WHAT IS SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE?

Titu-Marius I. Băjenescu*, ORCID ID: 0000-0002-9371-6766

Swiss Technology Association, Electronics Group Switzerland
*Corresponding author: Titu-Marius I. Băjenescu, *tmbajenesco@gmail.com*

Abstract. The article analyses a social problem with a major impact on the development of society, the macroeconomics, but also on each individual. The ability of some people to understand the behaviours, thoughts, and feelings of others and to interact effectively with them is called social intelligence. Also called interpersonal intelligence, it is closely related to emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is a person's ability to understand and control their own emotions, as well as the ability to deal with those of others. Although complicated to measure, these two forms of intelligence are particularly useful in everyday life: family or friends, married life, professional life...

Keywords: *social intelligence, emotional intelligence, social relations, reliable scientific knowledge, interaction of economy, culture and social structure, economy as a politically controllable apparatus, concept of "embeddedness", anthropology, sociology, generalizable theory of social systems, statistical experiments, definitions and empirical statements, ethical aspects.*

Rezumat. Articolul analizează o problemă socială cu impact major asupra dezvoltării societății, a macroeconomiei, dar și asupra fiecărui individ. Capacitatea unor oameni de a înțelege comportamentele, gândurile și sentimentele altora și de a interacționa eficient cu ei se numește inteligență socială. Numită și inteligență interpersonală, este strâns legată de inteligența emoțională. Inteligența emoțională este capacitatea unei persoane de a-și înțelege și controla propriile emoții, precum și abilitatea de a face față celor ale altora. Deși complicate de măsurat, aceste două forme de inteligență sunt deosebit de utile în viața de zi cu zi: familia sau prietenii, viața de cuplu, viața profesională...

Cuvinte cheie: *inteligență socială, inteligență emoțională, relații sociale, cunoștințe științifice de încredere, interacțiunea economiei, culturii și structurii sociale, economia ca aparat controlabil politic, conceptul de „înglobare", antropologie, sociologie, teoria generalizată a sistemelor sociale, experimente statistice, definiții și enunțuri empirice, aspecte etice.*

1. Introduction

Sociology as a science can be approached in various ways. I will exclude the case where someone has always wanted to get into the spirit of the times and knew from the

beginning that only sociology could help them. What seems more typical to me is the groping attempt to find a science that seems to provide an answer for a diffuse interest in what holds society together at its core and what this has to do with us as individuals [1]. As with all tentative attempts, one is certainly not unimpressed by what one "hears" in this respect, and some things one "knows" "approximately". I mean this without irony. That's how it is on a large and small scale, and science doesn't begin any differently.

Have you ever had the impression that some people are easier to talk to than others? Did you know that with a little practice you can also develop interpersonal skills? Developing social intelligence is useful for improving one's relationship with others. It allows you to better observe and understand them. This relational ease is an increasingly sought-after skill in the professional world. An individual who is able to understand his or her colleagues or clients, to put himself or herself in their place and influence them is an asset. Strengthening social intelligence has many beneficial effects in everyday life. Working on this skill helps to get rid of bad communication habits such as cutting others off, judging hastily, speaking too fast... But it will also make your personal and professional relationships more fluid. In some cases, using your social intelligence can avoid complicated situations or defuse conflict [2].

2. Development

Sociology is not about eternal or definitive truths that reassure one, reassuring, but rather about reflected certainty. But this can only be obtained after some anxiety and - it must be must be won again and again! Sociology is not an easy business, but that does not make it boring. Even more, it is able to surprise us where we think we are quite sure. Sociology does not begin far above our heads or in a foreign country, nor with the others, but here. And that's why you have to reckon with the fact that Sociology will initially disorient you: Nothing takes more time and intellectual effort than the gradual development of a constantly alert sociological consciousness [3]. For it involves a complete change of the habitual perspective with which we orient ourselves in the everyday world. The beginner in the study of sociology will initially measure his progress by a growing and, under certain circumstances, very profound disorientation towards his own disorientation towards his own living conditions, which can only be overcome by the alienating and relativising experience.

Economic sociology can be defined briefly as the application of the sociological tradition to economic phenomena, in an attempt to explain these [4]. Economic sociology shares most of the concerns and goals of economics. On one point, however, it differs sharply from conventional economics; and this is through its direct and strong focus on the role that social relations and social institutions play in the economy. To live in society means to be connected to other people and take part in its institutions - and this deeply affects the economic actions of all economic actors. It affects the way in which such actions turn out individually as well as in aggregate. The patterns of social interaction and the institutions that people create and use in their attempts to make a living and a profit are what constitute the main subject area of economic sociology. As in game theory, there is no isolated homo economicus in sociology -only people who interact with one another in their attempts to realize their interests.

The point about using terms such as 'validity', 'goodness of fit' and 'plausibility' is that they allow for a whole range of possibilities. Truth is an absolute notion. A statement is either true or false. And although we need the notion of truth as a regulative ideal (Figure 1), a goal

to aspire to, we also need other terms such as validity and plausibility to cover the range of possibilities that typically occur in concrete social research when we fall short of the ideal.
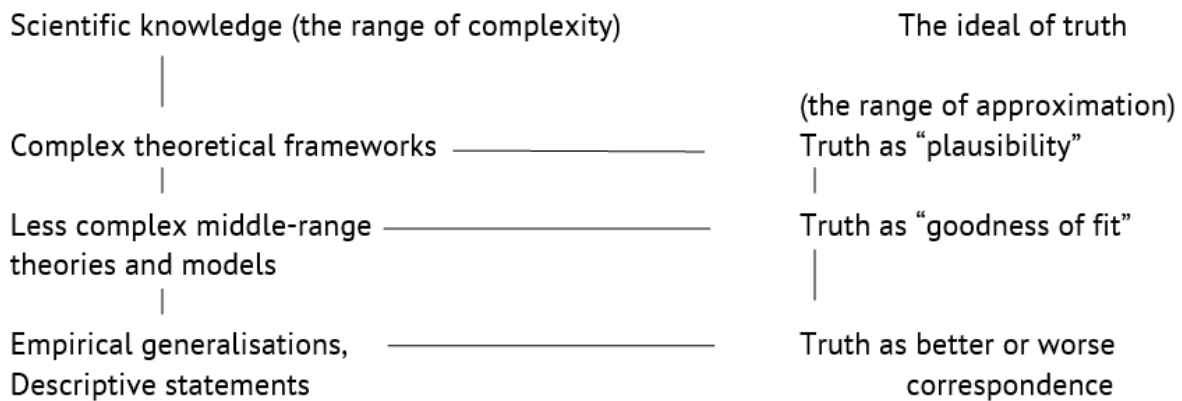

Figure 1. Scientific knowledge and the ideal of truth.

The basis for sociological study should be what we called "social facts," or "realities external to the individual" that can be verified empirically [5].

Durkheim based his ideas on thorough research of empirical evidence, such as case studies and statistics. His major legacy was the establishment of sociology as an academic discipline in the tradition of the positivist doctrine of Comte — that social science is subject to the same investigative methods as the natural sciences.

Labor and Monopoly Capitalism is considered a classic contribution to the discipline of sociology, but it is the only academic book that Braverman ever wrote [6]. The book's influence on the application of critical Marxist thinking to the empirical study of industrial work has been profound. With Trotskyist tendencies, he joined the *Socialist Workers' Party* in the 1930s. He was one of the leaders of the so-called cochranite branch, which was excluded from the party in 1954, bringing Cochran to the party. George Weissman, a Trotskyist student at Harvard, recruited Siegel to the newly formed *Socialist Workers Party* (SWP) to found the *American Socialist Union*. Harry Braverman (1920-1976) is best known for his book *Labour and Monopoly Capitalism*, published in 1974. Braverman is neither a neo-marxist nor a post-Marxist, but a Marxist: he does not seek to go beyond Marxism but to update it by taking into account the changes that capitalism has undergone over the century. In particular, he is known to have shown that the labour process has become the responsibility of the capitalist, to the extent that his reflection is often presented as a labour process theory. More precisely, starting from the observation that the capitalist does not buy a quantity of labour but a labour power during a given time, he shows the importance of the labour power control processes: in order to achieve the highest possible rent, the capitalist will seek to increase the yield of labour power, which is achieved in particular through the organisation and control of labour [7].

3. Fake News

Fake news is the intentional spreading of false information. Vaccinate yourself against the contagion of nonsense! We are an extraordinarily social species. Trusting others has been favourable to the survival of our ancestors. The downside is that we are easy victims for cheats, liars, swindlers and bullshitters.

We all have an interest in 'believing' as much as possible that is true and as little that is false as possible. We even have a personal interest in everyone doing the same: collective decisions will then be based on solid facts, public policies will be more effective, society will

be better off. I put "believe" in inverted commas because of the strong polysemy of the word; here I use it in the sense of "hold as true".

Of course, we know from experience that we sometimes "believe" false things, that we are wrong [8]. Sometimes we are even stubborn, and moreover we know how to recognise - at least in others - the signs of obstinacy in error. What we still need to really understand, measure and manage is that these errors are not random, they do not go in all directions, but take paths of least resistance, and in particular the flaws in our rationality that are cognitive biases. We are willing to 'believe' some things and reject others. Some sound scientific theories run up against epistemological obstacles, while folk legends or national novels slip through the blind spot of our vigilance.

Not all truth is credible, there is no intrinsic strength of the true idea, and no direct relationship between the degree of conviction that a belief inspires and its veracity [9]. There are many reasons for this. First of all, the true suffers from the major handicap of not being able to be anything other than what it seems, on pain of escaping its own definition. The true is also sometimes disappointing, abstruse, undesirable, even brutal. The false, on the other hand, assumes the right to all the tricks, it adapts to the coveted ear, inflames the imagination, flatters prejudices. The battle is unequal, but we seek the real, and therein lies its only advantage. The true, the real, is what continues to exist even when we do not believe in it, it is what a well-dosed scepticism cannot deny [10].

No one has prepared us as citizens to defend ourselves against a form of disinformation capable of upsetting our brain function. You know a plethora of nonsense that uses the natural slopes of the mind to make a cozy place for itself in our representation of the world:
- There's a monster in Loch Ness.
- It's not human activity that is disrupting the climate.
- We have proof that the soul outlives the body.
- Homeopathy works better than placebo. Thanks to the "memory of water". Etc.

Poppycock has no real arguments, no connection to any of the means available to determine the adequacy of its content with the real world. It is essentially content to please, anger or frighten, to provoke an emotional response. Its existence does not require a desire to deceive on the part of those who produce and share it, but it occurs in an epistemic vacuum, in the absence of a critical approach to the raw thing.

Nor is poppycock just any false information; it is information that people find interesting to listen to and pass on. It therefore meets a certain number of criteria that make it formidable.

4. Economics and Politics
In view of the fact that the individual social sciences are not bound to specific subject areas of reality, this at the same time raises the question of why one should take on the not inconsiderable intellectual effort associated with a subject-didactic integration of the social science disciplines into one school subject (e.g. for student teachers, who are then expected to study not one, but three disciplines). The social science truism of the interdependence between economics and politics, i.e. the cross-border, mutual influence of actors, institutions and structures in the political and economic subsystems, which is often used to justify interdisciplinary integration, does not in itself constitute a convincing justification for this subject didactic project [11]. The reason for this lies in the fact that the interdependence

between economics and politics has already been recognised by one social science discipline alone, i.e. both by political science.

5. Archiving Ethical Aspects

Archiving refers to the process of transferring records from the individual or organization who created the material, to a repository for appraising, cataloguing, organizing, preserving, and providing access to others. Social and *behavioral science* research engenders by-products that are worthy of archiving for a variety of future uses, including the furthering of basic and applied research, policy making, and the development and replication of effective intervention programs. Examples of such archive-worthy by-products are research data, their associated data collection instruments (questionnaires, interview protocols), and, more recently, intervention programs shown to be effective by evaluation research. Ethical issues occasionally arise in the archiving process. These issues typically relate to protecting the integrity of the selection process; protecting respondents' confidentiality; censoring potentially controversial or offensive material; the timing of the release of information to an archive; assignment of due credit to both original producer and archivist; the tension between *fidelity* and *usability* in the archiving process; and the ownership of the research and development by-products contained in the archive [12].

6. Empirical Research

Empirical research cannot be learned by reading books alone. Practical experience in dealing with the instruments of empirical social research cannot be replaced by any textbook, no matter how complete and detailed [13].

Students of the social sciences or humanities acquire a wide variety of knowledge and skills, depending on the discipline. Independent of all subject content, academic education always also pursues the goal of enabling students to understand, assess and produce scientific knowledge themselves. Methodological competence is necessary for this active participation in gaining scientific knowledge. Because without research methods, science is not possible.

Empirical social and human research is concerned with social and human circumstances, i.e. with the behaviour, experience and coexistence of people as well as with physical and mental characteristics of the human being. In this context, "human" and "social" are not positive-values, but neutral-descriptive terms that refer to the human and the interpersonal.

7. Sociability

Far from being merely technical problems, the difficulties that accompany the *ageing* and *retirement* are social and even economic and society problems; because they owe their origin to the relations of power and competition society; because they challenge the established order and because their various solutions - in terms of economic or social policies and interventions - are available and require social work on the part of all social actors, and in particular of older people, within inter-generational social movements.

8. Sociology and Religion

When religion is spoken of, it is usually a description of a system of belief relations that manifests itself institutionally and organisationally in societies and includes individual and collective practices and beliefs. An important component of this system, especially for

the newer social sciences and social psychology, of this system is religiosity, i.e. the attitudes and behaviours with religious attitudes and modes of action with a religious connection. Religiosity is found in different forms and constellations in people. It strongly or weakly pronounced, guiding actions in everyday life or not, purely private or public or not, ritual or inwardly spiritually oriented. At the same time, the representative summarized religiosity of individuals provides information about an important component of the culture of a collective [14].

The discussion of the definition of religion is long and controversial. It concentrates on the component of religion that is individually bound: religiosity. In the process, the corresponding definitions of religiosity are transferred to religion, i.e. the system of meaning in general. Problems arise due to the limited direct accessibility of the phenomenon of religiosity since the transcendence and individual conceptions of religiosity are not available for research**.** However, neither the aim of the psychology of religion, nor the sociology of religion is to explore the transcendence or the essence of religions. The only interest is in fathoming religious phenomena in this world. However, even in the determination of what is religious in this world, there are considerable differences in the research community. They have even led to the recommendation of individual scholars to dispense with a definition altogether. Because of the impossibility of empirical research into the phenomenon of religiosity without a definition, this proposal was justifiably rejected. For the socio-psychological view, it is less the social and organisational system of religion, but rather individual religiosity and its collective integration.

The ambiguous twilight that surrounds the origin and essence of religion for us will not clear as long as one believes to see in it only a problem that needs a solution word [15,16]. No one has yet been able to give a definition that tells us, without vague generality and yet including all phenomena, what "religion" is. Neither against mere metaphysical speculation on the one hand, nor against belief in ghosts on the other, is it securely limited, not even in such a way that its purest and deepest manifestations would be protected from being tested for the addition of these elements. Such indeterminacy of its essence corresponds to the multiplicity of psychological motives from which reflection has caused it to spring.

A living social science is always interested in the ongoing theoretical work of reconstruction. Its "founding fathers" carried with them the project of a unified science, whose development was to be part of the irresistible movement of rationalisation and disenchantment in the world [17,18]. Most of them took up and developed, with various accents, the motif of a certain loss of influence of religion in modern societies. Some have celebrated the desalination associated with this loss. Others deplored the emotional chill and the drying up of values that it causes. Still others have pondered at length on its possible replacement by a common morality based on science.

The philosophy of praxis aims to connect practice and theory in order to establish a successful political action. The Catholic Church, in particular, embodies an ideology that is immanent and functional to an organised collectivity.

9. Conclusion Concerning Vieillissement and Retirement

The succession of policies for the social management of ageing and retirement must also be analysed from the point of view of the instituted effect of social relationships, beyond the techniques of defining needs and drawing up programmes [19].

Gerontological intervention, far beyond its methodological variants, technical forms and immediate results, will not produce the same social effects, depending on the forms and

orientations that its agents favour and on the types of social relations in which it is developed and engaged.

10. New Developments

Of course, there are always new developments within the constantly (and in recent years even rapidly) growing field of qualitative and interpretative social research. That would argue for new introductions. But this natural growth and almost inevitable differentiation of the field require, first and foremost, revised new editions of the already existing introductions, but not yet necessarily a new work [20]. If I despite this comfortable situation, this contribution is another introduction to the theory and practice of qualitative social research (which is not a real introduction in the conventional sense of the word), then for the following reasons:

The posterity of Foucault's work is today a fragmented figure. Few authors have had such an important impact across disciplinary fields, so much so that we can say that today we are all disciples of Foucault.

Discipline comes from the Latin term *disciplina*, derived from *discipulus*, "disciple". The word itself comes from *discere*, "to learn". So what meaning should we give to Foucaultian learning? Do the numerous Foucaultian conceptual creations and borrowings, such as biopolitics, surveillance society, episteme, device, panoptic, subjectivation, etc., retain their relevance today? What are the limits? What inflections has the contemporary era imposed on the type of reading proposed by Foucault? What do we still have to learn from such a way of thinking that has never stopped blurring the boundaries between philosophy, history, sociology and anthropology? It is clear that Foucault did not leave any of these fields untouched. Certainly, he has not failed to be at the center of multiple debates, during his lifetime as well as today, as much because of his political as well as theoretical commitments [21].

Forty years after *Surveiller et punir, La Société punitive* shows that with the concept of discipline, Foucault intended to propose a genealogy of sociology, and in particular of the Durkheimian program. Refusing to see law as the shaping of demands immanent to collective consciousness, he treats the moralization of punishment as a strategy put in place in the nineteenth century by a bourgeoisie anxious to protect itself against the new illegalisms brought about by the transformations of capitalist property [22,23]. By taking as a guiding thread the confrontation with the sociological evolutionism that underlies the history of penality traced by Foucault, one propose to highlight the gains obtained by means of the archaeological method of dissolving historical continuities, but also the aporias that genealogy encounters in order to account for the formation of modern political subjects no longer based on forms of solidarity, but on the principle of a civil war underlying society.

Michel Foucault's work crosses fields whose boundaries are jealously guarded: philosophy, sociology, history, anthropology, linguistics, epistemology, art criticism [24]. The disciplinary boundaries of the social sciences and humanities.

The disciplinary boundaries of the social sciences and humanities are becoming blurred and new transversal bridges are being built, forcing many specialists to re-problematise their objects of study and intervention. How could it be otherwise when the notions of man and humanism are at the centre of Foucault's critique? This disciplinary confusion is both fertile and destabilising, renewing traditional ways of philosophising and problematising societal issues [25].

The radical nature of philosophical questioning, unabashedly transposed into the most varied disciplines (from psychiatry to law, from criminology to sexology, from medicine to biology), forces a double shift that poses major theoretical and methodological problems. While philosophy reconnects with the problems of the city, the empirical sciences are confronted with their conditions of possibility (formal, historical, social, political, economic, etc.). What has been done historically with the insane, the poor and the sick?

Why do we lock up certain categories of people? Why is it necessary to constantly say "who" we are? How do we govern? What are we dealing with? What does it mean to say "true"? How can we become the moral subject of our actions?

Foucault is no Durkheim. His method, sometimes obscure, encrypted or revealed here and there (interviews, lectures, articles, etc.), is constantly being revised and sometimes radically questioned (archaeology, structuralist method, genealogy problematisation, diagnosis, etc.) [26]. His key notions are successively redefined in the course of his work until they become unrecognisable (episteme, device, discipline knowledge, discourse, power, governmentality, subjection, subject, veridiction, etc.).

And, finally, the issues dealt with in his texts are not unanimously accepted by commentators, who multiply the effects of confusion and sometimes misinterpretation [27].

What exactly is this or that work talking about? What method is used?

Can we justify historically such and such a chronological division? Can we bring together in the same body of analysis very heterogeneous materials (architectural provisions, administrative regulations, taxonomies, paintings, obscure accounts of forgotten people, royal decrees, scientific theories, etc.)?

Despite a certain uneasiness that many sociologists feel towards these difficulties, it is clear that Michel Foucault's complex thought cannot be only at the cost of sterilising it, of undermining its originality and depriving it of its strength.

Conflicts of Interest. The author declares no conflict of interest.

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Submission of manuscripts: jes@meridian.utm.md