

FUTURE WORLD AND SOCIAL ENGINEERING

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Geleceğin Dünyası ve Toplum Mühendisliği

Bu çalışmada, sosyolojinin geçmişte tarih ve toplum felsefesi gibi öteki sosyal bilim dallarıyla olan birlikteliği vurgulandıktan sonra, özerk bilim olma yolunda günümüze dek yaşadığı değişimlerle süreçlere de kısaca değinilmektedir. Ayrıca, sosyolojinin bugünkü durumu ve dünyanın tüm karmaşık sorunlarıyla Yirmibirinci yüzyıla doğru ilerleyişi arasındaki gerçek ve potansiyel ilişkiler değerlendirilerek bu bilimsel disiplinin geleceği hakkında bazı öngörülerde bulunulmuştur.

Bundan böyle sosyolojinin, dünyamızın giderek daha da ağırlaşan sorunlarından uzak bir şekilde salt bilim ve araştırma merakının giderilmesi amacıyla yürütülen çalışmalar bütünü olarak algılanmasının olanağı kalmamıştır. Sosyoloji, giderek zorlayıcı ve dayatıcı olmayan, ama yol gösteren bir toplum mühendisliği kimliğine bürünmek durumunda olacaktır. Bu nedenle, sosyo-ekonomik, kültürel ve siyasal alanlarda uygulanacak yeni politikalarda sosyolojik yaklaşımların ve sosyologların daha etkili bir şekilde yer alması gerekir.

*Bu yaklaşım çerçevesinde sosyolojik araştırma alanlarını ve konularını Inkeles sınıflaması bağlamında yeniden tanımlarsak, onları şu kategorik başlıklar altında toplayabiliriz: **A.** sosyolojik analiz; **B.** toplumsal yaşamın temel unsurları; **C.** temel toplumsal kurumlar; **D.** temel toplumsal süreçler. Sosyolojik alanların belirlenmesi kadar, ne için ve kimin için sosyoloji yapılacağıının da iyi belirlenmesi gerekir. Tüm bunların ötesinde,*

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modern devletin ve çağdaş toplumun sorunları üzerinde yoğunlaşması gereken sosyoloji biliminin yeni sosyolog adaylarına en iyi şekilde nasıl öğretilbileceğinin somut olarak saptanması gerekir.

History may be defined as the study of human societies; So may be sociology¹. The two approaches should necessarily work together in analyzing and explaining societies, social processes and phenomena. Throughout world history, each society has changed, and is still changing. Change is structured, and structures change again². Moreover, our world is a live entity, and societies are changing in varying rapidity.

Founders of sociology have also seen this situation: For example, since the age of Durkheim, sociologists have been collecting data over the societies of their times³.

For a long time sociologists have studied in cooperation with philosophical historians and philosophers of society⁴. This cooperation was necessary and sufficient for the observation of social problems; but it was not sufficient for their solutions.

In fact, what sociology needs today is to be independent of those disciplines and their various approaches not only in discovering and presenting social problems but also in finding satisfactory solutions to them.

Furthermore, sociology needs to make use of sociometric, psychometric, econometric and educational models for (economically) developing and underdeveloped countries such as those which undertake Asian high-speed social and economic development, and take place in Asian-Pacific Link.

If we imagine modern sociology as a behavioral science, it should then seek to explain both contemporary and past human behavior⁵. It should try to explain the nature of social order and social disorder. Therefore, sociology should seek to discover, describe and explain the patterns which characterize societies and social life of man⁶.

¹ Burke, P. *Sociology and History*, London, 1980, p. 13.

² Ibid., p. 13.

³ Ibid., p. 22.

⁴ Ibid., p. 19.

⁵ Inkeles, A. *What Is Sociology?*, U.S.A. 1864, p. 19.

⁶ Ibid., p. 25.

In light of these, a general outline of sociological fields and subjects can be drawn as follows:

A. Sociological Analysis:

Human Culture and Society
Sociological Perspective
Scientific Method in Social Science

B. Primary Units of Social Life:

Social Acts and Social Relationships
The Individual Personality
Groups
Communities
Associations and Organizations
Populations
Society

C. Basic Social Institutions:

The Family and Kinship
Economic Institutions
Political and Legal Institutions
Religious Institutions
Educational and Scientific Institutions
Recreational and welfare Institutions
Aesthetic and Expressive Institutions

D. Fundamental Social Processes:

Differentiation and Stratification
Cooperation, Accommodation, Assimilation
Social Conflict
Communication
Socialization and Indoctrination
Social Evolution
Social Control
Social Deviance

Social Integration Social Change⁷.

A long time of technological advances has given sociologists and psychologists the ability to devise tests of character, to apply them by sampling methods to large groups of people, and through statistics to meaningfully analyze the results and then to examine other aspects of social structure⁸.

After World War II, the application of mathematical models to social phenomena became an increasingly popular and explicit scientific procedure⁹. Like any other conception of social world, mathematical models affect the work of sociologists¹⁰. The use of mathematical models in sociology has made only a limited contribution. In the future, however, such models may well give quite impressive results¹¹.

Each society is a system in itself. A broad classification of systems according to their component elements can be formulated as follows:

1. Mechanical Systems
2. Biological Systems
3. Socio-Economic Systems¹².

The structure of a system is the way in which that system is arranged or organized. In a system there may be sub-systems which interact with one another. By the term *interaction*, we mean quite general an operation between sub-systems¹³.

Socio-economic systems are dynamic systems, and each socio-economic system is itself a unique abstraction compared to others¹⁴. Social and structural content changes from society to society, from state to state and from religion to religion. In history, for example, Ottoman Empire was shaped by the communication and interaction which characterized the

⁷ Ibid., p. 12.

⁸ Ibid., p. 54.

⁹ Ibid., p. 42.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 43.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 43.

¹² Zaskodny, P. "The Smidak Principles: System Qualities", *Smidak Principles* (Emil F. Smidak), Switzerland, 1964, p. 176.

¹³ Ibid., p. 175.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 177.

Mediterranean. Likewise, the British Colonial Empire was based on new advances in marine navigation which made it possible to control oceans¹⁵.

Mechanical, biological and natural systems can be observed and explained objectively *from without* while the world of human activity can be observed, understood and explained *from within*.

Furthermore, the relations between the phenomena of the human world are the relations of value and purpose¹⁶. In this case, sociology for whom and for what? This is absolutely a very important question, although not a new one¹⁷. In other words, it is very important for the present time, and will continue to be so in the future.

Some social scientists as such, presumably serve only their own curiosity. They contend that in doing so they perform a useful social role¹⁸. It may be a 'purely scientific' style, but it is not that much necessary and useful.

Moreover, sociology should make societies live and take a breath. It should find implementable solutions and measures to crucial social problems. I am of the opinion that our fieldwork in sociology today should be associated only with contemporary societies, with their structures, and with their futures; We must think over their relations in the future world.

Since the Second World War, we have had a new world order and mentality. But, this situation is very likely to change before the 21st Century. That is why sociology has not any time to lose. It must hurry up.

In the past, it took sociology too long to be born. Today, sociology ought to be long-sighted, and it must be an organizer like the science of engineering. What I mean is that we must first discuss the concept of "social engineering" in sociology for our world. What is "social engineering"? Why is it necessary? Where should "social engineering" stop within the context of social, institutional and individual life? Above all, what should be the new sociological education about? This is a vital question. Another important question is: What will be the new understanding of education for each country in the next century?

Sociology must use existing public resources rationally, and utilize all social potentials. It must make several plans for the establishment of proper items in the field of education and for that of relevant applications in

¹⁵ Fleiner, T. "The Significance of the Smidak Principles for Constitutional Law", *Smidak Principles* (Emil F. Smidak), Switzerland, 1964, p. 116.

¹⁶ Bottomore, T. *Sociology: A Guide to Problems and Literature*, London, 1981, p. 48.

¹⁷ Mc Clung Lee, A. *Sociology for Whom?*, U.S.A., 1978, p. 19.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

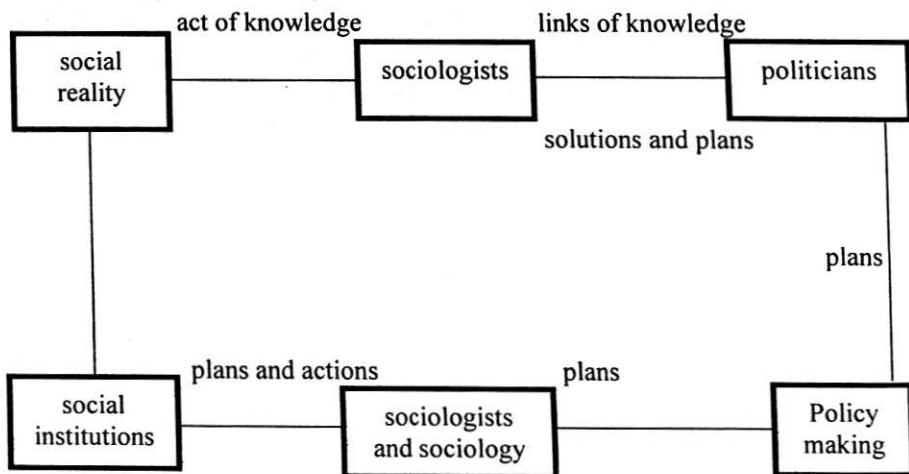
other fields of social development. These plans should be well-related to one another.

The development of more systematic observations and data collections in sociological research today may prompt us to reach this end in the future. At present, we are rich sociologists in the sense that we have quite rich data collections and knowledge. In the past age, however, in time of the founding fathers of sociology, there was not almost any systematic research and data collection on social life and societies.

Today, modern state and contemporary society need urgent sociological plans for the solution of their grave problems. Otherwise, tomorrow may be too late, because man is not just a homo-oeconomicus¹⁹. As a matter of fact, students of sociology must be so educated as to become organizational sociologists or social engineers in the future. In other words, sociology must be a problem-solving discipline in an age which is quite likely to be characterized by still more sophisticated problems.

Sociologists today need more of scholarly courage and mental agility in order to understand the present social reality which is more diverse and more dynamic than ever before²⁰. In the next century, there must be a strong cooperation between sociologists and politicians in order to overcome major problems of the world.

A rough model showing the role of sociology, of sociologists, and their connections with other areas or authorities in the future can be formulated as follows



¹⁹ Fleiner, T. op. cit., p. 115.

²⁰ Anderson, C. H. *Toward A New Sociology*, U.S.A., 1974.

As the chart shows, social engineering and policy-making need sociological knowledge and the laborious efforts of sociologists. As it is well known, starting from the very simple-structured societies to contemporary ones, administration type and planning had been the fundamental elements of social life at all societal forms. Social engineering that we are trying to emphasize in this paper, as Fichter understood, is a kind of condition in which realistic, objective and analytical sociological knowledge and structures, opposed to accustomed and traditional manners, occupy a certain place on the basis of the planning and administration processes especially in contemporary societies, of course in Turkey too²¹. The borders and significance of these perspectives on contemporary and future societies' socio-economic and socio-cultural systems should certainly be discussed. What is a good doctor for a patient; what is a good engineer and accountant for a building, it is a qualified sociologist for a society and social reality. If there is no way to avoid social planning or engineering whatsoever, let it be envisioned, more than and before others, by sociologists who are supposed to be one of the most concerned and specialized social actors.

²¹ Fichter, J. *Sosyoloji Nedir? (What's Sociology?)*, trans.from English into Turkish: Nilgün Çelebi, Ankara, 1994, p. 14-15.