

# **XIX ISA World Congress of Sociology**

## **Toronto, Canada, July 15-21, 2018**

**ISA Theme:** *Power, Violence and Justice: Reflections, Responses and Responsibilities*

### **CALL FOR SESSIONS**

**RC18: Theme: Dynamics of States and Identities in Contemporary Global Era**

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Chair: Laurence MOREL

For several years, the question of the state has regained importance, as evidenced by the adjectives that have been applied to it: “postcolonial”, “post-national”, “post-conflict”, “failing”, “regulator”, “collapsed”, “market making”. This flowering of labels reveals a recognition of the centrality of the state, both as an institution endowed with capacity for social change and control, and as a theoretical concept indispensable to systematic comparative analysis. At the same time, it raises the question of the capacity of states to structure major social and cultural conflicts and regulate our societies. The example of the economy is undoubtedly the most striking, since the crisis started in 2008 has shown the powerlessness of states to regulate financial flows and the increasing denationalization of political authority, exercised in part by international and private organizations. In this global context, the model of the nation-state born in the nineteenth century appears at war with itself. On the one hand, it has the double task of spurring on the economy and protecting the welfare and rights of all its citizens. On the other hand, it is confronted by the paradox of the dilution of national-state boundaries and correlative increase of nationalist or communitarian outbursts.

These internal conflicts raise concrete issues to contemporary societies: Is there an “ideal” form towards which the nation-state should evolve in order to remain the guarantor of fundamental rights, such as civil, political and social rights? How to apply policies of multiculturalism without promoting a multifaceted communitarianism? The question of ethnic or religious identities, whether regarded as a sign of the crisis of social integration, or as vector of change, is indeed at the heart of contemporary conflicts. This question also plays a fundamental part in the construction and reconstruction of citizenship, hence the importance of studying the dynamics of the interrelation between political power and different levels of identity (national, regional, communitarian...). This call for sessions thus seeks to deepen the current debate on these two-way dynamics that shape the transformations of the state and the course of identity claims.

We will welcome proposals that fall within the following axes:

- 1) the construction of new political legitimacy through the production of legal and constitutional norms and their effects on fundamental rights;
- 2) the phenomena of nomadic citizenship and politics towards the immigrants as biopolitics;
- 3) the future of democracy in a post-national context marked by re-ethnicization, balkanisation, religious fundamentalism or terrorism.