



The 39th World
Congress of the
International Institute
of Sociology
Yerevan, Armenia

JUNE 11-14, 2009

www.iisoc.org/iis2009

SPECIAL SESSION INFORMATION

Title of Session: Hostland and Homeland: Armenians and Jews Compared

Name of Session Convener(s): Eliezer Ben-Rafael

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Comments: -

Session Abstract: The Armenian and Jewish diasporas share many sociological, political and historical features. In both cases, diasporans widely outnumber the citizens of their original homelands; in both cases, diasporas existed long before independent states were created on parts of the territories that people referred to as “homelands”; in both cases, an allegiance to a particular religion constitutes a component of the diaspora’s traditional singularity and identity – even though many people in either group has removed themselves from the religious faith; not less importantly, Armenian diasporans as well as Jewish diasporans cultivate the memory of a genocide that took place in the 20th century. Sociologically, it is also to underline that while diasporans of both groups tend to concentrate in affluent societies which play a central role on the global scene, their respective homelands is situated in peripheral areas. Moreover, while the diasporans themselves often belong to the well-established strata of their “hostlands”, homelands still represent societies investing their best to reach and keep up with Western standards. This list of similarities does not exhaust yet all of them, and because of these very similarities, one may expect that delving into the comparison of Armenians and Jews under the angle of the dynamics of the relations they experience between diasporans and “homelanders” should be of special academic interest. This comparative discussion should throw a new light and offer new insights for the general study of transnational diasporas in this era of their becoming a prevailing feature of contemporary societies.

General information

During each afternoon of the congress, there will be room for a large number of parallel regular sessions. Each session is 90 minutes long and consists of an oral presentation of 4 to 6 papers. Session conveners are expected to administer and chair their session at the 2009 IIS World Congress.

Starting in mid-December, calls for papers to participate in approved sessions will be posted on the website. Interested participants should contact the session convener directly with an abstract no later than February 28, 2009. The session convener should take in all submissions and select the best 4 to 6 papers to be presented and forward this information, including e-mail addresses of accepted authors, to the IIS Secretariat no later than March 15, 2009.