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RCHS

Research Committee on the History of Sociology
International Sociological Association

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Editorial

Dear colleagues, the November edition of our newsletter is finally out and is full of interesting stuff. You can start by reading the Plan of Activities for 2016-2018, which was approved by the steering committee in the last month, following suggestions made in the RC's business meeting. As you may notice, we will need volunteers to help with our digital strategy. We also brought some information about the deadlines for submitting proposals for integrative and joint sessions for 2018 ISA's World Congress in Canada. Those of you interested in suggesting joint sessions should take a look at the deadlines for that and share your ideas with the Board.

The RC is also proud to announce the winner of the Young Scholar Prize 2016, Andreas Kranebitter. Congratulations, Andreas! You can read a summary of the winning paper and a brief comment by the Jury as well. There are also two obituaries for important figures in the history of sociology who have recently passed away. Finally, we also provide the traditional announcements for recent publications from our members. Enjoy your reading!

1. PLAN OF ACTIVITIES 2016-2018

This short text outlines a plan of activities for improving the profile of RC08 in ISA. The plan aims at increasing the research skills of young members, recruiting more people to our activities and boosting the visibility of our intellectual output.

Initiative I: **Workshop of Research Methods in the History of Sociology:** The plan is to organize a workshop for PhD candidates in Toronto a couple of days before the World Congress. The workshop would have the following format: a roundtable with senior members about "The history of sociology in different national contexts" + a general discussion of research projects sent by young members (PhD candidates). The roundtable would focus on the state of art of our field in different countries. The general discussion of the projects would be conducted by the same scholars. Those willing to actively participate in the roundtables and discussions should get in touch with the RC's secretary.

Proposed Schedule: July 2018

Place: Ryerson

Costs involved: Coffee breaks and local assistance

Initiative II: **Grants for Students:**

Criteria for eligibility:

The grants would be available only for PhD candidates who wish to attend our interim conferences (2020 onwards) and who are flying overseas, regardless of the place of the conference (whether Europe, Latin America, Asia etc)

The applicant must submit a one page letter stating his/her claim and the full paper three months previous to the conference

A maximum of 500 Euros will be allocated for grants, regardless of the number of recipients. The decision on the allocation of grants will be made by the RC's Board.

Costs involved: 500 Euros, which could be covered by a combination of ISA's funding for activities + RC's local account

Initiative III: **Social media strategy.**

RCs in general have similar strategies, relying on a mix of social media and websites/blogs. RC 22 (Sociology of Religion), for instance, has a clean website, with sections on news, funding schemes, job opportunities etc (<http://www.isa-rc22.org/>). Others, like RC 05 (Racism and Nationalism), have only a Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/ISARC05>). The Board decided that the best model is RC06's website (<http://www.rc06-isa.org/>), which is hosted in ISA webpage itself. We checked with its secretary, and they pay 300 dollars every four years to keep the domain, and the design is made by the secretary herself using Wordpress tools. We would like to ask our membership to volunteer for the position of RCHS webmaster and take responsibility for this page

Costs involved: U\$ 300, 00, which could be covered by ISA's grants.

2. World Congress 2018

ISA is starting the preparations for the World Congress 2018. As part of this planning, it has announced the proceedings to submit proposals for integrative and joint sessions. The deadline for these submissions is January 15th, and those of you who have ideas for sessions with our Canadian colleagues should write to the Board (Stephen Turner, Cherry Schrecker and Charles Crothers) so we can prepare something from our RC.

3. Young Scholar Prize 2016

Word from the Jury

Per Wisselgreen, Marta Bucholc and Jennifer Platt:

Our classroom methodological prescriptions do not fit easily the problems of studying the SS and their doings' – Elmer G. Luchterhand and the history of sociological research on Nazi concentration camps is concerned with the history of sociological research on nazism, and more specifically the research question about the problematic reception of Luchterland's project on survivors from the concentration camps. To answer his question, Kranebitter makes use of the Luchterhand archives and analyses Luchterhand's research in the context of contemporary postwar research on concentration camps. The paper is clearly outlined and written in an engaging manner, at the same time as it manages to see the link between his subject and the general discussion on the general incapacity to analyze genocide sociologically.

“Our classroom methodological prescriptions do not fit easily the problems of studying the SS and their doings” – Elmer G. Luchterhand and the sociological research on Nazi concentration camps.

By Andreas Kranebitter

In the last few years the relationship between sociology and National Socialism was once more widely debated in the German speaking sociology (Christ/Suderland 2014, Kranebitter/Horvath 2015). Most of the debaters focused on the question of whether sociology existed in Nazi Germany and Austria at all and on the 'contaminated' past of certain sociologists. Publications thus focused on the history of sociology *in* National Socialism. Sociologists who did deal *with* National Socialism in their postwar research have not received as much attention. The consensus here soon seemed to be that there

were not many sociologists whose research was dedicated to topics related to National Socialism, that on the contrary sociologists did not consider fascism, National Socialism or the Holocaust to be potential topics for sociological research. The main problem with this view, however, is that those few early studies that *did* exist have not been studied thoroughly. The reasons for remaining unpublished, not having been finished or, most importantly, not having been perceived has not been considered adequately.

Elmer G. Luchterhand's research is one example of an early attempt to study Nazi concentration camps from a sociological point of view. Of German descent, Elmer G. Luchterhand was born in 1911 in Colby, Wisconsin, and worked as a journalist before the war. In 1943, he was drafted into the US Army. In his position as officer he was part of the infantry troops liberating the Flossenbürg subcamp Hersbruck on April 20th, 1945. From April to November 1945, Luchterhand visited eight different concentration and labor camps upon their liberation, interviewing some 75 survivors and bystanders. After his return to the US, he completed his BA, his MA and a PhD at the University of Wisconsin – already focusing on survival and resistance in Nazi concentration camps. His PhD thesis, supervised by two eminent experts on Germany and Nazism, Hans Gerth and Howard Becker, was based on interviews with 52 concentration camp survivors in the United States in 1950 and 1951. He repeated these interviews with 43 of his respondents in 1970 and 1971, interviewing them about their readjustments in the post-war-era and factors of stress, thus making his earlier study a rare longitudinal study on CC survivors.

Generally speaking, the first studies on concentration camps by educated or future social scientists were the memoirs by concentration camp survivors themselves. Whereas these works were widely read and influential, those who “stood behind” literally fell into oblivion. There are several examples of scholars and teams doing research in the liberated concentration camps – e.g. the *Buchenwald report* (Hackett 1995), compiled by order of the US Army's “Psychological Warfare Division” and its officer Albert G. Rosenberg, interdisciplinary studies (Goldstein et al. 1991), and not least the works by some who had been present at the liberation of the camps as members of the US Army like Herbert A. Bloch (Bloch 1947) and Elmer G. Luchterhand (1952). Yet, they had all nearly no impact on either sociology or the interdisciplinary research on Nazi concentration camps. Even though Elmer G. Luchterhand did publish some papers on his studies, they are nearly never cited in recent sociological studies on Nazi concentration camps, in latest times most prominently ignored by Wolfgang Sofsky (1993) and Maja Suderland (2009).

Based on the case study dealing with Elmer Luchterhand's research on concentration camps, it is possible to add a methodological point to the discussion on sociology and National Socialism. As can be concluded from dozens of papers and manuscripts entitled "On Methods" in his estate, Luchterhand obviously put forward methodological problems of researching Nazi genocide in various papers and much of his correspondence. These questions relate to the collecting of data, its presentation, and even sociological terminology – in several interviews he had to dispute over terms like "role conflict" and "responsibility" as well as over the importance of certain social situations. While in general he was convinced that the "pandemic questions" which the Nazi genocide threw up could only be answered by "highly experienced journalists, as well as social scientists who are willing to venture beyond text book research methodology"¹, he was continuously skeptical regarding the application of "usual methods" throughout the years, and not only anticipated but even provoked criticism: "Methodologically this may seem questionable to those whose research stays strictly within the conventions of method as I suppose some of us have taught it in our academic lives. But our classroom methodological prescriptions do not fit easily the problems of studying the SS and their doings."²

There has always been a discussion about the limits of "normal" sociological methodology when confronted with critical and exceptional events and "research objects" like concentration camps. In this paper I argue that Luchterhand's work is an example of a dedicated search for a research strategy beyond the false antimony of an "exceptional" vs. "normal" approach of sociological analysis. His empirical material can be regarded as a unique collection of interview material, uniquely differing from the first published memoirs on concentration camps relating to behaviors like theft, sexual feelings, sharing patterns and changes in religious believe.

¹ Untitled manuscript, 28 February 1984, Elmer G. Luchterhand Papers, Brooklyn College Archives and Special Collections, Accession #2001-005, Sub-Group I, Series 2, Box 4.

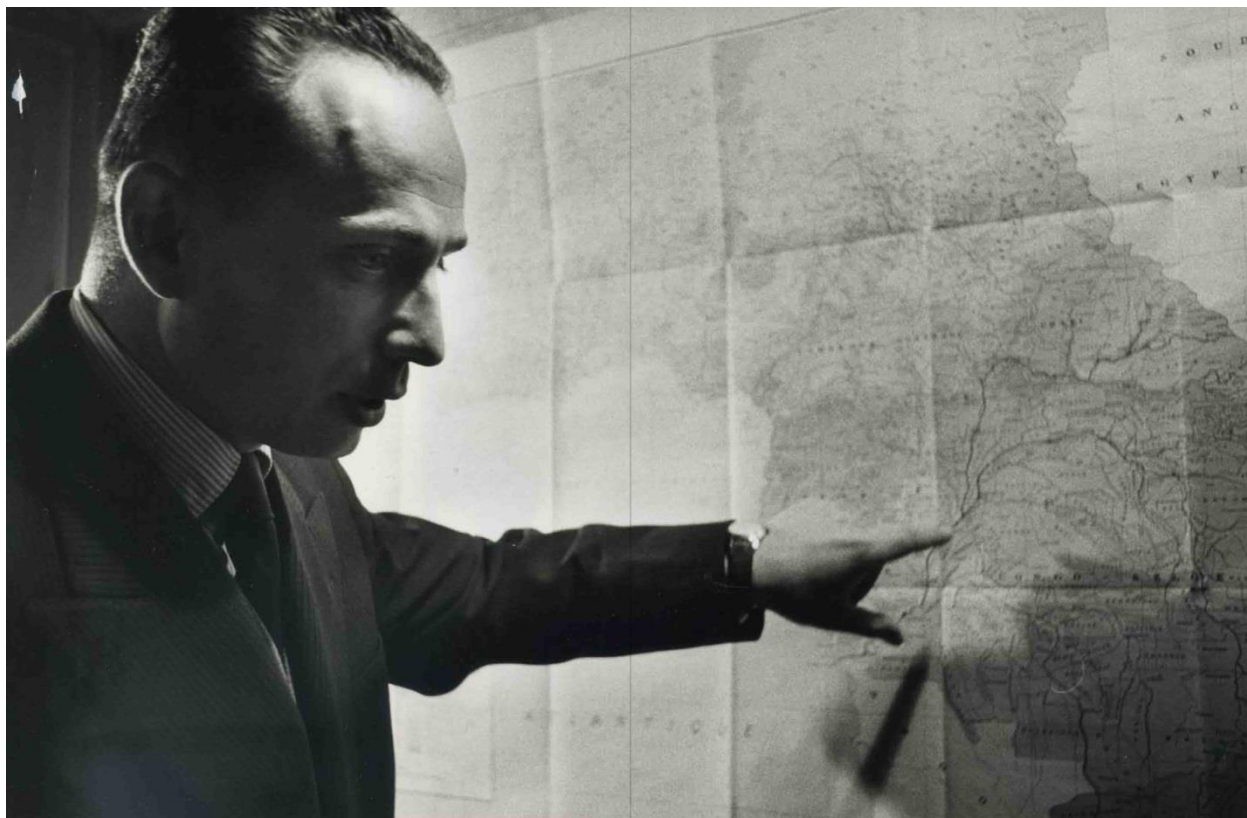
² Untitled manuscript, undated, Elmer G. Luchterhand Papers, Sub-Group I, Series 2, Box 4.

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4. GEORGE BALANDIER, A TOWERING FIGURE IN AFRICANIST SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY

By George Steinmetz



Georges Balandier at a meeting of the International Social Science Council (UNESCO), directed by Claude Lévi-Strauss (end of the 1950s)¹

Georges Balandier was born in 1920 in Ailleville-et-Lyaumont, a village in the Franche-Comté region of eastern France. Balandier carried out his primary and secondary school studies in the Paris suburbs and in Paris. Before WWII he studied at the Sorbonne, earning a *licence* degree in Letters (philosophy) and a diploma in Ethnology from the Paris Ethnological Institute. After being conscripted into forced labor in Nazi Germany, Balandier joined the French Resistance in 1943-1944. In 1944 he returned to Paris and became part of the Department of Black Africa at the *Musée de l'homme* (Museum of Man), working closely with the famous surrealist novelist and ethnographer Michel Leiris.

¹ Photo courtesy of Georges Balandier and Anne Balandier Rocha-Perazzo.

Under the influence of Leiris, Balandier's first publication was a semi-autobiographical novel, *Tous comptes faits*.² In 1946 Balandier assumed a research position as ethnographer with the Office of Overseas Scientific Research (*Office de la Recherche Scientifique Outre-mer*) and was associated with the French Institute for Black Africa (*Institut Français d'Afrique Noire*), or IFAN, in Dakar, which was the capital of French West Africa at the time. During the next five years Balandier carried out research in Senegal, Gabon, and the French Congo. In 1947 Balandier directed the IFAN Center at Conakry in French Guinée. He subsequently founded and directed the Department of Social Sciences at the Institute of Central African Studies (*Institut d'Études Centrafricaines*) in Brazzaville, the erstwhile capital of French Equatorial Africa.

In 1952 Balandier became a researcher at the French National Center of Scientific Research, or *Centre national de la recherche scientifique* (CNRS). He was affiliated at the time with the CNRS-funded *Centre d'études sociologiques*, the organization that was at the center of postwar French sociological research.³ In 1954 Balandier became a professor (*directeur d'études*) at the Sixth Section (Social Sciences) of the Paris *École Pratique des Hautes Études*—the school that has been at the cutting edge of French social science since WWII. In 1957 Balandier created the *Centre d'études africaines*, which was associated with the Sixth Section. He was elected to a chair in African Studies at the Sorbonne in 1962, and took over Georges Gurvitch's Sorbonne chair in “general sociology” in 1966.⁴

Balandier took over the post of “Editorial Secretary” of *Cahiers internationaux de sociologie* from Georges Gurvitch in 1954. The *Cahiers internationaux de sociologie* was the first new sociology journal created in France after the war.

2 Georges Balandier, *Tous comptes faits* (Paris: éditions du Pavois, 1947). Balandier wrote another novel that was never published.

³ Johan Heilbron, *French Sociology* (Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 2015).

⁴ Balandier, *Histoire d'autres*, p. 189; see also my interview with Balandier, “Tout parcours scientifique comporte des moments autobiographiques (entretien),” *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* no. 185 (December), pp. 44-61; Jean Copans, *Georges Balandier. Un anthropologue en première ligne* (Paris: PUF, 2014); Idem., “La mort de Georges Balandier» ociologue, spécialiste de l'Afrique,” *Le Monde*, Oct. 5, 2016

Whereas the journal foregrounded social theory under Gurvitch's editorship, Balandier added a focus on colonial, postcolonial, and non-European studies. Balandier also created the journals *Études guinéennes* (*Guinean Studies*) and *Informations dans les sciences sociales* (*Informations in the Social Sciences*), and he played a role in the creation of *Présence africaine*, a pan-African journal founded by the Senegalese philosopher Alioune Diop in 1947.⁵

In 1955 Balandier published his two doctoral theses, *Sociologie actuelle de l'Afrique: Dynamique des changements sociaux en Afrique central* (*Contemporary Sociology of Black Africa: Dynamics of Social Change in Black Central Africa*) and *Sociologie des Brazzavilles noires* (*Sociology of the Black Brazzavilles*).⁶ Notable first was the militant insistence in the titles of both theses on "sociology." The first book paved the way for a comparative historical sociology of colonialism and anticolonialism by contrasting the responses of the Gabonese Fang and the Congolese Bakongo to French rule.⁷ The second thesis was a pioneering urban sociology of sub-Saharan Africa, focusing on Bakongo urbanites who had resettled in Brazzaville. Balandier found that migrants did not abandon their traditional culture or connections to rural countrymen and that they developed a precocious awareness of the colonial situation and its structures of domination.⁸ Balandier became the leading French sociologist of underdevelopment. He popularized the term "Tiers-monde" (Third World), a phrase coined by Alfred Sauvy in 1952 on the pattern of the "Third estate" in the French Revolution.

⁵ Gregory Mann, *From Empires to NGOs in the West African Sahel: The Road to Nongovernmentality* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 27.

⁶ Georges Balandier, *Sociologie actuelle de l'Afrique noire. Dynamique des changements sociaux en Afrique central* (Paris, Presses universitaires de France, 1955); Balandier, *Sociologie des Brazzavilles noires* (Paris: A. Colin, 1955).

⁷ Georges Balandier, *Sociologie actuelle de l'Afrique noire*, pp. 14-15.

⁸ Balandier, *Sociologie des Brazzavilles noires*.

Balandier was the central figure in pushing colonial sociologists from a dependent position serving colonial rulers to a stance critical of colonialism and supportive of decolonization. Along with his coauthor Paul Mercier, Balandier began describing his work as “sociology” rather than “ethnology” or “anthropology” during this period.⁹ The label sociology seemed preferable to Balandier and others at the time because it placed Africa and the colonized and postcolonial world as part of the same analytic frame as the global north, enmeshed in global history. Balandier told me in 2007 that sociology was understood at the time as a kind of avant-garde, theoretical, and militant position (“une position théorique, une position militante”), in contrast to ethnology, more theoretically conservative at the time.¹⁰ Sociology as it was understood by Balandier and his colleagues at the time rejected any view of Africa as “unhistorical, repeating itself from generation to generation.”¹¹ This embrace of “sociology” was also motivated by a sense of the intellectual bankruptcy of a disciplinary division of labor that sorted “exotic,” colonized, and traditional societies to anthropology and advanced northern societies to sociology¹². Balandier moved away from his earlier rejection of anthropology during the 1960s, identifying increasingly with the label at the expense of sociology, but also becoming a fervent partisan of interdisciplinary. Balandier’s 1967 book *Anthropologie politique* (published in English in 1972) introduced his more historical optic to the anthropology of politics and the state. Since his retirement in 1985 Balandier’s publications turned toward more sweeping theoretical statements on power, civilization, and modernity.

9 Balandier, *Le dépaysement contemporain. L'immédiat et l'essentiel. Entretiens avec Joël Birman et Claudine Haroche* (Paris: PUF, 2009), p. 27.

10 Quotes from interview with Georges Balandier by the author, February 9, 2007, Maison des sciences de l’homme (Paris).

11 Balandier, “Sociologie dynamique et histoire à partir de faits africains,” *Cahiers internationaux de sociologie* 34 (1963), p. 6.

12 Balandier, “Problèmes actuels de la sociologie,” *Homme et société* 3 (1967), p. 53

Balandier's famous essay from 1951 on the "colonial situation"—published in English translation by Immanuel Wallerstein in 1966—analyzed colonialism as a complex, unique, overdetermined totality that could not be reduced to an instance of a general historical process. Colonial situations" differed from conditions in the metropolises and from noncolonized, nonwestern societies. The colonial and noncolonial aspects of a society were interlaced and could not be isolated from one another. And colonies and postcolonies were dynamic, historical, evolving entities—an argument undergirding Balandier's defense of a "dynamic sociology" against what he saw as the unhistorical, static models of structuralist anthropology. Several of Balandier's students during the 1960s, including Emmanuel Terray, Marc Augé, and Pierre Philippe Rey, pioneered a unique form of historical ethnography that differed in key ways from the structuralist anthropology dominating French the academy at the time. They combined archival research and a dynamic, historical sensibility with ethnographic fieldwork in African settings, along with a neo-Marxist theoretical framework indebted to by Louis Althusser. More recent students of Balandier include the socio-ethnologist Didier Fassin (Institute for Advanced Study, School of Social Science) and Abolhassan Bani Sadr, Iranian President from February 1980 to June 1981.

Georges Balandier, an extraordinary scholar and intellectual, will be sorely missed.

Georges Balandier, Dec. 21, 1920 (Ailleville-et-Lyaumont, France)-October 5, 2016 (Paris)

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5. Obituary for Jerzy Szacki

By Marta Bucholc

If history of sociology was to be symbolized by a single human person, most Polish sociologists would probably vote for Jerzy Szacki. For more than three decades, his *History of Sociological Thought* was for most of us the first and authoritative source of knowledge about everything that matters in social theorizing, from Aristotle to Habermas and Bourdieu. The huge book, over a thousand pages in the new extended Polish edition, was commonly referred to as "Szacki": this way he was constantly present among us, even after his retirement in 1999.

Jerzy Szacki, born in 1929, was a great scholar, but he was also a witness to 20th century. His name can be found among the Righteous Among the Nations. He had experienced life in many ways and came out with a mixture of distance and seriousness, which made his perspective unique and his insights balanced.

He never was a public person, a buzzname to TV-audiences. Nevertheless, he was a public intellectual, for he wrote and spoke about the public affairs with knowledge and wisdom usually untraceable in the so-called expert commentaries. He did not seek international acknowledgment. Even though his magnum opus, *The History of Sociological Thought*, was first published in English, it is the Polish version that really shows the full range of his scholarly vision, developed throughout a long series of books fundamental to Polish history of ideas. However, those few books of his which have been translated, such as *Liberalism After Communism* ([1994] 1995), a brilliant comment to Polish transformation, proves that not only history, but also historically informed analysis of contemporary political ideologies was Szacki's forte. He was particularly interested in conservatism and traditionalism: his account of the paradoxes of counterrevolutionary thought in 18th century France is unsurpassed. He usually managed to convince those who would take the trouble of reading his rich, erudite, clearly written and well-argued books, that our claims to historical prominence should be moderated by a sense of contingency of human efforts, and by a common sense, too.

This irony is a hallmark of the Warsaw school of the historians of ideas, a loosely structured yet intellectually distinct group of scholars active in Warsaw in 1950s and early 1960s. With his colleagues, including, among others, Bronisław Baczko, Jerzy Jedlicki, Leszek Kołakowski, Krzysztof Pomian and Andrzej Walicki, he chose a way as difficult under the communism as it is in liberal democracy: to think about the history of ideas historically, against the universal drive to make it pertinent at any price, whether as a part of the Marxist account of human history or of democratic vanity's fair.

Jerzy Szacki received many prizes, presided over many bodies, academic and non-academic, including his membership in the Board of RCHS in the years 1978-1988. His career was distinguished, but rather uneventful, a life of a man who did the work in front of him, but whose heart was not in titles, personal games and academic administration. He was never a fighter, but he managed to stay respectful and respected, perhaps because social science is, in its core, a very respectful vocation.

Jerzy Szacki died on 25 of October 2016. He will be mourned by his family, including his wife Barbara Szacka, also a sociologist, a pioneer of Polish memory studies and one of the pillars of Warsaw sociology. However, Szacki will indeed, and not only in a cliché, live on in his work, though the future generation will not have the chance to meet the man who managed to hide his impressive personality behind this immense oeuvre.

6. Publications

Journal Articles

Patel, Sujata. Feminist challenges to sociology in India: An essay in disciplinary history. *Contributions to Indian Sociology* 50, 3 (2016): 320–342, 2016

_____. The Challenge of Doing Sociology Today, *Economic and Political Weekly*, 51 (46): 33-40, 2016

Platt, Jennifer. Recent ASA Presidents and 'Top' Journals: Observed Publication Patterns, Alleged Cartels and Varying Careers". *The American Sociologist*. Here is a link: <http://rdcu.be/kkzP>

Connell, Raewyn; Collyer, Fran; Maia, João M; Morrell, Robert. Toward a global sociology of knowledge: post-colonial realities and international practices. *International Sociology*. first published on November 15, 2016 as doi:10.1177/0268580916676913

Susen, Simon (2016) 'Further Reflections on the "Postmodern Turn" in the Social Sciences: A Reply to William Outhwaite', *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society*, Online First, pp. 1-10.

_____ (2016) 'Towards a Critical Sociology of Dominant Ideologies: An Unexpected Reunion between Pierre Bourdieu and Luc Boltanski', *Cultural Sociology*, 10(2), pp. 195-246.

_____ (2015) 'Une réconciliation entre Pierre Bourdieu et Luc Boltanski est-elle possible ? Pour un dialogue entre la sociologie critique et la sociologie pragmatique de la critique', in Bruno Frère (ed.) *Le tournant de la théorie critique*, Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, pp. 151-186.

Book chapters

Susen, Simon (2017) 'Hermeneutic Bourdieu', in Lisa Adkins, Caragh Brosnan, and Steven Threadgold (eds.) *Bourdieuian Prospects*, London: Routledge, pp. 132-159.

_____. (2016) 'Reconstructing the Self: A Goffmanian Perspective', in Harry F. Dahms and Eric R. Lybeck (eds.) *Reconstructing Social Theory, History and Practice*, Book Series: *Current Perspectives in Social Theory*, Volume 35, Bingley: Emerald, pp. 111-143.

_____. (2016) 'The Sociological Challenge of Reflexivity in Bourdieusian Thought', in Derek Robbins (ed.) *The Anthem Companion to Pierre Bourdieu*, London: Anthem Press, pp. 49-93.

_____. (2015) 'Emancipation', in Michael T. Gibbons, Diana Coole, Elisabeth Ellis, and Kennan Ferguson (eds.) *The Encyclopedia of Political Thought*, Volume 3, Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, pp. 1024-1038.

Eliaeson, Sven (2016) "Max Weber on Russias's long road to modernity" pp 195-206 in *The Anthem companion to Weber* / edited by Alan Sica. New York: Anthem Press.

Books

Susen, Simon (2016) *Pierre Bourdieu et la distinction sociale. Un essai philosophique*, Oxford: Peter Lang, 170 pp.

Susen, Simon (2015) *The 'Postmodern Turn' in the Social Sciences*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 522 pp.

Chernillo, Daniel. (2016) *Debating Humanity. Towards a Philosophical Sociology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lidz, Victor and Helmut Staubmann (editors); Talcott Parsons and Winston White (2016), *Values of American Society; Manuscripts from the American Society Project, volume I* (Wien: LIT Verlag). This is the third volume in the series, *Studies in the Theory of Action*, edited by Staubmann and Lidz.