



## Sociological Briefing

# The sociologies that scientists and citizens like and use

After the harsh crisis of sociology in the second decade of this century, sciences and citizens are opening more pathways than ever before for our social science. Citizens require scientific contributions to improve society. For the first time in the two previous centuries of our history, biologists, mathematicians, physiologists and other scientists are asking us to collaborate with them to know the society they need to improve and how to do it with their creation of scientific knowledge. The problem is that they are not asking sociologists for the knowledge we already have, but for sociological knowledge able to undertake those analyses and this task. Diverse sociologies are already reorienting the knowledge accumulated during those two centuries to dialogic perspectives obtaining much more recognition by other scientists and society than ever before.

The article published by the journal *International Sociology* with the title “The time of dialogic sociology” opens the floor for all sociologists, from many different options, willing to contribute to this new and very promising future of sociology that has already started. After the selection of seven sociologists who are playing a very important role in leading the current transformation of all sciences, the research published in this article develops seven individual in-depth interviews and two focus groups to them. The first focus group was made before writing the article and the second one after their reading of a draft of the article.

## Results inspiring sociological horizons

The first result clarifies the relation between the crisis of sociology and its bureaucratization in which sometimes theories and practices had a clear impact on the careers of sociologists and not at all in the improvement of citizens' lives; this includes the claims of worker women and feminists against studies which dismiss their voices. It clarifies also how the continuous dialogue, and the co-creation of knowledge between researchers and researched obtain both an improvement of the lives of citizens and a much higher scientific level of sociological theories.

The second result analyzes the context in which sociologists have led the transformation of the research programmes in all sciences. It also explains the dialogic leadership which allowed sociologists to play this role as well as the characteristics of the pathways defined both to analyze and to promote the impact of scientific knowledge in the improvement of citizens' lives. Among those pathways, we can outline the ones oriented to policy impact, to citizens' participation, and to fit the objectives of the society.

The third result includes the development of a new sociological methodology, Social Media Analytics (SMA), able to analyze in an innovative way the relations between citizens and science and the actions that optimize them. Published before, this methodology

has been increasingly appreciated in part due to the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. It has allowed raising important questions like that there were more hoaxes and less evidence about COVID-19 in Western Twitter than in Chinese Weibo, and that in Western Twitter there were more tweets with hoaxes than with evidence but more retweets with evidence than with hoaxes. This description of the situation allowed SMA to do the normative action to provide new evidence to those activists in social media multiplying their impact on the health of the population. This SMA is being used by an increasing number and diversity of sociologists in different countries in their collaborations with scholars from diverse sciences.

The fourth result undertakes the analysis of scientific online platforms oriented to allow citizens not only to differentiate between hoax and evidence in all areas but also to co-create in dialogue with scientists the developments of these platforms. Besides the impact of those platforms in the improvement of education, health, or gender relations of citizens, they are also promoting the real participation of citizens, a more real and profound democracy of societies.

The fifth result argues in favor of the inclusive communication of science. In the past, the dominant discourse in this field was hierarchical: scientists cre-

ated scientific knowledge, and then they or some specialists offered this knowledge to citizens. Although the top-down approach has had clear and recognized limitations, there has been bureaucratic resistance to change. In the current dialogic society, there is an accelerated transformation from this dominant discourse to the bottom-up approach; if the main and most important scientific programmes prioritize the co-creation of knowledge in dialogue between citizens and scientists, the co-creation of the communication of science is still more required. The diversity of citizens, from the upper class to the underprivileged, should communicate among themselves the evidence able to improve their lives, this is the inclusive communication of science.

Dialogic sociology is not one more sociological theory, one option competing with other options. Dialogic sociology is a perspective receiving contributions from very diverse sociological options. All of them are increasing the recognition society makes of sociology, and all of them improving the citizens' lives.