



Newsletter

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Editor: Matt Patterson

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Inside This Issue

Letter from the President2

Announcements.....2

RC03 Sessions for XX World Congress of Sociology3

Community Profile4

Contacts6

Letter from the President

Dear Colleagues,

ISA World Congress ... is coming!

As you know, all information about this event is on the ISA website:

<https://www.isa-sociology.org/en/conferences/world-congress/melbourne-2023>

As regards RC03, the provisional programme includes 16 sessions regarding three main issues. First, seven sessions propose to discuss general aspects of community life and change. Some sessions discuss broad theoretical discussions and methodological issues, and others focus on thematic issues such as the new normality after COVID-19, community resilience, health, social inclusion, and the specificity of coastal communities.

Second, some sessions focus on socio-political processes and public policies. These are traditional topics on RC03, from the classical studies on community power studies to the international FAUI project and, more recently, issues regarding institutions, governance, and public policies. Specifically, two sessions propose to analyse political process and mobilisation in urban and rural communities, two focus on local/urban policies, and one specifically examines local welfare regimes from a comparative perspective.

Third, some sessions focus on community culture, or better, the symbolic dimension of territorial communities. This is a growing research topic in RC03 thanks to the international network of RC members working on the scene approach. Three sessions focus on the role of culture on community change and development, and one focuses on a crucial issue

Announcements

I. XX ISA World Congress of Sociology

See the letter from the President for more information.

II. RC03 at the European Sociological Association

RC03 will be holding a special section during the 2022 midterm conference of the European Sociological Association's Urban Sociology network (RN37). During the session, the theory of "scenes" and its methodology, known as the "mathematics" of culture, will be presented and discussed, followed by presentation of the newest research projects within the framework of scenes paradigm. The session will conclude with the presentation of opportunities for ISA RC03 – ESA RN37 collaboration and series of questions and answers. More information is available here: <https://esarn37.hypotheses.org/>

regarding climate change: 'water cultures' understood as approaches to dealing with this issue. Therefore, these sessions cross some aspects of the previously proposed broad topics.

Thanks to program coordinators for receiving and selecting session proposals. This is a critical step to organise our RC03 program. After September 30, 2022, the deadline for abstract submission, program coordinators and, especially, session coordinators should define the specific program selecting the proposals received.

In the meanwhile, we share some information about the congress provided in the last Meeting of the Research Council (24/09/2022):

(Continued on the next page)

Letter from the President (Continued)

Three formats for sessions are proposed. The session format will be decided after the early registration deadline (March 22, 2023):

Hybrid format: in-person and online presentations, but 80% must be in-person presentations.

Online format: less than 80% in-person presentations.

In-person format: next sessions will have in-person format only but will be available by webinar: Roundtable Sessions (concurrent running roundtable presentations in one room); Poster Sessions; Ad Hoc sessions; Sessions of National and Regional Associations; Professional Development Sessions and Author Meets Critics Sessions (authors should be in-person)

Registration fees:

Registration fees are the same for in-person and online presentations and cover participation in all types of sessions. Abstracts' submitters must specify a preferred presentation format in a session (on-site or virtual).

All participants will have online access to all sessions regardless of their participation due to the hybrid character of the congress

I hope this information could help encourage your participation in the next ISA World Congress.

Clemente J. Navarro, RC03 President (on behalf of the RC03 Steering Committee)

RC03 Sessions for XX World Congress of Sociology

<https://isaconf.confex.com/isaconf/wc2023/webprogrampreliminary/Symposium726.html>

Studying community life and change: discussing theoretical, methodological and thematic topics.

- [Theories of Practice: New Perspectives in Urban Theory and Research](#)
- [Collaborative Research: Critical Reflections on Research Ethics and Methodological Practices](#)
- [\(Re\)Turning to Urban \(new\) normality](#)
- [Community Influences on Lifestyles and Health](#)
- [Inclusive Education, Knowledge Co-Production, Social Justice and Human Rights](#)
- [Marine Justice, Ocean Studies, and Coastal Communities](#)
- [Comunidades Resilientes: Capacidades Colectivas De Resistencia y Transformación Ante Las Nuevas Adversidades](#)

Institutions, actors, governance: socio-political processes and public policies.

- [Mobilisation in Cities](#)
- [Reactionary Rurals: Authoritarian Movements in Global Hinterlands](#)
- [Can Place-Based Policies Enhance Community Life and Democracy: On Neighbourhood Governance, Participation and Institutional Trust.](#)
- [Local Welfare Regimes: A Comparative Analysis](#)
- [Nuevas Políticas Urbanas En Iberoamérica. Avances Hacia La Nueva Agenda Urbana](#)

Places and their symbolic characters: arts, scenes, lifestyles and community processes.

- [Cultural Institutions and Community](#)
- [Culture and Community Sustainable Development](#)
- [Uses and Misuses of Arts and Culture in Community and Urban Development](#)
- [Traditional Water Cultures and the Modern Life](#)

Program Coordinators:

- Marta KLEKOTKO, Jagiellonian University, Poland, marta.a.klekotko@gmail.com
- Cristina MATEOS MORA, University Pablo Olavide, Sevilla, Spain, cmatmor@upo.es
- Johan ZAIMAN, North-West University, South Africa, johan.zaaiman@nwu.ac.za
- Angel ZAPATA MOYA, Pablo de Olavide University, Spain, arzapmoy@upo.es

The Cafe Szafe Community During the Pandemic

By Jan Firlit, Gabriela Chomiczewska, Patryk Serafin, Oliwia Mazurek and Hubert Szotek (sociology students at Jagiellonian University, Kraków, Poland)

One of the most recognizable cafés in Kraków is Café Szafé located at 10 Felicjanek Street. Café Szafé, or “the Szafa”, which translates to “wardrobe”, has been on the map of Krakow since 2002. It is known primarily for its characteristic, eccentric appearance, which attracts many artists and individualists. Books and articles have been written about the Szafa (e.g. Café Szafé by Łukasz Dębski), Smarzowski shot the film “Pod Mocnym Aniołem” there, and there was hardly a day that went by without a recital, exhibition, or concert in The Szafa. However, Café Szafé’s existence came into question during the COVID-19 pandemic. Like many other venues in the catering and cultural sector, it was hit by successive lockdowns that prevented it from operating. Despite the difficulties, Café Szafé survived and quickly returned to its pre-pandemic mode of operation without losing its popularity. Based on an analysis of the café’s fanpage, interviews with café regulars and our own experiences of Café Szafé, we want to look at how the café, and the community gathered around it, functioned during the pandemic and what stands behind its success.

In early 2020, faced with no prospect of the café opening soon, the owners turned to the surrounding community for help. A fundraiser was set up on zrzutka.pl to enable the café to continue operating. The amount of PLN 7,500 set as a target by the organizers of the collection was exceeded and a total of more than PLN 8,000 was raised. Contributions of specific sums offered the possibility of receiving gifts, such as a Café Szafé birthday poster or a T-shirt with the café's motifs.

In parallel to the collection, Café Szafé moved some of screenings or chess tournaments online. Not only did



concerts and meetings with artists take place online, but also the existing regular meetings of local communities at film events. This online formula made it possible to maintain the involvement and existence of the community around Café Szafé.

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Cafe Szafé (Continued)



Undoubtedly, it is the strongly integrated community of Café Szafé that is responsible for the success of the collection, as well as the café's enduring popularity. As Szymon Kloska, literary critic and activist and a regular at Café Szafé, said, "the strength of this place is the people you can meet here. Some are there so often that you get the impression that they are on the café's equipment". The café's community has the chance to integrate not only during events in the café, but also outside it. On the café's "fanpage", for example, is an invitation to go to the climbing wall together.

We asked ten Café Szafé regulars about their experiences of the café. What emerges from the responses is a picture of the café as a safe place (described as safe space, comfort space), where peculiarity and eccentricity is not only accepted, but even desired. One respondent describes her relationship with Café Szafé as follows:

The Szafa for me is such an asylum. Whenever I could go somewhere after school or after classes it was it. Why? Because it has such an atmosphere that makes me calm down and forget about my problems. Smoking a cigarette, drinking coffee and chatting with friends is complemented by the mysteriousness of this place, which is relatively reserved for a certain community.¹

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Cafe Szafe (Continued)



Respondents pointed out that Café Szafé brings together a specific type of person, primarily 'locals' rather than tourists. It is the localness of Café Szafé that is its greatest asset according to respondents:

The uniqueness of the Szafa lies in the fact that it is something that has not been tainted by consumerism and capitalism. When it is attended by a small circle of people who know each other, an atmosphere is created and this is what makes me a regular. We say no to tourists!

In addition to the local character, respondents pointed to other features that unite the members of Café Szafé, such as openness, eccentricity, individualism and laid-

back attitude. Smoking is also a characteristic feature of café regulars.

From the responses quoted above, one can see how important the café is to our respondents. It is a space where one can feel safe, establish relationships with like-minded people and get away from the overwhelming outside world. The artistic, eccentric atmosphere of the place attracts people with specific character and interests, and Café Szafé practically becomes part of the identity of the café's regulars.

Café Szafé is a kind of cultural scene that allows the practice of certain lifestyles (individualism, transgression) and self-expression through appearance or behaviour. The Café Szafé community feels strongly connected to the place and has a sense of duty to support the café. The people we interviewed find it natural to support the café in difficult times such as the COVID-19 pandemic. The strong community built around Café Szafé allowed the café to survive, and shortly after the lockdown ended, the place started to be vibrant again.

Notes:

1. Warszawski M., *Cafe Szafe - an artistic melting pot...*, [online], <https://dziennikpolski24.pl/cafe-szafe-artystyczny-tygiel-w-ktorym-wojciech-smarzowski-nakrecil-film-pod-mocnym-aniolem/ar/3303538> [accessed 27.02.2022].

All images are taken from <https://www.facebook.com/KawiarniaCafeSzafe>

Contacts

New Website: RC03 has a new, revamped website. You can find it at: <https://www.upo.es/cspl/rc03-isa/isa/>

Please send future announcements to Matt Patterson: matt.patterson@ucalgary.ca