
Agriculture and Food

The E-Newsletter of the ISA Research Committee on Agriculture and Food (RC40)

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Content:

Greetings from the President3

Info on upcoming ISA Forum4

Draft agenda for the 2/26/21 RC40 Members’ (Business) Meeting.....5

VALE (Farewell) - Jane Dixon6

Update on the RC40 journal – IJSAF.....7

New member spotlight – Atakan Büke8

RC40 Outreach and membership drive posters.....9



Sociology of
Agriculture and Food



PRESIDENTS' WELCOME

Dear RC40 Members,

Greetings. COVID remains a major problem for all of us in our personal lives and in our professional lives. We are living through an exceptional moment, and the strain highlights many aspects of social structure and social relations. Clearly, there is much work to do to, analytically and practically.

The ISA Forum Feb 23-27, 2021 offers us a chance to reflect collectively and to interact online. Hilde Bjørkhaug has done an outstanding job coordinating RC40 participation in the Forum, and we will host 63 papers over 14 sessions. See details on these sessions attached (p4). ISA has re-opened registration, and there is now a lower cost option for people who are not presenting research to join the [FORUM](#). As detailed in this newsletter, we will hold a RC40 Members' Business Meeting 2/26 2:00 EST. Please join us, as this is an opportunity for all members to participate in shaping RC40 programming and the allocation of shared resources (p5).

I would like to thank Geoff Lawrence for offering a farewell (p.6) to Jane Dixon who recently passed away. Jane made a grand mark on agrifood scholarship through her intellect and warm character. She will be missed. Also, I would like to thank Dr. Atakan Büke, Post-Doctoral researchers at Leipzig University, Institute of Anthropology, who is highlighted in our RC40 new member spotlight. In our next newsletter we will introduce Dr. Wardah AlKatiri, Senior Lecturer, Department of Public Health at Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Surabaya (UNUSA), East Java, Indonesia.

Here in the USA, our ex-President is being impeached for a second time and we remain in something resembling a political crisis. But there is some good news. I encourage you to read the statement from John Kerry, [Presidential Envoy for Climate Change](#). Here we see a formal recognition of the centrality of science, the importance of ecology and justice, and a new commitment to international cooperation from an important nation. While there is a basis for some optimism attached to recent developments in the USA, you do not need to look far to find conflict and uncertainty. I chose image of protests of new farm laws in India because this unfolding issue highlights issues of concern to our collective – rural livelihoods, corporate power, state policy, civil society movements, food systems, land use, environment and justice. I hope I will see many of you online during the ISA Forum. As we look further to the future, I look forward to seeing you face to face at the [ISA World Congress in Melbourne in 2022](#).

Stay well.

Steven Wolf
saw44@cornell.edu

Info on upcoming ISA Forum



The ISA Forum of Sociology will take place online February 23 to 28 2021.

Since decision on moving from the originally planned event in Porto Alegre, Brazil, a reopening of abstract submissions and registrations was conducted. We are pleased to announce that RC40 will provide a viable contribution to the Forum with 63 papers presented in eight different groups over 14 sessions during the event. Some of the topics are organized in collaboration with other Research Committees.

During the Forum – Friday February 26th the **RC40 Business Meeting** will take place. This meeting will join the **RC40 Social Event**. The session will be open for members. Stay tuned for the zoom invitation with time-zone details.

The following sessions topics are represented at the FORUM:

- 1. From Food Utopias to Food Futures: Theory and Practice in Agri-Food Transformation**
Kiah Smit and Alana Mann will chair two sessions of 10 paper presentations.
- 2. Governing Value(s) and Organizing through Standards** (joint RC40/RC17)
Nadine Arnold, Allison Loconto and Filipe Calvao will chair 3 sessions (two in RC40 and one in RC17) with 15 paper presentations.
- 3. Alternative Food Networks**
Paolo Corvo and Raffaele Maticena will chair two sessions of eight paper presentations.
- 4. Financialization of the Agri-Food System and Its Consequences**
Hilde Bjørkhaug, Kiah Smith and Geoffrey Lawrence will chair one session with five paper presentations.
- 5. Social Movements as Protagonists of New Agrifood Markets** (Joint session RC40 RC47 RC48)
Paulo Niederle, Camila Penna, Simin Fadaee and Renata Motta will chair two sessions with nine paper presentations.
- 6. Agrifood Transitions in the Anthropocene**
Allison Loconto and Douglas Constance will chair two sessions of 10 paper presentations.
- 7. Agrarian Crisis and Farmers Suicide in Asia**
Bishnu Charan and Smita Verma has organized one session with three papers. (Chair: Hilde Bjørkhaug)
- 8. Inequality in Growth and Advancement of Agriculture**
Maitreyee Bardhan Roy and Steven Wolf will chair one session with four papers.

In addition to these 'regular' paper sessions, an 'open' **Poster Session** will invite delegates share snapshots of recent research ideas, areas or publications. Further in a **Panel Session** we will invite to a scientific dialog on emerging issues and engagement of scholarship in the sociology of agriculture and food. Details will follow.

Agenda for RC40 Members' Business Meeting, Feb 26, 2021 – 2:00pm EST

We will hold a meeting of all RC40 members Feb 26, 2021 2:00 EST to discuss the business of the organization and our future plans. All members are welcome to join and to contribute. This meeting will be followed by a social event. Please see draft agenda below. If you would like to suggest additional agenda items please email Hilde Bjørkhaug hilde.bjorkhaug@ntnu.no; Steven A. Wolf saw44@cornell.edu. We will email the zoom link and passcode to all members. If you do not receive this information, please email Steven or Hilde and we will share it with you.

- Welcome and introductions
- Membership report
- Budget report
- Updates from EC members
 - Early career workshops
 - Regional initiatives grantmaking
 - Communications
 - RC40 promotional materials
 - ISA leadership
- International Journal of Sociology of Agriculture and Food (IJSAF) report
- Planning for ISA World Congress (Melbourne) and IRSA (Cairns) – July 2022
- Preparations for RC40 EC elections in 2022
- Call for new business
- SOCIAL EVENT – Games, quiz, networking and COVID conviviality!

VALE (Farewell) - Jane Dixon

Our wonderful friend, colleague, and agri-food champion, Jane Dixon, died in Melbourne of a long illness on 29 January this year, with partner Colin by her side.

Jane began her career in social work but soon developed a strong interest in social theory and sociology. Her early studies of the social aspects of health and well-being – particularly health inequalities – led to the publication of many papers and articles on health care. Three of her books: *The Weight of Modernity*; *Health of People, Places and Planets*; and, *The Seven Deadly Sins of Obesity*, drew attention to the threats to population health which are embedded in the structures and practices of consumerism, fuelled by the activities of the corporate food sector and by government policy. Each book provided important and original insights into diet and health in contemporary society. During her career Jane held an Honorary Associate Professorship with the National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health at the Australian National University, and a Leverhulme Trust Visiting Professorship at the Centre for Food Policy, City University of London. She delivered policy advice on food security to the International Union on Health Promotion and Education, as well as providing technical assistance to the World Health Organisation.



But Jane's real claim to fame, as far as RC 40 members are concerned, was her conceptual contribution to commodity chain analysis. In her book *The Changing Chicken: Chooks, Cooks and Culinary Culture*, published in 2002, Jane critiqued the then-dominant Commodity Systems Analysis – or CSA - developed in the 1980s by agri-food guru Bill Friedland. Jane's insight was that while CSA provided an excellent framework for examining the ways commodities were transformed and acquired value, what it left out was the cultural economy. The cultural economy embraces the construction of meaning and of social identity. Jane called upon Weber, Bourdieu, Polanyi and other eminent social theorists to add a new and powerful cultural dimension to the otherwise structuralist and somewhat formulaic approach to the examination of commodity chains. *The Changing Chicken* has been described by reviewers as 'brilliant' and an 'excellent account of the relationship between food, food systems, and structures of power'. Former President of the International Rural Sociology Association, and long-time RC 40 member, Alessandro Bonanno wrote that her book 'transcends political economy' by investigating 'the complex interplay of power relations among producers, retailers and consumers'. Bill Friedland, himself, described the book as 'the most comprehensive commodity chain analysis I have seen'. Similarly, Jane's earlier article on cultural economy published in *Agriculture and Human Values* was described as 'one of the most useful methodological discussions in the food studies literature'.

Beginning with Agri-food 5 in Akaroa in 1997, Jane was a regular presenter at the yearly meetings of the Australasian Agri-food Research Network. She collaborated on grants and papers with a host of network members including David Burch, Ruth Beilin, Carol Richards, Phil McMichael, Hugh Campbell and Bill Pritchard and with many of her former students. I worked with Jane in examining the role of supermarkets in the industrial food sector. Her idea of supermarkets becoming 'food authorities' was yet another original contribution to our understanding of corporate power in the agri-food sector, as were her explorations into 'dashboard dining'.

Jane was always insightful and intellectually provocative, approaching everything she did with infectious good humour. She will be greatly missed by her agri-food colleagues.

Geoff Lawrence, 9 February 2021

Update on the RC40 journal – IJSAF

Despite the COVID-19 related slowdowns experienced by all academic journals this year, we have had some positive developments at IJSAF.

First, we learned in September 2020 that **SCOPUS**, the Elsevier database for the social sciences, will begin to index IJSAF starting with the 2020 issues. This means that all manuscripts published from here on in IJSAF will be accessible in the following databases: Agricola (USDA); SocINDEX (EBSCO); SCOPUS. In 2021, will plan on finalizing the submission of IJSAF to the **Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)** as a first priority. We maintain the goal of reapplying to Clarivate in 2022 in the hopes of finally receiving an ISI ranking and Impact Factor.

Second, we have begun to migrate the IJSAF archives to the ijsaf.org website and to register all archived and new articles with DOI numbers. **DOIs (Digital Object Identifiers)** are unique to each article and quickly link the reader directly to your article. The DOIs will send readers directly to the abstract of your article on the ijsaf.org website. This means that you can now find the archived issues of the journal both on the [RC 40 website](#) and on the [publisher's website](#). Please do check them out as there are some very relevant papers in the archives that you might have missed.

Finally, we would like to emphasize that the reach of the journal nonetheless remains dependent on the number and quality of manuscripts that are submitted. As noted in previous reports via this newsletter, we continue to struggle with getting enough high-quality submissions and AND with getting timely reviews of submissions completed. The success of the journal is dependent on your active participation. Remember, in order to achieve our goal of establishing IJSAF as the place to find cutting edge social science research on agriculture, we must consistently publish four quality issues per year!

We do hope to have a new issue of the journal published by the end of January 2021, and efforts are underway to publish a special issue of the journal this spring. That special issue is being guest edited by Maria Grazia Quieti, Colin Sage and Maria Fonte and will be devoted to the topic of **Sustainable Diets**. Please look out for these forthcoming issues!

We look forward to announcing some new initiatives in 2021 that will improve the submissions and readership – so please stay tuned!

Raymond Jussaume, Editor in Chief, International Journal of Sociology of Agriculture and Food (IJSAF)
Allison-Marie Loconto, RC40 Executive Committee Liaison to IJSAF

New member spotlight

Dr. Atakan Büke (Ph.D. in Sociology)

Philipp Schwartz-Initiative Fellow

Leipzig University, Institute of Anthropology

Email: atakanbuke@gmail.com, atakan.bueke@uni-leipzig.de

I hold a Ph.D. (2018, *Capitalist Food Regime and the Agrifood Problem: A Critique of Political Economic and Post-Developmentalist Understandings of the Agrarian/Peasant Question*) and M.Sc. (2008, *Globalization, Transnationalization, and Imperialism: Evaluation of Sociology of Agriculture and Food in the Case of Turkey*) in Sociology from Middle East Technical University (Ankara - Turkey), and was a visiting researcher at the Department of Development Sociology at Cornell University in 2014-2015. Informed by social theory, Marxism, development studies, political economy, and critical agrifood studies, my research interests are in the areas of food security, food sovereignty, alternative agrifood movements, food regime and agrifood system analysis, and agrarian/peasant questions.

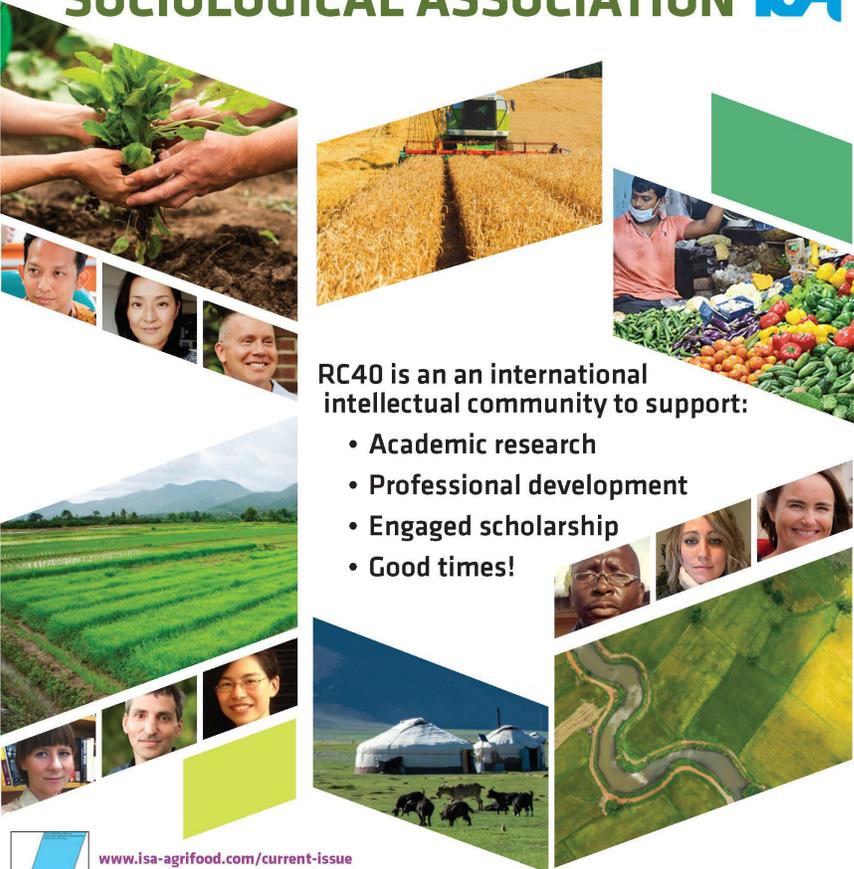
Currently, I am a postdoctoral researcher at Leipzig University - Institute of Anthropology as a Philipp Schwartz-Initiative (PSI) Fellow provided by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. The PSI programme is a full fellowship for 24 (+12) months in Germany, and my fellowship has started in September 1, 2020. I work together with Dr. Sarah Ruth Sippel as my mentor on the research project "Food Security versus Food Sovereignty in the Global South: An Evaluation of Food Politics and Seed Movements in Turkey". In this project, I am trying to investigate seed activism and movements that aim to protect local varieties in Turkey. I specifically focus on the growing tensions between neoliberal food security policies and food sovereignty politics, which concern the threats that are jeopardizing the contemporary agrifood system, such as hunger, malnutrition, overweight and obesity, diet-related health problems, climate change, etc.

RC40 Outreach and membership drive

RC40 is a bit of a secret. In general, people are not aware we exist and we welcome new members. To make ourselves known and to communicate that we are an open group, we have created an outreach poster. The idea is to signal who we are and to encourage people to access additional information and explore membership. The poster will be available in several formats on the RC40 webpage - <https://www.isa-agrifood.com/>. There will be an e-flyer suitable for email, an flyers of various sizes suitable for printing and displaying, and a large-scale poster suitable for printing and display in conference venues. RC40 has no outreach and communication professionals. We, together, are the basis for the reproduction and growth of the organization. COVID has set us back a bit. Please make use of these materials to make RC40 better known and to communicate that we welcome new members to participate and to play leadership roles.

JOIN US! > SOCIOLOGY of AGRICULTURE and FOOD (RC40)

+ INTERNATIONAL SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION



RC40 is an an international intellectual community to support:

- Academic research
- Professional development
- Engaged scholarship
- Good times!

 www.isa-agrifood.com/current-issue
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 Official publication of: Research Committee on Sociology of Agriculture and Food (RC-40) and the International Sociological Association (ISA)
 The International Journal of Sociology of Agriculture and Food (IJSAF) provides a forum for informed academic social science debates about food and agriculture-related issues.

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 INTERNATIONAL SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION www.isa-sociology.org
 SOCIOLOGY OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD (RC40) www.isa-agrifood.com
 twitter.com/ISA_RC40

Executive Council 2018-2022
 Steven Wolf
saw44@cornell.edu
 Hilde Bjørkhaug
hilde.bjorkhaug@ntnu.no