



## Commission on Marginalization, Globalization and Regional and Local Responses C16.29

<https://sites.google.com/view/igugeographicalmarginality/geographical-marginality>

### Commission Newsletter

2-2018

Welcome – Publications – Conferences – Steering Committee – Address update

#### WELCOME

#### Marginalité proche, marginalité éloignée

par Steve Déry  
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Loin. C'est un qualificatif qui est souvent utilisé pour parler de la marginalité et des personnes marginales. Pourtant, à tous les jours, l'actualité nous rappelle que cette marginalité est encore plus souvent très près de nous, même dans les pays dits industrialisés et riches, même parmi les segments de la population privilégiés. Par exemple, le Japon est à certains égards un pays symbole d'accomplissement et de succès économique et social à partir des années 1970 et 1980 : ses systèmes de santé et d'éducation sont parmi les plus performants au monde et les résultats, comme par exemple pour l'espérance de vie, qui atteint en moyenne 85,5 ans en 2018 (89 ans pour les femmes) (CIA Worldfactbook Japan), fort probants. Malgré ces développements généraux sur les plans socioéconomiques, qui témoignent de moyennes nationales, la situation des femmes y reste préoccupante à plusieurs égards – sauf pour l'espérance de vie bien sûr -, surtout depuis qu'il a été porté à l'attention du public la discrimination systématique – et même systémique! – à leur endroit à la Tokyo Medecine University « où les résultats des examens ont été manipulés pour favoriser les étudiants masculins » et exclure les femmes (traduction libre) (McCurry, 2018, *The Guardian*).

Sur un registre différent, à l'Université Laval, à Québec cette fois, un concours pour éventuellement engager de nouveaux professeurs en 2019 était... strictement réservé aux « *personnes s'identifiant comme appartenant aux quatre groupes désignés (...), soit les femmes, les autochtones, les personnes en situation de handicap, et celles appartenant aux minorités visibles* »<sup>1</sup>. L'objectif avoué est d'améliorer le ratio de ces quatre groupes parmi l'ensemble des professeurs. Il s'agit bien sûr d'une excellente mesure qu'il faut applaudir. En même temps, une mise en perspective dans le temps suscite des questions sur les raisons d'un tel besoin, alors que des mesures de discrimination positive (à compétences égales, des femmes, des personnes en situations de handicap ou des personnes de couleur sont choisies) sont déjà en place depuis de très nombreuses années. Comment est-il encore possible, en 2019, que les femmes, les Noirs ou les autochtones du Québec, ou même ailleurs au Canada, aux États-Unis, en Europe ou au Japon, n'aient pas accès à ces emplois de la même manière que leurs collègues masculins, au point que nous soyons obligés d'ouvrir un concours strictement réservé? Au minimum, cette situation nous dit que ces groupes au Québec – et très certainement ailleurs au Canada, car on y retrouve les mêmes règles de discrimination positive – continuent de vivre des situations de marginalité plus ou moins profonde, car même certaines parmi les privilégiés – celles avec un doctorat – ne sont pas traitées avec équité lorsque vient le temps de reconnaître leurs connaissances, leurs habiletés et leurs expériences.

D'un point de vue conceptuel et plus théorique, en quoi ces deux exemples sont-ils intéressants pour nous aider à mieux situer la marginalité? Ils nous convient surtout, peut-être, à être davantage prudents dans l'utilisation du vocabulaire. Les exemples ci-dessus nous rappellent que la marginalité s'inscrit d'abord dans les relations de pouvoir, relations qui varient selon le système de référence. Une femme noire peut bien avoir obtenu un doctorat, ce qui en fait une personne privilégiée dans l'ensemble de la société, mais si dans le monde scientifique son pouvoir reste faible du fait qu'elle est une femme de couleur, elle vit alors de la marginalité. Dans le premier exemple, la discrimination envers les femmes japonaises constitue une décision volontaire prise par des personnes en autorité, basée sur des préjugés sexistes. Ils contribuent à réduire l'éventail des possibles pour les femmes, à réduire leur capacité d'éducation, et donc, au final, rend beaucoup plus difficile pour elles le gain de pouvoir dans les différents systèmes auxquelles elles participent : bref, elles vivent un processus de marginalisation. Dans le deuxième exemple, on se rend compte que, malgré plusieurs années de discrimination positive, le niveau de marginalité de certains groupes reste toujours élevé car leur poids parmi les diplômés ne se reflète pas parmi ceux qui obtiennent des postes et la discrimination positive reste nécessaire en 2019 pour continuer à réduire leur niveau de marginalité.

Bref, marginalisation et discrimination représentent des concepts non-équivalents et, parfois, comme ici, complémentaires à la compréhension d'une situation. La discrimination témoigne de pouvoir inégaux dans la société. Si certains peuvent se permettre de « discriminer » les autres, ceux qu'ils choisissent de discriminer, c'est qu'ils ont le pouvoir de le faire. Cela témoigne déjà de relations inégales et d'un niveau de marginalité relativement élevé pour certains groupes. Mais aussi, la discrimination peut contribuer à diminuer encore plus les options de ces groupes, par exemple pour accéder à l'éducation, au savoir en général, à l'acquisition d'habiletés, d'information, ce qui peut ainsi réduire d'autant plus leur pouvoir dans le ou les

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<sup>1</sup> Constitution d'une banque de personnes candidates pour des concours internes de Chaires de recherche du Canada CRSNG et CRSH (niveau 2), Faculté de foresterie, de géographie, et de géomatique, Université Laval (affiche rendue publique en décembre 2018).

systèmes auxquels ils participent. Réduire la capacité de ce groupe à prendre des décisions constitue un processus de marginalisation.

Peut-être, après ces réflexions, le message que je souhaite passer pour la nouvelle année à peine commencée, est le suivant : lorsque vous étudierez la marginalité des zones éloignées, pensez aussi à porter attention à la marginalité qui peut se tenir tout juste à côté de vous.

Steve Déry, Québec et Ottawa, 7 janvier 2019

## **Intimate and remote marginalities**

Steve Déry, Department of geography, Laval University

Remote. It is often an adjective used to talk about marginality and marginal people. Although, everyday news is a reminder to us that marginality is still often very close at hand, if not intimate, even in industrialised and rich countries; even within privileged segments of the population. For example, Japan is to some extent a symbol of economic and social accomplishment and success since the 1970s and 1980s: the health care and education systems are among the best performing in the world, and results, such as for life expectancy – 85.5 years at birth on average for 2018 (89 years for women; CIA World factbook Japan), – are convincing. Though, these general trends are bearing testimony to national *averages*; and the situation of women remains preoccupying to many extents – save for life expectancy -, especially since a systematic – and even systemic! – discrimination towards women has been brought to public attention: the “Tokyo Medical University had [manipulated exam scores](#) to favour male candidates” and exclude women (McCurry, 2018, *The Guardian*).

On a different level, at Laval University in Quebec City, a call to create a pool of candidates has been opened to eventually hire new professors in 2019, a call first opened ... only to members of the four designated groups: women, autochthonous, handicapped or visible minority people<sup>2</sup>. The aim is admittedly to improve the ratio of these four groups among professors. It is of course a great measure that must be applauded. But at the same time, putting some perspective to the issue raises questions regarding the reasons for such a dire need. Positive discrimination (when people of equal qualifications are available, a woman or a person from a visible minority, or a handicapped person will be chosen to better represent their weight in the PhD population) has been in place for a long time in this institution as well as in most of universities in Canada. How is it possible then that, in 2019, the need is so dire that a call for such positions needs to be strictly restrained to these groups, especially women? At the very least, it tells us that women in Quebec – and most probably elsewhere in Canada - are still experiencing great deals of marginality, for even some of the privileged ones – with PhD degrees – are still not treated equally when it comes to the recognition of knowledge, skills and experiences.

From a conceptual and theoretical point of view, how can these two interesting examples help us to better situate marginality? First, they certainly invite us to more caution in the use of the vocabulary. Marginality is embedded in power relations, relations that are varying across

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<sup>2</sup> Constitution d’une banque de personnes candidates pour des concours internes de Chaires de recherche du Canada CRSNG et CRSH (niveau 2), Faculté de foresterie, de géographie, et de géomatique, Université Laval (affiche rendue publique en décembre 2018).

various reference systems. A Black woman might hold a PhD degree, making her a privileged person within the whole society, but if within the scientific world her power remains low because she is a woman of colour, then she is experiencing marginality. In the first example, the discrimination towards Japanese women constitutes a decision made by people with authority based on sexist prejudices. They contribute to reduce the range of possible options for women, reduce their capacity to be educated, and thus, finally, make it more difficult for them to gain power in the various systems within which they participate. In brief, they experience marginalisation. In the second example, we are witnessing that, even after several years of positive discrimination, some groups are still experiencing high level of marginality because their weight among graduates is not reflected among those who are obtaining jobs. Positive discrimination remains necessary in 2019 to continue to reduce their level of marginality.

In brief, marginality and discrimination represent non-equivalent and complementary concepts to understand these situations. Discrimination bears testimony to unequal powers within society. If some can afford to discriminate against others, it means that they have some power to do it. Relations are unequal and some groups have a high level of marginality. But also, discrimination can contribute to diminish even more the various options available to these groups, for example, to access to education, knowledge in general, to acquire skills or information; and this reduces their power within the systems in which they participate even more. Reducing the capacities of these groups to make decisions constitute a process of marginalisation.

Following these thoughts, my message to all of you for the new year is that, during this next year I suggest that, while you are studying marginality in remote areas, you also pay attention to marginality that could be standing just beside you.

Steve Déry, Quebec City and Ottawa, 8 January 2019

## **PUBLICATIONS**

The fourth volume in our series *Perspectives on geographical marginality* has been published by Springer just after New Year's Day. *Rural areas between regional needs and global challenges* (ISBN 978-3-030-04392-6; for the eBook ISBN 978-3-030-04393-3) provides the readers with a glimpse of the multifunctionality that is increasingly characterizing the rural world.

## **CONFERENCE REPORT**

Our commission met during the 2018 Regional Conference of the IGU in Quebec City, Canada, that took place from August 6 – 11. The papers were organized in five sessions, partly in collaboration with the Commission on Regional Development. At first, the Commission on Tourism was supposed to join, the way the organization of the program was made did let us much room for that kind of collaboration. However, even the cooperation of the first two commissions was not recognized as such in the program. It has to be noted that the organizing committee of the Congress made a mistake with the identification of the Commission: our Commission bears the number C16.29 but was wrongly identified as 31 during the congress in all the published documentation, which led to some irritation.

Five paper sessions were held on Tuesday, August 7 (sessions 1-4) and Thursday, August 9 (session 5) with the 19 following papers:

*Session 1: Tools of demarginalization in the local and regional development: what role for landscape and tourism?*

Konrad Czapiewski (Institute of Geography and Spatial Organization, Poland): Territorial Inequalities and Local Development – some narrative stories from Poland

Krystian Heffner (University of Economics in Katowice) & Agnieszka Latocha (Institute of Geography and Regional Development, Wrocław): Desolated villages as example of spatial, economic and social marginalization in the Polish-Czech borderland

Walter Leimgruber (Université de Fribourg/CH): Nature Parks: valorising regional potential. The example of the Gruyère Pays-d'Enhaut regional nature park (Fribourg/Vaud, Switzerland)

Jamal Abdullah (Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam): Voting patterns in marginal rural areas in the 2018 general election in Malaysia

*Session 2: Tools of demarginalization in the local and regional development: what role for landscape and tourism in Europe?*

Jerzy Banski (Polish Academy of Sciences): Structure and valorization of local resources in Eastern Poland

Toivo Muilu (Natural Resources Institute Finland – Luke) : Policies of sparsely populated rural areas in Finland

Kristjan Nemac (Science and Research Centre Koper): Do we need to change the system? Think global and create a local alternative

Hugo Capella Miternique (Universitat Illes Balears): Ibiza's diversity: from merge to de-gendered leisure

*Session 3: Migrations, adaptations, identities and frontiers*

Tomas Havlicek (Charles University Prague): Relict (phantom) borders as present social-cultural divide in Czechia: an example of geography of religion

Borna Fuerst-Bjelis (University of Zagreb): Appreciating differences and coexistence of identities: evidence from the multicultural historical borderlands of Croatia

Thomas Larsen (Kansas State University): Moving Forward with Migration and Geography Awareness Week

*Session 4: Between the local and global: multiscale economic inequalities and development*

Atsushi Taira (Kagawa University): Small and medium-sized "global-niche" firms in Japan: a key for rejuvenation of Japan's local economy?

Yehua Dennis Wei (University of Utah): Beyond Convergence: Spatial Polarization, Place Mobility and the Core-Peripheral Structure in China

Matthew Fahrenbruch (University of Kansas): Challenges to Demarginalization. The case of fisheries governance and the development of the export jellyfish fishery on the Miskito Coast of Nicaragua

Mahvish Anjum (Aligarh Muslim University): Custodians of Chikankari Industry in Lucknow City, India: An Occupational Analysis

*Session 5: Nouveaux modèles d'action en développement territorial*

Bernard Pecqueur (Université Grenoble Alpes) : Innovation sociale et revitalisation des territoires ruraux : le « tiers lieu » de Vizille (France)

Pierre-Antoine Landel (Université Grenoble Alpes) : Interroger la capacité transformative de l'innovation sociale : l'hypothèse de l'opérateur territorial de la transition

Mélanie Doyon (UQAM) : Modèle agricole alternatif et développement des territoires ruraux; le cas de La Clé des Champs de Saint-Camille

Juan-Luis Klein (UQAM) : L'innovation sociale, le « Buen Vivir » et les nouveaux modèles d'action en développement territorial

### **Business meeting**

The Commission held a business meeting open to all members, old and new, on Wednesday, August 8. The following topics were discussed:

- a. The next conference is to take place in Nepal in November/December 2019. Details will be furnished by the organizer, Prof. Pushkar Pradhan.
- b. There is a proposal for 2020 to hold a pre-congress conference in Cluj Napoca, Romania, preceding the Istanbul IGC.
- c. The collaboration with Springer who edit the series *Perspectives on Geographical Marginality* is continuing well. The new contact person, Mrs. Evelien Bakker, showed great enthusiasm and willingness to help with contacts. Apart from the fourth volume in the series that is almost ready, there a number of projects and members are encouraged to become more active. It is possible to suggest single author books as well. Please contact the series editors: Steve Déry ([Steve.Dery@ggr.ulaval.ca](mailto:Steve.Dery@ggr.ulaval.ca)), Borna Fuerst-Bjeliš ([bornafb@geog.pmf.hr](mailto:bornafb@geog.pmf.hr)), Walter Leimgruber ([walter.leimgruber@unifr.ch](mailto:walter.leimgruber@unifr.ch)), Etienne Nel ([nelet43p@geography.otago.ac.nz](mailto:nelet43p@geography.otago.ac.nz)), Stanko Pelc ([stanko.pelc@guest.arnes.si](mailto:stanko.pelc@guest.arnes.si)).
- d. The Newsletter should become not only an outlet for information but also a medium for discussion. Members will be encouraged to hand in short texts to be included with the aim to stimulate reflections and debates on marginality issues. Or reply to those which are already proposed.

### **FORTHCOMING CONFERENCES**

Our Commission invites members to participate in two conferences in 2019, a regional one in Ireland and our official one in Nepal. You are welcome to participate in both.

#### **1. Galway, Ireland, 15-18 May, 2019**

The 7th EUGEO Congress on the Geography of Europe will be held in conjunction with the 51st Conference of Irish Geographers. For details see <https://www.eugeo2019.eu>  
The dates are Wednesday May 15 – Saturday 18, 2019. The venue is the National University of Ireland, Galway

Our Commission is convening a session on the topic *Marginality within the European context seen through geographical lenses*. Registration opened on December 3, 2018 and will end on February 1, 2019. Convenors are Steve Déry (Université Laval, Québec), Stanko Pelc (University of Primorska/SI, chief convenor, [stanko.pelc@pef.upr.si](mailto:stanko.pelc@pef.upr.si)); Fatima Velez de Castro, (Universidade de Combriga, CEGOT/PT); Walter Leimgruber, (University of Fribourg/CH).

All members are invited to participate although this conference has more of a regional focus. However, we thought it useful to be present also on this European level, maybe encouraging members to organize regional conference sessions on other continents as well, in the context of similar events.

## **2. Nepal, December December 8 – 15 2019 (tentative)**

Our member Pushkar Pradhan has offered to organized our 2019 annual conference in his country.

The tentative date, just before the Christmas break, is justified by the weather. Winter is the best season to visit Nepal as it is the dry season.

The tentative title is *Natural Disasters, Marginalized Regions and Labour Migration*. The conference will include paper sessions and a 5-day field trip to Sirubari village and surroundings, southwest of Pokhara. Situated around 1,500 – 1,600 m asl, the village offers accommodation in a homestay and is home to a unique ethnic group.

Further information will be mailed in the not too distant future.

## **OTHER CONFERENCES**

2019 RSA Australasia Conference, Christchurch, Aotearoa New Zealand  
Urban and Rural Wellbeing, First Nations Economies and Global Value Chains for Regional Sustainability

February 11 – 13, 2019

<https://www.regionalstudies.org/events/urban-and-rural-wellbeing-first-nations-economies-and-global-value-chains-for-regional-sustainability/>

2019 RSA Annual Conference, Santiago de Compostela, Spain

Pushing Regions beyond their Borders

June 05 – 07, 2019

<https://www.regionalstudies.org/events/pushing-regions-beyond-their-borders/>

2019 RSA Central and Eastern Europe Conference, Lublin, Poland

Metropolises and Peripheries of CEE Countries: New Challenges for EU, National and Regional Policies

September 11 – 13, 2019

<https://www.regionalstudies.org/events/CEE2019/>

## **STEERING COMMITTEE FOR 2016-2020**

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#### **YOUR ADDRESS UPDATE:**

Please help us to keep the address list updated by communicating your new address, phone number, skype address, and e-mail address to the Commission chair ([Steve.Dery@ggr.ulaval.ca](mailto:Steve.Dery@ggr.ulaval.ca)) and/or the secretary ([walter.leimgruber@unifr.ch](mailto:walter.leimgruber@unifr.ch)).