



Dr. Michael Burawoy / Майкъл Буравой – председател на Международната социологическа асоциация (ISA), е в България на 18-19 март 2013.

Ще изнесе няколко публични лекции. Вижте програмата му.

Имаме възможност за пряк контакт и лични впечатления с една не само водеща личност в световната социология, но и един от инициаторите на нова трансформация на социологията в посока към така нар. „публична социология“, „глобална социология“, „социология на хармоничната цивилизация“.

Вижте неговото програмно изказване пред конгреса на МСА в Гьотеборг, 2010 г.: ***Facing the Challenges of Global Sociology.***

Facing the Challenges of Global Sociology

An election speech given at the ISA Congress in Gothenburg, **July 12, 2010**

It is an honor to be standing for election alongside Elisa Reis with whom I have served these last four years on the Executive Committee, and Said Arjomand with whom I began graduate school at the University of Chicago, unbelievably, nearly 4 decades ago.

While I am honored to be a candidate for the Presidency of the ISA, I also realize just how difficult an undertaking it will be. Four years of serving as the ISA's Vice-President for National Associations, filled with intense discussions with sociologists all over our planet, have made me acutely aware of **the magnitude of the challenges sociology faces** as a global discipline. I want to take this opportunity to report to you what I have learned during these 4 years, and how I would take the ISA forward to meet these challenges.

Universities and research establishments around the world face twin threats:

On the one side **the privatization and commodification of knowledge** production threaten to **turn scholars into appendages** of university business offices and their private partners.

On the other side **bureaucratic regulation and mindless ranking systems** are stifling exploration of new intellectual terrains and diverting energies **away from the investigation of pressing social problems.**

In a number of countries the twin threats are reinforced by **old or new forms of repression.**

In this context, sociology is particularly threatened, but sociology has also unusual potential to become a bastion of defense not only against the ascendant privatization and commodification of knowledge, but, more broadly, against new forms of commodifying labor, money, and nature that are generating cumulative crises of the 21st century. **Sociology is a potential defense** because it takes **the standpoint of society** -- civil society if you will -- **against excessive marketization**

and statism, but such a defense requires us to forge an active global sociological community, and simultaneously build constituencies beyond the academy.

None of this will be easy, but we can make headway by building on what the ISA has already accomplished. Concretely, my program would be **to erect a global sociology on three legs**, three Ms – **Media, Membership, and Message**. As President I would make creative use of electronic *media*, to build a more inclusive and interactive *membership*, while advancing a global sociological *message* for all.

Let me begin with *ELECTRONIC MEDIA*.

One of the first things we did in the National Association Liaison Committee was to **create a National Association website** with templates for all our 57 National Associations where we also posted reports from meetings, volumes on regional sociologies, conference proceedings, etc. It is a splendid website. But is anyone looking at it? It is not enough to create beautiful websites, we have to make them **participatory, accessible, and accountable** to the membership. I have 5 proposals:

- *First, the **electronic newsletter***. I think the President of the ISA, as well as Vice-Presidents should send regular reports to the membership on their activities. The ISA has a *Newsletter* that should be upgraded into a vehicle for continuous and two-way communication between leaders and members.
- *Second, the **Electronic-Bulletin***. Vineeta Singh has undertaken a labor of love in editing our E-Bulletin. It needs to be made available to the world at large. I would like to make her work more visible and involve more people to assist her.
- *Third, **translations***. One of the perennial problems in our association are the languages that divide us. We have discussed this on multiple occasions. one thing we can do is to translate into English articles published in languages other than English. I propose to create an electronic journal of translations or to make those part of the E-Bulletin.
- *Fourth, **Portraits of Sociology***. Devorah Kalekin Fishman has done a wonderful job creating the International Sociology Review of Books, featuring among other things interviews with sociologists. I would like to complement this with video interviews of sociologists – famous and not – from different parts of the world, and posted on our website, so that we get a better sense of the rich diversity of our community.
- *Finally, **Global Sociology Live!*** This is my most ambitious project. If elected I propose to run a weekly program on global issues with short lectures and/or interviews with sociologists around the world. It will be streamed as an **audio recording** and **posted on YouTube**. It will create an international audience for a live broadcast of global sociology – **a sociology with a global message**. For example, Emma Porio could talk about the aftermath of the Tsunami from Manila, Jackie Cock could talk about the political significance of the world cup from Johannesburg, Pun Ngai could talk about workers' struggles from Guandong, Maggie Abrahams could report on domestic violence in New York.

In these ways the *medium* actual creates the *MEMBERSHIP*, which is my second “m”.

Electronic media can potentially bring us together in new ways, allowing those, who cannot afford to come to world forums and congresses like this one, to participate in our community. But electronic media are not sufficient by themselves. We also need **more face-to-face interaction**.

There is much to be done in this regard. My priorities include catering better to *Junior Sociologists*. This is not easy since Junior Sociologists are often the most pre-occupied in building their careers, have fewer material resources, and have the least time for ISA activities. But they are our future, a new generation of ideas, and they are **18% of our membership**. We have to provide resources that will bring them together in a meaningful and rewarding fashion. We already have **the annual PhD laboratories introduced by Alberto Martinelli** – but I would like to **develop conferences for Junior Sociologists**, which would better help them integrate into the ISA, into RCs and NAs.

Another way in which the ISA promotes face-to-face dialogue among its members is through *REGIONAL WORKSHOPS*.

Over the past 4 years The National Association Liaison Committee sponsored 7 regional conferences or workshops in Turkey, in Azerbaijan, in Croatia, in Poland, in Cyprus, in South Africa, and in Iran. Such regional meetings along with the meetings of Research Committees are important to bring together sociologists with similar interests, speaking similar languages. Meetings within the region are not only cheaper and more accessible but provide a bridge to the world congresses. They are a small-scale supplement to the exciting meetings of Regional Associations – ALAS, APSA, ESA, and AfSA – that I attended.

Probably, the most important activity of the NALC was the second conference of National Associations held in Taipei, in March 2009 where we had 61 participants from 43 countries, evenly spread across the world. Here was our **own global public sphere** in miniature, addressing the theme, *Facing an Unequal World: Challenges for a Global Sociology*. Our task was to examine the inequalities and dominations that divide us, that is to apply sociology to ourselves – a dangerous pastime indeed. The major themes to emerge from this exciting conference included: **linguistic domination**, unequal material and **social resources**, **privatization of research**, and the need to develop **alternative theoretical frameworks**.

A year later we already have the papers from the conference published in three handsome volumes: Volume I: *Latin America and Africa*; Volume II: *Asia*; Volume III: *Europe*. All 53 papers are freely available at the Conference Website together with **audio recording** and **videos** of all the panels. The three volumes together with a short film of the conference – made by two sociology students Annie Lin and Ana Villarreal – have been distributed free to the participants, to national associations and to libraries all over the world.

This conference was made possible by funding obtained by the Taiwanese Sociological Association and the Institute of Sociology at Academia Sinica, and by the organizational genius of the Taiwanese team led by Maukuei Chang and Michelle

Fei-yu Hsieh. It was an extraordinary event in which *the membership exploited media to disseminate the message – and message, of course, is my third “m”*.

But what *MESSAGE*?

At the concluding session in Taipei we had a vibrant discussion of the twin forces facing universities around the world – the ones I referred to earlier -- on the one side **the privatization and commodification of knowledge** production, and on the other side **regulation and competitive evaluation**. Together these forces are turning universities into **commercial enterprises**, but also creating arbitrary hierarchies based in an **audit culture**. So far the E-Bulletin has devoted two issues to the topic. But we needed to look at things more broadly.

Accordingly, I developed an **ISA blog called “Universities in Crisis.”** Within the space of 5 months we have over 60 assessments of universities from sociologists from 35 countries, assessments that do indeed paint a frightening picture – but a picture we need to comprehend if we are to protect ourselves as a discipline. If elected, I will develop this into a bigger project that will **bring us together in common** cause with other social sciences.

If one *message* of the Taipei conference highlighted the twin forces of market and state threatening the autonomy and existence of universities world-wide, a second message concerned the way sociology can advance its causes through the building of constituencies, publics, outside the academy.

These *PUBLIC sociologies*, as I have called them, mean different things to different people, but they all share a common commitment to bring professional sociology to bear on the unique and escalating problems of our time. There are now over 20 symposia on public sociology published in different journals in different parts of the planet – sociologists examining their own field in order to better examine issues of **local, national and global concern**.

As your representative, over the last 4 years, I have traversed the world many times, visited 29 countries – north and south, rich and poor, big and small. I have learned just how dangerous public sociology can be in a country like **Iran** where quoting Weber can be the shortest road to prison, or **Egypt** where dissent is all too easily criminalized or the **Basque Country** where sociologists try to sustain public dialogue in the face of violence. I learnt how public sociology flourishes in a country like **Brazil**, how it is in retreat in **South Africa**, how it becomes a major axis of division in **Russia**, and the subtle forms it assumes in a country like **China**. I have learned how brave sociologists can be, but also how, in many countries, sociologists are over-taxed with teaching and multiple jobs. For them **public sociology is a luxury**. Still, even here sociologists show great inventiveness, showing how teaching itself can be public sociology – teaching that is accountable to student experience and local knowledge.

As some of you may know I think of sociology as having four moments – **public** to be sure, but no less important **professional, critical** and **policy**. Each depends upon the others. There can be no public sociology without professional, scientific sociology. Needless to say the configuration of the 4 moments looks very different in different parts of the world.

Despite those differences – and they are many -- we all face common global pressures, drawing us away from our publics. **Sari Hanafi**, writing about sociologists

in the Middle East, shows how **publishing globally can mean perishing locally**, and vice versa, **publishing locally means perishing globally**. He rightly urges us to **contest this polarization**.

Indeed, we must contest such centrifugal pressures, and, more generally, endeavor to bridge the many geopolitical divides and **build a global community of sociologists**. We should not weave it from above from the cloth of a single hegemonic universal sociology, but stitch it together from below whether this be through National Associations or Research Committees or other vehicles that recognize and respect the diversity of sociologies.

In short, I want to foster a more inclusive and interactive public sphere *within* our own *membership*, using new *media* to forge a global *message*. This would create a strong partnership among our disparate branches, our Research Committees and National Associations, and in this way **forge a more dynamic ISA**.

Sociology – the best sociology – matters, not just for us *but for others too*. **The world needs sociology**, a global sociology attentive to global issues. That is what drives the program I have outlined, and that is why I am standing for President.

Gothenburg, July 12, 2010

ПРОГРАМА на проф. Буравой за 18-19 март 2013

18 март 2013

11:00 Централната сграда на БАН – **Предизвикателства пред глобалната социология**

19:00 The fridge & Хаспел – **Каква е съдбата на марксизма след комунизма?**

19 март 2013

14:40 НБУ – **Социални движения в неолибералната епоха**

17:00 Ауд. 200 в бл. 4 на СУ (бул. Цариградско шосе, 125) – **Дилеми на публичната социология**