



Call for Paper

ESA2011-RN/RS-1095

RN07 - Sociology Of Culture

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Description of the Research network: The "cultural turn" had a profound general impact on the general sociological research agenda and on the content of academic sociological curricula. The main aim of the research network "Sociology of Culture" is to provide a forum for discussion and exchange for sociologists of culture who are either based in Europe or whose research is devoted to one or more aspects of "culture in Europe".

General call for paper: Cultural crisis is both part cause and effect of political-economic crisis. Thus, "social relations in turbulent times" are marked by both a "*crisis in culture*" and a "*crisis of culture*". Culture—the symbolic context in which choices and actions acquire meanings, shared or not—is a medium for building "worlds." It frames our very sense of time and space. It helps bridge past and future. It expresses the primordial issues of justice and identity—individual and collective.

The RN sessions listed below will address the following types of questions, illustrative of the range of cultural sociology.

1. How is cultural heritage related to national identities? What are the plurality of roles and definitions of cultural heritage in globalized societies? How is cultural heritage sustainable?
2. If culture is no longer "innocent," as an arena structured by various power inequalities, how do (or do not) competing claims to societal legitimacy and recognition find cultural resolution?
3. How do new media and the communication they mediate constitute virtual agoras, and with what consequences for citizenship?
4. How can cultural sociology engage cultural globalization, cosmopolitanism, and transnationalism, and with what reciprocal effects?
5. How do new methodologies—both technical and philosophical—encourage reflexive awareness of the strengths and limitations of existing procedures and approaches in cultural sociology?
6. How is culture performative? Conceived as the medium in which relations and realities are made manifest, how does culture consist in tools and templates, scripts, rhythms, props, metaphors, exemplars and modalities for action?
7. How does "integrated conservation"-- with its material, cultural, and social dimensions—provide a model for indexical and complex issues of planning, intervention, and identification of human values in the built environment?
8. What is knowledge, and what are the observable forms of its production and transmission? How does it contribute to the cultural construction of social reality?

We welcome all papers in the sociology of culture more generally, and in particular on the following topics:

Individualism and Collectivism, Culture and politics, Cultural policies, Migration and diasporas, Cultures of Crises, Ritual, Reflexivity, Cultural frames of economics, Identities and cultural differences, Culture spaces, Culture and time, Cultural institution and participation, Cultures of body.

In addition to RN sessions we will hold **joint sessions** with other RNs: RN5, Sociology of Consumption (“Cultural Consumption”); RN2, Sociology of the Arts (“The arts in the creative industries”); RN28, Society and Sports (“Sports and Spirituality”); RN18, Sociology of Communication and Media Research (“Digital Cultures”); and RN34, Sociology of Religion (“Culture and Religion”). Those wishing to submit an abstract for consideration in these sessions are kindly requested to indicate so in their abstract.

Abstracts should have no more than 250 words, can only be **submitted online** and must include: 1) name (s) and affiliation (s) of the author(s); 2) contact details of presenting author (postal address, telephone, fax and email address); 3) title of proposed presentation. 4) If your abstract refers to one of the above-mentioned topics, please indicate which one. Abstracts will be reviewed by peers according to the following criteria: a) Whether the paper will make an original, understandable, and meaningful contribution to sociology of culture debates. b) What research or evidence the paper is based on. c) Which existing theories and concepts the paper is in discussion with.

Coordinators:

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A fuller statement of the call for paper is on the website of the research network “Sociology of Culture”:

www.europeansociology.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=25&Itemid=29

Specific Session title I: 1. Cultural Heritage

In contemporary societies, cultural heritage plays a crucial role, especially in relation to national and transnational identities. We have witnessed a shift from a more “material” notion of cultural heritage (defined as the collection of monuments and cultural artefacts) to a more symbolic one. According to this second definition, cultural heritage would consist of the whole set of cultural practices and artistic artefacts that are relevant in their symbolic meaning for a certain nation or for transnational identities. This notion of cultural heritage can also include rituals and traditions, which are not material in nature. Cultural heritage becomes a collection of symbols, monuments, and traditions. In this session, we welcome papers on the relations between cultural heritage and national identities, on the plurality of roles and definitions of cultural heritage in globalized societies, and on any other aspects of this topic.

Specific Session title II: 2. Culture, Power, and Conflict

The work of Pierre Bourdieu, Stuart Hall, Judith Butler and many other scholars has stressed the links between culture and the reproduction of class, ethnic (racial), gender and other forms of social domination. From an institutionally-oriented point of view, the relationship between culture and power has already been discussed for quite some time with regard to the impact of mass media in modern or postmodern societies. Thus one could say that culture is no longer an 'innocent' notion. The notion of cultural power opens up to view a vast array of practices in which relations of social domination are either implicitly reproduced or explicitly contested by individual and collective actors.

Specific Session title III: 3. Culture and the Media

The media and the public sphere are crucial to understanding contemporary societies. As an organizational form the media and mediated communication constitute the virtual agoras within which citizens share the same political forums and agendas. In addition, through “audiencing” the same media, people are formed into the public or nation of a regional state; they share a great deal of knowledge, mediated experiences, and cultural products such as films, music and television programmes, which all have a bearing on their tastes and mentalities. Thus to understand the cultural forms of contemporary societies cultural sociology needs to study the media, their audiences, and the ways in which the media are part of people’s everyday lives. Moreover, the development of information and communication technology poses new challenges to cultural sociologists studying mediated communication.

Specific Session title IV: 4. World culture, cosmopolitanism and trans-nationalism

Processes of cultural globalization have become a very important topic within sociology and related disciplines over the last decade. Yet it remains the case that the sociology of culture has not yet systematically taken the “global turn,” either in terms of its empirical foci, its methodological approaches or its conceptual dispositions. Papers in this session will investigate the various ways in which the sociology of culture can engage with matters of cultural globalization, cosmopolitanism and transnationalism, investigating both how the sociology of culture can inform thinking about wider globalization issues, and also how the forces and phenomena associated with globalization compel and enable reworkings of established procedures and forms of thought within sociological studies of culture.

Specific Session title V: 5. Researching culture: methodological innovations

A very important element of sociological studies of culture is the set of ways in which particular empirical contexts are accessed and data are collected. Indeed, one of the key ways in which the sociology of culture can be differentiated from cultural studies is the nature of sociology’s battery of methodological approaches, and the emphasis sociologists typically place on methodological matters in studying specific contexts and phenomena. Consequently, a very important area for debate within the sociology of culture is the degree to which existing methodological approaches can deal effectively with emerging social and cultural conditions. Papers in this session will engage with both critiques of established methodological positions in the field and also novel developments within it. “Methodology” is defined widely to encompass both more technical procedures and also more “philosophical” issues .

Specific Session title VI: 6. Performing Cultures

In recent years, sociological interest in performance has been revitalized and this interest has resonated with a wide range of other disciplines concerned with the study of culture and society. In the performance paradigm, culture is conceived as the medium in which relations and realities are made manifest. It is seen to provide tools and templates, scripts, rhythms, props, metaphors, exemplars and modalities for action and to work in often quasi-conscious and embodied ways. The focus on performance thus encompasses the aesthetic and tacit features of social action and so connects arts sociologies with the sociological study of culture more broadly. We invite contributions that focus on the empirical study of performances as well as theoretical investigations of performance.

Specific Session title VII: 7. Cultures of conservation and sustainability

Integrated conservation as a well developed theoretical scholarly-professional discourse and multi-disciplinary-oriented platform has gradually become a well accepted general approach to conservation applications in planning at various levels of society. Contemporary theory of conservation calls for common sense for understanding why, and for whom, things are conserved. The contemporary theory of conservation is based on negotiation, on equilibrium, on discussion, and on consensus. Consequently, conservation should leave the expert-only zone to enter the Trading Zone, where the objective is to trade to reach an agreement between affected people. The concept integrated conservation enables a model for the identification of appropriate means to deal with contextual and complex issues of planning, interventions and identification of human values related to urban and architectural structures of every-day built environment.

Specific Session title VIII: 8. Culture and Knowledge

From the point of the new sociology of knowledge, culture has been defined as consisting of knowledge, i.e. socially transmitted meaning. In addition to this basic connection between culture and knowledge, the role of knowledge, knowledge transmission and knowledge production has gained much importance in recent years. Debates on spatial knowledge, knowledge and power, knowledge and discourse, knowledge society and knowledge culture(s) has demonstrated that knowledge has become a topic not only for sociology (but also for the society. The session on culture and knowledge, therefore, will focus on the intimate relation between culture and knowledge in the frame of the general question: How is it that knowledge contributes to the cultural construction of social reality.