



NEWSLETTER

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Letter from the President

Greetings from the ISA Research Committee for the Sociology of Religion.

This month's newsletter is short, focused on the **Call for Paper Proposals for next year's World Congress of Sociology** in Toronto, Canada. Paper proposals are due on 30 September, 2017, at 24:00 GMT.

The overall World Congress theme will be "Power, Violence, and Justice". This continues the ISA's recent concern for making sociology a force for positive social change. Page 2 of this newsletter has a complete description of that theme and a calendar of important dates.

Our Research Committee's theme will be "Religion, Power, and Resistance: New Ideas for a Divided World". Program Coordinators Anna Halafoff, Sam Han, and Caroline Starkey have posted a list of sessions to which you can contribute papers. **To submit one, please visit the ISA website:** <http://www.isa-sociology.org/en/conferences/world-congress/toronto-2018/call-for-abstracts/> Once there, click on the orange box, then on the RC22 link, click a session to read its abstract, and, it is right for you, click on the "Submit an Abstract to this Session" box, log in, and fill out the form.

The titles of those sessions are (listed alphabetically):

- **Candlelight Revolution and Religion in South Korea**
- **Dynamics of Gender, Religion and Intersectionality**
- **Gender, Feminism, and Islam and the West**
- **Media and Religious Radicalization: Gatekeeping and the Construction of Extremism**
- **Prejudice, Exclusion and Violence in a Transnational World**
- **Religion and Migration: Contrasting the First and Second Generations**
- **Religion and National Identity**
- **Religion and Non-Violent Social Movements**
- **Religion and Secularity**

- **Religion in the East Asian Public Sphere**
- **Religion in the Public Square**
- **Religion, Gender and Family Violence**
- **Religious Texts of Diversity Vs Exclusion**
- **Social Theory and Religion**

Session organizers have been instructed to think broadly rather than narrowly in choosing papers for presentation. As is usual for ISA conferences, each session will accept 5-6 papers for oral presentation and an equal number of papers for distribution. Many of those chosen for the latter will end up presenting their papers orally.

Worthwhile papers that are not chosen for oral or distributed presentation may be assigned to extra sessions, to roundtables, or to individual oral presentations. The last are a particularly lively format, where presenters interact with small groups of listeners and get to explain their work in depth.

One last word: this year, we will award the Varga Prize to the best paper by a scholar who is at most three years beyond the PhD.

The winner will receive a monetary award, plus assistance attending the conference to present the paper. See page 3 for details.

Best wishes to you all,

Jim Spickard
University of Redlands
president@isa-rc22.org



PS: Our next newsletter will come out in September. Please send us material that other RC members might want to read. See page 4 for ideas. Also, send us your news items, book and conference announcements, job openings, etc. Go to the "[News and Events](#)" section of our website and follow the instructions. While you're there, sign up to get our weekly summary of what others have sent in.



Moving towards the 2018 World Congress

The next ISA World Congress will be held in Toronto, Canada, from July 15-21, 2018. It's not too early to start planning.

The ISA conference website is at <http://www.isa-sociology.org/congress2018/>. The Call for Session Proposals is open (see page 3 of this newsletter), but the Call for Paper Proposals is not. It opens on 25 April, once the sessions titles have been chosen.

As you can see from the poster, the conference theme is "Power, Violence, and Justice: Reflections, Responses, and Responsibilities". On the website, ISA President Margaret Abraham describes the theme as follows:

Since the inception of the discipline, sociologists have been concerned with power, violence and justice. Current social, economic and political challenges enhance their relevance.

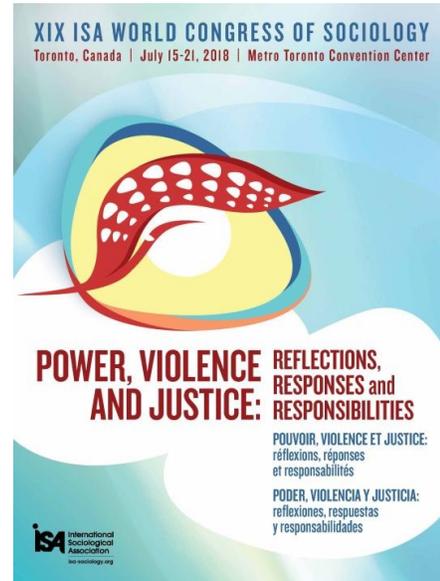
As capitalist globalization expands and deepens, corporate power increases along with global, national and local inequalities. New geo-political power configurations and confrontations are emerging, with violence being used as a tool to oppress and also to resist oppression. Colonial histories and contemporary land appropriations reflect the structures and cultural processes that perpetuate violence against indigenous and minority communities. States' failures to meet their responsibility to provide basic resources are often deflected by blaming the most vulnerable.

Both global economic and geo-political processes create crises and massive displacements of people and, at the same time, fuel racism, nationalism and xenophobia. We have also seen an increasing buildup of a culture of fear as a powerful tool used by states, corporations and other institutions to generate popular support for curtailing freedom in the name of security. Efforts to curtail the flow of desperate refugees, attest to the reinforcement of national and racialized borders.

Despite visible progress on equality issues, violence against women and intersectional violence point to the entrenchment of the gender border around the world. Equally significant is the need to consider the role of state and institutional power relations to ongoing everyday violence.

In response to disempowerment, violence, and injustice we have also witnessed nonviolent movements, humanitarian interventions, and peace processes that have empowered communities, reduced violence, and promoted justice. These diverse communities have built solidarities outside the neo-liberal frames of state-global capital nexus.

This XIX ISA World Congress of Sociology will focus on how scholars, public intellectuals, policy makers, journalists and activists from diverse fields can and do contribute to our understanding of power, violence and justice.



Timetable for Proposing Sessions and Papers (as of January, 2017)

2017

15 Jan:

- RCs choose Program Coordinators
- Proposal submissions for Integrative Sessions, Ad Hoc sessions, Author/Critics sessions, and sessions by national, regional, and other groups

2 Feb–15 Mar:

- Call for Sessions announced, including Invited, Presidential, and other RC sessions

16 Mar–7 Apr:

- Program Coordinators create final list of sessions

25 Apr–30 Sept:

- **Call for Papers. Participants submit abstracts to CONFEX (online)**

5 Oct–15 Nov:

- Session organizers choose papers and organize sessions.
- Unchosen papers either rejected or transferred to the Program Coordinators.

16 Nov–24 Nov:

- Program Coordinators reshuffle sessions, assign transferred papers, create roundtables, etc, so as to include as many good papers as possible.

30 Nov:

- CONFEX sends our notification letters to all authors, informing them of their acceptance or rejection

2018

20 Mar:

- Registration deadline for presenters

14 Apr–30 Apr:

- Session Organizers and Program Coordinators modify sessions based on final registrations.



The Varga Prize for New Generation Scholars

This award recognizes an outstanding new paper by a scholar who is at most three years beyond the PhD. It is named for our late Honorary President, Ivan Varga, who was well-known for supporting scholars just entering the profession.

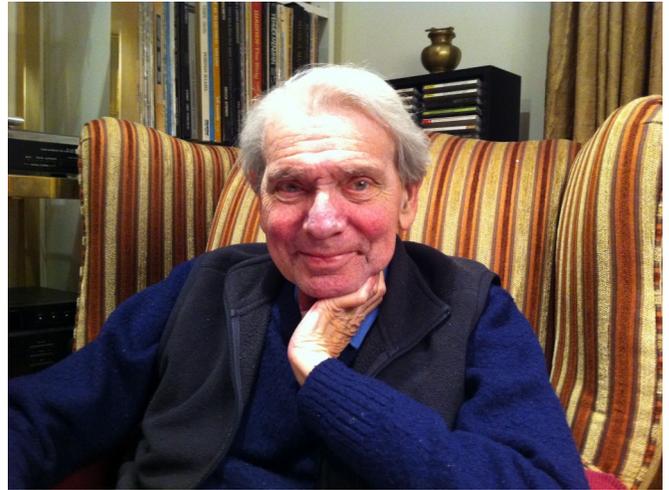
This is a monetary award of at least 500 euros.

The award also covers the winner's unreimbursed travel costs to enable presentation of the paper at the World Congress.

The prize was established by a gift from a donor who wishes to remain anonymous. It has been augmented by a grant from Springer Publishing and a contribution from RC-22 funds.

Application Procedure:

1. Submit your paper proposal to one of the RC-22 sessions at the [ISA website](#) Deadline is 30 September, 2017, 24:00 GMT
2. Send a copy of your abstract and the finished paper e paper to the President and Secretary/Treasurer of the Research Committee, along with a letter describing your work's significance and a curriculum vita. Deadline: same as above (30 September, 2017, 24:00 GMT)
 - president@isa-rc22.org
 - sectreas@isa-rc22.org



Ivan Varga (1931-2012)

The President will appoint an Evaluation Committee, made up of members of the RC22 Board plus a few other scholars. The Committee will choose the prize winner plus a runner-up, in case the winner is unable to accept the award due to an inability to attend the World Congress. (The runner-up will also receive a monetary award.)

All areas of the sociology of religion are eligible for the Varga Prize. The Committee will base its judgment on its estimate of the winning papers' scholarly worth, its intellectual importance, and its significance for furthering the sociological study of religion.

*There may be an opportunity to publish this paper after the close of the conference.
The winner does not have to accept this opportunity in order to claim the prize.*

IVAN VARGA: A REMEMBRANCE

by Christina Varga

from the *Globe and Mail*, 1/24/2013

A Hungarian Jew who lived through the Second World War only to come under the thumb of the Soviet Union, Ivan Varga perhaps understandably became a sociologist: a field that seeks to understand how social forces mold our world. Ivan was a boy when he and his family were forced to wear the yellow stars imposed by the Nazis on Jews. Risking being shot, he stood in bread lines without his yellow star in order to get a little more food for the family.

When Hungary was liberated from the Nazis by the Soviet army and the war ended, he worked to rebuild the country filled with youthful socialist ideals. When those beautiful socialist dreams turned to ugly Soviet reality, Ivan became a political dissident and after the Hungarian uprising of 1956 he fled to Poland, knowing he could be arrested or worse. But he was worried about his mother and returned to Hungary a year later. He was briefly arrested and interrogated and was barred from working. He earned money translating texts under the table, but it wasn't until things eased up in the 1960s that he was allowed to work officially as a periodical editor.

He married Eva Launsky, also an editor, in 1961. I was born in 1968, the year he was allowed to leave the country for a four-year stint as a professor at the University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania. It was a taste of Western freedom. Ivan told me that one of the reasons he decided not to return to Hungary was that when he watched advertisements for the British Overseas Airways Corp. he saw young people jetting around the world and wanted that freedom for me.

With nothing but a few suitcases we defected to Germany, where Ivan taught as a professor for a year, before being recruited by Queen's University in Kingston, Ont. From there, he continued his international work as a sociologist of religion. Organizing and addressing conferences from India to Australia and throughout Europe, he also edited books and wrote articles with a global reach.

He remained honorary president of the International Sociological Association's religion research committee until the end of his life.



Opportunities for You

Three Ways to Contribute to Our Next Newsletter

1) Tell us about the sociology of religion in your part of the world:

In our September, 2016, newsletter, we heard about the sociology of religion in Latin America. What's happening to religion in your part of the world? What's happening in your country? We'll publish short pieces in future newsletters: 500-750 words. Please send them to newsletter@isa-rc22.org.

2) Write a think-piece about the sociology of religion

What direction do you think our discipline needs to go? What are the cutting-edge issues? What projects do you find most exciting? We'd like short essays (up to 1250 words) that are scholarly but also provocative. Please send them to newsletter@isa-rc22.org.

3) Tell us about your books and awards

We'll publish significant news from members as space allows, and will post such news on our blog. newsletter@isa-rc22.org

Send us News for Our Blog.

Yes, RC-22 publishes a blog. We post calls-for-papers, conference and book announcements, job openings, and many other things of interest to sociologists of religion worldwide. Visit www.isa-rc22.org/news-events to get a sample. Then send your events and news to BlogSubmit@isa-rc22.org. We can't do attachments, so put your text in the body of your email. We'll post it and spread the word.

A weekly summary goes out to over 800 scholars worldwide. If you're not getting it, go to the blog page and sign up.

Keep Your Membership Up-To-Date

As you know, there are two parts to membership in the ISA:

1. Membership in the ISA as a whole (\$35-\$225 for 4 years, depending on your country; half that for students)
2. Membership on the Research Committees. (\$10-\$30, depending on your country)

The ISA does a good job of making sure that conference participants join the ISA, paying the rather large 4-year dues that keep the organization going.

It does not, however, make sure that conference attendees join the Research Committees themselves. Nor do we: you can participate in our programs without being an RC-22 member. This increases the number of people who can attend.

If you are not an RC-22 Member, please join!
If your membership has lapsed, or will lapse at the end of this year, please renew!



RC22—International Sociological Association (ISA)

2014-2018 RC22 BOARD MEMBERS

Officers

- President** Jim Spickard, University of Redlands, USA
president@isa-rc22.org
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Consider Running for Office

Officers and Board Members' terms expire at the next World Congress. Some Board Members are eligible for re-election but others are not. We will be seeking candidates for several posts, including President and Secretary/Treasurer.

Please write the President and the Secretary/Treasurer if you are interested in running.