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Mobilizing critical research for preventing and eradicating poverty

CROP Secretariat

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FOREWORD

This Newsletter intends to share some of the events and news that involved CROP during the first semester of 2012. During this period, the Programme continued working in the thematic lines presented in our previous newsletter. This time a great deal of attention has been paid to the interaction between religion and politics in framing the discourse, action and inaction towards poverty. It includes the contribution by Enrique Dussel and other relevant colleagues over the series of events organized in April by CROP and partners (NorLARNet, UiB Global, among others) as well as the formation of a CROP Working Group (WG) on the relation between poverty and religion. These events aim at systematically exploring the multiple interactions between both concepts which are relatively less mapped out in our area of study.

The WG initiative is an important step towards strengthening CROPs network. Other WGs will be created in the future as an effective way to decentralize CROPs activities and

research. Another important initiative developed during the semester has been the promotion of Visiting Research Grants for CROP Fellows within the framework of the University of Bergen's Strategic Programme for International Research and Education (SPIRE). This programme will provide funding on a competitive basis, receiving visiting researchers from abroad to stay at the University of Bergen for a period of 1-3 months. CROP therefore welcomes our distinguished Fellows to take this opportunity to carry out their intellectual work on our premises.

During this period CROP has also agreed with the International Social Science Council (ISSC) to actively collaborate in the organization of the first seminar of the World Social Science Fellows programme. We are now moving towards the launch of the first event by March 2013, thus contributing to the successful development of this Council initiative that will deal with CROP's main research themes.

Three significant calls for papers were launched during the first semester and are still open until the beginning of the second semester 2012:- (i) CROP Prize, deadline August 1. (see note in this Newsletter); (ii) International Workshop on "Poverty and Politics in Middle Income Countries" abstract deadline August 13 (South Africa, Nov. 22-24) and (iii) International Workshop on "The Political Economy of Poverty and Social Transformations of the Global South" abstract deadline July 9 (Egypt, Dec. 10-12), for further information visit www.crop.org

These activities have allowed us to strengthen our cooperation with old and new partners, CODESRIA, AARC, SEPHIS, University of Western Cape and the American University in Cairo, to mention



CROP INTERNATIONAL STUDIES IN POVERTY PRIZE 2012

CROP, in cooperation with Zed Books, launched a call requesting entries for the CROP International Studies in Poverty Prize 2012. The winner will receive NOK 50.000. The deadline is set for August 1.

The call seeks original, high-quality, alternative and critical academic manuscripts challenging the dominant thinking and knowledge about poverty and providing sound contributions towards the eradication and/or prevention of poverty.

Innovative manuscripts are accepted from all disciplines of the Social Sciences and the Humanities. Multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary approaches are particularly welcome as well as comparative perspectives. Participation of academics from all over the world is expected and submissions from the South are especially encouraged.

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<http://www.crop.org/storypg.aspx?id=560&MenuNode=&zone=12>

“Peasant poverty is like a tragedy which crosses every current world crisis: economic, financial, ecologic, and climatic”, states Luis Arizmendi, editor of the journal *Mundo Siglo XXI*. This is one of the expert observations that justified this high level workshop held in Mexico by CROP and *El Colegio de Mexico* in March 13-15. The researchers who attended this workshop have individually over the years made substantial contributions within this field.

One of the key questions put forward at the workshop was why the persistence of poor farmers has defied all the predictions about their disappearance. The classical conception of the development of capitalism in agriculture suggests

some of the institutions that have or are contributing to the successful realization of these events.

Our work in Latin America continues through the CLACSO-CROP Programme and other longstanding partners in the region such as *El Colegio de Mexico*.

In March a methodological workshop for young Central American and Caribbean poverty researchers was held in Costa Rica in collaboration with *FLACSO, Universidad de Costa Rica* and *Departamento Ecuménico de Investigaciones (DEI)* with the purpose of helping them prepare and discuss high quality research proposals on poverty and

poverty related issues. An International workshop on “Poverty and peasant persistence in the contemporary world” also took place in Mexico City, in cooperation with *El Colegio de México* and *Universidad Autonoma Metropolitana Xochimilco (UAM)* to deal with this highly relevant issue. A publication based on the best papers is currently being reviewed by an editorial team.

Finally, we would like to invite our readers to update their contact information so we can keep in touch to share the activities and possibilities offered by our network.

The Secretariat

POVERTY AND PEASANT PERSISTENCE IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD [March 13-15]



CROP and *El Colegio de México* jointly organized the interdisciplinary workshop, examining sound policies for eradicating poverty among peasants.

for instance that, as in industry, the agrarian class-structure will tend to polarize and the small commodity producer will tend to disappear. This is because the development of market and the social relations of production tends to concentrate income and wealth in the hands of the “most successful” economic and social agents. However, this argument has, apparently, been falsified by history.

Several presentations revolved around the background paper [[download link click here](#)] written by Julio Boltvinik, CROP’s Scientific Committee member and local

organizer. There was a particularly interesting theoretical debate around the characteristics of agricultural production and its difference with the industrial production; seasonality on peasant work; Marxists approaches on the agrarian question and Marx’s theory of value, as well as some reviews and updates on classical works in the field. Other topics discussed were the relation among environment, food crisis and peasants; policy, self-reliance and its link with peasant poverty; and also some interesting historical and empirical approaches.

As a part of the workshop, a public meeting was held at the press club of Mexico City. This was made in cooperation with *Asociación Nacional de Empresas Comercializadoras de Productores del Campo (ANEC)* and had an audience of more than 150 persons. The panel, coordinated by Julio Boltvinik, counted on interventions by Víctor Suárez,

coordinator of *Sin Maíz no hay País*; Armando Bartra, UAM-Xochimilco; Luis Arizmendi, editor of the journal *Mundo Siglo XXI*, Araceli Damian, El Colegio de México; Farshad Araghi, Florida Atlantic University and Henry Bernstein, University of London.

The academic committee for the workshop consisted of the two CROP

Scientific Committee members Shahra Razavi (UNRISD) and Julio Boltvinik (Mexico) as well as Sam Moyo from AIAS (Zimbabwe) and Kostas Vergopoulos (France). A publication with a selection of the papers presented is under preparation by an editorial team.

POVERTY AND POLITICS IN LATIN AMERICA [April 17]

The first 2012 CROP-UiB GLOBAL lecture on Latin American poverty and politics was given by the Argentine-Mexican philosopher Enrique Dussel on April 17 in Bergen. Dussel addressed what he sees as the false separation between economics and politics when deal with the concept of power. He argued that a negative definition of political power as domination cannot be legitimate and called for an “obedient power” based on moral respect for life, drawing upon Latin American experience and thinking.

In this context Dussel highlighted the various crucial contributions of Latin American scholars by way of the Sociology of Liberation (Orlando Fals-Borda), Pedagogy of Liberation (Paulo Freire), Philosophy of Liberation (Enrique Dussel) and the Theology of Liberation (Gustavo Gutiérrez). He strongly criticized Weber’s view of politics as legitimate domination of people, suggesting as an ethical alternative the “obedient power” by serving the people as exemplified by Bolivia’s president Evo Morales.

For Dussel, poverty has always been a central question for politics and the fundamental idea is to do justice to the poor in the old tradition of Hammurabi’s Code of Laws - delivering justice to those perceived as ‘non-beings’ in this world. The material needs of human beings (food, drink, clothing and housing) should be central for politics that presume to affirm life itself. Failure to do so means that life itself is being threatened –the tragic end result of poverty.

According to Dussel today’s ‘non-beings’, the poor, are victims of an immoral structural order that denies them the possibility to be fully human. The ongoing financial crisis is a manifestation of the dictatorship of transnational financial capital, and capitalism as such, which produces poverty. He



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suggested that Latin America has already lived the crisis Europe is now facing and that the Latin American liberation outlook can contribute to understanding and criticizing what is currently happening in Europe with the financial crisis. He anticipated that an organized participatory democracy will be the revolution of the 21st century, paving way for a world free of poverty and a real possibility to be human.

Following the lecture by Dussel, CROP also initiated its first working group (WG) on *Poverty, religion and social justice*. An agenda setting workshop focused on Latin American and Nordic perspectives on the theme, drawing upon contributions from Fortunato Mallimaci, *University of Buenos Aires / CEIL-PIETTE*; Enrique Dussel, *UAM*, with comments from Benedicte Bull, *University of Oslo*, Einar Berntzen, *University of Bergen*, and Patricia Lorenzoni, *University of Gothenburg*. More details about the WG can be found on CROPweb shortly.

As part of the visit to Norway, the seminar “Religion, Development and Social Justice” was held in Oslo 19 April. The main speakers included Enrique Dussel, Fortunato Mallimaci as well as theologian Sturla Stålsett, the Secretary General of the *Church City Mission in Norway* and currently a guest researcher at the *University of Glasgow*. The aim of the seminar was to discuss the main Latin American intellectual contributions to the current debate about religion in development. Bernt Guldbrandsen from *Caritas*; Arnhild Helgesen, *School of Theology*; Maren Christensen Bjune, *University of Bergen* and Lars Kirkhusmo Pharo, *Harvard University*, participated as commentators in the panel discussions.

These three events were jointly organized by CROP and the Norwegian Latin American Researchers Network (NorLARNet), with kind support from UiB Global, Bergen Resource Center for International Development and the CLACSO-CROP Programme.



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RELIGION, POLITICS AND SOCIETY [April 26-28]

Participation of CROP in the 6th NOLAN Conference in Stockholm.

As a part of its ongoing initiative with the CROP Working Group on Poverty, Religion and Social justice, CROP was pleased to sponsor a panel dealing with religion, politics and society at the 6th Nordic Latin American Researchers Network (NOLAN) Conference at the University of Stockholm 26-28

April. The session was coordinated by Maren Christensen Bjune and Einar Bertnzen, University of Bergen.

It contained presentations by Virginia Garrard-Burnett (University of Texas Austin), Jakob Egeris Thorsen (Aarhus University), Andrés Pérez-Baldotano (The University of Western Ontario), Live Danbolt Drange (NLA University College), Turid Hagene (Oslo University College), Rickard Lalander (University of Stockholm), Martin Lindhardt (University of Copenhagen), Hans Egil Offerdal (UiB Global/CROP) and Hans Geir Aasmundsen (Södertörn University College). A publication based on the papers is currently being worked on.

BASIC UNIVERSALISM AND POVERTY ERADICATION IN LATIN AMERICA: LIGHTS AND SHADOWS [May 27]

In the context of the Latin American Studies Association, on May 27, 2012, CROP sponsored a panel on “Basic Universalism and Poverty Eradication in Latin America: Lights and Shadows”. This panel was organized by Juliana Martínez (Universidad de Costa Rica and CROP fellow), chaired by Victoria A. Lawson (University of Washington, also a CROP fellow), and had papers

presented by Francesca Bastagli (London School of Economics), on *Brazil's Bolsa Familia reform: Towards selective universalism?*, Enrique Valencia Lomeli (Universidad de Guadalajara), on *Ideas, actors y conflicts in the design of conditional cash transfers programmes: the cases of Bolsa Familia and Oportunidades*, and Armando Barrientos (University of Manchester), on *Social Protection and Taxation Systems in Latin America*. Juliana Martínez drew on all three papers to present preliminary thoughts on how to assess progress towards universalism. Despite an early start on the last day of the conference, the panel was attended by about 30 participants.

Questions and comments revolved around how to define universalism and the role played by controversial social assistance in this regard. Follow-ups to this involve two additional panels, also sponsored by CROP under the Second ISA Forum of Sociology on Social justice and democratization, Buenos Aires, Argentina August 1-4, 2012. We expect to have a good selection of papers to work towards publication and make a larger impact in the public debate regarding lights and shadows of universalism in contemporary Latin America.

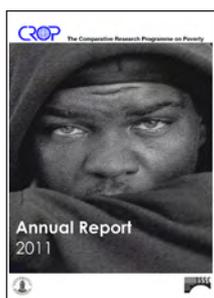
CLACSO-CROP TRAINING COURSE IN CENTRAL AMERICA

Sixteen young researchers from Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Panama participated on the 7th

capacitating workshop organized by CLACSO-CROP Programme. This workshop took place in San Jose, Costa Rica May 28th to June 1st. The main objective of this annual experience is to provide participants with theoretical, methodological and practical approaches for social science research in general and focusing in poverty

research in particular. This edition was organized in collaboration with several social sciences institutions from Costa Rica: *FLACSO, Instituto de Investigaciones Sociales* and *INIE-Universidad de Costa Rica, Departamento Ecuménico de Investigaciones, Cátedra Latinoamericana de Criminología y Derechos Humanos Alessandro Baratta*, and *CICDE*.

CROP ANNUAL REPORT 2011



The CROP Annual Report 2011 has been published and is now available on CROP's website. The focus during the report period has been on health, water and universal social policies. All three topics will remain central to CROP's core activities both in their own right and as part of a broader discussion of the Millennium Development Goals and the future of international co-operation toward poverty eradication.

In the near-term future, the CROP Scientific Committee and the Secretariat will dedicate themselves to improving CROP's performance, based on the lessons of the Programme's recent experience and mobilize critical research for the purpose of poverty eradication and prevention. CROP intends to do so with the committed support of all members of the CROP Network.

[Download link click here](#)

POVERTY: A GLOBAL REVIEW

CROP is pleased to announce that this book, one of CROP's classical texts, is now available in our free and open access library. CROP has made an agreement with the Scandinavian University Press to publish and make available for free downloading this classic book on poverty research.

Prepared by a group of experts within the CROP Network, this book is a state-of-the-art report based on poverty and poverty research in different regions in 1996. As such, it is unique and the first volume ever to cover poverty studies worldwide. It presents a rich variety of concepts, hypotheses and data used in different disciplines and different cultural settings.

The book, containing ideas and reflections on poverty manifestations, poverty research and poverty strategies, is a valuable source of information for students, scholars, researchers and policy-makers alike. As such, it is a baseline for on-going and future research, and a major contribution to setting up the agenda for poverty research in the new millennium.

At the time of publication **Amartya Sen** said about the book: *"Poverty has many dimensions and distinct aspects, and it is wonderful to have such a collection of informed analyses covering the different features. The regional perspectives combine extremely well with the general analytical discussions"*

[Download link click here](#)

POVERTY AND HUMAN RIGHTS FROM BELOW: AN ALTERNATIVE HISTORY AND APPROACH



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CROP Fellow Camilo Perez-Bustillo, Research Professor, Autonomous University of Mexico City (UACM), visited Bergen to give a series of lectures. A session jointly organized by CROP and UiB Global took place at the Bergen Resource Center for Development on June 19, 2012. Perez-Bustillo argued

for a new theoretical approach on Human Rights. He also referred to the close relation among poverty and human rights when he affirmed "poverty can only be effectively addressed and overcome if it is approached from a perspective that understands it to be a violation of human rights".

During this visit Perez-Bustillo also participated in the Bergen Summer Research School, 2012.



INTEGRATED SCIENCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



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UiB Global & CROP Lecture at the Bergen Resource Center

On June 26th, John Crowley, editor of the International Social Science Journal, UNESCO, gave a lecture on "Integrated science for sustainable development" in Bergen, Norway. He

argued that while it is now widely recognized that science and policy challenges relating to such complex systems as the environment require an integrated approach, a rather traditional division of labour still tends to prevail between the natural and social sciences. The natural sciences study systems and describe how they might evolve, whereas the social sciences are expected to provide a basis for action to do what science requires. This division of labour has failed in practice, most spectacularly with respect to climate change, and is indefensible in theory. Crowley's presentation re-examined the

nature of the systems that are of concern to integrated science – emphasizing the key role of humans within them – and the of challenges that the world faces, which are not always best understood in terms of failure to act on unquestionable knowledge. Finally, he affirmed that social science has a crucial role to play within integrated science - and in doing so will face significant challenges in terms of theories, concepts and methods.

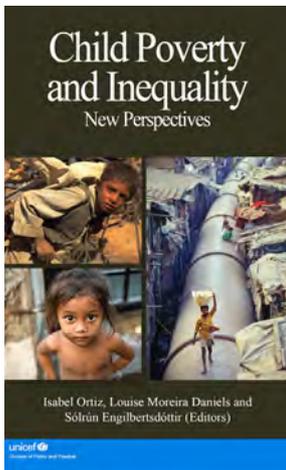




CROP POVERTY BRIEF

A new issue of the CROP Poverty Brief has been published by Scott Wisor who reviewed The World Development Report 2012 “Gender Equality and Development” (GED). Wisor situates GED in the broader development context, discussing its key findings and some shortcomings while suggesting how it should be used by advocates and allies concerned with eliminating gross gender injustice and global poverty.

Click for more information www.crop.org/viewfile.aspx?id=304



RECOMMENDED PUBLICATIONS BY CROP MEMBERS

Two books edited by Isabel Ortiz, Member of CROP Scientific Committee, were published and are open access available on CROP’s website.

- ***Child Poverty and Inequality: New Perspectives***
Edited by Isabel Ortiz, Louise Moreira Daniels, and Sólrun Engilbertsdóttir
- ***A Recovery for All: Rethinking Socio-Economic Policies for Children and Poor Households***
Edited by Isabel Ortiz and Matthew Cummins

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CALENDAR

UPCOMING CROP EVENTS

August 1-4

CROP roundtables at the **Second ISA Forum of Sociology** in Buenos Aires, Argentina:

“Basic universalism: Is Latin America getting closer or further away?” [Aug 1]

“The uneasy relationship between CCTs and universalism in Latin America” [Aug 3]

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August 22

CROP Scientific Committee Meeting in Bergen, Norway.

August 23-24

“MDGs and Poverty Reduction in the 21st Century: A Critical Assessment”

International Workshop in Bergen, Norway.

October 15-19

“Childhood, Poverty and Inequalities”

Roundtable at the V World Congress for the Rights of Children and Adolescents in San Juan, Argentina.

November 22-24

“Poverty and Politics in Middle Income Countries”

International Workshop in Cape Town, South Africa, in cooperation with the Institute for Social Development, University of the Western Cape.

December 10-12

“The Political Economy of Poverty and Social Transformations of the Global South”

International Workshop in Cairo, Egypt, in cooperation with SEPHIS and American University of Cairo.

