



## ***Private Sociologies and Burawoy's Sociology Types*** **Reflections on Newtonian and Quantal** **Sociological Imaginations**

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**Abstract:** Reflecting on Michael Burawoy's classification of sociology into professional, critical, policy, and public types, and the adoption of the latter as the theme of the ASA's 99th Annual Meeting, in this paper I argue that the drive toward increasingly global and world-historical public sociologies may prove hazardous in the absence of a parallel emphasis on the development and practice of private inter/intrapersonal sociologies. This requires self-critical revisitation of our basic definitions and theories in sociology in order to develop unified theoretical frameworks that meet the challenges of understanding and practicing the dialectics of public and private social processes in the 21st century. Needed are efforts to move beyond Newtonian definitions and theorizations of society and sociology and embrace new quantal sociological imaginations that creatively and integrally engage our macro and micro sociologies in favor of simultaneously world-historical and inter/intrapersonal exercises absent of rigid predetermined frameworks. Public sociologies can not advance our theoretical and applied sociologies of what is or what can be in the absence of parallel efforts in invigorating our sociological imaginations of our private, inter/intrapersonal social landscapes. Although personal troubles can best be understood in relation to broader public issues, the latter themselves can most effectively be addressed and resolved through the actions of specific individual agencies who champion the need for broader socio-historical interpretation and change as deeply personal exercises in self-knowledge and self-liberation. As C. Wright Mills emphasized, what sparks the sociological imagination is the meeting of public and private sociologies. In closing, the paper highlights the research and pedagogical value of a sociology of self-knowledge that expands the sociological imagination in both directions in favor of intimately self-reflective and increasingly world-historical explorations.

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The Title and Theme Statement of the 99th Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association (ASA) held in August 2004 drew our attention to the increasingly global nature of the public sphere which sociologists need to rigorously study

and participate in during the coming decades. The use of the term "public sociologies" by Michael Burawoy, the then outgoing ASA President, was an important step on the part of the ASA to institutionalize respect for sociologies that "move beyond the

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academy” and reach out in practical ways to public bodies large and small. In the words of Burawoy as stated in the Theme Statement, “More than ever the world needs public sociologies—sociologies that transcend the academy and engage wider audiences. Our potential publics are multiple, ranging from media audiences to policy makers, from think tanks to NGOs, from silenced minorities to social movements.”<sup>1</sup>

Although the Theme Statement seemed to be drawing inspiration from C. Wright Mills’s “sociological imagination” to invigorate our public sociological endeavors—reminding us of how sociologists’ critical imaginations “help turn private troubles into public issues”—there seemed to be an absence of a similar emphasis in the statement on the need for invigorating our *private* sociologies. It may be the case that public sociologies “challenge the world as we know it, exposing the gap between what is and what could be” (Theme Statement), but such an approach may not bear fruit in the absence of sociologies which help us understand and influence the way macrosocial structures shape and are shaped by the microsocial processes of our private lives.

In this working paper, an earlier version of which was presented as a refereed paper at the same 99th annual meeting of the ASA, I aim to revisit Burawoy’s call for public sociologies and the conceptual typology of sociologies that he utilized in order to advance his invitation. I will pursue this goal by way of focusing on a symposium of papers that emerged as a result of a series of seminars Burawoy conducted at Boston College in April 7-9 2003.<sup>2</sup> Taking for granted the value and need for engage-

<sup>1</sup> See ASA website: <http://www2.asanet.org/convention/2004/theme1.html>

<sup>2</sup> A pre-publication copy of this symposium was available (but no longer) at the time of original writing of this paper at: <http://www.unc.edu/depts/soc/colloquium/burawoy.pdf>. The collection was later published in *Social Problems*, 51:1 (February), p.103-130.

ment with public sociologies, I aim in this paper to explore the self-defeating nature of the limits a one-sided emphasis on public sociologies can pose in the absence of an equally serious and rigorous attention to private sociologies. I will then take this exploration further to examine the paradigmatic conceptual frameworks that have informed our foundational definitions of society and sociology, in the hopes of finding explanations for why the dichotomy of public and private continue to be maintained in our sociological theorizing and practices. I will conclude by highlighting the value of the sociology of self-knowledge as advanced in my work, concerned with advancing liberating autobiographical research in increasingly comparative, global, and world-historical frameworks.

I will first briefly revisit C. Wright Mills’s definition of the sociological imagination, followed by a synopsis and then critique of the conceptual framework and arguments advanced by Michael Burawoy as part of the symposium at Boston College. An exploration of the distinction between what I call Newtonian and quantal sociological imaginations will conclude this paper.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> In the aftermath of the April 2003 symposium at Boston College (whose proceedings was published in February 2004 in *Social Problems*), and since the writing of the earlier version of the present paper was presented at the ASA in August 2004, lively discussions and similar symposia and numerous published articles have followed. Among these are a collection of three “Commentary & Debates” articles (and an introduction) in the June 2004 issue of *Social Forces* (volume 82, issue 4, 1601-1643), and another one more recently in an entire Fall-Winter 2005 special double issue of *The American Sociologist* (volume 36, no. 3-4). In both of the above, Michael Burawoy was also a contributor. I hope that in the near future I will expand upon the inquiry advanced in the present working paper in order to incorporate issues discussed in the above and other debates on public sociologies. For specific titles of contributions in the above two other symposia/collections, see the bibliography located at the end of this paper.

C. Wright Mills was quite clear about the elements of what constituted his sociological imagination as a whole: 1-An awareness of the structure of society in which the individual presently lives; 2-A world-historical awareness of the spatiotemporal position and peculiarity of the given society in the context of human history as a whole; and 3-the kinds of "human nature" associated with that society, and the nature of troubles commonly experienced by men and women living in that society as compared with those in other world-historical spacetimes (Mills, 1959, 6-7). Of particular interest for our purpose here when considering Mills's formulation was distinguishing not only the private troubles and public issues from one another, but specifically contrasting on one hand (at the macro level) the contemporary social awareness with the world-historical contexts in which the person finds her/himself, and on the other hand (at the micro level) the inner life of the person with the variously stated "external career,"<sup>4</sup> "the range of his immediate relations with others,"<sup>5</sup> or "local environments of the individual."<sup>6</sup> In other words, there was a secondary breakdown within each of the private and public spheres which constitute the dialectical pairs of the sociological imagination as a whole. For Mills, all these four spatiotemporal landscapes, and more so their interpenetrations of one another, constituted the legitimate subject matter of sociology, such that the serious and com-

mitted intellectual could not remain so without grappling with *all the elements* in a totality of what constitutes the sociological imagination as a whole. What made the sociological imagination distinctive, in other words, was not one or another element in isolation from the other(s), but the very need and ability to link them to one another as part of a singular sociological inquiry.

That Mills's sociological imagination spread like a brush fire across the discipline in the coming decades is a fact. His insistence on the linking of macro and micro sociologies in favor of intellectual commitment to meaningful social inquiry and transformation was meant to counter the sterile grand theorizing of Parsonian Functionalists of his period. It clearly succeeded in that effort, and has now penetrated the awareness of most scholars in the field. However, one may question whether the "tragedy of sociology" Mills was lamenting about during the 1950s and 1960s may perhaps be revisiting and threatening the sociological imagination today in the form of an emphasis on the global nature of public issues at the expense of efforts towards parallel but integral development of private sociologies focusing on inter/intrapersonal social landscapes.

How should we understand Mills's warning that "No social study that does not come back to the problems of biography, of history and of their intersections within a society has completed its intellectual journey" (Mills, 1959, 6)? Is there today a unified sociological theory which meaningfully takes account of the complexity of the range of social spacetimes whose comprehension was considered by Mills to be an essential prerequisite for practicing good sociology? In other words, has the gap between macro and micro sociologies (or sociological theories) narrowed or widened in the course of the several decades since Mills penned his views? Is ASA's conference theme statement merely a pragmatic effort in favor of focusing on a specific as-

<sup>4</sup> "The sociological imagination enables its possessors to understand the larger historical scene in terms of its meaning for the inner life and the external career of a variety of individuals." (Mills, 1959, 5)

<sup>5</sup> "*Troubles* occur within the character of the individual and within the range of his immediate relations with others; they have to do with his self and with those limited areas of social life of which he is directly and personally aware." (Mills, 1959, 8)

<sup>6</sup> "*Issues* have to do with matters that transcend these local environments of the individual and the range of his inner life." (Mills, 1959, 8)

pect of our sociological imaginations—namely, the public issues—or is it rather a symptom of an underlying structural problem in our sociological frameworks which allows new intellectual fads to sway it away from the balance Mills’s sociological imagination called for? Why not take up “Public and Private Sociologies” as the theme of the ASA’s annual meeting?

In a Symposium of papers commonly titled “Public Sociologies: A Symposium from Boston College” (*Social Problems* 2004: 103-130)<sup>7</sup> Michael Burawoy and colleagues provide a valuable effort in explicating and illustrating what is meant by “public sociologies.” Burawoy, in particular, provides a clear statement on his definition of public sociology in his introduction,

The first step is to name it—public sociology—a sociology that seeks to bring sociology to publics beyond the academy, promoting dialogue about issues that affect the fate of society, placing the values to which we adhere under a microscope. What is important here is the multiplicity of public sociologies, reflecting the multiplicity of publics—visible and invisible, thick and thin, active and passive, local, national and even global, dominant and counter publics. The variety of publics stretches from our students to the readers of our books, from newspaper columns to interviews, from audiences in local civic groups such as churches or neighborhoods to social movements we facilitate. The possibilities are endless. (Burawoy, in Burawoy et al. 2004:104)

<sup>7</sup> A copy of papers included in this then-forthcoming symposium was available online (<http://www.unc.edu/depts/soc/colloquium/burawoy.pdf>) at the time of initial writing of the present paper.

Public sociology, however, constitutes for Burawoy only one of four main types of sociology as proposed in his writing. Referring to each as a “quadrant” of the whole gamut of sociological endeavor, Burawoy distinguishes four types of sociology from one another: Public Sociology, Policy Sociology, Professional Sociology, and Critical Sociology classifying them mainly in terms of the kind of knowledges and audiences they take up for their work.

Public sociology addresses extra-academic, multiple communities and real and thick publics, increasingly global in nature and scope, as its immediate audience; in this category, two Gramscian subtypes, traditional and organic are identified to distinguish between public sociologies that deal with established and institutional elite publics, and the organic sociologies which seek to establish enduring dialogical ties with ordinary publics in civil society, communities, grassroots movements, etc.<sup>8</sup>

Policy sociology relates more readily to the needs and problems of social policy-making institutions at various levels of institutional hierarchy, addressing itself also to extra-academic audiences. Professional sociology is concerned more directly with abstract and technical aspects of qualitative or quantitative sociological theorizing or empirical work and data collection and use, taking academic citizens as its primary audience. And Critical sociology also takes academic citizens as audience, providing needed reflexive critical assessment and evaluation for enlivening sociology as a discipline. Policy and Professional sociologies are concerned with instrumental

<sup>8</sup> “We call the first elite or “traditional” public sociology, and the second grass roots or “organic” public sociology. These are just two types. In reality public sociology may combine traits from each. Any individual may have feet in both camps, or oscillate between them. The analytical distinction between traditional and organic public sociologist serves its purpose if it calls attention to the diversity of public sociologies.” (Burawoy, in Burawoy et al. 2004:104)

knowledge production, while Public and Critical sociologies tend to be reflexive in their sociological endeavors. Burawoy concurs that none of the quadrants of the sociological typology can exist and function without the others, the tension among them helping to keep a balance needed for maintaining sociology as a professional, critical, policy-oriented, and publicly relevant intellectual and academic discipline. The types must be seen as *sociologies*, rather than *sociologists*, to highlight the fact that particular sociologists may practice various combinations of the various types at various points in their careers.

The need for classification, as exhaustive as it appears to be in the typological model proposed by Burawoy, seems to be central to the task of institutionalizing and promoting the hitherto neglected public sociology. In Burawoy's words,

In advancing a program for public sociology this is the risk one has to take, but public sociology's very presence creates a new terrain of debate and dialogue within the academy. *The struggle for public sociology is first a struggle over classification*, a struggle for a classification which brings public sociology into a relation with professional, policy and critical sociologies as opposed to a classification into quantitative and qualitative sociology, micro and macro sociology, pure and applied sociology, etc. The first step to public sociology is to recognize it, the second step is to legitimate it, the third step is to institutionalize it, the fourth step is to defend and expand it! (Burawoy, in Burawoy et al. 2004:126; italics added)

However, it may take, as invited by Burawoy himself given his interdependent sociology types, some efforts in critical sociology to see not only the contributions,

but also the shortcomings of the classification system proposed to advance public sociology. As exhaustive as the classification appears to be for the purpose for which it is invented, the explication of what seems to be the dialectical prerequisite for what is required for the promotion of sociological imagination tends to be lacking in the model. It is certainly true that Burawoy, as quoted above, recognizes a "micro and macro sociology" typology as another alternative mode of classifying sociology (along with quantitative/qualitative, pure/applied, etc.); however, the very instigation of a notion of public sociology in the absence of a sociology of private life seems to raise questions about the value of introducing another classification system without making efforts not only in integrating them with one another, but also in articulating—at least verbally, if not in schematic fashion—the relationships across the existing and proposed classification models.

One can understand the need for parallel but separate typologies, as, for instance, each of the professional, policy, critical, and public sociologies may contain sub-classificatory interests in micro/macro, quantitative/qualitative, or pure/applied sociologies. However, statements such as,

The next step is to frame public sociology in relation to other types of sociology. Neither traditional nor organic public sociology is charity work we do in our private life, *something apart from sociology "proper."* It has a dynamic connection to professional, critical and policy sociologies. (Burawoy, in Burawoy et al. 2004:104; italics added)

raise eyebrows (at least mine,...) about how society and sociology themselves are defined in the first place. What seems to be implied in the above statement—perhaps a subconscious slip and not really meant to convey what it does—is the notion that

what goes on in private lives (even in terms of involvement in charity work, one should add) is beyond the scope of the sociology “proper.” The use of quotation marks in “proper” may be an effort in problematizing artificial disciplinary borders in the academia, but the essential message given in the statement is that what matters most is the public involvement, rather than private lives of the members of public to whom (especially organic) public sociologies are encouraged to reach out. To do a sociologist’s work, in other words, may be seen in terms of how to, at best, turn private troubles into public issues, and thereby make them a subject worthy of sociological work. Is this what Mills intended to say? Are our private troubles themselves legitimate subject matters of sociology, along with the broader social contexts within which they must be comprehended, addressed, and resolved?

Stephen Pfohl, one of the contributors to the same Boston College symposium whose accounts are now compiled in the *Social Problems* (2004), seems to be addressing the same concern when seeking to engage in the discourse on public sociologies. Evoking what he finds essential in Mills’s sociological imagination, Pfohl writes:

If, as teachers, we are to effectively engage our students as a public we must do far more than provide them with information about how society works. This point was made by Mills (1959), who argued, “it is not only information” that students need to become active participants in a democratic society, particularly in a society where “information often dominates their attention and overwhelms their capacities to assimilate it” (p. 5). Instead, what is needed most “is a quality of mind that will help them use information and to develop reason in order to achieve lucid summations of what is going on in

the world and what may be happening within themselves.” (1959:5) This was what Mills meant by the sociological imagination—a quality of mind that enables people to make interpretive links between biographical experience and the historical social structures which mediate and give shape to experience. (Stephen Pfohl, in Burawoy et al. 2004:114)

As subtly critical as it may seem to be, thanks in part to the recognition of critical sociology in Burawoy’s classification system, the above statement points again to what is essentially valuable in Millsian sociological imagination—an effort in fact in the opposite direction of “declassifying” sociology across the private and public divides.

Classifications are useful, but how they are done can improve or lessen the usefulness for which they are devised. Abstract empiricism or grand theorizing, as valuable they may have been, were treated by Mills negatively due to the fact that they moved away from the real everyday life of the individuals whose personal and private troubles are neglected in the context of overly professionalizing, policy-orienting, and I would dare to say “public”-catering academia which did not see the trees because of the forest. A critical sociologist as Mills was—and, not to forget, a public and alternative policy-advocating sociologist to boot, with many ideas about how sociologists should conduct themselves as intellectual professionals—he would have perhaps seen as much danger in grand “globalizing” efforts in the academia today at the expense of neglect of the personal lives and troubles of individuals. Just because we deal with private troubles in order to see the public issues shaping them, does not mean that persons do not need conceptual and theoretical frameworks to analyze their inner, and interpersonal social experiences

at the private level—and, of course, seek to exercise their sociological imaginations by linking them to broader social issues and concerns. Conversely—and this is most important—the way broader and public social events shape private individual lives can best be comprehended, and *resisted and transformed*, by persons who are conceptually and educationally equipped and trained to notice and comprehend such global social forces at work and permeating their inner and interpersonal lives in everyday life.

I wonder where would George Herbert Mead's work on the self be located in the four-fold classification system devised by Burawoy, as it seems to me Mead does not readily fall into either of Burawoy's four categories. It seems to me that he was more a private sociologist, concerned with microsociological issues that are as essential for the development of sociological self-consciousness in the individual as broader and macro sociological theories and frameworks. Goffman's and Cooley's efforts in the symbolic interactionist tradition, or efforts by Berger and Luckmann, Schutz, Garfinkel, and others in the phenomenological tradition, along with other microsociologists' works, have shed considerable

light on not only the smaller public but also the private and inner lives of persons in everyday life.

The question again arises whether the purging of private sociologies from the classification has underlying structural roots rather than being merely a result of professional pragmatism in advancing a specific ASA annual meeting theme. Consider the mode of illustration of the four-fold classification system in Burawoy's diagram, for instance (the figure is reproduced below in Table 1).

Burawoy clearly reminds his readers that the classification system does not hold rigidly in real life. Individual scholars may practice any combination of the various sociological types at any point or during various periods of their scholarship. In other words, as Weber proposed in terms of his ideal typologies, here too we have a scheme which in empirical settings exist in fluid combinations and variations. Of interest, however, is to note the inherent problem of such schematic renderings of the classification system. For instance, take Burawoy's suggestion that public sociology is a "sociology that seeks to bring sociology to publics beyond the academy." However, elsewhere, including in the ASA theme

**Table 1: Types of Sociology**

	<b>Academic Audience</b>	<b>Extra-Academic Audience</b>
<b>Instrumental Knowledge</b>	<b>PROFESSIONAL</b>	<b>POLICY</b>
<b>Reflexive Knowledge</b>	<b>CRITICAL</b>	<b>PUBLIC</b>

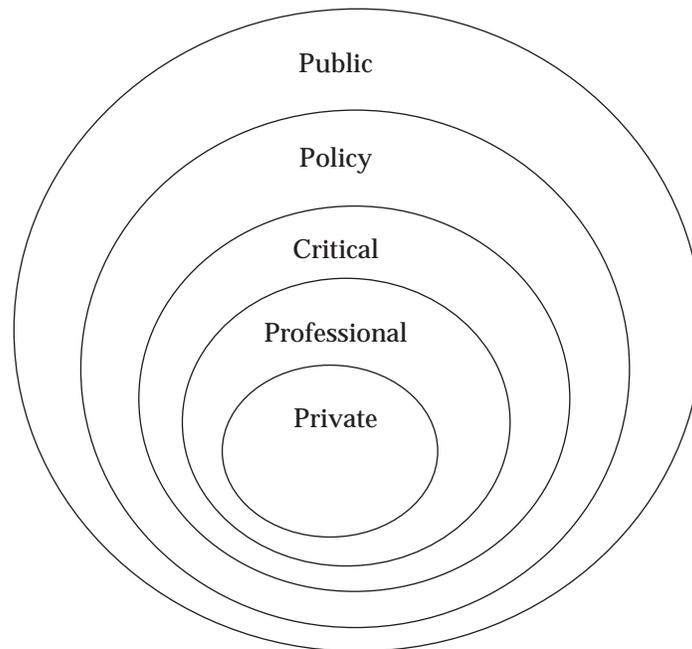
Source: Burawoy et al., "Public Sociologies: A Symposium from Boston College," *Social Problems*, 51(1), February 2004, p. 106

statement, we read that students in classrooms are, justifiably, the most immediate and perhaps important of the publics encountered by teaching sociologists. So, public sociology does not necessarily have to literally leave the academy to find its audience. In other words, we are dealing here not with mutually exclusive classification schemes, but ones based on a dialectical part-whole schema. One can argue the same for Burawoy's classification system as a whole. If students are teachers' immediate publics and by virtue of their being (or becoming) also members of public at large, potential audiences of public sociologists in society as a whole, one may argue the same for the multiple locations of sociologists in and outside academy, as producers and consumers of academic knowledges. The either/or logic of the boxed classification scheme in Burawoy may be thereby translatable into another scheme in which the overlapping of multiple identities of the so-

ciological types and their inevitable interaction with and influence upon one another may be more readily apparent.

It may perhaps be more useful, for instance, to revise the classification system proposed by Burawoy, by reconceiving it in terms of the dialectics of part-whole, one in which private sociologies are also recognized as being present at the core of all other types. In this alternative diagram (see below, Table 2)—to be interpreted in terms of overlapping parts/whole circles—what is private (smallest) and public (largest circle) are not separable from one another, but are conceptualized in terms of the dialectics of parts and whole. Private or personal troubles are interpreted as special, more narrowly defined, cases of public encounters in which encounters with the "public" are either directly (interpersonally), or indirectly (intrapersonally—that is as internalized projections of public encounters, experienced as interactions of intrapersonal

**Table 2: Types of Sociology Reclassified in Terms of the Dialectics of Part-Whole**



selves) experienced in the narrow fields of what Mills called the "local environments of the individual." For some who may not attend school, the private and public may not readily involve the mediations of professional, critical, or policy sociologies, but one may argue that whether or not one has gone through schooling (and that in college, or in sociology, for that matter), the mediating spheres of professional, critical, and policy sociologies have more or less shaped their private encounters with public issues—hence the diagram as shown above would still remain valid. Note again that in this scheme, all the other four sociological types have at their core the interaction with and concern for the private sociology, be they in terms of professional, critical, policy, or public sociological endeavors. In this scheme, in other words, the micro/macro classification separately envisaged by Burawoy is intricately incorporated into the classification, while the classification itself has been transformed from an either/or formal logical environment into one characterized by dialectics of identity and difference, where A can be at the same time non-A.

In the alternative diagram, no sociology can be conceived without the more or less presence and influence of other sociologies. In a way, audiences of private, professional, and policy sociologies are also public audiences of a special kind, Professional and Policy sociologies implicated by private and public sociological endeavors, and all involving at their core a variety of approaches to private sociological discourses. The very autobiographical nature of the contributors made to the Boston College symposium is, in fact, a tell-tale of other ways in which the "private (academic troubles)" of academic scholars themselves are shaped by and public reported as parts of the larger social issues raised in the course of their professional, critical, policy, and public sociologies. In many ways, the autobiographical accounts in the symposium

are themselves practical acknowledgments of the presence and the centrality of private sociological encounters. "Society," and "sociology," in this alternative scheme, therefore, are not solely defined in terms of the "other" but also of self relations. How a person relates to one's selves in the "persona" proper, in other words is as much a social relation as how he or she relates to "others." In alienating social experiences, in fact, one can easily note how one's selves become "others" even in intrapersonal landscapes—this being most apparent in sever dissociative and multiple personality disorders where an inner public of alienated selves may exist.

The "public," therefore, may be alternatively seen as much in terms of relations of interpersonal and inter/intragroup encounters, as in terms of reflexive intrapersonal encounters of selfhoods symbolically represented within the encounters of generalized others without. In this alternative scheme, it will not be feasible to ask the question Burawoy asks, "Let me return once again to the question: are there any publics *out there*?" (Burawoy et al., 2004: 128; italics added), for it is recognized that the public does not exist only "out there," but also within the deepest recesses of the individual's subjective reality sitting in solitude in contemplation of what to write for a public symposium next month. The dualism of private and public, academy and extra-academy, instrumental and reflexive, and knowledge/audience thereby is transformed into dialecticities of identify/opposites conceived in terms of part-whole modalities.

If we take seriously Mead's contentions (in *Mind, Self, and Society*) that "After a self has arisen, it in a certain sense provides for itself its social experiences;" that "A multiple personality is in a certain sense normal...;" and also that "What we have here is a situation in which there can be different selves and it is dependent upon the set of social reactions that is involved as to which

self we are going to be;" then we may begin to wonder, putting our reflexive Critical Sociology hat on, whether it makes any sense to take the assumed "individual" as a fundamental atomic unit of our Newtonian sociologies. In other words, Is society a system of interacting "individuals" or groups of individuals, or is it rather—adopting a deeper sub-atomic sociological imagination, a system of interacting selves, intra-, inter, and extra-personally conceived in relations respectively to the same person, to other persons, and to the natural and/or built environments?

In the Newtonian sociology of individual billiard balls, publics are sought in the "other," private and publics are separately classifiable, and what is in one sociological box cannot be at the same time in the other sociological box. One has to at best juggle professional, critical, policy, public, and private sociological balls as distinct and separable endeavors. In quantum sociologies, however, the very same policy sociological project is perceivable as an effort in public sociology, may be critical, and may be done with professional precision and skills—while being imaginatively self-reflective about what all that means in terms of one's private troubles.

In Newtonian sociology, either/or logic rules, in quantum sociology and/both logic becomes conceivable. In Newtonian sociology, sociological imagination at best seeks to make private troubles "sociological" by making them or conceiving of them as public issues; in quantum sociology, sociological imagination recognizes the public nature of the very personal and private troubles, seeking to acknowledge the relationality of private troubles and public issues in terms of the dialectics of parts and wholes, neither being conceivable and understandable (and therefore transformable) apart from the other.

Mills was right when he suggested that

In every intellectual age some one

style of reflection tends to become a common denominator of cultural life. Nowadays, it is true, many intellectual fads are widely taken up before they are dropped for new ones in the course of a year or two. Such enthusiasms may add spice to cultural play, but leave little or no intellectual trace. That is not true of such ways of thinking as "Newtonian physics," or "Darwinian biology." Each of these intellectual universes became an influence that reached far beyond any special sphere of idea and imagery. In terms of them, or in terms derived from them, unknown scholars as well as fashionable commentators came to re-focus their observations and re-formulate their concerns. (1959, 13-14)

To be sure, the Newtonian scientific model heralded a new approach to knowing and changing the world, hence becoming one of the defining features of the "modern" culture, because it substituted for the merely speculative and mysterious conception of the universe governed by unknowable supernatural forces, a conception of it as a law-governed universe in which, given sufficient data, even the mind and purpose of God could be measured and calculated. Newton's three laws of motion of matter were a revelation for his time. In his own words, these laws were as follows:

**FIRST LAW:** Every body continues in its state of rest, or of uniform motion in a right line, unless it is compelled to change that state by a force impressed on it.

**SECOND LAW:** The change in motion is proportional to the motive force impressed; and is made in the direction of the right line in which that force is impressed.

THIRD LAW: To every action there is always opposed an equal reaction; or, the mutual actions of two bodies are always equal, and directed to contrary parts.

To compare, let me quote here two popularized versions of the first law, available on two different educational website on the internet:

“ Law 1—An object moving in a straight line will continue moving in a straight line, unless acted on by an outside force. Also, an object at rest will stay at rest. The word for this is inertia.”

([http://www.edhelper.com/ReadingComprehension\\_27\\_20.html](http://www.edhelper.com/ReadingComprehension_27_20.html))

.....

“I. Every object in a state of uniform motion tends to remain in that state of motion unless an external force is applied to it. “

(<http://csep10.phys.utk.edu/astr161/lect/history/newton3laws.html>)

The reason I am quoting the different versions of the first law is to highlight a chief characteristic of the Newtonian world-view contained in them, namely, the so-called “billiard-ball game” conception of the universe, in which bodies act upon one another from “outside,” “externally.” Interesting to note here, and that’s why I am quoting other versions for comparison, is that in Newton’s own words, the externality of impression of force is not necessarily implied—though he almost certainly meant it to be interpreted as such. The notion “impressed on it,” in other words, leaves it open whether the object itself

could impress a force upon *itself*, as one of the possibilities. But Newton apparently did not mean it as such, and that is why he was interpreted accordingly to convey the notion of force as externally impressed on the object. The Newtonian conception, in other words, implied a universe structured as bodies, very large to very small, whose motions are law-governed by forces they *externally* exert on one another. This view, we should note in passing, still accommodates Newton’s religious world-view, since the ultimate “external” force may still be conceived to be that exerted by God. God and his spirit or will is thus posable as an externality to matter in such a cosmology. Below, on the human scale of things, the same may be accommodated in terms of the externality of mind versus matter. To this I will return later.

We need not go much further than examination of these laws to remind ourselves of the basic structure of the Newtonian world-view and science, and to be able to observe the identity of this cosmology with the particular Newtonian model of sociology. In the Newtonian cosmology, bodies, large or small, relate to one another as external entities in precisely determinable and predictable law-governed relationships whose structure can be discovered and analyzed through studying the nature of forces they exert on one another from without. Accordingly, we humans may not know exactly these forces in very large or very small scales, and may therefore have to resort to various statistical tools of measuring their probabilistic outcomes, but this does not mean that these forces are in and of themselves indeterminable, unpredictable, and chaotic. The order of the universe, from God’s nature above to the movement of smallest particles of matter below, is presumed to be precise, determined, and potentially knowable. This, of course, was a revolution in the prescientific cosmologies preceding Newton, for it made it possible to move beyond mysteries and specula-

tions about nature, motivating generations of scientists to seek the truth in actual facts of existence. The power of the Newtonian science was so immense, and its force so powerful, that even the genius that was Einstein, despite his newfound conception of the universe based on the theories of general and special relativity, could not abandon Newton's ultimate vision of universe as an ordered medium. "God does not play dice," Einstein said when dismissing the new arguments that were being advanced by the emerging quantum physicists in favor of a vision advocating a less determinable and predictable, ultimately a "chaotic" universe. Einstein, like Newton perhaps, was intensely eager to discover and read the mind of God to provide the ultimate explanation for the nature of the universe, and by extension, ourselves.

Paradoxically, in recent decades quantum physics has increasingly drawn a picture of the universe of subatomic particles as chaotic, indeterminable, unpredictable, and open-ended. While the Newtonian laws still hold for the motion of large objects, at the subatomic levels investigations have found Newtonian laws inoperative for quantal objects. It appears, such objects have a "mind of their own," their behavior not following the "law-governed" expectations of Newtonian dicta. Beneath the apparent order lies another subatomic structure of quantal bodies behaving in what appear to be "strange" ways. The vision of a mechanical universe has thereby given way to one governed at its roots by chaos. On the quantal level, dichotomization and rigid classification seems to be next to impossible. The either/or logical argumentations give way in quantum science to the fuzzy logic of and/both, objects being recast as processes and relationalities with fuzzy boundaries, intertwined with other objects, involving multiple directionalities, multiple trajectories, and diverse and unpredictable outcomes.

The new sciences of physics and cos-

mology are, of course, hard at work in solving this puzzle of all time, to reconcile the orderly laws of the very large, with the chaotic and strange behavior of very small quantal objects. Postmodern science, if there could be such a thing given the contradiction in terms, is in a transitional state, having already questioned and moved beyond the "modern" Newtonian vision of the universe, increasingly developing new methods, techniques, and theories about how the quantal universe operates. This dualism of macro and micro visions, however, not having arrived at a unitary theory of the universe, renders potentials for both regression and progress.

An important question that arises from latest debates in science, in my view, is the plausibility of multiple visions of universe, and appreciation of the value each may hold for further advancement of science. The universe, in other words, can be alternatively viewed as a system of cosmoses, a system of galaxy clusters, a system of galaxies, a system of stars, a system of atomic elements, or a system of subatomic, quantal entities. Do these alternative ways of viewing the universe have equal value for the kind of visions and theories we may develop about the "behavior" of their respective elements? A vision of a solar system, for instance, provides a much different sense of orderliness than a microscopic vision of a human brain system, or a theoretical consideration of strange behavior of quantal objects. What difference does it make to view the universe as a system of law-governed billiard balls vs. a seemingly chaotic system of strangely and unpredictably behaving quantal objects?

How should one reconcile the quantum vision of the universe with the orderly cosmologies of Newton or even Einstein? Are they mutually exclusive visions and interpretations of the universe? Are Newtonian and quantum physics irreconcilable with one another? And what difference does it make to reorient our sociological

imaginations from Newtonian to quantal modalities? Are there, parallel to alternative visions of the universe as reviewed above, alternative visions of society whose value for self and social knowledge and transformation may prove to be in variance with one another?

In the preceding we have seemingly moved far beyond the question of classification of sociology, and of Burawoy's various sociology types in particular. The overly cosmic "pubic" discourse of Newtonian versus quantal physics seems to have no apparent relevance to our own "private" disciplinary matters in sociology and its definitions. However, it is precisely the point of this essay to emphasize how seemingly grand and overly local issues can be seen both as intricately interlinked modes of expression of the same dilemma—that personal troubles and public issues are themselves two sides of the same coin, or, better put, need to be conceptualized in terms of part-whole dialectics. At issue here, by resorting to the discussion of what Mills also calls Newtonian viewpoints whose influence permeates our knowledges in a long-term, and large-scale span, is to draw attention to the rather strange proposition being advanced here that not only our typologies of sociology, but the very definitions of what society and sociology are can and should be problematized to note their Newtonian architectures. To borrow Burawoy's own expression, but differently, the struggle must be not only about classifications of sociology, but what sociology and society are in the first place. It is the more fundamental structures of our academic habitus of taken-for-granted definitions, in other words, that has given rise to an either/or modality of argument over private or public sociologies, leading Burawoy and others to engage in classificatory struggles.

A sociology that operates with a definition of society as a system of interacting (presumed) individuals—or groups of indi-

viduals—can be quite different from that which conceives society as a system of interacting selves, intra-, inter-, and extrapersonally conceived. The latter model can subsume the former one as a special case, where persons have achieved and display individuated thoughts, feelings, and actions, but especially in an alienated/alienating social landscape, this can not be readily assumed. Strange, it is, but I believe the recognition of this definitional distinction can signify and call for a radical paradigm shift in sociological imagination, sociological method, theory, and liberatory applied sociology. Much of existing sociological theories and concepts would need to be radically reinterpreted and readjusted in light of the paradigm shift, becoming subsumed, as particular theories, of a more general theory of social and sociological relativity.

The point here is to note that an uneasy divide between micro and macro social theories in fact echoes in parallel the divide between Newtonian and quantal scientific visions of the universe today. The micro social theories associated with symbolic interaction and phenomenological sociology, for instance, emphasize the plasticity of human nature, and the creative, indeterminacy, and unpredictability of human behavior in everyday life. At the very least, they begin with such assumptions. The macro theories associated with the conflict, functionalist, and some rational choice theories, on the other hand, take as their assumptions the determinate nature of human behavior in the web of larger social structures constituting them.

To further elaborate on the above, it is puzzling to note the degree to which the basic definitional structures of society, and thereby of sociology, are still cast in Newtonian modalities. Take the very commonsense definition of society and therefore of sociology that we use and teach in our textbooks. Here is the definition of sociology offered by the American Sociological Asso-

ciation:

Sociology is the study of social life, social change, and the social causes and consequences of human behavior. Sociologists investigate the structure of groups, organizations, and societies, and how people interact within these contexts. Since all human behavior is social, the subject matter of sociology ranges from the intimate family to the hostile mob; from organized crime to religious cults; from the divisions of race, gender and social class to the shared beliefs of a common culture; and from the sociology of work to the sociology of sports. In fact, few fields have such broad scope and relevance for research, theory, and application of knowledge.

Noteworthy here is that the subject matter of sociology, namely society or social life, is conceived of as one involving interactions of "people" in groups, small or large, and how those interactions shape their behavior, or vice versa. The Newtonian objects in this vision, in other words, are the individuals embedded in diverse sets of collective networks or systems, their external interactions with one another in diverse social contexts said to be the determinants of and/or products of their behavior. The "social," in other words, is defined in terms of interpersonal interactions or structures of action *across* people or groups of people, not also as relationalities among the elements that constitute those persons from within.

The behaviorist views of individual behavior as being shaped by external social stimuli, as we know of course, were long challenged by Mead, Cooley, Goffman, and other symbolic interactionists, who emphasized the independent self-interactive voices and roles individuals play in social inter-

actions. Weber had already noted that it is not sufficient just to study the external interactions of individuals in social life, but to seek to understand the subjective meanings they attribute to their actions. What to a behaviorist may appear to be the same action by different individuals, may actually prove to be actions taken for completely different motives and ends. People's behavior in "public," in other words, may hardly be understandable without knowledge of personal troubles driving them to take this or that public stance. It is true that according to Mead, self is a "social" product and cannot arise without a social context— "social" being interpreted here as relationships to other individuals, groups, and collectivities; it is actually to the capacity for making and using symbols, Mead and symbolic interactionists argue, that we owe the origins of our selfhoods.

However, as noted above, Mead also argued that once the self arises in the individual, it takes a life of its own, and its development through various play and game stages and phases of socialization takes place not according to a simple outside-in modality, but as a dialectical process through which the self itself participates through various modes of interpretation and self-interaction. For this reason, Mead argued that the formation of self is by no means uniform and the same for individuals located in the same social milieu, and that there was no guarantee that the multiplicity of self-identities internalized as a result of interaction and performance of social roles in diverse settings end up becoming articulated in a uniform and singular self-structure. He actually recognized that, as previously noted, multiplicity of selves are a common and normal occurrence. He did not, of course, argue, that all such states lead to extreme conditions of disorder found in some clinical situations, but the recognition of the fragmented and divided nature of what we otherwise assume to be an "individual" and singular

entity gives much credence to the argument that the assumption of singularity of individuals taken as basic units of social life is by no means and evident "social fact." The *Newtonian "billiard balls" of society, and of sociology, in other words, do have not only a mind, but often times distinctly multiple and more or less alienated minds, of their own.*

Recognizing that beneath the apparently unified and singular individuals lie chaotic landscapes of multiple selfhoods and personalities, more or less separated and alienated from one another—and this as a general condition for most people in present society, and not a malady that grips the psyche of a few persons under extreme clinical situations—one may wonder whether "individuals" should really be taken as units of analysis of social behavior and action. Are *individuals* agencies of action, or various selves constituting their often fragmented and divided landscapes within? The movement from Newtonian to quantum science involved the recognition of an underlying structure of matter that contained but was not reducible to the larger systems previously taken for granted as constituting matter. As I raised the question earlier, here, with respect to society and sociology as the study of it, one can raise the question whether society is to be viewed as a system of interacting persons in collective settings, small or large, or is society a system of underlying quantal selves whose strange, unpredictable, open-ended, and creative behaviors within and without are potential sources of alternative social knowledges and structures, rather than reverse being assumed to be the case.

To rethink sociology along new directions, involves openness to overhaul the paradigmatic structures of its definitional framework. By rethinking sociology in favor of sub-individual agencies, I don't think we move away from our sociologies and sociological careers; we actually come closer to forging new sociological imaginations to understand and transform our so-

cial realities in favor of building more harmonious environments within, across persons and cultures. Public and private are not separable categories in quantal sociology; they exist within and through one another. The public nature of our inner subjectivities is as real as the "hard and thick" publics we are encouraged to relate to on and off campus. As much as we are justly encouraged to view our students as important publics, we cannot ignore the fact that the most important lessons they will learn in class should be how to relate their personal troubles with the public issues pertaining to the varying course subject matters they take in sociology.

Burawoy's effort are undoubtedly commendable in making the issue of public relevance of sociology a public issue for all sociologists. My concerns about Newtonian sociology should by no means be interpreted as a critique solely of his work. It is a reflexive, self-critical effort, actually, of our discipline as a whole, and the structural constraints it has inherited from Newtonian world-views. The point here is not to undo Burawoy's effort, but to enrich his energetic efforts in the field of public sociology with some critical insight that may make it even more conducive to advancing our sociological imagination on and off campus. Public sociologies can even be more invigorated and pushed to the top of our agendas, if their advances are intricately and integratively bound with the advancement of private sociologies.

The reimagination of society, and thereby of sociology, in terms of socialities of intra-, inter-, and extra-personal, self relations breaks down the dualisms of private and public sociologies in favor of recognizing their twin-born and inseparable centrality to the sociological inquiry. As much as self-relations are reconceived as social relationships within and across persons, or in terms of relationships to the natural or build environments, social relations in turn are reconceived as relationalities of self-

hoods. Efforts in understanding society thereby inherently become efforts in self-knowledge at expanding intra/interpersonal, group, and broader social landscapes.

Public sociologies, as Stephen Pfohl emphasizes in his autobiographical essay in the symposium, can best be practiced in consideration of the complexity of the dialectics of personal troubles and public issues. It is only through such inner dialogues that the enormity of public issues facing the individual may be sensed and understood and acted upon in a personally committed and engaging way in the course of the individual's life time. What I have termed the Sociology of Self-Knowledge is another expression for the exercise of our sociological imaginations, stretched on the micro level to the most inner private recesses of the investigator's own intrapersonal social realities, and on the macro level to the global and world-historical landscapes which have shaped and are shaped by our personal and private social encounters without and within. In the process, the Newtonian, predetermined models of "society determines self," "society determines knowledge," etc., will need to be abandoned in favor of postdeterminist and creative formulations that equally emphasize and educate us to know and practice how self-critical agencies *can* determine social structures, and how imaginative self and global knowledges *can* shape social realities in favor of liberatory outcomes.

It is this concern with the dialecticity of personal and world-historical spacetimes that defines the central agenda of *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge* as found in this, its latest issue. The journal provides a forum for the exploration of personal self-knowledges within a re-imagined sociological framework. It seeks to creatively institutionalize new conceptual and curricular structures of knowledge whereby critical study of one's selves within an increasingly world-historical

framework is given educational and pedagogical legitimacy. The journal is a *public* forum for those who seek to radically understand and, if need be, change their world-historically constructed *private* selves. It is an alternative research and educational landscape for fostering de-alienated and self-determining human realities—one that does not shy away from using comparative and integrative frameworks in gathering and applying all useful elements of knowledge drawn from sources across cultures.

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