Hello friends,

This newsletter is mainly an invitation to submit your papers for Toronto. Please do not let pass the deadlines so we can meet in 2018!

We had a great conference this summer at Medellín, Colombia. Many ideas to collaborate were expressed there and we want to ensure to keep that energy together so we can reach some individual and collective products this year. In this issue you will find some interesting information prepared by Patricia Almaguer Kalixto and Luciano Gallón about Medellín’s conference. Thank you very much for your enthusiastic participation.

One of the highlights of the past conference was that David Karminski received the Walter Buckley award, and besides his presentation we had many promising participations. Congratulations, David.

For this issue, our dear Bernard Scott shares some thoughts relative to Leo Semashko’s tetrasociology. Thank you, Bernard!

It is important to keep feeding our Journal of Sociocybernetics, please send your papers to Fabio Giglietto.

Our social networks are enhancing, if you are not part of our Facebook or LinkedIn groups, please get yourself connected.

Last but not least, please share your thoughts, texts and images with us so we can have some material for the next newsletter.

Hope we can all meet in Toronto next year.

Juancho Barrón

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Some thought about Leo Semashko’s concept of ‘spherons’.

Bernard Scott


Since I first became acquainted with Leo Semashko’s tetrasociology (in 2002, when I wrote the editor’s introduction for his book Tetrasociology: Responses to Challenges, http://peacefromharmony.org/docs/2-1_eng.pdf) his theorising has become more detailed and more complex. However, the underlying logic remains the same: it begins with the four spheres of social production of the young Karl Marx, still free from the class struggle’s political dogmas, and the autopoiesis (self-production) of Humberto Maturana. The four spherons are: 1. the sociospheron which produces people; 2. the infospheron which produces information; 3. the orgspheron which produces organisations; 4. the technospheron which produces things.

Semashko’s spherons, by definition, reproduce the human social world (see his primer on Global Peace Science at http://peacefromharmony.org/?cat=en_c&key=423). Their harmonious working is prevented by mankind’s lack of awareness of this. Thus we are subject to conflict and other societal and individual pathologies. If we were to be aware of how spherons reproduce the world we would agree with Semashko’s peace science and his proposals for how to move towards a more harmonious world.

Some months ago in a message to Semashko, I commented that my own work was complementary to his approach in that I focus at a micro-sociological level, with interests in social psychology and cultural anthropology, on how to bring about the necessary changes in consciousness (belief systems and cultural practices) for humans to be able to understand themselves and how the world works. This is in contrast to Semashko’s
emphasis on the macro-sociological level, in the tradition of the young Karl Marx, Max Weber, Talcott Parsons and Nicholas Luhmann, to name just a few amongst many. I have summarised the core of my thinking in the paper “Education for cybernetic enlightenment”, which can be found on the Global Harmony Association’s website at http://peacefromharmony.org/?cat=en_c&key=255.

As a bridge between Semashko’s way of thinking and mine, I suggest that the spherons model can be applied recursively from the level of the individual managing his or her own life’s affairs (since, as individuals, we necessarily engage with all aspects of spherons’ activities) up to small groups, communities, social organisations and, as developed by Semashko, to the social world at large. I see this recursive application of the concept as akin to the cybernetician Stafford Beer’s recursive application of his viable system model, the VSM. (See, for example, his book Brain of the Firm, 2nd edition, Wiley, New York, 1995 or, for a brief, clear introduction Alenna Leonard’s (2000) paper "The viable system model and knowledge management", Kybernetes, 29, 5/6, pp.710-715).

I believe this proposed recursive (fractal) application of the concept of spherons can enrich Semashko’s theorising and facilitate interdisciplinary communication.

Bernard Scott
CALL FOR PAPERS TORONTO 2018

Abstracts submission

1. How to present a paper

Anyone interested in presenting a paper should submit an abstract on-line through a centralized website open from April 25 through September 30, 2017, 24:00 GMT.

Please follow the below listed steps:

Select session

- List of sessions is available in the relevant Research Committee, Working Group and Thematic Group section.
- The author is required to choose the RC/WG/TG session in which s/he wishes the abstract to be included.

Submit abstract: April 25 till September 30, 2017, 24:00 GMT

Participants must submit abstracts on-line. Only abstracts submitted on-line will be considered in the selection process.

- One cannot submit more than two abstracts.
- One cannot submit the same abstract to two different sessions.
- The abstract text cannot contain more than 300 words and must be submitted in English, French or Spanish.
- It is the author’s responsibility to submit a correct abstract; any errors in spelling, grammar, or scientific fact will be reproduced as typed by the author.
- All changes/uploads should be done via on-line system by September 30, 2017 24:00 GMT.
- Each abstract received on-line will be assigned an identification number.

Notification: November 30, 2017

- Submitters will be informed by November 30, 2017, whether their papers have been accepted for presentation.
- A final presentation designation (oral presentation, distributed paper, poster, or round table presentation) will be indicated. This information can be modified later by Session Organizers once registration check has been completed.
2. Registration deadline for presenters
March 20, 2018, 24:00 GMT

- In order to be included in the program the participants (presenters, chairs, discussants, etc.) must pay registration fees by March 20, 2018. If not registered, their names will not appear in the Program Book and in the Abstracts Book.

On the registration deadline March 20, 2018, presenters who have failed to register will be automatically deleted from the program.

- In case of a co-authored paper, in order for a paper to appear in the program, at least one co-author must pay the registration fee by the early registration deadline March 20, 2018; the names of other co-authors will be listed as well.

If other co-authors wish to attend the conference they must pay the registration fee.

It is very important that all participants respect conference deadlines concerning registration and submission of abstracts. No extension of deadlines is possible.

3. Rules for all presenters

- **Limited appearance in the Program**
  A person may be listed in the Program **no more than twice as author or co-author** (oral or poster presentation, distributed paper, roundtable presentation).
  In addition, a person may be listed in the Program **no more than twice as chair or co-chair, panelist, critic, discussant**. RC/WG/TGs can further limit the number of appearances within their own sessions.
  A participant cannot present and chair in the same session.

- **ISA and RC/WG/TG membership**
  ISA does not require anyone to be a member in order to present a paper, and provides different registration fees for members and non-members. Those RCs which require that presenters in their sessions are members of the RC, and/or also of ISA, should clearly inform potential presenters about these requirements from the very start of conference preparations.

- **Registration grants application deadline: January 31, 2018, 24:00 GMT**
4. Additional information

- **Languages**
  The working language of the Congress is English. All printed materials will be in English. Most sessions will be in English, except some organized by the Research Committees, Working Groups and Thematic Groups that will be conducted in Spanish or French. Please check the program. Simultaneous translation in English, French and Spanish will be provided only for the Opening and Closing Presidential Sessions.

- **Roundtable sessions**
  Five concurrent running round tables are set up at the same time and in the same room, with 5-6 presenters at each table.

- **Distributed papers**
  Distributed papers should be treated like any regular conference papers except that normally they are not presented. Only if a scheduled presenter of a regular paper does not show up, the first participant listed under distributed papers will be asked to present his/her paper.

  Distributed papers will be listed in the program and their abstracts will be included in the Abstracts Book, providing the authors pay a registration fee in time.

  Authors of distributed papers shall bring copies of their paper for session participants. Please contact your Session Organizer for further instructions.

- **Poster presentation**
  Poster size not larger than 114.3 cm x 116.4 cm (45 x 45.82 inches)

- **Full papers submission**
  ISA does not collect nor publish papers presented at its conferences. Each Research Committee, Working and Thematic Group establishes its own rules on full papers submissions. Please contact your Session Organiser for further instructions.

- **Letter of acceptance**
  For a letter stating that your paper has been accepted for presentation, please contact directly your Session Organizer.

- **Certificates**
  Certificates for authors (oral presentations and distributed papers), panelists, chairs and session organizers will be available for downloading at the Speaker’s Corner after the conference.
“As local organizer, the conference was a wonderful hands-on sociocybernetics lab as it helped me, as Medellín inhabitant, to learn new perspectives of how I observe my city and how international newcomers observe it and reflect that observation, changing mine. Also, I learned new ideas about complexity, social work tools, systemic approach and, finally, made new friends.”

-Luciano Gallón

“Las reflexiones respecto a la conciencia, las discusiones sobre los límites de la teoría de Luhmann y las nuevas consideraciones planteadas respecto a la función y operación de los medios de comunicación, me han otorgado en conjunto una serie de elementos e ideas estrechamente relacionadas con mi tema de investigación.”

-David Karminski

“This time I could learn a lot about Colombia and the tradition of sociocybernetics through some presentations and some discussions related to them. On the other hand, I could find some presentations inspired by Luhmann’s work. All of them stimulate me so much. Adding that, the remote participation by John was also of interest. This way of participating will be useful in the future.”

-Saburo Akahori
The opening keynote speech was in charge of Carlos Eduardo MALDONADO (KULeuven (Belgium), visiting Professor in different international universities and current professor of Universidad del Rosario, Bogotá, Colombia explaining “the complexity of innovation and social systems with the help of non-classical logics”. This thought provoking presentation was well received by the RC51 members, going from the features of classical thinking to non-Classical Logic (NCL) and analyzing the strengths, problems and challenges to the latest to work with different world theories.

“Non-classical logics (NCL) are a large and suggestive landscape that has rarely been taken into account when understanding and explaining social systems. This paper argues that there is no need to depart in research from formal classical logic, no matter what (unless the interest is historical). Social systems and innovation can be understood and explained via a number of (NCL). Therefore, it becomes compulsory to present the panorama and some of the main characteristics of (NCL). A look at some of the most salient features of (NCL) shows how suitable they are to understand and explain social systems, which are characterized by change, unpredictability, instability, fluctuations, non-linearity, and perturbations, among other traits. Yet, vis-à-vis innovation, (NCL) offer a wide spectrum, namely non-monotonicity. Non-monotonic logics learn, and therefore allow for adaptation to new information or to a changing environment. (NCL) are, indeed, one of the sciences of complexity, and complexity science is all about innovation, change, and evolution” (abstract extract)

Once inaugurated the conference with this presentation we had Felipe Lara Rosano (UNAM) presentation about “A sociocybernetic approach to social conflict resolution”. This work in progress arose in response to the need to have a conceptual sociocybernetic model of a methodological type that would facilitate the analysis of social conflicts. In his view, “the lack of a methodological type of sociocybernetic thread in the political analysis often overlook events that are key to political explanation, while at other times the emphasis on certain aspects of the conflict is exaggerated, and the vision of the totality is lost”. In his presentation, he went from reviewing the available literature on methodology of political analysis, to the discussion of selected and theoretical categories that could represent a conceptual sociocybernetic model of political conflict decisional process.

Bernard SCOTT (International Center for Sociocybernetics Studies) address in his presentation “Sociocybernetic understandings of consciousness” how sociocybernetics can usefully combine biological, psychological and sociological concepts to provide insightful understandings of human consciousness. The term “consciousness” has been on Scott concern following cyberneticians Warren McCulloch, Heinz von Foerster and Gordon Pask work. In his presentation Scott argued that that in order to characterize the emergence of consciousness it is necessary to make a distinction between bio-mechanical systemic unities and psychosocial systemic unities. Reflexively, this gives rise to a second-order cybernetics in which the observer is explaining herself to herself in a never-ending hermeneutic narrative and conversational circularity, a spiral of storytelling, agreements, disagreements, understandings and misunderstandings.
With a more empirical and local focus, Juan David. GÓMEZ-QUINTERO (Universidad de Zaragoza, Spain) presented a collective paper called “Speeches and Uses of the Citizen Participation Policy in Colombia: A Communication and Complex Causality Approach”. Following an analytical approach from sociocybernetics, this paper identified the actors, mechanisms and strategies used in the exercise of the citizen participation right and the construction of public sphere in a specific context cases participation from 2008 to 2011 in two departments of the Colombian Southwest (Valle del Cauca and Cauca).

Also with local and empirical perspective, Laura M. ARIAS-VALENCIA y Luz A. RAMÍREZ-CASTAÑEDA presented the paper (Manizales University) “Manizales City: Smart City?” Debating the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in cities and concept of Intelligent City and Smart City as an ongoing metaphor of the city as a system combined with aspects of sustainability and technology innovations. In their presentation, they refer the existing measurement models and indicators and apply some of them to the case of Manizales, city in Colombia.

Other presentations were oriented towards the concept of Smart city Laura C. ARICAPA-MONTOYA (Universidad Nacional de Colombia) and Luz A. RAMÍREZ-CASTAÑEDA presented the paper “The impact of open innovation and crowdsourcing on the Smart City”. In this case, they address the relation between open innovation and crowdsourcing for the consolidation of the Smart City analyzing the current academic literature. Finally, Marcela A. VARGAS-ROMERO also with Luz A. RAMÍREZ-CASTAÑEDA addressed the presentation titled “Ecosystem to implement the Smart University: National University of Colombia, Manizales campus”, addressed the university system as some sort of metaphor and lab to implement process of smart city and proposing that is possible to extrapolate city laboratory experiences in other universities to implement some sort of social test lab for the Smart City. Taking the National University of Colombia, Manizales campus, they refer some ideas on how to implement this.

In the first day, also James ROBERTS (University of Auckland, New Zealand) made his presentation on “Cybernetics, Planning, Politics”, an interesting perspective in the role of processing systems in economic planning. In his view, “these systems act as an extension of memory, perception, and analytical capacity, increasing both the speed and accuracy of decisions. Today however, technical questions are reduced to speculative generalization and politics is reduced to administration”. Roberts reflected on how high and digital technology has been employed by the economic status quo, namely capitalist production, to increase surplus value. Also how the cybernetics of economic systems has changed the production and circulation dynamics of contemporary capitalism with new intensities of automation, managerialism, computerization, networking, integration, and logistics have made new forms of capital accumulation possible and made old forms more lucrative. Is it necessary an appropriation of capitalist technology for social change? This is the debate proposed.

At the end of the first day, Juan C. BARRÓN PASTOR (UNAM, México) presented “Trump and the programmatic field of entertaining: An approximation from Critical Sociocybernetics” exploring the argument exposed in previous years in ISA and RC51 conferences, on “Critical Sociocybernetics”. As in previous presentations, he continue to explore mass-media as adaptive social system. In this occasion, he analyzed Donald Trump’s style of communication as a contentious complex problem to his country and the world. In his presentation he explained how the style and strategies developed for the programmatic field of entertaining, has moved from the traditional media language...
used for politics, commonly attached to informative strategies to strategies used for American wrestling and reality shows.

In the second day of the conference we had 7 presentations, starting by “Fake News is the Invention of a Liar: A New Taxonomy for the Study of Misleading Information Within Hybrid Media System” presented by Fabio GIGLIETTO Università di Urbino Carlo Bo, Italy) on behalf of his co-authors Laura IANNELLI, Luca ROSSI and Augusto VALERIANI. Also located in the context of the highly contentious US Presidential campaign, this paper aimed to address the limits of the current conceptual debate on “fake news” by introducing a radically new model framed in second-order cybernetics to describe the process through which misleading information spreads within the hybrid media system. The presentation addressed the contribution and implication of the model in tackling the issue of misleading information on a theoretical, empirical, and practical level, proposing useful taxonomies to refer the fake news phenomena.

Ana M. MIRALLES, Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana (Colombia) addressed “Public issues on Twitter as a computational social science problem”, proposing a framework in which public issues are conceived as a semantic object and not as a normative one, like traditional Social Sciences usually does. The paper intends to demonstrate that Computational Social Science (Cioffi-Revilla, 2014; Chang, Kaufman, & Kwon, 2014) allows to conceive the public and the subjects of public interest to the way of data intelligence generated in socio-technical processes from which semantic networks emerge and that these networks can be treatable as a complex subject. So her proposal was moving this path from social science to computational social science and proposing a new framework of the public based on Twitter.

In the same session, Pedro J. ESCRICHE (Universidad de Zaragoza, Spain) presented his paper “International Cooperation Programs as Complex Systems” where he addressed how a Sociocybernetic perspective can be useful to propose more successful cooperation programs and projects. As part of the contents he analyzed theoretical studies of the application of a Sociocybernetic perspective to cooperation programs and projects, empirical studies based on examples of practical implementations of this perspective and the use of specific sociocybernetic concepts such as second order observation, reflexivity, autopoietic and adaptive systems, discussing its strengths and limits.

Gabriel VÉLEZ-CUARTAS (Universidad de Antioquia Colombia) presented the paper “Discovering Invisible Colleges through Networks of Meaning” on behalf of his research colleagues Edinson BRAND, Ana M. OSORIO, Sara MONTOYA, Laura ECHEVERRY, Beatriz CARDONA and Sandra RODRÍGUEZ. In their paper they address the concept of invisible Colleges as representations of scientific communities with specific features: (1) they are constituted by written papers that share common references (or bibliography); (2) those papers discuss common issues and built concepts that integrate a common corpus or body of knowledge; (3) these groups have a structure where it can be find some leaders with a great volume of citations and productions and researches following those papers through citations. Velez et al presented a methodological procedure oriented by network analysis that allows to map trajectories of meaning, emphasizing shared literature and not in prestige features within invisible colleges. They apply this procedure to find communities through bibliographic coupling and using Louvain algorithm of network modularity, mapping both emergent and main stream issues were depicted describing a sort of networks of meaning.

Rene YEPES-CALLEJAS, and Luciano GALLON both from Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana, Colombia addressed an interesting paper titled “Exploring Innovation’s Valley of Death: a sociocybernetics perspective”. They explained that in innovation
and R&D literature the Valley of Death is used as a metaphor to describe systemic restrictions to the launch of new innovative products, i.e. funding gap between R&D and new product commercialization stages among many other reasons/explanations. A variety of depictions point out a complex issue where managers have to steer project to market along a hostile environment. By addressing such issue from sociocybernetics perspective, they argue that can be possible a different understanding for agents and factors involved in the Valley of Death and that this may provide a framework to simulate decisions and system behavior intending to cross the Valley and carry innovations to market.

Saburo AKAHORI (Tokyo Woman’s Christian University, Japan) presented the title “Observing Intolerant Society: A Lesson from Japan’s Experience”, as always bringing a theoretically grounded reflection on Japanese social dynamics. In this case he addressed the tendency of increasing intolerance as a social problem in Japan. Of course, “Intolerant society” can be applied not only to Japan but also to the rest of the world. However, he remarks that in Japan’s case both people’s kindness and intolerance are observed at the same time. His paper explored a better “general” framework to understand these paradoxical features of modernization and/or civilization through a case study of Japan using the theory of “observing systems”.

Jorge CARDIEL HERRERA (UNAM, Mexico) presented «Even the arbitrariness of the beginning loses its arbitrariness»?: Rethinking the Premises of Niklas Luhmann’s «Even the arbitrariness of the beginning loses its arbitrariness (like in Hegel’s system) as the construction of the theory proceeds. Thus a self--supporting construction arise». The intention of this paper was to rethink Luhmann’s most important decisions not as he claims —written by the theory itself (Luhmann 1995: IV)—, but as the products of an author, a designer and a sociologist. Some of these starting decisions become crucial premises in his full--grown theory. His thesis is that Luhmann’s own assumptions and presuppositions become distinctive for his theorizing style —one can concede that they are self--supporting— but that doesn’t mean they are justified, taking into account empirical sociological research and considering the development of Luhmann’s own theoretical building. The subjects he deal with in this paper are: the existence of systems, the tautological definition of communication, the society without a center, the system’s radical autonomy, the system’s unifunctionality, the psyche as a system and the non–technological character of social systems.

Bernd R. HORNUNG (University Hospital Giessen and Marburg, Germany) presented his paper “Sociocybernetic management innovation based on Covey - Pulling Social Forces from Behind our Backs up Front–“Arguing the correspondence between the management methods proposed by the late Stephen Covey and the sociocybernetic approach. In his perspective there are points in common to address learning systems. It can be seen as an innovation of management and leadership methods which in turn can be used to produce the innovations necessary to move society or a particular social system ahead in a desirable direction.

Daniel MONTES-AGUDELO, on behalf of Jheimer J. SEPÚLVEDA-LÓPEZ and Luz A. RAMÍREZ-CASTAÑEDA (Universidad Nacional de Colombia) presented the paper “Toward a complex system of personal and group characteristics for ICT appropriation”. This investigation addresses the phenomenon of digital inclusion, which is understood as a social development which has expanded, thanks to information and communications technology (ICT) growth. For them, the elements which compose the phenomenon of digital inclusion are not only heterogeneous, but also interdefinable. The previous affirmation justifies the analysis of the digital inclusion phenomenon as a complex system, which incorporates proposals from systems as well as from the field of
complexity. When discussing ICT appropriation, there are assorted proposals for the personal and social variables which condition said process.

Ana L. ESCOBAR and Luciano GALLON (Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana/Colombia) presented in the second day “Uses of ICT and Sustainable Development Goals. A correlation based on sociocybernetics”. The purpose of their analysis was to identify the specific uses of ICT needed for the implementation of actions aimed at complying with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and what type of actors subscribe to each one. This analysis has been generated for the city of Medellín, thinking that it is useful to build a framework of methodological understanding of observation and monitoring for the identification and characterization of ICT uses in the city. Therefore, they addressed the concept of second-order cybernetics where the system collects information about its own functioning. With this, we propose to resolve the question: What are the uses of ICT to track the state of SDG in Medellin?

Also with Luciano GALLON, Beatriz E. MARÍN OCHOA and José R. ÁLVAREZ MÚNERA, presented the paper “Research at UPB for social and human transformation” addressing The National Science and Technology System in Colombia and the fundamental question of similar National Science Systems: does this academic environment promoted by such institution contributes (or not) with new knowledge? do they contribute to solve complex problems in a post peace agreement country as Colombia, that requires profound human and social transformations? In their paper, they presented the experience of different research groups at Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana (UPB) and how they decided to make a joint research project that allows them based on sociocybernetics ideas, observe, map and analyze the sixteen best qualified Research Groups of the UPB, by knowledge area, research agendas, authors, methodologies, products, new knowledge production, human resource training and social appropriation of knowledge, for a better approach for stablishing its real contribution to Colombian Society.

In the second day, Patricia E. ALMAGUER KALIXTO (Universidad de Zaragoza/INTERHES) presented her paper titled “Participatory Action Research: Systemic Analysis for Social Transformation” In her argumentation this methodology has been characterized by a systemic approach that includes collective context analysis, categorization of priorities and a process evaluation. However only few authors have oriented their efforts on conceptualizing the “systemic” and “complex” aspects of the methodology (Burns 2006, 2007). We consider the framework of sociocybernetics (Geyer, 1995, Geyer y Van der Zouwen, 2006), can enrich the methodology with use of concepts such as second order cybernetics, the notions of adapting systems, structural coupling of self-referentiality, operational closure, feedback and feedforward, just to mention some of the sociocybernetics key concepts. The interest of this paper is to present theoretical discussion and some empirical research examples to contribute to the strength of Participatory Action Research from a systemic, second order observation and/or sociocybernetics perspective.

Also in the second day, Chaime MARCUELLO SERVÓS (Universidad de Zaragoza, Spain) presented “Truth, Trust and Trump: From Facebook to fake-news” He states that we are living in digital societies with more information than ever, but it seems that alienation, misinformation and disinformation are drawing a new horizon. What has been the role of social media and social networks? Is this a consequence of big data? If Heinz von Foester was right: «The Truth is the Invention of a Liar». What happens now? His presentation reflected in the responsability of the observer, and some of the authors that have deal with the same question (Hekiz Von Foerster, Boulding, Lanier). Using the Galtung model of cultural violence the paper proposes an interdisciplinary, systemic and
sociocybernetical approach to deal with the recent events and to anticipate social answers to this systemic challenge based on HVon Foerster statement «“The problem is not truth,” […] „The problem is trust.” (HvF)».

David KARMINSKI KATZ (UNAM/UADEC) Mexico with his presentation “Building the meanings of Death: An approach from complex systems to news stories of death” made a thought provoking presentation that had as a result as the Winner of the 2017 Walter Buckey Award. Taking the case of Mexico he contextualized that images about death feed news and reports with photographs and videos that has been addressed in different ways by the social sciences. His work attempted to ask from an interdisciplinary approach how the horizon of meaning of death is configured through news and reports. From this perspective, the production and consumption of these narratives is addressed as part of complex relations (Garcia, 2008), considering simultaneously the operations and distinctions proper of the mass media system (Luhmann, 2000), the construction of emotional schemas in social relations (Hochschild, 2003), and the cognitive implications of distinguishing death. This study aims to analyze a few cases from a selection of Mexican news media. The results show how death is represented within different programmatic selectors and scripts. The presentation aimed to gain feedback about the “contravening/reinforcing morale” coding, in order to see how psycho-emotional expectations could be understood under a sociocybernetic perspective. Indeed it had a very well reception from the RC51 members.

The last day José AMOZURRUTIA (UNAM, Mexico) presented “Anticipation in systemic social processes”. The cognitive process has confirmation and anticipation functions that confirm the assimilated and accommodated processes related with the Piaget’s abstraction and generalization operations. Anticipation is possible if there is a desirable ethic in the performance of assimilation and accommodated functions. The possibility of anticipating the activities of the system, its attitudes and promoted activities rely on the consistence of the real system. In this study, he presents a model to propose an imitation of the anticipation process. This model should permit to simulate the knowledge creation process inside the system’s epistemology and it depends only on its environment to give way to more authentic possible futures.

Luciano GALLON (Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana, Colombia) presented in the last day “System Dynamics based Sociocybernetics” a reflection on the possibilities, alternatives, barriers and potentials of making System Dynamics based Sociocybernetics. For this purpose the work explores new answers to the questions: How is it possible to observe reality systemically? What are the minimum elements necessary to capture reality systemically? What can be observed systemically, what was achieved to observe and what is intervened? What new meanings of reality are found through simulation? Remining us in one hand the basic notions of System Dynamics, he explained how he is using this language in his own lectures observing epistemological transformations on his students moving from a linear representation to a model design that might be useful for following simulation stages.

Margarita MAASS (UNAM, Mexico) did her presentation titled “Poverty, loneliness and sickness? Systemic vision to plan an old age with health and quality of life. New form of social organization”. As in previous conferences she keeps addressing the complexity of aging society in its different leves (retirement process, culture of saving, health prevention, social inclusion/exclusion processes. Presenting an empirical study on how to plan an aging with health and well-being? The first results present a first systemic proposal about the process of aging as a systemic personal plan. The proposal
offers a multifactorial and systemic vision, to plan a biopsychosocial old age, which implies a series of interrelated elements to work from socio-cybernetics, as a complex social system, so that we do not reach this stage with levels of poverty, loneliness and disease.

Juan C. BARRÓN PASTOR along with Jorge CARDIEL HERRERA (UNAM, MExico) presented “Critical Sociocybernetics: Testing the Functioning of the Concept of Dispositif”. The presentation proposes the development of a critical sociocybernetical concept of «dispositif», as used by Michel Foucault and broadened by Giorgio Agamben in his 2006 essay Che cos’è un dispositivo. In their perspective Sociocybernetics can profit from the interaction between the concept of dispositif and other classical sociocybernetical concepts like system and network. The article proposes the use of this widened concept of dispositif for the analysis of social phenomena, and shows how it works by examining how particular dispositifs can grow its steering power and exercise it in relation to other social and psychic formations. Some system theories observe these events as problems of differentiation. Critical sociocybernetics observes this not as systematical de–differentiation, but as an emergence of psychosocial formations called «dispositifs» that exercise power, as Foucault also recognizes.

The closing presentation was addressed by Michael PAETAU (International Center for Sociocybernetics Studies, Germany) with the title “Post-Conflict in Colombia: A sociocybernetic observation on complexity of the world’s longest war”. In this paper Paetau addressed the problem as a foreign observer of the Colombian events, yet he contextualized his position that has taken since decades as a second order observer of the Colombian war and now peace process. Considering the plebiscite of 2nd October 2016 as a break point the paper aimed to give elements to understand this complex process. Using some basic principles of a sociocybernetic approach. Sociocybernetics in this context does mean particularly the consideration of complexity, namely in respect to three different aspects: First in relation to the variety and multiplicity of the conflict itself. Second in respect to the contents of the agreement between the government and the FARC-Guerilla. And, third with regard to the implementation of the contracted transformation procedure, the steps to terminate the armed conflict and to establish a “post-conflict society”. The paper was the result of decades of research and follow up of the process and was well received by the audience in the context of the Conference.

Keynotes of the RC51 Business Meeting (June 21th 2017)

Report by Patricia E. Almaguer Kalixto, RC51 Secretary.

As every year, during our annual international conference a board and a business meeting is organized. In this year, our board meeting was held on the 20th of June, while the business meeting was done a day after. The board meetings are generally team encounters were the board discusses key issues to decide and or present within the general RC51 members. We are lucky that our meetings are short because we have several meetings during the year. Indeed, nearly each two months we have a gathering through google talk or skype in order to connect the current board members located in Austria, Colombia, Italy, Japan, Mexico and Spain. This regularity enables that we “keep the conversation” and have a closer follow up of the issues raised in the RC51 such as our conference organization, the JoS planning, emergent publications and other projects. The Business meeting is slightly different. This is an open arena so RC51 members and
non-members can attend (although only the first have right to vote in RC51 official
issues). Everyone is welcome because is a good way to have an overlook of the RC
activities.

Issues presented were:

Membership (by Patricia Almaguer, secretary), stating that we have around 99 active
members from 24 countries. From that number we have 34 life members. So we invite
to the rest of the members to be active on the role of inviting and promoting our RC51
within their universities, research networks and other colleagues. It is important to
increase our member network not only because that means to have a stronger presence
within ISA itself but it is key for the group to nourish with ideas, proposals, concepts from
other parts of the world who address systems theory and second order observation as
we do in the RC51. We announce that a survey about the interests, themes and
production of the members will be produced before 2017 ends.

In academic proposals (by José Amozurrutia, vice-president), it was adressed the
proposal of a Sociocybernetic book – perspectives and experiences (as it was stated in
2016). Amozurrutia due health issues have made a pause in this process, but the board
is undertaking this aim in order to reach a solid editorial purpose. Contents will be send
to researchers interested in participat in in a chapter. Contact the board if you want to
know more about.

Related to the finances of our group, Saburo Akahory, treasurer, presented the
updates in the last year: Before Vienna Conference we had 939.72 Euros. The RC51
member’s dinner was partially sponsored –so we could keep an affordable price for
everyone, so 339.50 Euro were paid in there. Another expenditure was the 120 Euro for
2016 membership fee for IFSR. The general account was 480.22 + 2.52 = 482.74 Euro.
Mind that we still have to cover some expenditures made in Colombia, so our finances are
in black, but very low at the moment. We will check with the ISA if there is any new
transfer to support our activities for Toronto.

Newsletter report in charge of Juancho Barrón, stated that we have accomplished
the ISA requirement of publishing a newsletter twice a year. The informative dimension
of the newsletter is now covered partially by the Facebook page, even more participation
in it would be desirable. A new strategy will be used for the next issue: beside reporting
some of the activities of this conference and bringing information about Toronto's
conference, a polemic sentence/question will be spread through Facebook and the email
list by the end of June. The question was actually included in the feedback form defined
by the Colombian local organizing team.

The Journal of Sociocybernetics Editor, Fabio Giglieto presented the contents of the
latest issue of the Journal of Sociocybernetics is Volume 14, No.1 (2016). It includes the
following papers: a) Is external control important for internal control? by Evo Busseniers;
b) Political legitimacy in Japan: a Luhmannian perspective by Andrew Mitchell; and c)
Bildung in the Era of Digital Media by Jesper Taekke and Michael Eric Paulsen. For 2017
we have planned a special issue with paper from Medellin conference. The deadline to
submit your paper for this special issue will be 10 September 2017. Those who submit a
paper will be kindly asked to serve as reviewer for the special issue, if needed. Fabio
took the chance to invite all our members and future members to cite JoS papers, submit
their works to our journal and be available to serve as reviewer as part of their service
for the journal and the community.
Our community manager, Luciano Gallón referred the traffic and visits within our Facebook, LinkedIn and website. As local organizer he also presented the statistics of the Medellin Conference. Despite the fact of a long distance travel, we had 27 oral presentations from 9 countries and 41 participants. A large local organizing team made possible to be focused in the conference at the same time that comfortable in the beautiful city of Medellin. Different type of extra conference activities were held such as excursions, visits in historical and meaningful places to understand the Colombian process towards a peace process. Outstanding local gastronomic offer were not excluded from the tours. This is the typical atmosphere on the RC51 where we have the tradition of a deep engaged local organizing team and were we take care of each other when we meet and give meaningful feedback of our work in progress. A welcoming academic group that attempt to enlarge and consolidate.

In the last part of our business meeting Chaime Marcuello (RC51 president) addressed the next conferences we have in the next two years; TORONTO, 2018, (September 30, 2017, Deadline Abstracts Submission) and URBINO, 2019, chaired by Fabio Giglieto. With this in mind we have clear horizon to plan, organize and continue working towards sociocybernetics.
This is a short report on the so-called e-Presence of our RC51 on Sociocybernetics community. You are very welcome to join us if you have not do it so far:

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Social Network</th>
<th>How to reach it</th>
<th>Members as 2017.06.20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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As you can see, LinkedIn is the one with more members, followed by Facebook that have been getting more acceptance for academic audiences. Our webpage and our Journal of Sociocybernetics (JoS) do not work on membership basis, but, in particular our webpage, give us the possibility to know some interesting information of our community as number of visits by country. For example, on Figure 1, you can see the 2012 visits and, on Figure 2, for 2015, on Figure 3, for 2016 and, on Figure 4, for 2017.

The top 20 countries that visit our website since 2012 can be noted on Table 1.

Table 1- 2012-2016 top 20 RC51 website visitors by country

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</table>

Help us to promote our RC51 by being active in our social networks and sharing the link of our website. We are sure that in your university, academic network, region and country, might be researchers interested in sharing their views on Sociocybernetics.
POSTCARDS FROM MEDELLÍN

Research Committee 51 on Sociocybernetics
ISA International Sociological Association
Call for submissions: APRIL 25-SEPTEMBER 30, 2017

Meeting Information
When: July 15 - 21, 2018
Where: Toronto, Canada

JOIN THE RESEARCH COMMITTEE 51 ON SOCIOCYBERNETICS

https://www.facebook.com/groups/ISARC51Sociocybernetics/