The Second International Spring Institute of Fès
Social work in the face of open cooperation and closed cooperation: theoretical issues and practical perspectives

Kingdom of Morocco - University Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah Fès - Faculty of Arts and Humanities Fès Sais
In collaboration with: The School of Social Work at the University of Moncton (Canada)

From May 10th to May 16th 2010 - Fès

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Following the tremendous success of the last two annual meeting hold in 2008 and 2009, the Faculté des lettres et des sciences humaines de l'Université Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah (Maroc) and the École de travail social de l'Université de Moncton (Canada) are proud to coorganise the Second edition of the International Spring institute of Fès. This Spring institute aim to make different participants (professors, students, practitioners, comminity leaders, etc.) meet together in order to share their researches around the stakes related to the links between theoretical and practical issues, which are central to anthropology, sociology and social work. Specifically, this 2010 Spring institute will foster open cooperation and closed cooperation in order to make participants discuss around their experiences in different academicals perspectives, such as: teaching, research, practical and field work.

The purpose of this Second International Spring institute organised by the Filière d’assistance sociale de la Faculté des lettres et des sciences humaines Fès Sais and the École de travail social de Moncton is two-fold: i) explore theoretical debates on interindividual cooperation ii) present specific case studies which are related to those theoretical debates and that are relevant for social work.

We would like to invite you to participate to the activities which will be hold between May 10th and 16th, in Fès (Morocco), as participant or speaker (see Call for paper document). In both cases, you must register by filling the registration form (see Registration form for the Second International Spring institute of Fès - May 10th to 16th 2010) and send it, with your registration check, before April 1st 2010.

Main themes of the Second Spring Institute

Thème 1 : Cooperation with Marginalized Groups
Thème 2: Open cooperation, its role in State structural decision making process
Thème 3: Social work and professional identity
Thème 4: Providing and evaluating services
Thème 5: Social Work in the Context of Religious and Cultural Plurality
Thème 6 : Social work and gender

Rational of the Second International Spring Institute of Fès

1. Cooperation, a social truth for humans
A consensus exists among scientists that cooperation, which consists of several people doing something together while having a common goal in mind, is one of the traits that describes the identity of Homo sapiens. Seen in certain animals, for example capuchin monkeys or red colobus monkeys and monkeys of Diana, undoubtedly very ancient among hominiciens, this social fact has a particular form among humans. Endowed with a capability of cooperation immensely superior than other animals, human beings, notes John Searle, possess a natural ability to engage in cooperative behaviour. Children, as early as only a few months of age, are predisposed to mutual attention, which is a minimum form of sociality due to the fragility of the species, which then evolves towards more complex forms. Humans are the only species in which we can observe strong, regular, diverse, risky, vast and sometimes costly cooperation between individuals who aren’t related. The more complex forms of cooperation are made possible by humans’ language abilities, Homo sapiens being able to manage very large networks of reciprocity. This idea is not a new one. It is found through the works of Cabanis or even Darwin, where, in The Descent of Man, he underlines the social qualities of Homo sapiens, which have led them to help fellow man and to receive help in return. Is it not also reasonable to see cooperation as the greatest social truth for humans? It is one of the conditions of emergence of forms of sharing; that is, collective ways of being, of doing, of thinking, of feeling. It is the offering here, that is expressed as a condition of the social bond.

If, in an evolutionary perspective, cooperation can be presented as an enigma – wouldn’t the adaptive advantage of an individual be one of being egotistical or a free-rider, notably in a world of cooperative humans? - It is because another characteristic of Homo sapiens wasn’t sufficiently taken into account: its deeply cultural nature. At each moment of human existence, the intelligibility of the sensitive, the access to rationality, the explanation of what seems unexplainable – for example, the repetition of misfortune or contradictions impossible to overcome – are only made possible through sharing of practices, of information, of representations that will allow members of a group to get answers where man alone could not. Therefore, human cooperation derives from explanations inextricably evolutionary and cultural in nature.

A more concrete example of this, in the field of social action, is that cooperation as a form of sharing can be presented as follows: the feeling of powerlessness and failure appears and is further developed when the social worker feels that he is confronted, alone, to difficulties and obstacles that are insurmountable. He then begins to underestimate his capabilities and means to overcome them. Open
cooperation, which can be seen in the networking of several social actors, allows a certain synergy of skills, optimizing social action from the social worker and reducing his feeling of isolation.

2. Closed cooperation, open cooperation and decision-making

The biggest human problem, according to Auguste Comte, is to subordinate selfishness to altruism. In fact, describing man by his egotistical nature is very reducing. It is probably impossible for a human being to be solely interested in himself, without cooperating at one moment or another of his existence, with at least his immediate surroundings. However, this cooperation can be made under two opposite forms: a corporatist cooperation, restricted towards a particular group (family, community, ethnic group, nation, etc.) and a cooperation that surpasses the limits of this group. We will call the first form “closed cooperation” and the second form “open cooperation” with reference, of course, to the bergsonian and poperian distinction between closed and open societies.

Some may wonder how members of a group will choose one or other form of cooperation. These choices remain, to follow along the lines of Lévinas’ writings, in the universe of non intentional consciousness, and remain, in variable proportions, under the hold of a deliberative system and an emotional system, and appear in social environments in which other individuals influence directly or indirectly, individual decisions.

Social sciences, and anthropology in particular, because of its empirical tradition that leads it to work closely with an undetermined amount of decisions that individuals face in their daily lives, must understand these theoretical and political questions.

The question is whether we can determine if, with absolute certainty, identity strategies will inevitably prevail on cooperative behaviour, confining it to closeness, or if the identity strategies, in certain decision making, can become subordinate to cooperative behaviour, therefore paving the way to a more open society.

In the field of social work, the issues of closed cooperation, open cooperation and decision-making can be explained by the fact that the social worker, whose mandate is to reduce negative effects of certain social issues, must answer to a number of obligations defined by the institution with whom he is employed. Can we therefore consider this action as a form of open cooperation even if it is predefined by the institution in which it takes place?

It is clear that open cooperation is a committed process that is interested in closely understanding the different aspects of society, whether it be in terms of identity (native, women, religious or ethnic group...), in terms of age (childhood, old age, etc.), or of being part of a vulnerable group (handicap, poverty, illiteracy, etc.) The social actor is therefore invited to observe, prior to action, the mental, emotional, and spiritual state of others; know their expectations; search the source of their problems. This having been said, the social actor’s profile demands flexibility in “perspective taking” in order to understand how others see the world around them.

In this view, instead of imposing predetermined projects or giving miracle advice, the social worker’s role is to encourage people to discover their own solutions, to mount their own projects, to develop self-initiative. It is finally, a role of mediator that must be performed by the social worker in order to encourage forms of open cooperation, regardless of the population being served.

If theoretically this role seems obvious, it raises many practical issues. Of course the social worker must be “open and flexible”, but this only works if the people with whom he is working are willing to dialog with him. Hence, the social worker must create a relationship of trust with the people with whom he is intervening; openness to cooperation must therefore be mutual. This openness can only be possible through a “perspective taking” process, dialogue which is based on a series of adjustments that are fundamental to the creation of a therapeutic alliance.

3. Case study

Many case studies can be presented, for example, in the field of regional development, of social work, of treatment of disabilities, of ecology, of micro-economy, of nutrition practices, of racial thinking, of religious practices, etc., which could just as well be suggested by practitioners (e.g. social workers, social development lobbyists), than by theorists of social sciences (anthropology, sociology, economy). These cases will allow for exploration on how government institutions and their employees can have an open dialogue, through different cooperative initiatives, and also address the capacity and willingness of certain vulnerable populations to collaborate to this dialogue.

Scientific committee

- Pr. Brahim Akdim, (Doyen de la faculté des lettres et des sciences humaines Saïs Fès, professeur d’enseignement supérieur), President of the scientific committee
- Pr. Charles Gaucher (Travail social : Canada)
- Pr. Roger Smith (Social work: England)
- Pr. Ian Shaw (Social work: England)
- Pr. Ali Watfa (Psychologie Social: Syrie)
- Pr. Jamel Trukey (Psychologie Clinique : Tunisie)
- Pr. Khabbache Hicham (Professeur de sociologie cognitive: Saïs Fès)
- Pr. Charles Gaucher (Travail social : Canada)
- Mme Stephanie Tardif (Organisatrice communautaire : Canada)
- Pr. Khabbache Hicham (Professeur de sociologie cognitive: Saïs Fès)
- Pr. Mohamed Ababou (Professeur de Sociologie des religions et de santé : Dhar almhraz Fès)
- Pr. Abdellah hallou, (Professeur de psychologie, CPR, Fès)

Organizational committee

- Pr. Charles Gaucher (Professeur de travail social : Canada)
- Mme Stephanie Tardif (Organisatrice communautaire : Canada)
- Pr. Khabbache Hicham (Professeur de sociologie cognitive: Saïs Fès)

• Pr. Mohamed Dokkar, (Professeur de psychologie : Centre de formation des instituteurs, Fès)
• Pr. Abdelmajid Makni, (Coordinateur de l'agence de développement social, région Fès)
• M. Mohamed Atiche (Ingénieur de programmation, Président de l'association AMJD)
• M. Jebbar Abdelhak (Doctorant en Anthropologie des religions; Département d'anglais)
• M. Najah Mahmi (Doctorant en Anthropologie des religions; Département d'anglais)

Guest speakers
• Pr. Charles Gaucher (Professeur de travail social : Canada)
• Pr. Mikko Juhani Mäntyssari (Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences University of Jyväskylä : Finland)
• Pr. Ali Watfa (Psychologie Social: Syrie)
• Pr. Jamel Trukey (Psychologie Clinique : Tunisie)
• Pr. Roger Smith (Professeur de travail social: England)
• Pr. Ian Shaw (Professeur de travail social : England)
• Pr. Joël Candau (Professeur d'anthropologie : France)
• Pr. Roger Smith (Social work: England)
• Pr. Ian Shaw (Social work: England)
• Pr. Haluk Soydan (Director, Hamovitch Center for Science in the Human Services : Sweden)
• Pr. Natalie Bolzan (Social Work and Community Welfare : Australia)
• Pr. Susan Dawson (Social Work : USA)
• Pr. Gary Madsen (sociologie des religions : USA)

Call for papers
You may submit two types of papers to the scientific committee:
• Papers are of standard format and are reserved for the scientific community in order to present a 30 minutes conference between May 10 and 16.
• Posters are of shorter length and are more open to scientific contributions in the making (research problematic, provisional results, commencement of thesis, etc.), to case studies, to presentations of experiences, to points of view or personal reflections, to institutional presentations. Posters are therefore open to a larger public, doctoral holders, students, social actors, etc. and must be presented between May 10 and 16 in Fès in a not more bigger format than 100 cm by 200 cm.

Submission of summaries
Participants wishing to present a paper (scientific paper) will need to provide a two page detailed summary with research problematic, methodology or approach, main results and bibliography.

Participants wishing to present a poster (research problematic, provisional results, commencement of thesis, case studies, presentations of experiences, personal reflections, institutional presentations) will need to provide a one page summary.

Summaries should be sent to the following address: hichamcogn_99@yahoo.fr and will be evaluated by the members of the scientific committee.

Submission deadline: December 18th, 2009

Notice of decision following scientific evaluation: January 29th, 2010

For registration, please fill out annexed form and send it, prior to April 1st, to Pr. Charles Gaucher at the following address:
Charles Gaucher: Professeur adjoint- École de travail social - Université de Moncton - Pavillon Léopold-Taillon, local 366 · N-B, Canada, E1A 3E9

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<td>The proposition contributes to the advancement of knowledge on one of the theme of the Fès Spring institute 2010 related to the notions of open and close cooperation.</td>
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<td>The proposition will interest the Spring institute participants.</td>
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<td>The research question or problem is clearly identified and its choice has been supported by a literature review in the field.</td>
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<td>The proposed method is rigorous and is adapted to the research problem. Its different aspects are described (sample, data-collection instruments, analysis, etc.)</td>
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<td>The results are clearly presented and are in relation with the themes of the Spring institute.</td>
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<td>The proposition will clearly benefit the researches interested in the notions of open and close cooperation</td>
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<td>The proposition relies on the recent contributions in the field.</td>
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les sens sociaux. Trois essais de sociologie cognitive, Paris, Economica, p. VIII.


A doctoral research is already in the making, under the direction of J. Candau in the industrial district of Biella (Italy, Piemonte), an area that is strongly encrusted in local community, territory and strong traditions, and is now experiencing a decisive turn, forcing it to undergo structural changes with regards to techniques and cooperation.

The goal of the research is to understand how organizational innovations appear, by testing the hypothesis that social capital has a role in decision making, through alternatives of closed and open cooperation. Barlett, P. F., 1980, Agricultural decision making, anthropological contributions to rural development, New York, Academic Press.

Emphasis could be placed on this topic to converge (in part, for example, in a day or seminars) the Spring Institute program with the Volubilis program. In every religion there exists orthodox, even fundamentalist views, and others that are more liberal. The first seem to prefer closeness, the second openness. We can ask ourselves what decision process was utilized that lead people to side with one view or the other?

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Registration form for the Second International Spring Institute of Fès
May 10th to 16th 2010
*Registration is obligatory for all participants and speakers

Name: ........................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................
Address: ........................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................
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*Northern countries students : 100US$ / Moroccan students or southern countries students : 30US$
* Northern countries speakers or participants : 200US$
* Moroccan or southern countries speakers or participants : 50US$
* Community leaders : 30US$
* Volunteers / guess speakers : 0US$

Check $ Money order $

Make the money order or check at the name of : École d’été Fès-2010
Registration form and payment must be send at :

Charles Gaucher : Professeur adjoint
École de travail social - Université de Moncton
Pavillon Léopold-Taillon, local 366 -N-B, Canada, E1A 3E9

Some double (20€ or 25€) or single (33€) rooms are reserved for the Spring institute participants. Please let us know if you want us to keep one for you:

I would like to have a double room [ ] I would like to have a single room [ ]

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