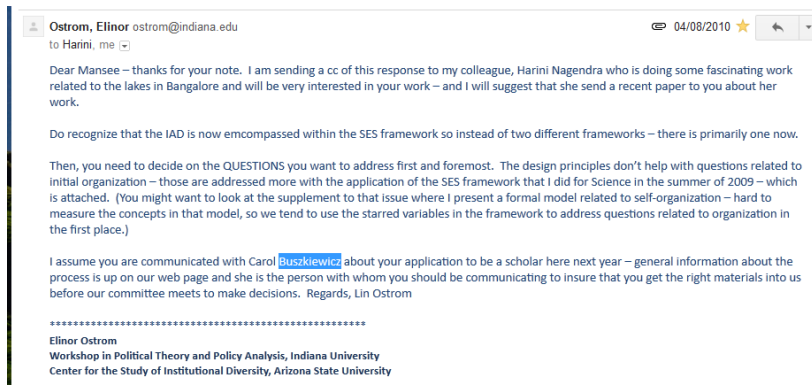


Ostrom n' Myself - A Tribute to Lin Ostrom

'O n' M' is a common language used in resource/infrastructure management for 'operation and maintenance'. I use it as a metaphor for Lin Ostrom's *operationalizing* the SES Framework and my promise for *maintaining* the legacy of it.

My association with Lin began when my current supervisor Jacko van Ast suggested reading about IAD after he read my draft research proposal. My research is on governing the urban lake systems in India. Within a month, at a PhD workshop at TU Delft Rolf Kunneke suggested that SES Framework is meant for my kind of research. Since 2009, Lin and her works are part of my everyday life.

Year after, I met Lin (first time) at 13th International Annual Conference on the Economics of Infrastructures at TU Delft, where she was felicitated for her Nobel Prize in Economics alongside Williamson. I didn't miss the opportunity to discuss my little research interest with Lin. Despite being on the spotlight and busy with big engagements, she was humble and patient to answer my queries on IAD-SES framework.



The excitement about Lin grew when I first received an email response from her within twenty four hours. She made my life temporarily easy by clarifying that, "IAD is now encompassed within the SES framework, so instead of two different frameworks- there is primarily one now."

She also asked if I communicated with Carol Buszkiewicz for visiting scholar program. I didn't miss the opportunity to write to Carol. *Fall 2011!* I was a visiting scholar at the Workshop. It was almost like a dream come true.



The Workshop's physical settings, the rules, the community attributes were just perfect for me to dig more into my research (action situation) including, understanding Lin and Workshopers works. There were several opportunities to interact with her, which I did not 'honestly' expect. Our dinner at Siam's House was all about discussion on study of urban lakes in India. I was thrilled!

At the weekly colloquium, my presentation was on the preliminary analyses of the current urban lake governance at Jaipur, Bhopal, Hyderabad, and Ahmedabad. I used the IAD framework. Interestingly, Lin had written remarks/suggestions on almost every paragraph of my paper. When I met her to discuss, I was amazed to find that she was thorough with my paper. She suggested trying the SES framework.



At the dinner of TU Delft conference, when I asked Lin about, ‘secret of her liveliness’, she promptly replied, “Sun Salutation till I could”. I jumped out of my chair, being a believer of Yog. To initiate Yog practice at the Workshop, I developed the Yog framework based on IAD. Lin was one the yog students until the time she became ill. The yog sessions at the library together are sweet memories! Oh, she and her mat!

The YOG Framework,

With due respect to Lin and all members of the Workshop, I’ve tried to make the YOG Framework look familiar and interesting to you by linking it with the IAD Framework. Below is the YOG framework that we will practice:

The *Exogenous Variables* are:

- Physical Boundaries of the body
- Thoughts in the mind
- Do’s and Dont’s of Yog

The *Action Situation* comprises of:

- Mind and
- Body

The *Interaction* is about Mind-Body

The *Outcome* (expected) is Good Health

The *Evaluative* criterion may be ‘feel relaxed’ or ‘stress free’

The mini-conference was an interesting time of the Workshop. Lin had built the pressure about it from beginning of the semester. I animated an action situation of Mansagar Lake Governance at Jaipur. I used the SES framework. The two days of exchange of ideas in her presence is unforgettable. Something special in her communication, that will keep me motivated about my research for long time. No doubt! The Workshop time was the best time of my PhD.



On 21 March 2012 23:47, Ostrom, Elinor <ostrom@indiana.edu> wrote:
Dear Mansee:

Thank you for sending me a copy of your paper. I have not read it as closely as I need to, but I do have some very general comments that I will send. I will try to take it along with me to London so that if we have a chance to chat we can talk in more specifics.

I think what you have ascertained in the first part of your study is that there are a very large number of biophysical characteristics that affect the decisions that people have to make within action situations. The maps you have done are very nice. In the dissertation, you will be able to reproduce them in a large size. The size of them for the paper is a little too small to make out some of the details, but I can tell that they will be very useful.

I would like for you to use the term “action situation” pretty much throughout your paper. After a long time of people raising questions about why did we have both an action arena and an action situation, in the *Journal of Theoretical Policy*, where I give a little history and discuss the current situation, I indicate that after a long amount of discussion we have decided to drop the term “action arena” and deal with the participants when we talk about the actors in a situation. There is plenty of time to talk about different assumptions one might want to make about the participants when one is describing them in an action situation itself. In that issue, I do present a slightly different picture of the IAD without the term “action arena.” That made it somewhat easier for us to integrate the action situation into the SES.

A great deal of the orientation for developing the SES is exactly your concern about how to include a biophysical geographic characteristic in more detail. As I discuss early in the discussions about the SES, many biophysical scientists had commented that we had presented a lot of detail about the nature of the rules and the community and had not thought an equal amount related to biophysical.

I met Lin at the Planet under Pressure Conference in London in March 2012. We discussed at length over my final research analyses. I had sent my paper in advance to her and she sent her comments two days before we met. The discussion with her and her comments are so precious part of my understanding of SES framework. It was inspiring to learn how she devoted herself for scholarly works, despite knowing about her growing illness.

The opportunity to develop the SES in the PNAS article, where I had very good cooperation from Scott Carpenter and other biophysical scientists, gave me an opportunity to try out this more overt analysis of the biophysical.

I think eventually you may in a dissertation want to discuss the historical interest that you had in the IAD, but if you are going to do an article, you may want to focus a little bit more on the SES and trying to elucidate what are the attributes of the resource system and relevant resource units that one needs to start thinking about when analyzing the lake systems in urban areas of India as you are planning to do.

I think it would be worthwhile to think about whether the attributes that you discuss in your paper are second level, third level or fourth level. I think one of the useful things of the approach that we are taking in the SES of dealing with multiple levels is that we do not have to put a very large number of variables all at the same level. Biologists long ago learned that there were many relevant characteristics to a wing structure for birds and other avian creatures. You do not need to make those all second-tier characteristics. They are characteristics of avian creatures. They are not characteristics of all creatures that one might want to study. Many of them are not at all related when you are studying fish for example.

Then the big thing you will need to work on, not necessarily for this paper but for your own dissertation, is the particular set of research questions that you are going to want to address. Harri and I addressed the factors affecting collective action that led us to identify one set of characteristics of the lakes in Bangalore. If we were going to be examining a different question, the biophysical characteristics that we selected would be different. That will be a problem that you will need to cope with as you start actually designing the dissertation itself.

Hope these comments are useful.

Leo F. Sandanha and Subramanya Sastry visited me at the Workshop on Monday, March 19. They are studying lakes in Bangalore.

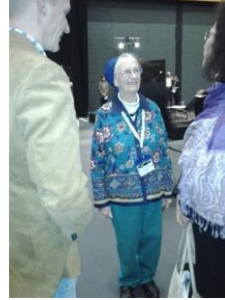
Looking forward to seeing you in London.

Regards,

Lin

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Elinor Ostrom
Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis, Indiana University
Center for the Study of Institutional Diversity, Arizona State University



It was my last meeting and last email exchange with Lin about my research. I'll cherish them forever.

The future generations of scholars interested in 'commons' and 'governance' will not miss to refer to Lin's works on past generations of those who managed to govern their commons sustainably. She showed the way to think differently beyond the panaceas. She is a true reflection of humble scholar and enthusiastic knowledge seeker, who was tough in contestations yet open for suggestions. It is certainly a privilege to know Lin Ostrom as a mentor and as a human being.



'Improving irrigation governance and management in Nepal, 2002' was a farewell gift by Lin. Indeed autographed by her!

Mansee Bal is a PhD researcher at Erasmus University, Rotterdam, The Netherlands (www.eur.nl/fsw) and an environment-development entrepreneur at Environmental Design Consultants, Ahmedabad, India (www.edc.org.in).