

An essay on relational analysis of relational sociology

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Abstract: In recent years, examining social problems such as health, education, environment, poverty, migration, disaster, all kinds of discrimination and inequalities in a relational and intersectional manner has become increasingly preferred. Especially sociologists find the essentialist approach of classical mainstream sociology based on dualities such as traditional-modern, structure and individual inadequate for themselves. In the age of uncertainties and complexities, old views that assumed a human-centered, deterministic and linear imposed by classical or traditional sociological theories have begun to be criticized. In this context, there has been a need to renew the definition of social in a way that includes not only humans but also the beings in our natural environment such as plants, animals and soil. Since it is not appropriate and possible to call this perspective, which finds all dualities such as human-nonhuman, structure-individual, traditional-modern, time-space, macro-micro artificial and prefers process-based analyses, as a new paradigm due to its nature, it is preferred to call it a way of doing sociology. In this original research paper, first the historical development of relational sociology in the world and its differences from classical sociology are revealed. Then, relational sociological studies conducted in Turkey are examined. In fact, within the framework of the article, some predictions are tried to be made about the future of relational sociology based on its current situation. The originality of the article stems from the effort to conduct this systematic review in accordance with relational sociological principles.

Keywords: *Mainstream sociology, Relational sociology, Systematic review, Turkey.*

1. Introduction

It is possible to talk about some “break down points” or “turning points” in the emergence of sociology as a science and the transformations it has experienced later. Especially in the process towards relational sociology, the first turning point was the criticism of structural functionalism, which we can call Anglo-Saxon sociology, which was strengthened by the USA after World War II, first in Europe and then by many non-Western sociologies, as inadequate in the 1960s. The second important turning point was the strengthening of studies on uncertainty and complexity in natural sciences and the fact that social theory could not remain indifferent to this. Thus, the conservative structural-functionalist studies of Parsons [1] are now starting to fall out of favor, although they are still being continued with some neo-functionalist efforts by the German Luhmann [2] and the American Alexander [3]. On the other hand, in all these radical change efforts, sometimes, paradoxically, uncertainties are witnessed in the form of some ups and downs. For example, the Italian Pierpaolo Donati [4] who conducted one of the first studies in the field of relational sociology and wrote the book Introduction to Relational Sociology, builds his discourse entirely on Parsons [1] system theory, which became famous as Adaptation, Goal attainment, Integration. and Latency (AGIL). At first glance, he also seems to be a neo-functionalist.

All these written and discussed issues actually increase the ambiguity of whether relational sociology is a brand new approach, theory or paradigm. In our opinion, it would not be wrong to say

that the fact that relational sociology, which rejects essentialism, has such an appearance is not a contradiction but rather stems from its ontology. Because being a definite, rigid and completed approach is quite contrary to the nature of relational sociology. In this context, it cannot be said that there is a consensus on what relational sociology is today. For example, unlike those who see relational sociology as a 'project' and 'language of struggle' Emirbayer [5] 'paradigm' Donati [4] 'theory' or 'approach', Fuhse [6] sees relational sociology as a scientific 'field' inspired by Bourdieu. According to him, a field includes formal communication actions that enable members to connect with each other and important basic publications as well as some presentations and informal conversations. In fact, what distinguishes a scientific field, a set of views or a group of writers and thinkers from others is the difference in the way of thinking, the style [7]. In other words, there are boundaries that separate scientific fields from each other and show their differences. It should not be forgotten that these boundaries are formed over time and that there is competition between the fields [8].

As Dépelteau [9]; Depelteau [10]; Depelteau [11]; Depelteau [12]; Depelteau [13] also points out, although the relational approach is not a theory on which a consensus is reached, it emerges from the discussions of sociologists from various sociological schools [5, 6, 14–16] on the distinction between structure and individual. In other words, the question of "can the individual act independently of the structure or is he completely guided by the structure?" lies at the heart of the discussions. In fact, as Emirbayer [5] influenced by Elias [17]; Elias [18]; Elias [19]), emphasized, it is more appropriate to see the social world in a process rather than a completed essence or substance. This is a matter of social ontology and is quite different from philosophical assumptions. On the other hand, the rejection of dichotomies such as social structure-agent, natural-social, body-mind, behavior-action, etc. is also at the basis of the relational view. Most relational sociologists argue that social facts emerge in the process of the flow of relational actions in society. According to them, people also become social actors in this process. In summary, the rejection of essentialism and relationality, that is, not being in a fixed position within networks and fluidity are the basic features.

Although they have different ontological and epistemological views, the common aspect of relational sociologists is that they accept that society consists of social relations or networks of relations between actors [9, 20–32]. Because the relations between people are the basis of the relational view. From this point on, the main questions are "what is a relationship, what does it look like and how is it studied?" In this context, there are some assumptions on a central basis for those who will conduct relational sociological studies and they are as follows [15, 16, 24]:

a) Social action can only be understood when it is between individuals or interdependent. For example, relationships between children's peer groups, a workplace or employees in any organization should be examined. For example, relationships between students and teachers as well as civil servants and superiors are important. Because, as stated, social relationships in interaction actually emerge as power. In other words, relationships also show the capacity of the parties to influence each other, that is, power relations.

b) Communication is of vital importance in social relations. Communication, as a process, has the power to determine, reproduce and even change social relations, which are a social construction [16]. Social relationship networks begin and continue with communication. Communication is actually micro-events that occur between individuals and are woven with meanings. In this communication process, social networks of expectations are constantly approved or reviewed. For example, 'communicative actions' such as shaking hands, greeting, talking, as Habermas [33] puts it, are always loaded with meanings such as acceptance or rejection of the relationship (cited in Fuhse [16]).

c) Social relations are not the same and unchangeable everywhere. On the contrary, they differ according to the environments. In other words, social space has the power to cause differences in the examination of social relations [4]. For example, it should be accepted that social relations will differ at home, at school or at work. Therefore, social changes should be examined not only in time but also in space [34].

1.1. Information on the Problem, Purpose and Method of the Research

The main problem of this research article can be formulated as the fact that relational sociology is not widely known as a new field. In this context, the questions sought to be answered as sub-problems are as follows:

- a) How has the historical development of relational sociology been?
- b) What are the different relational sociologies?
- c) What can be said about relational sociology in Turkey?
- d) What are the predictions about the future of relational sociology?

When writing the method of this article, it was felt necessary to use a different terminology than classical articles. Because in the classical method sections of sociological articles, some information is generally provided about whether the research data is based on an empirical study collected from the field or whether it is desk research in the library. In particular, the examination of previous studies is not given importance as it is called ordinary literature review.

However, all history, law, economics, political science and theology research are based on the meticulous re-reading and evaluation of previous studies. Here, under the influence of positivist epistemology in sociology, the tradition of testing the conformity of data collected from the field with the theory in a deductive manner similar to natural sciences, has begun to be found inadequate and even inappropriate. However, it is time for new discussions to be made based on existing knowledge to be accepted as new and original research in sociology. This study was written in a pragmatist style and focused on the problem. In addition, the basic features of relational sociology such as the rejection of all dualities such as objectivity and subjectivity, macro and micro, theory and practice, as well as the rejection of essentialism and focusing on the process were respected. In the age of uncertainties and complexities, more liminal features and turning points were tried to be revealed. An original research with these features was presented to the reader.

1.2. Historical Background

Relational thought is not the sole preserve of sociology and has begun to gain importance in almost all branches of science. It is possible to come across relational studies conducted in health and education, history, architecture and urban planning, geography, geriatrics, economics and labor economics, business, folklore, anthropology, psychology and political science, and international relations. It is also possible to observe the influence of the relational perspective in some basic fields, such as women's studies, cultural studies, urban dynamics, migration, aging, media and science studies.

Mustafa Emirbayer [5] one of the most referenced in relational sociology, challenges both the holism of Durkheim and the individualism or partialist classical sociological approaches focused on Weber in his work *Manifesto of Relational Sociology*. Finding structural analyses of networks of relations inadequate, he tries to show that social relations are intertwined and gain cultural meaning, as Bourdieu [20] defines it as the "logic of practice", by being influenced by Pragmatism and Social Interactionism. In fact, among the representatives of this sub-field are quite famous sociologists working in relational fields such as Harrison White, Peter Bearman, Ronald Breiger, Paul Dimaggio, John Levi Martin, Ann Mische, John Mohr (cited.in Kasapoğlu [35]).

After Mustafa Emirbayer [5] declared relational sociology as anti-essentialist through Cassirer [36] and Elias [19] detailed discussions were held at the 2008 Relational Sociology Symposium, which was also attended by sociologists such as White [37] the author of the book "Identity and Control". Two works published in the years immediately following this meeting were also milestones. These were, respectively, Donati [4] "Relational Sociology: A New Paradigm for the Social Sciences" and Crossley [25] "Towards Relational Sociology". In fact, Donati [27]; Donati [28] close interest in Parsons was not welcomed, and his claim to be the new paradigm was not widely accepted among relational sociologists. In contrast, Crossley [25]; Crossley [26] and Crossley [38] question of what is the relational sociological unit of analysis, or object of study, and his declaration that the unit of analysis is the networks of social relations and interactions between human and corporate actors, rather than the

structure or the individual, in a manner that challenges both holistic and particularistic or individualistic approaches, has been extremely interesting and valuable.

In fact, it is clear that individuals and their statuses are in relationship with each other. For example, a group of children are in relationship with each other and with their teachers as students. In this context, as Crossley [25] stated, it is important to see that both individual identities and statuses are in relationship Kasapoglu [34]. Shortly after these initiatives, the works written by C. Powell and Depelteau were published. These are the books *Conceptualizing Relational Sociology Ontological and Theoretical Issues* (2013a) and *Applying Relational Sociology: Relations, Networks and Society* (2013b). These books, rather than claiming to be a new paradigm like P. Donati, advocate the transition from a project to a paradigm if possible. In fact, Emirbayer [5] preferred the expression of a set of different theories instead of a holistic theory in sociology in his Manifesto. He gave priority to the desire to transform a research program into an academic movement.

Today, it is among the realistic assumptions that the great theories of the past will no longer be possible. Instead, the search for analytical, pragmatic, cultural, relational sociological and more sensitive approaches and concepts is widespread. Ontologically, the focus is on relationships and it is accepted that relationships create social life. Epistemologically, it is deemed appropriate to reject being essentialist and to focus on uncertainty and differences. Methodologically, it is also prioritized to examine concept-based and non-linear relationships rather than variables by distancing itself from positivists. As a result, starting from Depelteau, the rejection of essentialism and duality, process-based analyses, interdependence and reproduction, especially the production of new concepts are extremely important as the basic principles of relational sociology [35].

1.3. Types of Relational Sociology

Scientists and sociologists who think in a relational way have also started to build this field through their publications and references in their articles since 2010. The first classification of relational sociology was made by Dépelteau [9]. According to him, there are three types of relational sociology (cit. Kasapoğlu [35]):

a) Determinist/Structuralist: G.Simmel, E.Durkheim, T.Parsons, N.Luhmann, R.Collins can be considered as pioneers. B. Wellman and Berkovitz, as a new extension of Positivist sociology, give priority to systems and structures. They are partial reificationists.

b) Co-Determinist (Dialectic): A.Giddens, P.Bourdieu, P.Berger and Luckmann can be considered as pioneers. The leading relational sociologists in the new generation are M. Archer, P. Donati, R. Bhaskar and D. Elder-Vaas. They accept the structure-individual distinction for analysis purposes. M. Archer calls this analytical dualism. Their basic assumption is that there is a dialectical relationship between society and the individual.

c) Deep or transactional: Their pioneers are M. Weber, H. Blumer, B. Latour and H. Becker. Today, A. King and Depelteau are especially of the opinion that individuals do not enter into direct relations with the social structure. According to them, people can be in relations with other people and non-human beings. They do not accept subjectivism and objectivism and try to overcome them. In fact, it is possible to mention C. Powell's radical relational sociology here, which rejects all kinds of reification.

Of course, it cannot be claimed that there is consensus in the views, and it would be interesting to conduct a "correspondence analysis" of a multi-authored book written in recent years to reveal different approaches. For this purpose, German sociologist Fuhse [6] examined Depelteau [13] *Relational Sociology Handbook* with 33 authors and tried to reveal different views, approaches and their representatives. The most basic limitation of this study is that it tries to reveal the communicative relationship network of the field by empirically counting only the references that the authors give to each other without analyzing the texts. In addition, sometimes the authors have views that can be included in more than one group and publish them, which has the power to negatively affect the calculations of the correspondence analysis. However, it is still valuable in terms of showing the socio-

cultural formation of the field with views and people. According to Fuhse [6] it is possible to roughly divide relational sociologists into two groups:

- a) Those who provide new theoretical foundations for quantitative and positivist network research
- b) Those who try to provide different theoretical perspectives on the social world consisting of social relations. It is possible to regroup these second groups under the titles of Pragmatism, Critical Realism, and Constructive Empiricism.

Among the competing approaches in relational sociological studies, the one that is quite different from the pragmatists is the Italian Pierpaola Donati and his Critical Relational Sociology, which does not neglect the individual as much as the everyday social relations in family, friendship, social movements or other partnerships. Meanwhile, Depelteau's approach, which we can also classify as Deep Relational Sociology, also rejects all conceptual dualities and the existence of a structure that can have an effect on the transactional process. This view is actually closer to Latour [39] and Actor Network Theory than to P. Donati. Crossley [25] and Crossley [26] on the other hand, challenges classical structuralist analyses by examining the emergence and impact of cultural creativity in relational networks, inspired by French Pragmatism (Merle Ponty). It can also be said that Crossley [25] and Crossley [26] was influenced by White [37] famous for his work titled "Identity and Control" in his interactionist network analyses. Fuhse [6] correspondence analysis shows that the authors in the book in question do not respect either Durkheim's holistic approach or Foucault's social structure that sets the rules that discipline the individual, they contradict them, and they almost never make references to these thinkers.

On the other hand, Fuhse [6] presents the division of the field with a four-way classification. According to him, not only Pragmatists and Critical Realists, but also Classical thinkers and the New York School are among the other groups that have communication with each other and at least refer to each other. He also writes that the New York School has made efforts to both develop network research and to theoretically develop and reconstruct relational sociology outside of the classics. On the other hand, Fuhse [6] mentions that Bruno Latour and Pierre Bourdieu are difficult to place in any group due to their unique positions.

1.4. Characteristics of Relational Sociology

Although it is not possible to talk about a homogeneous relational sociology, it is possible to talk about some basic characteristics of relational sociology. Regardless of whether they are holistic or fragmentary, it is possible to compare main stream sociology (MS) and relational sociology (RS) under 16 headings without any order of priority [35]:

- a) Logical inference: While Mainstream Sociology (MS) is more deductive and top-down, Relational Sociology (RS) makes inductive bottom-up analyses.
- b) Unit of Analysis: Instead of MS's predefined fixed social things, RS accepts fluid, dynamic and continuous relationships as the unit of analysis.
- c) Main Ideas: Instead of being essentialist and objective in MS, RS looks at anti-essential and reflexive and avoids a priori assumptions.
- d) Methodology: Instead of being methodologically holistic and particularistic in MS, RS conducts a dynamic and process-based, dialectical examination.
- e) Research Techniques: Instead of being quantitative and variable-based like MS, quantitative and qualitative techniques are applied together in RS. Instead of variables, concepts are given importance.
- f) Cause-Effect Relationships: Instead of one-way determinism in MS, transactional relationships and uncertainties are studied in RS.
- g) Dualities: While MS is largely based on dualities, RS rejects dualities and uses them only when necessary for analysis purposes (analytical dualism like M. Archer).

h) Reification: MS largely accepts reification. However, in RS, it is not forgotten that society is a human product and reification is rejected.

i) Theory of Knowledge: Instead of Empiricism and Positivism in MS, Pragmatism is generally adopted in RS. Irrationalism is also accepted in some cases.

j) Theory and Practice: In MS, theory and practice are separate. In RS, they are always together and inseparable.

k) Concepts: Instead of a priori concepts such as society, individual, structure, class in MS, new concepts such as figuration (Elias), habitus (Bourdieu), Terrestrial (Latour) are suggested in RS.

l) Rationality and Objectivity: For MS, “strategic objectivity” is necessary to be a science. RS, on the other hand, tries to liberate sociology by rejecting the concept of “pretending” even though objectivity is not possible.

m) Scale: In MS, macro and micro studies are different. In RS, the unity of macro and micro is essential. The whole can be explained with the part.

n) Change: Instead of the one-dimensional, linear and historical change in MS, in RS, the understanding of change that accepts time and space, history and geography, synchrony and diachrony together as multidimensional prevails.

o) Language: Instead of the status quo and conservative language in MS, the language of struggle in RS, where defense and attack are together, is used.

p) Model Development: Instead of the functionalist and structuralist, variable-based models in MS, transactional and interdisciplinary or supradisciplinary models in RS are preferred and developed, in which social and natural sciences work together.

2. Development of Relational Sociology in Turkey and Sample Studies

It is possible to mention many important translation studies in the development of relational sociology in Turkey. In addition, master's and doctoral theses have been written. The most important translated works are "Tözcülüğün Tasfiyesi: Yeni İşleme Yeni İşleme Yeni" edited by. Later, a journal called "Modus Operandi: Relational Social Sciences" was published in two issues between 2015-2016. On the other hand, since the field is not limited to sociology, Relational Social Sciences Congresses have been held every year since 2017. In parallel with these initiatives, "Strata: Relational Social Sciences Journal" started its publication life in 2019 and is still continuing.

In the studies published in the compilation work called Applied Relational Sociology [35] a group of sociologists first discussed how relational sociology would be done and then determined social problems in various fields, and took relational sociology out of the level of purely theoretical discussion and carried it to empirical research. In other words, a group of young and senior sociologists from the sociology circle of Ankara University Faculty of Language, History and Geography, who had previously published their joint studies, conducted very productive first trial studies. It can be said that since very limited studies based on a few relational sociological principles are common in the literature, the initial difficulties were tried to be overcome by developing trust over time [35].

In the aforementioned book “Applied Relational Sociology”, first of all, there was a road map that the editor expressed as winds from Europe and America. In this section, Kasapoğlu [35] gave detailed place to Bourdieu and Elias from Europe; and Harrison White from America. Later on, in the book, Nazar Bal (A Sociological Analysis on the Relationality of Consumption Habits in Everyday Life); Günnur Ertong Attar (Face Book as a Communicative Figuration: A Status Sharing); Hasan Münisoğlu (From Nation to Minority: The Identity of Non-Muslims in Turkey Dragged to the Threshold); Zuhâl Yonca Odabaş (A Relational Sociological Critique of the Construction of Motherhood in the Political Sphere); Feray Artar (An Essay on the Relational Construction of Refugee Identity); İlker Uurlu (Turkey's Two Elections: Turning Points and Uncertainties); Zeynep Tekin Babuç (Syrian Families and Their Lives on the Threshold: The Mersin Example), Alev Akbal (Relational Sociological Analysis of the Culture of Fear and Uncertainty: The Swine Flu Example in the Press), Ayşenur Merve Uzun and Zafer Uzun (A Group Formation: The Sociological Analysis of the Relationship between Students Starting University) have published their studies as book chapters.

On the other hand, some important studies have been conducted that started with “grounded theory” qualitative studies that relational sociology is in harmony with and then reached the level of “mixed design” with quantitative research data [40]. The theoretical basis for the approach of mixed design studies based on pragmatism to solve problems was provided by relational sociology. The book includes chapters by Alev Akbal (Relational Sociological Mixed Pattern Analysis of Symbolic Violence in Healthcare), Simay Özlü Diniz (Relationship between Urban Happiness and Gardening: The Example of Capital Ankara), Murat Koçanlı (Relational Sociological Analysis of the Change in the Duties and Responsibilities of the Gendarmerie as a Law Enforcement Force in Turkey), Çigdem Yel (Relationship between Human and Nature: Farming in the Example of İzmir), Deniz Yerli (Women's Use of Technology during the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Relational Sociological Analysis). It should be particularly noted that while writing these sections, Pierre Bourdieu, Harrison White, Sarah Kenneth, Craig Mc-Farlane and Bruno Latour were used, and data was collected from the field focusing on concepts such as symbolic violence, uncertainties, turning points and liminalities, and alienation, thus ensuring the integrity of theory and practice.

There are also master's and doctoral theses based on relational sociological principles. One of these is the master's thesis based on a literature review titled "Relationality in Sociology and Relational Sociology" prepared by Demir [41]. The only original study that can be shown as an example of empirical, completely original mixed-design relational sociological research with quantitative and qualitative data collected from the field is Koşar [42] master's thesis titled "Sociology of Everyday Life in Uncertainty and Differences in the Covid 19 Pandemic Process: The Example of the Turkish Retirees Association". There is also The Impact of Culture on the Health and Illness Experiences of Immigrant Women: A Relational Sociological Research [43].

3. The Future of the Field: Leading New Initiatives

When we need new paradigms in understanding, interpreting and explaining many problems experienced globally recently, for example, when examining what we experienced after the earthquake centered in Kahramanmaraş on February 6, 2023 in Turkey, we should state that we benefit from the relational sociologist Bruno Latour. In fact, Latour, going back a long way, put forward his ideas under the influence of Tarde [44]; Tarde [45] and based on a holistic approach that does not limit society to humans alone. Because Tarde, from the very beginning, tried to include animal and cell societies when defining society.

Indeed, in his last writings, Latour [39] carefully distinguishes the old sociology, which he calls the ‘sociology of the social’, from the new sociology, which he calls the ‘sociology of associations’. The three main characteristics of the new sociology he advocates are not limiting analyses to humans, but also examining non-human entities.

Latour is primarily known for his “Actor Network Theory” (ANT). In particular, in addition to the “actor”, information in motion, money, technology, disease, microbes, plants in the sea, rocks, and ships, which he defines as “actants”, are included in his social theory. Serious roles are assigned to non-human entities, including laws and regulations, such as those listed above, or even more broadly. On the other hand, in this approach, science and technology are considered in harmony with the social [34, 39].

The most widely applicable area of Actor Network Theory is health. Indeed, studies have been conducted using the basic concepts of this theory, such as actor and actant, persuasion, transformation, punctualization, delegation and inscription, irreversibility, black box, immutable mobiles, hybridity, symmetry and asymmetry, and total network of relations, and have been published in the work titled Two Sides of the Coin: Health and Disease. While conducting these studies, visual sociology has also been used to collect data on sensitive issues such as the Biopsychosocial Model, which is in full compliance with relational sociology. These studies, in which all the concepts of ANT are applied, have been conducted in a wide range of areas, including cancer, HIV/AIDS, diabetes, chronic renal failure, chronic bronchitis and asthma, MS, as well as menopause and pregnancy experiences. In addition, ANT

formed the theoretical framework of a doctoral thesis titled “Sustainable Disaster Management and Women”, which examined the strategies developed by women to cope with water shortage due to the water cuts caused by the drought in Ankara in 2007 [46].

Latour [47] and Latour [48] meticulously emphasizes the need for a new geopolitical organization in his philosophical discussions. In this context, he proposes the concept of the New World with a relational perspective. He puts forward the concept of ‘Terrestrial’, meaning ‘Earth we live on’. Latour actually includes the term Gaia in the title of his last book. Gaia is a god with superpowers, the same meaning as Terra or Tellus in Greek and Roman mythology. In Latin, it means earth, soil. The development of Terrestrial as a new concept by Latour is very important in relational sociological terms. Terra refers to the personified existence of the earth. According to Latour [47] and Latour [48] in adverse climatic conditions such as drought, inequalities as well as radical nationalism and migration issues come to the fore again. The fact that the climate crisis is a global problem that cannot be solved within national borders also confirms this. The global and local duality or distinction is already misleading us. It provides a theoretical framework for studies on women, environment and animal rights. Studies based on Sarah Red Shaw and Craig MacFarlene are truly instructive [34, 40].

On the other hand, it cannot be ignored that relational sociology provides an important theoretical basis for studies in the field of migration. In fact, we can state that a model based on a relational perspective has been developed and published in the field of migration. For example, Alp modeled the data obtained from the field through an application he called “Göçmetre” in his article titled “Kahramanmaraş Earthquakes in the Context of Relational Sociology: Migration – Göçmetre” through algorithms based on relational sociological principles. Thanks to this application, it has become possible to go even further and test the hypotheses produced on migration theories through machine learning-artificial intelligence instantly according to different data sets. Claim is that it is more important and meaningful to re-read the process based on the results of the earthquake rather than the factors that cause earthquakes.

4. Conclusion

The one-way determinism approach that classical mainstream sociology has imposed to date is undoubtedly criticized by everyone today. In particular, Emil Durkheim's sociology's view of social phenomena as existing at a certain moment in history and as a separate reality level from individuals is found to be insufficient and inadequate. As a matter of fact, relational sociologists do not see society and the individual as separate levels of reality. Fixed, unchanging phenomena are replaced by fluid, dynamic processes. Going even further, given concepts such as society, individual, and class are also found insufficient and it is preferred to propose new concepts. In this context, it is preferred for sociology to have a language of struggle and to be active rather than passive.

In recent years, some new opportunities to do sociology have emerged all over the world and have become a subject of interest for some sociologists. The name of these new initiatives is, as is often stated, relational sociology. However, there are also those who belittle relational sociology as "old wine in a new glass". However, it is useful to state that it is also quite interesting for those who do not like the clothes sewn by the mainline sociology traditions.

On the other hand, it would not be wrong to say that relational sociology is a great opportunity for those who want to do mixed design research. Because the rejection of dualities and essentialism is in great harmony with the notion of mixed design research. Sociologists who advocate the rejection of dualities such as macro-micro, structure-individual, mind-body experience significant advantages when conducting mixed design studies.

There is neither need nor necessity for relational sociology to be a brand new paradigm. Because such claims will not go further than causing it to be essentialist. It is clear that it is an approach that embraces and develops the legacy of enlightenment based on reason, far from rejecting it, and always

looks forward. However, there will undoubtedly be those who misunderstand its concern with uncertainties, differences, and complexities while rejecting essentialism.

There has not been a single paradigm in social sciences since the beginning. The reason why there are competing views in these social sciences is that the subject it examines is not fixed, but rapidly changing and very complex. Therefore, doing science with both macro and micro, objective and subjective components is a unique feature of sociology. The fact that we do not have a single paradigm is actually an indicator of our development, not our underdevelopment. Just think, if it were said that everyone would be Marxist or everyone would be Weberian or Durkheimian, how many sociologists would be happy with their situation and work productively. In light of all these statements, especially for non-Western sociologists living in underdeveloped countries, developing and applying new sociological concepts and thus developing self-confidence, the opportunity to first conduct relational sociology, then grounded theory methodology and undoubtedly mixed design studies is a great blessing. A little courage and a little excitement is enough for this. The first step to take is to carefully read the studies done critically and to undertake research. The rest will come more easily and freely.

Transparency:

The authors confirm that the manuscript is an honest, accurate, and transparent account of the study; that no vital features of the study have been omitted; and that any discrepancies from the study as planned have been explained. This study followed all ethical practices during writing.

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