

Editorial

For a Bright and Open Future of *Sosiologia*

Eeva Luhtakallio & Tuukka Ylä-Anttila

An internet meme originally about male leadership in business – which noted there are more men named *Juha* as CEOs of stock exchange listed companies in Finland than there are women CEOs altogether – reached the Finnish sociological public by way of Helsinki-based sociologist *Lotta Haikkola's* Facebook status. She posted a list of names – *Harri, Pertti, Ilkka, Anssi, Pekka, Petri, Martti, Markku, Jarno, Ilpo, M'hammed, Juho, Matti, Jani, Hannu, Mikko, Olli, Turo-Kimmo...* and *Terhi-Anna, Merja, Leena*, to mention a few – and asked her followers to identify what this list is. Well, it does not take long for a Finnish sociologist to figure it out: in our field, as in many academic and other fields, the lead positions – in this case, professorships – are still occupied by a male majority, despite being entirely disproportionate to the gender composition of sociology students and researchers. This is one of the fights we must continuously fight within the sociological profession – it will not correct itself – but it is not the only one. There are other related fights in the struggle to establish equal, inclusive, and fair professional practices.

As editors of *Sosiologia*, and therefore gatekeepers of the sociological public sphere, this struggle has been ours for the past two years. The diversity of

the authors' first names in this issue – *Margarethe, Marko, Matilda, Anu, Daria, Anna, Michael, Nicholas* – is one manifestation of what we wanted to fight for. *Sosiologia 4/2015* is the first-ever issue of the journal in English. By launching a call for papers in English, we wanted to open up *Sosiologia* as a publication channel for, and include in our readership, those sociologists interested in the debates of the Finnish sociological public whose working languages do not include Finnish or Swedish. The result is, in part, visible on the pages of this issue: among the submissions were the five pieces now published. They discuss the phenomenon of the academic myth through the case of the alleged “silence of the Finns”; the long and gendered legacy of Finnish alcohol policy discourses seen in the “Whiskygate” online outrage; the ways in which Finnish border controls and immigration restrictions affect the lives of young Russian women in Finland; the profession-specific struggles of defining proper care for problem gamblers within the Finnish non-medical model's framework; and, last but not least, the need for critical sociological analysis of monetary responses to financial crises.

Now, there is much hype about “the international” going on in university politics. One could say that by publishing an issue in English, *Sosiologia*

is thus a touch more international. However, as the list of our authors' names may indicate, being "international" is not the same as *not* owning a Finnish passport (or any other, or no passport, for that matter). Such untenable definitions, which are sadly sometimes put forward even by the highest authorities of academic institutions, are entirely alien to sociology (and to all science). Instead of empty internationalism for its own sake, what is at stake here is the scholarly community: one that recognizes no national borders and one that, in its search for the truth, cannot be exclusive in terms of language any more than ethnic background, physical ability, or gender.

During our 2014–2015 term as editors of *Sosiologia*, in co-operation with the editorial board and with our publisher, The Westermarck Society, our priority was to ensure the journal is as open and accessible as possible also outside the strictly academic public. This is why we carried out several reforms. We hired graphic designer Otto Donner to redesign the journal, to make it pleasing to look at, to hold and flip through its pages, and, above all, to read. We started a blog and a Facebook page for the journal. To celebrate the journal's 50th anniversary in 2014, we invited sociologists to discuss the future of sociology in discussion pieces, which were published throughout our term. We shortened the embargo after which online versions of articles become available from a full year to six months. The journal is currently in negotiations with EBSCO to distribute our articles more effectively via global article databases. We are working with the National Library of Finland and the Federation of Finnish Learned Societies (TSV) to make our articles more easily accessible via our website, as well as looking into the possibility of adopting an Open Access model in the future. We worked vigorously on language in the editing stages with the authors to make the texts as readable as possible. And, last but not least, the decision was made to periodically publish English issues,

the first of which you are holding in your hands, whether on printed paper or a mobile device.

During our two-year term, the journal published eight issues consisting of 27 peer-reviewed articles, 16 discussion pieces, and 60 book reviews, altogether written by 124 authors. Out of the 38 authors of peer-reviewed articles, 53% were women and 47% were men – a welcome female majority witnessed for the first time in the journal's history. (As recently as 1999–2000, the proportion of female authors was just 20%.) The authors also held higher academic degrees than before: 53% carried doctorates (up from 38% in 2011–2013), 29% had master's degrees (down from 48%), and 18% were professors (up from 12%). We also had the pleasure of publishing articles from authors representing a more balanced distribution of universities than before: 33% of authors were affiliated with the University of Helsinki (down from 56%), 16% with the University of Tampere (down from 18%), and 13% with the University of Lapland (up from 2%). Here, the legacy of our predecessors, Jarno Valkonen and Veera Kinnunen, is clearly visible. Other Finnish universities (1–13%), as well as other research institutions (8%) and foreign universities (8%), also increased their shares. Out of 65 book reviewers, 55% were female and 45% male; 60% of reviewed books were Finnish publications, 34% were published abroad, and 6% were translations into Finnish.

We have published 30 blog posts, and the blog has been a success: the journal's website now receives four to five times as many visitors as two years ago, our Facebook posts reach thousands of people and our blog posts have had hundreds of readers each. The readership of our articles online (Elektra database) has steadily risen during the 2010s from about 5800 article views in 2010 to 9300 article views in 2014.

While our online readership has increased, the amount of hard-copy subscribers has gone down

slightly, from about 1600 to about 1500. This is no surprise, considering that readers everywhere increasingly prefer the digital form, while fewer and fewer readers reach for a paper copy. This is a challenge for the field of scientific publishing at large, and especially for a Finnish journal such as *Sosiologia*, whose operating budget largely comes from hard-copy subscriptions.

However, considering the reforms that have been and that will be made, our already strong online readership and, above all, the painstaking efforts of our authors and reviewers to produce highly relevant top-quality social research, we have full confidence in the future of the journal. This is particularly true, as we now leave it in the capable hands of editor-in-chief Olli Pyhtinen and managing editor Outi Koskinen of the University of Tampere for the term 2016–2017. We would like to take the opportunity here to thank warm-heartedly our successors for eagerly taking up the baton, as well as the entire editorial board for their zeal, care, and sense of duty in carrying out the hard work of peer reviewing. A special thanks goes to Kaisa Kuurne, who leaves the board after years of service. Finally, thanks to all of you who have borne with us and with our pace of reforms, sent us encouraging feedback and constructive critiques, and read and written sociology with open eyes and a sensitive wit. That's all folks!