, highly problematic as it is closing the possibility to further independent projects (and independent thoughts and imaginations), and helping in the ‘creation’ of a group of ‘social science technocrats’ working for the state or the market.

If this is the trend, the question inherent in it is – Who will speak “*truth to power*”? Who will do this act of “*Parrhesia*” or “*Fearless Speech*”? (Foucault 2001) How can a ‘critical sociology’ be possible in this climate of collusion? And the more these questions burst out in the horizon, the more I can feel this ‘unbearable lightness’ of the (sociological) being (Kundera 1984) in a ‘Kundera-esque’ mode.

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The Travels and Travails of a 'Third World Sociologist'

This is the first time I traveled to Europe, and this is my first experience with any ISA World Congress. My journey was a 'pilgrimage of the soul' to acquire knowledge of various kinds. The journey itself started around six years ago from a small Indian mofussil in India, from where I later came to the "semi-periphery" Singapore (Wallenstein 1989) for my doctoral studies and subsequently to Europe; my journey is a journey from the "*postcolony*" (Mbembe 2001) to the metropolis. Like a 'time-traveller', I had to cover a period of "one hundred years of (inner) solitude" (Marquez 1970). Fortunately, my first experience was one of a kind. The Conference, which was an exposure of an immensely large scale, rendered an outsized platform for deliberation, dialogue and exchange of knowledge in a most democratic milieu. The travels and travails of a third world young sociologist, to present himself as smartly and impeccably as he or she can, is not only the issue of an edgy young and aspiring sociologist, trying hard find his place among the luminous stars, and therefore speaking more than what is necessary to anxiously explain himself, but also of a search for the position and role of a 'third world sociologist' in the 'global structure of sociology' which is also a hierarchy of stratification and of power relations.

About my own presentation, I must not speak; it was disaster of its own scale, which always expresses through a whimper without but a bang within. I presented with outmost candidness and I believe I tried my best, without impressing any one much. On the other hand, I (like a 'typical third world sociologist') wanted to see places, around Gothenburg, to get the best out of my experience, but unconsciously probably disliking some of the conscious 'hegemonic' attempts taken to consign the third world. I realized a few things, and they are with all due respect to all the most famous sociologists, that it is better to read their

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books than to listen to them because they often do not speak something different from what they write: they have ‘repetitive effectual investment’ in their own theories, no matter how antiquarian those theories have become. Some of the schools and theorists have also created their very own closed groups, cliques and guard them like ‘jealous republics’ or ‘school of thoughts’.

Though this is not the place to discuss issues on the total organization of conference and logistics which needs overarching pragmatic attention, and in which the academic has no wish to involve himself, I shall nonetheless deal with these ‘petty issues’. There was a considerable difficulty with regard to the issues of expenses, quality and variety of food. Further, improper planning in organizing the plenaries and the parallel sessions often resulted in all sorts of clashes with each other as well as with the city tour. During the last days of the conference, many of the enthusiastic paper presenters who came to present their paper found nobody there: the rooms were closed and in many cases not even the session chairs were present. As the conference was a mega-event, understandably such a thing is probably bound to happen but I believe the less it happens, the better.

From the ‘Postcolony’ to the ‘Metropolis’ and Back: Completing a ‘Circle of Reason’

So clearly there is a general trend that the field of sociology and the social sciences is ‘democratizing’. Not only is there a surge of students from the developing world and the third world migrating throughout the world with ease, there are also a number of ‘centers of excellence’ in social sciences that are coming up in places like China, India, Brazil, Hong Kong, Mexico, Taiwan and Japan. In this context, let me share my life-experience with you. I had an undergraduate with zoology honors, with an urge of doing an MBA; I was an avid

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reader, but nevertheless till my undergraduate was over, never heard about a discipline called sociology.

With a sudden and unwelcome “contingency” of my father’s untimely death, I landed up in the department of sociology in a very small state university in a mofussil, called Sambalpur in India. Certainly there were infrastructural limitations there, but under the mentorship of the brilliant Professor Shukadeb Naik, I was initiated into the field of Sociology.

Taking sociology proved to be “path-dependent” (Mahoney 2000) for me as I was ever increasingly seduced by its charm, and with increasing ‘returns’ that it gave me. Nevertheless, I was still on the ‘margins of the margins’ (Chaudhury 2001) in this Global division of labour of academic sociology. I wanted to do my doctoral work either from the national centers of excellence in India, and harboured a hidden desire to do it from abroad (especially because of the prestige and charm associated with such a degree). A professor from the center which I first joined once categorically told me in a fit of rage (and of hubris, when she came to know about my ‘ambition’ of doing a Ph.D abroad) that with a degree from “Sambalpur University”, none of the universities abroad would offer me an admission. Eventually, I moved on to Jawaharlal Nehru University and with the guidance of my supervisor there, Professor Anand Kumar (incidentally he is the most popular and student-friendly faculty I have ever known) and through open competition, secured a place in the Department of Sociology at the National University of Singapore, which despite having a brilliant department, never actually discriminated me based on my degrees from “Sambalpur University”. This is probably the mark of distinction that NUS, a Global university, has made for itself, by creating a level playing field and democratic milieu for its students.

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I do not mention this anecdote as a piece of self-aggrandizement, nor as an advertisement of the place where I study. The motif behind this narration is an intensely sociological one that is concerned with the kind of assumption that prevails in many parts of the third-world and the erstwhile colonies because of their colonial legacies and ‘captive minds’ (Alatas 1974), according to which the production and distribution of knowledge is assumed as an unidirectional ‘flow’ from the ‘west’ to the ‘rest’ via the ‘peripheral centers’ to the obscure margins. The academies and the power structures in these places are designed to uphold the beliefs that their top academicians will be trained in the ‘West’ and they, in turn, will train their ‘margins’. What is implicit in such a discourse is that the ‘margin’ and obviously the ‘margins of the margins’ (Chaudhury 2001) cannot produce knowledge. Therefore, those students from the lower rungs who wish to surpass these concentric invisible hierarchies are targeted and criticized in their own countries.

What they don’t realize is, however, that a ‘silent revolution’ is changing the mode of pedagogy throughout the world with the help of new communications and technology, globalizing universities and open sources of knowledge and e-libraries in the internet and, with the advent of ‘Global Modernity’ (Petrovic and Schmidt 2010) (with all its flip sides that I have discussed earlier) in education, this hierarchy of knowledge formation cannot be maintained any more. Branding and fetishizing education and knowledge in the name of global and national centers will not really suffice in a more open field of competition, where access to knowledge has become, and will become less elite-centric. As Misha Petrovic says, “in Global Modernity ‘social learning’ comes through leaps and bounds, it does not have to follow anymore a slow evolutionary pattern”. I do not have to go very far for a pertinent example: recently, my alma mater Sambalpur University has signed a memorandum of understanding to form the Contemporary India Study Center (CISCA) with Aarhus

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University in Denmark along with other two partners from India, thanks to Professor Deepak Kumar Behera and the Department of Anthropology of Sambalpur University for their enthusiastic initiative. Therefore, there is clearly a silent democratic revolution that is taking place in the margins, which is democratizing the field of education, and creating a more homogenous field. Indeed 'society is on the move' and in line with that mobility and dynamism, so is Sociology.

“Miscellaneous Thoughts”

I personally (and I believe there are many who believe the same) want to see more and more Asians social scientists being invited to the ISA world congress, especially in light of the fact that many are already famous and have done laudable academic works, like Arjun Appadurai, Partha Chatterjee, and many more. I believe in Japan we will see some examples of works done by brilliant sociologists from Asia, Latin America, Africa and the Middle East. Observing the general trend of democratization in the field of sociological knowledge and the trend of serious and rigorous sociology that is being practiced worldwide, this should be taken as a juncture where the ISA organizers can actually open up the election of the candidates in a more democratic process rather than the indirect one. As a student member of ISA, I believe that we also should have the voting rights to choose the president, vice-president, and the other committee members. Though I can understand the angst and anxiousness regarding such a decision which would have the potential to bring about structural changes and a scenario in which ISA governance would go into the hand of the 'plebeians' because of the 'power differential', I believe that the voting results will still be somewhat predictable. If the western academies believe in the academic integrity and credentials of the rest of the ISA members in the near future, they should open up the election

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to close this 'democratic deficit' in ISA as an organization. I also believe that a junior sociologist sub-organization should be formed within the ISA structure which can foster a vibrant interaction and camaraderie among the young sociologists throughout the world.

The recent election of ISA and the executive committee is however a very satisfying one: our dear 'public sociologist' has been most predictably elected as president. He is surrounded with a cluster of brilliant faces, particularly from Asia and Latin America, who have also been elected. These trends that we are seeing and that we want to see further in the global field of Sociology as reflected in the representative body of ISA is already set to move and is already moving fast. The new 'Universities in Crisis blog' and the 'ISA Global Newsletter' projects are moves in this direction. In the next world congress in Yokohama (Japan), I along with many others hope to see another 'slice of society' and its ever shifting "order of appearance" (Mitchel 1991) in another gala and carnivalesque exhibition of the 'World Congresses' in one of the most dazzling places of Asia.

At the end of this paper, I would like to justify the 'title' of this paper. It is in anticipation of the criticisms that I may receive for the various remarks and constructive comments that I have forwarded so candidly on many aspects of the ISA as an organization and this recent World Congress. In so doing, my act is in a way just like Don Quixote's sudden realization of his own 'agency', heroism, chivalry and valor, after which, rather than attacking the 'real problems' of the society, what he merely did was 'tilt at windmills'. Sociologists of my ilk, even when engaging with activism, generally limit it to the bounds of pen and paper, and by constructing and criticizing a metaphoric 'origami tiger', derive a perverse pleasure. This is the peculiar characteristic of the modern, heroic and 'quixotic self', from which unfortunately I have not been able to shield 'my-self'.

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