

31st MAI 2007 - 1<sup>st</sup> JUIN 2007  
UNIVERSITY of NANCY 2

Claude Lévi-Strauss

Nels Andersen

Paul Lazarsfeld

Talcott Parsons

ELTON MAYO

Georges Gurvitch

# ***TRANSATLANTIC VOYAGES***

*Alfred Schutz*

Erving Goffman

**CÉLESTIN BOUGLÉ**

Ernest W. Burgess

Max Weber

Georg Simmel

Robert K. Merton

Maurice Halbwachs

*Robert M. MacIver*

*Herbert Marcuse*

Florian Znaniecki

*Conrad M. Arensberg*

**C. Wright-Mills**

**Bronislaw Malinowski**

Henri Mendras

William Foote Whyte

*Samuel STOUFFER*

Jean Stoetzel

**A. RADCLIFFE-BROWN**

Albion Small

*MICHEL FOUCAULT*

**Theodor Adorno**

**MICHEL CROZIER**

*Michael Mayerfeld Bell*

**Robert Ezra Park**

Jean Stoetzel

**Reinhardt Bendix**

*Everett C. Hughes*

Solon T. Kimball

Max Horkeimer



## **TRANSATLANTIC VOYAGES**

*International Congress of Sociology.*

University of Nancy 2 the 31/05/2007 and 1/06/2007

### **Call for papers**

#### **Co-organised by**

Laboratoire de Sociologie du Travail et de l'Environnement social  
LASTES (University of Nancy 2)  
Laboratoire « Cultures et Sociétés en Europe » UMR CNRS 7043  
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#### **with the support of :**

**I.S.A. International Sociological Association**

RC 8 (History of Sociology)

**A.I.S.L.F. Association Internationale des Sociologues de Langue Française**

CR 11 (History of Sociology)

CR 14 (Sociology of knowledge)

**A.F.S. Association Française de Sociologie**

RT 10 (sociology of knowledge, epistemology, history of sociology)

Transatlantic journeys, between Europe and the American continent have long been a source of inspiration for sociologists. They are a means of getting to know other cultures or academic worlds. These were often very prestigious in view of their long standing traditions, their thriving scientific and philosophical debates, as in the case of Germany, or their libraries such as those Max Weber visited in New York and which he mentions in his letters. Sociology as a discipline became organised via international congresses and associations. The early students became professors and diffused the sociology they had learned. Florian Znaniecki, for example, was the first to bring American sociology to continental Europe, whilst Robert Park based some of his teachings on Windelband's theories which had impressed him so much during his stay in Strasbourg, Germany, in 1900. There were also intensive exchanges between the US and Britain among people such as Sydney and Beatrice Webb and Jane Addams who, although they did not hold posts in sociology, are generally regarded as part of its history.

The journeys have been a source of comparison, of admiration or of astonishment. When Max Weber visited Chicago, a town sorely lacking in charm and amenities, he visited the Armour can company, which figured in the Baedeker of the time, and was greatly struck by the experience. As for Maurice Halbwachs, he was astonished by Chicago's spatial organisation, by its juxtaposition of different cultures. He was also intimidated by Robert Park's way of speaking. When Park first brought Booker T. Washington to observe the European poor, the visit became the basis for a comparative study which set the marks for a greater and more subtle understanding of poverty and exclusion.

Other journeys were a result of historical events as sociologists and other intellectuals were forced into exile in the face of rise of Nazism and fascism in Italy. Among the best known are Paul Lazarsfeld and the members of the Frankfurt School, but many others Europeans were obliged to emigrate at this time, be it because of their Jewish origins or because of their

ideas. The blending European and American sociologies took place in universities and other institutions all over America.

After the war the exchanges continued, those who returned home brought ideas encountered in exile which enriched their national traditions. Georges Gurvitch, for example, brought back to France what he called micro-sociology, the sociology of small groups, which was developed by sociologists and psychologists alike. French students of the time visited the United-States, Henri Mendras and Michel Crozier, among others, came back with ideas which are still important in French sociology today. Academic exchanges were funded as part of the American policy for German occupation and reconstruction. American professors lectured in Europe, as was the case of Everett Hughes who taught in Germany for a year. He was followed by Nels Anderson, who later invited Ernest W. Burgess. Also, during this period Erving Goffman stayed in the Shetland Islands studying the community and patterns of communication between its members. Before him, Arensberg and Kimball had studied another community, this time in Ireland.

Exchanges of ideas between social scientists on both sides of the Atlantic continue to enrich the sociological tradition today. Two examples are that of post-structuralisme, inspired among others by the works of Michel Foucault, while modern French sociology accords great importance to action theories, developed in Chicago and elsewhere. Transatlantic crossings have been a factor in enriching our experience, furthering academic and intellectual exchange and increasing objectivity. The examples cited show that they have been the basis of collaboration between researchers, and of a continual evolution of sociological theories and methods.

*Papers may address the following themes, but other suggestions will be very welcome:*

- 1) **The journey:** contributions could describe the conditions under which the journeys took place and the travellers reactions on arrival.
- 2) **The societies observed:** many social scientists crossed the Atlantic in order to carry out a study of the societies they visited. The studies they made took the form of community studies, studies of social structure or of local customs. Contributions could throw light on these studies and their influence.
- 3) **Exchanges of ideas and mutual influence:** how do the journeys carried out by social scientists, be they researchers or students, affect the sociology of their home countries? Sometimes the exchanges may be carried out by means of letters, or via published material which gives rise to new ideas and research.
- 4) **The home society:** transatlantic journeys and exchanges were also a basis for reflection on the authors own society. One example is that of Everett Hughes whose reactions to nazism were at the basis of the development of the concept of dirty work.

Propositions for papers, of one page or less, should be sent to Cherry Schrecker before the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2007

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