

The Future of Sociology

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*Like a hurricane, third-wave marketisation is picking up velocity and destroying societies in its path, destroying the very grounds upon which sociology grows. Sociology and humanity have a common interest in upholding civil society, and keeping state and market at bay. Working with Karl Polanyi's *The Great Transformation*, I diagnose three waves of marketisation associated with the commodification of labour, money and land, generating counter-movements at local, national and global levels. I argue that sociology is reshaped with each wave: in the first, it is utopian; in the second, it is driven by policy concerns; whereas emerging with the third wave marketisation is public sociology. The possibilities and challenges of public sociology as well as its relation to policy, critical and professional sociology are the subjects of this paper.*

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A third wave of marketisation has been sweeping the world, destroying the ramparts laboriously erected to defend society against the first and second waves of the 19th and 20th centuries. Swept away are the labour rights first won by western labour movements against the marketisation of the 19th century, but also the social rights guaranteed by states against the marketisation of the 20th century. Once again the world is being levelled down, and this time it is the whole world. Third-wave marketisation not only abolishes hard won gains of the past, not only finds its way into every nook and cranny, but also extends commodification to new realms. Nothing is sacrosanct to the third wave as it surges deeper and deeper into human society.

The commodification of nature, in particular, has come home to roost during the last quarter of the 20th century, gathering momentum as we enter the 21st century. Even as I speak struggles continue unabated over the dams of the Narmada River, over land dispossession in New Delhi, over the expulsion of farmers to make way for Special Economic Zones in West Bengal. I could give parallel examples of devastation for almost any country, and not just in the Global South. Behind this third wave are predatory classes, colluding with nation states and sometimes also with multilateral agencies, reigning terror down on the desperate and the destitute, workers and farmers, in cities and rural communities. The last hold out against this economic tsunami is society itself, composed of *associations* with a measure of collective self-regulation, *movements* forged out of a fragile collective will, and *publics* of mutual recognition and communication. Will society measure up to the challenge?

In facing this worldwide threat to society, and thus to human existence, sociologists have four choices. They can side with the state against the market, hoping to exploit what remains of state autonomy. In some nations this might make sense, such as those with a continuing legacy of social democratic politics or a strong legacy of welfare provision. Such policy science depends on finding spaces within the state from which to contain the market juggernaut – spaces that are disappearing everywhere, but at rates that vary from one nation to the next. Sociologists' second choice is to bury their heads in the sand, proclaiming that science must first be built before they can sally forth. We must not risk our legitimacy, our very existence by wading out into the storm. The professional sociologists sit tight waiting for the storm to pass, hoping against hope that it will not sweep them up with rest of society. The third choice is to agitate against the first two choices, writing tracts against their moral bankruptcy, launching jeremiads against those colluding with the evils of state and market. But these critical sociologists are preaching to a shrinking band of initiates as the storm strikes. Their message is incomprehensible and no one is listening. There is, finally, a fourth road that refuses to collaborate with market and state, that says science without politics is blind, that critique without intervention is empty, that calls on sociologists to engage directly with society before it disappears altogether. This is what I call public sociology. Third-wave marketisation calls forth the age of public sociology.

While public sociology can take the lead, it can only move forward with the supporting role of a professional science that gives lie to ruling ideologies and discloses injustice and inequality. Public sociology also depends on outward-looking critical knowledges that, in one direction, keep professional science honest, but in the other direction galvanise

movements around threatened values. Public sociology is nothing if it cannot, in the final analysis, bring about change even if only indirectly. It cannot, therefore, dismiss the world of policy science, but it has to attack it from without. That is the agenda but what is the context?

I

Three Faces of Marketisation: South Africa, Russia and the United States

Third-wave marketisation is global, even if sociology's reaction is still, for the most part, local or national. Let me illustrate with three countries with which I have some familiarity: South Africa, Russia and the United States. When I returned to South Africa in 1990, after a 22-year absence, I found there, in the twilight of apartheid, a sociology energised by its engagement with the anti-apartheid struggles, particularly with the labour movement. The sociology of 'social movement unionism' was born in the 1980s, subsequently to be taken up and further developed in other global contexts. The post-apartheid transition, however, would take place in a period of renewed market triumphalism, impelled by the collapse of socialism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. What socialist ambitions the African National Congress had developed in the course of its struggles quickly evaporated once it assumed power in 1994. Instead, South Africa opened its borders to trade and set about privatising its considerable public sector. The flood of imports from countries where labour conditions were even more oppressive and where wages were even lower destroyed sectors of the economy, eroded the strength of trade unions, leading to the casualisation of labour and the growth of the informal sector. The move to privatise water, electricity, public transportation and telecommunications was a second assault on day-to-day survival in the townships and villages. As the inhumanity of racism was arrested, another inhumanity deepened. The elimination of apartheid coincided with the (re)commodification of labour, whether through reduced social protection or suspended industrial regulation. It was as if apartheid had served its function, cleared the ground of obstacles and was no longer needed for the new brazen assault on the toiling classes.

South African sociology, too, unable to escape the pincer movement of state and market, was pushed towards professionalisation and drawn into the competitive game of international benchmarking. As wages in the universities fell behind those in the private sector and civil service, so sociologists made up their short fall by increasing reliance on policy research. The vibrant legacies of critical and public sociologies were weakened not only by the pressure for a more scientised and commodified

knowledge, but also by the retreat of society itself – its associations, its movements and its publics. Third-wave marketisation has shattered not only society but also the disciplinary field that is its expression.

Apartheid disintegrated soon after its ideological foe, the Soviet order, collapsed – a collapse that had its own tragic denouement. Following the chain reactions of 1989 in Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union found itself competing with its erstwhile satellites for the most rapid transition to a market economy. Under the rubric of ‘shock therapy’ (which proved to be all shock and no therapy) and ‘big bang’ (schemes of wanton destruction inspired by Western economists but firmly embraced by the new elites emerging within the party state) the Soviet order was dismantled in order to release the spontaneous growth of the market. The quicker the destruction, so it was argued, the less likely communism would exercise its revenge, and the more rapid would be capitalist reconstruction. The market did indeed spring to life but it played havoc with production.

With the liberalisation of prices at the beginning of 1992, inflation spiralled out of control, businesses quickly went out of business, and wages were not paid. The realm of exchange became the source of unimaginable wealth for a well-positioned few and the last resort for most. Resources flowed out of production and into flea markets, kiosks, supermarkets, banking, mafia, currency speculation, asset stripping and privatisation. Everything was up for sale in a big grab with rapidly diminishing time horizons. The commodification of money, for it too was subject to market exchange, had made it next to useless in economic transactions, which therefore retreated into barter.

Instead of revolution or evolution Russia faced economic involution – an economy that consumes itself leading to a decline next to which the wreckage wrought by the October Revolution was child’s play. If Stalinism brought primitive accumulation, the dispossession of the peasantry and the creation of a working class with nothing but its labour power to sell, the market brought re-peasantisation, what one might call primitive *disaccumulation*. Demographers have calculated that rates of mortality through lowered life expectancy in the decade after the fall of communism was as great as in the Stalinist atrocities of the 1930s. For so many, economic survival meant falling back into subsistence production and with that an advanced society retreated into kin networks and even more narrowly into the nuclear family.

As society goes, so goes sociology. Except for a momentary effervescence in the twilight of communism, under perestroika, when civil society burst forth, sociology had been an ideological conveyor belt for the party state. In the aftermath of communism its inherited professional

base was, therefore, very weak. Marketisation turned sociology into opinion polling and market research, while academic sociology disappeared into the new business schools. Without a solid foundation in professional sociology, a crude policy science prevailed. Critical and public sociologies could scarcely be found.

Paradoxically, we find almost the opposite in the United States. Third-wave marketisation has struck here too, aiming to destroy and uproot society, stimulating a lively response from professional sociology, but this remains bottled up in the academy, unable to make effective engagement with the wider world. With society sinking into oblivion – a process insulated from complex and sturdy research and teaching establishments – the potential contribution of a public sociology only grows. Yet its reception and adoption in society face ever-greater obstacles.

Take the example of Hurricane Katrina that brought down levees and flooded the city of New Orleans in August 2005, killing over 1,300 civilians. Much attention has been rightly awarded to the abysmal failure of the federal administration to cope with this unnatural disaster. It was not as if the catastrophe was unanticipated – knowing how precarious were the levees holding back the flood waters scientists had predicted their collapse in the face of such a hurricane and also accurately forecasted what would befall this beleaguered city. The levees had not been rebuilt, despite appeals to Congress from local administration, because the state had other budgetary priorities, not least, in recent years, the war in Iraq.

Indeed, militarism also explains the failure of emergency relief. For one, Louisiana's home guard that was mobilised to handle the crisis was depleted by postings to Iraq. More important, the Department of Homeland Security, newly created after 9/11, swallowed up FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency), as military security trumped economic and social security. Third-wave marketisation has gone hand in hand with gutting what there was of a welfare state and with deepening inequalities, so that the poor, largely black population of New Orleans was defenceless against the flooding, losing their homes and their possessions. They are now scattered across the nation in their trailers, and many finding life even more difficult are trying to make their way back. By its abstention, the US state commandeered a major racial expulsion from urban land, reconstituted New Orleans as a middle-class city by relying on the importation of cheap migrant labour to service its economy. But states do not have to be so ineffective in the face of disasters. Across the Gulf of Mexico, Cuba considers it a national

tragedy if a single person dies at the hands of a hurricane, even one as strong as Katrina.

Third-wave marketisation provides the context for the social paralysis of the state in its response to the hurricane, but marketisation was also a more direct cause of the devastation. The rapid and unregulated growth of New Orleans's leisure industry recovered land at the expense of the wetlands that are crucial for taming a storm surge and absorbing floodwaters. Unregulated capitalism also drove the oil drilling in the Gulf just off the New Orleans shoreline, causing further subsidence of the land, making the city that much more vulnerable to flooding. Finally, scientists have shown that global warming, another product of third-wave marketisation, by heating the sea intensifies the ferocity of hurricanes. Thus, with a profligate and unconstrained capitalism we can expect disaster damage to only increase. The US state was deaf to all the warnings of scientists whether it be those predicting the stronger hurricanes, the weakness of the levees, or the unequal social impact of such a disaster.

Perhaps economists with their interests in expanding the market or political scientists with their complementary interest in guaranteeing the political conditions for commodification may have the ear of capitalists and the state, but sociologists with their roots in society can have no such illusions. Indeed, with one hand states herald volunteer organisations or NGOs, as national saviours, yet with the other hand those very same states have declared war on civil society, attacking one trench after another. Sociologists, therefore, have to turn away from the hostile policy worlds of state and economy and instead cultivate other audiences, defending what is left of movements, organisations and publics, seeking to bolster the power of society organised for its own self-defence, and as a countervailing force to third-wave marketisation. It's a tall order, full of pitfalls. So how should we think of it?

II

Three Waves of Commodification: Labour, Money, and Land

My three cases – United States, Russia and South Africa and I could easily have extended it to India, Brazil and China – show how third-wave marketisation intensifies and is intensified by the dissolution of organised capitalism, state socialism, and colonialism. Today, state regulation continues but it deepens rather than counters the commodification of labour, money and land, or what Karl Polanyi in *The Great Transformation* (1944) called fictitious commodities. Polanyi argued that

commodifying these entities, that is, subjecting them to unimpeded market exchange, destroyed their use value, and thus undermined their utility as factors of production. You might say that the mode of exchange rebels against the mode of production.

Much of *The Great Transformation* is devoted to the commodification of labour in 19th century England. With the revoking of labour protection under Speenhamland and the proscription of outdoor relief, labour was buffeted by the seismic shifts in market forces. Capital could hire and fire labour at will with no concern for its survival, destroying the traditional community within which it had been embedded. Yet, at the same time, desperation forged a new society out of *social movements*, such as the factory movement to restrict the length of the working day, and out of *associations*, such as burial societies, trade unions, co-operatives, and utopian experiments (for example, Robert Owen's *New Lanark*). In brief, the commodification of labour led to the spontaneous defensive self-reconstitution of society at least in Europe. In the colonial world, referring mainly to Africa, Polanyi told a story of relentless demolition of all social defences against market forces. His portrait overlooks emerging forms of African resistance as well as the limits on destruction set by the colonial state.

Polanyi carries his analysis into the European 20th century, shifting from the focus on labour to the focus on money. When money becomes the subject of unregulated market exchange, as in Russia immediately after the collapse of communism, uncertainty of its value becomes so great that enterprises cannot function. Already in the 19th century states created their own national banks to regulate currencies and exchange rates, but the adoption of the gold standard after World War I led to wild fluctuations in the value of currencies threatening the viability of businesses. States responded with protectionism, insulating their national economies from global markets in more or less draconian ways. Fascism, Stalinism (collectivisation and planning), Social Democracy and the New Deal were divergent ways of coping with second-wave marketisation but they all involved restoring certain labour rights and extending them to social rights, including minimum wages, pensions, education and welfare. To be sure, these social rights could come with narrower political rights and the regulation of society. Even colonialism might be included within such a protectionist reaction to the market, in particular, strategies of indirect rule that sustained rather than destroyed traditional communities, thereby re-producing colonial working-class connections to subsistence economies, the foundation of cheap labour. Second-wave marketisation and the counter-movement by states coincided with Eric

Hobsbawm's short 20th century that begins with World War I and ends with the fall of communism.

Polanyi never anticipated a third wave of marketisation. Perhaps this was because he did not distinguish between a first wave and a second wave within his single 'great transformation'. More likely it was because the Fascist and Stalinist reactions to the second wave were so devastating with respect to human freedom, laying the basis of World War II. Polanyi thought human kind would never again take the road of market fundamentalism. Instead, he projected the possibility of a far more optimistic future in which markets and states would be subject to the direction and regulation of self-organising society. He was wrong on both counts: first, there would be a third wave of marketisation and we are in the middle of it now and second, no self-regulating society would emerge strong enough to keep market and state at bay. How should we characterise third-wave marketisation that begins in the mid-1970s and what societal reactions can we observe? I propose three dimensions.

Following Polanyi, we see that first-wave marketisation generates a counter-movement against the commodification of labour, while second-wave marketisation generates a counter-movement against the commodification of money. Third-wave marketisation, I claim, generates a counter-movement against the commodification of land or, more generally, against the commodification of nature. Although land was already commodified in the first and second waves of marketisation they had yet to lead to the wholesale devastation that now besets this planet. The effects of the commodification of nature have crept up on us, but they have been cumulative. Thus, so many of the struggles to-day are around the protection of access to land whether it be squatters or shack dwellers defending themselves against local governments trying to clean them out of the urban landscape, whether it be middle-class residents of the city opposing high-rise developers, whether it be indigenous peoples refusing to give up their land, or farmers battling against dams that would destroy their existence, whether it be the struggles for clean air, against the dumping of toxic waste, against privatisation of water and electricity. And so the list goes on. The commodification of labour and money, of course, is still important, indeed is as important as ever as I indicated above in my accounts of South Africa, Russia and the United States, but the reaction to the commodification of nature is the distinctive feature of third-wave marketisation.

The second way to characterise the third-wave marketisation is its scale. It is truly global in its causes and its ramifications. Once the barricades of state socialism, colonialism, and to a lesser extent social democracy crumbled, there was no place to hide from the storm of

marketisation. There is progression in the scale of reaction. If the response to the commodification of labour under first-wave marketisation was often local but aspiring to be national, and if the response to the commodification of money under second-wave marketisation was national but aspiring to be global (IMF, World Bank), then the response to the commodification of nature under third-wave marketisation may set out from the local, but it aspires to be global. Since the effects of global warming, nuclear accidents, water privatisation, contagious diseases are global so the response, in the final analysis, has also to be global, even if this global response involves knitting together local movements.

The third way to characterise successive waves of marketisation is not the advance from one fictitious commodity to the next, but in terms of the successive roll back of defences erected against marketisation. If second-wave marketisation first destroys the ramparts of labour organisation before it generates a counter-movement to build new ramparts of state social protection, then third-wave marketisation rolls back both labour and social rights. We see this everywhere as trade unions decline, as real wages of working classes fall, as social security, pensions, welfare all contract and not just in one country but across the world – although to be sure very unevenly. On what foundation then will the next round of defences be built – defences that will fend off the degradation of nature but also recover labour rights and social rights? The deeper the challenge to humanity and community, the deeper has to be the reaction. In response to third-wave marketisation we will need to develop the defence of human rights – the defence of a community of mutual recognition as human beings – that will necessarily incorporate labour and social rights.

Human rights, like all rights discourses, are easily appropriated and narrowed to suit particular interests. The United States defends its imperial adventures and colonial-like occupations – whether externally in Iraq or internally against African Americans – as the furtherance of human rights. Electoral democracy becomes a human right that justifies invasion, killing and subjugation abroad while hiding it in the prison complex at home. Markets themselves are advanced in the name of the human right to freedom of choice and the protection of private property, foreclosing what this means to those who cannot choose, who do not have property. Human rights that are universal rather than particular, and that, therefore, include labour rights and social rights must aim for the protection of human community, that involves first recognising and treating each other as ends rather than means. Human rights then is a complex terrain of struggle in which groups stake their claim on the basis of their own interests, but ultimately human rights is about the protection

of humanity, galvanising radical struggles of global proportions against third-wave marketisation.

III Three Waves of Sociology: Utopian, Policy, and Public

The thesis of this paper is that to each wave of marketisation there corresponds a distinctive sociology. Sociology grew up in the 19th century together with civil society, itself a response to first-wave marketisation. Sociology began as a moral enterprise defending society against the market, especially the destruction of community as newly proletarianised, destitute and degraded populations made the city their home. Sociology indulged in all sorts of schemes to circumvent or leap beyond the market, drawn from such schemes as Robert Owen's in England, the Narodniki in Russia, the co-operative and commune movement in the United States. This was the era of utopian sociology. One might say that Marx and Engels were utopians in their postulation of communism that would arise out of the ashes of the inevitably self-destroying capitalism. Auguste Comte imagined a familial order led by sociologists while Emile Durkheim postulated an organic solidarity built on corporatist organisation of the division of labour, a form of guild socialism. In a similar vein, the Gandhian movement was a specifically anti-colonial response to invading markets, seeking the boycott of foreign imports and the promotion of *khadi*.

Of course, Marx, Comte and Durkheim would rail against being labelled utopian. After all they saw themselves as scientists, committed to what is and what would necessarily be by virtue of the laws of society. Still, from today's standpoint, for all the revolutionary breakthroughs they brought to the study of society, their science remained speculative, especially as regards the future, strongly imbued with moral concerns to reverse the degradation brought about by 19th century capitalism. They focused on the division of labour as the foundation of their science and the central role of labour in their utopian projections.

Second-wave marketisation that takes off after World War I challenges the rights that had been won by labour through trade unions and political parties. But, as Polanyi argued, it was the ravages of international trade and exchange that threatened the conditions of capital accumulation and prompted protectionist reactions from the state. The reactions ranged from fascism to the New Deal and from Stalinism to social democracy but they all instituted a measure of social (but not necessarily political) rights, including security in unemployment,

pensions, welfare, and education. Sociology developed accordingly. In those countries that reacted to second-wave marketisation with authoritarian means, whether Fascist Germany or Stalinist Soviet Union, there sociology was eclipsed, but where it reacted with some form of social democracy, whether in the United States or Sweden, you got the development of a new type of sociology, that collaborated with the state to defend society against the market. This was the era of policy sociology – state funded research into social problems. Indeed, in England an autonomous sociology barely existed, but instead the field of social administration had grown up, integrally connected to the welfare state.

In the United States we see the development of a professional sociology that had greater autonomy from the state. Still, this sociology was concerned with the stability of society – stratification theory based on a prestige hierarchy of occupations, functionalist theories of the family, the regulation of deviance, industrial sociology concerned with the pacification and extraction of labour, political sociology focusing on the social bases of electoral democracy and the containment of extremism. The overarching theoretical framework was defined by structural functionalism – the delineation of functional prerequisites to keep any social system in equilibrium and how those prerequisites are met by the institutions of society. During this period sociology developed its own positive science, namely, detailed attention to empirical research, new methods of data collection and data analysis and the elaboration of so-called middle range theories that nestled in the scaffolding of structural functionalism. Positive science was a reaction against the earlier speculative science that was propelled by moral reform. Positive science wanted to expel moral questions to a completely different sphere, antithetical to science. If the first wave of sociology invented utopias, the second policy wave tended to think that utopia had already arrived and mistook it for reality. It was riveted to the present, concerned only with ironing out its small irrationalities.

So what sort of sociology marks the response to third-wave marketisation? As we have seen this latest round of marketisation rolls back the statist defence of society, taking the offensive against labour rights and social rights. Unlike the second wave of marketisation that provoked an anti-market reaction from the state – protectionism, planning, wage guarantees, welfare, public ownership of the means of production – third-wave marketisation entails the collusion of the state. Still a regulatory state, it is nonetheless regulation for rather than against the market. It undoes all that was achieved against second-wave marketisation. Society is, thus, under a double assault from economy and state. Unable to gain much leverage in the state or with the market the fate

Table 1: Sociology versus the Market

	<i>First-Wave Marketisation</i>	<i>Second-Wave Marketisation</i>	<i>Third-Wave Marketisation</i>
<i>Fictitious Commodity</i>	Labour	Money	Nature
<i>Locus of Response</i>	Local Community	Nation State	Global Civil Society
<i>Rights</i>	Labour	Social	Human
<i>Orientation of Sociology</i>	Utopian	Policy	Public
<i>Science</i>	Speculative	Positivist	Reflexive
<i>Geographical Locus/Origin</i>	Western Europe	United States	'Semi-Periphery'
<i>World Context</i>	Colonialism	Imperialism	Globalisation

of sociology rests with society. Sociology’s self-interest lies in the constitution of civil society where it barely exists and in its protection where it is in retreat. Hence the claim we are living in the age of public sociology.

We are, in a sense, returning to first-wave marketisation of the 19th century but with a difference. First, sociology cannot limit its engagement to local publics, but, as I have argued, it has to be concerned with knitting together a global civil society. Second, there is a utopian dimension but linked not to imaginary utopias but to actual existing utopias, whose conditions of existence and expanded reproduction it is our task to explore with all the techniques at our disposal. Third, this calls for a science very different from the speculative science of the 19th century. It calls for a science that is no longer rooted in value consensus and stability, but one that seeks to develop alternative values, hence the importance of value discussion, what I have called critical sociology. We no longer strive for a single paradigmatic science but a discipline made up of multiple intersecting research programmes, founded on the values of different publics but, at the same time, working out theoretical frameworks through engaging their external anomalies and internal contradictions. I call this a reflexive science, a science that is frightened neither of reflecting on its value foundations nor of articulating them publicly, but a science nonetheless.

If first wave sociology emanated from Europe, and second-wave sociology reached its apotheosis in the United States, where will third-wave sociology find its energy? In thinking of vibrant public sociologies, I turn to such countries as South Africa, especially in the climax to its anti-apartheid struggles, Brazil under its post-authoritarian regimes, or India with its continuing post-colonial struggles for social justice. What do these countries have in common? They represent the clash of North

and South, the tsunami of third-wave marketisation meets the ramparts of civil society erected in the struggles against different forms of authoritarianism, themselves created under second-wave marketisation. We might call these arenas the 'semi-periphery', but contra Wallerstein they no longer perform a stabilising function (as they perhaps did under the world system of second-wave marketisation), but they are now the site of veritable volcanoes, the source of unpredictable explosions against the invading new order. Public sociology finds itself swept up in the social lava, seeking to channel it against the market.

We cannot divorce the ties between successive waves of sociology and waves of marketisation from their very different world historical contexts. Crudely put, we can connect first-wave marketisation and utopian sociology with the colonial project, which as R.W. Connell (1997) has shown, formed the foundation of early European and American social theory. Evolutionism and the ideologies of progress and modernisation that inspired utopian sociology grew up on the sands of abiding and imaginary stereotypes of the colonised Other. Similarly second-wave marketisation was connected to policy sociology through an imperial project which assured the domination of the West through more autonomous colonial and post-colonial regimes. As Partha Chatterjee (1986) has so eloquently shown, the anti-colonial project that informed post-colonial regimes was intimately connected to Western ideas of nationalism – ideology that continued to reproduce a very unequal world. With the constitution of the national project, whether this was Stalinism, Fascism, Social Democracy, the New Deal, forms of indirect rule and dependency and even the Nehruvian state, came a policy sociology geared to social problems or, as in the case of India, a colonial and post-colonial anthropology.

The unity of second-wave sociology comes into focus when seen from the standpoint of third-wave marketisation whose project is indeed to destroy the barriers to open exchange set up by the nation state and to constitute an economically unified global order. Third-wave marketisation is not so much destroying the nation state as harnessing it to the homogenising forces of globalisation, a homogenisation that establishes new world hierarchies. Globalisation defines a hegemonic terrain in which any challenge has to be global too. Opposition has to puncture the universalistic pretence of globalisation by revealing its particularistic character, and proposing an alternative globalisation from below – a global civil society that circumvents and transcends the nation state, spreading multiple social currents across boundaries. Here lies the challenge for public sociology.

But public sociology will not spring *tabula rasa* from the global arena. Just as the nation state (together with neo-liberal economics) is harnessed to globalisation from above, so the first and most natural context for the development of public sociology is also national, driven by the need to construct an autonomous civil society where it is absent or weak and to defend and expand it where it is more vibrant. But there are other conditions for a national public sociology. It has longevity when it has a well-developed scientific foundation in professional sociology. It also requires a sense of its own values that comes from a critical sociology. As sociology becomes more global, borrowings across national lines become more feasible and more important. Portugal, for example, after its 1974 revolution, overthrowing nearly 50 years of dictatorship, drew on critical and professional traditions within American and French sociologies, harnessing them to a vibrant civil society. This small country is one of the leaders in public sociology, fused with policy, critical and professional sociologies.

Global borrowings present dangers as well as possibilities – the hegemony of United States' professional sociology can constrain the responsiveness of national sociologies to local concerns. Writing in English for foreign professional audiences inevitably threatens the vitality of local public sociology. Borrowings have to be selective. Whereas inspirational public sociologies may appear first in so-called semi-peripheral contexts, and their effects, too, can ramify across the world, such a counter-hegemonic movement will rely on inputs from other countries. On the one side, we have a hegemonic globalisation of sociology which tries to harness a policy sociology to a dominant professional sociology, whereas on the other side there grows a counter-hegemonic globalisation that will subordinate professional and policy sociology to the needs of public sociology, especially an organic public sociology. A Southern feeding of public sociology into the United States, for example, could temper the provincialism of US professional sociology so that it could play a constructive role in the world arena.

IV Conclusion

I have tried to show why sociology has to take a public turn. Sociology lives and dies with society. When society is threatened so is sociology. We can no longer rely on the state to contain the market and so sociologists have to forge their own connections to society, that is, to develop public sociologies. We have to do more than passively serve society, but have to conserve and constitute society. In this sociology has

many potential allies and partners within society as they too come under increasing assault from state and market. That is the broader contemporaneous context within which public sociology could be a guiding spirit and directing force.

We cannot think of the contemporary context outside its past. The three waves of marketisation and their corresponding configurations of sociology cannot be compartmentalised as three separate periods. Each wave deposits its legacy into the next wave in a dialectical regression or progression. So the waves of commodification deepen as they move regressively from labour to money to nature, each wave incorporating the commodification of the previous period, just as the counter-movement leads progressively from labour rights to social rights (which includes labour rights) to human rights which includes all three.

The dialectical movement of sociology is rather different. Policy sociology with its value neutral positive science is a reaction against utopian sociology with its moral infusions and its speculative science, while public sociology tries to bind the value commitment of the first period to the scientific advances of the second. Whereas commodification and its counter-movements deepen with every wave, sociology advances through thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. But even here we should be careful not to think in terms of discrete sociologies, but rather reconfigurations of the four elements of sociology, in which the weight of professional, policy, critical and public sociologies shifts over time. Indeed, a public sociology cannot really take off in a sustained manner unless it is impelled by critical sociology and grounded in a professional sociology.

The rhythm and spacing of the waves also varies from country to country. In the advanced capitalist world of today, the waves are more clearly separated in time, whereas it might be said in countries such as Russia, India or China that there is a compression of waves. Certainly in Russia the commodification of labour, money and nature was simultaneous and intense upon the fall of the Soviet Union, so much so that counter-reaction was suffocated before it began. Sociology suffered in parallel. In China, on the other hand, the intensification of the commodification of labour, money and nature also coincided in the post-Mao period, yet it was still regulated by the party state, which made for economic development rather than Russian economic involution, imprinting itself on the different legacies of sociology. National variation notwithstanding, we can still identify the present era as one in which the commodification of nature concentrates within itself the cumulative impact of commodification more generally. In its subsumption of all commodification, the commodification of nature becomes the planet's

most pressing problem and also becomes generative of social movements, held together by the language of human rights.

Can sociology meet the challenges of third-wave marketisation; can sociology partake in the knitting together of organisations, movements and publics across the globe? Or will it, too, submit to commodification – the commodification of the *production* of knowledge in the university and elsewhere, but also the commodification of the *dissemination* of knowledge by the mass media? On both counts it will be important for sociology to work directly with organisations, movements and publics to compose a singular process outside the control of market and state.

Note

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