Poziv sociologije: prevladavanje vrijednosno dezangažiranog profesionalizma i pristranog aktivizma

Matić, Davorka

Source / Izvornik: **Revija za sociologiju, 2017, 47, 177 - 205**

Journal article, Published version
Rad u časopisu, Objavljena verzija rada (izdavačev PDF)

https://doi.org/10.5613/rzs.47.2.3

Permanent link / Trajna poveznica: https://urn.nsk.hr/urn:nbn:hr:131:765462

Rights / Prava: In copyright / Zaštićeno autorskim pravom.

Download date / Datum preuzimanja: **2024-05-14**

Filozofski fakultet
Sveučilišta u Zagrebu

Repository / Repozitorij:

ODRAZ - open repository of the University of Zagreb
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

dabar
DIGITALNI AKADEMSKI ARHIVI I REPOZITORIJI

DOI: 10.5613/rzs.47.2.3
UDK: 316.1
Izvorni znanstveni rad
Primljeno: 23. 4. 2017.

The Calling of Sociology: Beyond Value-detached Professionalism and Partisan Activism

Davorka MATIĆ
Department of Sociology, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb, Croatia
dmatic@ffzg.hr

Michael Burawoy's project of public sociology provoked major debate within the sociological community about the tasks and nature of the discipline. While most participants in the debate are sympathetic to his call for a more publicly engaged sociology, many criticise him for politicising the discipline and claim that sociologists should not devote their work to promoting social justice or certain political agendas but concentrate instead on building an objective, evidence-based knowledge of society. This article argues that neither Burawoy's public sociology nor the so-called scientific sociology constitute a proper way to address the problems of sociology's identity crisis and its growing public irrelevance. It is suggested that Karl Mannheim provided the best answer to the questions of what it means to practice sociology and for what purposes it should be practiced. Following Mannheim's line of thinking, the article argues that the real issue is not whether sociologists should be committed to promoting social justice or accumulating objective knowledge about society, but whether they can offer a comprehensive interpretation of the current situation and develop effective strategies to transform the existing patterns of society.

Key words: public invisibility of sociology, Burawoy, Mannheim, public sociology, role of values, publicly engaged sociology

Introduction

Michael Burawoy's 2004 Presidential address to the American Sociological Association, in which he passionately argued for the institutionalisation of public sociology as a separate form of sociological practice, provoked major debate within the sociological community about the proper tasks and nature of sociology. His address came at a time when sociologists became increasingly concerned with the discipline's loss of prestige among both the academic and the lay public, with the deterioration of its public image and with

its growing marginalisation in the public arena. This perception that sociology is in crisis was not new. One of the earliest articulations of the "crisis thesis" was provided by Alvin Gouldner in his influential book *The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology* (1970), where he argued that academic sociology and its dominant functionalist paradigm are collapsing. Increasingly technocratic and subservient to the welfare state, academic sociology became fundamentally inept at accounting for major social and political changes, and is on the verge of being replaced by a new type of sociological thought and practice. The leading idea of Goulnder's argument is that sociology is inextricably connected with society, and that social crisis inevitably leads to a corresponding crisis within sociology. Social and political upheavals that engulfed American society in the 1960s and the emergence of new social movements rendered academic sociology obsolete and created space for the development of a more vital and socially relevant reflexive sociology.

A year later, Raymond Boudon gave a somewhat different diagnosis of the depth and character of the discipline's crisis. While for Gouldner the crisis was primarily a crisis of one brand of sociology, Parsonian structural functionalism, for Boudon it was an essential component of the sociological condition. Sociology is, he contended, "permanently in the state of latent crisis" (Boudon, 1980 [1971]: 1); it frequently experiences methodological and theoretical change "by way of crisis rather than continuity" (Boudon, 1980 [1971]: 10). His analysis focussed mainly on the epistemological aspects of the crisis, yet he acknowledged that social and institutional factors play an important role in its emergence, as they affect the form and content of sociological work. To avoid the disintegrating effects of the crisis, he advised sociologists not to engage in futile attempts to create unity in the discipline by giving preferences to one perspective over another, but to try to find the commonalities among various perspectives through dialogue and critical analysis of the sociological language.

The 1990s witnessed a new round of debate regarding the discipline's crisis as many sociologists struggled to identify the main reasons for the perceived weak public standing of sociology. Analysing the state of American sociology at the time, Stephen and Jonathan Turner (1990) concluded that it had become an "impossible science", Peter Berger (1992) wrote about its "failings" and declared sociology to have become a "sick" discipline, while others worried about its "decomposition" (Horowitz, 1994) or "disintegration" (Stinchcombe, 1994) and tried to answer the question

"what's wrong with sociology?" (Davis, 1994). For these authors, the invisibility and growing public irrelevance of sociology were the consequences of sociology's polymorphism and multivocality, of its lack of a clearly defined object of study and of the loss of intellectual direction, of disagreements regarding its tasks and purposes and of its flirtation with radical politics. In short, the public irrelevance of sociology stems from the failure of sociologists to establish disciplinary coherence and give answers to basic questions such as "who are we?", "what is it that we are doing?" and "what kind of knowledge do we produce?".

As demonstrated by this brief presentation of the main approaches to sociology's crisis, which preceded Burawoy's contribution to the debate, the diagnoses, as well as the proposed solutions to the crisis, are largely contingent on one's own understanding of sociology and of its potentials and its duties. While Gouldner's "coming crisis" was premised upon his view that sociology had become too monolithic, too dogmatic and too disengaged from the world, others took the opposite view and defined the crisis as a problem of diversity, fragmentation and, ultimately, of politicisation.

For his part, Burawoy does not believe that sociology, as a discipline, is in crisis, and claims that "far from being in the doldrums, today sociology has never been in the better shape" (Burawoy, 2005a: 279). Rather, the current crisis is one of sociology's public image. Yet, this crisis is not a consequence of sociologists' failure to reach an agreement about the core object of sociology or establish an integrating theoretical paradigm. Instead, it results from the fact that sociologists disengaged from moral issues, that they abandoned the discipline's "original passion for social justice, economic equality, human rights, sustainable environment, political freedom or simply the better world" and "channelled [it] into the pursuit of academic credentials" (Burawoy, 2005a: 260). His public sociology is meant to remedy this situation.[1]

Burawoy's project of public sociology

Burawoy (2005a) developed his argument through 11 theses,[2] but I will deal here primarily with the third and the eleventh. In the third thesis, he

[1] Evidently, Burawoy's view on the issue was greatly influenced by Gouldner and his fierce critique of the sociological establishment for its disengagement from the world in the name of the ideal of ethical neutrality.

[2] In his first thesis, Burawoy explains the current appeal to public sociology as well as the difficulty of its realisation as a consequence of sociology and the world moving in opposite political directions: sociology has moved left while the world has moved right. The

divided sociology into four distinctive forms of sociological labour: professional, policy, critical and public. They differ from each other with regards to the type of knowledge they produce (instrumental or reflexive) and the type of audience they address (academic or extra-academic). Professional and policy sociology are not interested in value discussion; they accept the larger world as unproblematic and do not call into question the existing social order. They produce instrumental knowledge, whether it is "the puzzle solving" within the various research programmes of professional sociology or "the problem solving" of policy sociology (Burawoy, 2005a: 269). Professional sociology addresses the academic audience while policy sociology services the needs of clients located primarily in government offices and the business sector. In contrast, critical and public sociology produce reflexive knowledge; they are "concerned with a dialogue about the ends" (Burawoy, 2005a: 269) and aim at societal change. Public sociology addresses various publics located within civil society and "strikes up a dialogic relation between sociologists and public in which agenda of each is brought to the table" (Burawoy, 2005a: 267) while critical sociology "examines the foundations [...] of the research programs of professional sociology" (Burawoy, 2005a: 268) and is therefore oriented towards the academic community.

Burawoy suggested that these four types of sociology are ideal types, since the empirical reality of sociological practice is far more complex and

---

second thesis claims that there are two different types of public sociology – traditional and organic. The third thesis differentiates between four types of sociology – professional, policy, critical and public sociology – while the forth thesis acknowledges the existence of the internal complexity and tensions within each type. The fifth thesis emphasises the distinction between sociology and its internal divisions on one hand and sociologists who inhabit one or more places within it on the other. In his sixth thesis Burawoy examines pathological tendencies within the four types of sociology, and argues that, in order to maintain the health of the discipline, they must be mutually accountable. The seventh thesis sketches out the discipline's field of power: instrumental knowledge, at least in American sociology, dominates reflexive knowledge. The next two theses explore the specificity of the contemporary configuration of American sociology. The eighth thesis invites professional sociology to return to its civic roots and to promote public sociology from the position of strength, while the ninth thesis suggests that, since American sociology is not universal but particular in its form and its content, there is a need to remodel not only the national but also the global division of sociological labour. The tenth thesis is a defence of disciplinary specialisation; disciplinary divisions should be maintained, as every discipline represents different interests and has a distinctive standpoint and identity. As elaborated in the eleventh thesis, the standpoint of sociology is civil society and it represents the interests of humanity.

nuanced.[3] Although each of these types of sociology embodies a distinctive form of sociological practice, they exist in a relation of reciprocal interdependence, in "an organic solidarity in which each type of sociology derives energy, meaning, and imagination from its connection to the others" (Burawoy, 2005a: 275). Neither public nor policy sociology can exist without professional sociology "that supplies true and tested methods, accumulated body of knowledge, orienting questions, and conceptual frameworks"; it provides them with legitimacy and expertise and is therefore "the *sine qua non* of their existence" (Burawoy, 2005a: 267). The same applies to critical sociology, since without professional sociology "there would be nothing to criticize" (Burawoy, 2005a: 275). Still, this interdependence is not of egalitarian but hierarchical nature. The primacy belongs to critical and public sociologies that view values and morality as the most important component of sociological practice and share an interest in social justice. The role of critical sociology is to "make professional sociology aware of its biases" and to promote "new research programs built on alternative foundations". It is "the conscience of professional sociology just as public sociology is the conscience of policy sociology" (Burawoy, 2005a: 268). While critical sociology re-examines the normative foundations of the sociological profession, public sociology interrogates the value premises of society and acts as a defender of humanity.[4]

Obviously, it is public sociology that Burawoy holds to be the most important. In the last of his eleven theses, he argued for sociology as a *partisan* profession, whose mission is to promote the interests of civil society that he claimed to be embodied in the sociological standpoint. According

[3] As stated in the fifth thesis, individual sociologists may simultaneously practice different types of sociology or switch from one to another during various periods of their professional career.

[4] It is worth mentioning that Burawoy was not the first to present the diversity of sociology in the form of ideal types. In 2001, Raymond Boudon delivered a lecture to the European Academy of Sociology in which he identified four major and permanent ideal types of sociology. The first is *cameral* or *informative* sociology, which produces data and analyses that aim to inform the decisions of policy-makers. The second is *critical* sociology, which identifies the defects in society and proposes remedies for them. The third is *expressive* sociology, which offers powerful, emotional descriptions of social phenomena. The fourth type is *cognitive* sociology, the main objective of which is to provide explanations for puzzling social phenomena. For Boudon, all four types are legitimate and interesting, but he considered the cognitive genre to be the most important (Boudon, 2002). His formulation of the divisions within sociology did not receive much attention from sociologists, most likely because it was not considered inspiring or controversial enough at the time.

to Burawoy, sociology's identity cannot be built upon the distinctive object of its knowledge but rather upon a specific standpoint – the "standpoint of civil society", which sets apart sociology from economics and its standpoint of the market, as well as from political science and its standpoint of the state (Burawoy, 2005a: 287). This division of the social sciences that was established at their birth in the 19th century became blurred in the 20th century, but it resurfaced once again during the 1980s with the revival of market fundamentalism and state unilateralism. "During last three decades", Burawoy wrote, "civil society has been colonized and co-opted by markets and states" (2005a: 288), which requires sociology to get actively involved in defending "the social" against the threat from these twin forces of neo-liberalism. And since sociology is affiliated with civil society, it "represents interests of humanity – interests in keeping at bay both state despotism and market tyranny" (Burawoy, 2005a: 288). For Burawoy, it is the task of public sociology to carry this defence. However, as he specified in his later works, this cannot be performed by traditional public sociology that communicates with the public through the media and that is "addressed to publics that are broad and national, that are largely anonymous and passive [...] and that are often mainstream in their orientation" (Burawoy, 2007b: 253). This can be accomplished only by organic public sociology that "circumvents the media in favor of a direct unmediated relation to publics which include neighborhood associations, communities of faith, labor movements, environmental groups, in other words, publics that are local, thick [...], active, and often counter-publics that make demands on municipalities or state governments" (Burawoy, 2007b: 254). Besides being engaged with already existing various publics and opposition social movements, organic public sociology is also involved in turning the inert, unconscious social categories such as the "poor, the delinquent, the incarcerated, women with breast cancers, people with AIDS, single women, gays, and so on" into an active public that holds "normative and political valence" (Burawoy, 2005b: 323). Through this engagement with, as he claimed, progressive elements of civil society, public sociology lays out an agenda for "*a real utopia*", which is "an integral part of the project of *sociological socialism* [...] that places *human society or social humanity* at its organizing center" (Burawoy, 2005b: 325). Soon after this, Burawoy declared that public sociology coincides, no more no less, "with the project of sociology itself" (Burawoy, 2007a: 12).

Shortcomings of the concept of organic public sociology

I agree with Burawoy that sociologists should be present in the public sphere. If they are not communicating with publics, if they speak to and write for the fellow sociologists only, if they publish only in peer-reviewed journals and adopt esoteric language that few in the non-academic world understand, then even the most progressive, reform-oriented sociological work will not have any impact and sociology will become (or remain) largely publicly irrelevant. However, I have strong reservations about Burawoy's partisan project of organic public sociology and do not believe that it is a proper way to approach the discipline's lack of public visibility and its identity crisis problem. First, his vision of sociology did not capture the minds and souls of non-academic audiences, and, consequentially, has no public impact. Even more so, if Burawoy is right that "sociology has moved left and the world has moved right" (2005a: 261), then it is not likely that the public would be sympathetic to the discipline that they identify with left-wing politics. Second, the direct civic or political engagement of sociologists that Burawoy holds to be a necessary precondition for making the discipline publicly relevant is just one way by which they can be involved in a dialogue with the public. As Patterson (2007) convincingly argued, sociologists do not have to be actively involved with movements within civil society in order to be publicly engaged. They can be involved with publics as experts informing and advising them about important public issues or as discursive public sociologists using the media to make their critical examination of a given society, or an aspect of it, accessible to the broader audience with an aim of initiating discussion about their claims.

Third, Burawoy's characterisation of civil society as "the last possible terrain for the defence of humanity" (2005a: 289) represents a one-sided and largely oversimplified understanding of civil society. He acknowledged that civil society "is not some harmonious communalism but is riven by segregation, domination, and exploitation" (Burawoy, 2005a: 289), but still considered it primarily a force on the side of democracy and freedom. However, as concluded by more sober approaches to the issue, civil society is not only the site of emancipation but is also home to citizens' initiatives and movements that are reactionary, xenophobic and exclusionist, and as such are miles away from the virtues of tolerance, trust and solidarity that civil society is supposed to embody (Foley and

Edwards, 1996; Cambers and Kopstein, 2001; Chambers, 2002). Strong resistance coming from within civil society to many progressive and egalitarian policies, such as affirmative action, family planning and same-sex marriages, testifies that an active civil society can be an impediment to, and not only a vehicle for emancipation. The presence of extremist right, racist, xenophobic nationalist or Islamist groups and associations prove that civil society is not necessarily "good", that it can and does give birth to movements that pose a direct threat to a democratic polity. Civil society, then, is a site of both inclusion and exclusion, and it can promote both emancipatory and reactionary causes. As Foley and Edwards put it (1996: 46): "If civil society is a beachhead secure enough to be of use in thwarting tyrannical regimes, what prevents it from being used to undermine democratic government?".

If we take this dark side of civil society seriously, which I think we should, then Burawoy's claim that "the standpoint of sociology is civil society" sounds, at least, strange. Unless, of course, we assume that only "good" civil society, meaning those associations and movements that promote the causes of the marginalised and disenfranchised, is truly a civil society. This problematic idealisation of civil society goes hand in hand with Burawoy's equally problematic, as Brady put it, "demonization" of the state (2004: 1634). True, the state can be repressive and more conservative than civil society, but it can also be more liberal, and its policies more egalitarian than the public opinion formed within civil society. Many moves toward greater justice and equality had been actually made through "coercive" state actions, and had been met with strong public resistance, with attacks on same-sex marriage legislations being a recent example. As feminists are well aware, civil society for a large part is deeply sexist and practices of gender discrimination are so insidious and pervasive that their dismantling cannot be achieved only by the efforts of organisations operating on the grassroots level, but requires state-enforced measures as well (Phillips, 2002).

Fourth, Burawoy's strict separation between instrumental and reflexive knowledge, between knowledge for efficient means and knowledge for ultimate ends, followed by the qualification of certain types of sociological practice as exclusively instrumental or reflexive, is artificial and largely false because any good sociological work is simultaneously instrumental and reflexive, simultaneously oriented toward the existing

world and critical of it. This separation is also harmful to sociology because it implies that a significant part of the discipline's empirical and theoretical knowledge, as well as its "problem-solving" work, has no value beyond the narrow circle of its practitioners or, worse still, implies that it provides the tools for more efficient oppression. Another problem is that Burawoy views both reflexivity and critique as the qualities of sociology that are directly associated with leftist political agendas, thus denying the possibility of reflexive work that is not directly politically motivated. Durkheim's research on suicide (2006 [1897]), for example, was not driven by his political concern but it nevertheless represents the model example of reflexive sociological work. While trying to understand the changing suicide rates across different countries and among different social groups, he came to the conclusion that suicide cannot be explained as a purely psychological phenomenon, as a matter of individual despair, mental illness or inherited tendency. Though suicide is an individual act motivated by personal reasons, it is also a social fact; suicide is related to collective life and its rate reflects the extent to which people are integrated into society. By showing how certain social processes and institutions can drive a person to take his or her life, Durkheim undermined the credibility of approaches that attributed suicide exclusively to various types of personal abnormalities, made us aware of its social dimension and encouraged the studies that analysed it in terms of social rather than individual pathology.

As demonstrated by an example of Durkheim's work, reflexivity is a distinctive characteristic of sociological perspective; it makes sociology what it is – a critical science that looks beyond what is apparent and obvious, that questions the most cherished assumptions of everyday knowledge and taken-for-granted views and discloses the hidden meanings of social events and processes. It sensitises sociologists to the imperfectability of their own views and allows them, as Peter Berger put it, to "become a little less stolid in their prejudices, a little more careful in their own commitments and a little more sceptical about the commitments of others" (1963: 175–176). As a critical and reflexive way of thinking, sociology undermines the prevailing formulation of what is a normal and natural state of society, thus creating space to improve it. It also teaches us to be sceptical of possibilities of final insights and to be careful not to impose our own ideological biases upon the reality we study. I am afraid that Burawoy for-

got this lesson. By uncritically privileging the views and interests of certain elements of civil society, his public sociology is in danger of becoming an instrument of ideological advocacy.

In addition, being a peculiar variant of standpoint theory, Burawoy's public sociology confronts the same "spokesperson-problem" that troubles the standpoint epistemology in general. Starting from the key premise of classical sociology of knowledge about the inevitable perspectivity and existential conditionality of knowledge, standpoint theorists challenge the traditional epistemological view of the possibility of achieving universally valid and value-free truths. They add to this another thesis – that among various existentially – bounded and partial knowledge some is more "true", meaning that certain historical agents can gain a better, more "true" representation of reality. As argued by one of the prominent representatives of feminist standpoint theory, powerful groups have great "interests in obscuring the unjust condition that produce their unearned privileges and authority", what makes the view from their perspective "far more partial and distorted than that available from the perspective of the dominated" (Harding, 1991: 59). Therefore, in searching for an objective view of society, sociologists should start from the lives and experiences of oppressed and marginalised groups because their social locations enable them to view the totality of the social order in a less distorted way. Although standpoint theories offer persuasive arguments against the classical epistemological concept of truth as "the view from nowhere" and help us to understand how power-relations influence the very process of knowledge production, their main shortcoming is a neglect of a performative character of representation. As Pels pointed out (2000: 163), standpoints or identities are not some naturally given objects that could easily be recognised as such but "need to be *spoken for* in order to become constituted as standpoints in the first place". They need to be constructed, attributed and performed, but their constructors – intellectual spokespersons – usually do not take this intellectual work of construction and performance into a full reflexive account. This, Pels argued, makes constructors "easily seduced to 'take on' a substantialized identity which is aligned with a larger emancipatory cause, and which enables them to hide their secondary will to empowerment behind the supposedly primary one of a particular class, gender, or race" (2000: 163–164). Like most standpoint theorists, when Burawoy asks sociologists to act as organic spokespersons (*partisans*) for causes of

the marginal and oppressed, he disregards, as Pels put it, "the inevitable hiatus between representers and represented, or the specific sociological "strangeness" which separate spokespersons from the subjects or objects which they claim to speak for" (2000: x).

It is this advice that Burawoy gives to sociologists to become organic intellectuals of subalterns and to position themselves as activists rather than as social scientists that provoked the most critiques. Otherwise sympathetic to his call for a more publicly engaged sociology, his critics are deeply worried that public sociology will politicise the discipline, undermine its scientific credentials, and further erode its public image. While they recognise that the work of sociologists has deep moral roots and that the "value of sociology has something to do with social justice" (Brint, 2005: 48), they are uncomfortable with his idea of the centrality of normative and political agendas in sociological work. They do not deny their importance, but insist that our moral and political commitments have to be put under control and subjugated to scientific inquiry. If not, we would lose the professional detachment that is necessary to analyse accurately (Turner, 2005; Brint, 2005), compromise our intellectual honesty by political loyalties (Smith-Lovin, 2007; Stinchcombe, 2007; Massay, 2007; Abbott, 2007), erode professional standards and ultimately undermine the legitimacy of sociology as a professional practice (Turner, 2005; Holmwood, 2007). Of course, Burawoy's critics do not share the same understanding of the role of values in sociology and do not necessarily claim the possibility of value-free sociological research. Yet, they agree that sociologists should not "bring their professional skills to the aid of some particular political project" (Abbott, 2007: 204) and that their professional associations "should *not* take an official position on political issues" but rather keep the position of political neutrality (Massay, 2007: 145). Instead of devoting their work to promoting a specific political programme, sociologists should concentrate on building a body of reliable knowledge in accordance with the canons of science (Tittle, 2004; Boynes and Fletcher, 2005) and try "to understand how the *world actually works*" and not "how the *world should be*" (Turner, 2005: 44). In other words, they criticise Burawoy for politicising sociology and for trying to impose on sociologists who hold a multiplicity of moral orientations and political agendas his own partisan goals as a purpose of sociological practice (Nielsen, 2004: 1619; Boynes and Fletcher, 2005: 16; Abbott, 2005: 204).

A false dilemma: sociology as either value-neutral science or morally inspired search for a just society

While I agree that in the course of their research sociologists should abstain from direct engagement with political struggles, I disagree with the view that providing accurate descriptions of the social world is the sole purpose of sociological work. This seems to be the leading idea behind Turner's proposal to institutionalise the separation between the scientific and humanistic sociology (Turner, 2005: 43). In one important sense Burawoy is right: sociologists should be interested not only in the pursuit of academic credentials but also in the betterment of society. Sociology matters because its empirical findings and theoretical insights deepen our understanding of social processes and institutions, of the ways they work, evolve and influence our lives and, ultimately, help us to make society better. Still, I do not sympathise with the privileging of the normative dimension of sociology that is implicit in Burawoy's conception of public sociology. Of course, values are an integral part of our research. They are present in the selection of an object of analysis and in the ways we approach it, in the questions we ask, in the selection and interpretation of data and in the answers that we give. In that sense, no science is value-free. The rules of the scientific method, even when flawlessly employed, cannot filter out the role of values in research. As Kathleen Okruhlik demonstrated on the example of the history of female behaviour, values influence not only the direction of the research but also the very content of science:

> "These theories may in many respects be quite different from each other; but if they have all been generated by males operating in the deeply sexist culture, all will be contaminated by sexism. Non-sexist rivals will never be generated. Hence, the theory which is selected by the canons of scientific appraisal will simply be the best of the sexist rivals. And the very *content* of science will be sexist – no matter how rigorously we apply objective standards of assessment in the context of justification" (the original source unknown, quoted in Brown, 1989: 157).

Okruhlik's argument indicates what is wrong with the claim that sociology should present itself as a value-free science. When Brint (2005), Tittle (2004), Turner (2005) and Boynes and Fletcher (2005) argue for the necessity of objective, value-free research if sociology is to have any impact, they seem to ignore that objectivity is not identical with value-neutrality, that the very act of constructing the categories of analysis, collecting data and building the theory involves values. Yet, denying the value-neutral

character of sociology does not imply that sociologists should surrender the discipline's scientific integrity to their personal values and preferences or that they should not aim at preventing their own value judgments from influencing *directly* the outcome of their research. Although even the most rigorous following of methodological rules would not make our research totally free of personal values, these rules enable us to understand and control our biases, thus helping us to approach and study the object of analysis in a less distorted way. In sociology, this goal may not be easy to achieve but, to quote Peter Berger, "in the very effort lies a moral significance not to be taken lightly" (1963: 166).

Let us consider briefly Max Weber's concept of value-neutrality (Weber, 1949a [1904]) that profoundly influenced later generations of sociologists and the way they approach the burning issue of the role of values in research. First of all, it is important to acknowledge that Weber never believed in the possibility of studying cultural or social phenomena with no reference to values. On the contrary, he was at pains to show that values are an integral part of social scientific work, that without them reality is meaningless and incomprehensible and that "[A]n attitude of ethical neutrality has no connection with scientific objectivity" (Weber, 1949a [1904]: 60). However, while the choices of research problems and the construction of concepts through which reality is ordered and empirical data mastered are necessarily value-relevant, the interpretation of empirical facts, Weber argued, must be value-neutral. Social scientists must not interpret empirical findings from their own value standpoint, but in a maximally unbiased fashion. More importantly, value-neutrality refers to the principal distinction between statements of practical evaluation and statements of logically deduced or empirically observed facts, as well as to the impossibility of deriving the "ought statements" from "is" statements. An empirical science, Weber contended, can examine values for their internal consistency and help in understanding the consequences of adopting particular means to achieve a certain end, but cannot adjudicate between values or tell anyone what values to follow. In essence, when Weber advised social scientists to adhere to the principle of value-neutrality, he was advising them to refrain from creating and propagating values. Social scientists *qua* scientists should not participate directly in policy debates, because they ought to be concerned with what is, not with what should be. They can make recommendations about effective strategies to reach an already established policy

goal but should not take a stance on its desirability (Weber, 1949a [1904], 1949b [1917]).

While Weber rightfully stated that using values to blind one to evidence inimical to one's own value platform is unacceptable in science, his proposition that social scientists must abstain from judging certain social practices and proposing solutions to what they consider to be bad is problematic for two reasons. First, to say that scientists should be silent on questions of right and wrong is in no way logically related to the demand that they should not use values in place of evidence. Second, to perform research but hand over the responsibility to consider its social and ethical consequences to someone else is damaging to the autonomy and public relevance of science. As Heather Douglas argued, rejecting the ideal of value-neutral science is not devastating for science; on the contrary, it is "required by basic norms of moral responsibility and reasoning needed to do sound, socially relevant science" (Douglas, 2007: 135).

Sociology is a socially situated practice deeply anchored in the social relations it tries to understand, and this profoundly influences the character of sociological knowledge. When sociologists study social institutions and social processes, they do not study objects that are void of values and that are separated from their subjective experience, but objects that constitute the frame of their living and thinking. This is why sociologists, whether they recognise it or not, do not and cannot practice sociology for scientific reasons alone. As Wallerstein argued, sociologists should perform three functions: an intellectual function – to seek and develop the most plausible analysis of social reality under investigation, the moral function – to evaluate the moral implications of the realities being investigated, and the political function – to analyse the best way to realise the moral good as sociologists understand it (Wallerstein, 2007: 171). These tasks are different, but nonetheless interconnected. To claim otherwise is to be dishonest with ourselves and with others. To privilege either the intellectual or the political task does not mean that the other tasks are not performed, but only that they are hidden and tacitly done. When proponents of value-neutral sociology assert that it is possible to isolate the intellectual task and let others perform the political task, they are actually only "avoiding the assumption of responsibility for the political function" and "opting nonetheless for a political choice, but doing so passively and, one might say, surreptitiously" (Wallerstein, 2007: 173). This is the trap of the value-neutrality claim: ei-

ther passively or actively, the political and moral functions are always being performed. The problem with organic public sociologists is that they privilege the political task and underplay the degree to which their political preferences may affect the validity of their analysis and knowledge claims. When they argue that sociologists should construct and promote the standpoints of selected social groups and work toward building "a resource and power base for the disenfranchised in their communities" (Feagin, 2001: 12), they are actually saying that the intellectual function of sociology has no value of its own but should be judged by its contribution to certain political goals.

The either/or approach to the tasks of sociologists – accumulating accurate, objective knowledge or promoting a better and just society – is a wrong one, since sociology is both a cognitive and a normative enterprise, as it is oriented simultaneously towards understanding how the social world actually works and towards improving/changing it. The growing public irrelevance of contemporary sociology mostly stems for the fact that sociologists tend to neglect the great tradition of a sociological diagnosis of the times, that the discipline at large had, as Lichtblau warned, retreated "from the project of formulating comprehensive interpretative schemata for the epoch and from the corresponding consciousness of present" (1995: 26). In developing my argument, I will rely on the work of Karl Mannheim – a great sociologist who taught not only what it means to practice sociology and how to do it, but also how to use it in order to understand social processes and place them under our control.

Mannheim's lesson: Sociology as an educational force and a guide for action

Karl Mannheim is remembered primarily for his work in the field of sociology of knowledge, although he made valuable contributions to various areas of sociological study, especially to the sociology of politics, sociology of generation and the study of the structure of modern society. Still, his most striking, but underestimated contribution to sociology concerns his vision of sociology as a practice. All of his works were imbued with a belief in the capacity of sociology to offer dynamic solutions to the intellectual, social and political problems of the modern world and with a corresponding belief in the duty of sociologists to participate in a collective effort to build an inclusive and just society.

Mannheim viewed sociology as a key social science whose main task is to act as a tool for rationally controlled social change. He first laid out the conception of sociology as a kind of intervention in social life in his famous work *Ideology and Utopia,* where he argued that an objective synthesis of different and often conflicting modes of comprehending and interpreting the world is the only way to overcome the universal crisis of distrust permeating modern society (Mannheim, 1954 [1936]). Published first in 1929, the book was written during a period of growing political polarisation, fierce ideological conflicts and ubiquitous apathy and lack of a sense of purpose in German intellectual circles. This context of the general crisis prompted Mannheim to develop his sociology of knowledge, which he conceived not only as an academic discipline committed to the exploration and clarification of the social conditionality of thought, but also as a socially engaged orientation towards the world. In his interpretation, the sociology of knowledge has clear practical goals; its theoretical and epistemological insights were meant to prepare the ground for scientific politics and thus help society to confront and solve its most pressing problems. In his later works, Mannheim elaborated on his vision of sociology as a science of social totality capable of diagnosing the current situation and providing tools for its improvement. Implicit in this vision is the possibility of achieving a "synthesis" of different perspectives, worldviews and ideologies. This synthesis, of course, would not eliminate all conflicts among groups, but rather provide a reference point for calculating the benefits and risks of different politico-ideological alternatives, as well as grounds for a "dynamic, constantly renegotiated settlement and equilibrium" (Mannheim, 2001c [1932]: 149).

Another continuity in Mannheim's thought is his belief in the imperative necessity of the politicisation of the intellect, epitomised in the statement: "In a political world, everything is political" (2001a [1930]: 61). In the lecture course he taught in 1930 as a newly appointed professor of sociology at the University of Frankfurt, he presented sociology as a multidimensional science of society that, besides being a *specialised discipline* with clearly delimited subject matter, is also a *method* within all human sciences and a *posture of consciousness*, *a specific attitude*. As a specialised discipline, it "explicates social formations or asks about the social processes that give shape to the movements of society" (Mannheim, 2001a [1930]: 5). As a method, it examines spiritual contents in

a manner that "brackets immanence and looks at contents transcendentally" (Mannheim, 2001a [1930]: 76), and, as an attitude, it "presupposes a distantiation from life" (2001a [1930]: 11) and consists of "the ability to see things in their multiple meanings" (2001a [1930] : 39). For him, this attitude was the most important dimension of sociology; it awakes in a sociologist the strength and capability to assume distance in her/his consciousness from all the things that present themselves as final, and as such is a necessary precondition for reflexive, critical thinking. Mannheim was aware of the danger implicit in exaggerated reflexivity. It can lead to questioning everything in turn and therefore to passivity and inaction. He vehemently rejected such an abuse of reflexivity and argued instead for the adoption of a direct attitude to life. Sociology, with all its distantiation, its relativisation and its calling everything into question, should prepare the ground for a reformation of the human condition, thus becoming "the social organ of humanity that is forming a new world in itself" (Mannheim, 2001a [1930]: 35).

This condemnation of abstract intellectualism is reflected in Mannheim's refusal to embrace an academically disengaged position. Namely, the mainstream of interwar German sociology, under the leadership of Leopold von Wiese, took on an increasingly value-neutral and professional character that Mannheim saw as deeply problematic. In the brochure titled *The Contemporary Tasks of Sociology: Cultivation and the Curriculum* (Mannheim, 2001c [1932]), he criticised purely academic sociology for its obsession with technicalities of thought, its avoidance of political and social topics and its withdrawal to the heights of abstraction, arguing that sociology should deal with themes that are of the greatest relevance and urgency for men and society. However, he equally distanced himself from radicals on both the left and the right who demanded that sociology be practiced as an openly politically committed enterprise, because "it would be the death of sociology if it were to became nothing but the agitational instrument of one or more parties" (Mannheim, 2001c [1932]: 150). He warned against using his argument about the existential determination of thought as a justification for exaggerated claims, such as was Hans Freyer's notion that "a will that is true is a warrant for true knowledge" (Freyer, 1964 [1930]: 307). Taken this way, Mannheim said, "the task imposed by insight into the reality of the existential connectedness of thinking is misdirected because the insight no longer serves self-criticism and distantiation from existential bonds, as

originally intended" but instead "legitimates every conceivable kind of partisanship" (Mannheim, 2001c [1932]: 151). Hence, both approaches – the value-neutral professionalism and partisan activism – represent a serious danger to sociology since they undermine its very purpose, which is to understand the totality of social processes and serve as a tool for the rational reconstruction of modern society.[5]

Mannheim acknowledged the necessity of separating sociology from political ideologies if sociology is to reach objective knowledge of social phenomena. However, as he wrote in the expanded 1936 English version of his *Ideology and Utopia*, the complete restraint of the will, the self-oriented and socially aimless thinking "does not constitute objectivity but is instead the negation of the essential quality of the object" (Mannheim, 1954 [1936]: 42). The consciousness of the world cannot be reached through abstract thinking and the suspension of values, but only through immersion in the life of society and active involvement in the socio-political arena. Although

[5] Mannheim was not the first to describe the mission of sociology in such terms. Auguste Comte carried on the attempt by Saint-Simon to create a new science of society meant to help overcome the chaos brought about by the French Revolution and serve as a rational basis for the new social and political order. This science, which Comte named sociology, would provide the knowledge and understanding that would make it possible to predict social trends and thus engage in a comprehensive reconstruction of society. He argued that because scientists/sociologists possess general knowledge and understanding of the application of "the positive method" in politics, they should replace the obsolete Christian clergy as a spiritual power and take control over the reconstruction process. In his later work, *System of Positive Politics* (Comte, 1875–1877 [1851-1854]), he stressed the moral aspect of social reconstruction, as he became increasingly convinced that sentiment, not reason, was the true source of social unity. As he proclaimed in the *The System of Positive* Politics, the mind has to be subordinated to the heart because "[I]n its vain present supremacy, the mind is ultimately our principal trouble maker" (Comte, 1875–1877 [1851-1854], in Pickering, 1993: 232). Therefore, the reconstruction of society necessitates the moral education that would combat egotistic individualism and that would be supervised by the cabal of scientist-priests and supported by the norms and rituals of a new, secular Religion of Humanity. Sociology, at the end, was to be an auxiliary to the pacification of society; it was to serve as a tool for the imposition of social unity through an austere moral order hostile to individualism and freedom of conscience. Such an understanding of socially engaged sociology could not be further from Mannheim's own vision. The central argument of Mannheim's sociological project is that sociology is indispensable to modern society, but not because it should help to abolish all disagreements and impose some despotic form of social unity. It was precisely the prospect of despotic unity either in its fascist or communist form that he had feared the most. His proposal for a rational reconstruction of society was shaped by his liberal values, by his belief that unity in modern society has to be fundamentally pluralistic and democratic. Sociology should play an important role in establishing grounds for such a unity, and sociologists should be active in the public sphere as educators, but should never assume the "spiritual" or political power.

thought can progress only if the élan politique is retained, if we are to gain objective knowledge of society our normative and political strivings have to be restrained and critically re-examined. "Man attains objectivity and acquires a self with reference to his conception of his world", Mannheim concluded, "not by giving up his will to action and holding his evaluation in abeyance, but in confronting and examining himself" (1954 [1936]: 43).

Obviously, Mannheim's conception of objectivity departs significantly from the classical epistemological notion of value neutrality. It is a peculiar combination of attachment and detachment, of value-based involvement and reflexive self-control premised upon distantiation from the self and the world. Hence, participation in socio-political affairs does not necessarily compromise one's view of reality and does not necessarily make one an advocate of a certain political position. Objective knowledge is possible as long as we are aware of the limits of our own normative views, and are willing to submit the logic of socio-political reasoning to the logic of sceptical and critical science, that is, sociology.

Throughout his life, Mannheim was convinced that sociology had to play a key role in the efforts to reorganise and reconstruct European society. Still, the role of sociology was not just to tell individuals what to do and how to live their lives, but, instead, to teach them how to exercise rational foresight and act in a responsible way. Deeply troubled with the rise of fascism in European societies, he became ever more convinced that combating the appeal of totalitarian movements required subjecting the citizens of modern democracies to sociological-civic education. Since in a democratic polity the citizen has a right of co-determination in the government, it is important to place him/her in a position to understand his/her social surroundings and make rational judgments about socio-political events. If we want to avoid the dangers inherent to the democratisation of politics, Mannheim argued, democracy has to be linked to mass enlightenment and schooling that would provide the broader masses with a sociological form of thinking and orientation, which in turn would guarantee that their participation in politics is guided by reason and not by emotions. Sociology, hence, has an important role in and corresponding obligation to democratic society – it has to cultivate the modern man and equip her/him with the intellectual tools that will enable her/him to gain a deeper understanding of self and of the functioning of society, thus helping her/him to submit social processes to her/his control and to became a master of her/his own

destiny (Mannheim, 2001c [1932]: 148–149, 151–158). At the centre of this *cultivational* mission of sociology was the effort to build an enlightened, responsible citizenry capable of seeing through the appeal of demagogues and resisting the temptations of irrationalism that Mannheim saw as the main threat to democratic society.

He further elaborated on the same vision of sociology as an educational force in his lecture "Education, Sociology and the Problem of Social Awareness" presented in 1941 at the University of Nottingham and published two years later in the collection of essays entitled *Diagnosis of Our Time* (Mannheim, 1999 [1943]). At the time when rapid social changes had made the society incomprehensible to the individual, Mannheim argued, sociology has to be integrated into the educational system, because only sociology can help the modern man to understand the largely invisible operation of social forces, and provide her/him with the "awareness in social affair". However, this "awareness" should not be understood as a mere accumulation of knowledge, but rather as "an attitude of mind", as a comprehensive sociological orientation that endows a human being with the capacity to grasp the whole situation in which she/he finds herself/himself and base her/his actions upon rationally made decisions. Unfortunately, he said, this awareness was suppressed by the two methods of academic teaching that prevailed in modern liberal education. Over-specialisation and the misinterpretation of tolerance and objectivity in terms of neutrality had rendered students entirely uncritical, neutralised genuine interest in real problems and discouraged students from participating in discussions about end values and goals. Yet, at the time when our choice becomes that between freedom and democracy versus dictatorship, the only sound teaching is the one that imparts social awareness to the students and trains them to become able, after careful deliberation, to make a choice and come to a decision (Mannheim, 1999 [1943]: 57–68). In other words, to successfully combat the appeal of democracy's totalitarian enemies, a man has to be taught to think sociologically, and for that to be achieved, sociology has to be "a necessary supplement to education in our age" (Mannheim, 1999 [1943]: 59).

Mannheim considered existential and normative political clarification to be essential to sociological work, yet argued that in the course of inquiry we should postpone evaluation as long as possible and substitute a conviction-laden way of observing the social reality with an instrumental

one. His appeal for maintaining a strict separation between normative and instrumental thinking was based on his belief that society cannot be improved by pure enthusiasm, but only by the sober investigation of its many problems. Although the instrumental analysis cannot in and of itself tell us what is a good and desirable form of society, our normative wishes can "find the social means to their fulfilment only if we carry our instrumental thinking as rigorously as possible" (Mannheim, 2001b [1935]: 187).

This emphasis on the instrumental dimension of sociological knowledge was directly related to Mannheim's conviction that sociology's mission is to make a creative contribution to the reconstruction of European society. After the fall of the Weimar Republic and particularly after the outbreak of the Second World War, he increasingly defined sociology as an applied social science whose main task is to help society to avoid chaos and maintain democratic control over social processes. In books and articles Mannheim wrote during his exile in London – most clearly in *Man and Society in the Age of Reconstruction* (1971 [1935]), in *Diagnosis of Our Time* (1999 [1943]) and in the posthumously published *Freedom, Power, and Democratic Planning* (1950) – he painstakingly promoted sociology, striving to demonstrate its practical relevance. Besides being a rational investigation of social trends and processes and an attitude of mind, sociology is now understood as a guide to avoiding the threats of dictatorship, as a science that provides citizens with a diagnosis of the current situation and with a therapy for social ills. The main thesis of these works is that at the present stage of industrial society, the planless play of social forces does not lead to freedom but to chaos, to individual and community disorganisation, and to the explosion of irrationalism which will deliver mankind into the hands of demagogues and dictators. In order to avoid such a development, Mannheim argued, the *laissez-faire* liberalism has to be abandoned, and social techniques of planning must be used in a way that will allow society to maintain control over social processes without interfering with liberal culture. However, these techniques are meaningless if not guided by decisive political will and organised in the spirit of a new ideal – "Planning for Freedom".

The planning for freedom presupposes sociological education of both the citizens and the elites, as well as the willingness of the elites to use and apply the method and accumulated knowledge of sociology to devise strategies for intervening in social life that are best suited to safeguarding and

promoting consensus regarding the basic values that all citizens can accept and believe in. That, in turn, requires that democracies recognise the importance of the sphere of valuation because "neither democratic tolerance nor scientific objectivity means that we should refrain from taking a stand for what we believe to be true or that we should avoid the discussion about the final values and objectives in life" (Mannheim, 1999 [1943]: 7). Still, this consensus about fundamental values cannot be achieved if social obstacles to it are not removed, that is to say if inequalities in income and wealth that cause permanent dissatisfaction and social tensions between classes are not reduced and greater social justice achieved (Mannheim, 1999 [1943]: 6). Hence, Mannheim pleaded for moving to a planned social order and insisted that social techniques of planning, if they are to ensure the survival of liberal civilisation, have to be based on a sociological diagnosis of the present state of society as well as on the values of freedom, solidarity, social justice and respect for personal dignity.

Mannheim's call for acceptance of some normative grounds for sociology was consistent with his epistemology which rejected the positivist scientism's claim that objective knowledge of society should be free of subjective evaluations and instead placed human subjectivity at the heart of social scientific knowledge. It was also consistent with his conviction that sociology is a science with a moral purpose, that it is not only an explanatory but also a critical science with transformative ambition: to demystify what seems to be the normal and natural state of social things and help humanity to build a society that meets its most fundamental moral and material needs.

In short, Mannheim thought of sociology as a science that is simultaneously a rational study of society, an epistemological position, a form of consciousness and a socially engaged orientation towards the world. It is a self-understanding of modern society and the most efficient tool for confronting and changing it. In his interpretation, sociology should never refuse to deal with difficult political questions and pretend to be a value-neutral science detached from social life. The traps of ideological thinking cannot be avoided by refusing to take a stance on important social and political issues, but only through the development of the sociologically informed consciousness that enables us to deal with these issues in a way that reduces as much as possible the danger of accepting uncritically our own beliefs and taken for granted views.

Sociology as a socially engaged science: Mannheim vs. Burawoy

Both Mannheim and Burawoy believe in the capacity of sociology to contribute significantly to the reshaping of the existing order into a more humane, democratic and just world. They both share a vision of sociology as an engaged and socially relevant science and are, therefore, critical of sociology understood purely in terms of its cognitive duties. They both want to counter the ills of their respective societies and hold that sociology is uniquely suited to help change the world for the better. However, the way they want sociology to affect social change is different, as is their understanding of the ways through which it can attain public relevance. Burawoy seemed to have endorsed the view that the best way to make sociology publicly relevant is to put it at the service of particular groups and promote their particular causes. He wants sociologists to act as organic intellectuals and produce knowledge that is relevant and credible to some groups, irrespective of the lack of credibility it may have for the others. In that sense, Burawoy's view on who constitutes the public that sociology should address, and what counts as publicly relevant knowledge and what does not, is excessively ideological. His political commitments lead him to neglect, and even deride, the dialogue with those groups within society he sees as political opponents. For Mannheim, the best way for sociology to pursue the goal of relevance is through providing explanations (diagnoses) and solutions to the problems that are of pressing concern to the general public. He wanted sociologists to act as public intellectuals and produce knowledge that, at least in principle, can be viewed as relevant and credible by all sectors of society.

My own position is clearly closer to that of Mannheim. While sociologists should not pretend that their knowledge claims are universally valid and value-free, they should not give up efforts to produce knowledge that can be used to benefit most, if not all, members of society. Sociologists should judge the worth of their discipline not in terms of its relevance to social activism, but in terms of its capacity to depict and make sense of major social trends and processes, and of its ability to guide society out of crisis. Accordingly, the best way in which sociologists can serve the needs of the weak and the oppressed is not by making sociology an auxiliary to partisan policy, but rather by providing knowledge and understanding of the social forces responsible for their oppression, so that they can organise and confront these forces successfully.

It is difficult not to recognise the contemporary relevance of Mannheim's vision of sociology. His response to the advocates of a so-called scientific and activist sociology, and the way he solved the tension between sociology's cognitive and normative aspects have unfortunately been largely forgotten. At a time when sociologists seem to be consumed more with their professional status and academic promotion than with diagnosing the current situation and devising a solution for the ills of society, it has become ever more important to take Mannheim's recommendations seriously. Because, if sociologists cease to strive to offer a comprehensive interpretation of their time and abstain from developing viable solutions for the ills of society, sociology will lose its public appeal and become largely irrelevant.

The uncertainties engendered by globalisation led under the banner of neoliberalism, coupled with the increasing presence of fake news and half-truths in the media, create a fertile ground for the rise of populist forces hostile to the achievements and practice of liberal democracies. People that are oppressed and robbed of jobs, basic security and prospects for the future easily fall prey to demagogues who promise to restore their dignity by destroying the establishment and evil entities responsible for their suffering, as epitomised by the victory of Donald Trump in the 2016 United States presidential election and the growth of populist parties across Europe. It is in this respect that the political climate in many Western societies resembles that of Europe of Mannheim's time. Widespread corruption among government officials, estranged political elites, growing inequality in wealth and income followed by new forms of social and political exclusion, steep increase in precarious work, dwindling trust in political institutions and mainstream political parties, cultural discord and the declining authority of science have created an explosive mixture of fear, anger, apathy and disorientation that threaten to transform liberal democracy into a tyranny of the majority led by self-declared saviours of the people.

Of course, sociologists alone cannot prevent this dangerous outcome of society's systemic crisis. But they can and should participate in the efforts to avert it by identifying its root causes, articulating potential remedies and making proposed solutions comprehensible in a broader interpretative framework. As neoliberal capitalism has escaped moral and social control and no political party seems to have a solution for the crisis, sociologists should move beyond their academic niche and provide the world with new ideas and the mechanisms for social change.

Conclusion

The ongoing crisis of global capitalism presents challenges but also creates opportunities for the sociological research. It also provides an opportunity to rethink the discipline's identity problem and to relate it more to the question of sociology's public role than to the issue of the diversity of methodological and theoretical approaches. True, polymorphism of sociology can negatively affect the discipline's public image since it can make the public wonder how a discipline that is so internally divided could possibly produce credible knowledge. However, it is precisely this diversity of approaches and constant re-evaluation of existing patterns of knowledge production that make it possible for sociology to maintain its vigour and its reflexive character. For that reason, the future of sociology does not depend on the prospect of one methodological or theoretical perspective prevailing over others, but rather on its ability and will to respond to the challenges of a rapidly changing world.

To conclude, the mission of sociology is two-fold: to describe, interpret and evaluate the condition of society, and to advance positive social change. This vision of sociology as both an explanatory and a transformative science should form the foundation upon which sociologists' professional identity is built and guide the way in which they teach their students, conduct their research and communicate their research findings to the broader public. Although the routine research activity within the specialised subfields of sociology and the work on the development of more precise measurement techniques are necessary because they deepen the understanding of different dimensions of society and strengthen sociology's claim to the status of a mature science, they are not sufficient and cannot justify the abandonment of the efforts to formulate a comprehensive interpretation of the current situation and articulate an agenda for the future. The strict separation between science and moral values, between instrumental and substantial rationality, between objective examination of social phenomena and an endeavour to create a better society, is not only untenable, but also damaging to sociology. To analyse social actions, institutions and relations makes sense only if the knowledge that is gathered by these analyses can help human beings to understand the social reasons for living the way they do, and come up with ways to improve their society. This means that sociologists should be concerned not only with the scientific value and validity of their research, but also with its social value. They should be concerned

not only with the internal problems of sociology, but also with urgent social issues, and relate the results of their research to the needs and preoccupations of the broader public, thus demonstrating the power of sociology to provide individual and collective actors with insights and clarifications that increase their capacity to think and act, to understand the social causes of their predicaments and to respond rationally to various social pressures and challenges. In other words, the tasks of sociologists are to analyse and explain the key aspects of society, to enhance the capacity of individuals to grasp the interconnection between their life experiences and their social surroundings and to devise strategies for improving the human condition. It is through the combination of these tasks that sociologists can fulfil the ultimate goal of their discipline – to aid in the reconstruction of society and ensure that this reconstruction is guided by reason and genuine human needs.

REFERENCES

Abbot, Andrew (2007). "For Humanist Sociology", in: Dan Clawson (eds). *Public Sociology: Fifteen Eminent Sociologists Debate Politics and the Profession in the Twenty-first Century*. Berkley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, pp. 95–209. doi: 10.1525/california/9780520251373.001.0001

Berger, Peter (1963). *Invitation to Sociology: A Humanistic Perspective.* New York: Anchor Books.

Berger, Peter (1992). "Sociology: A Disinvitation", *Society,* 30 (1): 12–18.

Boudon, Raymond (1980 [1971]). *The Crisis in Sociology: Problems of Sociological Epistemology.* London and Basingstoke: The Macmillan Press. doi: 10.1007/978-1-349-03686-8

Boudon, Raymond (2002). "Sociology That Really Matters: European Academy of Sociology, First Annual Lecture, 26 October 2001, Swedish Cultural Center", *European Sociological Review,* 18 (3): 371–378. doi: 10.1093/esr/18.3.371

Boynes, David and Fletcher, Jesse (2005). "Reflections on Public Sociology: Public Relations, Disciplinary Identity, and the Strong Program in Professional Sociology", *The American Sociologist,* 36 (3–4): 5–26.

Brady, David (2004). "Why Public Sociology May Fail", *Social Forces*, 82 (4): 1629–1638.

Brint, Steven (2005). "Guide for the Perplexed: On Michael Burawoy's 'Public Sociology'", *The American Sociologist*, 36 (3–4): 46–65.

Brown, James Robert (1989). *The Rational and the Social.* London and New York: Routledge.

Burawoy, Michael (2005a). "2004 American Sociological Association Presidential address: For public sociology", *The British Journal of Sociology*, 56 (2): 259–294. doi: 10.1111/j.1468-4446.2005.00059.x

Burawoy, Michael (2005b). "The Critical Turn to Public Sociology", *Critical Sociology*, 31 (3): 314–326. doi: 10.1163/1569163053946291

Burawoy, Michael (2007a). "Public Sociology: Mills vs. Gramsci. Introduction to the italian translation of 'For public sociology'", *Sociologica,* (1): 7–12. doi: 10.2383/24214

Burawoy, Michael (2007b). "The Field of Sociology", in: Dan Clawson (ed.). *Public Sociology: Fifteen Eminent Sociologists Debate Politics and the Profession in the Twenty-first Century*. Berkley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, pp. 195–209. doi: 10.1525/california/9780520251373.001.0001

Chambers, Simone (2002). "A Critical Theory of Civil Society", in: Simone Chambers and Will Kymlicka (eds.). *Alternative Conceptions of Civil Society.* Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, pp. 90–110.

Chambers, Simone and Kopstein, Jeffrey (2001). "Bad Civil Society". *Political Theory,* 29 (6): 837–865.

Chambers, Simone and Kymlicka, Will (eds.) (2002). *Alternative Conceptions of Civil Society.* Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press.

Comte, Auguste (1875–1877 [1851–1854]). *System of Positive Polity, Vol. 1–4.* London: Bell.

Davis, James A. (1994). "What's Wrong with Sociology", *Sociological Forum,* 9 (2): 179–197.

Douglas, Heather (2007). "Rejecting the Ideal of Value-Free Science", in: Harold Kincaid, John Dupré and Alison Wylie (eds.). *Value-Free Science: Ideals and Illusions.* New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 120–139.

Durkheim, Émile (2006 [1897]). *On Suicide.* London: Penguin Books.

Feagin, Joe R. (2001). "Social Justice and Sociology: Agendas for the Twenty-First Century", *American Sociological Review* 66 (1): 1–20.

Foley, Michael W. and Edwards, Bob (1996). "The Paradox of Civil Society", *Journal of Democracy,* 7 (3): 38–52.

Freyer, Hans (1964 [1930]). *Soziologie als Wirklichkeitswissenschaft: Logische Grundlegung des Systems der Soziologie.* Stuttgart: Teubner.

Gouldner, Alvin W. (1970). *The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology.* New York: Basic Books.

Harding, Susan (1991). *Whose Science? Whose Knowledge?: Thinking from Women's Lives.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Holmwood, John (2007). "Sociology as Public Discourse and Professional Practice: A Critique of Michael Burawoy", *Sociological Theory,* 21 (1): 46–66. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-9558.2007.00297.x

Horowitz, Irving Louis (1994). *The Decomposition of Sociology.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Lichtblau, Klaus (1995). "Sociology and the Diagnosis of the Times or: The Reflexivity of Modernity", *Theory, Culture & Society*, 12 (1): 25–52.

Mannheim, Karl (1950). *Freedom, Power, and Democratic Planning.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Mannheim, Karl (1954 [1936]). *Ideology and Utopia: An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge.* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Mannheim, Karl (1971 [1935]). *Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction: Studies in Modern Social Structures.* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Mannheim, Karl (1999 [1943]). *Diagnosis of Our Time: Wartime essays of a sociologist.* New York: Routledge.

Mannheim, Karl (2001a [1930]). "An Introduction to Sociology", in: David Kettler and Colin Loader (eds.). *Karl Mannheim. Sociology as Political Education.* New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publisher, pp. 1–78.

Mannheim, Karl (2001b [1935]). "In Defense of Functional Reason", in: David Kettler and Colin Loader (eds.). *Karl Mannheim. Sociology as Political Education.* New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publisher, pp. 175–194.

Mannheim, Karl (2001c [1932]). "The Contemporary Tasks of Sociology: Cultivation and the Curriculum", in: David Kettler and Colin Loader (eds.). *Karl Mannheim. Sociology as Political Education.* New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publisher, pp. 145–168.

Massey, Douglas S. (2007). "The Strength of Weak Politics", in: Dan Clawson (ed.). *Public Sociology: Fifteen Eminent Sociologists Debate Politics and the Profession in the Twenty-first Century.* Berkley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, pp. 145–157. doi: 10.1525/california/9780520251373.001.0001

Nielsen, François (2004). "The Vacant 'We': Remarks on Public Sociology", *Social Forces,* 82 (4): 1619–1627.

Patterson, Orlando (2007). "About Public Sociology", in: Dan Clawson (ed.). *Public Sociology: Fifteen Eminent Sociologists Debate Politics and the Profession in the Twenty-first Century.* Berkley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, pp. 176–194. doi: 10.1525/california/9780520251373.001.0001

Pels, Dick (2000). *The Intellectual as Stranger: Studies in Spokespersonship.* London and New York: Routledge.

Pickering, Marry (1993). "Auguste Comte and the Saint-Simonians", *French Hystorical Studies,* 18 (1): 211–236. doi: 10.2307/286964

Phillips, Anne (2002). "Does Feminism Need a Conception of Civil Society?", in: Simone Chambers and Will Kymlicka (eds.). *Alternative Conceptions of Civil Society.* Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, pp. 71–89.

Smith-Lovin, Lynn (2007). "Do We Need Public Sociology? It Depends on What You Mean by Sociology", in: Dan Clawson (ed.). *Public Sociology: Fifteen Eminent Sociologists Debate Politics and the Profession in the Twenty-first Century.* Berkley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, pp. 124–134. doi: 10.1525/california/9780520251373.001.0001

Stinchcombe, Arthur L. (1994). "Disintegrated Discipline and the Future of Sociology", *Sociological Forum,* 9 (2): 279–291.

Stinchcombe, Arthur L. (2007). "Speaking Truth to the Public and Indirectly to Power", in: Dan Clawson (ed.). *Public Sociology: Fifteen Eminent Sociologists Debate Politics and the Profession in the Twenty-first Century.* Berkley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, pp. 135–144. doi: 10.1525/california/9780520251373.001.0001

Tittle, Charles R. (2004). "The Arrogance of Public Sociology", *Social Forces,* 82 (4): 1639–1643.

Turner, Jonathan H. (2005). "Is Public Sociology Such a Good Idea?", *The American Sociologist,* 36 (3–4): 27–45.

Turner, Stephen P. and Turner, Jonathan H. (1990). *The Impossible Science: An Institutional Analysis of American Sociology.* London: Sage.

Wallerstein, Immanuel (2007). "The Sociologist and the Public Sphere", in: Dan Clawson (ed.). *Public Sociology: Fifteen Eminent Sociologists Debate Politics and the Profession in the Twenty-first Century*. Berkley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, pp. 169–175. doi: 10.1525/california/9780520251373.001.0001

Weber, Max (1949a [1904]). "'Objectivity' in Social Science and Social Policy", in: Edward A. Shils and Henry A. Finch (eds.). *Max Weber: The Methodology of the Social Sciences.* New York: Free Press, pp. 49–112.

Weber, Max (1949b [1917]). "The Meaning of 'Ethical Neutrality' in Sociology and Economics", in: Edward A. Shils and Henry A. Finch (eds.). *Max Weber: The Methodology of the Social Sciences.* New York: Free Press, pp. 1–47.

Poziv sociologije: prevladavanje vrijednosno dezangažiranog profesionalizma i pristranog aktivizma

Davorka MATIĆ

Odsjek za sociologiju, Filozofski fakultet, Sveučilište u Zagrebu, Hrvatska
dmatic@ffzg.hr

Projekt javne sociologije Michaela Burawoya potaknuo je široku raspravu među sociolozima o zadaćama i karakteru sociologije kao discipline. Iako se većina sudionika u toj raspravi pozitivno odredila spram ideje javno angažirane sociologije, mnogi su izrazili bojazan da Burawoyeva koncepcija javne sociologije vodi politizaciji discipline i sukladno tomu tvrdili da zadaća sociologa nije promoviranje socijalne pravde i specifične političke vizije, nego isključio proizvodnja objektivne, činjenično utemeljene spoznaje o društvu. U radu se iznose argumenti kako protiv Burawoyeve javne sociologije tako i protiv ideje vrijednosnoneutralne znanstvene sociologije, uz naglasak da one nisu adekvatan odgovor na probleme krize identiteta i rastuće javne irelevantnosti sociološke discipline. Sugerira se da je Karl Mannheim ponudio najuvjerljiviji odgovor na pitanje što to znači prakticirati sociologiju i u koje svrhe. U skladu s Mannheimovom argumentacijom, u radu se iznosi teza da pravo pitanje nije trebaju li sociolozi biti predani promoviranju društvene pravde ili akumuliranju objektivnog znanja o društvu nego mogu li oni ponuditi sveobuhvatnu interpretaciju sadašnjosti i osmisliti učinkovite strategije za preobrazbu postojećih obrazaca društva.

Ključne riječi: javna nevidljivost sociologije, Burawoy, Mannheim, javna sociologija, uloga vrijednosti, javno angažirana sociologija