

Knowledges and Social Orders

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Introduction

The colonial legacy still structures perspectives on work in Africa, particularly the perspectives regarding productive work, or work which bears progress and social order. According to these perspectives, social order could in no way be associated with work that takes place outside the formal or official economy. It is, however, clear that work that takes place in this latter setting is related to the Western school system and the capitalist industrial organization. Workers of the “informal sector” and the activities, which therein take place would be, the thinking goes, in contrast, reflection of social disorder. Yet, there is a critical need to make a difference not only between marginalized precolonial work and the informal economy resulted from capitalist economic crises, but also the need to empirically appreciate the central role of the informal economy as a driver of social order and innovation in the African context. Social theory has, though, largely embraced the institutional perspective to the point of ignoring the crucial role of the informal sector in the ongoing contemporary social transformations in Africa, in comparison with bureaucratic, formal occupations. African countries display different socioeconomic setup where informality takes the centre stage (Akuoko, Aggrey and Amoako-Arhen 2021; Benjamin and Mbaye 2012) in the face of the neo-liberal approach to informality on the continent that largely neglected the informal sector’s contribution to development. In this regard, in Ghana for example, as elsewhere in Africa, authorities have been preoccupied with displacing informality or absorbing it into the formal sector (Akuoko, Aggrey and Amoako-Arhen 2021). According to the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2018)). 61% percent of the working-age population—2 billion women and men—are in the informal economy. In sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), informal employment represents 86% and 92% of men and women’s total employment, respectively. The informal business eco-

conomic sector in developing countries represents a strong economic multiplier effect (Tichaawa 2017; Bennett and Rablen 2015; Hussmanns 2004). Through its content and its role, the sector represents, in the context of contemporary societies, a distinct area of economic activity and a segment of essential importance in the economic and social life of the majority of countries, especially in sub-Saharan Africa (Benjamin and Mbaye 2014; Grant 2015; Rogerson 2005, 2018). There are few incentives for the state to produce official economic statistics in environments with large informal sectors and subsistence agriculture (Egger et al. 2021).

The rapid expansion of the informal sector or economy in both developed and developing countries has not only captured the attention of researchers, development analysts, government officials and international agencies but is also prompting a massive profusion of literature on the topic (Onyebueke Geyer 2011, 65).

This is almost consistent with the sociological theory on the professions. There is a significant gap in our knowledge regarding labor force and its organization in Africa and how it shapes social changes.

This paper sets out to examine the dominant literature on the relationships between social order and knowledge hierarchies as it applies to African societies, in which new communication technologies are transforming the modes of access to knowledge and the appropriation of this knowledge for transformative processes led by informal labor force, though often mistakenly criminalized. In this paper, I want to recapture two key ideas from the literature on the professions and examine them from a relational approach to moral order. The first is to get away from the upward mobility focus and consider the similarities between occupations (Plato 1916; Hughes 1984), and the second is to reintroduce the macro-level of professional ethics (Plato 1916; Weber 1992; Smith 1929; Durkheim 1992). As the sociology of the professions moved to a system approach to professionalization, these two amendments to sociological theory of the professions can further our understanding of the moral organization of the occupations (Abott 1988).

Data and Methods

The paper uses the conceptual lens of Foucault, particularly his concept of “discourse” (Foucault 1967, 1970, 1971, 1972, 1973). Foucault suggests that, in all societies, the production of discourse is controlled, selected, organized, and re-distributed (Foucault 1971). This paper explores then the mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion of types of works and their consequences on knowledge of African societies more generally. The data covered the literature (theoretical and empirical) in sociology, history, anthropology on the “professions,” or more generally on “occupations,” from the earliest to the recent publications. In total, 159 references have been selected and reviewed. To analyse the data, I proceeded like Bourdieu; that is to say, “for each of the ‘moments’...That I distinguished (and which partially overlap), I try to establish on the one hand the ‘cognitive style’ of the current in question, and on the other hand its relationship with the historical conditions, the mood of the time” (Bourdieu 2004, 9).

The paper is structured into three main parts. First, it reflects on the problem of order before even the middle-age, in antiquity. Second, it explores the sociological literature on the professions, by identifying the evolution of this debate on the distinctive character of occupations with professional status. Finally, it reflects on the extent to which existing literature helps to understand other societies, which are not necessarily displaying the same dominant characteristics as Western societies.

Workers and Ethics Before the Professions

Consider three classic texts, one from the fifth century BC, and the two others from the twentieth century AD. “[E]very soul pursues,” Plato writes in his *Republic*,

This good (i.e. justice) [...] as the end of all actions, divining its existence, but perplexed and unable to apprehend satisfactorily its nature, or to enjoy that steady confidence in relation to it, which it does enjoy in relation to other things, and therefore doomed to forfeit any advantage which it might have derived from those same things” (Plato 1916, 226). In the half of the twentieth century, one of the great sociologists, Everett Hughes, suggested that “We need to rid ourselves of any concepts which keep us from seeing that the essential problems of men at work are the same whether they do their work

in the laboratories of some famous institution or in the messiest vat room of a pickle factory. (Hughes 1951, 318)

Twenty years later, Hughes's student, Eliot Freidson stated

The foundation of medicine's control over its work is ...clearly political in character, involving the aid of the state in establishing and maintaining the profession's pre-eminence. [...] And the autonomy of the individual practitioner exists within social and political space cleared and maintained for his benefit by political and formal occupational mechanisms. (Freidson 1970, 23–24)

If the antiquarian study of the professions is included, systematic studies of the professions go back as far as to 1915 (Flexner 1915). From the publication of Flexner's paper in 1915 to that of Freidson's book on the profession of medicine in 1970, which opened up the black-box of professional institutions, there is over one and half century of span. It is curious that for such a long time, studies on the professions neglected these social constants that Plato centuries ago, and Hughes, in relatively recent time, have raised, for a mere "constant preoccupation with upward mobility of occupations" (Hughes 1984, 418).

To return to Plato's text, it is important to note that historical data does not attribute the origin of the word "profession" to the Greeks. The word originates in Ancient Roman society (Sawadogo 2008). It is first recorded in 1200 from Old French as "vows taken upon entering a religious order." It comes from the Latin noun *professio* which stands for "public declaration." The verb it is derived from is to profess, of the Latin *professus* "having declared publicly," of *profitieri* "declare openly," (first recorded in the 1520s) from *pro-* "forth" and *fateri* (pp. *fassus*) "acknowledge, confess," akin to *fari* "speak." The verb to profess, "take a vow" in a religious order, appeared in early 14c. A profession successively, therefore, meant "occupation one professes to be skilled in" (from early 15c.), a "body of persons engaged in some occupation" (from 1610), and in a more secular term, from 1888, "prostitution," in talking for example about the *oldest profession*. In English then, the adjective 'professional' appeared in early 15th century. to designate religious orders, and in 1747 to refer to careers, especially of the skilled or learned trades from 1793. As a noun, 'a professional' as 'one who does X for a living', is used from 1798, but recorded from 1811, as opposed to "amateur," used from 1851. With respect to the noun 'professor', it is recorded from the late 14th century. to mean 'one who teaches a branch of knowledge,' coming from the Latin noun *professor*, "person who professes to be an expert in some art or sci-

ence, teacher of highest rank,” and from the agent noun *profitieri*, “lay claim to, declare openly;” but as a title prefixed to a name, it dates from 1706. The aristocratic pretention inherent in the word probably prevented its use by Ancient Greece philosophers.

The word ‘profession,’ it can be seen, relate to power. From the Middle Age ecclesiastic institutions to the modern bureaucracy, through Feudal political systems, orders of values shaped the content and the distribution of knowledge (Sawadogo 2008). The hierarchy of these values in each social system resulted in a hierarchy of occupations therein. These categorizations were so strong as to take the character of substance, that is, of a property which is considered to be intrinsic to each category of occupation. However, this central place of power, to which I will return later, underlined one of the important features of professional ethics, which the Greeks clearly delineated and yet barely discovered in the early twenty-first century (Freidson 2001).

Greek philosophers first discovered the principle of social evolution and explained the foundation of the division of labor in their ideal state reflected in Plato's *Republic*. Plato stressed the co-existence of individual-society as a necessity of our humanity, in the same way the other subsequent emerging elements in the world are for the society and for the state; because, as the translator of the Republic of Plato reported it, “Man, isolated from his fellow-men, is not self-sufficient” (Plato 1916, xiv). Thus, man's existence required the development of functions, which became more complex as the community increased, filled by different people: first, there were husbandmen, builders, clothiers, shoemakers; then emerged the need for carpenters, smiths, shepherds, and grazers; subsequently, with the development of commercial activities, merchants, sailors, shop-keepers, hired laborers appeared. Furthermore, the increase of the needs of the population will lead to the need of increasing and maintaining the territory of the state, thus constituted, making soldiers necessary. However, in addition to these necessities of life, members of the state will need luxuries, and if these have to be supplied, it must contain cooks, confectioners, barbers, actors, dancers, poets, physicians, and similar kinds of functions. The social order, thus, would rely upon three functions which make the architecture of the state: the function of “Guardian,” which must be fulfilled by “the oldest, the most prudent, the ablest, and above all the most patriotic and unselfish members of the body” (Plato 1916, xiv); that of “Auxiliary,” which “consists essentially in the ever maintaining a right estimate of what is, or is not, really formidable” (Plato 1916, xviii); and the function of “producer,” filled by husbandmen and craftsmen. Depending of the qualities of each of the above

members of the state, s/he can occupy any of these three functions. Nobody is naturally too humble to be prevented from the guardianship, nor naturally too proud to be protected from the craftsmanship. For example, in this regard, Plato writes “none of the occupations which comprehend the ordering of the state belong to woman as a woman, nor yet to man as a man; but natural gifts are to be found here and here, in both sexes alike; and, so far as her nature is concerned, the woman is admissible to all pursuits as well as the man” (Plato 1916, 161–162). Beyond the idea of philosophical quest for truth which characterizes philosophers, those who must rule the republic of Plato, “the friends of wisdom, those who seek wisdom but not formally possess it” (Deleuze and Guattari 1994, 3). What is particularly relevant to our purpose is Plato’s symmetrical and multi-level conception of the Good, and therefore of ethics, with regard to all the occupations of his ideal state.

The symmetrical conception of the “Good” is reflected in the teleological view of Plato, that is, in the view that final causes exist in nature; everything has a purpose.

The teleological view ... simply consists in seeing everywhere a certain function to be exercised, a certain work to be done, a certain end or good to be worked out. The good of anything is to be or do what it is meant to be or do. ...the word “good” means that which anything is meant to do or to be. A man’s life is morally good in proportion as it exhibits purpose, and not merely purpose, but a purpose going beyond himself. (Joshep 1948, 12)

Every soul without exception pursues that as this is in its nature: the shepherd pursues the good of his sheep, the pilot’s end is to protect the sailor, and the physician’s interest is the health of the patient. “And thus,” Plato writes:

all who are in any place of command, in so far as they are rulers, neither consider nor enjoin their own interest, but that of the subjects for whom they exercise their craft: and in all that they do or say, they act with an exclusive view of them, and to what is good and proper for them. (Plato 1916, 22)

This implies that any craftsman must comply with the division of labor and stick to what s/he knows best, and not go beyond, because “The just man goes not beyond his like, but his unlike; the unjust man goes beyond both his like and his unlike” (Plato 1916, 31). As far as the interest of artist is concerned, Plato does not conceive that her/himself pursues her or his interest, for the division

of labor makes it an end for someone else; so that the “advantage,” of a professor of an art:

the receipt of pay, does not come to each from his art, but, strictly considered, the art of healing produces health, and the art of wages pay; the art of house-building produces a house, while the art of wages follows it and produces pay; and so of all the rest; –each works its own work, and benefits that which is its appointed object. (Plato 1916, 27)

This pursuit of the good, which is inherent in every art in the strict sense (because “no craftsman errs”), does not lead Plato to ignore contrary behavior; “Unjust” men might be found among the three classes of the state, from the guardians to the craftsmen, thus differentiating the “genuine” artists from the “counterfeit” ones within each occupation. This leads us to Hughes statement according to which all occupations, humble or prestigious, face the same contingencies, so that it is both empirically questionable and theoretically inappropriate to attribute occupations definitive attributes; because “if a certain problem turned up in one occupation, it [is] nearly certain to turn up in all” (Hughes 1984, 420). Then, if this is so, how can one account for the fact that some occupations become dominant over some area of social life? To answer this question, Hughes moves to another level of analysis, that of the symbolic character of knowledge and expertise. His central concept for this account is that of “moral division of labour,”

that is, of the processes by which differing moral functions are distributed among the members of society, as individuals and as categories of individuals. Some people seek and get special responsibility for defining values and for establishing and enforcing sanctions over a certain aspect of life; the differentiation of moral and social functions involves both the area of social behaviour in question and the degree of responsibility and power. (ibid: 288)

The status of different occupations in a society reflects the status of the need each claim to fulfil and that of the knowledge use for this end. The more the values of these needs and expertise are closer to those required by the state, the more likely they will be granted the monopoly over the definition and satisfaction of these needs. In this regard, the ethics of an occupation does not only consist in acting as Plato suggests in the interest of things over which it has authority, by a skilful implementation of expertise, but also this ought to

meet the ends instituted by the society as a whole, and which the state defines and oversees through its Auxiliaries.

In Plato's ideal state, the "guardians" occupy this moral role in the division of labor. As the magistrates of the state, they are selected from "the oldest, the most prudent, the ablest, and above all the most patriotic unselfish members" of the society. I am aware that real world processes deviate from Plato's ideal state; what Plato's moral and political philosophy helps uncover though is the delocalization of one level of professional ethics; the moral end of a profession has another source than within itself. This is clearly shown by Max Weber with regards to modern bureaucracy; by developing an organization based on impersonal criteria and on efficiency, modern bureaucracy (public or private) has created the moral framework for the professional whose job is only to fill an office base on specific expertise (Weber 1978). The political power of a professional over a certain matter of life has its source in the state (Freidson 1970); not an intrinsic characteristic of professional expertise. This underlines the macro-level of occupational ethics shown in the *Republic* of Plato.

Through this critical analysis, it is revealed that: (a) the definition of moral values corresponds to a specific function, fulfilled by the state, because the role of this occupational group is to "think" (Durkheim 1992); (b) the ends of all occupations are the same, which is to pursue the interest of the object of which they have the craft; and every occupation as far as it is that it claims to be cannot have other purpose than doing what justifies its being; yet they are all subject to contingencies; (c) the status of an occupation in a society reflects its distance to the state's normative requirements; the production of these norms are opened to contingencies and depends on the balance of power in a society; (d) moral order in the occupations (low or high rank) is best understood as involving the work of more than one occupations (be it in regulated or open market), because the values which direct occupational behavior are produced by specific inter-related functions; the study of more than one occupation is not an incidental choice, but a methodological prerequisite.

For years, the sociology of the profession has been diverted from this perspective; the social science of the professions of contemporary societies, developed or not, has paradoxically its foundations back down to Ancient Greek philosophy through classical economics up to classical sociology. From an organic account, which did not prejudice the attribute of emerging occupational institutions, the sociology of the professions then took an uncritical approach which simply described them as they see themselves and others; the critical turn diverted sociological interpretation from professions' own representation

of themselves, opening thus the black-box of professional 'natural' wisdom; in its latest development, the sociology of the profession had to return to the first half of twentieth century with Hughes (1951); but the macro-level of occupational ethics, which I now recover, was just far away, and almost forgotten. Freidson (2001) seems to think that such a third party in professional responsibility is a threat; this literature review shows that occupational ethics is rather a teamwork.

In the following section, I proceed to bring more detail about the theoretical development of the sociology of the professions to date, with the view to reintroduce the missing link to the understanding of social order.

The Sociological Constructions of the Occupations

The sociological approach to the profession was organicist first, then functional. It later turned to a more conflict and strategic perspective, in which professions were viewed as the only beneficiaries first, and second with the state as a strategic ally, thus bringing sociological theory of the professions back down to Plato (1916) and to Hughes (1951).

Nature-structural developments: August Comte ([1844] 1856) was concerned with explaining social evolution and in laying down a road to structural changes for modern society. But he was not specifically interested in the expert of teleological objects, nor that of metaphysical or positivist objects; Spencer (1896) demonstrates how structural changes results in complexity and hierarchy in the division of labor, as society moves from traditional to modern mode of organization; yet, he was not particularly addressing the magician, the king, the priest, or the civil officer of these social organizations; similar view can be state about Tonnies (1955), Weber (1978), and others. All had seen in the professions the gate-keepers of the "absolute values" of the developing modern society, and the guarantees of the public good in a democratic society. Spencer and Durkheim, and the others were aware of the fragility of human motives, but had, for the most part treated irregular behavior by the professions as a reflection of dysfunctional institutions. In general, they had not been interested in conceptualising the professions as separated from the social system they were analysing.

The teleological approach of these classical sociologists to society preserved them from a mere evaluative interpretation of occupations. Such a teleologi-

cal view, in asserting the existence of an underlying order in society, took a holistic approach. Holism supports that new “phenomena, such as life, individual consciousness, and ‘folk soul’ emerge as a result of the organization of parts into wholes, by way of creative synthesis” (Udehn 2001, 38); but the whole is irreducible to a mere aggregate of the parts. Analogically, for “social holism, society ... is supervenient upon, but irreducible to, human individuals and their actions” (ibid.:39). Fundamentally, the evolution of the society is a continuous process of integration and differentiation, from simple to complex. Founders of Sociology had their encounter with the professions, and occupations more general, through their interest in these broad processes. Their framing of it, the temporality and interrelationships between sequences of evolutions differ from one author to another; but generally, they share the idea of complexity and integration in relations to the structure and characteristics of the occupations which make-up the emerging structures. For instance, in his *Principles of Sociology*, Spencer (1896) accounts for the evolution of societal needs and their implication on occupational structure. Basically, he examined the genesis of the medicine-man and priesthood. The core thesis is that the emergence of the two functions reveals the needs of the society concerned. Since these needs are dynamic, the history of these functions replicates the history of societal needs. Occupations split up and mingle according to the changing human needs. The function of priesthood, thus, took over that of medicine-man. To use Spencer’s words, we see a “partial usurpation by the priest of the medicine-man’s functions” (Spencer 1896, 42).

The processes continue with the emergence of the modern state, and occupations emerged as a product of the disintegration of ecclesiastic social bonds. Similarly, the society of Durkheim (1947) is bipolar. Beliefs and practice draw their foundations either from religion in the case of traditional society, or from occupational groups in the case of modern society. The evolution of occupational groups parallels the emergence of modern society and made it possible. Contrasts are made by Tönnies (1955) between *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*, and by Weber (1978) between ideal types of legitimacies. Nevertheless, although they address occupational structures in their characterization of each sequence of the social evolution, these authors do not make occupations as a topic of study, and do not scale them within a hierarchy. Instead of taking into account the issue of hierarchy between occupations in their research interests, sociologists who subsequently studied social order are going to continue, in their ways, the functionalist analysis of modern societies; still, on

contrast to the classics, they will be dedicated, with less critical view, to the description of those occupations claiming the status of profession.

Symbolic congruence-identity production: Two interrelated phenomena make this sequence of sociological thinking the most conservative, with respect to the interpretation of professional dynamics. First, the philosophical foundation of sociological theory remained that of holism, even if the established concept was referred to as functionalism, which combines ideas of structure and function in the approach to cultural integration and variations. Second, professions themselves became more conscious of their identities as distinct from other kinds of occupations. The study of the professions, though now more systematized, was marked by this functional approach to social dynamics and by the shaping of sociological inquiry by the way professions perceived themselves (and vice versa). In other words, the founding scientific literature about the professions was functional and less critical to their object of study. It mainly emphasized the instrumental role of the professions against the asymmetric expert-client relation. Professionalization thus appeared as a logical effect of the evolution of structural guarantees for the expert-client mediation. The first attempt to account for such an attribute has been regularly identified with a paper by Flexner (1915). In this paper, the author stressed the central significance of the “professional spirit,” as a distinctive disposition of the professional. This disposition reflects a set of six attributes which would define a profession: two of the attributes are cognitive, and refer to the intellectual and learned aspects of the profession. Another is moral and affective. It concerns the personal responsibility of the professionals and their altruism. Two others are organizational. They refer, on the one hand, to the institutional organization of the profession’s body of knowledge and, on the other hand, the ritualistic processes of its transmission through education, and to the internal organization of the profession. The sixth attribute is about the goal of this system of knowledge and its institutions of governance: practical and problems-solving. Yet Flexner’s work is a precursor to the sociology of the professions. As Dingwall reminds us, “[...] these have, for the most part, been treated as of mainly antiquarian interest” (Dingwall 1983, 1).

Parsons’s work (1939, 1951, 1964, 1968) and that of Hughes (1958, 1971) have been considered as being of major influences on contemporary research in the study of professions. Two core features emerge from Parsons’s interest in the professions in modern society. First, he was concerned with the conditions and mechanisms of the maintenance of the social order in this new social con-

text. The professions were considered in this functionalist perspective as an alternative to the disintegration of traditional social institutions in the ordering of social relations in modern society. The balance of power between client and professional is analyzed within a framework of role system, with dominant authority granted to the latter. As Abbott comments, “[f]or Parsons a professional’s power over clients was necessary to successful treatment It was grounded in expertise, guaranteed by professional control, and offset by the trust between professional and client” (Abbott 1988, 86–87).

The second feature of Parsons’s interest in the professions are his arguments against the universalism and abstraction of the utilitarian principles about economic motivations. Drawing, mainly, from Weber on the structure of action process, he argued for a historically grounded moral order, which utilitarian theory disregarded. The study of the professions, as non-profit occupations, was a mean to this theoretical confrontation with utilitarianism. He placed the distinctive collectivity-orientation of the professional within the institutional framework which made it possible. In this view, he contended that, “[w]hatever difference there may be from a psychological point of view between the typical motives of physicians and businessmen must be analyzed with this in mind, taking it as a starting point” (Parsons 1991, 473).

This functional approach to the mechanics of social order was the dominant framework of the time. It is particularly with Carr-Saunders (1928), Carr-Saunders and Wilson (1933), and Marshall (1939) that an attribute approach had been significant. Indeed, Carr-Sanders and Wilson were the first to attempt an analysis of the professions in Britain, and as Abbott (1988) and many others observe, the properties which they identified became the core of later definitions of a profession. Marshall (1939), like Carr-Saunders and Wilson, was aware of the increasing number and varied types of professions, but particularly stressed the changing patterns of their relationships with the welfare state. In the early 1960s, the way in which researchers addressed the professions shifted toward a more naturalistic approach, in the kind of organist approaches within classical sociology. The function of the professions did not matter so much to those who were studying them. What mattered was the natural history of the different occupations, which led them to the relatively full self-control. In this structural view, professionalization was portrayed in terms of an explanatory category about the ongoing processes of self-governance as an indicator of accomplishment by some occupations (Millerson 1964, Wilenski 1964). Despite the limitations of its linear approach, criticized in later writings (Abbott 1988), “the explicit focus on structure and its evolution led to theories about the his-

torical forces driving the structure, and hence the structuralists developed the explicit models of professionalisation [...]” (Abbott 1988: 15).

In sum, the functionalist approach, with its focus on upward mobility and the description of status professions, significantly differs from the symmetrical view suggested in Plato’s civil state, and by Hughes (1951), who was though writing at the same period. Nevertheless, with regard to morality, if one considers only the aspect of craft, the professions are here seen to display attributes of Plato’s “just man,” in relation to which, the physician, like any professor of an art towards its object, is considered not as “a maker of money,” but “A healer of the sick,” acting therefore for the interest of the patient (Callhan 2006); the interest of the physician is in turn the end pursued by another function: the “art of wages.” At the end of the decade though, the following statement of Adam Smith would fit very well with the idea which was beginning to prevail among researchers about the professions; in the eighteenth-century Smith said:

It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker, that we expect our dinner, but from their regard for their own interest. We address ourselves, not to their humanity, but to their self-love and never talk to them of our own necessities but to their advantages. Nobody but a beggar chuses to depend chiefly upon the benevolence of his fellow-citizens. (quoted by Callahan and Wassunna 2006, 16)

Symbolic dissonance–identity crisis and the emergence of critical thinking about the professions:

Studies on the professions during the 1960s can be characterized as “sociology in the professions,” because of their relatively uncritical character; and those which were going to dominant the 1970s onward, considered as studies in the “sociology of the professions.” The interpretation of the status of the professions in society significantly changed. From the functional perspective, it moved to a monopolist one. In this later view, the structural developments were considered instrumental to professional dominance. Their service orientation was replaced by self-interested motivations, making professionalization a collective endeavor for mobility.

The first decisive move toward this approach came from Eliot Freidson. His *Profession of Medicine*, first published in 1970, initiated the theoretical split with traditional theories, which seemed to be proving increasingly inadequate. Parsons’s role system in the physician-patient relationship was reassessed in the

light of Becker's (1963) theory of deviance and Hughes's (1958, 1971) concepts of "licence" and "mandate." If Parsons addressed the issue, it was from a vertical standpoint, where medical knowledge was pre-supposed as authoritative. Freidson argued for a pluralistic analysis of illness as an historical category, which varied with the values of social categories in the society. The power of the medical profession to define illness and health and to lead the governance of public health found its significance when related to the field of power. This exclusive right over the market was provided by the State through licensing and was made relatively legitimate by the overall society through the authority granted to them. This dominance was unambiguously interpreted mainly as initially resulting from the State's demand. His subsequent writings further grounded this argument of professional dominance, although he found it hard to support empirically professional claim (Freidson 1970b, 1975, 1983, 1986).

Like Freidson, Terence Johnson (1972, 1973a, 1973b) disputed the impressive character of professional claims to public service. Like Freidson with regard to the medical profession, he supported the idea of the manipulative character of medical knowledge. It was not only historically embedded, but it also generated clients' needs. The most radical accounts of the processes of the professional expropriation of society's needs have been epitomized by Illich's work (1975). Yet the significant contribution of Johnson was to ascribe professional power to interweaving networks of relationships, where professional autonomy appeared as contingent and always negotiated; for professions have never escaped from the patronage of a third party (Johnson 1973b). The collegiate control over work had been very brief in history. As he underlined it, when addressing the issue of the increasing pressure from third party in professionals' sphere, "these alternative solutions [professionalism and third party control] to the problem of controlling the professional-client relationship provide a framework for the classification and analysis of professional occupations" (Johnson 1973b, 122–23). This suggestion prefigured the later reconceptualisation of Freidson (1994, 2001); and the relational approach to the profession developed by Abbott (1988) was then reawakened with the rediscovery of Norbert Elias' work on the professions (Elias, [1939] 2000, 1964, 2007). In stressing the epistemological and theoretical contribution of Johnson (a junior colleague of Norbert Elias), Cain (1983) succinctly put it that;

Johnson's approach represents an advance on the classic statements such as, for example, that of Carr-Saunders and Wilson (1964); first, because it is *relational*; second, it questions the taken for granted *desirability of professionalism*

and third, it departs from *empiricist nominalism*. The fourth merit of Johnson's approach is that it allows for mobility of jobs between categories... (Cain 1983: 108)

Another major contribution to the monopolist approach is from Larson (1977). Like Freidson and Johnson, and unlike Béland (1976), Ben-David (1963, 1966) and Bledstein (1976), she emphasized the external instrumental consequences of professionalism for professionals as collectivities. Professions were, unlike the early literature supposed, market organizations. They derived their power from the expropriation of social meanings by dominating them intellectually and organizationally. However, Larson made a considerable regression compared to Freidson and Johnson. Freidson and Johnson wrote within the traditional definition of the profession at the time, but were still sceptical about its potential to advance theorizing. Larson, in contrast, while she reversed the traditional image of the profession and professional, remained within the whole traditional model; because she focused her study within themes and assumptions from Anglo-American perspective on the professions, and ruled out occupations which were inconsistent with her framework.

However, within the very monopoly approach substantive changes occurred by the end of the 1980s. The lessons drawn from comparative studies supported arguments about some insights from the Parsonian perspective, and confirmed the disenchantment of the myth of the professions that had been initiated by Hughes. In line with Parsons, Freidson (1986, 1988, 1994, 2001) reasserted the centrality of professions in contemporary societies, with a reasoned demonstration of the legitimate boundaries of such dominance. Such a return to the classics was possible thanks to a skilful integration of supposedly conflicting traditions, where Parsons and Hughes (1958, 1971) were seen to be complementary (Freidson 1978). The professions were reconceived within the general framework of the sociology of work. Its structural developments and its nature must not be pre-supposed, as Parsons and others did, or decreed by 'fiat' (Dingwall 1983), that is in abstract. By conceiving of the "concept of profession as a limited number of occupations which have particular institutional and ideological traits more or less in common," Freidson (1994, 16) reoriented the debate toward what he termed 'professionalism'. As a way of organizing an occupation, the profession, in this new perspective, "represents much more than only a status, for it produces distinctive occupational identities and exclusionary market shelters [...] which set each occupation apart from (and often in opposition to) the others" (Johnson 1972, 45).

To be sure, in the second edition of the *Profession of Medicine* (1970), Freidson was already aware of the significant changes that were taking place within the profession of medicine. Despite the authoritative discourse of the profession of medicine, it remained vulnerable given its dependence on decisions of other parties. It is not possible, even advisable, for the professions to control all the conditions in policy-making, for example. The technical expertise of the professional is then shaped by values of the other participants. In addition, individuals' decisions to consult cannot be controlled. Furthermore, the emergence of intermediary agencies between professionals and clients makes their autonomy more vulnerable. These are the critical limits of the profession of medicine. Freidson's introduction to *The Professions and their Prospects* (1973) mapped the space and the dynamic of third parties in professional work, an issue already scrutinized in *Professional Dominance* (1970). The centrality of professional expertise over its environmental contingences was strongly supported in *Professional Powers* (1986). As he stressed it early, "in any case, when an occupation has become fully professionalized, even if its work characteristically goes on in an organization, management can control the resources connected with work, but cannot control most of what the workers do and how they do it" (Freidson 1973, 23). By early 1990s, this argument took shape. *Professionalism Reborn* (1994) is a collection of significant papers from Freidson's whole career and at the same time a state of the art of the sociology of the professions. It is a reflexive book which, by taking stock of his unpublished conceptual discussion (1978) and of insights from Goode (1960; 1969) and Tawney (1920), subtly reconceptualises the notion of professions and develops a theoretical policy. The scenarios of this theoretical policy found their development in his last book *Professionalism: The Third Logic* (2001). Here he discusses the Weberian ideal-type and applies it to the analysis of the professions, by developing models of professionalism. As Johnson (1973a, 1982) suggested, Freidson considers professionalism as a scale within which different occupations, according to their state of professionalization, interact. In this model, Freidson states:

I use the word "professionalism" to refer to the institutional circumstances in which the members of occupations rather than consumers or managers control work. [...] In the most elementary sense, professionalism is a set of institutions which permit the members of an occupation to make a living while controlling their own work. (Freidson 2001:12; 17)

Freidson cogently analyses of professional ethics, but by opposing interrelated occupations, he is diverted from a relational analysis of professional ethics, which I am now considering. Nevertheless, Freidson has made a significant contribution to the development of the sociology of the professions, and to the understanding of professional ethics. He conspicuously showed the centrality of expertise for the professions and revealed the important contingencies which could potentially put it at risk. However, by focusing on the external consequences of professionalism and its implication for social order, he did not develop a deep account of the process of professionalization. Interprofessional dynamics and mechanics of third-party influence were less developed, although still present in his work. Yet his legacy has been fruitfully appropriated. There has been a reawakening of the relational approach on the professions. The illuminating work of Abbott (1988) has become significantly influential among students of the sociology of the professions. Typically, Abbott sees professions as exclusive occupational groups and their body of knowledge as a significant resource in this competing relationship. His assumption of professionalization focuses on work rather than on structure. Such an assumption is considered to be a privileged lens for observing competition between professions in order to control their work, as well as for inquiring into the subsequent differentiations of the professions. He has moved from the classical organizational structure analysis to that of groups with common work. The control of jurisdiction is considered as having a level of saturation. The role of the state in the control of these jurisdictions is rather ambiguous, for it is a simultaneously a competitor, a producer of ecological niches, and a mediator of competing occupations through sets of regulations. Clients' differentiation is merely the product of professionals' market strategies, if it is not always channelled by the state. As Dingwall vividly summarizes it:

[Abbott] sees occupations, or, in the case of the 'professional system', particular kinds of expert occupations, struggling among themselves to carve out a niche in the field of work, drawing boundaries around the territories they claim for themselves, extending them whenever they can, drawing back when they are forced to do so, sometimes lording it over their neighbours, at other times finding their own patch of land under threat of colonization. (Dingwall 2008, 94)

The study of occupational jurisdiction is the latest distinctive approach to the professions. It poses a principle of symmetry between occupations by looking

at their actual work, and then tries to understand occupational upward mobility. It approaches more than one occupation and makes the “state,” as an occupational group, a part within the system of the professions. What I did is to recapture both the philosophical and sociological foundation of these functional and symmetric relationship, as well as the missing level of the system occupied by the state. Then for the purpose of my own research, I replace the focus on expertise brought forth in the system of the professions, by moral values as discussed by the political and moral philosophy of Plato (1916), and by Hughes in terms of moral division of labor. From a mere study of jurisdictional competition with focus on expertise, I move to the study of occupational moral jurisdictional competition with emphasis on moral values. The underlying assumptions of that approach distinguish it with those founding the study of single occupations.

Reconfiguring the Study of Knowledge, Social Order, and Social Transformation in Africa

When discourse about workers in antiquity and discourse about workers in contemporary society are brought next to each other, the discriminatory power of the latter is clearly shown. To explore this statement, I will take the example of African traditional healers. In fact, while today’s African traditional healers would be listed in discourse on work and workers in the former, in the latter they would be excluded. Until present day, the occupation of traditional African healer is classified as an informal sector occupation. The day sociologists of the professions asked the question about the relationship between their concepts of the professions and the rationalizations of the professions about themselves (Dingwall 1983), the discipline started to make some significant theoretical contributions (Abbott 1988; Freidson 1970; Freidson 2001; Johnson 1972; Larson 1977). There is still another deep-seated preconception which has to be deconstructed if the present bottlenecks (Saks 2012) to theory development have to be overcome (Sciulli 2009); that is, a similar question about the relationship between sociologists’ concepts about the professions, and the foundational enlightenment’s “dogma” of the “Idea of progress” (Nisbet 1969). The notions of “traditional medicine” and “traditional healer” are part of those preconceptions which exercise constraining effects on the thinking of many researchers, and as such constitute a case which draws attention to the matter. Since the World Health Organization’s (WHO) interest and subsequent insti-

tutionalization of these notions, researchers struggled to adjust them with the complex reality they have to account for (WHO 1976, 1978a, 1978b). In particular, from the end of the 1980s, researchers in Africa started to point out the narrowness of the notions without however engaging systematically with them (Gruénais 1988).

In the subsequent decades, neologisms of all kinds were developed by researchers. For example, the Congolese sociologist Tonda (1997) used terms such as “neo-traditional practitioners”, “neo-researchers”, and “non-biomedical specialists” (Tonda, 2002: 632 footnotes) to designate “producers of theories and practices of healing who are not included in the traditional registers: biomedicine, ‘traditional medicine’, religion, etc., but participate more or less in all these registers at the same time.” In his study in South Africa, Xaba (2004) struggled to find the appropriate term and ended with spatial taxonomy “Indigenous”, which he took as synonymous with “traditional medicine” as opposed to “modern medicine”. Flint (2001), whose field was the same area, referred to the taxonomy of “African/Western.” Bado a Burkinabe historian of medicine, argued that the term “traditional medicine” lacks a historical depth, and constructed his own neologism in terms of “empirico-metaphysic” as opposed to “empirico-rational” (Bado 1996; Bado 2006).

In fact, the terms are various: “traditional medicine/modern medicine”, “orthodox medicine/non-orthodox medicine”, “biomedicine/non-biomedicine”, “conventional/non-conventional medicine”, “Complementary medicine”, “alternative medicine”, “ethnomedicine”, “parallel medicine”, “soft medicine”, “simple medicine”, “official/non-official”, etc. The conceptual problem goes beyond the specific case of Africa and is of interest to Western researchers as well, given the significant development of similar practices in their societies (Ramsey 1999). Within this variety of notions there are even discriminations in relation to the geography of the usages (Edjenguèlè 2009, Ramsey 1999). For example, the term “traditional medicine” is less respectful and is never applied to indigenous therapeutic practices of peoples of North America and Europe, whereas “complementary” or “alternative medicine” are rarely institutionally used for the medicine of Africans, Latin-Americans, developing Asia, and indigenous Australians (Edjenguèlè 2009); rather, the common usage is the reverse, thus recalling the deep-seated historical dichotomy between “civilied/modern” and ‘primitive/traditional’ societies. As for the practitioners, the WHO helped institutionalise such categories as “tradipractice”, “tradipractitioner”, “trade-therapy”, trade-therapeutics, “tradi-therapist”, “healer”, “all this to avoid using the words medicine and physician” (Edjenguèlè 2009, 55).

The conceptual problem goes further back to the early Western anthropological studies. The problem presented itself to these researchers in terms of making a distinction between magic, religion, and “natural” healing, and correspondingly to associate these processes with distinctive practitioners, such as “magician”, “priest”, and “herbalists” (e.g. Ackerknecht 1982; Colson, 1962; Colson, 1977; Forde, 1964; Foster 2009; Malinowski 1948; Mbiti 1969; Par-rinder 1961; Pritchard 1937; Rivers, 1924; Turner 1970, 1975). The mind-set of anthropology from the 1920s gives a misleading impression. Either Pritchard or Malinowski seems to engage in a more empirical study of Africans, or other non-Western systems of thought, as opposed to the theoretically oriented construction of classical anthropological accounts such as those of Levy-Bruhl, Frazer, or even Durkheim. However, in fact, the former considered the latter’s conclusions, and then tried to find their empirical referents among the people they studied.

Acknowledging the logical structure of African or other non-Western societies’ systems of thought amounted to these authors essentialising them rather than putting them within a genuine comparative historical perspective; in other words, they attribute to them incommensurable properties in relation to similar processes in their own societies so that cognitively, their conclusions do not help a deeper historical conceptualization. Until the publication of Horton’s paper, there was no attempt to historicize African knowledge systems and technologies, except to place them, despite the incommensurability, below “Western science.” Horton (1967) broke with this attitude by arguing that there is some continuity between African traditional thought and Western science, because they both fulfil the same function of need for explanation, prediction, and control. Ironically, Horton was also aiming to come up with the same conclusion as previous classical sociologists; that is to say, a justification of the pre-eminence of Western civilization and the Western origin of science. There have been many criticisms of Horton’s paper, but Keita’s recent paper sums up what can be drawn from it (Keita 2007). First, the comparative method was ill designed; instead of considering the African system of thought and technology as a whole, the author limited himself to traditional levels of thought. Second, even within this, he conflated metaphysical thinking into the mere religious system. Third, by tracing Western science to ancient Greece, he lost sight that science did not originate in Greece but in ancient Egypt, then a Greek colony; and by this way Africa, including Africa down to the South where he conducted his research (Keita 2007).

The result is that apart from the principle of comparison with which he can be credited, Horton's conclusions appear to be problematic. It is inappropriate to compare science and religion, because they aim to serve different functions. As Keita (2007, 147) puts it "religion serves a special function ...Religion is concerned mainly with communication and maintaining kinship with departed ancestors and anthropomorphised beings in the form of deities or some single deity who is the source of all phenomena and who might be conferred a supra-human moral authority." As such, it constitutes only a sub-realm of the meta-physical world, the other sub-realm being magic. By contrast, "Magic and science are concerned essentially with the explanation and manipulation of phenomena" (Keita 2007, 147). Horton refused to treat magic separately, and this led to his erroneous conclusions. However, only between religion and magic can a continuity thesis be supported. Through time, some answers to people's questions became available through common sense, thus amenable by science; and in turn, since science can also deal with the matters concerned with magic, advances in scientific inquiry erode the resorting to magic. This state of affairs points to the constraints which structure these potential sources of knowledge, depending on the social context. The fact is that Western societies triumphed from these constraints, which was also partly helped by commercial exchanges and colonial domination (Cook 2009). Conversely, scientific progress impacted on religion although, in contrast to magic, this realm has so far with varying degrees retained an enduring function in society (Keita 2007; Rivers 1924). In this connection, cognitively, what is encompassed within the ahistorical words and neologisms listed above, can be classed as "medico-magical medical practitioners", "medico-religious practitioners", "empirical medical practitioners", and "scientific medical practitioners". All these practitioners operated within the same society; in Western societies, the modern linear arrangement only occurred from the seventeenth century. The point is that both the more recent conceptual discussions (and its corollaries of neologism), and the earliest anthropological taxonomies, display a common pattern which consists of two processes. First, both are couched in evolutionary terms with varying degrees of systematization. Secondly, the definition of the people practising or using this expertise refers to names based on the expertise, technically, rather than in economic terms.

The fact is that this is a rather recent mode of thought, reflected in the 'idea of progress.' It is a modern idea (Hall and Gieben 1992; Van Doren 1967; Ginsberg 1953; Nisbet 1969; Nisbet 1980), prevailing from Ancient Greece through to the Middle Ages, down to the twentieth century. However, as Nisbet pointed

out: "From at least the early nineteenth century until a few decades ago, belief in the progress of making, with Western civilization in the vanguard, was virtually a universal religion on both sides of the Atlantic" (Nisbet 1969, 7). The idea of progress held by the Ancients was cyclical, consisting in an idea of recurrent cycles of development, similar to that of the Christian religious epic, which is also cyclical but with no regard to recurrence. Only the modern period produces the "idea of linear progress; the vision of mankind without old age and decline, with ever-increasing knowledge ahead" (Nisbet 1969, 212). Constructed with regard to interrelated assumptions concerning the linear character of time and the irreversibility of change, an ameliorative corresponding movement towards perfection, its universality, and rationalization which did not require empirical evidence, the Western modern idea of progress drew into correlation two propositions (Nisbet 1980). On the one hand, there is the idea that the accumulation of knowledge in the Arts and sciences will always result in much improved knowledge, and on the other hand, that human nature is moving towards perfection in terms of morality and spirituality; the triumph of applied science was the seed of this hopefulness (Ginsberg 1953).

Clearly, the concept of progress embodied "the idea that through the application of reasoned empirically based knowledge, social institutions could be created that would make men happier and free from cruelty, injustice, and despotism" (Hall and Gieben 1992, 37). August Comte provided a searching account of this linear evolution, with an implicit Platonian model of government led by experts in science, with the priest leading the lowest stage (Comte 1869). Spencer (1896) systematized the parallel cogitative and occupational development from the medicine-man to the physician through the priest. Foucault (Foucault 2007, 2010) provided a cogent articulation of the relationship between knowledge and good government as reflected in Western governmental practices from the end of the eighteenth century.

The contemporary expansion of competing medical practices in Western societies, as shown above, reveals that the linear metaphor does not exhaust the issue. Revolts against rationalism and science, cultivation of rationality (religious and secular), growth of subjectivism and egotism are evidence of how symmetry does not hold in absolute terms. Moreover, not all Western thinkers left the idea of progress unchallenged; for example, Weber (1978) was sceptical about the argument. The point is that the symmetry between scientific progress and moral progress is a historical construct; there has not been always a linear relationship between knowledge and morals (Lloyd 1979). The understanding of this process is essential in order to better comprehend the implica-

tions of this association and to separate, at least analytically, the technical definition of an occupation from its economic categorization. In societies without the modern linear idea of progress, such as Ancient Greece, medieval Europe, and African traditional societies, the authors who sought to define different specialists cognitively (technically) failed; they rather resorted to moral categories. Spencer did so to differentiate the magician from the priest (Spencer 1888, Thomas 1903); in the face of this difficulty, Rivers suggested that “one of the means by which it is possible to distinguish medicine from magic and religion is an inquiry how far the leech is differentiated from the sorcerer and the priest” (Rivers 1924, 41). This can be done through the analysis of the formation of priesthood and its subsequent changes in terms of its focus on religious rituals and the beliefs which support them in the given society, or in terms of the secularization process, which erodes the symbolic dimension of the healing art. The fact is that as Weber pointed out:

The sorcerer may sometime be very learned, while deep learning need not always characterize priest. Rather, the distinction between priest and magician must be established qualitatively with reference to the different nature of the learning in the two cases. (Weber 1978, 425)

Yet, the priest holds the modern equivalent professional role in the occupational stratification system in pre-modern societies. Almost all anthropologists who had been interested in African (or other non-Western or pre-modern European) religions or political organizations, even inadvertently, proceeded in a similar way. Few of them explicitly used moral taxonomies (Colson 1977; Forde 1964; Fortes 1987; Mbiti 1969; Parrinder 1961; Colson 1962; Pritchard 1937; Harwood 1970; Bonnet 1988; Turner 1970; Turner 1975).

Max Weber (1978) is one of the rare modern sociologists to have discovered the limitations of the linear and technical definition of the profession. He saw that the expansion of democratic values had led to institutional arrangements in offices, which resulted in the promotion of occupations whose access were based on non-particularistic standards; expertise is important but not essential as a discriminatory factor. This is Parsons's (1939) argument, which Sciulli (2009) had refined recently. There are also some, though not developed, such as Hughes (1984) who talked about “moral division of labour” to designate this occupational differentiation and hierarchies based on a moral taxonomy. The conceptual and theoretical problem is not intrinsic to the healer occupation; it

applies to such diverse occupation as weaving, handcraft, trade, politics, music, dancing, sport, agriculture, etc.

Unsurprisingly, the debates in sociology which contributed, within Western scholarship, to a more reflexive theorizing of professions has hardly influenced anthropology throughout the discipline's history. In fact, when colonialists and anthropologists arrived in Africa, it was not only for them a reality to be discovered. For the latter, it was already an institutionalized entity to be described in order to make salient what were the distinctive characteristics of their own society, which had already received detailed conceptualization from sociologists and other theorists. In contrast, the formers were mainly driven by the transformation of African value systems, which they thought reminded them of their own repressed identity. The later destruction of these value systems, which constituted the superstructure of African societies, was considered to be a necessary step in the politics of the capitalist system of production. Beneath the difference between their projects, colonialists and anthropologists adopted parallel fictions which shaped their subsequent perspectives on Africa. By following even, in some cases, what he believed to be his "private aims," the anthropologist was doing no more than reproducing a discourse, which had been mostly set up outside him. Since this discursive field provided him with the framework about how to speak of things, he was not able to think of other things outside it, contributing thus to the distortion of a reality which he shed light only at the points of seizure for the colonial power. Hence, occupations as an object of anthropological study were stifled in Africa in labor, favor and recognized this failure (Foster and Anderson 1978). Shortly after, anthropologists called for new interest in the "professionalization of African medicine" (Last and Schavunduka 1984). This initiative did not stimulate further interests as it emerged at a period of shift in medical anthropological writing, mostly in medical anthropology toward large scale studies (Genest et. al. 2007; Baer et. al. 2003; Baer and Singer 2007).

Work seems to interest the anthropologists as something exterior. As a result of this, the focus has been on the "work" rather than the person who performs the work. The variables of the material life of Africans, which were studied by anthropologists are categories of political economy. Like Weber with Christianity, Malinowski (1925) incidentally studied the economic influence of religion and magic, as did Firth (1939), Nadel (1942), and Thomas (1959). Herzkovits (1952) and Pritchard (1956) studied the organization of material production within general social processes. The study of the organization of work and working groups (Roper 1958; Richard 1932), the sentiments of

people (Kuper 1947; Tax 1953), their attitudes toward time and its patterns of allocations (Winter 1955, Sauter 1950, Delafosse 1921), were also significant. Others were interested in the mechanisms of distribution (Kuper 1947, Firth 1959).

In the 1960s, in reviewing the anthropological literature on work, Gosselin (1963, 511) stated that “anthropology has never used so far the notion of work in order to analyse and expose the functioning of the societies it studies.” Two decades later, Copans (1981–1983) observed, in his review of the literature in the working classes in Africa, that the Africanists’ studies about the issue were still marginal despite the growing interests during the previous decade. The reasons of such a lack, at least in the case of anthropology, could now be addressed easily.

The anthropological project seems to be, wittingly or unwittingly, largely a political project, that of controlling, of administration, of seizing the societies it studies. Overall, with respect to labor in Africa, anthropological inquiries were undertaken in response to the need of understanding problems, whose decisiveness could not be disconnected from the general imperial context of the West. Indeed, from the sixteenth century to the second half of the nineteenth century the discipline participated in the delimitation of the boundaries of modern civilization, in order to justify the extension of these very boundaries to integrate societies which were believed to be lacking such “universal values”. With the redefinition of interests following the “scramble for Africa” as one of these a “natural world” to be pacified, by the beginning of the twentieth century, anthropology came to be interested in labor but not as an historical reality. Labor was as something to be moulded. In response to the colonial needs, wittingly or not, the anthropologist focused his eyes on potential surfaces of labor. Then anthropology was concerned with the mechanisms to tear the labor out from these surfaces without developing new formations around the bonds such labor might create. The intellectual history of anthropology about labor was a history of labor and the negation of its holder, that is: the worker. Even until the end of the third decade after independence, there were few attempts to rethink work within the framework of specialized functions. As a result of this, the renewal of interest in the professions by the 1980s has been undertaken with poor theoretical foundations. The anthropology of work which was initiated on the basis of its truncated knowledge was not rewarding, because it was based on evolving practical interests, and its attempts to shift toward a sociological study of the professions, mainly in the health field, could not be achieved with such a weak intellectual framework. Perhaps, anthropology is

experiencing its enlightenment as Salhins (1999) believes. What seems to be clear though, from this study, is that the light is likely to come from a critical integration of sociological theories of the professions rather than from the remains of the anthropology of work (which is in fact the successor of anthropology or sociology of industrial relations). The French sociology of professions (Dubar et. al. 2005), and its sociology of work (Paradeise 2003) seem, in their current state, too weak to respond efficiently to the challenge. Since the end of the 1980s medical anthropology has been shifting towards systems studies with a pronounced preference for writing about abstract entities of traditional sociological macro theorizing: capitalism, world system, dependency theories etc. In such a context, the specific focus on a theory of the sick (not only his sickness) and the curer (not only his knowledge), are receiving significant interest.

Conclusion

The challenges faced by sociology, as social sciences more generally, is clear. First, anthropological studies about work in Africa has taken a Marxist perspective. Work and the processes it involved have been negated for a long time, because they have been considered to be a phenomena, which is foreign to 'non-civilized societies', and which should therefore be developed in the colonized. As a result, when it came to be an object of scientific discourse, the concern was mostly with how the labor force might be released in order to constitute a favorable environment for capital, and the consequences of these processes for indigenous identities. Furthermore, originally, the sociology of the professions was confined within modern American and British societies. The theoretical and empirical contributions that history has recently made to sociological theorising developed from studies of Western history. Unavoidably, the sociology of professions has, in order to carry out adequately its new agenda in contemporary Africa, to rediscuss its concepts. African societies are witnessing, like other societies, the development of the knowledge society, which primarily contribute to social transformation through the way people, particularly workers utilize new technologies. A better appreciation of the impacts of these new technologies will need a proper understanding of what work means in different contexts. The sources of knowledge, which used to be in formal organizations, have become more diverse and accessible. This

context reconfigures social order and how different institutions contributes to it.

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