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THE CATCH 22 SYNDROME OF SOCIAL SCIENTISTS IN THE SEMIPERIPHERY: EXPLORATORY SOCIOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

Sindrom “kvake 22” među poslenicima društvenih nauka sa poluperiferije: neka sociološka zapažanja

ABSTRACT *This paper describes the parochial predicament of the social sciences by looking at world sociology in its Janus-like face: on the one hand we focus on the intellectual, political, and sometimes even ethical compromises that social scientists in European semiperipheral countries forgo in order to gain acceptance and recognition in world sociology. On the other hand we show how these compromises paradoxically impoverish intellectual potentialities in the major centers of academic excellence too. In the analyses we focus on different interrelated facets of scholarly work where these paradoxes take shape: problem setting and conceptualization, the hierarchy of scholarly publications, the definition of excellence through citation patterns, scientific conferences, and lastly, funding schemes for research. We argue that the social and the political organization of the World System of Science jeopardizes free access to multiple and plural perspectives of the social. A potential source of ideas, theories, and paradigms is hampered by the hierarchical division of labor between scientists in the centers of science and their peers in semiperipheral countries, whose knowledge remains unutilized and sidelined.*

KEY WORDS *semiperiphery, social scientists, knowledge production, marginalization, global hierarchies*

APSTRAKT *Ovaj rad se bavi fenomenom parohijalnosti društvenih nauka posmatrajući svetsku sociologiju u njenoj dvostrukosti, kao lik boga Janusa. S jedne strane, fokusiramo se na intelektualne, političke, pa i etičke kompromise koje naučnici iz društvenih nauka prave da bi bili prihvaćeni i priznati u svetskoj sociologiji. S druge strane, pokazujemo kako ti kompromisi, paradoksalno, osiromašuju i intelektualne potencijale u glavnim centrima*

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akademske izvrsnosti. U radu analiziramo niz međusobno povezanih aspekata naučnog rada kroz koje se ovi paradoksi očituju, kao što su: postavljanje problema i konceptualizacija, hijerarhija naučnih publikacija, definicija izvrsnosti kroz obrasce citiranja, naučne konferencije i, na kraju, šeme finansiranja istraživanja. Tvrdimo da društvena i politička organizacija „svetskog sistema nauke“ ugrožava slobodan pristup višestrukim perspektivama na društvene fenomene. Potencijani izvor ideja, teorija i paradigmi zaprečen je hijerarhijskom podelom rada između naučnika u centrima i njihovih kolega u poluperiferijskim zemljama, čije znanje ostaje neiskorišćeno i marginalizovano.

KLJUČNE REČI poluperiferija, naučnici iz društvenih nauka, proizvodnja znanja, marginalizacija, globalne hijerarhije

Introduction

There was only one catch and that was Catch-22, which specified that a concern for one's safety in the face of dangers that were real and immediate was the process of a rational mind. Orr was crazy and could be grounded. All he had to do was ask; and as soon as he did, he would no longer be crazy and would have to fly more missions. Orr would be crazy to fly more missions and sane if he didn't, but if he was sane he had to fly them. If he flew them he was crazy and didn't have to; but if he didn't want to he was sane and had to. Yossarian was moved very deeply by the absolute simplicity of this clause of Catch-22 and let out a respectful whistle.

"That's some catch, that Catch-22," [Yossarian] observed.

"It's the best there is," Doc Daneeka agreed.

This paper describes the parochial predicament of the social sciences by looking at world sociology in its Janus-like face: on the one hand we focus on the intellectual, political, and sometimes even ethical compromises that social scientists in European semiperipheral countries forgo in order to gain acceptance and recognition in world sociology. On the other hand, we show how these compromises paradoxically impoverish intellectual potentialities in the major centers of academic excellence too. In arguing for the first position we focus on a double-bind – a catch 22 syndrome – that is unique for scientists in the semiperiphery, showing how their quest for recognition jeopardizes their initial motivations for engaging with social science knowledge. In trying to support the second position we show that self-censoring and accommodation to dominant paradigms in the semiperiphery backfires unto the presently recognized centers of excellence by limiting their potential pool of ideas for scientific innovation. We thus argue that the extant division of labor in the World System of Science strengthens intellectual closure throughout the social sciences.

Following the above quote, we argue that like Orr, social scientists in the European semiperiphery are in a no-win situation: if they want to be included in central arenas of the social sciences (and hence be sane) they have to function under conditions which they cannot influence, and consequently they end up being alienated from the scientific problems which motivated them in the first place (hence ending up being insane). If, however, they want to work where they can affect their surrounding conditions and express commitment to their local context they end up being secluded from Western frames of reference – and hence they are akin to being scientifically insane. Globalization intensifies this unique paradox: the growing pressures toward the integration of scientists from the semiperiphery into the centers of science, accompanied by the adoption of global standards of excellence, induces them to camouflage their original motivations and to distort the problems and definitions of their native context. However, in doing so they deform their knowledge while becoming less relevant and conversant with the worldview of their own people, whereas forsaking potential insights about globalization as seen from “below.”

In this paper we seek to expose the different ways by which the position of social scientists in European semiperipheral countries traps them in a "catch 22 syndrome," eventuating in a vicious circle of exclusion and marginalization. We shall show how attempts at inclusion in international scientific arenas necessitate semiperipheral scientists to abandon their original interests (e.g., the local social issues which motivated them in the first place) or their original theoretical presuppositions (e.g., adopting the problems and conceptual definitions of scientists in the center) – thus producing alienation and dissociation from their unique intellectual projects and local intellectual communities. In contrast, the evidence suggests that if they choose to maintain their original intellectual projects they risk being unheard, misunderstood, or shunned as irrelevant by those who currently define scientific excellence.

Our argument goes to the other pole too, though. Specifically, we argue that social science knowledge in the center is delimited by center/semiperiphery relations. We maintain that by cloning Western models of thought social scientists in the semiperiphery delimit the global bounds of social science knowledge; that by communicating with scholars in the Western centers of science only in a way that the latter understand, they decrease pluralism and shrink the potential pool for new ideas. Furthermore, the self-censorship that the latter exhibit and their accommodation to Western agendas – which are oftentimes made in an attempt to chase the chimera of Western definitions of scientific excellence – deprive Western scholarship of potential innovations and critical perspectives that could be engendered by a pluralistic intellectual environment.

This restriction of perspectives results from the hierarchical power structure and resource dependency between the strong Western countries – mostly the USA and the UK – and the multitude of dependent or semiperipheral countries throughout the world. We believe, indeed, that as a result of this restriction the social sciences are confined by unique national traditions (Levine 1995). In other words, Western centers of academic excellence remain unfertilized because of the inauthentic posture that those dependent on them evince in order to gain recognition, even when they study globally-relevant topics. In a sense, then, we argue not only that the social sciences were traditionally parochial, but that they have remained so to this very day. What is new is that Western parochialism is being re-packaged and reconstructed as a universal science of the social (Bourdieu and Wacquant 2005). But in developing this way, its strength becomes its weakness.

By detailing the diverse ways by which exclusion and marginalization of scientists in the semiperiphery take place we hope to bring to light (a) the paradoxical and ambivalent experience of social scientists in the semiperiphery, and (b) the parochial nature of Western social science itself (Wallerstein 1999). Whilst exposing this Janus-face of modern social science – excluding foreigners but parochializing the insiders – we support previous calls to broaden the current definition of scholarship and excellence (Boyer 1990). In some deep sense, we attempt to provide fresh breath to the old ideals of science as a place for the universal participation of human talent, irrespective of gender, nationality, religion, location, or color (Merton 1973; Shils 1983). In essence, then, we use different sources of data to support the modern ethos of the community of science (Jaspers 1960; Kerr 2001; Pelikan 1992).

Social Science, Center and Semiperiphery

The ethos of science is inherently tied with universalism and cosmopolitanism (Barber 1952; Merton 1973). Expressing Enlightenment ideals of humanism and individualism, scientists were to pursue truth irrespective of culture or nationality (Shils 1967; Shils 1983). Their commitment was to be oriented to the global scientific community rather than to any primordial center. Science, therefore, was defined as a general good that should be pursued and promoted for the betterment of humanity. It was to be an open arena for cultivating human talent, allowing scientists from around the world to have an equal share in the communal effort of advancing scientific knowledge. Sociologists of science have indeed regarded science as “a common stock of knowledge,” “a cosmopolitan tradition,” as “a global scientific community” that is oriented toward the “communal cultivation of science” (Schott 1993b). In line with these images, Edward Shils (Shils 1967) argued that,

The intellectual community, in its territorial scope and its criteria of admission, is the most universal of communities... In principle, no primordial properties,

such as connection of kinship, locality, tribe, or territory, are valid in the assessment of the qualifications for membership in any of its constituent institutions or for advancement in its corporate or honorary hierarchies (p. 284).

In contrast with its ethos, however, science is nationally, geographically and culturally distributed; the social sciences are also reflecting the colonial history of their setting (Bremen, Ben-Ari and Alatas 2005; Harding 1998; Lemert 1995). Instead of its avowed pluralism and openness, science evolved into a hierarchically organized closed system. It is true that universities and research centers have spread around the world (Frank and Meyer 2007), but these loci of scientific activity are peripheral satellites in a world that is dominated by strong scientific centers (Wallerstein 1999). The scientific projects carried in remote locations usually *apply* ideas that were generated in the center. Furthermore, center-generated theories are often *tested* by local data to extend their use; and local evidence is often presented as an *example* for these centrally generated theories.

In several comprehensive studies of the global scientific community Thomas Schott has clearly shown that science is, indeed, hierarchically organized (Schott 1993a; Schott 1993b; Schott 1998a; Schott 1998b; Schott, Kanamitsu and Luther 1998). These studies have repeatedly shown that scientists in semiperipheral areas defer in face of their colleagues in the Western centers of science. As Schott said, scientists in the semiperiphery “have deferred mainly to these centers, have traveled there, been influenced by science in the centers, occasionally collaborated there and valued recognition from colleagues in the centers” (Schott 1993a, p. 43). Though he believes in the functional openness of science – coming from the center of the center – Schott has clearly shown that scientists in the semiperiphery are users of Western science rather than contributors to its collective stock of knowledge (Schott 1993a; Schott 1993b; Schott 1998a; Schott 1998b; Schott, Kanamitsu and Luther 1998).

These comprehensive studies have also illuminated the Achilles heel of Western science, namely its self-reliance – which we deem to be its parochial orientation. For example, American universities usually host students from around the world, but excellent American students rarely leave their country to study abroad. This closure has many consequences. As Schott suggested,

North American scientists defer mostly inward, to their local contributors, and little outward, to contributors in Western Europe and elsewhere around the world...North American scientists receive influence mostly from peers in North America, some from Western Europe and little from elsewhere...North American scientists desire recognition mostly from their local peers...Self-reliance in the deferential ties is far higher in North America than in any other region...North American research is considerably more self-reliant than the research in any other region. This evidence corroborates the hypothesis that the

center is especially self-reliant (Schott, Kanamitsu and Luther 1998, pp. 120-137).

Why the Semiperiphery? A Note on Knowledge Production

In the present context, we focus on social scientific work in European semiperipheral countries (Terlouw 2002) because scholars in these settings are especially attuned to the rise or fall of states, institutions, organizations, and careers (Blagojevic et al. 2003). Theoretically, knowledge about the social is highly influenced by concrete exposure to historical events and political regimes (Wessely 1996). It follows that semiperipheral settings constitute ripe settings for exposing scientists to extreme forms of social change, and hence for deep understanding of social life. Furthermore, plunged into a survival mode of life, social scientists in “transition” settings are challenged to deconstruct the forces that engulf their lives and rock their careers. Having been exposed to institutional and organizational earthquakes, they become sociologically privileged: they learn to deconstruct interests and assess reforms; they clearly see the rule of arbitrariness and perceive the ways of power with naked eyes. Consequently, social scientists in semiperipheral areas may be said to “enjoy” epistemic advantages relative to their peers in the centers of science – who work in stable locations – because they were witnessing – much to their distraught at times – the positive and negative repercussions of profound and fast social change.

As other scholars suggested, this epistemic advantage is a potential source for unique knowledge (Levine 1979; Pels 1999; Schutz 1964; Tiryakian 1973). This position is said to allow scholars in the semiperiphery to see more clearly the arbitrariness of social institutions. Post-colonial theorists even argue that standing in the “third space” – that between a center and a periphery – provides epistemological advantages. This position is a productive one; it engenders new possibilities of thought and provides room for new paradigms to evolve (Bhabha 1994). This general argument is especially true in post-Soviet and post-communist societies. Remembering the functioning of prior institutions, scholars in these places can clearly appreciate the operation of new ones; having a clear memory of one type of society (e.g. state socialism), they can easily appreciate and criticize the functioning of a new order (e.g. a neo-liberal market economy). Actually, semiperipheral locations often provide scientists with knowledge that is generated by quasi controlled-experiments, namely with a design of before-and-after (society before and after war, rapid inflation, mass immigration, etc.). Since social knowledge is so intimately tied to personally embodied experiences, social scientists in semiperipheral areas should be excellent sources for innovative social science insights. As Hadas, writing in Hungary, said more than ten years ago, “a scholar can

be capable of creating a theory or paradigm of universal validity starting out from the 'differentia specifica' of his very topic" (Hadas 1996, p. 70).

Paradoxically, however, – and against the avowed advantages just described – the very social location that potentiates their knowledge of the social is also the cause for the inadvertent muteness of social scientists in European semiperipheral settings (Blagojevic 2004). Given their potential for outstanding insights, the dependent position of social scientists in semiperipheral countries may be thus counterproductive for global social science, not least because it produces unintended censorship. This position – characterized elsewhere as “transmitters” of Western knowledge to the East (Blagojevic 2004) – is thus a reason for the loss of an important source of potentially innovative ideas and insights about social realities in a globally changing world.

The Academic Catch 22 in the Semiperiphery

In the following exploratory and qualitative analysis we expand on previous analysis of the problems of East-European sociology (Blagojevic 2004; Blagojevic 2006; Hadas 1996; Kovac 2002; Lengyel 1996; Wessely 1996) by detailing *how* center-semiperiphery relations in the social sciences censor academic work in the latter while delimiting potential innovativeness in the former. We argue that power-dependency relations amongst scientists in Western and semiperipheral countries produce a series of catch-22 paradoxes. In the analyses we focus on different interrelated facets of scholarly work: problem setting and conceptualization, the hierarchy of scholarly publications, the definition of excellence through citation patterns, scientific conferences, and lastly, funding schemes for research.

Problem Setting and Conceptualization

Allegedly, social science concepts are universal. People often believe that their features are like those of natural science concepts, namely that they are applicable across contexts, and that they are invariant. Practically, however, social science concepts are culturally defined. They are applicable in their original context, but prove to be less effective or even invalid across cultural or national borders. Notwithstanding their contextual nature, however, Western social scientists believe that their indigenous terminologies constitute objective toolkits that allow valid cross-cultural inferences. They also expect scholars in the semiperiphery to use these toolkits, without reflecting on their contextual nature, assuming them to be universal. This, however, may be a source of bias or distortion.

In his critique of American scientific imperialism, for example, Pierre Bourdieu provided concrete examples for its power over non-American scientists

(Bourdieu and Wacquant 2005). In America, he argued, race relations boil down to the clear dichotomy between Blacks and Whites (Myrdal 1944). In other contexts, however, race relations obey a gradated framework, allowing many shades and colors along a racial continuum. This is the case, for example, in Brazil. However, due to their weakness in the world of science, Brazilian sociologists adopt the American model of race relations and apply it to their own context (Schott 1998a). Directed by American foundations, these scholars acquiesce with American pressures, awkwardly applying foreign concepts to a reality which follows unique normative structure. For Bourdieu, this imperialism – most severely critiqued in the case of the neo-liberal economic theory (Bourdieu 2005) – is bad for the social sciences. Like other forms of imperialism, it obstructs truth and besets a just world order.

This pattern of scientific imperialism was recently exemplified in a European study on private schools. Wishing to publish their study in an American journal, the European authors had to frame it within the American liberal discussion about privatization of public services and school choice (Chubb and Moe 1990). This American strand suggests that private schools are more effective than public schools, and that, in order to improve productivity and competitiveness, it would be advisable to privatize schooling (Chubb and Moe 1990; Coleman and Hoffer 1987). In the European context, however, private schools are often run by religious institutions, and their framework is utterly different from the American liberal model of market choice. Consequently, in negotiating the publication, the American editors and the European authors had difficulty to agree about the meaning of what privatization means. At the end of the day, however, the American version prevailed, leaving the European authors frustrated because they felt that the US model is the exception and that the best thing to do was to drop it from the statistical models. This, however, was hardly an option.

As different scholars have suggested, Eastern Europe has unique ways of conceptualizing phenomena, and they have locally applicable theories (Hadas 1996; Lengyel 1996; Wessely 1996). For example, Nannette Funk has recently explored whether Anglo-American feminist critiques are applicable in Eastern and Central European countries, concluding that “under the conditions in this region, several Anglo American feminist criticisms of liberalism do not apply, while others have a very different meaning” (Funk 2004:695). Explaining these differences she stated that post-communist liberal feminism “...did develop differently and exists in different theoretical, political, and historical contexts. In both pre and post-socialism, liberal thought varies widely and differs from many of the classical and dominant forms of liberalism in Western Europe and the United States” (Funk 2004:696). Paradoxically, however, most of those differences stay invisible and unrecognized because they do not fit into dominant frameworks which the center defines.

Another crucial issue is that of conformity to external agendas. Western agendas – academic, social, economic, and political – latently impose frames of reference on scholars in the semiperiphery, regardless of their relevance for those countries. These agendas – centrally set by major international players like The World Bank, G8, or the IMF – often assume a univocal model of development. Consequently, everything is seen through the lenses of deficiency and delay. “Catching up” with the West is portrayed as an inevitable necessity, often frustrating the people and leaders of semiperipheral countries. The strategies of camouflaging and self-censoring clearly appear when Eastern-European countries join the European Accession process. If they want to gain recognition and legitimacy, scholars from these countries have to abide by Brussels’s agendas and policies. If they really want success, they become advocates and ambassadors of those agendas.

Some Eastern-European scholars accentuate this critique by suggesting that their ideas are being “robbed” by their colleagues in academic centers. Having a shattered infra-structure for carrying out research, these scholars see their original ideas being taken away because they have no means to test them through rigorous empirical studies. Consequently, some of them feel that they “feed the beast,” namely provide others with ideas but suffering from “erosion of authorship” along the way. Other scholars report about a sense of mistiming, namely of never being in synch with current academic fads. They feel that either they wrote new ideas before their time (and were therefore left unused), or were too late, arriving on scene after center-based academics have written about their topics (leaving them the turf of irrelevant esoteric examples). Scholars from the semiperiphery indeed feel that their contributions can only be recognized if they connect with ready-made conceptualizations in the center. They enter into academic debates, but rarely do they frame them or define their agendas. At best, they get a niche in the debate, providing a cornered example that expands cross-cultural perspectives. This means that they are – almost by definition – deprived of the capacity to be recognized as original.

These notes suggest that social science concepts are not politically innocent. Whether one uses strong words – like imperialism, phantasms of universalism, or colonization – or more polite ones like transition, democratization, and modernization, the fundamental power structure is the same. Western science cannot escape its colonial heritage, not necessarily because of inherent aggressive tendencies, but rather as a consequence of the unequal global institutionalization of the social sciences in the world (Wallerstein 1999). Consequently, social scientists need to appreciate the role of power in making for biased “knowledge,” and the connection between that “knowledge” and concrete political, military and economic world affairs. Because of their subordinate position in this power structure, social scientists in the semiperiphery are caught in a troubling double bind. Using concepts of little relevance for their setting they are destined to become irrelevant at home.

But by using their indigenous conceptualizations they are destined to disappear from the global, or rather Americanized world of science. Either way, they become *personae non gratae*.

Scholarly Publications

Like other facets in academic work, publication of scientific studies in scholarly journals were historically and culturally determined by Western traditions (Clark 2006). However, sociologists of science have often believed that in order to ensure true meritocracy publication of scientific papers should never reflect geographical or cultural borders (Merton 1973). Of most spheres of life, indeed, science was to be the most open for talent. In a recent complaint against the U.S. Government regarding the exclusion of a South African scholar from the state the editors of the ASA's *Footnotes* argued that "academic freedom is fundamental to ASA's mission, which rests upon the ability of scholars from wide-ranging perspectives to engage in dialog that nurtures scientific development to the benefit of the larger society. Academic freedom is the hallmark of American democratic culture" (*Footnotes*, Vol. 35(8): 1, 2007). This openness of the Western academic ethos is strongly endorsed by journal editors and reviewers.

However, scholarly publications are rarely open for non-Western perspectives, and – in contrast to its avowed openness – academic freedom is usually allowed only for those who adopt Western scientific and often political agendas. Though unintentionally, indeed, scholarly journals impose a Western discourse that delimits its own breadth. The monochromatic nature of the center's scholarship results from the hidden power structure of the World System of Science. Indeed, because of their dependent position, scholars in the European semiperiphery distort their agendas and conform to externally-set agendas, thereby allowing Western univocality to remain unchallenged. In the following notes we detail how this state of affairs eventuates.

The delimited nature of Western social science often necessitates scholars from the semiperiphery to re-orient their problem setting and conceptual frameworks to those familiar for American and Western European readers. In order to "interest" them and converse with their discourses, scholars in the semiperiphery are oftentimes required to translate their studies so as to make them "universally hearable." These translations usually result from prodding exerted by reviewers and in response to requests for clarification and justification that journal editors impose as pre-conditions for publications. The following examples – informally collected from different sociologists – convey the spirit of these requests by Western journal editors.

“I do not want to seem ethnocentric, but since most of [Journal’s X] readers are American, they are likely to question the generalizability of your theoretical framework and empirical findings.” [Assuming that American research is generalizable without necessitating a similar justification].

“Given the parochialism of American readers, it might be wise to have a footnote on the first page that...”

“I do not think the author has told us why we should be concerned with corporate law reform in [...] as it is a tiny country that is not (as far as I know) a significant player in the international political economy.”

Furthermore, when they simplistically heed such requests, scholars in semiperipheral settings at times set non-coherent problems for their papers, producing confusion that makes publication even more difficult. The following quote attests to the harsh flaming produced by such paradoxical attempts to make ends meet, but it also exposes – once again – the parochial or local nature of the community that readers expect foreign scholars to converse with:

“This is a weird paper. The literature is all about tracking in the American high school, while the data are about tracking in the [country] primary school [...] but if we are to ask for a redraft we would need the [country] data related to classic UK studies such as...” (underlined in the original).

Scholars from semiperipheral countries are indeed accustomed to receive such requests for re-orientation and re-drafting. In fact, if they want to be heard by Western scholars they have to reframe their original interests in order to match those of Western gatekeepers. For example, a paper written by a top MA student from Hungary was rejected twice by Western journal editors. In the first round of review they requested her to frame her results around a Western theoretical framework. In the second round they rejected her paper because it did not confirm or reject Western theories, and was therefore not important enough to be published.

It is important to note that these requests by Western editors and reviewers do not express neutral scientific requests for clarification; rather, they should be understood as unintentional power-laden impositions. Expressing a limited, often national point-of-view, they become unintended acts of domination which makes foreign social science only relevant to the extent that it converses with the local and delimited communities of Western countries.

Such informal prodding provides a clear example for the “catch 22” syndrome that this analysis alludes to. On the one hand, if they want to publish in top academic journals – which become top journals due to the intense scientific conversation that

characterizes nationally-confined social science – social scientists from semiperipheral locations have to exercise the art of multiple translations and accommodations. In other words, they need to review Western sources, to adopt Western problems, and to frame their studies through Western conceptualizations. Actually, countries in the center are implicitly framed as “model countries” with “model knowledge” systems, while countries in the semiperiphery unintentionally become “deviant cases” or “comparative cases.” In order to tell a story about the latter, however, social scientists in the semiperiphery have to write a coherent story for the model.

For example, to pass journal gatekeepers social scientists in the semiperiphery need to engage in an ongoing dialogue with Western ideas, even when the terminology they adopt is out of synch with their original agendas. In many cases this means that they need to explain why their society differs from the Western model, making them “specific.” This requirement urges authors in the semiperiphery to engage in rhetorical exercises at justification that Western scholars are simply exempt from. But in detailing and justifying these differences or similarities the authors are forced to use Western lenses or agendas. This isomorphic tendency reproduces Western societies as “normal,” and normalizes semiperipheral societies as underdeveloped or as “in transition.” They are *ipso facto* defined as inferior and in need of external intervention by experts from the center.

Moreover, social scientists in the semiperiphery often need to obtain credibility as “scholars” through putting up lists of references and citations that often do not have anything to do with the local problems they are trying to explore. Furthermore, in writing their papers they are not expected to cite much relevant work from their own country and in their native language. This practice unintentionally undermines academic communities in the semiperiphery, because a large body of work is left un-cited as a result of power-dependency relations. This is why career progression is more difficult for academics in their own land.

Additionally, in order to be recognized by the center, scholars in the semiperiphery often need to conceal their own innovations and theoretical contributions, tactically but unnecessarily applying Western ideas. In order to be accepted by Western scholars they even need to “invent” others who will in turn “invent” them as innovators. In feminism, this manipulative strategy is often called “the power of the weak”, denoting the ways by which powerless women in patriarchal settings manipulate “their” patriarch to achieve their goals. Though generally true, this pressure to accommodate to Western frameworks is especially felt by researchers who engage with empirical research. However, whatever strategy of justification they adopt, many scholars feel that in order to publish in recognized Western journals they have to abandon their original orientations, silence local debates to which they respond, and censor their real interests. Their original

interests, creativity, and innovativeness are “lost in translation,” ending up being fully misunderstood, or irrelevant, in their own settings.

The other side of this “catch 22” is just as frustrating. If they choose to frame their studies through locally-generated knowledge schemes – namely, local interests and local concepts – social scientists in the semiperiphery risk being muted by journal gatekeepers. This is exacerbated by the fact that in many cases, social scientists in semiperipheral settings prefer writing in their native language, aiming for their native audience. However, by using native languages they fully exclude themselves from the global scientific community because foreign scientists can rarely read and evaluate their contribution and situate it within the appropriate context. For example, a colleague published papers on South America, many of them in Spanish. Consequently, his English-speaking peers were unable to read and assess his contributions. This resulted in continuous suspicion about the quality of his work, eventually accompanied by slow academic promotion.

Furthermore, scholars in the semiperiphery are oftentimes motivated to engage with social science scholarship because they want to engage with local social reforms (e.g. engaging in state building efforts, inciting a civic movement, etc.). However, when they want to publish their scientific insights they have to censor those interests because otherwise they risk being stigmatized as “political” (rather than scientific). This mode of informal control makes for submissive adherence to non-authentic agendas that may alienate social science efforts in the semiperiphery. On the other hand, if they want to play an active role in their communities – and often they are prodded to do so because of academic traditions in small semiperipheral countries, where elites are drafted for nation-building projects (Yair and Apeloig 2006) – their work is soon stigmatized at the center as “political” rather than scholarly. It should be noted, also, that the Western academic tradition emphasizes the relevance of specialization, but in many semiperipheral countries scholars get involved with expert work as part of their intellectual responsibility towards the community (Lengyel 1996).

Another problem results from the fact that universities throughout Europe are institutionally becoming ever more tied to Western definitions of excellence. They promote scholars based on evaluations of merit, which are commonly measured by the number of quotes in English publications covered by the ISI. To survive, then, social scientists in the semiperiphery are now pushed to publish in Western outlets more than they have been before. However, in doing so they are destined to stand at the periphery of the global community, because the community of science only “listens” to their projects when they alienate themselves from their original interests, or when they take subordinate roles in projects headed by scholars in the center (e.g. Gross and Benavot 2008). As suggested, they can only publish in Western journals if they support or reject Western theories with local examples.

Because of these various forms of polite academic pressures, scholars in the semiperiphery are forced to bow and play according to Western models of excellence. However, we argue that this forced submissiveness works for the detriment of enlightened social science. As Foucault suggested, power defines truth, but in the case of the social sciences the power of Western scholars defines a delimited truth that encircles them in a parochial world of unchallenged ideas. This division of scientific work can be likened to Hegelian master-slave relationships. Paradoxically, then, because of their domination of the World System of Science, Western scholars forsake the opportunity to see their world from alternative points of view. For the social sciences, however, this parochialism may be fatal. The fruitful potential contribution that could be garnered by plural perspectives and cultures is cut short. Consequently, national sociologies in the center remain bounded by their unique context.

Evaluation of Excellence and Citation Techniques

A major source for measuring scientific excellence is provided by citation counts and publications in highly cited journals. The most comprehensive tool for providing this information is the *ISI Web of Knowledge*, which provides yearly evidence about scientific productivity of scholars, institutions, and countries (Garfield 1970; Garfield, Pudovkin and Istomin 2003). While most scholars would agree that the ISI is biased toward Western science, few take time to delve into its inner working in order to appreciate the real extent of this bias. The following evidence exposes some important details about the ISI's delimited and Western-oriented sources. As we shall argue, the evidence testifies the exclusion of science in semiperipheral areas, but *ipso facto* also the constraints on Western science itself.

In 2006, for example, the ISI coded information from 1,768 social science journals. Of those, 95% were published in eight Western countries. The major English-speaking bloc – the USA, England, Canada, and Australia – accounts for 83.5% of all journals; the West European bloc – the Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland and France – adds 11.3% of all ISI recorded journals. All the other countries in the world – including giants like China and India, and midgets like Israel and Slovenia – accounted for only 5% of all recorded social science journals. Furthermore, the ISI encoded information about social science journals from 39 countries only, suggesting that all the other members of this globe are irrelevant unrecognized by the social sciences according as the ISI structures it. No matter how one looks at this data, they clearly suggest that scientific excellence is latched to Western publishing outlets only. It may also be noted that English has become the dominating language of science. After the collapse of the USSR, for example, scientists were advised not to rely on Russian sources, because inbreeding would strengthen invisibility.

These characteristics leave open questions about scientific activity in non-Western countries, and about the geographical, political, or cultural bias of this seemingly neutral instrument for assessing scientific excellence. Either way, two things are clear from this data. First, because of technical considerations, scientific excellence is nowadays defined by using Western publications only. Over the past few years university administrations – under the ideological pressures of global neo-liberalism and flexible management principles – have set new requirements for promoting and remunerating their scientists. In contrast to the traditional emphasis on local publications, some universities will now only credit their faculty if they publish in ISI-ranked journals. For example, if a social scientist from Finland seeks to become renowned beyond the borders of his or her country or be promoted by the university, he or she has to publish in ISI-ranked journals and be cited by other scholars who publish in these journals – largely because academic excellence is delimited by the technical and geographical limits of this American database. In that sense, indeed, the ISI has inadvertently become a technical instrument of global domination, because it imposes on everybody to participate in a mode of work that is particularly befitting the American labor market. Over the long run, this feeds a spiral of ever growing exclusion of authors from “small” intellectual markets. This leads to the unprecedented popularity of a selected “few”, which are cited over and over again in a manner of scholarly ritual that covers the profound neglect of theoretical and comparative contributions from authors from the semiperiphery.

The second conclusion from the prevalence of Western journals in the ISI is that Western scientists publish in highly secluded environments, thereby possibly becoming entrapped within the parochial discourse of their Western environment. This paradoxically results from the unintended predicament of non-Western science: in order to become excellent, social scientists in the semiperiphery take a chameleon-like posture, formulating their texts in such a way as to converse with Western discourses. Their dependency on foreign donors and foundations in the center strengthens this inauthentic posture, producing invalid knowledge schemes that satisfy external wishes but have limited relevance. The co-optation of scientists in the semiperiphery enhances uni-vocality of the center’s journals and strengthens the doxic tendencies of social science paradigms.

The deceptive stance that scientists in the semiperiphery exhibit therefore rebounds on Western social science. Since scholars in the semiperiphery censor their original conceptualization, Western scientists do not have an opportunity to learn from alternative worldviews. Furthermore, since they are not challenged by such alternatives they do not feel that there are omissions and biases in their paradigms, pushing them toward closure and stasis. Consequently, as long as Western social science delimits itself to Western publications and journals, it may be circling within non-enlightened bounds and hence limit the potential of global social science knowledge. Sadly, however, scholars in the center are rarely aware of the parochial

nature of their agendas, falsely believing in what some have critiqued as the Western phantasm of universalism (Bourdieu and Wacquant 2001; Bourdieu and Wacquant 2005; Wallerstein 1999).

In this sense, the ISI makes for two types of structural constraints, one on scholars from the semiperiphery – who have no independent strategy to become recognized as excellent; the other on Western scientists, many of whom get entrapped by nationally and culturally delimited assumptions, concepts, and agendas. While the former can never attain excellence without giving up to Western science, the latter's scholarship is destined to remain parochial and of limited universal significance. Paradoxically, this parochial bent is still associated with seemingly universal conceptions of excellence.

Scientific Conferences

The Janus-face of the social sciences is also engendered by participation in Western scientific conferences – like the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association or its British counterpart. These events remind participants from semiperipheral countries to what extent they are outsiders: marginal actors in the hotbed of social science. Unintended reminders are provided by “receptions for international scholars,” where all foreign members are invited to celebrate their Otherness with representatives of the organizing committee. Although the organizers truly wish to celebrate the effort of foreign scholars in coming to the conference, the voluntary short gathering they organize symbolizes the national boundaries of the scientific labor market, and strengthens the sense of foreignness, namely of being estranged while integrated; of being pushed into Otherness by a supposedly universal setting.

This parochial orientation is oftentimes structured in the programs of scientific conferences too. In many cases foreign scholars are relegated to sessions under the title of “comparative perspectives” or “international perspectives.” Such sessions may lump together scholars from Turkey, Israel, Africa, and China in what amounts to be a ghetto of the excluded. Viewed in terms of popularity – often an index of excellence – these sessions attract a small audience. Those attending them often come from the “native countries” of the presenters, some in expressing tribal loyalties, and some to be briefed about pressing conditions in their home country.

In other cases – especially in times of war or protracted conflict – social scientists from the semiperiphery are invited to speak about burning issues (literally, at times), but then again they are positioned as the exotic. For example, a colleague from former Yugoslavia described the many conferences that she was asked to speak about the dire days of her country. In cynical twist she referred to herself as a “Serb-for-rent.”

These representative anecdotes suggest that social scientists from the semiperiphery are integrated into the center as strangers; but whilst integrated as strangers, they are pushed to adopt the center's problem setting and its normatively accepted discourses. Admittedly, the sessions about semiperipheral countries are not meant to exclude foreign scholars, but rather to exhibit the place of Otherness. However, in doing so they unintentionally produce intellectual ghettos that exclude scientists from the semiperiphery from the major arenas of the conference.

Reminders of their peripheral position are unintentionally sent to scientists from the semiperiphery even on the rare occasion when they are invited as keynote speakers. Even in such settings they stand in a "catch 22" position. If they choose to be understood by their audience, they have to match their discourse to the interests of their audience. In response, they frame their talk vis-à-vis familiar topics for the Western ear. Based on experience, these honorable guests soon learn that the "burden of proof" is on their side. They quickly appreciate how to frame their presentation so as to match the needs and interests of their audience (Blagojevic 2004). However, in ironing their speech so as to make it "hearable," they are pushed to present their data or observations as examples for Western theories or conjectures rather than as topics worthy of interest in their own right. But in doing so they may feel that they defect from their original inquiry while speaking about issues which may stand at the bottom of their true priorities (e.g. speaking about equal opportunity when the problems are rather personal security and minimal standards of living).

Put differently, guest speakers are oftentimes pushed to provide the seemingly universal perspective of the West with their local anecdote. Nevertheless, they most often are still looked upon as anecdotal. Essentially, scholars from the semiperiphery are exotic to listen to, but they are rarely taken seriously. Often it seems as if the audience is baffled by these keynote lectures: at times such presentations are followed by silence – admittedly, some times silence expresses appreciation – but it is silence nonetheless. In other cases, the audience applauds the guest with cheering hails of "heroism," but there is a tinge of colonial air to them. For example, when India's Arundati Roy bashed American capitalism during the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association the crowd cheered with enthusiasm. Nevertheless, Roy was perceived as anecdotal. True, she was a literary gem to listen to, but her speech was perceived as a fantastic challenge against the American foundations of global control. But it remained fantastic. Coming from India, Roy could easily be relegated back there.

Paradoxically, then, scientific conferences – though meant to be open arenas for all nationalities and creeds – are caught in the same "catch 22" that delimits the span of the social sciences. National meetings are national: they have a local pre-determined focus, they use a local discursive environment, and they are often geared

toward nationally pressing issues. Notwithstanding their global appearance and multicultural orientations, then, these annual meetings are always national and self-referential.

In this intellectual environment, it is very difficult to maintain a different voice. Actually, foreign scholars are unintentionally directed to “become white,” namely to speak to the meeting's theme in a language that is acceptable for the host society. This is why, then, scientific meetings tend to foreclose social science knowledge rather than expand its boundaries. Admittedly, this tendency for closure partly results from self-censoring practices which scientists from the semiperiphery engage with; but it is clearly a structural outcome of the division of scientific labor in the World System of Science.

Funding Schemes

Funding for social research in semiperipheral areas is commonly derived from external sources. Peripheral countries suffer from lack of resources to fund social research and from weak infrastructures to support statistically robust long-term studies. Given these weaknesses, UNESCO, the World Bank, and the Rockefeller and the Soros Foundations constitute the major alternative sources for funding scientific research in semiperipheral countries. However, these provisions usually come with strings attached, namely with clear agendas set by central officers and with expected outcomes that should fall within the charter set by the foundations. For example, American funding was a major player in setting the agenda of “modernization” in Israeli sociology (Yair and Apeloig 2006). Similarly, the Soros Foundation and EU-funding for the Balkans was directing research projects toward externally defined agendas. While center-defined agendas for research may at times coincide with local ones, in others they might not. Either way, however, semiperipheral researchers will circumvent their original ideas in order to obtain funding for any research, if only to survive their peripheral predicament.

The European context of political integration promised to equalize opportunities for researchers across the continent. Despite its avowed agenda, however, European funding schemes have remained unequal. For example, a study found that in the fourth and fifth frameworks of EU research programs 57% of all research coordinators came from four “core” European countries: UK, Germany, France and the Netherlands (Gross and Benavot 2008). Only 21% lived in the southern countries (i.e., Italy, Portugal, Spain and Greece). Another report (Greco and Wickham 2002) has similarly shown that most projects are centrally-led by the aforementioned four countries, but that the recent program has expanded the participating of countries from semiperipheral areas (participation of East European countries rising from 3.1% in the fourth framework to 39% in the fifth, for

example). These studies clearly show, then, that most EU-funding returns to the central countries; and that most projects are led by leaders from central countries. Therefore, participation of scientists from semiperipheral countries in EU-led studies strengthens EU-agendas while neutralizing their potential contribution for the expansion of European social science.

Furthermore, researchers from the semiperiphery are often incorporated in EU projects in order to buttress the inclusive value of the proposal, thereby raising its chances in the competition over funding. In other words, the institutional rules of EU funding encouraged participation of semiperipheral countries, but they were often in a position to describe what happens in “transition” as compared to the normative models of the center. In this setting too, then, the power structure of center-semiperiphery was reproduced. But in order to survive and obtain some funding for their work, scientists in the semiperiphery were to acquiesce with the agenda set by project leaders from the center. They were thus again caught in the catch 22 syndrome.

Conclusion

Social scientists in the European semiperiphery have a unique position to appreciate the complexities of social organization and political life. Having witnessed the rise and fall and rise of different political and social regimes, they are keenly aware of the arbitrary and contingent nature of societal institutions. However, as we have shown in this paper, these epistemic advantages are lost and censored as a result of the same forces which potentiated their sociological imagination in the first place. Living on the semiperiphery, social scientists are caught in a series of contradictions – described here as the catch 22 syndrome. Indeed, the five facets of academic work covered here – conceptualization, publication, citation, conferences, and funding – are systematically intertwined; together they form a coherent structure which debilitates, censors, and excludes unique patterns of knowledge from the semiperiphery. Reflecting their weakened position in the World System of Science, social scientists in the semiperiphery cannot simply overcome their marginalization by “making it” in one domain. In order to voice their authentic knowledge and local insights they need to escape from the double bind that they are entangled in. This, however, is hardly possible.

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