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Paul Hanly Furfey's Quest for a Good Society

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The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy

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Foreword

Bronislaw Misztal

This volume represents a collective effort of a group by scholars from Italy, the United States and Poland. The idea of re-examining Furfey's work came from Francesco Villa, an eminent Italian sociologist, whose interest in meta-theory in sociology prompted him to start some archeological research on social knowledge of a by-gone era. In the summer of 2000 he came to the Catholic University of America to investigate existing archival documentation on Furfey. But Furfey was not only a theoretical sociologist—he has also been an activist social worker, a pioneer of sorts. In order to investigate his heritage, which was both of intellectual and moral nature, we have invited a prominent Polish sociologist—Krzysztof Frysztacki, whose work on responses to social problems is a contemporary echo of Furfey's edge on the moral responsibility of public intellectuals. Soon, what originally had seemed to be a modest project grew to become a major historical research endeavour with important implications for the modern sociological vocation. In the Spring of 2003 a symposium was organized which dealt with Paul H. Furfey's work.

The reader may want to follow the course and structure of the entire volume or to focus on particular thematic issues. The *Preface* by George F. McLean situates the Furfey heritage in the broader philosophical context, while the *Prologue* by Bronislaw Misztal evaluates the most fundamental work by Paul H. Furfey and traces his influence to modern sociological discourse. *Part One* of the volume will bring the Reader to the theoretical implications of the Furfey debate: what is the significance of the study of the social and moral consequences of social problem (Krzysztof Frysztacki), how does sociology make account of what is going on in society (Laura Bovone), and how does metasociological analyses help us to cleanse sociological discourse of threads of secondary nature. *Part Two* of the volume brings the Reader to the moral implications of research on social action, by providing an outlook on urban social problems (Enrico Tacchi), on work and its role in production of social problems (Silvia Cortelazzi), and on a theory of moral judgments (Eric Sean Williams). *Part Three* takes up the issues of religion, faith and the vocation of sociology. The reader may want to learn about the prospects of a dialogical society (Godliff Sianipar), about the faith foundations of the Catholic intellectual tradition (Paul D. Sullins), and about the development of this strand of sociological inquiry at the

Catholic University of America (Raymond H. Potvin). *Part Four* contains a most illuminating personal remembrances of Furfey (Raymond H. Potvin) and the full list of archival resources available at the CUA.

Along with this volume The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy is also re-publishing the original, and until now forgotten work by Paul H. Furfey. The two volumes form a framework for the Furfey debate as the Editors see the argument and its relevance to modern society.

The Editors gratefully acknowledge the support from the Life Cycle Institute of the Catholic University of America. The Institute provided a fertile ground for the Furfey debate and hosted the Symposium in 2003. The Dean of Arts and Sciences, Professor Larry Poos offered significant financial support for the Symposium. Additional funds came from the Graduate Students Association. Most of the organizational and administrative work has been done diligently by Eric Sean Williams. George F. McLean edited the two volumes and Ann Kasprzyk did the painstaking work of correcting the manuscript. The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy provided

production facilities for the volumes which it will distribute to 350 university libraries across the world as well as making them available through the usual book distribution channels.

Preface
Understanding Paul Hanly Furfey

George F. McLean

There is a right way and a wrong way to understand a sociologist. The wrong way is to suppose sociology as having a fixed, determined nature, and then to judge anyone working in that field in terms of this supposed nature. That is the wrong way because, like any branch of human endeavor sociology is historical in nature and evolves and develops over time. Moreover, its development is neither unilinear nor always progressive. At times it surges ahead with the opening of new horizons and/or new methods. At other times, it focuses upon less significant dimensions of human social life and/or remains captive to older methods which deter it from real insight and limit it to the endless calculation of surface phenomena, which in the end shed little light on the social character and characteristics of human life.

Msgr. Paul Hanly Furfey was keenly conscious of these opportunities and pitfalls. He lived early enough in the development of sociology as a science and a profession to be involved in its shaping, he was great enough as a person and as a thinker to take up responsibilities for the direction it was taking. And even if his vision was not broadly followed at the time, he was prescient enough to have richly developed dimensions that only now are being recognized as having been seriously lacking and in need of being freshly pursued. In a word, he was postmodern, when his colleagues and even his successors in the field were struggling to be modern.

Let me explain. The origins of sociology are often traced back to Auguste Comte and the development of positivism. Its history is marked by such great figures as Marx Weber, Emile Durkheim and R. Malinowski. As a proper discipline in North America the first department devoted exclusively to its study was launched in Chicago only in 1892. Sociology, when Furfey entered the list in 1925, was still a very young field looking for its legs.

Moreover, as a discipline it was beset by a deep problem. Modernity began with a ground clearing process in which all was put under doubt (Descartes), the mind was reduced to a blank tablet (Locke) and the humanizing contents of the tradition were smashed like a set of idols (Bacon). All this was done in order that knowledge might be reconstructed in terms exclusively clear and distinct to the human mind and which in tight concatenation would constitute the "sciences".

For Descartes, this requirement immediately split the human into two substances, body and spirit, each of which was clearly not the other. Moreover, it was the externally visible material or bodily dimension which was readily available for empirical observation and experimental repetition. Hence, when with the development of the various fields of investigation the study of societies as constituted of humans living together was taken up, it was precisely as physical realities that they lent themselves to clear observation and calculation. The more the attempt to be scientific the more the human sciences reduced themselves to empirical observation of the material dimensions of the human person and hence to those aspects most related to brute animals.

Recognizing the unacceptability of studying human life by omitting spirit or reason, the sciences of the spirit (*geisteswissenschaften*) were initiated. But here too the search for clarity pointed towards intellectual systems calibrated to what was universal and necessary, i.e., to formal systems and ideologies. There were differences of emphasis between the Anglo-Saxon countries and the European continent with the former focusing especially on the empirical work in a

positivist manner and the latter turning more to theory. But as shaped to the scientific goals of clarity and universality both were blunt instruments indeed for the study of free human beings, unique in their social interaction. While extensively guided by reason, humans can attend selectively to different levels of meaning and, in any case, are motivated not only by knowledge, but also by love, affections and emotions both positive and negative.

Msgr. Furfey brought to sociology what for the field was a truly exceptional background for taking account of these many human dimensions. He had a comprehensive training in philosophy which in epistemology examined carefully the different modes of knowledge. He had done also extensive work in theology which opened the human horizons not only to the freedom of the human person, but to God.

He learned well the nature and ways of sociology as can be seen from his *Scope and Method of Sociology*. Yet he was not absorbed by what others were doing in the field, but was able to identify and evaluate the contribution of the particular cognitive levels they employed. This he laid out in detail in his work *Three Theories of Society*.

He showed that the exclusively empirical use of sense knowledge itself generated a sense of self and of society which he termed the "success paradigm." This is focused on material goods and physical welfare, on sense gratification and economic competition. While this stimulates productive capacities it leads to individual self-centeredness and conflict with others. Thus it has a centrifugal effort on societies beginning at the family level, and directs its energies to the lesser values of human life. Sociology done exclusively in these terms, as was largely the case in the North America of Furfey's time and remains so today, was itself a danger to society.

Beyond this he notes the properly intellectual levels which enable the elaboration of social theory especially in Europe. Unfortunately, in the search for scientific rigor modeled on the physical sciences and their universal and necessary terms, theory devolves into ideology as it omits that which is most proper to human life, namely uniqueness in the exercise of freedom; universality and necessity override uniqueness and freedom. The oppressive ideologies of Furfey's time in mid 20th century reflect these limitations most strongly.

In this light Furfey could see that not only were there social problems which sociology seemed inadequate to treat, but even more that sociology itself in the terms in which it was being exercised was itself key in generating these problems. The main thrust of his life and work in sociology was to address these problems of the science itself. To say that he was not a sociologist in the then common sense was for him a body of honor; to criticize him for not being so is wildly to miss his mark for with the prophet of old he would say of sociology: take away this heart of stone and give me back my heart of flesh and blood!

In this his strategy was precise and positive – in contrast to 'positivist'. He would attempt to revive the cold heart of sociology, to recognize that at the core of society was the human person body and spirit, mind and heart. That this was not Hobbes' individual isolate: short, brutish and mean, but a child of God, made in his image, and thus reaching out to others with wisdom, love and care. This had to be the heart of any truly social and therefore human science.

Furfey knew also where to turn for this. It was not to an ideology or 'ism,' even a 'personalism,' but to the long experience of humanity, especially of the Christian community in which alone the sense of person developed and flourished early on. Thus he looked to the books of the New Testament and to the writings of the early Church fathers to find the seeds of this transforming vision. It seems incorrect to say that he thought the early Christian community practiced evangelical poverty, just as he did not ask people of his day to do with less than a comfortable life. But he did see in the early writings of the Church a spirit of sharing and concern

for others that could guide those in his days of the Great Depression in the direction of a more equitable salary structure so that all might be able to share to some necessary degree in the goods of creation, or simply in the words of SOME: So Others Might Eat. He did well to bring these biblical and historical indications forward wherever he found them, though it was not his job or intent to be a scriptural exegete or a Church historian.

Nor was his intent to write a balanced assessment of the effect of religious teaching on social practice in the past, much less to judge the past by present social standards. Furfey's job was to find wherever he could the principles which could help people survive. Thus in the Great Depression he not only taught social justice, but personally initiated a number of projects to provide for people in their needs. In the Second World War, almost alone, he spoke out against carpet bombing and other atrocities. Some might look back negatively and ahistorically to criticize what seemingly took too long for Christianity to accomplish (e.g., abolition of slavery); Msgr. Furfey looked back in order to garner orientation and inspiration to face the great tragedies of the present and to build the future. He was one who would stand beside the poor in the depression and for the innocent in midst of the passions of war.

It would be wrong then to interpret his work as discarding social structures and attempting to resolve all in terms of the person as understood in the Christian tradition. The need to which he responded vigorously was rather to suffuse the increasingly impersonal structures of the industrial revolution with humanity, to humanize the dehumanizing. This he recognized could be done not in terms of merely abstract social structures which formalized exploitive competition, but of deep and mutual respect, care and concern which enabled truly social interaction to be human and humane.

Like a knight in battle – and he was ever that – he countered the immanent concrete dangers with the needed blows to protect the widow and to orphan, to help the poor and to ward off the atrocities of war.

Meanwhile, the Church in its encyclicals had been learning from Marx more of the significance of social structures as healthy or unhealthy contexts for human social interaction. Furfey added strong attention to the human person as image of God and his vice regent in this world in response to the well justified fear of structure and method alone as exemplified by Fascism and totalitarian Soviet Marxism in his day. In this he paralleled the thought of H.G. Gadamer, the title of whose seminal hermeneutic work, *Truth and Method*, should not be read to mean that truth is achieved by being reduced to method, but that in human and social matters truth begins when we break the limits of the method of the sciences.

It would be truly bizarre however to think social structures were not part of the Furfey's sociological landscape: his *Scope and Method of Sociology* focuses thereupon. Indeed late in life, having lost confidence that sociology itself could be reformed, it was precisely in the liberation theologies and its related community restructuring that he placed his hope for the future of society.

Now as we move beyond the dehumanizing scientism of modernity and search for more humane modes of life it is not surprising that we turn with new interests to the work of Msgr. Furfey. He saw the dangers we now try to escape; he saw the roots of the human dignity we now seek; he sought to open sociology to this missing dimension. We live in his shadow, have much to learn from his teaching, and strive to follow the path he pioneered.

Prologue
A Quest for a Good Society:
Paul Hanly Furfey as a Theorist of Social Amelioration
Bronislaw Misztal

Introduction

When Plato set sail for Syracuse in 368 BC, he believed that he was on the mission of perfecting human society. Convinced by his long-time Sicilian disciple, Dion, the philosopher decided to render advice and instruction to Dionysius the Younger. Notwithstanding his failure to even persuade the king that a better society is possible, Plato left, only to return six years later with the same purpose—to help produce a social system with a human face. Ever since, the name of Syracuse has been emblematic of scholastic and intellectual dreams that we can contribute to leaving the society better than what we found. When in 1934 Martin Heidegger returned to his regular teaching position from his one-year stint as a rector of Freiburg University in Nazi Germany, one of his colleagues quipped: "Back from Syracuse?" The adventures of Plato in Syracuse have become a metaphor for our search for a better society.¹

Twenty-four centuries after Plato, an American sociologist returned to his university lecture hall after a term as an adviser to the U.S. President. "Americans aspire to a society that is not merely civil but also good" writes Amitai Et'Yioni in his recent book (2001:1). And he continues: "A good society is one in which people treat one another as ends in themselves and not merely as instruments, a society in which each person is shown full respect and dignity rather than being used and manipulated. It is a social world in which people treat one another as members of a community."

Those words, uttered at the twilight of the new century are a clear indication that we are engaged in a perennial quest for a better life just as the ancient Greeks. We undertake an odyssey in search of something that is intuitive, but to which we cannot attach particular historical references or axiological imperatives. This is a cognitive and intellectual journey, but one which requires strong academic, methodological and mental faculties.

Evidently, the quest for a good society is neither qualitatively nor philosophically novel. It is recurrent and, indeed, repeats itself in fairly regular time intervals. It comes back as a theme associated with the completion, fulfillment and the end of certain historical periods (like the theories of "endism" which are nothing else but hypothesized ideas of better times, allegedly are yet to come to closure after a certain era). The search for a good society becomes also prominent at the time of moral crises, economic downturns and in such periods when, suddenly, certain of our activities or practices are unveiled, illuminated and decreed as inhuman, causing our civilizations to be ashamed or confused (like the event of the Holocaust, the practices of genocide and ethnic cleansing, the dehumanization of labor by industrial civilization, or its denigration of moral ethos by the post-modern consumerist society).

Good society is a concept, which presupposes, first of all, that a human society can, indeed, be good. If it is so, then it has to be capable of meeting certain quality standards, which are universal. If it is so, there has to be a general axiological system against the backdrop of which one should be able to scrutinize and evaluate the actually existing societies, their practices of everyday living and their value systems. Such standards have also to be particular, or culture-specific. In other words there should be a number of society-specific, cultural and historical factors

that determine the standards or patterns of goodness. "Each society has a distinct history and condition and (...) each started its journey from a different point; (...) each is moving in a different direction to find the best point of equilibrium..." (Etzioni, 2001: 4).

Furthermore, good society is a concept, which presupposes that no matter how good it actually is, every society can be ameliorated, improved and perfected. There is, therefore, a considerable distance between the actual state of every society and its potentialities. Such a gap is also a measure of society's imperfection. Speaking about good society involves the illumination of this discrepancy, which has several dimensions: moral, political, organizational, and economic. Speaking of good society frequently also involves listing certain shortcomings of the ideas that underlie this society's very existence. Therefore, whatever the analyses of the good society, they usually fall into the borderline of critical sociology or critical philosophy. Without criticizing the actual state of affairs of the *status quo*, of the embedded patterns of everyday functioning, one cannot raise the idea of good society. The proponents of amelioration are by default the critics of contemporaneity, disenchanted with the past and skeptical about the future. The defenders of the *status quo* call such quest for a good society a Great Schism. Writes Walter Lippmann: "men may have to pass through a terrible ordeal before they find again the central truths they have forgotten. But they will find them again, as they have so often found them again in other ages of reaction, if only the ideas that have mislead them are challenged and resisted."²

Such a framework does not provide a good climate for sociological work on the good society. There are usually more defenders of the *status quo*, whose interests are deeply vested in the *modus operandi* of what others say could be ameliorated, than those who would risk their position and social capital in order to bring about some change.

Criticizing actually existing societies raises by itself a wave of social criticism, frequently vehement. Totalitarian regimes have the institutionalized means of dealing with such criticism by unleashing orchestrated popular protests, by singling out and incarcerating those whose voices are most audible and by implementing strong ideological and propagandistic machines to muffle ideas of a better life. But democratic systems are not much better, even though authors of new ideas do not suffer from physical persecution and/or terror. A common response for querying the possibilities of social amelioration in a democratic political setup is a bold statement that the actual society is not only good, but that it probably is the best type of society that realistically can be thought of and that it is looked upon with envy by other, less fortunate people.

In France, Germany and certainly in the United States of America both the political leaders and the intellectuals who serve to the state and its official ideology loudly pronounce that the society is already good. This is why a common way to theorize about good society is to either go away and live elsewhere³ while ruminating about one's society of origins, or to travel to a foreign society and paint its picture upon returning home⁴. It is certainly a most daunting and challenging task to write about good society without ever traveling to Syracuse. Paul H. Furfey has magnificently performed one such task. It is with his vision and theory that this essay is concerned.

P.H. Furfey as a Theorist of Society

Furfey is unique as a sociologist and a theorist in that he actually comes up with an idea and a concept of society. In fact, most sociological work does not contain a definition of this most used concept.⁵ His definition precedes subsequent ruminations. Upon completion of his research, Furfey checks again for the validity of his original preconceptions. Such a cognitive procedure remains in line with his work on metasociology as an instrument to control the quality of

sociological theorizing. Society, says Furfey, is "a group cooperating for some common purpose [...which] makes a society what it is. Common purpose is an essence of a social group. Without a common purpose a group becomes an aggregation of individuals. It ceases to be a society. [...] To understand our modern civilization as a whole we must understand the purposes of the men who make it up."⁶

How society, or the people who make it up, define their common goal and the purpose of their life is therefore crucial for understanding whether this form of life can be good and ameliorated, and what are its developmental limits. It is an important epistemological step, for Furfey indicates that society is an intentional form of universe. What makes it a society are peoples' intentions. What makes it good or bad is what its members strive for, and what they intend to accomplish through their lifetime. Intentionality in defining the really existing social entities has been introduced and discussed at large by Joseph Searle in the 1980s. Furfey never got that far, but he was unique in outlining the intentional character of human society derived from purposive action.

Furfey must also have been familiar with Sigmund Freud's conclusion that "the idea of life having a purpose stands and falls with the religious system"⁷. Similar to Freud, for a while he set out upon the less ambitious task of determining "what men themselves show by their behavior to be the purpose and intention in their lives. What do they demand of life and wish to achieve in it?"⁸.

When examining his contemporary American society, Furfey concludes that the ideals and ambitions of people who make it have one common denominator: the quest for success. The concept of success is by itself relative and general. "To succeed means to attain some desired end; but the word itself does not indicate what that end may be."⁹ The quest for success is an aspect of culture of a society.

As a theorist he speaks of the "success ideal" which is an ideal type, a Weberian conceptual instrument to create an epistemic standard for encompassing a large spectrum of phenomena. He would probably agree with the following statement of Weber: "In its conceptual purity, this mental construct cannot be found empirically anywhere in reality. It is a Utopia."¹⁰

As a sociologist, however, he turns to cultural analysis in order to find the empirical reality corresponding to his ideal type. Thus he speaks of a success-class or a category of people who enjoy more than a proportional share of civilization privileges and who realize a manner of life, a scale of values, a system of ethics and a culture of success.

Furfey does not measure success by the yardstick of socio-economic status, something that has become a notorious practice of American sociology in the 1960s. Instead, he proposes that success is a privilege of enjoying life. While Freud speaks of individual pleasure as a state of mind, Furfey invokes class- and culture-specific rewards that are enjoyed collectively and relatively to what other categories of people partake.

This difference in perspective has a tremendous influence on the nature and explanatory weight of Furfey's theory. Instead of ruminating about individual responses to satisfaction or dissatisfaction, he indicates that the class nature of enjoyment of relatively elevated cultural life styles carries with itself a responsibility of being a citizen. In a sense he stops short of suggesting that there is a gradation of responsibilities pertaining to relative class position, and that the higher the class status, the greater its responsibility of citizenship. He concludes that "the power of successful men extends far beyond" money and power. "Not only does the success-class regulate its own life according to the success culture, but by its power of controlling society it tends to direct the whole trend of modern civilization towards this same success-culture. This directive process is partly unconscious; for by acting as an ideal for the rest of society, successful men

diffuse their own customs, scale of values, principles through the rest of society. Thus, the success-class gives society its *telos*."11

Furfey's idea of differentials in citizenship responsibilities would not be compatible with most of the late-twentieth century concepts of democracy as a universal system of rights. The second half of the twentieth century has almost completely forgotten about responsibilities, and focused on the ever-increasing stress on individual and individualized citizenship and social rights. The subsequent crisis of the Western system of democracy results from the fact that members of society are treated as private individuals, entitled to private spaces, and not as responsible collective citizens inhabiting social spaces, and whose responsibilities would be commensurate with the status and social capital they possess. In fact, by constantly limiting and restraining the magnitude of obligations and by increasing the volume of individual expectations, Western capitalism has expanded the realm of the private, and dwindled the realm of the collective and public. John Hall finds that modern societies, and in particular the American society, encounter the existence of ambiguity between expectations and possibilities; consequently, the collectivistic sources of public trust are subject to attrition, while individualized confidence is vested in abstract systems—something that produces intolerable ambiguity and indeterminacy.¹² Democracy promoted a somewhat flattened, or uni-dimensional image of society. A uni-dimensional man is a natural product of this democratic indeterminacy.

Furfey stands elsewhere. He concludes that his ideal of a successful man is, or could be a many-sided individual, a multi-dimensional man whose societal or collectivistic obligations have not been flattened by universalistic democracy. Not very politically correct by the standards of the American culture wars of the 1990s, this position, however, opens broad perspectives to examine how the already existing society can be improved.

The measure of the gap between the really existing society of cooperating individuals and the ideal type of a good society is the actual dimensionality of people's undertakings. The deeper, the more profound and exhaustive are such activities, the more satisfying and fulfilling they are, and the closer the society to the good ideal. The more individualistic the people, the flatter are their human lives, while the more collectivistic, or the more pro-social they are, the more multi-dimensional are its fulfillments of from such activities.

This was not a popular stand. Lippman, for example, would discard in advance any attempts to expect of collectivist movement even the slightest possibility to develop pro-social attitudes, for he was afraid of extensive populism. But he would agree that "the ideal of a directional society [would require...] a revolutionary advance in the logical powers."¹³ Thus, an improvement in societal organization has to result from the improvement of human intellectual powers, from our ability to comprehend the world around us.

Says Furfey: "if we are to understand modern society teleologically, if we are to gain the insight necessary to remedy social evils, then we must understand the success-ideal."¹⁴

It is obvious to me that American sociology did not follow the road, which the theoretical works of Paul Hanly Furfey paved. In fact, I believe, it must have almost completely forgotten his perspective. It is only seventy years after Furfey that the debate between the communitarians and liberals on the definition of public good has raised again the issue of collectivity, but it failed to place the concept of differential citizenship responsibilities at the center of analysis.¹⁵ The ongoing debates about certain shortcomings of American individualism as a cause and source of the crisis of the idea of good society, good citizenship, good leadership and good stewardship do bypass the epistemological determinants of societal organization or the axiological orientations of human actions. Instead, various authors attempt to link particular legislations with the presence or

absence of certain social institutions. Furfey, most likely, would have viewed such debates differently.

Furfey as the Critic of Positivistic Society

It would be an understatement to say that Paul Hanly Furfey was skeptical about what Western capitalism has to offer both to an individual and to a society. He was a passionate critic of what can be called the "positivistic project". He finds that in real life the class of capitalists is driven by the Freudian pleasure principle, that this class is immoral and has a dualistic mentality, and that the culturally embedded success ideal promotes mediocrity as a major social virtue of American social and public life. Capitalists, who should lead the society, have double standards: they support popular education for the masses, yet send their own children to private schools; they fancy themselves in philanthropy, yet indulge in luxury. Says Furfey: "It is an ideal which preaches decency and respectability but it is not an ideal to make moral heroes. It is an ideal rooted fundamentally in the obvious. For it seeks what is obviously pleasant for self [...], what is obviously good for others, [...] but implies no quest for vague and distant ideals, ineffable truth, half-realized beauties."¹⁶

Furfey's criticism of the positivistic project of society is three-dimensional and will be presented here not in the order in which it appears in the original work, but in the order that in the opinion of this writer, better reflects the course of social development which has taken place since.

Firstly, the limitations of the positivistic project are of epistemological nature, and result from what the positivistically driven sciences can, and what they cannot, explain. Quoting directly from none other than August Comte, Furfey reminds us that positivism postulates a rejection of all inquiring into causes, first and final. It accepts all obvious truths and all deductions from these truths, while rejecting still non-obvious truths. "Positivism, says Furfey, is essentially characterized by its emphasis on [...] what is discoverable without great subtlety or insight. It is a philosophy of the commonplace."¹⁷

Furfey labels a typical human product of positivistic epistemology as "the man of one method", and says that an experimental psychologist or a behavioral social scientist (no offense) is the most emblematic case of how positivism has affected our cognitive faculties. The man of one method makes up his own private criteria of truth and falsehood, thus "trying to impose one's own ideas upon reality, whereas reality should be allowed to impose itself on the thinker".¹⁸ There is, therefore, a considerable gap between an ideal man of success, a responsible citizen and somebody who would seek an objective truth, and a real product of positivistic society—a uni-dimensional man. Herbert Marcuse introduced the concept of uni-dimensionality about 20 years after Furfey, offering us a critique of the mass culture. Etzioni came up with the idea of "monochrome society"¹⁹ which also suggested the existence of this phenomenon of a flattened spectrum of citizenship. But the actual roots of uni-dimensionality, as Furfey teaches us, do not lie in industrial grade culture, but in the cognitive methods of positivistic behavioral sciences.

His second line of criticism pertains to the consumption of the benefit of success, or the uses of relative life-style freedom. Those are satisfactions that one derives from having done something that is both pleasurable and good, which is rewarding and also contributes to the collective or public good of society. He calls this phenomenon the "post-attainment satisfaction". Because he is shallow, lazy and otherwise seeking easy solutions, modern man goes for a faster reward, which is called "attainment satisfaction". The real causes of the fact that members of the positivistic

society seek the immediacy of consumer pleasure rather than the long-term feelings of fulfillment must lie within the individualistic tradition of the West. But this attitude of impatience, shallowness and moral minimalism ultimately leads to the failure of the positivistic project. It is responsible for the mediocrity of human capital, it puts restraints on how much people learn and, consequently, how much they enjoy life.

The third line of criticism pertains to the patterns of economic redistribution and social justice. Furfey directed a number of dissertations at Catholic University of America (CUA), which dealt with the standard of living and the wages of the working class population in the District of Columbia. His economic analyses unveil a considerable amount of radicalism: in fact he recommends a simple yet broad system of GNP redistribution to be based on voluntary decisions of the most privileged and most successful citizen. Here again his concept of responsibility comes to the fore, even though he immediately concludes that "there will be no redistribution of income"²⁰ and that cultural underprivileged is as strong as economic under-privilege. Consequently, the positivistic project, which is based solely on the success-ideal, cannot succeed, because the ideal is wrong. "If we wish to reach a society better than the current success-culture offers, than we must [...] be relying upon a better epistemology than positivism gives us." Positivism has produced a world of unexciting mediocrity, where real virtues do not matter, and where shallow attainment satisfactions prevent people from becoming responsible citizens.²¹

It is an interesting conclusion that to remedy the shortcomings of the positivistic project one has to turn to a better epistemology, rather than to more efficient and deep-reaching methods of redistributive justice. The liberals of the late twentieth century would have disagreed, and would seek to ameliorate the society by proposing to share widely the tangible financial products of the success-class. But the real remedy, Furfey seems to have told us, lies with improving our methods of gathering knowledge, education, shaping human minds and molding their characters. Fifty years ahead of the forthcoming IT revolution, and not aware of the coming era of informational society, Furfey proposes something which has never really been popular in America—the intellect and intellectualism as a remedy to the selfish pragmatism of positivism.

Furfey as Architect of a New Social Order

Assuming truth is really existent and available to our cognition through epistemological instruments, Furfey proposes "the discovery of deep truth must be a function of intellect, since it is a function neither of sense, nor of will, nor of impulse."²² Contemporary society relies on certain images and ideas that people produce of it. In the absence of knowing the truth, the human mind invokes impulses, which are concealed from the consciousness. These are wishful thoughts.

One of the most powerful allegations that Furfey makes, derives from the Platonian vision of a cognitive cave: it suggests that wishful thinking is a widespread method of shaping social attitudes and casting judgment on the social world. Here Furfey comes close to the ideas of Karl Popper, whom he probably read but never quoted. Furfey, like Popper, sees the prospects of an open society, a better one, and he, too, sees its enemies. But the enemies of good society for him are cognitive destructions, which take the shape of racism, super-patriotism, hawkism, and ultra-nationalism. In Washington, DC, far removed from the epicenters of Nazism and Communism, Paul Furfey does not speak of the German or Soviet societies, respectively. He speaks about the American society in which strong enemies of social amelioration are embedded. But August Comte could not have been right in assuring us that we are determined to find only the obvious truths, and thus we should be content with our present society.²³ Furfey counters Comte's

positivism with the Thomist concept of noesis, which is an act of the intellect in search of deep truths. Our immediate apprehension of primary and deep truths, according to St. Thomas, results from *habitus principiorum*, which is a mental, "stable quality disposing and helping the power to act".²⁴

Noesis is thus a cognitive or epistemic practice. Its object is to determine the essence of things (rather than to be content with superficial conclusions characteristic of positivism), to provide immediate analytic judgments as instruments guiding our behavior, to provide immediate synthetic judgments that would allow us a better understanding of the surrounding world, and finally to discern unanalyzed truths.

Gradually a picture of the noetic society emerges as the next project on the road to social amelioration. Furfey constructs this project on the cognitive foundation, suggesting that only understanding what things are (essence), explaining them (analysis), and adding new ideas (synthesis) can provide people with the ability to go beyond the obvious, thus breaking away from the mediocrity of positivism.

The noetic project is aimed at creating cognitive certainty. We have already noted that our contemporary scholars of modernity find that societies in which we live produce ambiguity and risk, rather than certainty. Fifty years ahead of the post-modernist demise, Furfey derived from Poincare two types of truths—one which is comprehended by the mind, and the other which is formulated in language. Post-modernism went the latter direction, but Furfey concludes that "noesis far outruns the language"²⁵, and that in some cases the language can never catch up with our comprehending intellectual faculty.

We need visions and visionaries in order to create a good society, says Furfey. By this he refers to producing novel intellectual models that exceed beyond the obvious, beyond the already existent and the mediocre. We occasionally have great moments of visions, and one who has seen the vision will never return to the Platonian cave.

Linguistic structures restrain the freedom of intellectual faculties of human beings, thus the noetic project is hinged on the cognitive ability of producing, launching, circulating and marketing intellectual models that would be evaluated for their moral standards. Those models have to be novel and non-obvious; they also have to be good, to contain ideas and solutions consistent with moral standards. A good society is one that can tell the difference between good and bad, a difference between the moral and the destructive.

Furfey reaches again to the trove of Thomist epistemology, and presents us with the idea of another instrument of cognition. It is called *synderesis* or a *synderetic habitus*, "by which the first principles of the moral order are immediately known"²⁶. If *habitus principiorum* is an instrument to pursue the truth and explain why things are, the *synderetic habitus* is an instrument to discern things good from things evil, and thus to orient our actions towards the former. Furfey's modern man, like Freud's, has thus to navigate between the Scyllas and the Charybdises of pleasures and pains, gains and costs. But while the latter is capable only of distinguishing the sources of immediate individual gratification, the former will search for the post-attainment satisfactions, for moral values and virtues such as generosity, responsibility, trustworthiness and care.

This project appears to be highly idealistic and theoretical. We should remember, however, that Furfey has started his inquiry with a definition of society as a group that pursues a common purpose. Now he comes back to the definitional aspects of his theory, and proposes to speak about a good society. A good society is a group of people cooperating towards common purpose, and doing so in an efficient manner. The goodness of a society is thus perceived as a derivation of

synderetic epistemological practices (ability to pursue certain norms), and as a function of its efficiency.

We can now make a distinction between the positivistic society and the noetic society. The former is a system whereby people satiate their consumer cravings, where science dresses up the obvious into tables and data analysis, and where calculative actions (otherwise frequently referred to as rational choices) predispose people to expect an even or proportionate return on their investment of skill, time, good will and energy. It also focuses people's activities on producing and distributing material goods. The noetic society, on the other hand, is a system whereby people satiate their cravings for knowledge and truth, and where they distinguish between matters good, which they pursue, and matters evil, which they try to avoid. They build knowledge through education and moral training, and do not calculate as to the evenness or proportionality of their investment returns. "A noetic society would be, above all and before all, a society in which it would be easy to be a human being, in which it would be easy [...] to develop those human faculties which are most human and to conduct one's life in accordance with really human principles of conduct."²⁷

The Noetic society is an intellectual society; groups of people who pursue non-material values and who embody the non-material non-instrumental virtues. This is not your average middle-class society project. "Middle class" is essentially a product of positivism. Its critique is fundamental and substantial, and based on the fact that "middle class", by definition is mediocre and resigned to live within the most-obvious and easy attainment systems. Furfey would once again stand against what has become a mainstream trend in the second half of twentieth century sociology: far from being fascinated with the material conspicuousness of success and critical of the moral dualism of the upper class, he was critical also of the development potential of the middle classes. Interestingly, his approach suggests that class is not really an adequate concept of sociological analysis, for people and societies should be evaluated for their moral, material, emotional and energetic contributions to society and not just with regard to their socio-economic standing.

The final stage of Frey's work deals with the prospects of the project of pistic society, or society that is based on faith. He has made a full circle and from where Freud has stopped. The essence of this project exceeds the conceptual framework of my paper, for it would require an advanced philosophical argument and analysis to evaluate the non-empirical, revelational sources of truth. One aspect of this project, however, is worth mentioning, and this is its epistemic character. "What we need against the rationalists, writes Furfey, is not less intellectual activity, but more."²⁸ Furfey looks into the issues of the authenticity and integrity of human destiny, issues which have been fully discussed only recently by Charles Taylor.²⁹ The positivistic society was a project based on the production of goods and provision of simple statements about a world resplendent with such material artifacts. The noetic society proposed to search for good and to instill in people a fundamental appreciation for deep knowledge and post-attainment satisfaction. The Pistic society project is to be founded upon charity, or giving. It is to be giving beyond taking, thus allowing the society to accumulate the capital that its members are and have to offer. In a dramatic breakaway from the tradition of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, Furfey proposes that one can give and not expect an even return. This is true charity. Interestingly, never, since Furfey, has anybody in sociology really raised this argument.

After Furfey. Theorizing the Good Society Project

That Paul Hanly Furfey was the precursor of modern debates about good society I have no doubt. That he had little impact on the ruminations of those who followed this theme I have no doubt either. He was not read widely, and the quotation index for his name would bear no results had not Francesco Villa rediscovered Furfey's scholarship. But American sociology of the late twentieth century has suddenly been confronted with the issues defining good society. Albeit not exactly in the same form as in Furfey's work, such issues started emerging with the advance of the modern capitalist society.

One of the earliest indications about the non-existence of the good society project was the work by Robert Putnam. Using GSS data he demonstrated "the strange disappearance of social capital and civic engagement in America" as measured by "networks, norms and trust—that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives".³⁰ It sounds familiar. Putnam simply redresses the original Furfey argument that a good society pursues a common objective that is consistent with the axiological system (noetic), and that it does so in an efficient manner. But he also directly verifies and validates the original argument: Putnam finds that "education has a massive effect on social connectedness" and has an impact on trust and membership in civic organizations through which people give and invest their time and good will into societal structures.³¹ Education is a prerequisite for the synderetic *habitus*. Putnam suggests that "well educated people are much more likely to be joiners and trusters, partly because they are better off economically, but mostly because of the skills, resources, and inclinations that were imparted to them at home and in school."³² Putnam ties the phenomenon of declining connectedness and trust to several macro-social processes: to the patterns of residential mobility and suburbanization, to the ever increasing volume of work hours logged by an average American and by women in particular, to the ascent of women into the workforce, to the decline and disintegration of the institution of marriage, and finally to the phenomenon of "white flight" or the withdrawal from community associations of the white majority as a result of legal desegregation (and the subsequent "black flight", which may be a mirror effect of the former). Putnam's explanations fall short of linking the erosion of civic America with the absence of normative standards. Since he looks only in the direction of hard data, he also loses sight of the epistemic prerequisites of creating a good society.

Another important segment of scholarship pertains to the issue of civil society. It is frequently contrasted with the concept of the State. The latter embodies the legitimate use of power and coercion. The former, which is "a collective entity existing independently from the State"³³ is considered to be a potential repository of social good. It is an interesting story that, even though the concept of civil society is deeply embedded in the Anglo-Saxon tradition of philosophy, Furfey has not used it even once. Likewise, most of the existing works on civil society fails to use the concept of good society, even though many authors invoke the work of Adam Ferguson who spoke about members of civil society foregoing their individualistic cravings for the sake of "the good of society". But the idea of civil society was to be a model, or a project of a good social order. Deriving directly from Durkheim's notions of pre-contractual elements of social life, such scholars as Eisenstadt and Roniger demonstrated that the normative infrastructure should place limitations on the unrestricted exchange transactions promoted by the free market societies. Civil society was also supposed to promote the autonomy of individuals—*cum*—citizens. Interestingly also, what results from the civil society approach is a debate over the priority of collectively articulated social good versus the idea of universal rights, and not the issue of social capital-type sources for the

project of the good society. It is only in Habermas that we find the over-rationalised concept of benevolence as a basis for ethical action. Thus, many works on civil society shadow earlier investigations by Furfey and come up with less conclusive results.³⁴

Certain progress in discussing the project of the good society, albeit indirectly, comes from the work of Robert Wuthnow³⁵, who advances three arguments: that democracy and moral deliberation have much in common, because both require faith that human betterment can be approximated through working together; that cultural diversity upholds democracy, freedom and autonomy; and finally that markets give people more opportunity to cultivate their own life-styles. But Wuthnow indicates that, on the grounds of rational choice, moral deliberations make little difference to the existence and functioning of civil society.

The most interesting contribution to the debate on good society comes from the scholarship on social solidarity, especially as counterpoised with the issue of social justice. Present in the liberal debate, those ideas underlie the role of communal mutuality and shared affective aspects of the social world which do not agree with the linguistic and rational formulations of contemporary doctrines of social justice. Seila Benhabin and Jurgen Habermas provide conflicting views of what is possible and desirable in modern society.³⁶ Solidarity is seen as a form of charity and responsibility of various parts of society for their common good. The component parts are very specific for each society and every culture. Social justice, on the other hand, refers to abstract principles on behalf of faceless societies. This issue is further clarified by comments coming from John Paul II: "The exercise of solidarity is valid when members of each society recognize others as persons—the more influential feeling responsible for the weaker, the weaker doing what they can do for the good of all, and the intermediate groups respecting the interests of the others. Solidarity is [...] a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good."³⁷

It is obvious today that the debate commenced by Paul Hanly Furfey is an unfinished and discontinuous one. Unlike many important threads in the American social thought, this particular theme of how to grasp the idea of the good society, how to discuss its model and how to implement a project of betterment did not have direct followers. But the issues remain pertinent, today more than ever before. The social capital is melting. The structures of connectedness are eroding. The normative cohesion fades away. Basic social institutions, like workplace and family, continue to become weaker and more frail. Attempts to review alternative projects, like that of civil society, did not bring about a decisive progress towards approximating a project that would be acceptable and a society that would be more inhabitable to a majority of its citizens. This is why revisiting Paul Hanly Furfey's many forgotten ideas makes so much more sense today.

Notes

1 Cf. Lila, Mark. 2001. "The Reckless Mind. Intellectuals in Politics." New York: *New York Review of Books*. The issue of intellectuals remaining at the service of traditional or modern tyrants is frequently raised in the context of intellectual responsibility, which is debatable. In fact, unless one introduces the concept of a good society as a litmus test of intentions and goals for academic and intellectual servility, one cannot discern between instrumental and autotelic motivations.

2 Lippmann, Walter. 1937. *An Inquiry into the Principles of the Good Society*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, p. 41.

3 This has been the experience of the Frankfurt School exiles in the United States. Franz Neumann, Henry Morgenthau and Herbert Marcuse most notably, while living and working in America have outlined the prospective for creating a democratic system in Germany that would

go beyond Western capitalism and would entail social democratic constitutionalism as a framework for creating a better society. Cf. Soelner, Alfons. 1990. "From Political Dissent to Intellectual Integration: The Frankfurt School in American Government, 1942-49." Pp. 225-243 in Bruce Robbins, ed. *Intellectuals. Aesthetics, Politics, Academics*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

4 For this purpose America has always served as a splendid goal of travel and a convenient subject of inquiries into the model of good society. Cf. de Tocqueville, Alexis. *Democracy in America*.

5 For example, see Turner, Jonathan. 1998. *The Structure of Sociological Theory*. Sixth Edition. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company. This fundamental and comprehensive review of contemporary sociological theories completely escapes dealing with the subject matter of such theories.

6 Furfey, Paul Hanly. 1937. *Three Theories of Society*. New York: Macmillan, p. 8.

7 Freud, Sigmund. 1961. *Civilization and Its Discontents*. New York: Norton, p. 25.

8 *Ibid.* But Freud, having abstained from even pursuing the religious ideas, concludes that people "strive after happiness" and try to avoid pain. Furfey, instead, seeks different and variegated purposes.

9 Furfey, Paul Hanly. 1937. *Three Theories of Society*, p. 9.

10 Weber, Max. 2002 (1949). "'Objectivity' in Social Science." Pp. 171-177 in *Classical Sociological Theory*, Craig Calhoun *et als*, eds. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers. See p. 171.

11 Furfey, Paul Hanly. 1937. *Three Theories of Society*, p. 13, 14.

12 Hall, John A. 1999. "Genealogies of Civility." Pp. 53-111 in Robert W. Heffner, ed. *Democratic Civility*. London: Transaction Publishers. See p. 101-102.

13 Lippmann, Walter. 1937. *An Inquiry into the Principles of the Good Society*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, p. 34.

14 Furfey, Paul Hanly. 1937. *Three Theories of Society*, p. 16.

15 Hall, John A. 1999. "Genealogies of Civility." Pp. 53-111 in Robert W. Heffner, ed. *Democratic Civility*. London: Transaction Publishers. See p. 103.

16 Furfey, Paul Hanly. 1937. *Three Theories of Society*, p. 34.

17 Furfey, Paul Hanly. 1937. *Three Theories of Society*, p. 57.

18 *Ibid.*, p. 58.

19 Etzioni, Amitai. 2001. *The Monochrome Society*. New York: Basic Books.

20 Furfey, Paul Hanly. 1937. *Three Theories of Society*, p. 50.

21 *Ibid.*, p. 67.

22 *Ibid.*, p. 104.

23 *Ibid.*, p. 71.

24 *Ibid.*, p. 109.

25 *Ibid.*, p. 121.

26 *Ibid.*, p. 128.

27 *Ibid.*, p. 138.

28 *Ibid.*, p. 166.

29 Taylor, Charles. 1989. *Sources of the Self. The Making of the Modern Identity*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

30 Putnam, Robert D. 1996. "The Strange Disappearance of Civic America," pp. 34-48 in *New Prospect* 24.

31 *Ibid.*, p. 38.

32 *Ibid.*

33 Seligman, Adam. 1992. *The Idea of Civil Society*. New York: Free Press, p.5.

34 *Ibid.*, p. 203.

35 Wuthnow, Robert. 1999. "A Reasonable Role for Religion? Moral Practices, Civic Participation and Market Behavior." Pp. 113-129 in Robert W. Heffner, ed. *Democratic Civility*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers.

36 Benhabib, Seyla, 1986. *Critique, Nom and Utopia*. New York: Columbia University Press. See also Habermas, Jurgen. 1990. "Justice and Solidarity". Pp. 32-51 in *Hermeneutics and Critical Theory in Ethics and Politics*. Cambridge: MIT Press. Castoriadis, Cornelius. 1984. "Value, Equity, Justice, Politics." Pp. 260-340 in Castoriadis, *Crossroads in the Labyrinth*. London: Harvester Press.

37 *Sollicitudo Reis Socialis* (On Social Concern). December 30, 1987. Pp. 38 and 39.

Chapter I
**Social Problems, Sociological Responses, and the Sociologists’
Professional Roles: Concerning Paul Hanly Furfey’s Studies,
Interpretations, and Practical Pursuits**

Krzysztof Frysztacki

Sociologists study societies, but they also belong to them; they observe social problems but also experience and participate in them. These simple statements mask a multitude of complicated problems and dilemmas of our community. The contribution of the Reverend P.H. Furfey supplies food for thought in this connection and helps bring up to date some questions that have been affecting us for a long time. The present short remarks are intended to be a small contribution toward this end.

The Two Sociologies: Theory and Practice

What I would like to start out by stressing is, so to say, the existence and reciprocal interaction of two sociologies.

One sociology is that of which we are conscious, to which we refer, and which, I suppose, constitutes our source of intellectual and professional identification, even pride. In a broad sense, it is theoretical sociology. Its importance I cannot overestimate. Suffice it to say for now that the two-century-long history of our discipline is filled with ideas and works of classics and leading contemporary representatives, ideas and works that are of a theoretical, explanatory nature. From the classical, nineteenth century concepts to the wide range of ideas and studies in the twentieth century, sociology’s progress has been marked by a constant and perhaps dominant component of explanation and interpretation, usually generalized, even if referring to specific problems. It would be difficult to imagine sociology without the theoretical contributions of Comte, Spencer, Marx, Weber, Durkheim, Znaniecki, Mead, Schutz, Parsons, Merton, Dahrendorf, or Giddens, to name just a few immediately recognized figures.

At the same time, we know that there is also another sociology. It stems from and is defined by a myriad of specific events, circumstances, needs, and actions arising out of them and expected of sociologists by the institutions for which they work. Thus applied, this sociology incorporates the category of practice and its resulting functions. As a consequence, the situation of those more practice-oriented and entangled sociologists seems much different. They are expected less to engage in intellectual inquiry into social properties and more to collect and process specialized information and to solve concrete problems (especially those that worry their sponsors), or to improve the effectiveness of certain agencies. Cast in such roles and performing such actions, sociologists are to be less thinkers devoting themselves to abstruse aspects of social realities and more efficient operators on behalf of various causes, interests, or efforts. This second sociology also has its own history marked by the activities of outstanding individuals, to mention just LePlay and Booth, whose nineteenth-century endeavors were heroic in their way. For the most part, however, this type of activity is filled with relatively anonymous efforts by sociologists who do not rise to fame, who mingle with others in interdisciplinary teams and who, rather than help accumulate our collective knowledge, prefer to achieve concrete, expected results "here and now."

The above distinction is, I believe, fully justified, but it calls for a clearly voiced additional commentary. It is certainly not true that both sides of sociological realities are separated by an insurmountable wall. On the contrary, what serves as a linchpin uniting both is, of course, the empirical nature of the social world, the unlimited wealth of empirical phenomena and processes that supply the justification for any sociology, whether "theoretical" or "practical." Although quite understandably the first variety enjoys more acclaim, the other is just as authentic and needed.

Stemming from and addressing social realities, both theoretical and practical sides of sociology reinforce each other or, at any rate, they are capable of doing so. The dictum that nothing is so practical as a good theory has almost become a catch phrase, but with equal conviction we could state that practice is a starting point for theoretical exactitude. Let us quote the example of a key issue in urban sociology which was, and to some extent and in different variants still is, human ecology. The city makes theoretical thought possible, but it also yields to modification. A given city is concrete and unique but some characteristics of urban social-spatial structure turn out to be generalized and apply to different places, a fact that enables sociologists to build an urban theory. This and other examples document the continuum of theory-empiricism-practice.

Applied Sociology

At the same time, the dichotomy I outlined causes certain, perhaps unavoidable problems and carries a measurable price that the sociological community pays. The difficulty is in mutual communication, in finding a common language, even in what we can call a mutual lack of faith that theory and practice can be fully satisfactorily integrated. It is nevertheless a challenge that is worth taking up and really unavoidable, even if for some reason we thought we should avoid it.

For about a hundred years, an important answer to this challenge has been so-called applied sociology. It is usually understood as an aspect of general sociology, as a specialized way of pursuing the science. Important here are the characteristics of the positions taken by practice-oriented sociologists and of their roles. In one sense, applied sociology is a way of reaching out to various communities and to other partners in search of broadly defined opportunities to act. This implies a need and a readiness to learn the positions of those others and to establish cooperation with them.

Applied sociology is sometimes defined in terms of attributive and functional models. In this light, social engineering is referred to as a set of actions undertaken to take advantage of the existing body of sociological knowledge, in order to produce results in the form of new programs, institutions, or social policies. A distinct form is clinical sociology which deals with providing counseling and social-technical assistance in existing situations and forms of social functioning using whatever social resources are present in them. Finally, there is enlightening sociology, the purpose of which is to explain the social world in clear terms, with a view especially to informing decision-making centers. Whatever the specific manifestations, the common purpose is to consider empirical phenomena and take appropriate measures.

If so, we might add that such desires to combine the theoretical with the practical, given all difficulties and limitations that involves, bear upon the individual paths taken by those who have chosen what we call here applied sociology to pursue their mission. The factors at play in such choices must be intellectual, cognitive, and axiological – i.e. leading to a given set of values and standards – all superimposed on manifestations of social participation and public spirit. It is therefore a type of holistic position and approach. Let us try to look through this lens at some selected views and the work of P.H. Furfey.

Two additional remarks are in order here. First, not only do I refrain from aiming at an all-embracing definition of P.H. Furfey's works, but, on the contrary, I will limit myself to an attempt to capture an aspect and the context of what he wrote and acted. The reason is obvious enough: a more comprehensive treatment is best left to people incomparably more competent at it than am I. But there is also another purpose: to identify one aspect of interest and to consider its nature and implications. Secondly, a tentative working conclusion is suggested by the fact that P.H. Furfey was a Catholic priest. On the one hand, it is easy (and appropriate) enough to say that this had a strongly formative effect on him in the sociology he pursued, that to some extent his was, to coin a phrase, a sort of "religious sociology," or at any rate a variety with a strong "spiritual" content. Yet on the other hand, paradoxical though it may sound, I suppose that we can abstract from his priestly condition and delve into his words like those of any other author.

Paul Hanly Furfey

Furfey is at his most theoretical in his *Three Theories of Society* (1937). In a sense the book is astounding in its distinction and individuality. Relatively young at the time of its writing, the author has the courage to follow his own path of global theoretical thinking, to search for his own answers to questions like, what is society, how to study it, and what it should be like. The answer he arrives at, mainly as the concept of what he calls *pistic society*, is one that places emphasis on the society's foundation of faith, on the importance of contemplation, on charity and its social significance. All this in an emotional, indeed affected union with his religious worldview and judgment. A critical commentator could offer various additional insights and pose some questions. His three models of society may bring to mind the theoretical method used by A. Comte in building his conception of three stages of social development (the essential difference lying in the nature of "good" society; it is hardly surprising therefore that Furfey is critical of Comte). An emphasis on the centrality of the religious element in social life may be seen as an aftermath of the theory of social facts as suggested by E. Durkheim. This does not, however, shake my conviction that we are observing thoroughgoing, independent views that acted as an intellectual core for his further insights and actions such as, on the one hand, a radical Catholic vision and, on the other, all that made him engage in more strictly understood, narrowly differentiated, and closely examined social issues.

Let us go on to another of his statements on generalized social problems that he made more than 20 years later (in 1959). If he followed others in accepting the conventional definition of social problems as situations requiring ameliorative treatment, he nevertheless considered as key questions: who can perform a value judgment that something needs to be ameliorated and how is this to be done? In answering that question, Furfey basically rejected two possibilities popular among sociologists. One refers to social disorganization, the other looks for root causes of problems in the views of dominant social groups. In both cases identifying and interpreting social problems may be encumbered by errors of one-sided subjectivity. What is really needed is, in his own words, a solid, objective criterion by which to diagnose the pathologies of society, whether the citizens are aware of them or not. The natural law is such a criterion.

The natural law helps direct our collective attention and activity toward a social ideal, toward what the author described as an external order and as economic and cultural welfare of citizens. And again, it means (Furfey stressed another time, almost with enthusiasm) the great advantage which is, to him, complete objectivism. At this point, I think, the reader may hasten to ask additional questions about whether such objectivism is possible, how it can be recognized, etc. The

author is also aware of the difficulties involved in penetrating the nature of such a complicated social ideal, or rendering it operational in the form of indices of problems as they turn into social problems. Without hesitation, he adopts a realistic ontological position. What is more, he also assumes that this general objectivism resulting from the actual natural law surpasses and overcomes the boundaries of social-cultural diversity, such as when Catholics, Protestants and Jews can perfectly well cooperate in joint social endeavors connected with given social problems, whereas such endeavors are made possible by a departure from objective properties and patterns of the natural law and they may – perhaps should – adjust to specific actions in specific, variable social conditions.

It was from this point of view that P.H. Furfey focused his attention and efforts on selected issues that disturbed those objective, positive qualities of social life and emerged as problems. I will quickly recount his, and some others', studies on so-called marginal employability (1962). They are an interesting example of a general position combined with a particular empirical phenomenon, an example that confirms the ontological and axiological option Furfey made his own. In itself, the concept of marginal employability is debatable. After all, the fact that some men often change jobs or quit work, alternate between employment and periods of occupational inactivity, and consequently obtain low income, need not, properly speaking, be described as a social problem. After all the market and the law permit this behavior. Yet for Furfey and his colleagues, it looms as a serious social problem that clashes with their vision and, consequently, with what they regard as objective social requirements. In the light of their analysis and commentary, it is a burden both for the men involved and for society, which not only loses the benefits of their potentially more intensive exertions, but must even resort to lending unwarranted, objectively unnecessary assistance to them. The type of social order assumed as objectively appropriate is considered the definitive argument.

Having noted all this, let us move on to work which, in P.H. Furfey's theoretical-empirical-applicational pursuits, was perhaps crucial, or at any rate highly characteristic, and which well illustrates the distinctiveness of his approach. *The Subculture of the Washington Ghetto* (1972), the work I have in mind here, is partly a research report, partly a short book. In a highly graphic way that is also convincing, it portrays the characteristics of the life of ghetto dwellers, as well as the combination of factors and circumstances that disturb that life.

The starting point was an anthropological concept of culture synthetically approached. Consequently, it consists of capabilities and habits which a man acquires as a member of society. These include arts, beliefs, behavior patterns, institutions, language, legal codes, pattern of family life, and other constituents of a broadly understood social heritage. Thus, if some segment of a given community possesses a number of peculiar features while others are shares with the broader community, then the notion of subculture can be used to characterize this segment.

It is on this basis that the author discerns and analyzes the Black Ghetto of Washington, D.C. His investigation stresses such empirical components as the economics of the ghetto, broken homes (or family and household decomposition), daily life management and routines, the ghetto dialect, organizations and agencies of community life, moral and religious qualities. This rich array is importantly complemented by characteristic case studies portraying the life situations and changes of those selected ghetto dwellers who were described as the better-adjusted and the less well-adjusted. In his conclusion, the author returns to his introductory assumptions confirming and reinforcing them. In this view, within the entire Washington community, there exists a ghetto community that stands out for a lifestyle, a subculture of its own. Moreover, this distinct lifestyle, the peculiar reality, the separate subculture cannot be interpreted as an exception from the "normal

rules" applying to the broader environment. The ghetto and its subculture are autonomous, they are therefore simply different. As an example (an important one), the language these people use is not "bad English" as many others are led to believe. It is a distinctive language in its own right that has its unique roots and a complex history. It is not inferior, it is different. Nor is it static; on the contrary, it changes as does the ghetto and life in it.

The study is the aftermath of a research presence in the ghetto, of long, penetrating observation, of contact with the inhabitants. Written in a vivid language, it is easy for the reader to follow and to become absorbed in matters as important as they are interesting. Such claims should properly be illustrated with appropriate quotations, were it not for the narrow confines of this brief presentation. I can, therefore, only voice a hope that at present, years since its publication, different people will be able to trace the original, study it, and use it in further needed dispute. In this discussion, let us focus on two trains of thought.

The first is to attempt to position *The Subculture of the Washington Ghetto* in the broader context of P.H. Furfey's work. I can make no claim to a sweeping comprehension of his entire output and I refer primarily to the publications already cited. Believing them to be sufficiently indicative, however, I would venture saying that both his laborious involvement with the functioning of the ghetto and the conduct of the project are a sign of a perceptible change in his work. By this I mean a strengthening of the strictly and specifically sociological orientation in the theoretical as much as empirical and applicational senses. This last quality perhaps deserves special emphasis. Compared with the ghetto project, his earlier works seem more given to philosophical and social reflection and speculation on the history and constitutive features of society. My impression is that, faced with the realities of the Washington ghetto, with the data obtained there, Furfey became more open and sensitive to the important details of human life, perhaps at the expense of the question of how this detail fits in with some generalized social model, whether and how it reflects a generalized social problem.

The other thought I want to mention is, again paradoxically, an attempt to characterize the most common properties of P.H. Furfey's brand of sociology and try to confront them with some wider dilemmas of our discipline. I speak of a possible paradox because the emphasized empirical and applicational nature should not perhaps lead to general conclusions. And yet, bearing in mind that particular research experience, I want to suggest two "ideal" research approaches in sociology. Let us label them type A and type B – and I do not hesitate to identify Furfey's view as decidedly the latter type:

- A1. Observation from without;
- B1. Involvement and participation in the social entity under study;
- A2. Axiological neutrality;
- B2. Values shared by the researcher as a justified factor in sociological research;
- A3. Stress mainly on positions, roles, patterns of interaction or exchange;
- B3. Focus on holistically considered human beings;
- A4. Global perspective;
- B4. Focus on special instances of social life;
- A5. Individualism, ontological minimalism;
- B5. Emphasis on complex social conditions;
- A6. Isolation of a single key variable;
- B6. Use of many variables;
- A7. Purpose mainly descriptive or explanatory;

B7. Responsibility in regard to social issues and pursuit of applicational results.

This is a fragmentary interpretation which ignores a number of significant points, and Furfey's sociological output itself would probably suggest additional questions. Nonetheless, with reference to the author in question we can, I believe, use the properties attributed to him. Over and beyond what has been said, we might add that his was a progressive perspective, involving emphasis on questions of social justice. He would probably favor subsequent developments like action research and community work principles. In particular, his empirical research enables us to discern in him a positive involvement, a sympathy for those in difficulty, a search for solutions. One more remark by way of a postscript: I wonder what position Furfey would have taken if he had been able and willing to engage in the later, controversial dispute on liberation theology...

In sum, I started from remarks on applied sociology and after this encounter with Paul Hanly Furfey would close with them. Applied sociology does not exist in a vacuum. It belongs in research and at the same time it belongs in societies, their characteristics, their efforts. On the one hand, it is made possible by primary sociology, either as general theory or as specialized empirical subdisciplines. On the other hand, applicational endeavors become components of the social world and fractional efforts for sociologists to perform their roles.

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Chapter II

Sociology as an Account of Accounts

Laura Bovone

The communicative turn of contemporary sociological theory is now a consolidated fact (Bovone 2000). It is difficult to identify precise causes for this turn, but it certainly has to do with the success the phenomenological approach has had in the XXth century sociology: communication seems to be the answer to many of the problems and interrogatives that a phenomenological sociology opens about the foundations and the methods of knowledge.

The topic of communication supersedes the topic of morality which was central to classic sociological approaches, especially functionalism. This shift is particularly visible in American micro-sociology (Goffman and Garfinkel); however there are other sociological approaches - neither American nor focused on micro phenomena and interested in the responsibility that the new globalized society confronts us with that nevertheless see morality as a blocked system, separated from its traditions and hardly renewable. That is probably why socialization, viewed as the process whereby young people access society as performed and guaranteed by past generations (such as functionalism had described it) has lost interest in the discipline.

What I want to argue here is that new approaches of contemporary sociology, while concentrating on communicative processes, in particular communication among peers, do not renounce morality; however their lack of interest for socialisation seems to point to a crisis in the foundations of morality and its importance. Sociology seems to concentrate on a wide generation of adults who, while tolerant and uncertain about life and the future and therefore incapable of instructing new generations, are very keen on speaking about themselves to compare with others or even to account for their practices, able to explain their points of view and beliefs, be these accepted or not by the wider social context. This is what Bauman (2001) calls "the individualised society".

In this situation, for sociologists of post-modernity, who see society as reflexive and individualised, the problem arises of how to teach their students, how to tell other people what things are like or, even worse, what they should do. How can a sociologist abdicate his/her commitment toward new generations; how can he/she avoid establishing whatever role sociology is left with in this situation?

I would like to deal with some of these problems, drawing on just a few authors to support my stance. In particular I would like to argue for the centrality of Goffman's sociology: Goffman opposes Parsons and by doing this he opens up many new issues. First I would note the distances of Goffman's theory of morality from the functionalist establishment; then I will turn to other contemporary theories of morality, as they are found in Habermas and Bauman. I picked these two theorists not only for their relevance, but also because they show a social, moral and political commitment totally absent in Goffman. It would have made a lot of sense if these (committed) authors had recovered at least some of the elements of the functionalist morality which Goffman had erased. But this has not been the case.

Compared with Parsons, two elements have been changed by Goffman and taken up in the Goffmanian version and other contemporary moral theories to be considered here. The first element is a split in the practical sphere, which functionalism had always considered as a monolithic domain governed by objective rules guaranteed by society. The split emerges as the Goffmanian opposition between ethics and etiquette, and, more generally, as the opposition,

highlighted in Habermas and Bauman among others, between universal/rational principles and individual opinions, between recognised social norms and everyday, common-sense morality.

The consequences of this break are very important. While studying Goffman I had thought this to be a trait peculiar to his theory, but now it appears to be a constant trait of contemporary theories of morality. It is the problem of socialisation, which, from Goffman onwards, has been replaced by the urgent need to collect voices and documents, to listen to opinions and experiences lived by other people in order to compare them with our own; in one word, the problem to be solved is the issue of communication.

From Morality to Communication: Goffman, Habermas, Bauman

Goffman openly declares his intention to neglect the area of "law, morality and ethics...the code which governs substantive rules and substantive expression" in order to pay attention only to etiquette...the code which governs ceremonial rules and ceremonial expressions (Goffman 1967:55). Among microsociologists (the most obvious comparison is with Garfinkel's ethnomethodology) Goffman is more interested in the moral domain, but, as he states in a crucial passage of the conclusion of *The Presentation of the Self in Everyday Life* (1959: 251), his interest is focused on the "amoral issue of engineering a convincing impression of being moral individuals". He is interested in the ways in which individuals manage their "multiple self identifications" and reads their professed principles as face games or scenic tools.

Etiquette is the formal code that governs encounters. The main goal for the Goffmanian social actor is both self-promotion and the preservation of the interaction: to save the face..."is to save the situation" (Goffman 1967:39). As in Parsonian functionalism, private and social interests are not conflicting; but for Goffman the goal to attain is to show a balance, situational and provisional; the good he talks about is regulated by etiquette not by ethics. On the basis of these formal criteria the individual chooses his/her temporary self-identity, his/her proximity/distance from all the many roles available at that moment and the decision to support certain moral standards (Bovone 1993).

What functionalism maintains and Goffman argues against is the idea of the basic stability of the role system, of their hierarchy and of the subjective adherence to this hierarchy: ultimately the existence of a shared moral sense expressed in deeply rooted principles, inspiring most of our actions, except for a few deviant ones.

When Goffman distinguishes between ethics and etiquette, his purpose is not mainly polemic, neither is it intended to maintain that the formal analysis of etiquette is more useful than the substantial level of ethics; rather he means to suggest that the formal level is as substantial as the level of ethics and that it is just as important to understand how a "working consensus" (Goffman 1959:10) is usually reached. This effective, albeit not explicit, consensus, often is more useful for social living than a consensus based on principles (the working consensus is often but not necessarily more useful than consensus rooted in substantial morality, which, in any case, for Goffman cannot be analysed).

To put this dualism into perspective it is useful to compare Goffman with contemporary authors writing on morality and still keeping this dualistic approach; I refer to Habermas and Bauman. As they would probably both want to distinguish themselves from Goffman, I shall start from this difference in order to show, at the end, how all the three authors actually have many points in common.

Habermas's analysis of morality, contrary to Goffman, is not limited to the surface of behaviour, rather it strives to attain the depth of intentions. Therefore, in contrast to the functionalism and also a sort of microfunctionalism sometimes attributed to Goffman, it incorporates a dramatic view of contemporary culture. While in previous society individuals could easily adapt to a shared moral order, Habermas (1991) sees every man/woman of the present as split between an internal ethical source – easy to locate because consistent with one's biography – and a common, if possible, universal normative system very difficult to elaborate.

Since for Habermas it is important to reconstruct the level of shared morality, which also guarantees the democratic consensus on rules of civil coexistence, the problem is again how to let everybody participate on an equal basis in the elaboration of a new ethical order, how to guarantee a democratic discourse where everybody's ethical systems can meet. The moral problem becomes a communicative problem, the urgent need to enliven a dialogue at risk of fragmentation into the many streams of individual reasons. To this purpose Habermas (1973) introduces the concept of an "ideal linguistic situation". Such a situation does not exist in reality, but needs to be assumed by all of us if we want effectively to speak to each other; above all, we must collaboratively create it if we want to produce a shared morality.

Actually the "discourse ethics" (Habermas 1991) that should lead to that situation, seems more a proposal or the acceptance of others' proposals, than a precise trust in a future attainment of a universal source of rationality and morality. However Goffman's dualism and Habermas's dualism are very different: Goffman distinguishes between substantial ethics and etiquette (which has to do with appearance) and decides to study the latter; on the other hand Habermas distinguishes between personal ethics and social morality, both sources of substantial rules, and sketches a utopic hypothesis for their recomposition.

Between Goffman's micro-theory and Habermas's macro-theory, we can consider Bauman's as a meso-theory, criticizing the formalism of traditional/modern morality from the point of view of the postmodern subject. By arguing that moral problems are neither rational nor universal, Bauman moves away from the illuministic perspective adopted by Habermas. Bauman's dualism mainly consists in the diachronic opposition between the morality of modern society, whose idea of absolute Truth allowed the legitimization of the worst crimes, and the morality of postmodern society, well aware of an unavoidable uncertainty, because "morality can dream about steady foundations only to its own detriment". Absolute faith in one's own beliefs helps governors, but today, says Bauman, "tasting the world represents a considerable step forward towards its management" (Bauman 1999b: 125).

Bauman illustrates the existential strategies of the postmodern individual in the famous essay *From Pilgrim to Tourist*, where "the postmodern problem of identity is primarily centered on how to avoid fixation and how to keep the options open" (Bauman 1996: 18). The postmodern citizen is not a pilgrim orientated to a goal, rather a tourist in search of experience. He/she does not try to build a solid future for him/herself; on the contrary he/she wants a reversible future. Young people are not stimulated to discover their vocation, to carefully plan their curriculum, to work hard to achieve the role that will qualify each person for life; in times of uncertainty it is wiser to prefer the gratification readily available: casual encounters, consumption, entertainment.

The second aspect of Bauman's dualism is the awareness and the acceptance of ambivalence: it is not worth aspiring to absolute moral values since each action is limited, the formalism of traditional morality is dangerous, rules are often inadequate to the changeability of contexts. Although Bauman (1983) and Habermas (1991) use the terms "ethics" and "morality" in a different way, they both stress the distance between personal morality and universal morality. Unlike

Habermas, Bauman does not fight postmodern ambivalence, he does not attempt to overcome it in the name of a shared rationality. For Bauman, the problem is how to be responsible within diversity, how to preserve diversity.

Contemporary social theory, then, I hope it is becoming clear, does not neglect the topic of morality, but it treats it differently from the past, by marginalizing the problems of the socialization and education of young people. The moral world it depicts consists of adult domains set in comparison to one another – different moral concepts, sometimes strikingly divergent, or a society formed by carefree young tourists, worlds that are not hierarchically structured by asymmetrical relations of authority.

Goffman, Habermas and Bauman all point to a communicative solution to the problem of morality, which leaves the issue of socialization largely to the side.

Goffman's theory makes no attempt at social intervention, rather it depicts social actors struggling to save actual social encounters, instead of abstract entities such as a better future society to be created through a patient commitment to the socialization of younger generations.

Habermas did in the past show some interest for functionalist theories of socialization, especially in the 70s when he was reflecting on how to educate the new generations in a society going through a legitimization crisis. More recently, however, globalization poses more urgent problems: the coexistence of different cultures, the plurality of biographies, the awareness of one's own moral limitations, etc...The task of enlarging the citizens' community to broaden the public sphere is obviously big enough and in some ways endless. Nobody can control it, nobody can perfectly translate idioms and cultures (Habermas 1991, Ricoeur 1999) or even properly compare cultures and moral rules.

We can reach the same conclusion following Bauman. The formation of the modern citizen was based on socialization and its experts, whose goal was to help the individual forge a stable and established identity; in other words to guide the pilgrim to his/her sanctuary. Socialization, for Bauman, is therefore founded on certainties. In the postmodern era, there are no certainties, no experts, no socialization. Who would take up the task of socializing the tourist in a society of tourists? "Like the Web, the world is not just out of control, it is uncontrollable"; it is mainly the web, the domain of global communication, that presents us with a renewed awareness of our limits (Bauman 1999a: 145).

In such a scenario, Goffman invites us to always renegotiate the definition of the situation, rules of behavior, role and role distance, etc...Habermas advises us to engage in an endless discussion, Bauman identifies a possible objective: the experience and preservation of diversity. For Bauman, the other's freedom guarantees my freedom, the responsibility toward the other, although not deriving from a common project, nevertheless renders each person as an interesting interlocutor.

Sociology and Its "Communicative Duty"

What then is the task of sociology in a world of virtual peers, where the solutions to problems of social life do not come from experimented recipes, but are based on people's openness to dialogue, sometimes on the efforts of imagination?

Sociology ceased long ago to envy natural sciences, as soon as it uncovered some of the hidden rules of the glorious "game of science" (Cassano 1989) and moreover since it reevaluated its role as the forefront of contemporary reflexivity (Giddens 1990). But reflexivity is by definition a situation with no time out; the sociologist, by looking at the culture he/she belongs to, looks at

his/her self. Though he/she is supported by a tradition and is part of some scientific community, this is not enough to make him/her feel secure. On the one hand it is clear that many of the past categories are not suitable to describe the present (Melucci 2000 b); they are "zombie categories", as Beck brilliantly suggests - thinking about some venerable sociological categories such as family, class, neighborhood- (Beck- Beck-Gersheim 2002: 203). If we lack new models to organize our social life, but also adequate patterns to describe it, if we live a "decline of narratives of given sociability", sociology cannot feel self confident while trying to play with fragments of a discourse that appears old and inadequate. So then again: what will sociology's task be in a world of peers, how will it cope with the uncomfortable feeling of having lost the vantage point whence it used to look down on postmodern chaos? From all our talks it seems that sociology has not given up, rather it keeps on trying.

Habermas's statement (1981:20) that "among social sciences only sociology deals with the whole ensemble of social problems" can, I argue, be stated in a somewhat less defined and pretentious, but also less ambiguous, way: sociology nowadays perceives itself only as a fragment of a broader discourse, in which it strives to play the critical role. However, it does so by keeping the debate open, by taking up the task of making a synthesis and an interpretation that sociology knows to be only temporary.

Using a term coined by ethnomethodology (Garfinkel 1967), I would say that sociology perceives itself as an account of accounts: the idea is that the sociologist has to give voice to others without any pretence of being voiceless, to listen to others while becoming involved in the others' discourses, to make up a "methodological intersubjectivity" including sociologist'and others' discourses, his/her own story and even the account of the ongoing empirical work (Knorr-Cetina 1981). In other words, sociology's task is a communicative one: it makes connections, asks people to speak and listens to them, re-elaborates by accounting for whatever the others said. It favors, when possible, the "power to name" (Melucci 2000a: 147), the symbolic capacity necessary to participate. This is the responsibility of a profession looking for a role in the crisis of roles and models, a crisis that a reflexive sociologist cannot ignore and must attempt to solve at least in practice. We see, then, that in this case the interest for communication entails a morally loaded option.

Once again, the methodological solutions proposed by the authors I presented (whom I consider as emblematic of our time) are in no way the same, but they share one aspect: they refuse to opt out, to put themselves aside as neutral and privileged observers. Let us start from Goffman, not only for chronological reasons, but also because his theory of knowledge and his methodological stance is the most peculiar. His micro perspective,—his curiosity for face or word games and his indifference or even skepticism towards principled positions,—makes his case special, although I hope to be able to show some similarities between him and Habermas and Bauman.

Goffman speaks about his way of doing sociology in a more explicit way in his latest work and in particular in *The Interaction Order* (1983) where he defines his method of investigation as "situational" and "naturalistic". If the term situational refers directly to the need to concentrate on whatever is typical of microinteractions, the term naturalistic could perhaps be misleading and requires a punctual comparison with the actual way in which Goffman practices research and adopts the phenomenological tradition, as he declares in the introduction to *Frame Analysis* (1974). It then becomes clear that the naturalistic attitude mentioned by Goffman has nothing to do with a naively realistic attitude or a positivistic one.

To use a naturalistic approach, for the scholar adopting a "situational perspective", who wants to observe "our subjective involvement ... in the organization of experience" (Goffman 1974: 10-11), this means entering the situation with the attentive and careful approach of a nature scientist. But this is not enough: while the natural scientist usually neutralizes his/herself by becoming a sort of "mirror of nature" (Rorty 1979), Goffman, on the contrary, observes himself and his own work with the same care. Thereby, to adopt a naturalistic approach means not only to speak, observe, take notes and categorize, but also to interact with others in a natural way, trying not to supersede, not to lead the discussion, to favor other points of view. The idea is to make oneself an object of observation amongst others, to be aware of one's method and work, and to assess it like the work of other actors engaged in the construction of frames to organize knowledge. If the sociologist knows more than the others, that is because he/she is more aware of the "vulnerability" (Goffman 1974) of his/her knowledge, looks within him/herself as much as outside.

Goffman dedicates just a few pages to talk about the sources of his method—he certainly is not a methodologist and neither are Habermas or Bauman. These pages are very few pages when compared with the many dedicated to the research reports, where the participant observation or the document collection are reported, along with comments that are very rarely conclusive. Actually, Goffman's reports usually look like an accumulation of documents to support a typically tentative thesis, which later on can even be turned upside down if it proves to be invalid. The conclusions of his arguments often make an abrupt turn and they become provisional, vulnerable and open. This is where Goffman's famous irony comes from: it is in fact a self-irony.

With all his limitations Goffman is the only one out of the three who did any empirical work. We could therefore assess whether the theoretical program that Habermas and Bauman develop goes in any way along with the program put into practice by Goffman.

First of all, there is an interest for a certain kind of empirical material: even the critical hermeneutics developed by Habermas is focused on discourses, Bauman encourages sociology to collect stories. But if we can consider this a common interest, coinciding with the interest in communication, I believe that the three authors deal with the topic from different approaches, by bringing to the methodological issue three very distinctive contributions. What I would highlight is that Habermas, and Bauman, as well, are aware that the discourse of sociology is precarious and that any interpretation is problematic.

Having said that and simplifying the matter, the peculiarity of Habermas's contribution consists in keeping the reference to truth, in attempting to identify the condition in which the speaking subjects can aspire to valid communication in order to build an "ideal linguistic community". But while there is no empirical correspondent to this ideal linguistic community, neither is there an actualization of it in the scientific community, or in the communicative relations between the researcher and the object of his/her study.

For this kind of awareness Habermas (1967) recognizes his debt to the comprehensive approaches, of Goffman and ethnomethodology; from these he learnt to apply the same interpretative schemes to everyday life and to scientific activities, he learnt that the sociological community, like any other scientific community, works in a well-defined space, limited by the "natural language".

The social scientist belongs to the world he/she must describe. The language one uses is not neutral, because it is the same used at the pre-theoretical level, the one taken for granted. When one describes, one interprets and gets involved, or participates in the communicative process. Certainly for everyone "the same structures that allow reciprocal understanding, provide the possibility for a reflexive self control of the process of reciprocity" (Habermas 1986:202).

However, theoretical argumentation is ideally both free from constrictions and open to criticism and repairs. What really distinguishes the scientific discourse is its openness to debate within the scientific community. Although everyone is subjected to the communicative duty, since that is the prerequisite of human social life, it becomes somehow the scientist's specific duty. The scientist inevitably pushes the tendency to reflexivity typical of postmodernity to the extreme, thereby attaining a sort of "rootless cosmopolitanism" (MacIntyre 1988: 388, quoted by Habermas 1991)), an exasperation of cosmopolitanism characterizing the average citizen. This attitude can be interpreted as an extreme willingness to listen, extreme orientation to find an agreement, extreme openness to other people's stories.

Once again Bauman's position is a useful mediation between Habermas's abstractions and Goffman's extreme empiricism. If individual freedom is granted by "the absence of guaranteed meanings, of preordained norms of conduct, of pre-drawn borderlines between right and wrong", according to Bauman it is not up to the sociologist to find routes which are impossible to find, which can even be wicked, rather it is the sociologist's task to keep routes open (Bauman 2000:212), The task of the sociologist

correcting common sense' and legislating the true representation of human reality... The essence of the task is not closure, but opening; not the selection of human possibilities worth pursuing, but preventing them from being foreclosed...or lost from view (Bauman 2001, 13).

Sociology does not wish new masters to be born, it simply tries to listen, taking part for social variability, going along, it seems, with the lifestyle adopted by the postmodern citizen/tourist.

In the "individualized society" at least one thing seems clear, the importance of individual life stories. Among the many materials that a sociologist can collect by listening and observing – just think about the variety of documents that Goffman draws to our attention – Bauman (2001, 13) chooses the life stories, which bear for him a dense meaning, constitutive of the sense of life: "Articulation of life stories is the activity through which meaning and purpose are inserted into life". The life story is a story told and listened to in order to find meanings, to find an agreement on the sense of the story. Each story negotiates its vulnerable meanings in situation, following Goffman's perspective, but it also is a communicative exchange finalized to an agreement, in Habermas's sense, ultimately a step forward toward the construction of the "ideal linguistic situation". This substantial ethical reason emerges even when Bauman speaks about sociology as a story of stories, as a story among the others but functioning as a support to other stories and bearing the responsibility to encourage the variety of stories. Sociology is an inviting story, that sets the other stories free.

Sociology is itself a story – but the message of this particular story is that there are more ways of telling a story than are dreamt of in our daily story-telling; and that there are more ways of living than is suggested by each one of the stories we tell and believe in (Bauman 2001:13).

Once again the sociologist lives among others, but these others are not simple objects to observe; they are responsible subjects and, at the same time, the sociologist is a subject/object him/herself. He/she doesn't want to be a "social engineer" who piles up data and graphs on a base of certainty whence to plan society, he/she intends to be a "social interlocutor" (Gadamer 1976).

Like all the others, the sociologist has no certainties to transmit, no exhortations to make, no regulative principles to found a project or a government. His/her problem is how to show all these uncertainties, subjectivities and responsibilities, how to account for them, how to record them, how to listen to voices and how to give voice to whoever has none. This is sociology's communicative task, the transformation that renders it an account of accounts. To go back to the question posed in the title, sociology doesn't need to choose between morality and communication. Lately the two domains seem to coincide.

"To be a listener of the many stories of human meanings – and then to retell the stories as faithfully as one is able". As soon as 1982 (:77) Berger and Kellner remarked that this methodological option is also a moral one: we can add, it is also a communicative option and an openness toward what is possible, a hope in the unknown and in imagination.

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Chapter III

Sociology and Metasociology: A Journey of Over Half a Century

Francesco Villa

On the present occasion I would like to recall the relationship between Paul Hanley Furfey and Luigi Sturzo. We are not the first Italians to come into contact with Furfey: as long ago as the Second World War period, Luigi Sturzo – an important Italian politician, as well as a sociologist and, first of all, a priest – was in contact with Paul Hanly Furfey, and we can record some "elective affinities" between these two prominent personalities.

Sturzo in his book on *The True Life: Sociology of the Supernatural*, published first in English in 1943, here in Washington D.C., by Catholic University of America Press, quotes Furfey's work on *Three Theories of Society*, published in New York in 1937. Like Furfey, Sturzo also joined the efforts of sociology to reach beyond its naturalist and positivist confinements, in view of developing a sociological theory pertaining to the social and historical dimension of supernatural reality. Furthermore, in response to the critics of another one of his works *Inner Laws of Society. A New Sociology* (1944; first Italian edition 1935) – published in English through a sponsorship of the *Luigi Sturzo Foundation for Sociological Studies*, established in New York in 1944 – Sturzo collected in his book *Del metodo sociologico. Risposta ai critici* (1950: 123-168) the lectures delivered on his own sociological theory by Dr P. H. Furfey¹ in McMahon Auditorium, at Catholic University of America, in 1945 and chaired by the Mons. Donald H. McLean.

It may be interesting to do some research to verify how many times Sturzo and Furfey met during the Second World War period, when Sturzo was living in the US, to escape Fascist intolerance in Italy. Leaving to the biographers of these two great personalities and to researchers into the sociology of the supernatural the task of further investigating the Furfey – Sturzo contacts, I wish here to focus on Furfey's sociology-metasociology distinction, an issue I have been reflecting upon for the last ten years.

In 1993 I wrote an essay on Simmel, entitling it *Sociology and Metasociology in Georg Simmel*, without actually knowing of the metasociological treatise Furfey had written forty years earlier (in 1953) where the distinction between sociology and metasociology was fully developed. When I discovered this, I became interested in this terminological coincidence and I proposed to reconstruct its history, starting from George Ritzer's use of Furfey in his *Metatheorizing in Sociology* (1991: 3-4). The follow-up investigations have enabled me to track some research paths for my publication *Sociologia e metasociologia* (Villa 2000). This year, in fact, we are exactly fifty years after the publication of Furfey's book, and it could not be a better opportunity to make a journey to go over the history of the relationships between sociology and metasociology over the last half century.

Sociology and Metasociology in Paul Hanly Furfey

The term *metasociology* was first used by Paul Furfey in his *Metasociological Treatise of 1953*, on the *Scope and Method of Sociology*, with its second edition twelve years later, which I use in the present context. According to Furfey:

A special science is called for to furnish and apply principles for the construction and criticism of a valid sociology. This science will be called metasociology; it is

defined as an auxiliary science whose function is to determine for sociology criteria of scientific quality and criteria of relevance together with their practical application. In other words, it is metasociology that furnishes the methodological presuppositions necessary for carrying out sociological research, constructing sociological systems, and criticizing such research and such systems after they have been completed. (Furfey 1965: 8)

Moreover, according to Furfey, the tasks of metasociology are three:

It must yield criteria for distinguishing scientific knowledge from non-scientific knowledge in the area in which sociology operates; these are criteria of scientific quality.

It must yield criteria for distinguishing what is relevant to sociology from what is not, thus defining the field of the science; these are criteria of relevance.

It must furnish practical procedural rules for applying these criteria in practical sociological research.

It should be immediately clear that metasociology is a science distinct from sociology. Two sciences are distinct if their subject matter is different. But metasociology and sociology have different matter. Therefore they are distinct sciences. The subject matter of sociology is something existing in the real world of men and events, whereas the subject matter of metasociology is sociology itself. Thus the proposition, "Propaganda is one means of social control", is a proposition about human group life and belongs to sociology, whereas the proposition, "Sociology is a science," is a proposition about human life and belongs to metasociology. (Furfey 1965:9)

Metasociology in such a meaning in Furfey's study is made to refer to logic in general and to logic of science, as well as to axiology in terms of the value judgment evaluations implied by sociological knowledge and by its postulates. We may then conclude that Furfey distinguishes metasociology, meant as an auxiliary science of a logical and axiological character, from sociology: that is to say that while sociology investigates society, metasociology investigates sociology itself, i.e. its logical criteria – in relation with general logic and the logic of science – as well as value judgments, in relation with axiology, as indicated in the graph below

LOGIC AXIOLOGY (including general logic (as systematic investigations of and the logic of science) values, including value judgments)

METASOCIOLOGY (including the logic of sociology, dependent on logic, and metasociological value judgments, dependent on axiology)

SOCIOLOGY (cfr. Furfey 1965: 18)

In his twenty-chapter volume Furfey constructs his argument not only on the nature of metasociology (ch. 1) and its development (ch. 2) but also on: the nature of scientific knowledge (ch. 3), metasociological value judgments (ch. 4), prolegomena to the definition of sociology (ch. 5), the definition of sociology (ch. 6), productive thinking (ch. 7), sources of error in productive

thinking (ch. 8), the logical structure of science (ch. 9), the logical structure of sociology (ch. 10), induction (ch. 11), statistical analysis (ch. 12) observations as a research technique (ch. 13), case studies of individuals (ch. 14), case studies of communities (ch. 15), the cultural approach (ch. 16), the experimental method in sociology (ch. 17), tests, rating scales, and questionnaires (ch. 18), the use of written sources (ch. 19), the construction of a sociological system (ch. 20).

As one can see, this amounts to an articulated and complex study on sociology and its investigation methods, and thus, according to Furfey's own definition, to a true metasociological treatise.

Ritzer's Own Interpretation

According to George Ritzer's interpretation, Furfey ended up excessively separating sociology from metasociology, since the latter should be interpreted – more simply – as the systematic study of sociology in general and of all its building blocks, particularly of the structure implicit in its various sociological theories (Ritzer 1991, ed. 1992, 1998). Such a view would converge with what Gouldner and Bourdieu mean by the phrase "sociology of sociology" and in effect metasociology, as developed in the United States, mostly coincides with a second-level reinterpretation within an exclusively sociological theoretical and methodological framework. Yet Ritzer prefers to use the term metasociology because he holds that the phrase "sociology of sociology" is often identified in the United States with a number of "trivial" and "pretentious" studies published by some sociologists in the 70's and in the early 80's, obviously far less valuable than those by Gouldner and Bourdieu.

In actual fact, Gouldner holds that the so-called "sociology of sociology" – also defined as "reflexive sociology" – is meant to deal with what sociologists wish to do and with what they actually do in the world and in society, in other words with the relationship between thought and experience. Bourdieu specifically focusing on the individual sociologist's own personality (Gouldner 1970). Bourdieu, on the other hand, uses the terms "socio-analysis" and "reflexivity" to point to the room to be reserved for the sociology of sociology, meant as the true centre of the subject. Indeed, he holds that the most important progress made by social science arises from the constant effort to develop a sociological criticism of sociological reasoning itself (Bourdieu 1984). Later on and more decisively he argued that sociology of sociology is a fundamental dimension of sociological epistemology: far from being a specialist knowledge among others, it represents the necessary assumption of any truly accurate sociological practice (Bourdieu-Wacquant 1992).

Ritzer himself remarks that Bourdieu's approach is broader and more complex than Gouldner's. Despite acknowledging the importance of an analysis of the individual sociologists' own personalities (at least as types), his attention focuses on the all-embracing social forces forcing sociologists to be unconsciously involved in what they do. Sociological reasoning develops within structural contexts that inevitably affect it. The sociologist's own task is that of analysing the character of such structures, or better, "the social determinants of sociological thought" (Bourdieu 1990: 184). Such social structures are tied in with the structures implicit in sociological theorizing, that are described as "unpredicted thinking categories confining the thinkable and predetermining thought" (Bourdieu, quoted in Wacquant 1992: 40). There is indeed a relationship between objective social structures and mind structures: it is the sociologist of sociology's own job to disclose the character of this relationship.

Bourdieu's own research reaches beyond a sort of "epistemological caution" and proposes that sociologists use their own discipline as "a weapon against themselves, as a caution tool" (Bourdieu

1990: 27). Moreover, he prompts sociologists to be constantly mindful of the way in which social structures influence – and sometimes contradict – what they think and do. In other words, the sociologist is encouraged to try to check the effects of social determinisms affecting both his or her own world and the scientific discourse itself (Bourdieu 1984), as well as – more specifically – the scholastic reason, in addition to the notion of "free subject transparent to himself" that rationalism, existentialism and phenomenology placed at the centre of the philosophical, scientific and artistic universe (Bourdieu 1998).

Ritzer's suggestion is to identify a set of three types of metasociological and, above all, metatheoretical work (Ritzer 1991, 1998: 37), differing on the basis of their own basic objectives, to be respectively identified with a deeper understanding of sociological theorizing, the development of new theoretical approaches and the definition of an overarching perspective, also called metatheorizing. He also holds that metatheorizing itself may be fully defined as the systematic study of the fundamental structure of sociological theory, as implied in the various theories to be made explicit precisely by metatheorizing (Ritzer ed. 1992).

We may, then, note with Ritzer that metasociology may be interpreted, in general, as a systematic study of sociology and of its various explicit and implicit building blocks. Such a study may be aimed at the following:

Understanding sociological theorizing in greater depth. In this respect, Ritzer identifies four varieties of metatheorizing (internal-intellectual, internal-social, external-intellectual, external-social) grouping various features and building blocks of sociological theories (1991:17-34). New concepts also, such as McDonaldisation, are considered useful by Ritzer (1998) to explain and to better understand some trends of contemporary sociology.

Developing new theoretical approaches, with innovative solutions of traditional sociological problems. In this respect, one may distinguish – in the rise of new intellectual traditions – between implicit and explicit metatheories, to a certain extent presenting analogies with the implicit and explicit social analyses at the origins of sociological theories themselves (Ritzer 1991: 35-50).

Establishing a metatheory, i.e. a second-level interpretation of sociological thought, which may disclose the conceptual assumptions and the underlying structure of the various theories: in this respect, metasociology "follows onto", that is presupposes the drawing up of the theories themselves, according to the original meaning of the Greek word *meta* (= after) which we find as a prefix in the term in question (Ritzer 1991: 51-62).

A feature common to Ritzer and to the authors he examines seems to be the viewing of metasociology exclusively within a sociological framework of knowledge (Ritzer 1991: 4). In other words, no special consideration is accorded to the assumption of sociological knowledge exceeding sociology itself. In my essay on Simmel I have already remarked that such an extension makes for a complex issue, that may be tackled according to various modes (Villa 1993: 29). Yet the most classical outline of the present issue refers to the relationship between sociology and philosophy, in which the metasociological overlaps with the pre-sociological, if only on the basis of the origin, one may say, of the derivation (even in Pareto's terms) of sociology from philosophy. Hence, preferring such a classical approach to the problem, I can only converge on Furfey's own view, since both logic and axiology, from which his metasociology depends, are part and parcel with philosophy.

The Us Debate on Metasociology

Some lines of the debate on metasociology that have been developing over the last decades in the US deserve careful consideration. The most relevant key author for a reconstruction of such a debate is, again, George Ritzer (1991, ed. 1992, 1998), who, in his writings, nearly always uses the expression *metatheorizing* as a synonym for the term *metasociology*, since he defines *metatheorizing* in the broadest sense as a systematic study of the implicit or underlying structure of sociological theorizing (ed. 1992: 7). An interesting panoramic view of the increasing production of explicitly and consciously metatheoretical essays by a number of American sociologists was already provided by Fuhrman and Snizek (1990). In addition to the works considered by these two authors, let me mention the paramount metatheoretical studies by Berger-Wagner-Zelditch (1989) and by Turner (1989). The review of *Sociological Theory* has also devoted increasing space to explicitly metasociological papers, such as those by Ritzer (1988), Levine (1989) and Fararo (1989), whereas *Social Forum* has reserved a special issue for metatheorizing (Ritzer ed., 1990b). Beside these and numerous essays and articles in journals, one may also recall the more complex works by Fiske-Shweder (eds. 1986), Osterberg (1988), and Turner (1989 ed.), and again by Ritzer (1991), while other authors have tackled important metatheoretical questions, such as the micro-macro link (Alexander-Giesen-Münch-Smelser, eds., 1987; Collins 1981a; 1981b, 1988; Ritzer, 1990c), the action-structure link (Archer 1982, 1988; Bernstein 1971; Giddens 1990) and the levels of social analysis (Wiley 1988, 1989; Ritzer 1990b).

Starting from such premises on the development of metasociological studies in the US, Ritzer proposes to distinguish three areas in which it is possible to pinpoint the originating factors of metatheorizing and which should, as a whole, enable us to understand what are the actual predominant issues – in addition to the predominant features – of this field of study. It is internal factors within sociological theorizing (area 1), within metasociology (area 2) and external both to sociological and metasociological theories (area 3). As far as area 1 is concerned, Ritzer lists the following factors:

1.1. *The ever increasing corpus of classical and contemporary theories.* Every year the accumulation of sociological theories grows at an exponential rate, along with the urgency of being abreast and of finding a meaning to an ever more exoteric literature. The non-enviable need to know the intricate ideas of classical authors, Comte, Spencer, Marx, Durkheim, Weber, Parsons and Schutz to begin with, is further weighed down by the need to stay updated on the production of authors such as Habermas, Giddens, Bourdieu, Alexander, Collins, Coleman and many more. This requires careful theoretical studies and new metatheoretical investigations, aimed at identifying the new theories' roots and features, their interweaving, their possible convergence or divergence points, and the factors – including extra-sociological ones – that have determined their development.

1.2. *The implicit metatheorizing in the work of many theorists.* Many of the classical and contemporary sociologists have developed their own theories, partially at least, on the basis of careful metatheoretical studies. In this respect, one may mention the following: Marx's criticism against capitalism, drawing its inspiration from Hegel's, Bauer's and Feuerbach's philosophies, from Smith's, Ricardo's and Mill's political economics, as well as Cabet's, Owen's, Fourier's and Proudhon's own Utopian socialism; Schutz's phenomenology, which depends in a major way on Weber's, Husserl's and Bergson's theoretical contributions; Alexander's multidimensional neofunctionalism, based on a detailed analysis of Marx's, Weber's, Durkheim's and Parsons' works; Habermas' communicative act theory, rooted in the critique of theories of the Frankfurt School, but also in Marx's, Weber's, Parsons', Mead's and Durkheim's works. According to

Ritzer, all the aforementioned authors developed their own theories through metatheoretical analyses and in their works one finds exemplary metatheorizing cases, which may serve as models for present-day metasociology students.

1.3. *The sense of a crisis affecting sociological theorizing.* Amongst the nearest and most direct causes one should recall, as a key factor, the sense of a crisis of sociological knowledge which spread in the 80's. Gouldner had already foreseen an impending crisis in 1970 and sociology has ever since been suffering from that crisis. Ritzer believes it is difficult to think of a time in which theorizing did not experience a crisis. Even nowadays many sociologists are deeply concerned for the present state of theorizing and such a concern becomes apparent in various forms. Some are concerned about the lack of genuine theoretical headways, others about the infinite multiplication of more or less successful theories, others about the growing gap between theorizing and empirical research.

1.4. *Post-modern culture.* Another close and much more specific cause of the growing disinterest for *metatheorizing* is – according to Ritzer – post-modern culture (Brown 1987, 1990, Kellner 1988, 1990; Lemert 1990). There are many converging points between the two, and in some respect metatheorizing may indeed be seen as a post-modern development within sociological theorizing. The rise of post-modern culture (cf. Foucault 1966, 1969; Jameson 1984; Lyotard 1981) precedes the more recent developments of metasociology and may thus seem to have played some role in it. In spite of this, the explicit reference to post-modernism and to its links with metasociology are even more recent. It is, therefore, more appropriate to speak of their common historical and cultural conditions, which, have prompted the emergence of both phenomena. Ritzer believes that metatheorizing, like postmodernism, tends to emphasize the irrational and undetermined aspects of sociology, even though it also differs from post-modernism because it does not reject anything: everything in sociology becomes an object to be studied and analysed. Operating in such a way, metatheorizing makes all sociological approaches relative, since it is concerned with what sociological theorizing ought to be, but with a deeper understanding of what it is in all its areas, varieties and expressions. For some students of metatheorizing, this deeper understanding is an end in itself, for others it is a means to create a new theory or to identify an overarching theoretical perspective. The term "deconstruction", typical of post-modern culture, can to a great extent give a sense of the aim of metatheorizing. As deconstructionists, metatheorists often re-read and re-analyse sociological theories and their paradigms, which are seen as "texts" to be reinterpreted through new perspectives and new interpretative implements. This way it is possible to achieve a better understanding of what is analysed, another orientation shared by metatheorists and postmodern thinkers is the critical attitude towards great narratives, metanarratives and all-encompassing explanations. It is now clear that none of such perspectives is adequate in itself: students of metatheorizing have turned to the limitations of such perspectives, in order to find a way to go beyond them through a new and more limited synthesis.

1.5. *A new generation of sociology theorists.* The 80's have witnessed a generational shift amongst theorists of American sociology, as influential personalities such as Parsons, Gouldner, Merton, Homans, Blumer and Coser retired from teaching or die. The younger generation of sociologists has become to be less committed to traditional theoretical perspectives, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, to be more eclectic and more open to critical analyses of their own theories, as well as to the unbiased study of their competitors' own theories, also trying to integrate their differences. In other words, such theorists are more open towards metasociological analyses.

Among metatheorizing's internal factors (area 2), Ritzer refers to the limitations inevitably characterising the earliest explicitly metatheoretical writings, to the works on sociology's paradigm, to the analyses on the micro-macro and action-structure links, to the debate between positivism and anti-positivism, as well as to the critical reactions to metatheorizing emerging in the mid-80'd.

Let us review this issue and its main aspects:

2.1. *Inevitable limitations of the earliest metatheoretical works.* Ritzer quotes, in this respect, the first great work by Parsons of 1937 (*Structure of Social Action*), Furfey's own 1953 text (*The Scope and Method of Sociology: A Metasociological Treatise*) – which we have already mentioned – and two of the most famous works by Gouldner of 1965 and 1970 (*Enter Plato* and *The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology*). These works are too far apart in time to possibly form a critical mass to be referred to: moreover, they are very different works and often marked by opposite orientations, despite a common interest in metatheorizing, though expressed in different ways and tones. Only Furfey, in fact, explicitly employs the term metasociology, whereas Gouldner resorts to the expression "reflexive sociology" and Parsons disguises his discoveries under the thick lining of the structural-functionalist theory (Ritzer ed. 1992: 13).

2.2. *The issue of sociology's paradigm.* Thomas Kuhn's investigations on the structures of scientific revolutions may be viewed as an important contribution and a very specific entreaty for the development of metasociology. On the basis of Kuhn's definition of the character of the paradigm of scientific revolutions, a great many sociologists have tackled the paradigm issue within sociological theorizing (Friedrichs 1970; Effrat 1972; Mullins 1973, 1983; Ritzer 1975a, 1975b). The notion of paradigm shows its lasting usefulness to this day, after many scholars have devoted themselves to analysing sociology's paradigmatic structure (Falk-Zhao 1989, 1990; Bealer 1990, Gottdiener-Feagin 1988; M. Rosenberg 1989). The analyses of sociological paradigms are clearly of a metatheoretical kind, since they identify a paradigm from within a paradigm normally drawn from the cultural and philosophical context. As a whole, such analyses open up a number of useful avenues to broaden the horizons of metasociological studies.

2.3. *Micro-macro and action-structure links.* A further source of metasociological notions may be found in the interest in the micro-macro and the action-structure relationships. A number of scholars have been drawn to such notions (Knorr-Cetina eds., 1981; Collins 1986, 1992; Alexander-Giesen-Münch-Smelser eds., 1987; Ritzer 1990c). The micro-macro link has particularly interested American sociologists, whereas the action-structure link has been studied and debated especially in Europe (Archer 1982, 1988, 1995; Giddens 1990), where, however, a fierce debate has been developing since the early Nineties on both these methodological oppositions (for Italy see Bovone-Rovati, a cura di, 1988; Cesareo, 1993; Addario, a cura di, 1994).

2.4. *A positivists-anti-positivists confrontation.* This amounts to a further source of metatheoretical researches, even though the issue at stake is very ancient and practically insoluble in Ritzer's view (ed. 1992; 15). Indeed, positivists – starting from the assumption that sociology is a natural science – have always opposed the supporters of a hermeneutic-type approach. A recent variant of the anti-positivist position is that of the post-positivism theorised by Alexander and Colomy (1992), who think they are able to overcome both positivism and anti-positivism through a new theoretical perspective, which may provide an opportunity to furnish epistemological and ethical foundations for the advancement of social sciences. The guarantee of such a substantial definition of progress consists in relaying the foundations of the positivist approach through a new developmental model of the social sciences, accounting for the continuity between a

"metaphysical" and an "empirical" environment. The debate, however, is continuously evolving and new positions emerge on either side of the contest. It is undoubtedly a metasociological issue which to date – again according to Ritzer – is far from being adequately solved.

2.5. *The response to the criticism against metatheorizing.* Some important works, published *circa* in the mid-80's, contained attacks of various kinds and character against metasociology, accused of being too vague, inconsistent and fragmented (Collins 1986, Turner 1985, 1986; Skocpol 1986). The later developments of metasociological thinking have arisen mostly from a need to respond to such criticism, which, because of its harshness, had spurred great excitement amongst metatheorizing supporters of supporters. The latter, in turn, reacted defending metatheorizing by redefining its own specific field and by further demonstrating its usefulness (Fuhrman-Snizek 1990; Lemert 1992; Ritzer 1988, 1989a, 1990b; Wallace 1992; Weinstein-Weinstein 1992).

As far as external factors affecting sociological theorizing and metatheorizing (area 3) are concerned, Ritzer considers the links with some borderline areas of sociological and historical knowledge, in addition to those with "parallel" fields of *meta-data-analysis* and *metamethods*. Let us examine some aspects of these too.

3.1. *The links with other areas of knowledge.* According to our guiding author (Ritzer, ed. 1992: 16), there are development opportunities in metasociology, related to both internal and external contexts of sociological knowledge. Students of metatheorizing only now are starting to complement their reflections with ideas of this kind, making use of some studies in history and sociology, such as those conducted by Jones (1977, 1983a, 1983b, 1985) and by Seidman (1985), in sociology of knowledge (Mannheim 1957), in the history of ideas (Lovejoy 1948; Skinner 1969), in the history of science (Crombie 1986), in history – especially French history of mentality (Burke 1986), and in *Geistesgeschichte* of German origin (Schulin 1981). So far metasociological works have only slightly been influenced by ideas drawn from these fields of investigation. However, examples of mutual influences are already attested and, as they increase, in Ritzer's view, they will significantly enrich metasociological research work in the coming years.

3.2. *The development of "parallel" fields in meta-data-analysis and metamethods.* While focusing on investigations of a metasociological kind one cannot overlook the current growth of research into *meta-data-analysis and metamethods*, respectively involving a systematic study of sociological methods and of the results of empirical investigations, often in an attempt to come to a synthesis. Within these fields fall works trying to adjust one method to another (*field work, surveys, experiments, nonreactive studies*: Brewer-Hunter 1989, cited in Ritzer, ed. 1992: 17), or attempting to draw some conclusions from qualitative studies (Noblit-Hare 1988), or to build up quantitative foundations for qualitative research (Gephart 1988), in order to analyse the relationship between research methods and the micro-macro issue (Fielding 1988), in addition to making an attempt to expand quantitative methods to be able to draw conclusions from surveys by means of large scale works (Wolf 1986; Hunter-Schmidt 1989). Metasociologists are aware of the links of their studies with these fields of work, whereas a similar awareness does not seem to exist in the students of meta-data-analysis and metamethods. Ritzer hopes that a contact line may develop among different groups of scholars in view of an at least partial integration of their own respective areas of investigation.

At the end of such a list of factors, it is necessary to stress the fact that metasociology's own development process is conditioned by a number of problems. Different subject matters call for a careful critique, for new development and perhaps even drastic revisions (Ritzer ed. 1992: 17). The latest reports on metasociological investigations are very different from the earliest ones. This shows that the "shape" of metasociology changes and evolves, becoming an inherent part of the panorama even within the subject itself. Therefore, according to Ritzer, one needs to be committed to defending *metatheorizing* and to fully exploiting positive aspects in the criticism from the opposing factions.

A. The very same author admits that he accepts such criticism without complaints, and in fact that he is ready to accept it even in the future, with the qualification that the irritability of some of his opponents shows how metasociological work may touch on "sensitive" issues. What disturbs metasociologists even more is not criticism itself but the lack of response to their own rebuttals. Ritzer stresses that to a certain extent fierce debates are useful to draw more attention, and deservedly so, to metatheorizing, while at a deeper level they are useful to urge metasociologists to refine their own viewpoints and to improve the quality of their investigations. Finally, he believes that critical contributions may foster, rather than hinder, the institutionalisation of metasociology, that is now inevitable because it simply entails an extension of the basic tools of sociology to the study of sociology itself.

Criticism and Developmental Progress

According to Charles Lemert (1992), metatheorizing critics may be subdivided into two groups. On the one hand, there are those who think that they are not doing any metatheorizing, but do actually practise it, though in an uncertain kind of way and hence unsuccessfully. On the other hand, there are those who purport not to do any metatheorizing, but who are actually aware of practising it and practise it unwillingly but successfully. The most illustrious representative of the first group is the late George Homans who, in his work on the nature of social sciences (1989) and also in his autobiography (1984) expressed his intolerance for the metatheoretical penchant expressed by his Harvard colleagues, particularly by Parsons, maintaining that it only amounted to "words about words" and considering the classics, such as "old Durkheim", irrelevant now. It is also unimportant that he himself was initially interested in Pareto's thought and that he published, working with Curtis, his first important work precisely on this "old" author or that, later on, he shared in his study of groups (1950) a systemic-functionalist approach, employing what is in his own original way an inference method different from Parsons' one.

Homans's remarks are shared, although somewhat differently, by James Coleman, who, right at the beginning of his works on the foundations of social theory (1990) mostly reduces the latter, also in connection with its university developments, to a mere history of social thought. Moreover, he maintains that the most recent social theorizing production consists exclusively in *chanting old mantras* and in invoking nineteenth-century theories. Homans's and Coleman's invitation to break away from the classics, is actually an invitation to sociologists so that they may get rid of their subjection to tradition. Indeed, in the first chapter of his book, Coleman tackles the issue of metatheorizing and of "explanation" in social science, setting the latter against the "invocations to nineteenth century theories", just as in the past the positive nature of science has been opposed to religion. For Coleman, then, scientific explanation is modern and in line with the needs of progress, whereas the "sacred enchantments" of sociologists vis-à-vis nineteenth century classics are bound to tradition and backward.

According to this delicate line of interpretation, metatheorizing also becomes backward tradition, "virtually religious" (Lemert 1992: 127) and certainly unscientific. Such criticism obviously derives from specific convictions about science, modernity and progress. In actual fact, Lemert maintains that, despite criticism of traditional theories, both Homans and Coleman attempt to explain the systems of social behaviour through variants of early nineteenth century doctrines. The late Homans, indeed, chooses as his theoretical approach a strong methodological individualism, whereas Coleman puts forward a creative reconsideration of such an approach. Nevertheless, these two authors have undoubtedly contributed in a major way to the development of sociological knowledge, but not to metatheoretical knowledge, since they deny the theoretical value of the sociologists who preceded them, without admitting that they also sit "on the shoulders of giants" of the past: "*Their denials aside, they too stand on the shoulders of giants*" (Lemert 1992: 127).

In the first group of critics of metatheorizing may also fall Theda Skocpol who has made his criticism explicit in an essay devoted to the *cul de sac* of metatheorizing. Skocpol reproaches metatheorists for their excessive commitment to classifying other people's arguments, instead of tackling substantial problems, thus running the risk of creating artificial ideal types of category patterns, which confuse rather than clarify the most fruitful trends in the fields of theorizing and empirical research. From this point of view, metatheorizing would be a *cul de sac* because it would take time, energy and interest away from investigations on substantial problems, giving absolute preference to patterning sociological theories, and accordingly oversimplifying and distorting them.

To such objections D. Weinstein and M.A. Weinstein rebut that metatheorizing actually qualifies as a valid antidote against every attempt of making particular theories absolute, given that, through its typologies and its reflection work, metatheorizing reduces the absolute claims made by individual authors and furnishes an adequate description of the specific theoretical categories employed by them. The attitudes of intellectual humbleness preferred by metatheorizing tend, indeed, to moderate the claims made by each theory to be the only valid theory. This shows why it is necessary to make efforts to "classify other people's arguments", devoting sufficient time to this work, but this time is well spent – according to D. Weinstein and M.A. Weinstein – for this way one may contribute to rid theoretical elaborations of limiting interpretations of real problems calling for real explanation.

The second group of critics is made up of those who, although they do not wish to practise metatheorizing, are actually aware of practising it and who maintain that their theoretical elaborations are intellectually superior to those that are held to be metatheoretical. These authors give the impression of voicing their reproach with great caution against metatheorizing and the difference from the first group may seem thin, but is actually very important in the end. For instance, Jonathan Turner maintains that metatheorizing is an "interesting philosophy and, at times, a fascinating history of ideas" (1987: 162) but he also maintains that it is not a category that may be easily employed for theoretical work. A similar opinion is expressed by Randall Collins (1986), who explains the failures of contemporary sociology through its scientific limitations, partially blaming them on metatheorizing, since the latter depends on an intellectual level different from that of theorizing, and, moreover it does not prove to be creative in itself. Both these authors hold valid only certain criteria of theoretical production, which entail a rejection of traditional intellectual, mostly expressive, values which accord total preference to the most creative, productive and useful ones of contemporary sociology.

According to Lemert, whereas Homans and Coleman disguise their trust in nineteenth century utilitarian thinkers, Collins and Turner, on the other hand, hide their faith in the criteria of free thinking of the eighteenth century Enlightenment. Besides this subtle preference for one century or another, the true reason enabling us to distinguish Collins and Turner from Homans and Coleman is that the former, at least, carefully and explicitly state their references to other authors, though they also carefully avoid making use of the term metatheorizing to indicate their own reworking of other people's theories. Lemert (1992: 128) claims that he does not know other sociologists using other people's ideas in a more generous and creative manner than do Collins and Turner .

Turner's theory regarding the behaviour of social structure draws in a serious and consistent way—again according to Lemert's own analysis – on reflections by Durkheim, Freud, Mead and Garfinkel, just as Collins' notion regarding the chains of interaction rituals would make no sense outside the substantial reference to what one usually identifies as Goffman's "Durkheimian side". Collins himself recognizes that his own theory about the interaction ritual refers to "a well established sociological tradition that was first established by Emile Durkheim and was then developed by Marcel Mauss, Ervin Goffman and by other authors" (1992: 237). The upholders of metatheorizing may guarantee without any problem the right to hold, as Turner does, that this is analytical theorizing and not metatheorizing, just as they have no trouble acknowledging that Collins does not depend as a sort of replica from Durkheim and Goffman, but that he reinterprets these authors creatively.

What Lemert reproaches Turner and Collins for is rejecting, as they reject the term metatheorizing, an approach from which some draw pleasure for its own sake – depriving it of any use – in the critical elaboration of certain ideas. In other words, the intention of these two authors would be to purify sociology of its pre-scientific impulses. This way Turner and Collins would converge with Homans and Coleman, both for a strongly individualistic view of intellectual work and for denying sociology's connections with pre- or extra-scientific dimensions and concerns: to study Durkheim for no other reason but for the sake of pleasure and interest would appear to be a pre-modern trend contrary to producing good science. Actually their bias against metatheorizing is so strong that – according to Lemert – it prevents them from identifying the metatheorizing aspects present in their own arguments.

Moreover, faced with a crisis of sociology – real or hypothetical as it may be – metatheorizing may prove to be an important instrument of defence. Sociology in fact is all too often misunderstood and not always appreciated. Genius, creativity, hard work and other such virtues are not sufficient to defend it. Within such a perspective, the metatheoretical debate can contribute to a great extent to highlight the scientific character of sociological investigation: in this respect, one may say that good metatheorizing contributes to improve the scientific quality of sociological discourse. Undoubtedly, as George Ritzer demonstrated (1991), the contribution of metatheorizing is remarkable, and yet – according to Lemert, insisting too much on the usefulness of metatheorizing is tantamount to jeopardizing the only value possessed by metatheorists not shared by their opponents: the pure enjoyment of writing about ideas and authors held to be interesting in themselves. For this reason metatheorizing cannot prosper in environments which are conditioned by the demands of hard work, by the needs of progress at all costs and by the urgency to produce analytical theories that may be immediately useful and marketable on the market of ideas.

An assessment of criticism against metasociology has also been made by Denis Abrams, Roger Rietman and Joan Sylvester (1980). These authors have particularly examined Ritzer's metasociological contribution and his proposal of a multiple paradigm (1975a), that later brought about the definition of an integrated paradigm (1980, 1981). The first set of critical comments

concerns the issue of selectivity. In other words, some authors (Imersheim 1976; Effrat 1976; Abel 1976; Martindale 1979) maintain that a classification of sociological theories through different paradigms entails an arbitrary choice, selection and attribution process of those theories themselves. The whole corpus of sociological theorizing may indeed be "cut up" in various ways, according to the criteria used by the person who does the cutting. A second set of critical remarks concerns the criteria – in this case also considered arbitrary – employed to distinguish the "monistic" or "pluralistic" character" of sociology, whereas a third set of critical remarks concerns the fact that metasociology in general – and Ritzer's own in particular – would take into account the political, economic and historical factors which lie outside sociological academic environments, but affect in a major way the contents, the quality and the goals of sociological production.

The reference to the influence of dynamics and factors outside sociology enables us to propose some reflections on the opportunities for metasociological discourse to be redefined and to develop. The greatest of such opportunities consists in renewing the distinction between sociology and metasociology drawn by Furfey fifty years ago, while at the same time furthering its development by resorting to the category of limit function. As you will recall, Furfey believed that metasociology was to be defined as an auxiliary science, set to determine the criteria for scientific quality, the contents and application areas of sociological investigation. In other words, metasociology should be seen as a special science providing and applying the principles and the methodological assumptions necessary to scientific research, in order to construct the systems of sociological theorizing and to criticize both empirical research and theoretical systems.

In this respect, according to Furfey, metasociology "transcends" sociology, since it fulfils its own tasks by going "beyond" the aim of sociology and by drawing up rules for a more advanced theoretical processing. If we consider Furfey's interpretation a valid one, it becomes clear that metasociology becomes a "science" distinct from sociology, featuring *aspecial epistemology*, which studies the validity, limitations and criteria typical of sociological knowledge². On the basis of the current trend to integrate the various disciplinary areas and to "affiliate" epistemological discourse, we may perhaps reconsider Furfey's distinction between sociology and metasociology, but still without reducing metasociology to mere post-modern metatheorizing. Hence, it is necessary to rethink metasociological discourse with a different and more dynamic conceptual framework, in which metasociology may be considered as a limit function of sociology.

In connection with its epistemological dimension, metasociology has undoubtedly to do with philosophical logic and with axiology, as properly highlighted by Furfey (1965: 18). This means that, in connection with the specificity of sociological notions, more importance must be given to the relationship with philosophy, interpreted as a systematic act of logical-rational reasoning on reality and as an investigation on the main problems of human existence, as well with the other human sciences. Along this chain of reflections, it becomes legitimate to maintain that metasociology will have to engage in qualifying and checking also sociology's relationships with philosophy and the other human and social sciences. We witness the rise of a fourth task assigned to metasociology, to be added to the three typically epistemological ones already indicated by Furfey, which may be defined as a borderline task: that of making explicit and of controlling the complex and sometimes muddled issue of the interdisciplinary relationships and links present within sociological knowledge, in direct connection with the other equally complex issue of defining the limits proper to sociology. In this respect, metasociology may also be identified as a limit function, that is as a response to a critical and self-reflexive need of sociology, that aims to pursue a correct interdisciplinary practice within sociological knowledge.

The "fathers" of positivistic sociology maintained that the whole of society must be explained through a single science – i.e. sociology – and that the preceding forms of knowledge must either be overrun, as in the case of theology and metaphysics, or be integrated as specific disciplinary areas within sociological knowledge. This claim to comprehensiveness explains many of the initial successes and enthusiasms for the "new science" of society, but also many of the polemics that accompanied its development, since the pre-existing human and social sciences – or any later offshoots – would never accept any subordination to sociology. Economics, politics, geography, anthropology, psychology continued to develop autonomously, eventually even proposing a "default" conception of sociology itself. That is to say that the latter – in spite of its claims to be comprehensive – would in effect be concerned with matters not clearly already assigned to any other more specific or more important sciences.

In its later developments, however, sociology has shown its own identity in taking on specific philosophical approaches and has also made use of analytical notions offered by the other human and social sciences. A metasociological interpretation then proves to be fundamental, in order to sort out sociology's own specific notions, by comparison with those of the other sciences, and to allow for a proper integration of the latter. Sociology does remain, in fact, the most general of the social sciences and must be able to properly integrate – by avoiding confusions, distortions or unnecessary overlaps – the contents of the other sciences into its own hypotheses on the explanation of social phenomena. However, it must not overlook the need for a proper explicit statement of its own philosophical and methodological assumptions and of those of other sciences. The development prospect of metasociology, therefore, will necessarily have to take into account such needs for a critical epistemological review and for an assessment of the interdisciplinary dimensions of sociological knowledge.

Notes

1 Quoted also in Sturzo (1992: 129).

2 For the distinction between general epistemology and special epistemologies it may be useful to refer to what Evandro Agazzi has written (1966: 105): "By the phrase "general epistemology" we mean a critical discourse concerning science in general terms, aiming, if possible, at identifying the essential traits of scientific knowledge and its limitations. To this end it will employ a type of investigation that, precisely due to its general nature, may not be bound to the traits of any particular science and may at the same time suit all of them. Alongside this [general epistemology], then, may be located as many "special epistemologies" as are the individual sciences, that is a number of critical discourses that, contrary to general epistemology, will be devoted to recognising and to assessing in detail the processes and the types of knowledge within the various areas of knowledge once their scientific soundness has been recognised."

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Chapter IV

Social Problems and Urban Conditions in Furfey's Perspective

Enrico M. Tacchi

The aim of this paper is to present some aspects of Furfey's studies, dealing with social problems in urban environment. As everybody knows, Paul Hanly Furfey was not only an empirical urban researcher, but also a distinguished Christian theorist, whose influence was politically important. Among other things, we can remember that, in 1936, Furfey proposed a sort of *supernatural sociology*, in order to build up a Catholic theory of society¹. Nine years later, he studied in depth the sociological thought of Luigi Sturzo, the founder of the Italian Popular Party².

Notwithstanding this wide perspective, we have better to limit our speech to a review of several Furfey's works, from the point of view of an urban sociologist: this is my peculiar point of view.

To do that, I will use several quotations. The first one is a self-definition of Furfey's life and it is contained into this sentence: "I was a priest and a social scientist devoted to the study of social problems and to their solution"³.

Following this sentence, this article will be divided into three parts:

a) first of all, we will consider some studies in which Furfey acts as an academic scholar, describing social concerns in peculiar urban conditions;

b) after that, we will turn to Furfey's social work, as a consequence of his involvement in problem solving, as a citizen and as a priest;

c) in conclusion, both issues will be discussed, with reference to the scientific and social environment in which they are situated.

P. H. Furfey as a Social Scientist and the Studies of Urban Problems

A Permanent Scientific Interest

Most Furfey's works have theoretical aims, but we will consider this Author as an empirical researcher. In one sense, some concerns about urban problems can be found since his doctoral dissertation. As a matter of fact, in 1926 Furfey published *The Gang Age*, a book in which psychological and social problems are merged, to study in depth the behavior of young boys and their tendencies to join a group of peer.

His late work, *The Subculture of the Washington Ghetto*, was published in 1972. In this book, Furfey gives us a careful report of a qualitative inquiry on 28 families of the Washington black ghetto.

So, we can look through these two works as considerable examples of a consistent attention to social problems in a period of about half a century.

An Early Scientific Work

Let's start with a brief outlook of the first book. As a young scholar, Furfey discussed some social problems in his Ph.D. dissertation *The Gang Age*⁴, a study of preadolescent boys and their recreational needs.

The Author shows an up-to-date knowledge of the best methodologies available in the Twenties about psychological survey; some important scholars are quoted, such as Allport, McDougall and Watson. Furfey's attention to psychometrics and the level of intelligence (IQ score) in young boys will be confirmed in further studies. As a consequence, most part of this early work can be defined as a psychological inquiry.

However, Furfey considers two classes of "elements of conduct" to explain human behavior: in the first one *subjective factors* (drives and adaptive mechanisms) are gathered; but the second class encompasses *environmental factors*. Among these, he lists five *social factors*, such as home, companions, school, community and church. No doubt that these last factors can be considered as fully sociological (Fig. 3, p. 17).

The book deserves several considerations to the preadolescent's ideals and the use of spare time, but these topics were not widely studied in the Twenties. So, the main Furfey's concerns are the problems of retarded and defective children, as well as the education of gifted children.

Within this frame, only a little consideration is dedicated to the differences between urban and rural conditions. The importance of home environment is also considered, but mainly from the point of view of parents' influence on "moral faults, family order, school work, recreation, money and health" (p. 130).

In conclusion, the core interest of this book is the building of the boys' gangs, as a primary need of adolescents, independently of their dwelling areas.

A Late Scientific Report

Let's turn now to *The Subculture of the Washington Ghetto*, an important study that Furfey carried on in collaboration with Mary Elizabeth Walsh⁵. Dr. Walsh was a teacher of sociology at the Catholic University of America, and she had already collaborated with Furfey in other studies on social problems⁶; she was also the founder of *Fides House* in the Washington black ghetto, where she lived and worked.

Of course, many social scientists are theoretically interested in the less privileged communities; but Furfey is even more interested in solving practical social problems: "Efficient action presupposes understanding" (p. 3).

In this book, the term "subculture" is used to explain the peculiar lifestyle of the black ghetto, as a variety of the American culture.

The origins of the ghetto subculture are linked with two factors: *race* and *class*.

a) First of all, we are facing a *black* culture, for example when we see that the ghetto dialect has its historical origins in Non-standard Negro English (NNE). Of course, this origin is not biological, since black people that have been acculturated to the middle class speak Standard English.

b) We are also facing a *lower-class* culture. Its main elements are low wages, irregular employment, instability of family ties, poor quality of housing, lack of cleanliness.

A general opinion about the ghetto dwellers is that "they are lazy... and refuse to work regularly, that they are sexually immoral, and that they tend to be criminal" (p. 7).

Furfey's purpose is to study objectively the subculture of the ghetto, avoiding bias and moral judgements.

The Urban Context and the Ghetto Economy

To do that, he carefully describes the urban context in which the ghetto area is situated: the subculture of the ghetto is strictly connected with the "ecology of the ghetto" (p. 15). In particular:

a) in the past, the ghetto area used to be a fashionable one. From the end of the eighteenth century, the main factors that caused the present urban downgrading were crowding and the presence of inhabited alleys;

b) in the ghetto area we can notice a mix of commercial and residential establishments. Usually, the neighborhood stores are established at the ground-floor, but the upper floors are used as apartments;

c) residential buildings are made of bricks and usually have either two or three stores. They often are very poor and overcrowded, but there are occasional exceptions. In 1965, the field workers reported that several houses needed paint or had broken windows. "The street and sidewalk were extremely dirty with papers, garbage, broken bottles, cans..." (p. 14)

d) the ghetto area is quite isolated from the middle-class quarters. So, many middle-class citizens may never have heard of the poverty existing in their own city: "public opinion is not very concerned about the ghetto because the public knows so little about the ghetto!" (p. 15)

Furfey points out that "the ghetto economy ... differs from the non-ghetto economy qualitatively, not just quantitatively" (p. 27). Let's consider now the way that money is earned, managed and spent:

a) of course, most of the families are officially classified as "poor", but some of them have *illegal* sources of income. More, many wage earners in ghetto families have *irregular* works, such as men working in the construction industry or women employed as domestic workers;

b) in the ghetto, the money is managed on a day-to-day basis. Often people cannot afford to buy in quantity and thus save money. They cannot shop selectively at stores offering the best prices. They cannot obtain credit at reasonable rates. To resume, they cannot plan and manage their finances (p. 22);

c) as a consequence, ghetto people tend to spend money immediately. They have been criticized for being unable to save money for future needs, but we must remember that most of them lacked the money for normal life.

Families and Households

According to the sample considered by Furfey, the average structure of the ghetto family seems to be weak. Consensual unions are as common as legal marriages. Only a minority of children live in 2-parent families. One reason for the break-up of homes could be "that relations between husband and wife are more impersonal in the ghetto than in the middle class" (p. 30). Sometimes, parent-child relationships are relatively weak, too. In conclusion, the living conditions in the ghetto seem to be linked with less warm interpersonal intimacy within the family. "It is easier for such intimacy to develop in the comfortable, relaxed atmosphere of a middle-class home than in the cramped, unpleasant ghetto home with his lack of privacy". (p. 32)

Not all ghetto households are poorly managed, but on the whole the quality of household management tends to be low. Some apartments are dirty; rats, mice, roaches and vermin can often

be seen. Most dwelling units are crowded and poorly furnished, but no family lacks a TV set, since "television is the cheapest form of recreation available to the poor" (p. 34). Some ghetto dwellings are not enough heated in winter; others are poorly equipped with electrical, plumbing and gas features.

In the matter of food, some families suffer from a chronic shortage. Some mothers shop for clothing rather casually, but others plan carefully, in order to dress appropriately their children. "On the average ... ghetto people keep their clothing less clean than do middle-class people ... the ghetto itself is dirty, making it more difficult for its people to keep clean." (p. 35)

Other Cultural Elements

In the last chapters, Furfey's book turns to consider some cultural factors, existing in the urban context described above: the ghetto dialect, the contacts with organized groups and the moral and religious codes:

a) Non-standard Negro English (NNE) is not simply "bad English"; it's a separate dialect, which has its origins in the West African slave trade. Teachers in ghetto schools make great efforts to teach Standard English to ghetto-born children, but they have great difficulties in learning it. As a consequence, a ghetto man's speech betrays his origin. Today, this fact can stigmatize him more than race, in particular when he seeks a job requiring an ability to deal with the middle class. As a matter of fact, many blacks have been employed in such jobs, but "surely one cannot imagine a saleslady in a chic boutique making a sales pitch in the ghetto dialect!" (p. 42);

b) when Furfey published the present report, the ghetto residents were scarcely involved in local political groups. Generally speaking, they regarded police personnel as unfriendly, because they tended to consider the police as agents sent into the ghetto to enforce the white man's law. The relations of ghetto people with schools and health agencies seem to be only a little better. Last, a number of social agencies are working in the ghetto area; they do help the poor, but "to live 'on welfare' is not a pleasant sort of life" (p. 46). Most people feel humiliated and this is the reason for which some mothers in the Furfey's sample worked very hard to escape from public welfare status;

c) private violence and extra-marital sexual activities are considered common in the ghetto. There is less regard for the rights of property, too; but there is no evidence that ghetto people have a different moral attitude toward alcoholism and drugs. Most families in the sample had no contact with religion at all; however, some belongs to unconventional religious groups.

This covers the first part of this article, dedicated to Furfey's scientific study of urban problems. Let's turn now in brief to his practical social work in problem solving.

P. H. Furfey as a Social Worker Involved in Urban Problem Solving

A general outlook of Furfey's social engagement as a priest and as a social scientist can be found in his late book *Love and the Urban Ghetto*, published in 1978. In one sense, this is a comprehensive autobiographical book, even if the Author will end his long life in 1992. Let's consider now the main contents of this work.

Christian Morality and Social Sins

At the beginning of this book, Furfey points out the framework in which his analysis is situated. In his opinion, the current Christian morality tends to be "negative"; in other words, the main problem to face seems to be how to avoid sins. Furfey's aim is to propose a "positive" moral basis to achieve salvation, according to the holy Gospel. This basis is a practice of the virtue of charity, that is Christian love, as announced in the title of the book.

So, everybody has the duty to help people in need, but individual donations are not enough to really solve the problem of poverty in the ghettos. A social intervention is required, to reduce the consequences of social sins⁷.

The concept of "social sin" is taken by the so-called "liberation theologians" of Latin America. A main issue of this position is that some great problems, like poverty, do exist, even if nobody decided to create them. "Poverty is the fault of the economic system", Furfey says (p. 16). As a consequence, the forms of economic injustice are sins of society rather than of the individual; to reduce them, suitable public policies are required: "Social sin demands social action" (p. 23).

In this frame, we must remember that hundred of millions inhabitants suffer from hunger in less developed countries. But it is hard to understand why poverty exists in affluent countries, such as the United States. Statistical figures show that poor people are characterized by low income, insufficient diet, bad housing, poor education and health care, high death rate: in brief, "the poor die young" (p. 40). That is one reason for which Furfey is so interested in social action within the urban ghetto.

The Ghetto as a Place of Poverty

After that, Furfey summarizes the main social characters of the Washington black ghetto. However, further information is added about the interest of the Catholic University in the ghetto. In particular, Dr. Gladys Sellew had discussed her Ph.D. dissertation on deviance in the area⁸, and founded a neighborhood center, called *Il Poverello House*.

This book is not written for scientific purpose, so Furfey can widely present his ideas against luxury and against love of high income. He points out that ghetto workers are not stupid or lazy, but they are sociologically handicapped, because they are black, they speak a nonstandard English and their social environment doesn't press them to succeed (in a middle-class sense). As for crime, Furfey quotes Sutherland's theory of "white-collar crime"⁹ and argues that people of high social status can avoid to be judged or sent to prison, because their crimes remain hidden. That can explain the high crime rate within the ghetto; but "the poor despise the rich as immoral just as much as the rich despise the poor" (p. 73). And we should consider that ghetto people also have virtues, such as courage, will to make sacrifices for one another, and a disposition to work very hard (they sell their muscle; in contrast, middle-class workers sell their skill).

How to Fight against Poverty?

The remaining chapters of the book are written to explain why Christian social thought often fails to understand the fundamental nature of the poverty.

To do this, Furfey discusses Christian liberalism, Christian radicalism and Christian revolutionism:

a) Christian liberalism is an answer of the Catholic movement to the problems of the industrial revolution. The history of Catholic activity in social protest and in social work is very important in the United States: Catholic liberalism has encouraged good social legislation, working conditions have been improved and the poor were helped in many ways. However, millions of poor remain in the most developed countries and "Most middle-class people comfortably assume that the poor are adequately taken care of by the various form of relief" (p. 110);

b) the Catholic Worker Movement represents Christian radicalism in the United States. Its theoretical basis is *personalism*, as proposed by the French philosopher E. Mounier¹⁰. In Furfey's opinion, the main limit of Catholic radicalism is to help some individuals without changing the social system. But "it is the system itself that makes our neighbors suffer" (p. 130);

c) Christian revolutionism was proposed by "liberation theologians" of Latin America¹¹. In a democracy, revolution does not imply violence: in this case, the socio-economic system must be destroyed, but the political system must not. In Furfey's opinion, fighting for radical social reform is a Christian moral duty.

Discussion and Conclusions

Scientific Background

At the beginning of his scientific career, Furfey's sources were mainly philosophers and social psychologists. In his dissertation about the gang, he also appreciated the Boy Scouts movement, but we can find only a few sociological references.

On the contrary, the report about the Washington ghetto is a good essay of urban sociology.

Originally, the ghetto was the quarter in which the Jews lived. That is the meaning of this word in Louis Wirth's masterpiece, published in Chicago in 1928¹².

But, in a wider meaning, the ghetto is a part of a town in which an ethnic group is settled, with his own lifestyle¹³. In these cases, many authors use the word "slum", as Harvey Zorbaugh did in 1929¹⁴. Furfey himself occasionally uses this word¹⁵.

Generally speaking, the urban slum is considered as an area in which *black* people live; but this condition is unnecessary, since we can quote several studies on urban *white* slums, in which distinctive ethnic groups are settled, such as Italians¹⁶.

In the Thirties, a very interesting Ph.D. dissertation about a slum area was also presented by Robert Navin at The Catholic University of America¹⁷. Unfortunately, this careful survey regards Cleveland (Ohio) and its results were not considered to study the Washington black ghetto.

Sources

It is interesting to notice that Furfey doesn't quote the works mentioned above, nor the main European classical sociologists. In the works that we have considered, he only quotes two books published in Chicago, that is *Culture and Poverty* and *Behind Ghetto Walls*¹⁸.

Furfey seems to prefer other sources, first of all a number of original works elaborated at the Catholic University; he also takes into consideration several Public Administration reports.

Of course, in the last book of 1978, some theologians and social leaders are quoted.

In conclusion, Furfey seems to reveal a tendency to use original data and to avoid useless exhibitions of pedant references.

Methodology and Heritage

At the beginning of his career, Furfey was concerned with the study of Intelligence Quotient (IQ) in young boys. He never left this early concern in psychometrics; as a matter of fact, until 1971 he was director of a large research project on Infant Education, financed by the National Institute of Mental Health.

However, further techniques were required to study properly the ghetto area. As we have seen, Furfey considered the experience in interracial life both as an experiment of "scientific Christian charity" and a source of many sociological insights¹⁹. Thus, the social scientists of the Catholic University chose *participant observation* as their main methodological tool, and Furfey is fully aware of this²⁰. This technique was widely employed by the Chicago social scientists, for instance by Thomas and Znaniecki to study the life of Polish community in the United States²¹.

In conclusion, we can assume that Furfey's studies put into evidence some permanent concerns of everyday urban life: just think that Lawrence Veiller, a speaker at an international congress held in Berlin in 1931, declared that "the United States had been conscious of its slums for eighty years, and nothing had been done"²². In this sense, the efforts to better the conditions of the lower social groups are endless.

Notes

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3. Furfey, Paul Hanly, *A Personal Preface to Love and the Urban Ghetto*, New York, Orbis Books, 1978, p. ix.
4. Furfey, Paul Hanly, *The Gang Age. A Study of the Preadolescent Boy and his Recreational Needs*, New York, Macmillan, 1926.
5. Furfey, Paul Hanly, *The Subculture of the Washington Ghetto*, Washington, The Catholic University of America, 1972.
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9. Sutherland, Edwin H., *White Collar Crime*, New York, Dryden Press, 1949.
10. Mounier, Emmanuel, *Personalism*, Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame Press, 1952.
11. Boff, Leonardo, Boff, Clodovis, *Liberation Theology: from Dialogue to Confrontation*, San Francisco, Harper & Row, 1986.
12. Wirth, Louis, *The Ghetto*, Chicago University Press, 1928.
13. Furfey, Paul Hanly, *Love and the Urban Ghetto*, cit., pp. 47 ss.
14. Zorbaugh, Harvey, *The Gold Coast and the Slum*, Chicago, University Press, 1929.
15. "What about the vast numbers of the poor in our city slums?", in Furfey, Paul Hanly, *Love and the Urban Ghetto*, cit., p. 14. See also p. 39. And before, discussing the term Ghetto in his report about Washington: "Landlords are reluctant to rent to Negroes with a slum background", in Furfey, Paul Hanly, *The subculture of the Washington Ghetto*, cit., p. 9.
16. Whyte, William Foote, *Street Corner Society: the Social Structure of an Italian Slum*, Chicago, University Press, 1955.

17. Navin, Robert Bernard, *Analysis of a Slum Area*, Washington, D.C., The Catholic University of America, 1934.
18. Valentine, C. A., *Culture and Poverty*, Chicago, University Press, 1968; Rainwater, Lee, *Behind Ghetto Walls*, Chicago, Aldine 1970.
19. Furfey, Paul Hanly, *A Personal Preface*, cit., pp. xii s.
20. Furfey, Paul Hanly, *The Subculture of the Washington Ghetto*, cit., p. 59.
21. Thomas, William Isaac, Znaniecki, Florian, *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America*, Chicago, University Press, 1918.
22. 13th International Housing and Town Planning Congress, Berlin Papers 1931, Part I, pp. 315 ss., quoted in Navin, Robert Bernard, *Analysis of a Slum Area*, cit., p. 5.

Chapter V
Work as Key to the Social Question
Silvia Cortellazzi

Could work still be today the key to the social question? Robert Castel in a 1995 volume, entitled *The Metamorphosis of the Social Question*, affirmed that work, at the moment in which it became the central paradigm of the social setting, after having undermined the family and sense of belonging to a community, has today been called into question as an inclusion factor. The "workers without work", according to an expression coined by Hannah Arendt, even today are considered to be superfluous, "useless people for the world".

It seems clear that the resumption of certain positions (always dear to the Catholic world, right from the emergence of the social question at the end of the nineteenth century) is even more topical and important today. The economy does not establish social order. Work can not be viewed only in terms of conflict. Solidarity is not an external factor of society based on voluntary work but it becomes the structure and basis – economic, too - of society itself.

Certain principles already present in the industrial society cannot be abandoned in today's society which we term post-industrial or post modern.

The first is State intervention in the direct resolution of work conflicts. The job of resolving conflicts is, in the social democratic State (by this we generally mean the western European democracies of recent years), entrusted to "*meccanismi di concertazione*" which involves trade unions, employers and state. The old way of resolving conflict between workers and the ruling class has for many years been mediated by a third partner, public administration.

The second principle is the intervention of the State in social politics. It is notable how the social politics of western Europe and in particular, Italy, have been turned inside out on the subject of work to support the unemployed, especially the long term unemployed. They are "products" of the huge transformation that has taken place in the economy from the industrial era to the post modern society we are currently experiencing. Support for unemployed people, especially in Italy has taken on sometimes perverse characteristics with consequences that have proved bad for the economy, both in objective terms and in relation to its capacity to replan the working life of these unemployed people.

The excess of welfare benefits, admittedly better than no aid, has nevertheless at times damaged the very workers who were the designated recipients of these policies, impeding in fact their professional retraining and the search for another job. It has to be remembered that several thousand Italian workers have ended up in a situation where they get excessive wage aid (the possibility of having a salary even if you don't have a job) even for over 10 years.

Two phenomena which today characterise the economy seen from the point of view of the Italian worker: the possibility of encountering unemployment (a phenomenon almost unheard of in the mature industrial societies) and difficulty in entering the job market, a phenomenon also known as youth non-employment.

Not only that. One has to look at the kind of work and the jobs young people find and at the kind of jobs offered to workers who have lost their job in order to re-enter the job market.

Simona Beretta, in a 2001 seminar entitled "Work as Key to the Social Question: the great social and economic transformations and the Subjective Dimension of Work", maintains "that form of work, its time frames, and its physical space have changed; new tensions have emerged: between local and global, between "old" and "new" economy, between technological change and

unemployment, between economic growth and environmental sustainability: The social question today has many dimensions".

The dimensions of the social question can be explained beginning from the crises of the economical paradigm which dominates industrial society like a mechanistic theory.

This paradigm has shown itself incapable of promoting development in developing countries and unable to avoid crises within the developed countries. Not only does this paradigm not explain the sense that people give to their work, but it does not take into account their motivations. Nor does it touch on the relationship between work and life outside work. Work is central to people's lives; all research indicates this. But society itself, which has made work its heart, is not able to maintain its value.

But what type of work do people do nowadays? Are these jobs similar to those of the past? Are the new forms of work able to give a sense of meaning to people's lives in the same way as the jobs of the industrial age seemed to be able to do? In the Christian anthropological vision, must/can work be at the centre of people's lives?

Let us examine these points one by one:

Work today is less stable than that of the industrial society. A person no longer enters a company to leave it only on retiring. Young people start work in companies, which change during the course of a few weeks or months. This is a new fact of modern life in Italy, characterised by the work force which in the industrial society was devoted to a single job for the whole of their lives.

Jobs today have changed beyond recognition in both content and contracts. New ways of working have been introduced as a result of the technological revolution in computer science and new contracts have been drawn up such as temporary working, job-sharing, and teleworking, forms of working which have become more and more visible in recent years. These ways of working are today characterised by a kind of instability unknown in the past.

These new forms of work seem to give less meaning to both social and community life than in the past: Whereas in the industrial society the homogeneity of work in a community was able to define objectives and a way of life, today work itself is structured in such a way as to remove all sense of belonging to traditional communities.

Even more interesting, we believe, are the arguments relative to the fourth question: in the Christian anthropological vision, is work the main focus in people's lives? Certainly, from the Bible we get the notion of work as a sentence, but also as a means of self realisation, through involvement with God. The most important papal encyclicals on the subject of work are as follows: the *Rerum Novarum* and the *Quadragesimo Anno* on the social question and *Laborem Exercens* at the beginning of the 1980's exclusively on work.

The first two encyclicals underline the corporate and non competitive nature of work in the industrial society. During the twentieth century, these principles have not always been well accepted in the mainly conflictual conception of work in Italy. The content of the *Laborem Exercens* is, on the other hand, quite different and has found greater acceptance among a large number of scholars. Its principles are still of interest and have currency today.

In the encyclical, the greatest importance has been given to the subjective side of work compared to the objective side, which means that man has priority over capital.

Another aspect of great importance is the weight given to the external structure of the company. The encyclical in this is ahead of its time. Only recently, in fact, has the subjective content of work been highlighted, the importance of the social and community dimension for people. In the industrial society and at the start of the 80's in Italy we were still in this phase: the

objective dimension of work took precedence over the subjective and it was the organisation, that was at the centre of research, not the worker as an individual. These were the themes at the heart of political and cultural debate, not the motivation and expectations of the people.

A third principle which we would indentify in "Laborem Exercens" is that of the justice ethic. Overcoming the work conflict and its political and economic implications, the encyclical maintains that solidarity is the founding principle of justice and of the relationships, even conflictual ones, present in society

A fourth element is the work content which must be able to satisfy the people who do it, alienation, excessive fatigue, stress, and the loss of meaning. All are elements which the encyclical indicates are negative and need to be overcome with the idea of work as a source of satisfaction. Here, more than anywhere else, is derived the idea that man "is made for Saturday", that he is oriented towards the feast day and to the celebration of the divinity, and not only in search of fulfilment on this earth.

Conclusion

Work is an element which forms the very basis of our society. It has to be regulated and not left to free market competition. Work is central to the Church in creating a meaning for the earthly existence of man. It is not the ultimate goal of life, but has to be related to a much broader design of the meaning of life which goes beyond economic goals and material fulfilment.

That said, the social question is delineated and resolved by setting out and resolving the problems of work, which constitutes the inescapable mainstay of the social question. To pick up the theme of this discussion, then, the social question today, is more than anything else the question of work.

Chapter VI
A Theory of Moral Judgment and Furfey's
Three Theories of Society

Eric Sean Williams

Moral research among different subcultures suggests that an individual's world view influences what factors are taken into account when he or she makes a moral judgment. If the content of that world view is determined or at least influenced by the prevailing culture in which the individual lives, then radical changes to society would necessitate changes in the way in which members approach decisions regarding proper behavior. Similarly, the Positivistic, Noëtic, and Pistic Societies which Furfey described would all require different moral frameworks.

Three Societies: Moral Requirements

Two features of the positivistic society suggest a moral framework for such a society. The success ideal suggests that proper moral action is action that supports the achievement of an individual, whereas an improper moral action is one that hinders achievement. Furthermore, because a positivistic world view allows for only a superficial knowledge of the world, it follows that the only the most apparent achievement would be considered when making moral decisions. An example of a moral act under a positivistic world view would be purchasing lunch for someone who is homeless because feeding someone who cannot afford to eat fulfills an apparent need of that person. An immoral act could be disturbing one's spouse who is engrossed in her job because it might hinder the spouse's ability to produce a product that stands out to the boss, client or customer.

The moral framework for a noëtic society would need to include a deeper understanding of proper behavior. This provides two implications. First, behavior directed towards individuals would take into account a deeper understanding of the ramifications of one's behavior for other people, including not only short term but also long term implications of the act. A classic expression of a noëtic moral act is found in "Give a man a fish and he will have dinner tonight; teach a man to fish and he will have dinner every night." Thus, a moral behavior would be one in which an individual's long term interests would be supported, not just the person's short term interests. A second implication of deep knowledge for morality is that an individual would understand that behavior affects society in general. Moral behavior would perpetuate a good society, while immoral behavior would hinder the functioning of a good society. For example, people would not drive in excess of the speed limit in a noëtic society because they would view traffic laws as a way preventing the injuries and other hardships caused by disorder on the roadways.

The moral framework within a pistic society would have a very different focus from that of the positivistic or noëtic societies. In such a society, revealed truth and truths derived from revealed truth would provide the basis for moral decisions. Moral behavior would be that which conforms to the wishes of a higher power. Behavior in opposition to the wishes of the higher power would be immoral.

The Cultural Psychology Approach

Contemporary research in the field of human development has provided several different empirically analyzed perspectives on how individuals make moral decisions. Most narrowly define what kinds of decisions are considered moral decisions.¹ However, the Cultural Psychology system created by Shweder (1990) and refined by Jensen (1997a) does observe the diversity between and within individuals' moral frameworks. According to Cultural Psychology, individuals make judgments about the world based upon their world view, which develops within the confines of the prevailing world view of a cultural group. Thus, decisions about the meaning of phenomena fall within the context of the world view and cultural assumptions. Within Cultural Psychology there are three different types of justifications which individuals produce when making moral decisions. These types are the Ethic of Autonomy, the Ethic of Community and the Ethic of Divinity.

The Ethic of Autonomy conceptualizes the individual as an autonomous entity who uses reason to determine proper behavior in various situations. While Autonomy can focus on other people, as well as on the self, autonomous reasoning is always concerned with the interests of individuals. Recent studies have begun to divide the Ethic of Autonomy into three distinctly focused sub-ethics (Williams 2002). First, Self-oriented Autonomy is concerned with the welfare and interests of the individual making the decision. An example is a person who gives money to a job training center for homeless parents because it enhances his or her reputation. The actor's concern is how the act will benefit him or her, not how it will benefit another person. Other-oriented Autonomy is concerned with the welfare and interests of an individual other than the actor, or with a group of people conceived of as individuals. For example, one could give a considerable sum to a job training center for homeless parents because that person wants to give those individuals a chance to lead a better life. The actor's concern is no longer with his own needs, but still he focuses only on the needs of other individuals, and is not guided by general principles or focused on benefits to a group.

Abstract autonomy introduces to social judgments general principles of individual rights and responsibilities of behavior to other individuals. An example of this type of autonomy is a wealthy person who gives money to charity because of a belief that the rich have a responsibility to help support those who cannot earn a living by themselves. While the actor is considering others, the real focus is on his or her personal responsibility to help those people. Another example is a person who gives money to a scholarship fund because he or she benefited from a scholarship while in college. The actor considers individual reciprocity: one who benefits must give back to that which helped.

The Ethic of Community conceives of the moral agent as a member of groups and communities who must pursue group goals and uphold group standards. The groups can range in size from two people in some types of relationships, to society as a whole. An example of the use of the Ethic of Community is a person who gives money to charity because he or she believes that reducing poverty makes society safer. While the individual will receive the benefit of personal safety from the act, the actual concern is how the larger group, in this case society, will benefit from the act. On a smaller scale, an individual may give money to a charity because his or her family has a tradition of giving money to that charity. Because the reason for donating the money is upholding a group tradition, this would still be considered Community-based reasoning.

Finally, the Ethic of Divinity conceives the individual as a part of a transcendental reality, where a higher power or higher order provides laws or guidance that reveal how the individual

should behave. The higher power can include gods or goddesses, a controlling power like karma, or even the laws of nature or the reality of the Universe. The rules can come from scriptures, from the rules of a particular religion, or from direct inspiration. However, by definition another person can only produce a rule within the Ethic of Divinity if that person has some kind of religious or quasi-religious standing (i.e. a religious leader or a psychic medium). Examples of Divinity are diverse. An individual may give money to a charity because he or she is required to tithe one tenth of income to church or charity, or because it will bring about a spiritual benefit, or even because he or she feels that God commanded such in a dream.

The Cultural Psychology approach to analyzing moral reasoning provides a unique way of describing the multifaceted style in which many people describe moral experiences. Because it provides for different focuses of moral reasoning, this approach is well suited to discussing what moral factors would be considered in each of Furfey's societies. The remainder of this paper will discuss which of the Ethics would be present in the Positivistic, Noëtic, and Pistic Societies respectively. Then empirical research will be described that supports applying this formulation of moral reasoning to Furfey's societies.

The Positivistic Society

As stated previously, the Positivistic Society will require only a superficial understanding of others' needs and will focus on achieving one's own success or helping other to achieve obvious goals. The Self-oriented Ethic of Autonomy is uniquely suited to this society. Can a decision be any more basic and less considered than simply asking "What is best for me?" Implied in this question is only the consideration of what is best in the short run. Basing moral decisions on what is best for one's self is quick and efficient. Very little time is needed for consideration for such a decision, and relatively little information must be taken into account. It is logical to assume that if only the good of the self is taken into account, an individual will act towards his or her own benefit. Thus, the success ideal is clear because Self-oriented Autonomy will work to achieve individual goals.

Other-oriented Autonomy will also be prominent in a Positivistic Society. In many ways, it is merely turning the success ideal towards another person. Only a superficial understanding of what another person needs is required to make an Other-oriented Autonomous judgment, and many times personal interaction is not necessary. For example, one can determine if an action will physically harm another person with little consideration. Also, determining if an action will make another person happy can be based upon an assumption, rather than a considered interaction. Other-oriented Autonomy does not require much effort.

Abstract Autonomy is not fostered within a Positivistic Society. General principles of behavior toward other individuals are not self-evident. To accept these one must understand that a simple cost benefit analysis of a situation sometime leads to outcomes that are unfair, shirked responsibilities, or denied rights. Doing the right thing based on Abstract Autonomous principles requires contemplating a moral dilemma, often until non-obvious conclusions are reached. In addition, Abstract Autonomous principles can often lead to outcomes that are fully beneficial to neither the actor nor another person. Sacrifice and self-denial are not endemic to the Positivistic Society.

The Ethic of Community will be rare in a Positivistic Society. Underlying each Community decision is the realization that in some situations the good of the group is superordinate to the good of any individual. This is a direct contradiction to the success ideal. To make a Community based

judgment the importance of upholding group standards must be valued. It is hard to argue that this value can be grasped with only a superficial understanding of society. Even the decision to follow a cultural tradition implies that one considers why the cultural tradition is important to follow. On the other hand, if one decides that upholding a group standard is to one's own benefit, then one is not actually making an Ethic of Community judgment but a Self-oriented Autonomous judgment.

The Ethic of Divinity is out of the question in the Positivistic Society. Though some have argued that individuals possess an innate religious sense, rules from a higher power must be learned or arrived at through contemplation. The positivistic society does not allow for this. In addition, the materialist bias that Furfey attributes to the Positivistic Society would rule out any desire to follow a higher power.

The morality of the Positivistic Society does represent, in Furfey's terms, a "man of one method". Superficial knowledge of the self and others is really the only factor taken into account when an individual is confronted by a moral dilemma. Thus, only the most obvious benefits to oneself and others are used for making a decision. Other factors are not dismissed; rather, they are never even considered for they take too much effort and time.

The Noëtic Society

The superficial goal-oriented focus of morality in the Positivistic Society will not suffice in a society dominated by a more considered understanding of reality. Thus, in the Noëtic Society the Self-oriented Ethic of Autonomy will exist but have a different focus. While individuals will still be concerned with their basic needs, they will also focus on less obvious needs. Furfey states that a Noëtic Society will be a society of contemplation where the arts and humanities are emphasized. Thus, Self-oriented Autonomy will have as its goal personal growth, as opposed to the achievement of superficial benefits.

Similarly, Other-oriented Autonomy will look for the deeper needs of an individual. Making sure that another is properly fed and clothed will still concern a moral actor, but in a Noëtic Society, intellectual development for its own sake will be seen as equally important. Assisting in another's development will be valued as an end unto itself, instead of being valued for how well it could help an individual achieve the success ideal.

Abstract Autonomous reasoning will be prevalent in the Noëtic Society. If, as Furfey states, members of this society will seek to understand the essence of moral behavior, they will contemplate underlying ideas of good behavior. Through contemplation, principles applicable to multiple situations can be formed. Ideas like reciprocity, fairness, and universal rights will apply to both the self and to others. The essence of proper behavior, as it relates to other individuals, replaces individual interests as the focus of Autonomous reasoning.

If one accepts the proposition that accepting the good of the community over the individual good is non-obvious, then clearly the Ethic of Community will first be prominent in a Noëtic Society. In this society, there is time to contemplate the importance of group membership. The perpetuation of the group will not be seen as something that benefits the individual, but as an end itself. The success ideal is suppressed, inasmuch as it is transferred from the self to a more abstract entity, the group or society.

Furfey stated that noësis could be used to accept that there is a divine truth, but it could not be used to actually grasp divine truth. Therefore, the Ethic of Divinity will not be active in the Noëtic Society. Though noësis allows one to approach the deepest truths, reason and contemplation alone can not reach absolute truth.

Overall, moral reasoning in the Noëtic Society breaks with the pursuit of the success ideal. Consideration of principles and abstract communal considerations supplant what is good for the self or apparently good for another as the principal focus of moral decision making. The actor sometimes ignores materialist considerations for the sake of abstract ideas about proper behavior. In all, deep thought does enter the moral framework in a Noëtic Society, as superficial knowledge becomes inadequate for making decisions.

The Pistic Society

When one first considers moral reasoning within the Pistic Society, one may think that individuals make decisions based only upon a religious framework. While faith will play the primary role in all moral decisions, some other types of reasoning may still be present. For instance, the Self-oriented Ethic of Autonomy will not fully disappear. Rather, individuals will be concerned with their "truest" needs. An individual will still seek to provide for the basic needs of survival, but he or she will also be concerned with taking whatever steps are necessary for approaching the divine. A decision to buy a winter coat so one can walk to church, instead of donating the money spent on the coat to charity, does not directly relate to religious rules or religious goals. Rather, it is a personal decision to achieve an individual goal (i.e. keeping warm), so that one can pursue a religious goal.

Likewise, Other-oriented Autonomy will still be present, though in a limited way. In this case, an individual will focus on providing an environment in which another individual can seek his or her spiritual fulfillment, although decisions to help feed the hungry and such could still be made, taking only individual welfare and interests into account.

Abstract Autonomy will be unnecessary in the Pistic Society. One will not have to contemplate general principles regarding the behavior towards others, because inspired principles will regulate behavior towards other individuals. This is not to say that principles such as fairness and individual rights will not be present in such a society, but spiritually inspired variants of these principles will govern behavior.

Similarly, the Ethic of Community may not be very apparent in the Pistic Society. In this type of society, communal standards and rules will have a divine origin, as legitimate religious authorities will propose them or they will be directly spiritually inspired. However, desires to maintain the integrity of a non-religious group (i.e. government or labor organization) will not always have a religious focus. As Furfey stated, groups such as these will have a role in a Pistic Society. Thus, Community based reasoning could exist in a limited capacity that relates to specific social organizations.

The Ethic of Divinity will be the main form of moral judgment in a Pistic Society. Though Furfey proposed only a Catholic Pistic Society, different faith traditions could produce such a society. (Later this paper will discuss fundamentalist Protestants as having a partially pistic world view.) From wherever a Pistic Society develops, it will be all encompassing in regards to an individual's moral framework. What is good for the self, for other people, and for a group will be seen through the prism of divine regulations. Religious rules will also govern interpersonal interaction.

In all, morality in a Pistic Society will be a nearly perfect representation of a religious world view. All other types of decision making will be seen through that prism. Observation will have given way to reason, which in turn gives way to faith. There will be a commonly held belief that only that can lead to a fair, just, and moral society.

Empirical Support

Because Furfey's theory is compatible with the cultural psychology perspective of moral reasoning, research conducted from this point of view can answer questions about the accuracy of Furfey's assertions. To answer many of these questions, I will turn to a recent study using a structured diary as the methodology completed by 100 students at a private secular and a private religious university (Williams, 2002). Other studies will provide a supplement when the diary study does not address a certain question.

First, one may ask if individuals do actually reason using the three ethics and the sub-ethics for the Ethic of Autonomy. The question can be answered in two ways. First, taken together, the participants in the diary study (Williams, 2002) did use all of the ethics and sub-ethics. Ninety-two percent of the participants used the Self-oriented Ethic of Autonomy at least once; and 60 percent used Other-oriented Autonomy. An almost identical number of participants used abstract Autonomy (79 percent) and the Ethic of Community (80 percent). Only a quarter of the participants used the Ethic of Divinity. The presence of all the ethics and sub-ethics implies that there are individuals in society who confront moral issues from world views that could be associated with each of the three societies. The most commonly used ethic was the Self-oriented Ethic of Autonomy, which, I argue, closely relates to the Positivistic society. This is consistent with Furfey's theory about American society: individuals hold their own welfare and interests as paramount. Furthermore, few individuals use the Ethic of Divinity, supporting the belief that the United States is anything but a Pistic society. The prevalent use of ethics which I associate with the Noëtic society may seem to weaken the presented theory. However, it is important to keep in mind that the sample is composed of college students who may benefit from a liberal education that stresses learning in the way that Furfey proposes for a Noëtic Society.

The second way to determine if individuals do use all three ethics is to determine if they use them in any substantial amount². Figure 1 shows that when only the Ethic of Autonomy was used (24 percent), either Self-oriented Autonomy or Other-oriented Autonomy was always present, so individuals did tend to prefer reasoning that I would associate with a Positivistic world view. For individuals who used more than one ethic, a breakdown for the sub-ethics of Autonomy was impossible because of the limited number of participants. However, for the sake of argument one can assume that the Ethic of Autonomy will be used in the same way alone and when combined with other ethics. Thus, it is extremely revealing that only 5 percent of the participants did not use the Ethic of Autonomy as a primary ethic of reasoning (those individuals were Community only reasoners). However, 72 percent of the participants use Autonomy combined with Community, Divinity or both. Thus, it is probably a safe assumption that the participants in this study did not believe that simply looking at the apparent needs of others or by considering the needs of oneself was sufficient to make proper moral decisions. This implies that as a group these individuals would form a moral society that had strong Positivistic and Noëtic traits—not unexpected for college students.

Naturally, one must next ask which ethics predominate within an individual's reasoning. The diary study found that participants tended to use the Ethic of Autonomy twice as often as the Ethic of Community, and rarely used the Ethic of Divinity. As a whole, it seems as if members of this sample found it easier to focus on individual factors when making moral judgments. From this, it is not unreasonable to conclude that they found it easier to perceive the more apparent needs of

the self and of others than to consider more abstract factors. This assessment of the immediate needs they considered is also supported by the fact that almost half of the moral experiences took less than 15 minutes to resolve (this included both deciding upon a resolution and acting upon that decision).

From the findings about how often the ethics are used, certain assumptions can be made about American society. First, Furfey seems to have been correct in his assumption that this is a mainly a Positivistic Society because it seems as if individuals mostly think about their own success or another person's success when making moral judgments. However, this is not universally true. At least among university students, there is some use of a noëtic perspective. Perhaps their liberal education is responsible for this.

Now one should ask if it is possible to have any semblance of a Pistic Society in America. I would argue that there are already pistic sub-societies within the United States. In the first chapter of his third society, Furfey eliminates from his discussion all possible Pistic Societies other than a Catholic society. Research by Jensen (1997a, 1998), though, has suggested that both Baptists and Hindus with an orthodox religious world view tend to use the Ethics of Divinity and Community when confronted with moral issues. This differs from progressive Baptists and Hindus who tend to use the Autonomy and Community.

Jensen (1997b) attributes this difference to different world views common to each religious group. The orthodox perceive God as the ultimate source of moral authority, whereas progressives emphasize the importance of the individual as an autonomous being. The orthodox view human relationships as structured to reenact the human/divine relationship, whereas progressives have an egalitarian conception of human relationships. The orthodox view this world as a place to seek salvation for the next, whereas progressives focus on individual and communal fulfillment in this world. The orthodox view suffering in this world as a symptom of removal from God, whereas progressives view suffering as a problem with the structure of this society, which should be remade. To have a better society, the orthodox believe that individuals should seek to live by God's will, whereas progressives seek human solutions to problems by continuing to improve society. There is obviously a vast difference in world views between the orthodox and progressives.

The progressive world view is currently more prevalent in American society (Arnett, Jensen, & Ramos, 2001). Thus, the discussion of the three ethics in a general population and specific sub-populations provides two types of reasoning discussed provide two implications for society. First, if a society desires to build a Noëtic Society, then it is conceivable that a liberal education will help develop one. Second, a Pistic Society can exist, but it would require a radical change in the perspective of a society where members would, at the very least, agree that a higher power did create an order that should be followed.

Conclusion

This paper does not take a position on which type of society is the most beneficial for humanity. Rather, it seeks to find a parallel between research on moral decision making and Furfey's three societies. From the cultural psychology approach, it is posited that in a Positivistic Society individuals will take into account the apparent interests of individuals when facing moral dilemmas. In a Noëtic Society, members will be concerned mostly with abstract ideas of morality as they affect individuals and the communal good. In the Pistic Society, individuals will strive to obey the will of a higher power. American society tends to be positivistic. However, previous

research suggests that any type of society is possible, but members of society must choose to build that type of society either through education or faith.

Notes

1 For example, one of the most commonly used frameworks today is the domain-specific approach to moral reasoning proposed by Elliot Turiel (e.g. Nucci & Turiel, 1993), in which only issues that involve welfare, rights and justice could be considered moral.

2 For this study, the researchers created categories based on criteria used by Colby and Kohlberg (1987) to determine the stage or intermediate stage of reasoning in to which a person was to be placed. Participants were considered single-ethic reasoners if they used 67 percent or more of autonomy, community, or divinity. Participants were three-ethic reasoners if they used more than 20 percent of autonomy, community, and divinity. Finally, they were considered two-ethic reasoners if they used less than 67 percent of each ethic, but not more than 20 percent of each ethic. Autonomy only reasoners were further divided between those who primarily used one, two, or three of the subdivisions of autonomy using the same cut-off criteria that was used for Autonomy, Community and Divinity.

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Chapter VII
Paul Hanley Furfey and an Inter-Faith Dialogical Society
Godlif Sianipar O.Carm

Introduction

Paul Hanley Furfey is one of the greatest Catholic social thinkers in the United States. He wrote many books and articles to support society with the teachings of Christianity. In this paper I will use one of the most important of his books, "Three Theories of Society", to relate his ideal notion of society with contemporary problems of interfaith dialogue.

The competence of sociology to deal with interfaith dialogue comes from the practical aspects of religion. Every religion has a social aspect to its teachings, and in this sense sociology of religion plays an important role in creating a good society within communities. In other words, interfaith dialogue is a sociological category from the sociological point of view. It is a social process in which persons or institutes are interested in creating dialogue, come together, and plan the form of their working together.

The Church, according to Reuel L. Howe in his book, "The Miracle of Dialogue", should not be left behind in promoting dialogue as well¹. The separation between the world and the Church, as well as the rejection of the Church towards the world makes possible the ministry of dialogue. The communication becomes monological and not equal when the Church is preoccupied with its own concerns and oblivious to the world. While on the other hand, "the true concern of religion is not religion, but life. The gift of God in Christ is not for the Church but for all men, and the Church is sent not to itself but to the world"². Speaking dialogically with each generation and thus meeting the needs of human beings is the responsibility of the Church.

Talking about Christian responsibility to speak dialogically with other religion, this paper's goal is an explanation, description, and reflection of the task in a specific way that invigorates the dialogue between Christians and Muslims, from Paul Hanley Furfey's perspectives. Furfey never wrote articles or books about interfaith dialogue between Christian and Muslims except his commentary on 'Intercredal Cooperation'. However, his positive support for interfaith dialogue in the article becomes my standpoint or encourages one to connect Pistic society and interfaith dialogue between Christians and Muslims. "By all means let us continue our collaboration with non-Catholics, but not until we put an enormously greater emphasis than we do now on the supernatural and distinctively Catholic elements in our social program"³.

In order to fulfill the goal we divide the solving mechanism as follows: first we are dealing with Furfey's idea of society and how this idea could lead a society to a good society. After that, we will see the problems of interfaith dialogue. Conflict between Christians and Muslims could happen anytime and anywhere. In this paper we will see only the common problems. Then, we will talk about the importance of interfaith dialogue between Christians and Muslims. The benefits of the interfaith dialogue are the main purpose of this effort. After that, we will further go to Paul Hanley Furfey's notion of Pistic society and its transformation to an interfaith dialogical society. Pistic society becomes the ideal place or space where interfaith dialogue could grow well.

Paul Hanley Furfey's Idea on Society

Furfey divides society into three different kinds, namely Positivistic, Noetic, and Pistic Society in an effort to understand society precisely. Many scholars have tried to contribute their expertise to society. Their efforts sometimes have produced unexpected results or do not fit the realities because they know too little about the characteristics of a given society. Besides that, even scholars disagree with one to another on the most fundamental issues of society because of their lack of understanding of society. Furfey said that he is trying to help scholars to understand society better: "On the basis of such a deep understanding, it is possible to build a human society which shall be deeply satisfying to the most fundamental needs of man"⁴ .

Society exists because a group of people has the same common purpose as its specific character, without which it ceases to be a society. In a modern society the common purpose is to succeed⁵ . To avoid bias, the meaning of the word 'success' here is better understood from the view of those who have admittedly attained it. In other words, a success should be defined by those from the success-class, even though a small number of people tend to disagree with this notion. But in general, most people agree that life in the successful class is a comfortable, pleasant, and secure life. Further, to enjoy life is not the sole ultimate purpose of this class but also responsibility toward society. By using their influence in its business and political arenas, they have power to manage and control social policies in society.

For Furfey, a Pistic (Greek = *pisticos* means faith) society is a society where human beings can find and satisfy their basic needs. He does not promote Positivistic society because it is based on a 'superficial view of reality' and leaves out its most essential facts. Furfey does not promote Noëtic (Greek = *noeticos* means to perceive) society because it happens only individually, but does not work in society. "A society founded upon noësis is beautiful but unworkable. A society founded upon wishful thinking or feeling or emotion does not ever deserve serious consideration. For wishful thinking and feeling and emotion are epistemologically unsound. They are not valid approaches to reality, and societies founded upon them cannot be realistic and satisfactory"⁶ .

Pistic Society Provides Good Society

Pistic society is the ideal society. Pistic society is a society where divine faith, in contrast to human faith, becomes the foundation. "If therefore there is any hope for a fully satisfactory and great human society, and if such a society must be founded on the secure foundation of a deep and penetrating knowledge of reality, then we must not pin our hope on the powers of the human intellect, not even on the marvelous power of noësis. Our only hope for building such a society is to make our foundations deeper still, to found a society upon faith, to make it a pistic society"⁷ . Furfey believes that in Pistic society divine faith will lead everybody to go beyond the utmost bounds of knowledge to which human genius can attain. Why? Because it is founded on a truth which is not only deeper but infinitely deeper. "A noëtic society is better than a positivistic society because it is founded on a deeper truth. Just so a pistic society is better than a noëtic society because it is founded on a truth which is not only deeper but infinitely deeper"⁸ . What is promised by divine faith to go beyond the utmost bounds of knowledge actually is part of human nature. The human intellect tends towards truth. We want all good, all truth, and to possess these things eternally. This extraordinary ambition is so natural to a human being that he/she cannot renounce it⁹ .

When Furfey talks about the ideal society, the question is, does it have the same meaning as 'good society'? Among sociologists the meaning of a 'good society' is still an open quest, but for a deeper understanding of the meaning we may ask, "a good society for whom?" or "a good society in whose opinion?" The meaning of good society is still not far away from the notion that 'the common good is the pursuit of the good in common'. Robert Bellah's definition on good society is of a place where one can better discern what he/she really wants, and what he/she ought to want to sustain a good life¹⁰. This definition is not far away from Amitai Etzioni's understanding on a good society when he is talking about the first principle of a good society. He says that "A good society is one in which people treat one another as ends ... and not merely as instruments, a society in which each person is shown full respect and dignity rather than being used and manipulated"¹¹. In general, both scholars are talking about society as a means for reaching or possessing good for its members.

Furfey believes that Pistic society will provide a good society. It will lead its people to a condition where people treat each other in dignity as faith teaches them. The credible motives that come from faith produce credible behaviors as we can see from the testimony of the martyrs and the holiness of believers. That is why Pistic society is the ideal society in building a good society. The question is how Pistic society contributes to solving the problems of pluralistic faiths within society.

Interfaith Dialogue and Its Problems

In general, there are two reasons why interfaith dialogue is needed¹². The first, is the historical argument based upon the experiences of the dark side of religious lives, especially the conflicts between Christians and Muslims. Religion has brought violence and people have used religion to justify their prejudices. The second, is the ethical belief that religious tolerance and trust for each other can exist through dialogue. With this belief, no religion will claim that truth is only on their side. As Howe says that, "Every man is a potential adversary, even those whom we love. Only through dialogue are we saved from this enmity toward one another. Dialogue is to love, what blood is to the body. When the flow of blood stops, the body dies. When dialogue stops, love dies and resentment and hate are born. But dialogue can restore a dead relationship. Indeed, this is the miracle of dialogue: it can bring relationship into being, and it can bring into being once again a relationship that has died"¹³. Howe is certain of the power of dialogue for maintaining a good relationship between two or more persons. As examples or illustrations of the importance of dialogue, Howe describes the learning process of a newborn infant, the relation between a man and a woman in marriage, and the relationship between parents and children.

"Dialogue" is from the Greek "dia-logos", meaning a conversation between two or more people. Its antonym is monologue (a conversation with oneself). According to the *American Heritage Dictionary* "dialogue" means "to engage in an informal exchange of views", and this meaning has been revived, particularly with reference to communication between parties in institutional or political contexts. Dialogue is a basic need of a human being as a social creature. Psychologically, there has to be¹⁴: (1) openness to each other, (2) voluntary discourse response, and (3) trust in the information given in order to engage in an exchange of views.

Let us now see how a Pistic society can create solutions for interfaith dialogue between Christians and Muslims. The growth of Muslim populations, especially in Western countries, has generated increasing concern among Christians about Muslims' influence and presence. For some people Muslims are "a menacing threat to what they called a homogeneous western society", and

"a significant challenge that is potentially undermining the core ideas and values that are Europe"15 .

In Europe, the presence of Muslims has become a political issue. People question publicly whether Muslims are worthy citizens of democratic nations or whether their presence will alter the nature of the West forever. Yet, Muslims have become part and parcel of the West and have challenged Westerners to accommodate their demands for freedom of religion, and the right to propagate their faith and enjoy the culture of their choice.

According to adherents.com16 in 2002 Islam is the second largest world population, after Christianity, with 1.3 billion or 22 percent of world population. The rank of major religions in the world is as follows:

Table: Rank of Religions and Percentages of World Population in 2002

No.	Rank	Religion	Population	Percentage
1.	1.	Christianity	2,000,000,000	33
2.	2.	Islam	1,300,000,000	22
3.	3.	Hinduism	900,000,000	15
4.	4.	Secular/Non-religious	50,000,000	14
5.	5.	Buddhism	360,000,000	6
6.	12.	Judaism	14,000,000	-

In the US the Muslim adult population has grown 109 percent, from 527,000 in 1990 to 1.1 million in 2000. Islam, even though the percentage is 0.5 percent, becomes the fourth largest religion in the United States after Christianity (76.5 percent), Non-religious (13.2 percent) and Judaism (1.3 percent).

The fact that Muslims are growing in number during this decade and are still growing could bring Western countries into a society where Christianity is no longer the majority religion. In this sense we need to know much about effective inter-group relations to create a good relationship with Muslims. For example, John Slawson in his book ‘Unequal Americans’ suggests how effective inter-group relations can be achieved. His suggestion is "by restructuring the power resources among the groups, not by being taught ‘to be nice to each other’"17 . He believes that redistributing power is essential to harmonious inter-group relationships.

When the majority group in Western countries is concerned about promoting harmonious inter-group relationships, they will create a dialogue. The majority group is the key group in deciding not only equality in terms of the accessibility to all groups regardless of race, ethnicity, religion or sex, but also availability in terms of the accessibility of resources for all.

The United States and Canada, according to Ovey Mohammed S.J., is an important arena for Muslim – Christian dialogue because on this continent Islam is no longer a Middle Eastern religion anymore. In North America Christians and Muslims, coming from all parts of the globe, allow for new possibilities for dialogue and collaboration18 . The growing Islamic population in the United States calls on society to extend the interfaith dialogue and include Islam within this dialogue.

Seyyed Hossein Nasr, one of the world’s leading experts on Islamic Science and spirituality, listed at least four categories that Christian and Muslim forums should deal with.

1. First, there are theological issues such as ‘I am the Way, the Truth and the Life’, ‘Extra Ecclesiam Nulla Salus’, the Incarnation and the Trinity. From the perspective of Christianity, few attempts are being made to interpret these theological issues metaphysically and esoterically for

non-Christians. These concepts are hard to understand and match with the basic theological understandings of Islam. Nasr said that there are still many major theological problems that have not received a solution by those who are seeking commonality between Islam and Christianity. From Islam's side, according to Nasr, 'the best that one can do in such cases is to have respect for the other and for the Muslims'. He bases his suggestion by quoting the qur'anic verse: "And argue not with the people of the scripture unless it be in a most kindly manner, save with such of them as do wrong; and say: 'we believe in that which hath been revealed unto us and revealed unto you; our God and your God is One, and unto Him we surrender'" (Q.29: 46)¹⁹ .

2. Second, there is the freedom of worship. Many Christian groups in the West have complained about the lack of the freedom of worship for Christians in the Islamic world while there is freedom for Muslims to worship in the West. According to Nasr, freedom of worship as a strict reciprocity is not a simple thing to do. It is not true that Christians are not allowed to build Churches in the entire Islamic world. In Iran, for example, there are more Christian Churches in the present day than there are mosques in all of Western Europe. Aramaic liturgy and other ancient forms of the rites and practices of Christianity have survived within the Islamic world.

There is also a second category of countries where curtailment of the freedom of worship has taken place in the past few years, including Egypt, Sudan and Saudi Arabia. Quite often the curtailment of freedom is based not on religious issues but on political and economic factors. Local Christians enjoy much more economic and political power than Muslims because of the affinity to Western ruling powers. Nasr believes that in general the issue of freedom of worship relates not to Christianity itself, but to the secularization or modernization of Western society. Puritans had a more difficult time when they ruled in New England and there was no freedom of worship. In other places, Catholic Spaniards and Portuguese killed many Native Americans in Central and South America because they were 'pagans'. In the Islamic world, when the freedom of worship is guaranteed, it does not come from the imposition of secularization, but from Islam itself. Muslims today who attend mosques are like Christians in Europe in the 1400s where more than 10 percent of Christians attended churches.

3. The third is the missionary activity. Both Christianity and Islam envisage themselves to have a global mission and are therefore rivals in many areas of the world. Usually Christianity came to the Islamic world with money and military power from Western countries. As a result, Christian missionaries are associated with colonialism and cultural imperialism. Quite often Christian missionary schools have become Christianization agencies. Christians do not send their children to Islamic schools, even if they were supported financially not by local Muslims but by the foreign Muslim government. According to Nasr, modernism in all its modes and ramifications is the major obstacle to Christian – Muslim dialogue.

4. The fourth is the differing attitude towards modernism. Christians are suspicious of Muslims because Islam has not modernized along the lines of Christianity, and they evaluate contemporary Islam accordingly. Islamic realities and those who do not depart from the traditional norms are usually neglected by Western scholars. On the other side, in dealing with modernity, Christian theology has tended to undergo major changes especially in the liberal 'strands' of Christianity which are the very elements usually carrying out dialogue with Islam. One of the examples given by Nasr is the view of the nature of God, prophecy, eschatology, and ritual. In Islam there is nothing to compare with innovations in the understanding of the nature of these four from traditional interpretations to the current one. Compared to a Catholic or Protestant, a Muslim would have to contend with sea changes to go from a St. Thomas to a modern Catholic theologian, or a Jonathan Edwards to a modern Protestant preacher.

On the Islamic side, most of those interested in dialogue with Christianity basically have relied upon the 'quranic ecumenism', and the long tradition of Sufism and Sharia. The opposition usually comes from those Muslims who are influenced by current reformism or who refuse to heed the universalistic message of the Quran. So in Nasr's view the 'silent third partner' that is the role of modernism has to be taken into consideration: "What is needed is to have both sides of the dialogue recognize fully the significance of the presence of modernism ... and fully to understand how modernism affects this dialogue on various levels from the purely theological, to the social and political, to the scientific and technological"²⁰ .

In Nasr's view the 'silent third partner', that is the role of modernism has to be taken into the consideration in interfaith dialogue between Christians and Muslims. The future of religion will depend on the attitude of various religions toward modernity in the light of their doctrines. He said that we couldn't be sure that this attitude will be the same, because at the current time the same perspective does not exist.

Making an Interfaith Dialogue

We have talked about the major problems of the interfaith dialogue between Christians and Muslims. The major problems that exist between these two religions bring into question why we need interfaith dialogue. Why not choose other methods; or, are there any other methods besides interfaith dialogue? The problem is that we live now in a modern age where human dignity is honored as it is and where interfaith dialogue is the most effective way to deal with other religions.

Leonard Swidler, in his book 'Death or Dialogue', found that a number of recent developments that have contributed to the rise in dialogue. A major cause is a paradigm shift in how the West perceives and describes the world²¹ . All statements about reality seem to be related to the historical context, praxis, intentionality and the perspective of the speaker. He calls this a 'relational understanding'. If I wish to expand my understanding of reality I need to learn from others what they know of the reality that I cannot see from my point of view. This definition paralleled Weber's work on '*verstehen*', often called a method of 'emphathetic understanding'. A relational understanding can only happen through dialogue.

For inter-religious dialogue based on relational understanding, Swidler suggests that this has to take place in a fundamental way according to the underlying principles for action which motivate each tradition. In the spiritual arena, for example, each religion meets others on a high level of unity with the Ultimate Reality, no matter how it is described. But this would exclude not only Atheistic Marxists, but also Nonatheistic Theravada-Buddhists. As an alternative, in order to include these in the inter-religious dialogue, the theme of 'salvation' broadly understood could be a better solution, because by talking about salvation every religion has its own perception of the ultimate meaning of life.

The second reason is that our relationships are always at risk of conflict according to Peter M. Kellet and Diana G. Dalton in their book 'Managing Conflict in A Negotiated World'. "Moments and times of conflict are as inevitable as moments and times of cooperation or collaboration"²² . Conflict is part of our everyday lives in relationships, families and workplaces. Why is this? It is because humankind is both individualistic and communal? We are both similar and different and the tension between the different forces results in conflict. The function of dialogue, from Ronald J. Fisher's view, is to increase understanding and trust among the participants engaged in conflict, rather than to create alternative solutions to conflict. "Improved communication and understanding is one of the first steps in de-escalation and resolution"²³ . Dialogue is a useful means to provide

ventilation or catharsis, which is often conducive to the subsequent steps of problem solving and reconciliation. Dialogue emphasizes simply understanding of the other party or religion in the conflict, rather than attempting to change the other. So dialogue improves communication and understanding.

The third reason for inter-religious dialogue comes from Linda Zagzebski, who said that at the time we realize that we are different from others our responsibility is not only to ourselves but also to others. "It is usual in modern liberal society to think that we do not owe other people very much, and we owe the least to people who are not part of our own culture. Certainly, it is widely agreed that we ought to treat persons of other cultures and other faiths with tolerance ... and also ought to treat them with respect"²⁴. The basic thought that stands behind this responsibility is a belief that all humankind is from one community, sharing the same nature and the same rationality with all other human beings. This calls us to treat all other humans as partners with us in pursuing our common human goal of reaching the truth. So we form a human community because we are called to the same end.

Interfaith dialogue, based on the assumption that we are called to the same end, is a medium that will provide an exchange of information until at last people from both sides have enough understanding to reach agreement. Zagzebski realized that getting the agreement is the hardest thing to do, even though in fact as human beings we are inclined to get agreements because of our rational nature and our being a community²⁵. That is why, according to Zagzebski, interfaith dialogue needs persons with 'phronesis' or practical wisdom because they are persons with good judgment, who help to shape the direction of the community, to critique it, and to lead the community in reaching consensus. He said that interfaith dialogue is more likely to be successful when it is practiced by such persons²⁶.

Some Approaches in Interfaith Dialogue

All the above reasons become a signal to Christians and Muslims to promote interfaith dialogue. But since not every social problem is important for the state to solve, we need to know how to approach the interfaith dialogue's problem properly. The problem of interfaith dialogue should be put as a grievance within society.

Slawson suggests the claim makers should define the problem in terms of the general welfare and urban problems, rather than as a religious problem. "Even if attention is focused on the specific problem of a particular group, the general welfare and the stability of society should form the context for pursuing a particular goal"²⁷. This suggestion is understandable since Jurgen Habermas insisted that the "material substratum" of society and its pattern of reproduction should be taken into account in understanding the rationalization of the lifeworld properly. "However, according to Habermas the action-oriented approach of the differentiation of the lifeworld is insufficient to account for all the complexities involved with the historical process of rationalization in western societies. The rationalization of the lifeworld can be properly understood only when it is conceived not only as a symbolically reproduced communicative order, but also by taking into account the "material substratum" of society and its pattern of reproduction"²⁸. Defining interfaith dialogue as a social grievance, the problem of dialogue becomes the problem not only of the religious leaders, but also of society. In other words, this problem needs civic engagement.

Slawson also mentioned the important role in promoting interfaith dialogue of such "mediating institutions", such as nations or state, international institutions, "World Council of

Churches", and "Motamar Al-Alam Al-Islami", or regional institutions, the "Bishops' Institute for Interreligious Affairs", and the "East Asian Christian Conferences". In local or national context, the mediating institutions raise a superordinate goal as a "bridge issue" for effective joint action between different groups such as housing projects, poverty, health problems, unemployment, inadequate schools, air pollution, water pollution and inadequate transportation. This idea paralleled Zagzebski's work on the "phronesis" or practical wisdom and the "assumption that we are called to the same end". As a mediator or motivating factor, mediating institutions create collaboration in social issues to resolve differences between Christians and Muslims; here the most important part is as the way to present the 'salvation' to the people. In other words, faith or theological differences are no longer a big problem. Slawson calls this as an effort to restructure the relationship between two different groups, in this case between Christians and Muslims. "Effective intergroup relations can be achieved by restructuring the relations among groups. This restructuring of power relationships among groups is essential to harmonious intergroups relationships"²⁹. In other words, the mediating institutions' function is to make relationships between Christians and Muslims more effectively.

Slawson suggests different kinds of approaches that we can apply to the problem of interfaith dialogue. For example, he suggests that the universalist approach to each problem is from the direction of the general good: improving society as a whole will benefit each group. In contrast, the particularists try to benefit their own group first, believing that what is good for their group is good for the nation. For the problem of interfaith dialogue this approach is to establish the starting point of dialogue. The universalists approach says that dialogue should begin with frequent meetings between Christians and Muslims, talking with each other so they know each other profoundly. But the particularists approach say that dialogue should be started by teaching Muslims about Christianity, and Christians about Islam, holding that profound understanding of Islam by Christians, and Christianity by Muslims will benefit or solve the problem of interfaith dialogue. Besides the universalist and particularistic approaches, there are pump-priming approaches, salting-in approaches, and quarantine approaches. These should be applied according to local situations because not all of them are applicable to solving the problem.

From Pistic Society to Interfaith Dialogical Society

As mentioned before, Pistic society will provide a good society and lead people to a condition where people treat each other with dignity as their faith teaches them. Charity becomes the main factor in this task and is a bridge to possess things eternally. Charity for both Christianity and Islam is the foundation of the social relationship with each other. In Islam, for example, doing charity such as Infaq (spending benevolently), Ihsan (the doing good), Zakat (growth or purification), and Sadaqa (charitable deed) are parts of God's call as Khalifah (God's vicegerent). However, in Positivistic society, competition and disunion are characteristics. Noëtic society has a much better basis for cooperation and understanding because everybody respects each other's human dignity. In Pistic society charity unifies and intensifies the basic need for cooperation with each other human being.

For a student of inter-religious dialogue it is clearly enough to connect charity with a demand for solidarity and tolerance within an interfaith dialogical society. Solidarity and tolerance for people from different religions expresses a true and eternal brotherhood: "This is my commandment: love one another as I love you" (John 16: 12), and "You will find that the most

implacable of men in their enmity to the faithful are the Jews and the pagans, and that the nearest in affection to them are those who say: 'We are Christians'" (Q.5: 82).

According to Jan H. Walgrave, solidarity and tolerance as socio-ethical principles become guides for regulating the relations between different groups or between persons and groups³⁰. He said that the ultimate foundation of the principle of solidarity is the ethical nature of human beings. The attitude of love or charity demands that we apply ourselves to fulfill all the conditions necessary for the attainment of one's personal good. So the ultimate foundation of the principle of tolerance is love. Love puts one at the service of the total personal good of the other.

Besides the value of charity in Pistic society, regarding Zagzebski's idea on 'phronesis', in my opinion Furfey is a person with practical wisdom, by promoting Pistic society as the ideal society. He directs our society to a consensual community. His theory of Pistic society is a society where inter-religious dialogue could grow peacefully. In other words, in Furfey's hands interfaith dialogue has probability to become interfaith 'dia-practice' between the two religions.

Pistic society is an ideal society where conflict no longer exist. It is another way to represent or reproduce heaven on earth³¹. Even though Pistic society is not the ultimate Catholic ideal because that ideal is heaven, it gives us heavenly peace. In other words, Pistic society becomes the ideal type of an interfaith dialogical society. Pistic society inter-relates positively with an interfaith dialogical society to produce peace in our society. We are at risk of conflict all the time, and dialogue is the most powerful way to solve this.

Conclusion

"No world peace without peace among religions, no peace among religions without dialogue between the religions, and no dialogue between the religions without accurate knowledge of one another"³². These words come from Hans Kung, a major theologian in religion today. War on terrorism, war in the Middle East, an eternal conflict between Palestinians and Israelites, and most other conflicts are triggered by ego and hatred for someone else or toward other nations. Love, solidarity and tolerance are left behind because of their uselessness to those who are pursuing an instant solution for the conflicts. The mediating institutions should work hard to make peace possibly among different religions. In other words, an interfaith dialogical society becomes an urgent need for society today.

Notes

1 Reuel L. Howe, *The Miracle of Dialogue*, The Seabury Press: New York, 1963, p. 3.

2 Howe, p. 14.

3 Paul Hanley Furfey, "Intercredal Cooperation: Its Limitations," in *American Ecclesiastical Review*, Vol. 111, September 1944, p. 175.

4 Paul Hanley Furfey, *Three Theories of Society*, Stratford Press Inc.: New York, 1937, p. viii.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 9.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 159.

7 *Ibid.*, p. 176.

8 *Ibid.*, p. 178-9.

9 *Ibid.*, p. 194.

10 Robert N. Bellah et al., *The Good Society*, Alfred A. Knopf: New York, 1991, p. 9.

- 11 Amitai Etzioni, *Next: The Road to the Good Society*, Basic Books: New York, 2001, p. 1-2.
- 12 Siti Aisyah, "Beyond Pluralism – Kritik Implementasi Dialog Agama," *Kompas* – December 30, 2002.
- 13 Howe, p. 3.
- 14 D. Hendropuspito O.Carm, *Sosiologi Agama*, Kanisius-BPK: Yogyakarta, 1983, p. 172.
- 15 Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad and I. Qurqmaz, "Muslims in the West: A Select Bibliography," *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, (2000) 11 No.1, p. 5.
- 16 Adherent.com is the second most frequently visited general religion site on the Internet, and is not affiliated with any religious, political, educational, or commercial organization. This data is updated in September 6, 2002.
- 17 John Slawson, *Unequal Americans: Practices and politics of Intergroup Relations*, Greenwood Press: Connecticut, 1979, p. 3.
- 18 Ovey N. Mohammed, S.J., *Muslim-Christian Relations: Past-Present-Future*, Orbis Books-NY, 1999, p. 82.
- 19 Seyyed Hossein Nasr, "Islamic-Christian Dialogue: Problems and Obstacles to be Pondered and Overcome," *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, (2000) 11 No.2, p. 215.
- 20 *Ibid.*, p. 225.
- 21 Leonard Swidler, "A Dialogue on Dialogue," in *Death or Dialogue: From the Age of Monologue to the Age of Dialogue*, by Leonard Swidler et al., Trinity Press International: Philadelphia, 1990, p. 57.
- 22 Peter M. Kellet and Diana G. Dalton, *Managing Conflict in A Negotiated World: A Narrative Approach to Achieving Dialogue and Change*, Sage Publications Inc.: California, 2001, p. 9.
- 23 Ronald J. Fisher, *Interactive Conflict Resolution*, Syracuse University Press: New York, 1997, p. 121.
- 24 Linda Zagzebski, "Religious Diversity and Social Responsibility," in *Logos*, (2001) 4: 1, p. 135.
- 25 *Ibid.*, p. 137.
- 26 *Ibid.*, p. 153.
- 27 Slawson, p. 111.
- 28 Mathieu Deflem, "Social Control And The Theory of Communicative Action," in *International Journal of the Sociology of Law*, (1994)22 No.4, p. 355-373.
- 29 Slawson, p. 3.
- 30 Jan H. Walgrave, *Person and Society: A Christian View*, Duquesne University Press: Pittsburgh, 1965, p. 149.
- 31 Furfey, *Ibid.*, p. 240.
- 32 Hans Kung, "Christianity and World Religions: Dialogue with Islam," in *Muslim in Dialogue: The Evolution of A Dialogue*, edited by Leonard Swidler, The Edwin Mellen Press – New York., 1992, p.168.

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Chapter VIII
Paul Hanly Furfey and the Catholic Intellectual Tradition
Paul Sullins

Introduction

Most sociologists today would consider a religiously informed social analysis to be inconsistent with genuine social science, which must proceed by "value-free" inquiry; others, more broadmindedly, might consider a religious sociology possible but irrelevant or at least not useful to genuine sociology. To this mindset, as to late modernity generally, the claims of Paul Hanly Furfey, Catholic priest and sociologist active in the second quarter of the 20th century, cannot help but be a bit jarring, for Furfey unapologetically formulated a distinctly unsecular "Catholic sociology" grounded in the dogmatic truths of the Catholic faith. Catholic sociology, he argues, is superior to secular alternatives precisely because it appropriates the truths of divine revelation. For Catholic sociology, Church tradition is axiomatic. "The Catholic sociologist," he explains, "cannot make up his theory out of his own hand. He must draw it from the teachings of the Church."¹

While the modern rejection of such a project may rest on good reasons, it is worth noting that it never actually engages the religious views it opposes. (Modern social scientists find such a stance plausible, but modern social scientists are axiomatically secular by training and orientation. Thus their critique or dismissal of religious, and to a lesser extent any "interested", social theory, simply begs the question of what constitutes "genuine" sociology.) For simply to assert divergent assumptions, to the extent one is not simply being intolerant, does not constitute an argument. Modern sociologists have their assumptions, which are secular, and Furfey has his, which are theological or religious. Without first committing to one set of assumptions, how is one to conclude that either view is better than the other?

In this essay I propose, alternatively, to stipulate or bracket Furfey's assumptions about Catholic sociology, and on this basis to examine his use of the Catholic Church's doctrine in his social thought. Assuming (for the sake of argument, if nothing else) that a sociology informed by Catholic teaching is possible and valuable, how adequate is Furfey's theory by that measure? To the extent that Furfey's views are persuasive, this method provides a much stronger assessment of his social theory than the alternative, for it critiques his sociology, not on the basis of current conceptions of what constitutes sociology, but on the basis of his own claims.

Sources of Authority

Although advocating close adherence to tradition, Furfey untraditionally privileges the New Testament and the ante-Nicene Fathers as especially authoritative sources for social thought. He argues: "Among all these sources of Catholic social teaching, of course the Holy Scriptures and the early Fathers are pre-eminent. For these are the fontes revelationis and to them the Catholic sociologist must turn as to a fountain head. . . .to learn the true nature of Catholic social reform."² This view of the relation of early to later components of the Tradition seems not to take seriously the Catholic understanding of the development of doctrine, in which later elements build upon and elucidate earlier ones. The normal Catholic approach would be to examine the most recent teachings of the magisterium (not to ignore Scripture, but interpreting it with magisterial teaching as a guide) in order to learn the "true nature" of any doctrine.

This criticism would not be too serious, perhaps, with regard to foundational aspects of dogma or morals, which are recognized to be already thoroughly developed within Scripture or the early Fathers. But Catholic social teaching is explicitly recognized as a later, very recent development of thought within Catholic doctrine. In light of this, Furfey's variance from the tradition is striking. Consider, for example, the simple statement of the Catechism on this point: "The social doctrine of the Church developed in the nineteenth century when the Gospel encountered modern industrial society. . . The development of the doctrine of the Church on economic and social matters attests the permanent value of the Church's teaching at the same time as it attests the true meaning of her Tradition, always living and active."

Furfey does not deny that Catholic doctrines develop, but he holds that the social teachings, which "have been particularly slow to develop",³ are still incoherent. "Catholics lack a definite theory of society,"⁴ he complains, which prevents a clear and coherent agenda for social reform. Yet, as we shall see below, he holds that the New Testament presents a complete theory of society. How is it that modern Catholics lack a definite theory of society when there was a complete and well-rounded doctrine in the New Testament era? Furfey never addresses this question. However, he frequently implies that modern Catholics have lost or degraded the original fire and purity of the New Testament vision of social reform. This idea, that an original pure revelation has been degraded and is currently being rediscovered, is essentially Protestant in orientation, a point to which I will return in the conclusion of this essay.

As sources of authority, then, Furfey draws upon, in roughly descending order, the New Testament, the early Church Fathers, and the modern social encyclicals. I will examine his treatment of each of these sources in the same order.

Scripture

For Furfey, the New Testament presents a "complete and well-rounded"⁵ body of social doctrine. The central idea is the Mystical Body of Christ, in which "common life Christians are elevated to the supernatural order and they practice supernatural virtues of which charity is the chief."⁶ This is the fundamental social teaching of the New Testament.⁷ Motivated by charity, Christians form a new society of mutual love, dignity, and equality. The rich voluntarily renounce their riches to share with the poor; all persons are detached from seeking great wealth. In the unity of the Mystical Body, differences of race, sex, or social condition are seen to be superficial and unimportant, and have no place.

By the practice of charity "Christians will influence society for the better."⁸ This "social effect of the practice of the social virtues by the individual person"⁹ is what Furfey means by personalist social action. This, and not by organized social reform, is how the early Christians changed society. Furfey is explicit about this: "Personalist social reform is the characteristic technique of the early Church. Unless we understand personalist social action we can read the New Testament and the early Fathers and miss their social thought entirely."¹⁰

Although the Church in our day has become weak and corrupted, for the Christians of the New Testament era the doctrine of the Mystical Body "was more than a beautiful ideal; they practiced what they preached."¹¹ The practice of virtue in early Christianity had the intent and effect of rectifying social wrongs in early Christianity. Almsgiving, for example, constituted "the personalistic attack on the unequal distribution of wealth", one that was "very effective."¹² Organized social reform can also influence society, but personalist social reform is better. It is "just as effective as organized action. In fact, in many cases it is much more

effective."¹³ Personalist action can be undertaken, moreover, when organized action is not possible or is ineffective.¹⁴ Despite its outlaw status, the early Church's practice of charity "was a leaven which was gradually leavening the whole mass" of Roman society.¹⁵

Furfey's exposition of Scripture conveys a sense of challenge, even excitement, but it is premised upon a number of textual and factual inaccuracies. At least three of these problems are quite serious. First, New Testament accounts do not support the idea that the early Church generally operated as an ideal community, such as Furfey describes. Second, his claim for the effectiveness of Apostolic era personalist reform is made problematic by the apparent persistence of social inequalities in Roman society and especially in the Church. Finally, the notion of personalist social action is inconsistent with the early Church's expressed understandings of both virtue and society. This third problem extends into Furfey's use of the early Church Fathers as well as Scripture. I will deal with each of these issues in turn.

Apostolic Heroism?

As noted above, Furfey maintains that personalist social action motivated by charity characterized the church of the Apostolic era. The modern Church, he urges, can learn from "our heroic ancestors in the faith" to "be unworldly, to love poverty, obscurity and austerity. . . to live in a unity of spirit. . . to forget the distinction. . . between race and race. . . [and] to help the poor by heroic almsgiving."¹⁶ However, it is not at all clear from the evidence that the early Church, beyond the twelve Apostles, actually operated in such an ideal fashion.

Furfey himself provides little evidence for this ideal view of early Christianity. In his fullest treatment of the topic he points to only two things as evidence: St. Paul's collection for the needy Christians in Judea, and Acts 4:32: "The multitude of the believers were of one heart and one soul, and not one of them said that anything he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common."¹⁷ Neither of these, however, clearly supports the claim he is making.

Many exegetes question whether Acts 4:32ff (and the parallel passage at Acts 2:44-45) is strictly literal history. The superlative references ("not one . . . all") suggest that this is an idealized account, whether by Luke himself or a redactor. Grant notes that these are summary statements that make "striking statements about Christian life at Jerusalem", in accord with favorite Lucan themes.¹⁸ While Peter's statement in Acts 3 that he has neither silver nor gold is consistent with taking these summaries at face value, the condemnation of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11) does not. Here Peter makes clear that the sin they have committed consists not in withholding their property as their own, but in lying about the amount it brought at sale. "While it remained unsold, did it not remain yours?" he asks. (Acts 5:4) Moreover, here is a clear counter-example to the claim, made just six verses earlier, that all possessions were donated for the needy.

Furfey's interpretation, furthermore, overlooks an obvious feature: the Jerusalem Christians are not reported to have shared their goods with society, or with the poor generally, but only with those who were being added to the Church. Some have argued from this that the early Christians understood the demands of Christian charity to apply only to relationships with other Christians, but not relationship with unbelievers.¹⁹ This may go too far, but it underscores the plain point that the benefits of such heroic charity as is reported in the New Testament accrued overwhelmingly, if not exclusively, to those inside the Church.

Surprisingly, for someone who was an advocate of "supernatural sociology", Furfey also completely ignores the dramatic stories of supernatural healings, visions and miracles scattered throughout the accounts of the early Church. These are clearly integral to the life of the church and

further its apostolic mission and charity. If the healing of the lame man in Acts 3 is representative, here is a direct amelioration of a social problem on a personal level that is fully in accord with any other instance of personalist action that may be found in the book. The fact that Peter offers the healing as alms, and precedes it by saying, "Silver and gold I have none", makes the connection with voluntary renunciation of wealth explicit. On this point, it appears that Furfey's supernatural sociology is not supernatural enough.

In any event, it is clear that such heroic renunciation and sharing of goods, if it actually occurred, did not last long in Jerusalem, and did not characterize the activity of early Christians generally. It was only a few weeks at most before inequities in the distribution of goods due to ethnic factions—the Hebrew Christians were shortchanging the Greeks—necessitated the commissioning of deacons to oversee the distribution, so that the Apostles' ministry would not be distracted by the complaints (Acts 6:1ff). This is hardly a picture of heroic renunciation and charity. Furthermore, as Harrison notes, "Apparently the regular distribution referred to in the early days of the church had to be discontinued" fairly soon because "the resources of the local church were unable to cope with the situation."²⁰ Indeed, it was precisely for the Jerusalem Christians, by then in collective penury, that St. Paul took the collection that Furfey points to as additional evidence of heroic charity.

The Corinthian Christians to whom Paul wrote soliciting the collection could hardly be said to be examples of heroic charity. The community was split by factions (I Corinthians 1:11-12); sexual immorality (6:12-13), including incest (5:1), was openly tolerated, even justified; lawsuits between members were a problem (6:1); and the poor were discriminated against even in the sharing of the communion meal (11:17-22). Nor does Paul make heroic charity the basis of his appeal. He nowhere advocates that they should renounce their property; on the contrary, he asks only that each contribute a small amount—"whatever he can afford" (16:2)—each week. While Furfey takes as evidence of personalistic action Paul's catalogue of his own apostolic sacrifice—"We go hungry and thirsty, poorly clad and roughly treated" (4:11-12)—Paul's point is to contrast his experience with that of the Corinthians: "You are already satisfied; you have already grown rich. . . ." (4:8). It is out of their surplus wealth, not voluntary poverty, that Paul appeals to them to supply the needs of the Jerusalem Christians, "not that others should have relief while you are burdened" (2 Corinthians 8:13-14). Clearly, Furfey's description of an ideal community of heroic renunciation and charity does not apply to the Corinthian Church or to the collection he references.

Apart from possibly the primitive Jerusalem assembly, heroic charity (as distinct from merely generous almsgiving) cannot be said to represent the apostolic church more generally. To the contrary, Harrison points out that ascetic practices, particularly celibacy, fasting and the renunciation of wealth, were not practiced in the early church as much as they were in the fourth century.²¹ The best that can be said is that, like the present day, a wide variety of church forms and philanthropies can be found throughout the apostolic era in responses to different social settings.²² Contrary to Furfey's argument, no single form of charity can be taken as exemplary for all churches either then or now.

Persistent Social Problems

Not only does Furfey claim that the early church actually practiced personalist social action; he also claims that it was actually effective in bringing about social change in the church and the wider society. To support these claims, Furfey is led inexorably to defend positions that are manifestly contrary to fact.

For example, Furfey claims that "the familiar principle of the Mystical Body" resulted in a "lack of consciousness of racial differences" which solved the problem of race relations in the apostolic church.²³ Yet reported problems over racial differences abounded, even if we confine ourselves to the historical material of the New Testament. We have already noted how the Greek widows were short-changed by the Hebrew administrators of church welfare funds in Jerusalem (Acts 6:1). This discrimination only involved Jews of different racial mixtures, however. The consensus assumption among the Jerusalem Christians at that point in time was that persons not of the Jewish race ("Gentiles") were not eligible for salvation at all. Far from being an implicit result of charity, this assumption only changed as a result of special visions (Acts 10), confrontations (Galatians 1) and the first church council (Acts 15). And the idea that non-Jews could be saved was not accepted by the early church immediately, uniformly, or in some cases ever. The transformation of Christianity from a Jewish sect to a universal religion, open to all races, is one of the major themes of the book of Acts, carried by the gradual movement of the narrative from Jerusalem to Rome.

In light of these facts, Furfey's claim that the early church was not conscious of racial differences cannot be considered credible. Likewise, his treatment of the place of wealth and the position of women in the early church also founders on the facts. But his most serious misrepresentation of the history of social issues in early Christianity regards the institution of slavery.

Not surprisingly, Furfey asserts that "slavery. . . was inconsistent with the Christian moral ideal as implied by the doctrine of the Mystical Body."²⁴ And, unlike the issues just discussed, he does recognize the problem that the persistence of slavery in the early church presents for his understanding of personalist social action. "Since slaves are proclaimed the equals of free men within the unity of the Mystical Body, we might expect that St. Paul would demand the immediate liberation of all slaves. This, however, was not the case." Furfey explains this difficulty by claiming, in a two-pronged argument, that Paul temporized. Although a) the absence of slavery was part of St. Paul's social ideal, b) it was not part of his "immediate practical program" because of the social disruption that manumission would cause. "To preach the liberation of all slaves at once would have done more harm than good."²⁵ Eventually, however, Paul's teaching led to the liberation of Roman slaves.

To make this argument, however, is to undercut the whole idea of personalist social action. If the apostles refrained from enacting their social principles because it would disrupt social order, they clearly were not practicing nonparticipation. If St. Paul denied a clear implication of the Mystical Body in order to preserve pagan society or avoid a reputation for fomenting disorder, he was, according to Furfey's own theory, engaged in compromise rather than practicing heroic charity and renunciation.

In addition to this serious problem, both prongs of Furfey's argument regarding slavery require factual assertions that are highly problematic. Regarding the first prong (a), there is simply no evidence that St. Paul ever envisioned the general liberation of slaves. His counsel to slaves was to find contentment with their place in society. "Were you a slave when you were called? Do not be concerned but, even if you can gain your freedom, make the most of it." (1Cor 7:20-21 NAB) Furfey claims that "the whole Epistle to Philemon is indeed a beautiful and tactful plea for the liberation of the latter's slave,"²⁶ but this exaggerates from a single oblique hint—"I know you will do even more than I say" (Philemon 21)—and ignores the fact that the occasion of the letter is that Paul is returning Onesimus to his master. Brown is representative of the more balanced scholarly consensus on this point: "[D]espite his implicit encouragement to release Onesimus, Paul

does not tell Philemon explicitly that keeping another human being as a slave factually denies that Christ has changed values." 27 Moreover, Philemon was never understood by the Church to even hint against slavery before the 19th century, so that ". . . through the centuries Paul's failure to condemn slavery was used. . . as proof that the institution was not evil in itself." 28

For the second prong (b), Furfey makes the striking claim that the teaching of Christianity did eventually lead to the actual liberation of all Roman slaves. ". . . as soon as the doctrine [of the Mystical Body] was widely accepted, slavery disappeared automatically in the Roman Empire."29 Furfey provides no basis for this claim, nor could he have, for there is none. The assertion is contrary to all historical evidence, including the unanimous witness of the Christian apologists. Far from disappearing, Cowell estimates that the number of slaves increased throughout the duration of the Roman Empire.30 The Roman practice of enslaving the Goths and Huns was a primary motivation for the Germanic rebellion and invasion of Rome. Slavery did not cease even with the fall of the empire, but persisted in a mitigated but real form in the medieval institution of serfdom. That Furfey was unaware of such historical knowledge may be hard to believe. Lest we may think he misspoke, however, he adds, "Here is an example of personalist social action at its best."31 Elsewhere he insists again that the Roman Empire was concretely converted by Christian love.32

We have seen that in the face of persistent social problems that contradict his claims for the effectiveness of personalist social action, Furfey either ignores the contrary evidence, as with race relations, wealth or women, or is led to make clearly counterfactual claims, as with slavery. For all these issues, Furfey tends to read 20th century social ideals back into the apostolic church—a point I will expand in the conclusion. Despite the inspirational challenge of his ideas, we must conclude that his strategies to address these problems are not very successful, nor are his arguments convincing regarding the effectiveness of early Christian personalist social action.

Scripture and Patristics: Virtue and Social Reform

Thus far there has been a certain unavoidable anachronism in my argument. Many of the deficits in Furfey's use of the Bible noted thus far are not unique to him, but reflect a time when Catholic biblical studies in general were, by contemporary standards, quite simplistic. Besides these weaknesses, however, Furfey's views are confronted by a more fundamental problem in the New Testament, extending into his use of the early Patristic sources. Not only is Furfey in factual error in claiming that personalist social action actually produced social change in the apostolic era, there is not a shred of evidence that any early Christian writer ever thought that they would.

Furfey consistently interprets the abundant exhortations to virtue in the early Christian literature as a plan of social action, undertaken on the conviction that "personal reform will gradually lead to social reform."33 Indeed, for this reason Furfey sees the Holy Scriptures and early Fathers as the pre-eminent sources of Catholic social theory.34 However, while personal reform is dealt with at great length in these sources, not once in all of this literature is the idea of social reform ever discussed.

The idea of social reform is foreign to the thinking of the New Testament. As Harrison points out, in the New Testament Christians are aliens and exiles in the world (I Pet. 2:11), whose citizenship is in heaven (Phil. 3:20), and who have no lasting abode here but seek one to come (Heb. 13.14).35 While to separate completely from society is impractical, personal holiness calls for as much detachment from the corrupt world order as possible, and there is certainly no sense of a positive obligation toward society. Brown, voicing the consensus view of modern exegesis,

attributes this to the early Church's apocalyptic expectations: "[B]elief in the imminent return of Christ allowed toleration of unjust social conditions for the expected short while."³⁶

Even Brown's view overstates the case for social concern in the early Church, however. There is little doubt that the expectation of an immediate Parousia strongly conditioned the thinking of the early Church, but if it served to suppress the development of an incipient apostolic social theory, one would expect such a theory to develop soon after the Church began to adjust to the possibility that Christ's coming was delayed indefinitely, that is, by the mid-second century. Furfey shares with Brown the perception that the development of the Church's impulse for social reform, implicit in the apostolic era, was suppressed by social conditions, although he points to different conditions and a different timeline: "The Church had to wait for the Peace of Constantine [314 a.d.] before it could come out in the open and sponsor social reform."³⁷

Both Furfey's and Brown's views founder, however, on the fact that it was not until at least a thousand years after Constantine that anything like the idea of social reform began to emerge. This is a point upon which there is virtually no historical disagreement. Gordon writes that, but for a couple of possible exceptions, "[T]here would seem to be general scholarly agreement with the judgment of Gerhart Ladner that, ". . . since the Christianization of the Roman Empire not one of the Fathers. . . expects a universal change of economic and social conditions to result from the preaching of Christian morality." ³⁸ "The Fathers", Ladner continues at the same place, "did not expect a general disappearance of social injustice on earth."³⁹

Although the Fathers advocated works of charity that may have had some social benefit, they in no way conceived of this as oriented toward social reform, personalist or otherwise. Gordon notes that "in urging almsgiving. . . the Fathers' chief emphasis is on the spiritual benefits accruing to the individual who undertakes such action. . . . Social reform. . . appears to be either outside their scope of vision or deemed no part of Christ-inspired social action."⁴⁰

The two possible exceptions involve principles in Augustine's *City of God* and Chrysostom's call for Christians to free their slaves. Furfey claims that Augustine teaches an unadulterated theory of personalist social action.⁴¹ Others have found in him the seeds of a more traditional doctrine of social reform.⁴² However, while Augustine's two-kingdom view of the relations of the spiritual and material realms was philosophically important for the later development of the Church's social theory, as Ladner notes, "St. Augustine did not envisage a reform of the socioeconomic order as such."⁴³ Frend concludes his review of the later Fathers, principally Augustine, with the observation, "Reform of society, even as a sign of preparation for the Coming, proved to be beyond the imagination of the time. . . . to think that the Lord had shown that the Kingdom would be established by destroying many of the moulds accepted by society would have seemed altogether fanciful."⁴⁴ Similarly, although Chrysostom did advocate freeing slaves (of which Furfey seems unaware), for him "the freeing of a slave is not an issue of social justice. Rather, it is an act of piety or charity." His concern is to urge wealthy Christians to a less cluttered life, and he is not averse to them retaining one or two slaves. ⁴⁵

Beyond the few oblique references already noted, Furfey did not deal much with the later Patristic tradition. This is consistent with his view that the most powerful advocacy of personalist social action was to be found in the most primitive sources. It remains to examine Furfey's treatment of the modern Catholic social tradition that was emerging in his own day.

The Social Encyclicals

In contrast to his use of the Fathers and Scripture, Furfey's treatment of the social encyclicals is neither cursory nor uninformed. Although he pointedly eschews extended exposition of them,⁴⁶ it is fair to say, as Curran does, that he "constantly appealed to the papal teachings in the encyclicals."⁴⁷ However, he uses the encyclical material selectively, reinterpreting it in accord with his theory of personalist social action, largely ignoring the emphasis on social justice and change that form the focus of the encyclicals themselves. Because these ideas have developed extensively since Furfey's day, to avoid anachronism I will confine my discussion to the social encyclicals that were extant at his time.

Furfey sees himself as correcting an imbalance in the interpretive discourse on the social encyclicals. He repeatedly quotes *Quadragesimo Anno's* (hereafter QA) prescription for the social problem: "Two things are most necessary, the reform of institutions and the correction of morals."⁴⁸ In fact, he points out,⁴⁹ QA says that "the first and most necessary remedy is a reform of morals".⁵⁰ "Unfortunately", Furfey argues, "commentators on the encyclicals have given moral reform far less attention than it deserves. . . .writers have confined themselves to the discussion of organized action in interpreting the *Rerum Novarum* and the *Quadragesimo Anno*. Thus they have told only half the truth." His purpose, he explains, "is to attempt to restore the balance by calling attention to the great emphasis which these encyclicals place on "the correction of morals".⁵¹

To Furfey it is apparent that this correction of morals is nothing other than personalist social action. "Moral reform. . .is a true technique of social action. . .it has been well called "personalist social action".⁵² This is functionally the same personalist social action that he finds characterizing the New Testament: "the social effect of the individual life lived in accordance with Christian social virtues".⁵³ Thus, he concludes, QA advocates that personalist social action is "the first and most necessary remedy" to the social problem.⁵⁴

Furfey's understanding of moral reform, however, is quite different from that of the encyclicals. This difference is not merely adventitious or one of emphasis, but is based on a fundamentally different understanding of the nature of human action in society. This difference is apparent on three levels of interpretation in the encyclicals, from (a) the surface sense of their explicit teaching, to (b) the level of the meaning and interpretation of words, and finally to (c) the level of the theoretical context or assumptions by which the teachings are to be understood.

(a) At the surface level, it is apparent that personalist social action is not emphasized in the social encyclicals to the extent that Furfey suggests they are or should be. Furfey, no doubt, would argue that greater magisterial teaching in this regard would be possible, and would be a benefit to the Church. Yet the deficit is so striking as hardly to need elaboration. The term "personalist social action" or even "personalism" never occurs in the social encyclicals. As is well known, they focus on the rights and duties of social justice, such as private property and defining a just wage, issues seldom if ever addressed by Furfey. To solve the social problem *Rerum Novarum* (hereafter RN) appeals not to superhuman charity but to minimal duties, the failure of which is a crime.⁵⁵ Not only do they lack Furfey's call for renunciation and voluntary poverty, the encyclicals defend the aspirations of workers to acquire wealth, and advocate that the wealthy need only give alms out of the surplus, after providing for themselves.⁵⁶

Furfey interprets the encouragement of Eucharistic participation in the encyclicals as an argument for the effectiveness of personalist action. But the documents call not only for persons to fervently desire the Eucharist, but also for the State to make possible sufficient respite from

labor to be able to celebrate it.⁵⁷ And they nowhere suggest that the former will automatically bring about the latter. There is, in sum, simply no strong advocacy of personalism in the social encyclicals. As far as their explicit teachings are concerned, we must agree with criticisms such as Cronin's: "In all candor, it must be stated that the heavy emphasis upon personalism and nonparticipation, in [Furfey's writing], does not accord with the apportionment of subjects in the social encyclicals. . . ."58

(b) Probing to the level of denotation, it is clear, furthermore, that the "correction of morals" envisioned by the encyclicals is not what Furfey takes it to mean. This term does not refer to the individual reform of moral behavior, as Furfey assumes, but rather the collective reform of moral influences and restraints, what we today might call the reform of public morals. Granted that original sin has inclined both employers and workers to avarice, the moral problem addressed by the papal teachings is not the increased veniality of individuals so much as "social conditions which, whether one wills it or not, make difficult or practically impossible a Christian life."⁵⁹

As QA explains: "Strict and watchful moral restraint enforced vigorously by governmental authority could have banished these enormous evils and even forestalled them; this restraint, however, has too often been sadly lacking. . . . [For] there quickly developed a body of economic teaching far removed from the true moral law, and, as a result, completely free rein was given to human passions."⁶⁰ The consequence of this is that workers are exposed to greater moral hazard: "With the rulers of economic life abandoning the right road, it was easy for the rank and file of workers everywhere to rush headlong also into the same chasm; . . . Truly the mind shudders at the thought of the grave dangers to which the morals of workers (particularly younger workers) and the modesty of girls and women are exposed in modern factories; when we recall how often the present economic scheme, and particularly the shameful housing conditions, create obstacles to the family bond and normal family life; when we remember how many obstacles are put in the way of the proper observance of Sundays and Holy Days; . . .for dead matter comes forth from the factory ennobled, while men there are corrupted and degraded."⁶¹

At one point in his writings Furfey does seem to recognize the nature of this problem. He quotes QA: "It may be said with all truth that nowadays the conditions of social and economic life are such that vast multitudes of men can only with great difficulty pay attention to that one thing necessary, namely their eternal salvation."⁶² However, for these conditions to be corrected, he argues, "the State must yield to the Church" in an ecclesiastical supremacy that exceeds that of the Middle Ages.⁶³ Such a triumphalist vision, needless to say, exceeds anything found in the social encyclicals, and was definitively repudiated by the Second Vatican Council.

By contrast the encyclicals promote strong public authority in line with social virtue for the correction of morals. The restoration of society will come about, not through personal virtue, but by being governed by the principles of "social justice and social charity", which are properties of the social order, not individual persons.⁶⁴ While individuals, families and subordinate associations have their part to play, only the state can govern all the parts of society to ensure the common good.⁶⁵ This is clearly a collective and cultural, not individual, concept of moral reform. While encouraging all to greater virtue, it is specifically the correction of these corrupting conditions to which QA is addressed, and to which it refers when it calls for the "reform of morals".

(c) Beneath these differences in the meaning, finally, are evident fundamentally different assumptions about the relation of the individual to society. To be sure, the papal teachings argue that social good must be founded on virtue,⁶⁶ but this does not mean that it is nothing more than

an effect of virtue. The concern of the encyclicals, in fact, is in the opposite direction: not with the effects of charity on society but with the social conditions that make charity possible and encourage it. Actions by the state and public authority in support of the right ordering of social life, particularly economic life, form essential conditions for virtue, just as virtue forms the necessary motive for such actions.⁶⁷ RN points out that even the heroic charity of wealthy Catholic individuals who share in the lot of the poor is "very easily destroyed by intrusion from without."⁶⁸ Socialism is criticized not only because of its inherent injustice but also because it would promote "mutual envy, detraction and dissension."⁶⁹ Thus, although the encyclicals frequently advocate personal charity, it is, as in Scripture, never conceived as an effective remedy for social ills. QA is explicit on this point: "no vicarious charity can substitute for justice which is due as an obligation and is wrongfully denied."⁷⁰ Far from charity reforming the moral order, the idea here is that the moral order is a precondition for the effective practice of charity.

The fundamental difference, then, between Furfey and the papal teachings is not theological, but sociological. While the encyclicals envision a dynamic mutual interaction of collective structures with individuals, Furfey adopts the view that social change operates in only one direction, i.e., from the individual to the collective. He argues, "institutions are the product of men. If individuals are immoral, their institutions will be immoral also. Good men are the basis of good institutions." It is for this reason that "it is vain to hope for the reform of the social order unless 'the correction of morals' precedes."⁷¹ Furfey never seems to grasp that social structures can also constrain and shape personal choices in ways that are culpable, that "good institutions" are also in part the basis of "good men". In rejecting the possibility of social forces that act on individuals, Furfey steps outside, not only of the Catholic tradition, but of the sociological tradition for understanding human society as well.

In sum, Furfey's disagreement with the papal teachings regarding moral reform is not minor or accidental. The divergence of views does not skim the surface, but "goes all the way down" through deeper levels of meaning in the encyclicals, deriving at root from different sociological conceptions of persons in society.

Conclusion

This review has found that Furfey, while appealing for support to the Catholic intellectual tradition, is fundamentally at variance with that tradition in significant ways. Although he prided himself on his faithfulness to Catholic teaching, in practice he engaged in what McCarragher describes as a "selective appropriation of liberal Protestant intellectual culture."⁷² Most importantly, Furfey's assumption regarding the social effect of the practice of virtue is entirely absent from the ancient tradition and is contradicted by the modern social encyclicals.

This disagreement is consequential, for if personalist action is not actually effective in producing social reform, the whole idea of personalist social reform confronts serious fallacies. If virtue and moral order are not necessarily connected, as the encyclicals imply, then just as it is possible for a corrupt man to live in a good society, it is clearly possible for an individual to reap the undue benefits of an unjust economic system and at the same time engage in heroic almsgiving. Suppose an employer, out of ignorance or due to universal custom, pays his employees too little, as judged by the injunctions of social encyclicals. Suppose further that the same employer then practices heroic renunciation of his wealth in almsgiving. Does the almsgiving ameliorate the injustice of the insufficient wages? As we have seen, QA would answer, no.⁷³ The two are not connected. No matter that the alms of the employer may help others, or even the same workers,

the dignity of the workers not receiving a just wage is denied no less. Thus personalist action, unmatched by a just social order, does not necessarily correct the injustice of even the little part of society under the control of the employer.

Furthermore, since virtue and social justice are not essentially connected, it is conceivable that an unjustly ordered society can promote more personal virtue or that personalist action can further an unjust social order. In the hypothetical scenario above, since the net surplus wealth is greater if it accrues to the employer (assuming his personal overhead is less than that of the workers combined) than if the workers were paid fairly, the total wealth and possible good of the society may even be greater when the workers are oppressed. It has often been argued, moreover, that times of social trauma or oppression stimulate the practice of heroic virtues, renunciation, sacrifice and martyrdom. (Even in terms of the employer's personal redemption, it is a theological error to think of good and evil as commensurable. The good of his personalist action does not "make up" for the injustice to the worker, even if he were culpable for it.)

Charitable almsgiving, in turn, can lessen the collective misery of persons in an unjust order to the extent that movements for collective reform are impeded. This idea is not far-fetched: the perception that the charity of the Church could be interpreted as conferring legitimacy on an unjust social order was one of the presumptions that the 20th century social encyclicals were written to correct. In the absence of social justice, specifically the fair distribution of wealth, charitable almsgiving can have the opposite effect from conferring human dignity. As an Anglican cleric, fully in accord with the thinking of the social encyclicals, eloquently expresses:

The charge against our social system is one of injustice. The banner so familiar in earlier unemployed or socialist processions—'Damn your charity; we want justice'—vividly exposes the situation as it was seen by its critics. If the present order is taken for granted or assumed to be sacrosanct, charity from the more or less fortunate would seem virtuous and commendable; to those for whom the order itself is suspect or worse, such charity is blood-money. Why should some be in the position to dispense and others to need that kind of charity?"⁷⁴

Furfey's sociological disagreement with the Catholic tradition has implications that reverberate throughout his thinking. Since infused personal virtue is his preferred, if not only, source of social improvement, the individual is exhorted toward ideal purity while collective reform is seldom in view. Society tends to be regarded as wholly corrupt and the Church as wholly incorruptible. Although he was probably unaware of this,⁷⁵ this view is more representative of Protestant, particularly Anabaptist, thinking than it is of Catholic theology. In many ways Furfey is like the radical Protestants. His literal application of Scriptural precepts, read as simple Biblicism, is reminiscent of the Anabaptists. The impulse to withdraw from society, to be pure in a natural sense, uncorrupted by culture, so as to "live above" the world, is precisely the impulse of Protestant sectarianism. The personalist actions Furfey espouses—renunciation, non-participation and bearing witness—find their most consistent and characteristic expression among Mennonites and Amish groups. In H. Richard Niebuhr's well-known typology of the Christian views of the relation of Christ and culture, Furfey's position falls clearly in the category of "Christ against culture", which "affirms the sole loyalty of Christ over the Christian and absolutely rejects culture's claims to loyalty."⁷⁶ This radical stance is characteristic, according to Niebuhr, of Protestant sectarianism "in its narrow, sociological meaning,"⁷⁷ and its purest exemplars are the Anabaptists. Niebuhr critiques this position as inadequate because radical Christians "cannot separate themselves completely from the world of culture around them."⁷⁸ Thus, they tend to confine the ethical demands of the Gospel to the fellowship of Christians,⁷⁹ and have never been effective in reforming society.⁸⁰ Furfey, as we have seen, is susceptible to all of these criticisms.

His ecclesiology, in short, is functionally that of radical Protestantism rather than the Catholic tradition.

In large measure Furfey's variance from the Catholic tradition undercuts the claims he made, later in life, for metasociology and Catholic sociology. Claiming theological status for his views, Furfey argues that his Catholic sociology, deduced from revealed truth, is superior to secular alternatives based on ordinary empirical knowledge. However, if his assumptions are at variance with the revealed truth of the tradition, his "Catholic sociology" is of no higher authority than secular sociologies. There is, about all this, a general confusion in Furfey's thinking, asserting for theology a normative role in social theory and for sociology a grounding in theology that neither Catholic theology nor Catholic sociology claim for themselves. The result is that, in attempting to establish theology as a metasociology, Furfey only succeeds in establishing sociology as a kind of ur-theology. He produces no viable theory of social action beyond personal morality, albeit an heroic morality, and no program for society beyond privileging the Church.

The idealistic project of Paul Hanly Furfey, to produce a distinctly Catholic sociology, ultimately resulted in disappointment. Whether or not any Catholic sociology must disappoint by virtue of falling short of normative sociology, Furfey's Catholic sociology disappoints by virtue of falling short of normative Catholic thought. As McCarragher concludes, he "missed an American opportunity for a definitively Catholic. . . form of social thought and cultural politics."⁸¹ Furfey himself, later in life, abandoned his ideal in favor of co-operating with social democracy. It is not clear to what extent the inconsistencies in his thought may have led to this disappointment, but, as we have seen, such inconsistencies are present and are not trivial. His selective and idiosyncratic use of the Catholic tradition, scrupulous on matters of normative dogma, ultimately amounts to a rejection of the salient features of that tradition regarding the nature of social justice. Most pertinently, his assumptions regarding the place of persons in society, consciously identified as sociological, ultimately deny altogether the autonomy of social reality over against the individual, which the tradition affirms. In the final analysis, although he aspired to advance Catholic sociology, Furfey espoused a view that was neither sociological nor Catholic.*

Notes

* See Chapter X "Understanding Paul Hanly Furfey".

1 Furfey, "Christian Social Thought in the First and Second Centuries" (*American Catholic Sociological Review* 1940), p. 13. Citations of Furfey's works after the first one will be identified only by year and page number.

2 1940, p. 13. In *Fire on the Earth*, pp. 8-9 and 105-107, he also advocates hagiography as another source of social doctrine.

3 *Fire on the earth*, 1936, p. 103.

4 1936, p. 2.

5 *A history of social thought*, 1949, p. 156.

6 1949, p. 155.

7 1949, p. 140.

8 1949, p. 155.

9 1940, p. 14.

10 1940, p. 15.

11 1949, p. 150.

12 1940, p. 19.

- 13 1940, p. 15.
- 14 1936, pp. 94-97.
- 15 1940, p.20.
- 16 1940, p.20.
- 17 1949, p. 150.
- 18 Robert Grant, *Early Christianity and society*, p. 98.
- 19 Cadoux, *The early church and the world*, p. 90.
- 20 Harrison, *The apostolic church*, p. 181.
- 21 Harrison, *The apostolic church*, p. 98.
- 22 Raymond Brown, *The churches the apostles left behind*.
- 23 1949, p. 19.
- 24 1949, p. 150.
- 25 1949, p. 152.
- 26 1949, p. 151.
- 27 Brown, *Introduction to the New Testament*, p. 507.
- 28 Brown, Introduction, p. 507.
- 29 1940, p. 18.
- 30 F. R. Cowell, *Everyday life in ancient Rome*.
- 31 1942, p. 18.
- 32 1937, p. 227.
- 33 1940, p. 20.
- 34 1942, p. 13; 1936, p. 8.
- 35 *The apostolic church*, p. 92.
- 36 *Introduction*, pp. 509-510.
- 37 1940, p. 20.
- 38 Barry Gordon, "Rich, poor and slave in the socioeconomic thought of the later Fathers", p.
32. He quotes Gerhart Ladner, *The idea of reform*, p. 463.
- 39 Ladner, *The idea of reform*, p. 463.
- 40 Gordon, *Rich, poor and slave*, p. 32.
- 41 1936, p. 10.
- 42 Henry Chadwick, "Providence and the problem of evil in Augustine".
- 43 Ladner, *The idea of reform*, p. 463.
- 44 W.H. Frend, "Early Christianity and society", p. 71; quoted by Gordon, note 28, p. 36.
- 45 Gordon, *Rich, poor and slave*, pp. 31-32.
- 46 Furfey's 468-page *A history of social thought*, intended to be a comprehensive survey of social thought "from the Catholic viewpoint" (p. v.), treats the encyclical *Rerum Novarum* in one page. *Quadragesimo Anno* is dismissed in one paragraph, because "it covers a broad field, too broad to be summarized here" (pp. 401-02).
- 47 Charles Curran, "Paul Hanly Furfey: Theorist of American Catholic Radicalism", p. 674.
- 48 *Quadragesimo Anno* 77. Quoted in "Personalist action in the *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno*", 1941, p. 204; and 1949, p. 400.
- 49 1941, p. 205.
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- 54 1941, p. 205.
 55 *Rerum Novarum* 31, 32.
 56 *Rerum Novarum* 9, 65; . *Quadragesimo Anno* 74.
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 58 John Cronin, *Catholic Social Principles*, 1950, p. 689.
 59 Pius XII, *Solenita della Pentecost*, 1676.
 60 *Quadragesimo Anno* 133.
 61 *Quadragesimo Anno* 135.
 62 *Quadragesimo Anno* 11, quoted in Furfey, 1937, p. 210.
 63 1937, p. 213.
 64 *Quadragesimo Anno* 88.
 65 *Quadragesimo Anno* 80.
 66 *Rerum Novarum* 50.
 67 *Rerum Novarum* 53.
 68 *Rerum Novarum* 75.
 69 *Rerum Novarum* 22.
 70 *Quadragesimo Anno* 137.
 71 1941, p. 204.
 72 Eugene McCarragher, "The church irrelevant: Paul Hanly Furfey and the fortunes of American Catholic radicalism", 1997, p. 165.
 73 *Quadragesimo Anno* 137.
 74 William Temple, *Christianity and the social order*, pp. 22-23.
 75 Curran, p. 674.
 76 H. Richard Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture*, p. 45.
 77 Niebuhr, p. 56.
 78 Niebuhr, p. 73.
 79 Niebuhr, p. 71.
 80 Niebuhr, p. 67.
 81 McCarragher, p. 165.

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Chapter IX

Paul Hanly Furfey: Sociology and Catholic Sociology

Raymond H. Potvin

There is no doubt that Paul Hanly Furfey advocated a Catholic sociology, a sociology informed by the gospels and Catholic doctrine. In fact, he called his approach to the study of society, "supernatural sociology". In 1940, he wrote:

Sociology is the study of human society, of human group life. To learn about his subject, the sociologist naturally wants to use all available means. There are three such means, namely the scientific, philosophical and theological methods. All these can contribute their quota to the understanding of society. To neglect any one is to leave our *sociological knowledge* partial and incomplete.¹

Furfey's views on Catholic sociology, are quite clear. Unfortunately his views on sociology itself are less so. His thought on what he called the "narrow science" changed over the years.

Furfey was introduced to the field by William Joseph Kerby, the first American Catholic sociologist and student of Georg Simmel, who taught in his lectures that sociology is a discipline in its own right. Thus influenced, Kerby distinguished between descriptive or concrete sociology and directive sociology:

Descriptive Sociology involves systematic observation of human association and its forms, classifications of phenomena and the formulation of laws which appear in human association. Directive sociology ... sets up the true ends of human association and describes the manner in which it should be controlled for the realization of these ends.²

It should be noted that for Kerby descriptive sociology was not limited to data collection and presentation but included the formulation of laws of human association. It is not clear how Furfey in his early career accepted Kerby's concern with sociological theory though he clearly became convinced of the need for data collection. His focus, however, was on the individual. As a student of Thomas Verner Moore, he devoted himself to the study of child psychology and did extensive case studies using psychological testing, including some which he developed himself, such as measures of Developmental Age and Maturity Quotient. In his own words he wanted "to understand society at its simplest".³ His first published book in 1926, *The Gang Age*, is an example of his approach at the time.

This interest led him to study the effect of physical changes, such as puberty, on behavior. He spent the academic year 1931-1932 in Germany to immerse himself in medical studies but he soon became disillusioned and realized that social problems were too complex to be solved scientifically.⁴ Upon his return, he visited Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin at the "Catholic Worker" in New York and became convinced that "to cure the ills of society one must simply take the Gospels seriously [and that] society will be cured by curing the minds and hearts of citizens".⁵ Here we find the roots of his Catholic sociology, a program of social reform based on individual reform according to the Gospels. His *Fire on the Earth*, published in 1936, is one

expression of that theme. By 1938, the year of the founding of the Catholic Sociological Society, Furfey had become "the most sophisticated proponent of a distinctly Catholic sociology".⁶ The debate over this issue in the *American Catholic Sociological Review* led him to refine his ideas and eventually, in 1953, he published his *Scope and Method of Sociology*. In this work we find some evolution in his thought. Here he seems clearly to recognize the value of a scientific sociology qua sociology devoid of theological postulates.

In 1952, Furfey had acknowledged the need to reform social institutions as such but he had insisted that "Institutions, after all, are built by individuals and reflect the spirit of the latter."⁷ In this context, no recognition was made of the emergent properties of social interaction. In 1953, however, after reviewing a sample of 83 definitions of sociology and examining the material and formal object of these definitions, he formulated the following: "Sociology is the science which seeks the broadest possible generalizations applicable to *society in its structural and functional aspects*."⁸ Here Furfey appears to recognize the emergent properties of social reality. It should be added that this recognition does not indicate that he has changed his position regarding Catholic sociology. In this same work, he forcefully insists that while a sociology free of supra-empirical postulates is possible, it is not very useful. Whether sociology is to exclude supra-empirical postulates or not is a decision based on metasociological judgments.⁹ Over the years, Furfey made his own preference quite clear.

While recognizing that empirical sociology was certainly possible and that with time sociologists might be able to build some of its propositions into a logical theoretical system, he personally remained skeptical that this goal could ever be reached.¹⁰ Just as his enthusiasm for medical science explaining certain aspects of human behavior had led to disillusionment, so also, over time, did his interest in any theoretical system of empirical sociology. Late in life, not only did he voice his negative view of sociological theory as such in private conversations, but, at age 82 he evaluated the field in an interview with a reporter of the *National Catholic Reporter* who questioned him about sociology:

Reporter: You are a social scientist, aren't you?

Furfey: Well, I think I might call myself a behavioral scientist, but don't call me a sociologist, do not you dare.

Reporter: You reject sociology...

Furfey: ...it isn't scientific. You see, sociology is supposed to be an exact science, but it isn't. For one thing you can't, repeat can't, make generalizations about society.

Reporter: Where do you look for progress, for giants, for support?

Furfey: Liberation theology....¹¹

Here we meet the Furfey of *Love and The Urban Ghetto* (1978), the culmination point of his long and dedicated career. By this time in his life, Furfey had reduced sociology to the collection of data at the service of ethics and theology. In fact he later dismissed William Kerby, who had been his admired mentor and colleague and whom he succeeded as department head at Catholic University "as one who didn't do much sociology".¹² The fact of the matter is that Kerby was quite versed in sociological theory, but did little if any research data collection; hence Furfey's negative evaluation.

Not all Catholic sociologists agreed then or agree now with Furfey's position regarding a Catholic sociology, not even some of his Catholic University faculty colleagues of the time. For example, Bernard Mulvaney, who taught sociological theory during Furfey's chairmanship of the

department, insisted that "The sociologist, then, enjoys a certain autonomy in reaching his conclusions, for the validity of his findings cannot be tested from the normative point of view." 13 Mulvaney was a Viatorian priest and most likely had been influenced by the Viatorian sociologist, J.W.R. Maguire, who did not believe "that there is a Catholic sociology any more than there is a Catholic algebra." 14 An elegant formulation of the rationale for an autonomous sociology was advanced by C. Joseph Nuesse, the former dean of the School of Social Sciences and later Provost of Catholic University. Influenced by Franz H. Mueller, who based his own definition of the field on Gustav Gundlach, Nuesse in his "Catholic Sociology: Memoir of a Mid-Century Controversy", distinguished between thought and action and between proximate and ultimate causes of reality. 15 An autonomous sociology must first establish "a base in knowledge of society" with "the study of the proximate causes" of social interaction if one is to engage in social reform or the study of ultimate causes. In his words: "A developing science of sociology could thus seem to be indispensable for the full development of the philosophical and theological principles that had been derived from Catholic social thinking through many centuries and for intelligent action guided by these principles." 16

It is true that the debate over whether sociology is a narrow or broad discipline is a matter of definition. But it is also a fact that definitions are not by themselves true or false. They are useful or not. Furfey believed that an autonomous sociology is not very useful. Nuesse insisted not only that it is useful but in effect it is indispensable for what Furfey was attempting to accomplish. An effective Catholic social policy requires knowledge acquired from scientific social science, including sociology.

It must be stressed from the outset that advocating a scientific, empirical sociology does not imply the rejection of all non-empirical postulates. In fact, Jeffrey Alexander points out that even some positivists recognize the "implications of the Kuhnian revolution and argue that non-empirical and philosophical commitments inform and often decisively influence natural scientific practice." 17

Sociology as science not only must have an interpretative epistemology but its hermeneutic leads to a scientific activity which need not be reduced to positivism or neo-positivism since it deals with much data wherein mental states are an integral part. 18 In effect, sociologists of any persuasion must make presuppositions about the reality they are studying. Categories and concepts based on some theory or other have to be formulated to organize the data observed. Only thus can scientific thought and propositions be formulated. Such postulates are supra-empirical and are inevitable. But these are not the supra-empirical postulates that underlie the "autonomous sociology" versus "Catholic Sociology" debate. These are postulates that underlie any knowledge acquired through the use of reason. The debate centers more specifically on the legitimacy of supra-empirical postulates based on faith or idealism whether religious or secular.

Is the decision for the sociologist regarding this issue simply a question of value judgment? Not necessarily. It may simply be the result of a rational calculus of choosing effective means to acquire specific types of knowledge. Given sociology's lack of theoretical integration into an accepted system, Nuesse seems "to allow for the possibility suggested by Furfey that in some future period sociology may be advanced by the introduction of supra-empirical postulates" based on ideological grounds. 19 He cites the establishment of the Gulkenian Commission on the Restructuring of the Social Sciences in 1993 as an example of sociology being defined as a "policy science". 20 It is true that increasingly ideological movements are developing sociologies to suit their policy interests, such as the Marxists and the feminists among others.

Again, we are dealing with an issue of definition and again the criterion for opting for a plethora of sociologies such as Marxist Sociology, Feminist Sociology or Catholic Sociology, to name but a few, is whether they are useful or not. Rational discourse would seem to indicate that they are not on two counts. The use of ideological supra-empirical postulates in the formulation of sociological theory or of research hypotheses can bias the collection of data which, in turn, can bias the propositions generated. Secondly, the policies resulting from such findings can undermine the goals suggested by the ideological supra-empirical postulates themselves by generating false solutions for achieving such goals.

Reason would seem to dictate that the findings of an autonomous sociology once formulated and then applied to the goals of social policy or social reform would avoid these problems. There are enough issues to be resolved by the epistemological postulates that have to be accepted, given the human condition, before any kind of knowledge can be acquired. To increase the problems generated by accepting postulates that are not required can only confound the difficulties of rational discourse in the field of sociology and its impact upon policy.

In opposition to the argument that sociology should not include normative value judgments, some sociologists, including Furfey,²¹ insist that categories and/or concepts by themselves, often embody normative value judgments. Such a critique fails to recognize Ernest Nagel's distinction between "characterizing" and "appraising" value judgments.²² It is quite possible to employ concepts in an hypothesis or proposition, murder for example, without appraising its referent as good or bad even if the society defines it so. That appraisal belongs to social ethics, social policy or social reform which does include such value judgments. It is true, as Russell Keat's notes, that the use of value laden characterizing concepts could imply an appraising judgement on the part of the sociologist but it need not be so if the sociologist makes it clear that it does not. In fact "the requirement that social theories can be assessed by value-independent criteria of validity does not entail the absence of normative concepts in the presentation of such theories."²³

Another objection frequently advanced against the separation of sociology and social policy is that a value-free sociology becomes logically irrelevant for policy if it does not entail normative judgments. This is not necessarily so. Any normative theory or policy which is concerned with the negative or positive consequences of observable and particular social behavior or social institutions, in effect is making scientific claims which can be validated or not by an empirical sociology. In fact, sociology's usefulness for social policy or social reform is based primarily upon its autonomy as a normative value-free enterprise.

The yoking of sociological theory and agency in one overall system of critical sociology, of any stripe whether Marxist or Catholic is detrimental to both, research and reform. When one attempts to be both observer and agent, at the same time and place of the same action, one or both activities will suffer. In the words of Russell Keat:

It is certainly possible to produce theoretical knowledge which is helpful for human agents, but to do this is something different from being actually involved in the process of deliberation and action. One can construct theories about something, or one can be engaged in deciding to do it; but one cannot, as it were, theorize in the mode of agency. Critical social theorists have to decide which it is that, at any particular point in their lives, they are to do; but they cannot have it both ways at once.²⁴

Over time I believe Furfey came to realize this and made his choice quite clear in his interview cited above with *The National Catholic Reporter* when he retorted: "don't call me a sociologist, don't you dare!" At this stage of his life he looked to "liberation theology" for social reform! Whether his thought would have evolved eventually toward a third option suggested by Keat's phrase, "that they can't have it both ways at once", the key words being "at once" and the option being at times a committed empirical sociologist and at other times a committed Catholic social reformer is doubtful given his late disillusionment with sociology. But, in 1953, in his *Scope and Method of Sociology*, he clearly recognized that possibility and pointed the way for those of us who accept that third option when he wrote: "experience shows that knowledge about society is necessary for efficient social planning and reform and that sociology furnishes this; the science serves as a means to this end; that is, it possesses a useful value."²⁵

Notes

1 Paul Hanly Furfey, "Why a Supernatural Sociology?" *American Catholic Sociological Review*, 1 (1940), 167 (Underlining mine).

2 William Joseph Kerby, "The Teaching of Sociology in Catholic Women's Colleges", *Catholic Education Association Proceedings*, 17 (1920), 153.

3 Paul Hanly Furfey, "An Autobiography", Unpublished document prepared by Paul Hanly Furfey for Raymond Potvin's introduction of Furfey at the Association for the Sociology of Religion banquet held to honor him at the Dupont Plaza Hotel, Washington, D.C., August 25, 1985.

4 *Ibid.*

5 *Ibid.*

6 C. Joseph Nuesse, "Catholic Sociology: Memoir of a Mid-Century Controversy", *U.S. Catholic Historian*, 16 No. 3 (Summer 1998), 101.

7 Paul Hanly Furfey, *A History of Social Thought* (New York: Macmillan, 1952), p. 402.

8 P.H. Furfey, *The Scope and Method of Sociology* (New York: Cooper Square, 1965), p. 139. Originally published by Harper and Brothers, 1953. (Italics mine)

9 *Ibid.*, pp. 497-498

10 *Ibid.*, p. 499.

11 "In 56 Years He's Never Lost His Sense of Outrage", *The National Catholic Reporter*, Feb. 9, 1979, p. 11.

12 C. Joseph Nuesse, "William Joseph Kerby(1870-1936):The Approach to His Field of the First American Catholic Sociologist," *American Catholic Studies*. 111 (Spring-Winter), 2000, 79.

13 Bernard G. Mulvaney, "The Place of Empirical Sociology," -, 3 (1942), 225-230.

14 Quoted by Paul Mundy, "Sociology and American Catholics" in Joseph S. Roucek (ed.), *Contemporary Sociology* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1958), 308.

15 Nuesse, "Catholic Sociology", *op.cit.*, pp. 105-106.

16 *Ibid.*, p. 106

17 Jeffrey Alexander, "The New Theoretical Movement" in Neil Smelser, ed., *Handbook of Sociology* (Newbury Park: Sage Publications, 1988) p. 78.

18 *ibid.*

19 Nuesse, "Catholic Sociology", *op.cit.*, p. 109.

20 *Ibid.*, pp. 109-110.

21 Furfey, *Scope & Method*, *op.cit.*, p. 498.

22 Ernst Nagel, *The Structure of Science* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, Oxford, 1976), pp. 491-94.

23 Russell Keat, *The Politics of Social Theory* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1981), pp. 40-41.

24 *Ibid.*, p. 207.

25 Furfey, *Scope and Method, op. cit.*, p.93

Chapter X Furfey Remembrances

Raymond H. Potvin

I first met Furfey in 1954. He had just published his *Scope and Method of Sociology* which had received wide acclaim in the sociological world beyond the circle of Catholic scholars. Needless to say, I was duly impressed. We were in his office and, when he interrupted our conversation to take a long telephone call I perused the subject matter of the thousands of books that lined the walls, from floor to ceiling and all classified by subject. My wonderment increased by the minute. Books on medicine, on biology, on psychology, on the social sciences including sociology, on literature, on art, on mathematics, on philosophy, theology and spirituality. And then there were the dictionaries! Believe it or not, besides the traditional languages of French and German required at the time for a Ph.D., he had dictionaries in Hebrew, Arabic, Ge'ez, Amharic, and even in Chinese. Incredulous, I asked him when he had hung up the phone: "Do you really know all these languages?" His answer was simply: "When I wrote the *History of Social Thought* I had to make sure that I was translating the original text correctly." He then laughed and added: In spite of practicing my Chinese with some of my Chinese students of the past I am afraid that my pronunciation is not very good. It was then that I realized that Furfey was as close to a genuine genius as I would ever meet.

As such I was not surprised to learn that he was often unpredictable. He could be meek and gentle, especially with the young and the needy. Mrs. C. Joseph Nuesse, as a young girl, was a member of St. Martin's parish in Washington, and she remembered Furfey well when, early in his career, he ministered as an assistant pastor in her parish. She said he frequently joined the school children at play and treated them with much tenderness and care. But he was not always so. He could be forceful and feisty as well when he felt aggrieved. One day he charged in Dr. Nuesse's office, at the time Dean of the School of Social Sciences, pounded the desk and informed him in a loud voice and in no uncertain terms that he was the Head of the Department of Sociology and would brook no interference from any dean. Dr. Nuesse has never forgotten that outburst.

As Head, with a capital H, of the Department of Sociology for 32 years he ran his faculty meetings with an iron hand. Always polite, he rarely argued, permitted his colleagues to voice their opinion, but he managed to do what he wanted done. For example, at comprehensive exam time he insisted on passing any student who had passed required courses whether or not he or she did well on the comprehensives. At the time the whole faculty read and voted on the exam. The average was then calculated and 70 was the passing score. Furfey always voted last and Mary Elizabeth Walsh, his close associate and co-founder with him of Fides House and Il Poverello House, always voted next to last. I remember well one such session. After discussion of one student's papers, four of the faculty including myself voted 60. Professor Walsh voted 80 and after a brief moment or two Furfey voted 100 and gleefully announced the average score of 70 and recorded a pass on the record. Needless to say, the students loved him!

Furfey and I did not interact much except in what concerned the department. In those days I was a night person; he was a day person, if one can call his life style such. He generally would go to bed about six or seven in the evening and get up about two in the morning. When Catholic University acquired one of the early computers — an IBM 1630, I believe, located in the basement of McMahan Hall, we both logged many an hour on that machine, but we never competed for time. Most evenings, after most users had gone home, I would log in from nine pm to two am or so and,

as I headed back to bed, I would meet Furfey coming from Curley Hall. He would work on the computer till six or so in the morning when he would leave to celebrate his seven a.m. mass in the crypt of the Shrine. At such times, when we met at two in the morning, he would engage me in lively, exuberant conversation. I was nearly asleep; he must have thought I was a dunderhead to say the least.

My lack of response to these early morning conversations was not held against me. When my father died he took a long train ride from Washington to Massachusetts to attend his funeral. And once he even invited me to dinner. Furfey was a gourmet and a lover of fine wines. He did not indulge in this secret passion often, but once a year he recharged his batteries, as he put it, by vacationing in Paris and sampling the delights of classic French cooking and chateau wines. Upon hearing in one of our early morning conversations that I also enjoyed French cooking but could not afford the prices, he invited me to an early dinner at the best French restaurant in Washington. He ordered for both of us. Price was no consideration. I will never forget that experience nor the superb Montrachet that accompanied the meal. It was a meal fit for the gods!

In spite of his occasional indulgence in fine food, he lived frugally. He preached the benefits of voluntary poverty and was firmly consistent in his love and tenderness for the poor. Influenced by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin he was convinced that to cure the evils of society one simply had to take the gospels seriously. However, he disagreed strongly with the Catholic Worker theory that the way to reform society was to abandon the cities. He believed in helping the poor where and how he found them by changing their living conditions and the causes of their poverty.

In fact, Furfey fought for the rights of all minorities. He was a founding member of NOW, the National Organization for Women and of the International Committee of Conscience on Vietnam. Furfey was a pacifist and conscientious objector. He preached forcefully on the evils of war. Many of his students followed his lead and went to jail rather than violate their conscience. He called those who fostered or even supported the war, the respectable murderers, which eventually became the title of one of his books. He meant every word, Respectable Murderers! Little wonder that the *National Catholic Reporter* once said of him "In 56 years he never lost his sense of outrage". At this time he was beyond the age for being drafted and was not subject to possible imprisonment, but certainly he was focused on these issues close to his heart.

From the Baroness de Hueck, the founder of Friendship House in Harlem, he acquired his zeal against the evil of racism. At a time when blacks were considered second rate inhabitants of Washington and interracial marriages were illegal, Furfey broke the law and performed interracial marriages openly. He defied the authorities to jail him. The Father, as he was known in the black ghettos of Washington, was a holy terror when he felt Caesar was overstepping his bounds. In many ways he was as outrageous as the *National Catholic Reporter* had labeled him.

This comment on race relations reminds me that, at age 88, Furfey was forced to give up his large office and move to a smaller local where he had no room for all of his books. He invited me to browse in his library and to squirrel away a few for my own use. An especially prized collection on race relations and poverty, however, he did not permit me to take. "I need these for my next book", he said. This from a man, aged 88, who had already published 17 books and 271 articles over 57 years!

Since Cardinal McCarrick is here, I must not forget that Furfey had the gift of prophecy. When the then Father McCarrick had finished writing his Ph.D. dissertation, Furfey passed it on to me to read. I did and returned it to him with the comment that this McCarrick was very intelligent and certainly could do a little more work on it to enhance its value. Furfey replied: "Oh, no! This young priest has more important things to do than spend time on this dissertation. You see, he is destined

to go far in the Church. Let us not waste his time!" Furfey was right. Today that student is now our Cardinal Archbishop and Chancellor of this University. If Furfey could speak now he would tell me. " I told you so"!

Paul Hanly Furfey left his imprint on this city, on this university, on this department of sociology and on me. Though we disagreed on some issues I have been blessed just knowing him.

Chapter XI
**The Papers of Msgr. Paul Hanly Furfey at the American Catholic
History Research Center and University Archives of the Catholic
University of America**

William John Shepherd

Monsignor Paul Hanly Furfey, was born 1896 in Cambridge, Massachusetts and had a long connection to The Catholic University of America (CUA) in Washington, DC. This began with his Knights of Columbus Fellowship, 1917-1918, when he specialized in Psychology, while simultaneously earning an MA from St. Mary's University in Baltimore. After ordination, he returned to CUA from 1922 to 1926, working on a doctorate, with a major in Sociology and a minor in Psychology and Biology. His dissertation, *The Gang Age (1926)*, was a study of pre-adolescent boys.

He joined the CUA faculty, as an Instructor in 1925, became an Assistant Professor in 1931, and a full Professor in 1940. He was Acting Head of the Sociology Department from 1934 to 1940 and Head from 1940 to 1963. He also served as Co-Director of the Department's Bureau of Social Research (BSR) and CUA's Center for Research on Child Development. He and Dr. Mary Elizabeth Walsh, a lifelong colleague and friend, who was also a CUA faculty member, founded Fides House (1940) for the poor and homeless in Washington, DC. Msgr. Furfey retired from CUA in 1966, becoming Professor Emeritus, though he continued work at the BSR until 1972. He received the papal medal *Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice* in 1958 in recognition of his teaching, research, and writing. He died 8 June 1992 in Washington, DC, having spent his final years near CUA at Carroll Manor, a nursing home for priests.

In September of 1983, CUA Archivist, Anthony Zito, contacted Msgr. Furfey regarding the disposition of a group of his papers recently received in the Archives. Said records included correspondence, financial records, and printed material that had been stored in the Semitics Department in Mullen Library. A year later, in September of 1984, Msgr. Furfey and Dr. Mary E. Walsh, whose papers were also included, signed a Deed of Gift form, witnessed by Dr. Zito and CUA Library Director Eric L. Ormsby, transferring their papers. A second deposit, containing mostly correspondence, was received on October 16, 1984 from Msgr. Furfey's office St. Bonaventure Hall. The third deposit, with material similar to that received already, came on April 13, 1987 from the CUA Administration Building. The fourth deposit, consisting of mostly photocopied correspondence and Furfey interview transcripts, was received on July 8, 1988 from Brother Bruce Leshner who had collected this material as research for his 1990 Ph.D. dissertation from the Graduate Theological Union of Berkeley, California, titled "The Spiritual Life and Social Action in American Catholic Spirituality: William J. Kerby and Paul Hanly Furfey." The fifth deposit, received on June 5, 1991 from St. Bonaventure Hall consisted mostly of printed material, scrapbooks, and photographs. The sixth deposit was a small one consisting of some miscellaneous printed material received July 22, 1991 from former student Edna O'Hearn. The seventh and last deposit followed his June 8, 1992 death and was received June 25, 1992 from Carroll Manor, his last residence. This material included correspondence, memorabilia, genealogy, and financial records. Final deposition arrangements were conducted by Dr. Zito and Msgr. Furfey's lawyer, Michael Curtin, along with nieces Elizabeth Floyd and Molly Hess.

This voluminous collection contains a mass of correspondence, both professional and personal, as well as reference and research material, calendars and address books, student notes and papers, photographs, multi-media material, memorabilia, financial records, and printed material. Due to his lifelong professional and personal collaboration with Mary Elizabeth Walsh, their records were largely intertwined and difficult to separate. In many cases the material deposited in the archives was loose and unorganized, often without folders. The decision was made to treat Furfey and Walsh material as two parts of a joint collection, dividing wherever possible. The result was a collection of parallel organization with much cross-referencing. When there was a doubt as to authorship, material was placed in the Furfey section. This consists of ten series numbering some 135 record center boxes and including Correspondence, Administration Files, Reference Material, Photographs, Calendars and Address Books, Photographs, Postcards, Maps, Financial Records, and Publications. The Walsh section reflects a similar format, but with only seven series and some 37 record center boxes.

The first series has correspondence, both personal, 1920-1992, boxes 1-4, and professional, 1925-1992, boxes 4-14. The latter, has a folder index, which especially reflects interaction with peers and students in broad social and intellectual activities, as well as, personal advancement and achievement. Correspondents include controversial theologian Charles E. Curran, Catholic spiritual writer Catherine de Hueck Doherty, noted church historian John Tracy Ellis, labor priest Francis Haas, Catholic interracial advocate John La Farge, eminent liturgist Dom Virgil Michel, social work educator Dorothy Abts Mohler, peace activist Gordon Zahn, and playwright June Vanleer Williams.

The second Furfey series, part one, boxes 15-22, contains a variety of material regarding the administration of the Sociology Department, 1928-1980, though focused on his tenure as department head, 1934-1963. Part two, boxes 23-89, consists of the Bureau of Social Research (BSR), which was created by Furfey and Thomas J. Harte as a facility for contract and grant research. The directors avoided structure and a statement of specific goals as the BSR was an ongoing experiment that they believed had an important academic role in the training of students by providing them with dissertation topics and sociological data. A major portion of this is a mass of reference material, 1916-1992, mostly printed and filed according to an alphabetical code. There are also studies, workshops, and grant project files, including the St. Martin's School for Boys, 1925-1930; the Baltimore Deaf Community Research Project (BCDRP), 1962-1973; Juvenile Delinquency Evaluation Project (JDEP), 1959-1960; and the Infant Education Research Project (IERP), 1967-1973. Because of sensitive case file information, files for both St. Martin's and the IERP are restricted. Finally, there are field work records related to such local settlement houses as Il Povrello House and Fides House. Material, especially the correspondence and photographs, regarding Fides is of particular interest and was the basis of a 1999 *Washington History* article by Jenell Williams Paris.

The third Furfey series, boxes 90-91, has personal calendars detailing his weekly or daily schedule and address books, 1932-1981.

The fourth Furfey series, boxes 92-94, are his education records with student class notes as well as composition and text books, ca. 1905-1931, and diplomas and honorary degrees, 1909-1968.

The fifth Furfey series, boxes 95-98, has a variety of photographs. There are, among other things, personal portraits of Msgr. Furfey ranging from childhood to old age, pictures of family and close friends, colleagues at the CUA Bureau of Social Research, students at St. Martin's School for Boys, and persons and events at Fides House.

The sixth Furfey series, boxes 98-99, has phonograph records, including some clearly recreational and others educational, and two audio tapes, one from about 1960 and the other from 1992, neither of which with any indication as to subject.

The seventh Furfey series, boxes 100-101, has genealogy, artifacts, and memorabilia, 1803(1896-1980) 1980.

The eighth Furfey series, boxes 102-104 and map case, has miscellaneous postcards, devotional, travel and map collections, ca. 1920-1980.

The ninth Furfey series, boxes 105-116, has personal financial records, 1887(1920-1992)1992, regarding income tax, investment, medical, auto, housing, legal, and miscellaneous.

The tenth Furfey series, boxes 117-135, has publications and publicity material containing material used for Furfey's voluminous writing of books, articles, reviews, and speeches, along with the resulting publicity, i.e. commentary and press coverage. Included are unpublished galleys and notes, as well as editorial correspondence preserved in addition to the final published versions. There is also a section on Furfey as contributing editor, 1935-1945, without any editorial correspondence, but including copies of the pertinent magazines, such as *Preservation of the Faith* and *Liturgy and Sociology*,

The Walsh material contains the following seven series: Correspondence (1930-1980), boxes 136-140; CUA Sociology Department/Bureau of Social Research (1930-1972), boxes 140-163; Calendars and Address Books (ca. 1945-1980), boxes 163-164; Education Records (1931-1937), box 165; Memorabilia (ca. 1940-1980), Financial Records (1932-1985), boxes 168-171; and Publications and Publicity Material (1931-1980), box 172.

The Furfey papers, some 215 feet in 172 boxes, are generally accessible to researchers though a folder index for the entire collection is not yet available. To examine the papers, please contact one of the staff listed below to make an appointment.

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