

### **ISA RC 13 and the Barcelona Forum: An inner search**

The First ISA Forum of Sociology, jointly organized by the Spanish, the Catalan and the International Sociological Association will go in the history of ISA as a golden leaf. When Arturo Rodriguez Morato, ISA Vice President for Research and the main architect of this innovative initiative and the Forum Director invited participation of RC 13 at the Forum I was at a loss to understand if RC 13 was in a position to accept the invitation due to its limited membership. However, RC 13 took it as a challenge and also as an opportunity to build itself. To accomplish the task the Board of RC 13 started working with zeal, enthusiasm and commitment. To begin with we thought of such other areas of sociological research which ought to be related to leisure and announced a large number of tentative session themes, and then approached the concerned ISA research committees if they would like to organize joint sessions with RC 13 on these themes. The response was overwhelming. ISA Research Committees on Sociology of Education, Futures Research, Social Transformations and Sociology of Development, Sociology of Aging, Sociology of Health, Sociology of Religion, Sociology of Science and Technology, Environment and Society, Deviance and Social Control, Sociology of Work, Women in Society, Sociology of Youth, Sociology of Childhood, and International tourism, and the Working Group on The Body in the Social Sciences not only collaborated but also extended their wholehearted cooperation in making the joint sessions with them a grand success. These joint sessions attracted not only a large number of participants from diverse cultures and societies, but also enthused intense debates and discussions and also led to innovative exchanges. The independent sessions of RC 13 combined with its joint sessions provided a great opportunity not only to reflect on the work of leisure sociologists but also to the realization that how deeply the phenomenon of leisure is associated and interlinked to a large number of other important social phenomena, and that there is an urgent need to explore these possibilities. The Barcelona Forum provided a great opportunity to the RCs to move beyond the boundaries of committees.

Participation of the research committee on leisure at the First ISA Forum of Sociology in Barcelona, Spain during September 5-9, 2008 will be remembered as a landmark in the annals of RC 13 in terms of its growth, expansion, connectivity, enthusiasm and confidence. It was also historical occasion for RC 13 since it was here in Barcelona that RC 13 awarded the Young Leisure Scholar Awards for the first time for the best adjudged papers.

Besides strengthening the research committees and to providing them opportunities of their interlocking with other research committees the other main objective of the Barcelona Forum was to provide a forum for dialogue on the same subject among different views from different sociological specialties through the Common Sessions to be addressed by selected invited speakers. Recognizing the importance of leisure in the contemporary world President of Research Committee on Leisure, Ishwar Modi was also invited to make a presentation on **Leisure and Social Transformation** in the very first common session on **Social Changes and Social Problems** chaired by Piotr Sztompka, the immediate past President of ISA.

Ishwar Modi  
President, ISA RC 13 (Leisure)  
[iiiss2005modi@yahoo.co.in](mailto:iiiss2005modi@yahoo.co.in)