

SYMPOSIUM:
INTEGRALISM AND THE FORMS OF SOCIAL SCIENCE

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INTEGRALISM AND PUBLIC SOCIAL SCIENCE

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This article presents Michael Burawoy's delineation of four forms of social science: professional, critical, policy, and public. Their interdependence in the division of labor of science is considered. The main tenants of integralism are briefly summarized in relation to this typology. This article serves as an introduction to a symposium on integralism. The five articles in the symposium are placed in the context of the forms of social science.

The idea of “public sociology” has recently received considerable attention. Interest has focused on the writings of Michael Burawoy (2004a, 2004b, 2004c, 2004d, 2005a, 2005b), who has developed a conception of public sociology and its relation to other forms of sociological practice. The idea of public sociology has been the focus of symposia that have both critically examined it and elaborated on its characteristics (Burawoy, Gamson, Ryan, Pfohl, Vaughn, Derber, Schor 2004; Zimmer, Burawoy, Nielsen, Brady, Tittle 2004). Although most of Burawoy’s writings focus on sociology, he has applied his formulation of four forms to the social sciences in general (Burawoy 2005a), and it is presented in that context in this article.

Briefly stated, public social science is directed toward engaging audiences outside of the academic community in dialogue regarding values and significant problems. Professional social science consists of theoretical frameworks and research programs that provide

the basis for this public dialogue. Critical social science examines disciplinary frameworks from a value perspective. Policy social science provides solutions to specific problems. These four forms of social science are interdependent.

The nature of integralism as a scientific paradigm has been the topic of several recent symposia in this journal (Jeffries 2003:9-25, Jeffries 2004:97-170; Varacalli 2001:11-55). This article will relate the characteristics of integralism to the forms of social science. This analysis will illustrate the comprehensive nature of integralism as a system of ideas and science. The relationship between integralism and the forms of social science serves as a context for the five articles included in this symposium.

THE NATURE OF DISCIPLINES

Burawoy (2004a, 2004c, 2004d, 2005a, 2005b) approaches the nature of sociology and the other social science disciplines through an ideal type formulation of the division of scientific labor. His analysis is framed in terms of two basic questions: “Knowledge for Whom” and “Knowledge for What”(2004c:1606).

Knowledge can be intended for academic or extra-academic audiences. Academic audiences are constituted by the appropriate community of professionals and scientists. Extra-academic audiences can consist of either clients or patrons that engage the services of professionals. Extra-academic audiences can also be social collectivities ranging from particular groups to the general public who are in some form of communication with social science professionals. Professional and critical social science is directed towards academic audiences, policy and public social science toward extra-academic audiences.

Knowledge can be employed for instrumental or reflexive purposes. Instrumental knowledge involves a means-ends orientation. It represents the search for scientific knowledge within the theoretical traditions and methods of a discipline, or the attempt to provide solutions to specific problems based on this knowledge. Reflexive knowledge examines presuppositions and foundational values. Its approach is dialogical in that it involves the communication of ideas between parties, often in the form of the exchange of ideas. Professional and policy social science is oriented toward instrumental knowledge, critical and public social science toward reflexive.

Burawoy’s (2004a, 2004c, 2005a, 2005b) analysis yields a fourfold classification of knowledge and audience that can be applied to

each of the social science disciplines. The relative importance of the forms typically varies by discipline, by country, and by historical period.

The four forms of social science constitute an ideal type disciplinary matrix. They represent a reciprocally interdependent division of labor in any particular discipline. In each social science, the vitality of any one form is dependent on the vitality of all the others (Burawoy 2005a:514-516).

INTEGRALISM AND THE FORMS OF SOCIAL SCIENCE

Integralism was first advocated as an ontology epistemology, and scientific tradition by Pitirim Sorokin (1941a:746-769, 1957:683-697, 1961, 1963:372-400, 1964:226-237). It is a paradigm that transcends the disciplinary boundaries of the social sciences. The distinguishing feature of integralism is the combination of faith, reason, and sense observation into a harmonious scientific system. Various aspects of its general characteristics have been described in publications by Ford (1963, 1996), Johnston (1995, 1996, 1998), Jeffries (1999, 2002, 2003), and Nichols (1999, 2001). These sources, Sorokin's previously cited analysis of integralism, and his general system of sociology (1941b, 1947, 1948, 1954), are the basis for the brief formulations of the attributes of integralism in relation to each of the four forms of social science that follow.

Professional Social Science

The foundational form of each social science discipline is the professional one (Burawoy 2005a, 2005b). This form involves the disciplinary traditions, theoretical perspectives, data gathering practices, and scientific research programs that give each social science discipline its particular identity as a scientific community. Knowledge provided through professional activity is legitimated by the norms of science. The audience of this form is academic, primarily within but also between social science disciplines.

In integralism, professional social science has several general characteristics. Its most unique feature is that the reality that is the subject of investigation is viewed as consisting of physical-empirical, rational-meaningful, and supersensory-superrational components. Therefore the epistemology of integralism consists of methods of cognition appropriate for obtaining knowledge of each component: senses, reason, and faith. This ontology and epistemology provides for incorporating ideas from the major world religions at every point in the

scientific continuum from presuppositions and value premises, through models and theory, to concepts and their operational definitions.

This combination of the recognition of religious truth and the exploration of its implications for social theory and research is illustrated in the article by Nichols (2005) that is included in this symposium. Nichols examines the manner in which Sorokin's formulation of integralism and the "positive psychology" advocated by Seligman and Peterson both represent systems of thought that go beyond the boundaries of contemporary social science. Despite differences between integralism and positive psychology, both emphasize "universal standards of goodness," the "importance of altruism and love," and the "sacred value of the human person" (Nichols 2005:33). While positive psychology is formally secular, it moves closer to an integral model with its emphasis on the concept of virtue, an idea that has both traditions and implications within the truth of faith.

Religious ideas provide the foundation for a potential array of scientific research programs on the model formulated by Lakatos (1978). In this model, in an integral form, religious ideas derived from the truth of faith are fundamental in formulating the core of research programs. They are then incorporated when appropriate in the theoretical and operational propositions that are derived from the core and subjected to empirical tests. Since these features of professional integralism are applicable to all the social sciences with their various theoretical approaches and research traditions, integralism can properly be considered a paradigm within which the normal science of scientific research programs can operate. The content of these research programs is shaped to some degree by integral critical social science.

Critical Social Science

The focus of critical social science is dialogue among academics regarding the presuppositions and moral foundations that are inherent in the practice of science. This form is "the conscience of professional knowledge" (Burawoy 2005a:511). It calls the attention of social scientists to "their place in the world" and "the assumptions and values that underpin their research programs" (Burawoy 2004a:105). This critical culture that promotes dialogue and reflexive understanding can be drawn from a variety of sources, including those that transcend disciplinary boundaries or the social sciences in general. The knowledge of critical sociology is justified on the basis of the moral vision it provides (Burawoy 2005b:15-17).

In integral critical social science, the value premises that guide theoretical development and the selection of research topics are derived from the truth of faith. Drawing from this source, a major focus of investigation is the development of individual goodness. Religious traditions indicate that concepts such as virtue, benevolent love, and morality are ways of more specifically formulating this idea. Again drawing from religious traditions, the absence of goodness can be conceptualized as vice or sin. In either case, the exercise of individual choice is given emphasis. A second emphasis is upon the manifestation of goodness in interpersonal, intergroup, and international relations. Concepts such as the Golden Rule and solidarity are appropriate at this level of analysis. In the most general sense the critical perspective of integralism shapes the professional form of each of the social sciences by focusing theoretical development and scientific research programs on these topics. This concentration of scientific practice in turn contributes to cumulation and the enhanced ability to establish valid scientific generalizations.

Policy Social Science

Policy social science identifies effective means to attain a specified end (Burawoy 2005a, 2005b). This form focuses on how concrete knowledge can be used in a practical manner to find solutions to problems. The end result of policy social science is typically defined by a client or a patron. In the former case the end may be narrowly specified by the interests of the individual or organization contracting for the services of the social scientist. In the latter case, the end is typically broader, as in a given research interest specified by a funding agency. Knowledge in policy social science is justified by its effectiveness (Burawoy 2005b:15-31).

The article by Thompson (2005) in the symposium provides an example of how the truth of faith can contribute to policy social science. He examines how ideas from Thomistic psychology could benefit clinical psychology, particularly as it is practiced within a therapeutic milieu. The thought of St. Thomas Aquinas provides clinical psychology with two assumptions: that the practical task of therapy must be guided by an understanding of the nature of human beings, and that the goal of the client-therapist relationship is to assist the client in pursuing a good and satisfying life. On this basis Thomistic psychology emphasizes goal oriented behavior that is directed toward the ultimate end of human existence, beatitude, and on proximate ends that are consistent with it. This provides the therapist with a standard by which behavior can be evaluated and assistance given to clients.

The distinguishing characteristic of the policy form is the application of scientific knowledge and understanding to consider how some end can be achieved. Deriving from the critical value framework, integral policy science focuses on understanding how reconstruction toward greater good can be achieved. A basic theoretical assumption of Sorokin's sociology is that since culture, society, and personality are inseparable components of the reality studied by social science, all three must be changed to achieve significant movement toward the good. Based on Sorokin's assumption regarding efficacy, and on a major focus of religious thought, integral policy science gives primacy to movement toward the good through the choices and behavior of individuals. How individual goodness forms the basis for positive changes in successively macro components of society and culture is another basic area of scientific investigation and policy formation. These policy orientations draw from and contribute to the content of theory and research in professional social science.

Public Social Science

Public social science "elaborates and calls into question values held in society, through the stimulation of open public discussion" (Burawoy 2005a:511). It promotes "dialogue about issues that affect the state of society" with a wide variety of publics (Burawoy 2004a:104). In "traditional" public social science, communication from social scientists to the public is primarily through some form of the media, most notably writings such as books that attract a wide audience and stimulate discussion. In "organic" public social science social scientists are in dialogue with specific communities, such as those of neighborhood, labor, or faith. The knowledge in this form is legitimated according to its relevance (Burawoy 2005b:15-17).

Students are a primary public. Burawoy (2004d) notes:

Nor should we forget that our first public is composed of students who, if we do our job properly, become more critical, more aware, more reflective citizens as a result of our teaching. They are not a burden but an opportunity. They carry sociology beyond the academy, they become ambassadors of sociology. In this sense, all of us who take teaching seriously are public sociologists. (P. 6)

Three articles in the symposium analyze the expression of integral public social science in teaching. They deal with the introductory course in sociology, courses in social problems, and

courses in marriage and family. In each instance, the implications of ideas derived from religious faith upon course content is considered.

Teaching introductory sociology from a perspective derived from Sorokin's integralism is the topic of the article by Sharkey (2005) in the symposium. He begins by noting that C. Wright Mills' (1959:3-24) idea of the "sociological imagination" is frequently used in introductory courses. It provides an effective way of relating social issues to personal problems. This framework provides a strong moral concern that gives impetus to understanding society from a scientifically grounded perspective. This understanding can then be used as a basis for activism for changing society in a beneficial direction. Despite these positive attributes, Sharkey regards this perspective as having definite limitations. Mills' thinking, and more current adaptations of it for teaching purposes, often involve problems such as secular relativism, political anger, rejection of absolutes, and an overemphasis on hierarchical conflict, political solutions, and particularistic rights. Sorokin's integralism is presented as an alternative perspective that can be used in teaching to correct some of these problems. Integralism provides a basis for teaching students in four ways: it shows that cultural relativism must be supplemented with rational analysis and religious truth; it gives an alternative to the contemporary cultures' limited version of truth; it introduces students to the sociological importance of love; and it provides a comprehensive view of critical thinking that transcends the political focus prevalent within sociology.

In his article, Ross (2005) addresses problematic aspects of the analysis of social problems found in college textbooks. He considers the question of how a social problem is defined from perspectives provided by both professional and critical social science. The basis for defining a social problem is regarded as foundational in a field focusing on the application of scientific understanding and knowledge to conditions that are viewed as problematic. The typical approach taken in textbooks is to define a condition as a social problem when society sees it in this manner. This is both relativistic and subjective. Critical social science provides the basis to question this approach. This manner of defining a social problem can be contrasted with an integral perspective based on the truth of faith. This leads to a definition of social problems in terms of prevalent social conditions that undermine or are not consistent with the spiritual nature and dignity of the human being. This perspective is shown by Ross to lead to a different view of the identity of social problems than is commonly found in current textbooks.

The article by Matthews (2005) considers the implications of a faith based perspective in teaching courses in marriage and family. Certain problems in teaching students are noted: they may be sensitive to evidence indicating that alternative family forms are less effective; they may not understand the meaning of sacrificial love; and they are often pessimistic regarding the possibility of marital success. In terms of class content, Magisterial teaching regarding marriage and family is both comprehensive and insightful. This source is regarded by Matthews as fundamental in shaping course content, both in terms of presenting social science data and in terms of addressing anti-marriage viewpoints. Realist philosophical assumptions regarding human nature and destiny derived from the truth of faith are regarded as providing a further context for considering both the nature and the purposes of marriage and family.

Public sociology must be relevant to engage the interest of audiences outside of the academy. Professional integralism's focus on the ultimate values of truth and goodness provides scientific knowledge and understanding on a subject matter that is of potential interest to the general public. Both critical and policy integralism express, reinforce, and specify in different ways this subject matter. Critical integralism is organized around ideas of the good such as virtue, benevolent love, morality, the Golden Rule, and solidarity. These ideas are both in a considerable degree derived from and supported by the world religions. This correspondence of scientific knowledge with awareness based on religious consciousness creates a potentially wide-ranging and convincing relevance for large segments of the general public, and for specific faith based organic publics. Likewise, policy integralism entails proposing policy efforts based on scientific knowledge and understanding to realize these ideas in manifestations particular to the personal, social, and cultural aspects of reality. Important in this regard is integralism's emphasis on the causes and effects of individual goodness. This focus potentially provides individuals with a scientifically based awareness of how their individual choices and actions can lead toward the greater good. Thus policy integralism is also potentially relevant to various segments of the public that are motivated to become engaged in efforts to achieve positive change. Sorokin's description and explanation of the characteristics of this historical era provides a further source of relevance to integral public social science. His analysis of the decline of the currently dominant sensate culture and the necessity of replacing it with an integral one provides a compelling basis for public dialogue regarding the necessity and direction of individual and collective action. For public social science, his analysis

provides a context of meaning within which integral social science can be both justified and made relevant to a wide audience.

CONCLUSIONS

Burawoy's analysis of the four forms of social science and their interdependence provides an important and comprehensive reference point for the development of the integral paradigm. His typology can be viewed as a standard which suggests that integralism's fullest development entails a strong and continuing manifestation of each form of social science. Disciplinary differences in content and emphasis are inevitable and necessary. Nevertheless, vigorous activity is required in each form in all the social science disciplines to develop integralism to its maximum potential for good in the emerging global society.

This and previous symposia can be regarded as small but important first steps in the difficult task of building a viable integral tradition in all of the social science disciplines. Much challenging work needs to be done by many dedicated individuals!

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