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DISCURSIVE HABITUS OF SOCIOLOGY

(About the order of sociological paradigms)

Abstract: *This paper analyzes the problem of paradigm and discourse in contemporary sociology. Problems of delays in paradigmatic development of modern sociology manifested as ignoring or running away from the paradigm and the urge to declare "low" theoretical discussion and "minor" issues of a paradigm or "grand theory" are considered. Special attention is paid to the order of paradigms in sociology as a science, about the great impact of relativism, constructionism and deconstruction of common sense in establishing and developing the contemporary conceptual sociological paradigm. It is noted that the most of the problems in contemporary sociology come from the discourse about the crisis, a lack of understanding of its role and importance in sociological theory, as well as the conversion of the discourse into the paradigm.*

Keywords: *the universal paradigm, the general paradigm, the theoretical paradigm, the conceptual paradigm, the non-paradigmatic space, the order of paradigms, the discourse, the discursive practice, the discursive habitus, the individualistic theory.*

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Introduction

If fundamental changes of social reality as a kind of referential universe of sociology, does not require a fundamental (or even none) changes in sociological terms, does this then mean that the social reality as a referential universe of sociology is actually a solely product of sociological theory? If from the unique concepts of various sociological theories we can perform the interpretation of social reality as “the totality of the course” (Gurvitch), then the problem of the referentiality apparently resides solely in the reality of theoretical and conceptual space, because the possibilities of changing the subject are in advance contained in the concept. Therefore, we should not be as surprised by the variability of the social, as much as we should be by the absence of the variability in the conceptual. The question can also be set as following: how theoretical concepts in general, today, operate in a world of the conceptual, the social? If the social reality as a reference universe of sociology became conceivable in advance (if we count in its intelligibility in advance), then the theory as its integral part, can only ask the question of its own existence, namely: whether the theory is only closed theory or discursive practice? Does the notion of contemporary social reality has discursive origin and does the sociological theory exists discursively? Is the question of understanding today's society set through the paradigm and the discourse on society (Touraine)?

The problem of referential reality, as a fundamental philosophical problem, inevitably becomes a fundamental problem of modern sociology. If we start from the premise that today the essential philosophical problem is a problem of real as a redundancy (Baudrillard), and we hypostasized it on the social level, as a problem of unemployment, then the question is „what to do with a work force in the information age? What to do with the waste that is exponentially increasing? Send it to the scrap heap of history?”³

Is today's society evolving into a society without employment? Does the informatics change the characteristics and position of knowledge in society? What will happen to the skills that are not transferred, or can not be transferred to a computer profiles, frames and portals? Is the „society of knowledge” that is mentioned in the science and political practice, an illusion, an utopia or reality?

The problem of the referential reality is inevitable and over again set as a question of the relationship between theory and practice and in such a way that this relationship, in the end, reveals itself as a metaphysical illusion.⁴

Conservative function of the methodology aims at totalising establishment

³ Baudrillard, J., *The Perfect Crime*, the Belgrade Circle, Belgrade, 1998., page 54.

⁴ Baudrillard, J., *The Perfect Crime*, the Belgrade Circle, Belgrade, 1998., page 53.

of a foundational function of the subject by “methodological field” that provides the full sovereignty of the synthetic activity of the subject, as previously defined conditions of validity. Methodological field as a space of discourse (Foucault) previously defined conditions of validity in a manner of intentionally performing perceptual organization of fields in accordance with a set of findings that suggest one and the same view. In that way, the education of facilities is completely inseparable from the field in which they appear.⁵

The organisation of perceptual field emerges as the imposition of referential reality to a particular type of discourse (the reality to which the discourse is referring to and in which is true) through the previous regulation and reduction of the “crude reality” by the filtering function of concept. Then the discourse can not question the established order of conceptual content, or the concept as a frame of content that is changing. In that way the epistemological deceptions of the subject that is being ontologically stylized in absolute (Adorno) is being done in advance. It is often forgotten that all great and useful types of discourse (in philosophy, science, religion, history...), are in fact, discursive practice⁶, because they establish anthropological and methodological order in the concept, as well as in understanding and interpretation of reality to which the term is related.

The existence of discourse in certain circumstances, shows that ontology independent of epistemology is not possible, but that the ontological level of social reality exists in the discursive practice, as a representative function of its own discursive historicity. Since there is no discourse that is not historical⁷ (diachronic character – this is its general shape), this means that there is no discourse outside the social reality, because then the social reality would lose its ontological footing, so the only model of representative reality would be a network of texts, for which the references are only the other texts. That way, the concepts, their contents and their order of elements would operate within its own closed circle, away from the reality as a referential frame and further baffle researchers and users of (in our case, sociological) research. In this way, the illusion that all major types of discourse have the same problems is created,⁸ because the textual auto-referentiality through its historical existence shows that knowledge has become the epistemological process of semiosis.⁹

If there is no constant checking of correspondence of theory and practice (concept and experience), then there is the possibility that social reality exists only as a representative function of language. Theoretical expressions were then, as well as factual statements, linguistic entities and they belong to

⁵ Foucault, M., *Archaeology of Knowledge*, Plato, Belgrade, 1998., page 222.

⁶ Foucault, M., *Archaeology of Knowledge*, Plato, Belgrade, 1998., page 26.

⁷ Foucault, M., *Archaeology of Knowledge*, Plato, Belgrade, 1998., page 214.

⁸ Compare: Foucault, M., *Archaeology of Knowledge*, Plato, Belgrade, 1998., page 26. See also: Jaus, H.R., *The Esthetics of Reception*, Nolit, Belgrade, 1978., page 40 and forward.

⁹ See: Arian, R., *Postmodern archival: Introductory Questions*, Archive News, Zagreb, no. 46, 2004., page 13

discourse,¹⁰ but to the incomplete discourse (to the discourse that is not discursive practice). The danger of the accumulated heritage of textual auto-referentiality is becoming a true habitus of sociology, as the only possible condition of each practice threatens. Such a discursive habitus of sociology would mean moving the referential universe of sociology from reality (real and existing) to the text, as a sufficient and self-sufficient, the area of discourse. Such discourse is not based on condition and the existence of the object, but the existence of the object is based on the discourse. The subject of sociological analysis remains within the text and theory, it becomes a complete structure, captured in the old conceptual habitus, it ignores the dynamic social changes in its own environment or has a very mild reaction to them.

For contemporary sociology, several important questions regarding the status of its theoretical, investigative and analytical habitus are raised. First of all, the issue of state and order of sociological paradigms? Then, what ensures the sovereignty of the sociological discourse? Is the idea of social losing the primacy in paradigmatic and discursive habitus of sociology? Is the subjective (influenced by liberalism and individualism) receiving the primacy over the objective approach in the present habitus of sociology? What is the relationship between macro and micro levels in sociological theory and research? Is the sociology constantly updating the subject of its research? What is the relationship between form and content in the central concepts of the sociological conceptual and categorical opus (human as a social being, the state, democracy)? Some of these issues are examined in this text.

The forgotten paradigm

One of the forgotten areas of modern sociology is a matter of sociological paradigms. This problem is present in almost all post-modern theories (theoretical directions, schools of thought) in sociology (symbolic interactionism, ethnomethodology, the theory of exchange and rational choice, integrative theory, feminist theory and sociology of everyday life). This applies primarily to the efforts of these theoretical approaches to impose new views and positions without a clear indication of the state of the paradigm in that theoretical area that they wish to engage. Fleeing from the 'big issues' and 'great theories' postmodern theoretical trends and the sociology of everyday life prefer 'small' issues and concerns and because of that they are distant from the main sociological paradigms. In this way the contemporary sociology counters with important issues that it can not solve: the relationship between macro and

¹⁰ See: White, H., *Fabulation of history and the problem of the truth in the representation of history*, "K." - Journal for literature, literary and cultural theory, Zagreb, 2003., No. 1, page 34.

micro levels of research, relations between objective and subjective; increasing entry of common-sense understanding into the scientific area, pursuit of deconstruction and relativization of basic theoretical structure, as well as an attempt to move the subject of sociology from the society to individuals.

Ignoring the issues of paradigm in modern sociological debates, analysis and researches is visible in several aspects. First, running away from debate about the role and importance of paradigms in sociology, as orientation, science space and methodological direction given by the contemporary scientific community (in this case, the sociological community) to each researcher (sociologist). Second, there are no accurate discussions or scientific concerns about the order of paradigms in contemporary sociological researches. Third, there is no clear difference between the paradigm and the discourse, as the two most important scientific areas that give importance and dynamics to the sociological researches. Fourth, the simplified common-sense understanding of the paradigm which is reflected in the fact that each position, opinion, the new theme or theoretical approach declared as a paradigm is more and more present. These issues in contemporary sociology will be discussed more later in this paper.

What is the role and importance of the paradigm for the contemporary sociology? First of all, we should start from the position on the importance of the paradigm for all sciences, so we could later understand its importance for sociology. Let us recall that a paradigm is a sure path adopted (built, established) by a scientific community as a set of rules, laws, theories, methodological tools and ways of linking theory and practice, from which one scientist or group of researchers start their work. It is the property of a scientific community in terms of resources that are not temporally and spatially restricted and that scientists use in accordance with their abilities and sensibilities. Thomas Kuhn is credited with the discovery and formulation of the scientific paradigm, as well as pointing out its importance in the establishment, development and condition of any ‘normal’, ‘mature’ science.¹¹ Without knowledge, adoption and referring to the paradigm science can not develop and scientists are left wandering without safe compass and rules that will help them in solving the natural and social puzzles. If they do not keep the paradigm, scientists and researchers will all (or most) facts and elements, take as equally relevant to the subject of study. Scientists will then stay on those facts and phenomenal events that are available to the ‘ordinary’ observer or, as Kuhn said, the ‘pre-paradigmatic’ stage of science, and will not be able to meet the demands of the paradigm and bring in their study ‘the spirit of the pre-

¹¹ “The paradigm is what members of a scientific community share and, conversely, a scientific community consists of people who share a paradigm [...] Thus, the scientific community consists of those who are actively engaged in a scientific specialty”. (Kuhn, T., *Structure of Scientific Revolution*, Nolit, Belgrade, 1974., pp. 240, 241).

paradigmatic' science. Their efforts and their work will appear to start from the beginning of a scientific paper, instead of continuing, extending, supplementing it and beyond. Such a scientist or a group of scientists (researchers) are not aware that the paradigm contains elements that are permanent, which remain even when one paradigm is replaced by another paradigm.

One of the reasons for leaving the paradigm or avoiding its "strict" rules and scientific procedures, by the researchers, is that some researchers have not understood the essence of the paradigm, which is developing and leaving room for constant updates, processing and creations. Many modern scientists and researchers understand the paradigm as a pattern, scheme, model to whom they should obey blindly and implement it without the rest. If they fail, then they run away from the paradigm in instrumentalism, empiricism, 'daily life', developing, sometimes, essence, journalistic and literary approach to the subject. These scientists, researchers do not realize that the paradigm sheds light on those issues and facts that are outside its framework and which are important for the overall state of science, especially when it comes to social science. There are researchers who ignore the paradigm or 'declare' it obsolete, arguing that by the freedom of scientific work and the need for expansion of individualism and subjectivism in science. Kuhn was aware of these dangers, and that is why he noted that terms such as 'model' and 'form' are not sufficient to fully define and understand the paradigm. Paradigm is not 'an object that is copied', but rather a framework which space and content are articulated and specified by 'a new and stricter conditions'¹². Paradigm as a framework of scientific research (filled with laws, methods, instruments, conceptual categories, scientific language and theory) that serve to expand scientific knowledge through the discovery of new facts, as well as matching those facts with the norms, laws and predictions that the paradigm previously set. In this way, the paradigm leaves room for constant adding and adjustments of the scientific elements, making itself the subject of further additions, adjustments to the environment (scientific and empirical) and changing the outdated elements in its own order, and in order of the science that represents and which parts it keeps together.

Another important reason why modern scientists are running away from modern paradigm and searching for easier and simpler rules and principles of scientific research, we can see in the action of postmodernism and postmodern discussions which encompassed the total world cultural space in the second half of the twentieth century. Postmodernism has come into conflict with the scientific paradigm, first of all, by its insistence on deconstructing and relativism of 'all existing', as well as giving preference to subjective experience, views and approaches (subjectivity) over the objective state of

¹² Kuhn, T. the same, page 65-67.

affairs. Scientists who were not able to meet the strict requirements of the paradigm or have not endured its ‘pressure’ on their own scientific habitus, gladly accepted the principles of postmodernism and gradually brought them into the modern scientific discussion. In that way, they sometimes managed to avoid the control and reduction imposed by the paradigm in order to prevent the use of vague concepts, attitudes and formulations.

As the third reason to avoid the dominant paradigm can be considered a great influence of corporations and economic power centers on science and scientific research. Science is industrializing, it is introduced into the corporate system, serving corporate interests and the interests of the great centers of power. Science becomes a craft, insensitive to the problems that in the society are created by its research results (environmental, health and security risks), the priority becomes getting money and obtaining funds for projects that will justify requests and efforts of large companies. So we get ‘entrepreneurial’ science¹³ that is losing the impartiality and objectivity in its research and that is sacrificing paradigmatic rules and procedures in order to accept technological and corporate domination. In this group of reasons for suspension of scientists from the scientific paradigm, we can add the impact of different ideologies, political ideas and practices, as well as the social cultural environment.

The first two reasons for suspension from the scientific paradigm are due to internal weakness of science, as well as the strength and solidity of the scientific community. The third reason is the result of outside pressure on the science and the scientific community from the economic, political and ideological entities in society and the centers of power from local to global levels. The first two reasons for suspension from the scientific paradigm lead to the weakening of scientific accuracy, clarity, expressiveness, and systematic, or to the appearance of methodological and theoretical erosion of science. The third reason leads to partiality, atomization of different sciences and raises the question of the ethical dimensions of science.

How are the three previously mentioned reasons for suspension from the scientific paradigm manifested in sociology? Misunderstanding of the essence and importance of the universal paradigm gave rise to many theories and theoretical approaches in sociology, which wanted to make up for the shortcomings of each of the previous theories, but in such a way to reject and deny the basic elements of these theories, instead of expanding and adding new paragraphs, adapting them to the historical and practical context. Particularly interesting is the phenomenon of ignoring one of the theoretical paradigms of

¹³ In a very inspiring analysis of relations between science, knowledge and social conditions, Ravetch Jerry mentions four aspects, four metamorphosis of modern science to come to the four in its adaptation of the dominant technological and corporate logic: weak (sloppy) science entrepreneurial Sciences (Race for the money), reckless science, and fourth, dirty science. (Ravetz, J., *Scientific Knowledge and Its Social Problems*, Transaction Publishers, 1996).

others and their lack of mutual dialogue. So the functionalism completely avoids Marx's notion of conflict and social changes, and sometimes it seems as if the two theories do not belong to the general sociological paradigm. Simmel followers do not take into account Marx's analysis of the division of labor, the role and importance of large social groups, etc.¹⁴ The lack of mutual dialogue and confrontation of the basic assumptions of the three largest 'classical' theoretical paradigms (Marxism, functionalism and structuralism) and highlight the values that are 'survivors' after the passage of their domination, indicates the weakness of the discourse within the theoretical paradigm in contemporary sociologists.¹⁵ This weakness has led, on the one hand, to escape from all the three paradigms and the appearance of many new theoretical discussions and the 'school of thought' that aspired to become modern 'grand theories'. On the other hand, the discontinuity in the development of theoretical sociological paradigm manifested itself as an imbalance between macro and micro levels of sociological analysis (predominance of micro-sociological analysis) and the predominance of empirical, instrumental and technical over the theoretical part of methodological procedures in social researches. This made it less coherent and unstable inner structure of sociology and has changed its relationship to other related disciplines.

Second, previously mentioned reason for withdrawing from the theoretical paradigm has led to a relativization of some solid social claims from the earlier classical theoretical principles and to the introduction of new 'non sociological' elements in the theoretical and conceptual discourse (MacDonaldism, figuration, the world of life, dramaturgy, compassionate introspection, ethnomethodology, network communications, etc). All this has led to the atomization of the general theoretical framework and the division of the major immediate sociological disciplines, without clear distribution of the research topic. There was a predominance of conduct and interpretation of symbols in everyday human actions (hermeneutics of sociology), rather than research, analysis, proof and theoretical verification. Hermeneutics is an integral part of

¹⁴ Luis Coser gave detailed and valuable analysis of the role and importance of conflict in society and social group, relying solely on Simmel views and does not include the views of Marx, Gustave le Bon, or any other 'classics' of sociology (Coser, L., *The Function of Social Conflict*). On the other hand, Thomas Weber, his analysis of the conflict does not rely on Marx, Simmel, Coser, or Dahrendorf, not even in the chapter explaining the causes and the essence of the conflict (Weber, T., *Conflict Resolution and Gandhian Ethics*). These two examples show how to neglect general sociological paradigm that should always consist of some elements that always follow the conceptual and theoretical discourse.

¹⁵ In the eighties of the twentieth century a broad discourse within of Marxist theoretical paradigm took place, which is self-sufficient and triumphant reaffirmation of the vitality suggested in Marx's theory 100 years after his death, but this discourse has not involved the dialogue with functionalism, structuralism and other theoretical discourses that have occurred along within sociology. Rather, he opposed them and pointed out the insufficiency of their theoretical connections and the inability to practice. A similar thing happened to the functionalist discourse during the fifties and sixties of the twentieth century. If we look at the side, it looks as if the three theoretical paradigms come from three different general paradigms (economics, linguistics, history).

sociological theory, it is necessary to be continuously improving, but if you move away from the epistemological, methodological and theoretical discourse and too close to relativism and ad hoc constructivism, then it is less productive for sociology. Sociology can not be a ‘hermeneutics-centric’ science, as well as it can not be ‘epis-centric’,¹⁶ transforming sociologists into the abstract and the imprisoned ‘homoacademicus’.

The third reason has led to the loss of critical dimensions of sociology as one of its most important dimensions and roles in the society. This led to a stronger influence of ideological and political entity on sociological researches and scientific explanations. Turn of the mainstream of sociology to the primary empirical questions, without a solid theoretical coordination led it into a position to deal with ‘small’ matters, and that part of its case studies was given to other disciplines such as political studies, psychology, marketing, organizational behavior and communications. A new ‘entrepreneurial’ sociology has while running away from its essence (paradigmatic, discursive and methodological habitus) led to the further atomization of sociology and ambiguous relationship with a close disciplines, weakening its position in the academic social space and reducing its explanatory credibility. What Agamben found in philosophy,¹⁷ has happened to contemporary sociology, it has become scattered on its territory, ceded a portion of their resources to the other sciences, it has made the theoretical and critical cutting edge blunt.

The paradigm established by Kuhn is a universal paradigm and includes a framework, attitudes, principles and procedures relating to all sciences (natural, technical and social). The paradigm, understood in Kuhn’s direction of thinking, means a constant dialogue and interaction between the scientific community, its scientific tradition and its surrounding, which must lead to the required consensus on the basic content of the paradigm.¹⁸ Science is constituted, it becomes ‘mature’ and ‘normal’ only when it is able to accept, absorb and articulate universal scientific paradigm. Some research, analysis, discussion or learning achieves scientific dignity only when applying the rules of the universal paradigm manages to crystallize at least one or more theoretical conceptual paradigms. As Merton says, the paradigm is the foundation upon which rests the building of the theory, interpretation and analysis.¹⁹

Universal paradigm is particularly important for the social sciences. It is by

¹⁶ Bourdieu, P., *Marcel Mauss aujourd'hui*, Sociologie et sociétés vol. 36, 2004., n° 2.

¹⁷ Agamben, G., *What is a Paradigm*, A lecture by Giorgio Agamben, August 2002. (www.egs.edu/faculty/agamben-resources.html)

¹⁸ Sardar, Z., *Thomas Kuhn and the Science Wars*, Circulation Jasenski & Turk, Zagreb, 2001.

¹⁹ The paradigms promote accumulation of theoretical interpretations. Paradigm is the foundation on which the houses of interpretation is built. If a new floor can not be built on such a basis, then it must be seen as a new wing of the total structure, a foundation of concepts and assumptions must be expanded to support this field. "(Merton, R.K., *On theoretical sociology*, Plato, Belgrade, 1998., pp. 106).

sociology (sociologist) immediately accepted and was the basis of its further construction and development as an independent science, as it provided the possibility for the establishment of one special sociological discipline, the sociology of knowledge, or the sociology of science, who cares about the theoretical and methodological state, vitality, and practical role and position of sociology.

The order of paradigms

To understand the essence and significance of the paradigm of contemporary sociology, it is necessary to point out the order of the paradigms of the entire “building” of sociology. First of all, it is important to find criteria which are used to establish a division of paradigms and their mutual arrangement.²⁰ We take three criteria that lead us towards the ability to make the division into three groups of paradigms. The first criterion is the question of generality and wide coverage of the research topic, respectively the totality and continuity of keeping the general subject of sociology (or any other science) and equitable ‘distribution’ of the case studies between the various disciplines of the same science (in our case, sociology). According to this criterion we can identify four paradigms: the universal paradigm, the general paradigm, the theoretical paradigm and the conceptual paradigm. The second criterion takes into account the function and task of the paradigm in science and society. Based on this criterion, we distinguish between two paradigms: theoretical and practical. The third criterion is based on the use of language and terminology for the analysis and explanations of a problem. According to this criterion, we can distinguish between scientific and commonsense paradigms.

We have previously noted that the universal paradigm is in the basics of every science, including sociology. The universal paradigm can be thought of as a set of proven theoretical, methodological, systematical and organized, towards practice directed, research results, which one scientific community adopted and is passing the inheritance over in the continuity to each new generation of scientists. Universal paradigm is the sign and the landmark to every single scientist or group of scientists, both given and assigned from the

²⁰ Raymond Budoni outlines four types of paradigms: 1 meta (general views on the emergence of a theory); 2 conceptual (used for classification); 3 comparative, by analogy or paradigm of similarity (society is like the theater); 4 formal paradigm (principles of analysis of social phenomena). We see that this division has no specific criteria of division paradigms, whether it is the generality, breadth, scope or something else. Even we can say that there are a number of criteria in such a division, while the third paradigm (analogy, similarity, comparison) may be present (even it means) in each of the remaining three. There is more to say about the methodological procedure. (See: Boudon, R. & Bourricaud, F., *Dictionnaire critique de la sociologie, deuxième édition*, Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 1986., Boudon, R., *The Social Sciences and Two Types of Relativism*, Journal of Classical Sociology, 2005., Vol. 5).

total science (global) community and each of its separate parts, which appeared in the division by certain types of science, space and time.

As a next stage, science has to develop its general paradigm, or 'skeleton' that will wear and keep the entire building, tightly linked to the foundation (the universal paradigm). For the sociology, the general paradigm is also its general subject of research, and that is the company understood as the totality of social relations, phenomena, processes, creations and structures observed through the prism of human activities. General sociological paradigm forms its basic framework (skeleton) that occurs as a result of applying the principle of universal paradigm for analysis of society. General paradigm provides scientific dignity of sociology and gives it the task to set up in the center of the search a society in all its forms, conditions, temporal and spatial dimensions.

How will the task which is set by the general paradigm to sociology accomplish, depends on the scientific theories that will be developed as a set of discoveries, understandings and explanations through the application of appropriate methodological principles and rules. Scientific theories, theoretical paradigms, are the third level in order of sociological paradigms (and the paradigms of other sciences). They provide the content, development, dynamics, power and perspective of science. What sociology as a social science, has so far achieved is contained in its main theories (positivism, functionalism, Marxism, structuralism), and their explanation of the society. For this reason, a crucial, three-leveled question is imposed: does the modern sociology develop, improve, upgrade and strengthen its overall paradigm, or is it leaving it (as suggested by Touraine), or, whether it has replaced the old theoretical paradigms, having exhausted their framework and introduced the new paradigm (paradigms), or rather drifted away from the dominant (scientific) paradigm (as we noted in the introduction to this text) and allowed it to be trapped in its non-paradigmatic space?²¹

The conceptual paradigm is a framework which includes elements that build and develop some sociological concepts and terms. This paradigm provides all the necessary infrastructure for the development of the science. The quality of sociological theories and the stability of its paradigms depend on the quality of conceptual paradigms, such as the quality and duration of the concepts and terms depend on whether they arised from elements of the paradigm, or are taken from non-paradigmatic space. Discovery, understanding and explanation, as the three elements of the social academic lever, directly depend on the use of proven concepts and the new constructions that will fill the void in the rapid development of the theoretical discourse. Sociology will be a science of society as long as her conceptual paradigm (paradigms) is able

²¹ This text has the intention to initiate discussion on this issue and invite the scientific, sociological community to seriously address the problem of paradigmatic and discursive conditions of today's sociology.

to confirm the value of old concepts and construct the new ones that will include new forms of sociability, as a consequence of continuous technical development and demographic growth. It is therefore essential that modern sociologists are more concerned about old conceptual paradigms such as social being (a man as a social being), class, alienation, power, state, socialization, control, influence, authority, democracy, etc, to see how these paradigms are useful, how many of them have been added, updated or stayed neglected. This is important as well as discussion of new conceptual paradigms such as virtual communities, cyber society, networked society, knowledge society, 'Moloch', 'automaton', 'figurations', 'new cultural history', the inclusion, post-modernism, the fear, the risks, 'the field', social capital, etc. It is necessary to determine whether the new conceptual paradigms arised from elements of the old paradigms, has the continuity of research retained and whether the new paradigmatic framework will be broader, more meaningful and stimulating for further research.

The order of paradigms is important because of its overall development, character, scientific habitus and perspective. Also, we should always take into account the order of the paradigms because it is not possible to 'jump over' that order when we are editing "obsolete" and under-productive elements of some paradigm or the paradigm as a whole. It is not possible to replace the general sociological paradigm, if the versatile preparation through the comprehensive changes in conceptual and theoretical paradigms has not been done. The order in the change of paradigms is reversed from the order of its constitution.²²

First, the conceptual paradigms are changing, and then theoretical, while the general paradigm remains, only upgraded and strengthened. The universal paradigm is the logical-epistemological framework, the abstract-theoretical construction, so flexible that their change does not make sense. So Touraine is not right when he asks the question of replacing general sociological paradigm, by the attitude that 'sociology is no longer studying society', that it is not science about society, but about the individual and that there is 'no more society'.²³ No matter what Touraine suggests that the social actors on the social scene are altered, and the actors 'separated from the system', and it has been a rise of individualism, 'waking of the subject', to 'invasion of democracy', the emergence of 'society of women' or the 'society without women', we still can not talk about the disappearance of society but about its multiple and radical changes. It is necessary to develop a

²² To use the metaphor of Merton paradigm as a basis (theoretical) of the building and to conclude that it is not possible to change the foundation of the building, and floors, interior floors and roof remain preserved. Repair of buildings can be of roof repairs (in our case the sociological conceptual paradigms), and only the floors of the interior (in our case the sociological theories). If you are not firmly based, it is not possible to add new floors.

²³ See: Touraine, A., *A new Paradigm for understanding today's world*, Polity Press, 2007.; Touraine, A., *Sociology without Societies*, "Cuurent Sociology", March 2003., Vol. 51(2), 123-131.; Touraine, A., *Is Sociology still the Study of Society?*, Thesis Eleven, No. 23, 1989.

discourse within some conceptual paradigms, such as a social being, global society, presentation, selection, socialization, communication, empowerment, social relations, domination, alienation, power and manipulation, in order to find out more about the value of the theoretical paradigms that reject the old and embrace new concepts. Only after that could start discussions on the state of general sociological paradigm, the need and possibility of its change, or, the Turen proposal for the “new” general paradigm of sociology, which will trace the path in the ‘sociology of freedom’, free from social determinism.

The second group of paradigms, based on the criterion of their task and function in science and society, includes theoretical and practical paradigm. As previously mentioned, the theoretical paradigm implies a framework that has emerged as the logical-epistemological and methodological structure that contains all the elements required for scientific work, that are a result of continuous research, or, discovery, understanding and explanation of some law. Its function is to direct science, take care of its internal structure, and to enrich and develop its discursive space and verifies explanations that have arisen as a result of significant and broad scientific discourse. Theory defines and operationalizes concepts, links them together into one system and ensures their development, use and usefulness. The practical paradigm refers to the experiential and empirical facts²⁴, and includes rules in everyday life and work of people. That is, usually, a set of routine procedures and behavior in everyday communication, but also new modes and actions that want to overcome some of the existing situation and make new relationships. Practices are, to paraphrase Bourdieu, the activities of people that are not objectively defined, nor completely free. Work in school, family life, success in business, management of the city have their practical and paradigmatic frameworks, which differ from the theoretical approach to education, social group or government. The theory goes through “the prism” of practice, as well as the practice is ‘enriched’ by the theory. Science must include both theoretical and practical paradigm in their relative balance.

As for the division of paradigms on scientific and common sense, it can be said that the scientific paradigm uses the method, theory and scientific language that is specific to each science and should prevent inflow of unscientific concepts and categories in the discursive space of science, and their longer retention or prevalence in that area.²⁵

²⁴ The difference between experience and empiricism here we make in the meanings offered by Bernard Valdenfels. In this regard, see: Valdenfels, B., *Topography of the foreign*, Stylos, Novi Sad, 2005., pp. 20.

²⁵ Milena Filipovic says, paraphrasing Bourdieu: “sociology can cope with common sense criteria, provided they are specifically taken for the case, rather than let them be brought into the scientific discourse.” (Filipovic, M., *Sociology and post-positivist paradigm: a cognitive difficulties of Contemporary Sociology*, Sociology, no. 3, 2008., pp. 255). Warning of the dangers of relying on common sense and his inability to facile rejection of the sociological discourse, has provided and Emil Durkheim in the introduction rules of sociological method.

The common sense paradigm involves identification of social facts on the basis of a review, routine relationship with them, staying on overt elements of a phenomenon or process, without searching for the causes and latent elements of processes and relationships. The common sense paradigm may allow declaring same problem solved where science sees only its hidden or new and broader expression. Of course, common sense thinking and knowledge is often a starting point for identifying some facts that will subsequently become the subject of theoretical discussion and analysis, delivering the knowledge of science. However, we must not allow the conversion of common sense, 'ordinary' language (concepts, terms, symbols and attitudes designed by experience) in a scientific language (epistemologically constructed conceptual system of categories of scientific empiricism). This will lead (has led) to the relativism of scientific knowledge and understanding the objectivity of scientific knowledge and relationships: the subject of research ↔ findings ↔ actor (subject) of the knowledge.

The importance of the discourse

Many problems in the development of modern sociology come from the lack of understanding and accepting the role and importance of the scientific discourse. To remember that by the discourse we mean a set of activities that involve a thought about something, talk and discussion about the case studies, symbols, meanings and language orientation, then the path of spotting problems to its explanation, the power of denial and the power of the proof,²⁶ startup, separation and conditioning of the total theoretical events within one paradigm and among the paradigms. The discourse is the energy and drive force of theories, methodologies and science, but also the bond between the theory and practice, skills of translating theory into practice and vice versa. The discourse is both the continuity and the discontinuity in the series of theoretical and practical manifestation of the research topic. If the discourse is in crisis, then the science is in crisis too. It is our opinion that the discourse in the contemporary sociology is in a significant crisis and that this caused many theoretical, practical and critical shortcomings that we see today as an obstacle to its schedule, news and further affirmation.²⁷

As the first problem we can identify insufficient emphasis and identifying of differences between the discourse and the paradigm. If the paradigm is the general framework of scientific activity, then everything happening in that

²⁶ Foucault points out that the discourse is a power that should be won (Foucault, M., *The order of the discourse*, Carpos, Loznica, 2007., p. 9).

²⁷ Interesting and stimulating debate on the crisis of the discourse in sociology we can see in: Stridom, P., *Discourse and Knowledge, The Making of Enlightenment Sociology*, Liverpool University Press, 2000.

framework is the scientific discourse. In the framework of modern sociology, after declining relevance of structuralism and Marxism as the dominant theoretical paradigms, appeared a tendency of starting the new paradigms. It can be said that most of them are the discourses in the attempt of releasing of the classic theory and the establishment of the new ones. Thus, all variations of 'post-structuralism' and 'neo-Marxism' are the discourse that expands, strengthens or weakens the space of these theories, before it establishes the new theoretical paradigm. In the sociological debates marked as 'theories about postindustrial society' and 'postmodernism', is talked about the development of discourse that attempts to introduce to the theory a number of empirical facts and practical changes in the social and cultural dimension of society, caused by rapid technological, technical, and economic development. The best example of changing the paradigm for discourse is 'the theory of everyday life' and the debate on globalization, which aspired to occupy the position of new sociological paradigms, and actually remained at the level of discourse. The full range of analysis designated as 'sociology of everyday life', represent a set of conceptual discourse of individualism, freedom, reflexivity, communication, style and way of life, bolstered by domination of (neo) liberal economics and liberal ideology. Discussions of globalization are just the new discourse on long ago highlighted problems of rapid economic, scientific, technical and technological development, which brings all major social and cultural difficulties to collectivities such as states, nations, religions and in that way increase the problem of individual and collective identity. Along with the economical and technical changes, grows the number of risks in society, whose control becomes less possible.

One of the problems of lack of understanding of the importance and function of the discourse occurs in an attempt to distinguish one element from the discourse, which wants to assert itself as a paradigm. Such is the case with the development of 'feminist theory' (theories), where the gender element in the discourse on human relationships is separated and imposed as a theoretical paradigm.

The next problem is ignoring the discourse in order to escape from the 'old' paradigm and establish the new one. Is it, therefore, necessary for some analysis of Giddens, Bourdieu, Bauman, Derrida, Homans, Goffman or Viliri to be announced as the new paradigms, or accepted as a discourse within the theoretical paradigm marked as structuralism? Why run away from structuralism, when the structure is one of the main categories in the conceptual and categorical area of sociology? The absence of discourse on the conflict, class, exploitation and alienation, because of running away from Marxism, has created a gap in theoretical sociology building which was not successfully completed by the terms dromology, gender inequality, simulation, interactionism, dramaturgy, exchange, etc.

The neglect of discourse in the conceptual paradigm is perhaps the biggest problem in modern sociology. Here, we will show it in two examples. The concept of global society in classical sociological theory relates to the general society understood as a theoretical construction, the highest level of the logical and epistemological abstractions. In the thoughtful operationalization of the term we have in mind the three levels: the material basis of society, legal and political organization and culture. Practical and empirical operationalization of this concept was not possible, because it excludes the spatial and temporal dimension. Today, this conceptual paradigm is obsolete, unproductive and should be replaced. It is obvious that the concept of global society, so far includes the temporal and spatial dimension. It develops these years and decades and includes the space around the globe. Relations, processes, phenomena, and some institutions in this society are spread globally, with global consequences, including global resources²⁸, global migration, global workforce and ‘global chains of maternal care.’²⁹ Only after the sufficiently developed discourse within the conceptual paradigm global society, it is possible to set more valuable forecasts on the roads, the importance and consequences of globalization and talk about the sociological theory of globalization, as the new theoretical paradigm.

Another example that we want to stress out a subject of serious and comprehensive discourse is a conceptual paradigm that sets the framework for the understanding of man as a social being. In Marx and Durkheim's learning a man was seen as a social being, with the difference that is in Marx a man forced (under duress) a social creature, alienated from its essence and tends to be a free social being, because only the company can build and gain freedom, while for Durkheim a man is subordinated to society as a higher content, a higher being, because for human society is everything, complete compliance. For this paradigm is necessary to undergo a new discursive check to see if the modern man is a social being, or the free and emancipated person, or perhaps lonely, isolated and lost individual. Our view is that man is no longer a social being, not by force, ‘per se’, or self-consciously, with the expressed and fulfilled potential, ‘for myself.’ During the historical development, a man wanted to get rid of their forced, imposed, given societal and to obtain freedom, at its option given sociability. Modern man becomes again a ‘cave being’, but now not on the loss and reduce of needs³⁰, deprivation and hardship, but rather on the basis

²⁸ Experts talk about the assumed global resources of oil, gas, precious metals, drinking water and they tell forecast of the duration of existing reserves.

²⁹ Hohšild, E. R., *Global care chains and emotional surplus value*, Haton, W., Giddens, E., *On the edge*, Belgrade, 2003.

³⁰ Marx in the early works talks about the return of man-workers in a cave (a figurative term for workers uncomfortable flat), “which was poisoned by the stinking breath of civilization.” The worker does this because of the lack of means of livelihood, and forced the various sacrifices, poverty, savings, the reduction needs, ‘even for the air and movement.’

of growth and accumulation of needs, the continuing increase in consumption, expressed desires and motives that every day he owns more than the previous day. New man cave is not “uncomfortable den”, but comfortable palaces or luxury apartment equipped with sophisticated devices and communicators in order not to feel isolated in their voluntary isolation. Modern man has developed a need for a virtual community, the virtual ‘social networks’. He thus became the ‘network being’, a global network, enough distant from society to not participate if there is no need, but also close enough to use all community resources, to compete, to be rich, to own immensely, to rule, to be powerful, greedy and irresponsible. Our response to Turen’s challenge would be that the company still exists, that man is less a social being (does not see society as its essence) and more a ‘new’ cave being and that there is the development of new forms of sociability, based on new forms of communication (such as virtual networks and cyber space). It is true that society as a whole, as a separate entity³¹, does not have the power and supremacy over man, what had in the past two centuries, but now some of its elements (companies, media, ideology) achieve full domination over man and social relations.

There are many conceptual paradigms that discursive theory and discursive practices of modern sociology could (should) check and change (classes, state power, ideology³², socialization, knowledge, democracy). Thus, for example, through a discourse, the concept of democracy as rule of majority, should be balanced against the concept of meritocracy as a rule of knowledge (best biography). We believe that in this discourse would show that democracy has exhausted all its potential and that it should be replaced, as a conceptual paradigm and a practical paradigm.

Conclusion

The contemporary sociology has neglected the role and importance of the discourse within the scientific research, analysis and explanations. There was a significant delay in establishing the new theoretical paradigm, although it has appeared a lot of theoretical trials and analysis with aspirations to become a new paradigms, ‘grand theories’³³. After the abandonment of Marxist and structuralist paradigm, a lot of ‘little’ theories showed up, which in our opinion

³¹ In classical paradigmatic and discursive activities, the reality is divided into three entities: the nature, society and man's opinion.

³² About the discourse related to ideology, its impact and consequences in society, see: Tauren, A. Van Dijk., *Ideology and Discourse, A Multidisciplinary Introduction*, Barselona, 2003.

³³ The term “grand theory” used by George Ricer meaning by that ‘a broad and ambitious attempt’ by some authors to present a ‘chapter of human history’, such as Parsons, Merton, Dahrendorf, Luman, then Norbert Elias, Giddens, Bourdieu, and other contemporary sociologists (Ricer, J., *Contemporary Sociological Theory and its classical roots*, Official Gazette, Belgrade, 2009).

did not reach the level and strength of these two paradigms. This is another indication of weakness of science to develop continuity of paradigms and their gradual shift. The underdeveloped discourse (within the paradigms and among paradigms) has led to the escape of the paradigms and return of sociology to the “small” issues and concerns. Of course, it is necessary for sociology to deal with ‘small’ and ‘big’ issues, but there must be balance between them.

We set up another important question: are these many discussions, ‘grand theories’, ‘school of thought’, classified in the ‘post-modern theory’ and ‘theory of everyday life’, the theoretical paradigm or just the conceptual and theoretical discourses? We think that this is a discourse and that all these discourses can be divided into the theoretical paradigm that would be designated as a theory of individualism or individualistic theory. The intention of these discourses is to emphasize the affirmation of the individual, its freedom, the separation of the system, to indicate the relativization of ‘all that exists in society’, influenced by postmodernism and liberalism. Of course, there is a strong influence of science and technology that led to a new ‘human evolution’ through the optic of the eye, alarms, video surveillance, biotic parts of the body and other forms of strengthening human's strength, control and power, all in favor of gaining profit and personal wealth, regardless of the risks³⁴. This has prompted sociologists to think about individual, personality, individual as a new, key actor in the present society.

It is necessary to stress out the importance of theoretical and practical constructivism (constructionism) in the discursive habitus of modern sociology. Theoretical constructions are important instruments of conceptual paradigms as a synthesis of discursive practice, which always provides the elements for the construction of concepts. However, constructionism can not be productive if it completely breaks up with elements of the paradigm within which it moves. Constructionism is not a substitute for the ‘objective reality’ and can not construct reality. If constructionism goes out beyond the framework of the paradigm, then it allows the possibility of establishing the paradigm of common sense there. Today there is a trend that every particular opinion or position is declared a paradigm. The views of individual authors may introduce a problem in the discursive space, but not form a paradigm. It must be the result of consensus of the scientific community.

³⁴ Man's 'technological evolution' are making steady progress, biotic parts of the body (artificial implants) are becoming more sophisticated, but the new problems are occurring. Thus, bacteria and new viruses are becoming resistant to antibiotics and they return to some old diseases. This behavior was led by pharmaceutical companies running for profit and forced consumption of drugs which are carried out by resistance.

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