YALE UNIVERSITY
CENTER FOR CULTURAL SOCIOLOGY
SPRING CONFERENCE 2016
MEANING IN PLACE

Time	Friday, April 29 ~ 210 Prospect Street, Room 203
1:00 ~ 1:15	**Opening Remarks** Jeffrey Alexander ~ Yale University. CCS Director
1:15 ~ 2:15	**Session I - Special Trauma Session** *Chair: Kyung-Man Kim ~ Sogang University, Seoul, South Korea. CCS Visiting Fellow* **Vietnam: A War Not A Country** Ron Eyerman ~ Yale University. CCS Director Magnus Ring ~ Lund University, Sweden. CCS Faculty Fellow Todd Madigan ~ Yale University. CCS Junior Fellow
2:15 ~ 2:30	*Coffee Break*
2:30 ~ 3:45	**Session II - History, Injury, Memory** *Chair: Anne Marie Champagne ~ Yale University. CCS Junior Fellow* *Reconstructing the Political Processes of New Haven Municipal Firefighting* Carolyn Ly ~ Augustana University. CCS Faculty Fellow *Hard-Earned History, Undeserved Memories:* *Economics and Morality after the Fall of the Soviet Union* Till Hilmar ~ Yale University. CCS Junior Fellow *Photographing Recovery: Survivors of Sexual Assault in Visual Culture* Dana Hayward ~ Yale University. CCS Junior Fellow *Respondent: Vanda Černohorská ~ Masaryk University, Czech Republic. CCS Visiting Graduate Student*
3:45 ~ 4:00	*Coffee Break*
4:00 ~ 4:55	**Session III - China, Ideology, Modernity** *Chair: Todd Madigan ~ Yale University. CCS Junior Fellow* *Did We Invade Others?* *The Imperial History in the Chinese and British History Textbooks from the 1950s* Zhaojin Lu ~ State University of New York at Albany *Microblog as a Symbolic Battlefield:* *The Contestation and Sinicization of Democratic Ideology in China* Muyang Li ~ State University of New York at Albany *Respondent: She Xi ~ China Agricultural University, Beijing. CCS Visiting Graduate Student*
5:00 ~ 6:30	*Reception ~ Lounge, 210 Prospect Street*

Ron Eyerman, Yale University, CCS Director
Magnus Ring, Lund University, CCS Faculty Fellow
Todd Madigan, Yale University, CCS Junior Fellow

Special Trauma Session
Vietnam: A War Not A Country

Our title is a play on the more commonly heard admonition to think about Vietnam as a country, not a war. Our aim in this presentation is to address the memory of a war that in the United States is called the Vietnam War. One point is to show that this conflict goes by different names and has a different meaning for its three main protagonists: the Americans, the 'North' and the 'South' Vietnamese. Memories of significant events, like wars, are couched in narratives, frameworks which structure its form and content. That a narrative has this double-sided characteristic will elaborated by Todd Madigan. Todd will also present how the South Vietnamese, most particularly those exiled in the United States represent the war and its meaning. Magnus Ring will do the same from the perspective of the North Vietnamese and I will present the war from the American perspective. Our plan is to make a collective presentation, organized around what we identify as spheres of memory: scholarly history; political and policy analysis (including official commemoration), popular culture and biography. Our focus is on the reconstruction and re-presentation of the collective past, on how collective identity and collective memory intertwine.

Carolyn Ly ~ Augustana University, CCS Faculty Fellow

Reconstructing the Political Processes of New Haven Municipal Firefighting

How did particular meanings of "merit" become significant for municipal firefighters in the city of New Haven? What was the original purpose of the merit system in the State of Connecticut and how did people respond after the merit system was initially in place? In this article I present previously unexamined and surprising data that demonstrates how the understanding of "merit" has evolved. Paying particular attention to the cultural and historical processes of meaning making, I present and discuss significant moments when the narrative of fairness and equity, represented through the ideal of "merit," was contested and constructed anew by workers.

Till Hilmar ~ Yale University, CCS Junior Fellow

Hard-Earned History, Undeserved Memories:
Economics and Morality after the Fall of the Soviet Union

A central theme of the modern, capitalist story of emancipation is that of leaving the past and the binding ties of memory behind. For Hobbes, there could not have been a social contract without an act of collective forgetting, because it would otherwise be haunted by resentment. Yet, the "timelessness" of capitalist exchange is itself a cultural fiction that responds to concrete historical demands. By discussing empirical examples from post-socialist societies in Central Eastern Europe, this paper opens some theoretical avenues that highlight points of convergence between social memory and economic sociology. The post-socialist transition to capitalism is an exemplary space to interrogate this link, as the post-socialist social contract is deeply enmeshed with transitional justice and questions about the moral basis for the politics of redistribution and recognition. It is a social space in which grand historical narratives creep into social relations. By synthesizing some of the existing literature on the subject, I want to focus on the question of how interpersonal relations are affected by symbolic classifications that arise from both economics as a memory of socialist times and as a contemporary moral language of deservingness.

Dana Hayward ~ Yale University, CCS Junior Fellow

Photographing Recovery: Survivors of Sexual Assault in Visual Culture

Victims feature prominently in public discussions and debates about sexual violence, as heroes and as villains. In particular, visual representations of survivors of sexual assault are becoming increasingly important in shaping public opinion. From photos of Emma Sulkowicz carrying her dorm mattress across campus to the controversial documentary The Hunting Ground, portrayals of rape survivors in visual culture both create and reflect broader cultural norms and values about sexual assault. In this paper, I explore narratives of victimhood and survival in two recent photo essays, Annie Flanagan's "Preservation: Surviving Sexual Assault" (2013) and Melanie Blanding's "Silent Scream: Sexual Violence Against Women in the Congo" (2006). Both essays, funded and published by the Alexia Foundation, an American non-profit, aim to empower survivors of sexual violence by highlighting their experiences, yet the projects differ significantly in the ways they conceptualize trauma and recovery. "Preservation" focuses primarily on psychological trauma, while "Silent Scream" pertains almost exclusively to bodily injury.

Zhaojin Lu ~ State University of New York at Albany, Sociology Graduate Student

Did We Invade Others?
The Imperial History in the Chinese and British History Textbooks from the 1950s

Post-empire nations deal with their imperial history with different strategies. This paper analyzes the ways in which the histories of imperial expansions are depicted in the history textbooks adopted in China and British. China before 1951 and Britain before 1970s used similar strategy to tell the story of their empires. They depict the expansion of empire in as positive and even glorious, and as the civilizing missions carried out by the Britons and the Chinese. Also, the conflation of ethnic majority to the nation is found in both cases i.e. English-British conflation and Han-Chinese conflation, while the contributions made by non-English and non-Han ethnic groups were underappreciated. However, the evolution of narratives after the history education reform took different paths in the two countries. The British narratives had a broader ethnic definition of the Empire, including not only the British colonizers but also the colonized. Multiple sides of stories and opinions about the empire were included in the texts. The Chinese textbooks shows the editors' insistence on Han-superiority within the narratives. The stories about the expansions of Chinese empire are either ignored or put into a "national unity" narration, and the single-sided story-telling of the empire is continuing.

Muyang Li ~ State University of New York at Albany, Sociology Graduate Student

Microblog as a Symbolic Battlefield:
The Contestation and Sinicization of Democratic Ideology in China

In recent years, the Chinese authorities are involved into a battle with the cyber citizens in interpreting democracy within the Chinese context. The comparison between China's socialist regime and the Western democracy has become a popular topic on social media. The occasionally expressed preference for the liberal democracy by cyber citizens not only brought crisis to Chinese Communist Party's ideological hegemony, but also challenged its legitimacy to govern. On microblog, where official's mouthpieces directly confront the grassroots, Chinese authorities tried two ways in strengthen its control over this rising democratic discourse: 1) repress counter-socialist expressions through administrative regulations and censorship; 2) incorporate the typical democratic codes with China's existing cultural codes, claiming "there should be a 'third way' between social democracy and traditional socialism". Chinese microbloggers, on the other hand, tried to challenge the officials by promoting their own approach in interpreting democracy, via the creative utilization of civil codes and popular genres. By taking data mining on online discourses that approved/censored by the authority, this study intend to explore the culture-producing process of the Sinicized democratic ideas in contemporary China.

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Time	Saturday, April 30 ~ 210 Prospect Street, Room 203
9:00 ~ 9:30	*Continental Breakfast*
9:30 ~ 10:55	**Session IV - Religion, Body, Health** Chair: Till Hilmar ~ Yale University. CCS Junior Fellow *For Faith's Sake: European Mosques and the Civic-Religion Divide* Elisabeth Becker ~ Yale University. CCS Junior Fellow *Narratives of HIV/AIDS in the Iranian Newspapers* Elham Pourtaher ~ State University of New York at Albany *Gender Dramas: Mastectomy, Iconic Power, and the Mise-en-Scène of the Body* Anne Marie Champagne ~ Yale University. CCS Junior Fellow *A Situated Perspective on the Social and Spatial Impact on Recreational Drug Use* Cecilie Astrupgaard ~ University of Copenhagen, Yale Sociology Exchange Scholar Respondent: Abby Stivers ~ State University of New York at Albany, CCS Predoctoral Fellow
10:55 ~ 11:15	Coffee Break
11:15 ~ 12:20	**Session V - Education, Meaning, Russia** Chair: Shai Dromi ~ Yale University. CCS Junior Fellow *Culture and Education: Underappreciated Junction* Dmitry Kurakin ~ Higher School of Economics, Moscow, Russia. CCS Faculty Fellow *Meaning Networks and Multi-dimensional Choice in Educational and Life Course Decision Making* Timothy Malacarne ~ Mount Holyoke College. CCS Faculty Fellow Respondent: James Hurlbert ~ Yale University. CCS Junior Fellow
12:20 ~ 1:30	*Lunch*
1:30 ~ 2:25	**Session VI - Markets and Meanings** Chair: Nickie Michaud Wild ~ Mount Holyoke College. CCS Faculty Fellow *Advertising Morality: How Advertisers Think about the Social Good* (with Andrew Cohen) Shai Dromi ~ Yale University. CCS Junior Fellow *Regulating Market Innovation: The Case of "E-hailing" in New York City* Nicholas Occhiuto ~ Yale University. Sociology Graduate Student. Respondent: Jin Su Joo ~ Yale University. CCS Junior Fellow
2:25 ~ 2:45	*Coffee Break*
2:45 ~ 3:50	**Session VII - Identity, Materiality, Nature** Chair: Cecilia Li ~ State University of New York at Albany *Materiality, Iconic Nature, and Social Resonances in the Physical Landscape* Eric Malczewski ~ Harvard University, CCS Visiting Faculty Fellow *Can we really distinguish between civic and national solidarity?* *How social club sociability resurrects civic nationalism from below* Danny Kaplan ~ Bar-Ilan University, CCS Visiting Faculty Fellow Respondent: Ron Jacobs ~ State University of New York at Albany. CCS Faculty Fellow
3:50 ~ 4:00	**Closing Remarks** Philip Smith ~ Yale University. CCS Director
6:30 ~ 9:30	Banquet at Trinity Bar and Restaurant Conference participants only

Elisabeth Becker ~ Yale University, CCS Junior Fellow

For Faith's Sake: European Mosques and the Civic-Religion Divide

Studies of Islam in Europe remain distanced from Muslim communities, too often essentializing this broad faith population. In this paper, I argue that to understand Islam in Europe, faith must be taken seriously as an activity that not only conditions, but creates; not only a call but cause for action; an act in and of itself. I operationalize this understanding through a comparison of two mosque communities, the East London Mosque and the Sehitlik Mosque in Berlin. Drawing from over two years of ethnographic study in these mosques, I analyze how the first instates a halal/haram boundary, seeking to distance itself and its members from mainstream British society; and the second emphasizes fusion of the Muslim community with broader German society, highlighting unity between civic and religious values, as well as belonging to these spheres of identity. Both communities draw their reasoning and motivations for enacting faith in these divergent ways from Islam's foundational sources (the Qu'ran and the sunna/hadith) and both claim theirs to be the true or "pure" form of Islam in the contemporary. Yet the significantly different forms of Islam that result have important implications for understanding integration and its failures on the continent today.

Elham Pourtaher ~ State University of New York at Albany, Sociology Graduate Student

Narratives of HIV/AIDS in the Iranian Newspapers

Recent medical literature as well as reports developed by global health agencies have warned that the HIV/AIDS prevalence rate is increasing at a staggering degree in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). While a new wave of epidemiological studies has started flourishing to investigate this problem, yet the cultural mechanisms of HIV/AIDS in the individual countries of MENA are still largely unknown. To respond to this important gap, this study will be the first attempt to focus on the newspaper narratives of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Iran from a cultural-sociological perspective. Narrative analysis, as developed by the strong program in cultural sociology, will be employed to investigate the textual framing of HIV/AIDS in five nationally circulated newspapers in Iran for the period of 2009 to 2013. The anticipated outcomes and contributions of the study are threefold: the initial goal of the paper is to learn about the overarching structure of narratives on and about the epidemic in the Iranian public sphere and to identify the potential sites of contestation over the meaning of the illness in the contemporary Iranian society. Secondly, the joint perspective of cultural and medical sociology will bring about a new vision of the epidemic in the region, which we expect will significantly contribute to the epidemiological research in the field. Third and most importantly, we intend to go beyond a mere analytic discussion by providing context specific, culturally oriented recommendations to improve the HIV/AIDS intervention and policy design in Iran as well as the broader the region.

Anne Marie Champagne ~ Yale University, CCS Junior Fellow

Gender Dramas: Mastectomy, Iconic Power, and the Mise-en-Scène of the Body

This paper draws from interviews of transmen and breast cancer survivors, two populations that frequently undergo mastectomy, to examine how bodies constitute social gender dramas through an intensification of embodiment that fuses or de-fuses underlying meaning structures with an overarching sex/gender binary frame. Bringing together cultural pragmatic theories of social performance and iconic consciousness, this paper considers the body a type of mise en scène, wherein unfamiliar, often idiosyncratic, personally meaningful embodiments disassemble normative gender forms, thus attenuating their iconic power. Based on biographical interviews with trans- as well as cis-gendered mastectomy patients, this paper demonstrates the theoretical value of bracketing witnessable social interaction in order to explore the more inconspicuous, aesthetic dimension of social performance that is activated at the boundary of the body and self. Such a shift in analytical attention, this paper argues, can reveal how sensuous, bodily experience translates the uncanny—the previously ineffable felt body—into new, citable gender expressions.

Cecilie Astrupgaard ~ University of Copenhagen, Yale Sociology Exchange Scholar

A Situated Perspective on the Social and Spatial Impact on Recreational Drug Use

Very often, recreational drug use is taking place within a social context between friends, which is why this study consist of a focus group interview with four friends who every summer attend a music festival in Germany named Fusion. The analysis takes up three analytical points of impact; normalization, risk reassessment, and pleasure.

By combining the concept of symbolic boundary work, with the concept of neutralization techniques, I study how drug use is being normalized by distinctions between certain drugs and drug-related practices. By taking up Becker's classical article, "Becoming a marihuana user" (1953), the friends' common norms of how to take drugs are nuanced with the considerable differences in their risk assessment. The level of experience is seen as an indicator of the level of danger they put themselves in when using drugs.

Finally, the pleasure associated with recreational drug use is analyzed. Here, the social context is crucial and seen as a source of pleasure in itself, which goes beyond the pure physiological effect of the drugs. Likewise, the space of Fusion facilitates a special kind of extrovert pleasure of the sociality, which takes place simultaneously with an introvert, embodied pleasure.

Dmitry Kurakin ~ Higher School of Economics, Moscow, CCS Faculty Fellow

Culture and Education: Underappreciated Junction

Culture and education both enjoy enormous attention as research fields, though, rather separately than as a joint field of culturally-centered inquiry in the sphere of education. However, relation between education and culture is deeper than is often understood, in terms of historical similarity, formal resemblance, substantive proximity and even semantic kinship. This mutual disregard is, thus, itself an intriguing puzzle. I argue that it has both cultural and institutional roots, such as different patterns of politicizing of culture and education and historically contingent disciplinary division of labor. I argue further that current mutual disregard is not beneficial for culturally-sociologically sophisticated vision of education, and taking the resemblance between culture and education seriously can substantially advance educational research. To make culturally-sensitive educational research vibrant it is necessary to re-connect it to the crucial concerns and intuitions that have been energizing the development of cultural theory – to the empirical material of education. The paper examines some of these 'nerves' of cultural theory to be implanted to the body of educational studies, such as a connection between culture and human action, ways cultural and material factors produce constellations of historical development, alienation as a tragedy of modernity, and micro-sociology vision of power and control as immanent to social life. Based on this vision, this paper outlines the growing though vaguely delimited field of culturally-sensitive sociological research in education and explores the underestimated stakes which cultural sociology has in educational research, advantages it might bring to the field, and some of the promising research strategies.

Timothy Malacarne ~ Mt. Holyoke College, CCS Faculty Fellow

Meaning Networks and Multi-dimensional Choice in Educational and Life Course Decision Making

Large-scale survey research remains mostly uninfluenced by the cultural turn in sociology. In this project, we examine the multiple dimensions of meaning that surround prospective educational and professional choices for a nationally representative cohort of Russian secondary school students. Using network analytic methods to examine the Russian Panel Study of Trajectories in Education and Career (TrEC), we show that while economic rationales are some of the characteristics most often cited as desirable in a future occupation, they are not central to the network of meaning created from the association of concepts. Ethical rationales prove to be less frequently used, but are much clearer in their emergent meaning. We also find that students in academic secondary schools have a much more elaborated set of meanings than students from vocational secondary schools. Our findings problematize one-dimensional (often economic) understanding of success and a desirable future that are often implicit in large-scale survey research. We discuss the importance of these findings in relation to their specific empirical focus and their methodological significance for the integration of cultural sociology and survey research for the study of educational and life course decision-making.

Shai Dromi ~ Yale University, CCS Junior Fellow

Advertising Morality: How Advertisers Think about the Social Good
(Co-author: Andrew Cohen)

Advertising has long been stigmatized as complicit in exploitative capitalist mechanisms and cultural degradation. However, little is known about the ways in which those who work in advertising maintain a positive self-perception in face of such critique. In this paper, we analyze the ways advertisers frame the moral worth of their work. We draw on 9 total months of fieldwork and 74 interviews across three different advertising agencies in the United States. We employ identity theory on the one hand and pragmatic and cultural sociology on the other hand to identify the meaning structures by which advertising professionals discussed moral conduct in their field. We find that advertising practitioners use shared frames and narratives to present situation meanings in which their moral identities and the moral worth of their work are justified. Three such frames emerged in particular: the account-driven, which links moral virtue to caring for the client and for the advertised product; the creative-driven, which ties the social good to the production of inspiring advertisements; and the strategic-driven frame, which sees the social good in helping consumers and spreading civic values. Our findings suggest these frames are not ad-hoc, but instead consequential for those working in advertising. Based on this evidence we argue that professional communities maintain shared meaning structures by which to confirm workers' sense of morality. Theoretically, the work unpacks the ways in which cultural meaning-structures facilitate social psychological identity work, and provide individuals with the tools to maintain a positive self-perception.

Nicholas Occhiuto ~ Yale University, Sociology Graduate Student

Regulating Market Innovation: The Case of "E-hailing" in New York City

Like other market actors, regulators use categories to interpret and make sense of the people, organizations, and products they oversee. Research suggests that market innovations which are categorically ambiguous to regulators have the potential to disrupt regulatory frameworks by allowing firms to engage in activities analogous to those that are prohibited or restricted. This paper explores how the categorical ambiguity surrounding the innovative practice of "e-hailing" (or, locating passengers through mobile devices) contributed to the disruption of regulatory frameworks in New York City. An understanding of this process has implications for debates surrounding the relationship between innovation and regulation in markets.

Eric Malczewski ~ Harvard University, CCS Visiting Faculty Fellow

Materiality, Iconic Nature, and Social Resonances in the Physical Landscape

This paper builds on the cultural sociological program of the study of iconic power. Two new concepts – sensuous surface and conductive surface – are introduced. These concepts, which distinguish between icons' formal aesthetic power and their power as conduits of symbolic principles, elaborate and extend Jeffery Alexander's notion of iconic surface. The analytical purchase of these concepts is demonstrated in an analysis of the works of the 19th century American landscape painter Albert Bierstadt. Bierstadt played a key role in the genesis of the variety of iconic nature – the aesthetically potent and symbolically resonant image of the physical landscape – characteristic of American modernity.

Danny Kaplan ~ Bar-Ilan University, CCS Visiting Fellow

Can we really distinguish between civic and national solidarity?
How social club sociability resurrects civic nationalism from below

Most theorists of national attachment presuppose national solidarity as an outcome of macro-level processes of collective identity formation and offer little in the way of a bottom-up approach to the study of solidarity. In turn, theorists of civil society point to the role of small-scale civic associations in generating solidarity, but focus on democratic culture rather than national attachment. One obstacle to developing a bottom-up approach is the expectation for a categorical differentiation between civic and national solidarity, an expectation backed by current scholarly critics of "methodological nationalism" and specifically "civic nationalism."

I would like to problematize this assumption. While citizenship and national identity can be readily differentiated when it comes to practices of cooperation between compatriots civic and national solidarity converge. Building on my work on institutional performances of "strangers-turned-friends," I will discuss how both civic and national solidarity could be understood as a form of 'clubiness' generated by the mechanisms of "public intimacy," a dramaturgical mechanism for establishing exclusivity under the gaze of an audience that can also become a participant.

Having participated in similar social clubs and sharing partly overlapping social networks compatriots acquire a sense of competence in turning particular strangers into friends (while alienating others) and gain reassurance in the ability of others to do the same. Whether or not associational life enhances democratic values or civic participation I suggest that it matters for the (civic) nation, imagined as the ultimate social club of strangers-turned-friends.