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On Reproducing Social Reality: A Reply to Harrison

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That social inquirers should be careful about the intrusion of biases and questionable ethnocentric presuppositions is a widely accepted and unquestionably cogent methodological dictum. Less widely accepted, and perhaps less cogent, is the view that such intrusions are best avoided by inquirers adopting the interpretive constructs, points of view, etc., of their subjects. Debates over this latter point have flared up repeatedly in twentieth-century philosophical and social-scientific literature, notably in the extensive discussions of Peter Winch's *The Idea of a Social Science (ISS)* and 'Understanding a Primitive Society' (UPS). His contention that proper social inquiry is actually a form of conceptual-analytic epistemology, aimed necessarily at the recovery and use by the inquirer of certain rules and criteria operative within the source-language community in the individuation of social actions, makes Winch clearly a proponent of the latter, controversial thesis.

The late Richard Rudner ('Some Essays at Objectivity' [EO]) has challenged Winch, contending that his thesis rests on what Rudner calls the 'reproductive fallacy' of assuming that the function of a social description is to reproduce aspects of what it describes. Recently, Stanley Harrison ('Rudner's Reproductive Fallacy' [RF]) has taken issue with Rudner's critique, charging that it commits a fallacy of somewhat older vintage, namely, of attacking a straw man. Rudner, he claims, by not attending with care to Winch's important distinction between reflective and unreflective understanding, and by not keeping in mind the differences in view between himself and Winch regarding the nature of reflective understanding, creates the confusion and inconsistency he ostensibly finds in Winch. However, I shall argue that Harrison has misconstrued the thrust and content of Rudner's argument, and though this may result in part from the way Rudner formulates certain points, these can be clarified and Rudner's telling objections to Winch's and related views sustained.

HARRISON'S REPRODUCTION OF RUDNER

Harrison believes Rudner intends to demonstrate that the understanding Winch advocates 'is a camouflage and counterfeit form of scientific knowing', or, at best, 'a sometimes useful but unrigorous understanding based on direct experience', and Harrison contends that this harshly antagonistic thesis rests on two related mistakes: (1) Rudner equates Winch's central distinction between reflective and unreflective understanding to the distinction between knowing that and knowing how, or to that between knowledge about and knowledge by acquaintance—all, in Rudner's terms, delineating 'an opposition between... direct experiences of objects or events on the one hand, and more indirect relationships, such as formulating or reading descriptions of such events on the other'; (2) Rudner begs a central question in assuming that social inquirers must use scientific method (seemingly contrary to what Winch wants to establish).

This faulty categorization, Harrison contends, makes Winch's demand that the inquirer learn the subjects' language in order to gain a reflective understanding of their practices sound as if it also entails a demand for 'direct' understanding. Meanwhile Rudner's contentions that Winch views the function of science as to reproduce reality, and that Winch himself is out to reproduce social reality, indicate to Harrison that Rudner regards science as the only viable form of indirect understanding (RF, pp. 41-43; cf. EO, p. 126).¹

Thus, Harrison remarks, for Rudner 'this means that not only does Winch not realize that reflective knowledge is really scientific knowledge, but he sins twice by expecting the social inquirer to "reproduce" in his own understanding what it is like to be the agent whose actions are governed by certain rules, informed by certain values, and so on' (RF, p. 42). Indeed, Harrison contends, Rudner hopes to reveal an outright inconsistency in Winch's position:

... to Rudner's ears, Winch's talk about learning the language of the agents in order to understand them sounds exactly like knowledge by acquaintance or knowing how, the kind of understanding which proceeds from having a direct experience of events. But this is precisely not what Rudner thinks of as reflective knowledge. Thus, from Rudner's point of view, Winch wants to have his cake and eat it. That is, Winch wants reflective understanding and he wants it to have direct relation to phenomena, whereas for Rudner the whole point of reflective knowledge is its indirect relation to events. To insist that reflective knowledge of social phenomena is only achieved by appropriating the language and symbolic practices of the agents being studied violates, therefore, Rudner's criteria for what counts as reflective understanding. In fact, Rudner takes the requirements of learning a language to be a paradigm of knowledge by acquaintance. He writes: 'No doubt, we have "learned a language" only if we have gained the kind of understanding of it which is identical with directly experiencing behaving in conformance with its rules'. [RF, p. 42; cf. EO, p. 132.]

Thus it appears that it is impossible to have knowledge of events that is at the same time both reflective and unreflective. These seem to be two distinct and mutually exclusive epistemic states (RF, p. 43).

Having established, he believes, that Rudner's case rests pivotally on this restriction of reflective understanding to scientific understanding, Harrison proceeds to point out that what Winch envisions is not two distinct kinds of knowledge, but something more of a continuum:

They are not two kinds of knowledge predicated on Rudner's direct/indirect relations to events, but rather different degrees of one kind of understanding, both predicated on the same direct logical relation to the rules which give actions their sense and the reasons which ground the rules. They differ only in the level of understanding or awareness of these relevant reasons and rules which make human conduct meaningful. [RF, p. 43.]

The result, Harrison contends, is that the essence of Winch's position is completely obscured. The very reason that Winch demands his particular variety of reflective understanding is 'precisely because it remains grounded in a continuous logical relation to social phenomena. Reasons once hidden, either partially or totally, now stand revealed as the explanations of actions'. One may come to see 'that one's conduct had a point to it quite different from what had been assumed' or 'that the magical rites of an alien tribe may be much more akin to prayers than to misguided technical efforts to change the world'. Indeed, 'For

1 I shall forego discussion of Harrison's criticisms of Rudner's treatment of arguments that try to draw Winchian import from examples concerning the limits of alien intellects in interpreting human behaviour (RF, pp. 39-40; cf. EO, pp. 116-19). Although Harrison sees indications here of a presumption of science's superiority, he doesn't seem to rest his case on this.

Winch, social anthropology is most valuable because (and when) it achieves understandings of other agents which exposes the real point of their conduct' (RF, p. 43; cf. UPS, pp. 181ff.).

RUDNER'S ACCOUNT

However, I believe these criticisms generally miss the mark. Rudner is not out to discredit Winch's notion of understanding, but rather means to criticize the idea that this is the *only* type of understanding appropriate for social inquiry. Moreover, Rudner's argument does not rest on the conflation of the various above-noted distinctions into a rough direct/indirect knowledge contrast (indeed, the idea that reflective and unreflective understanding form a continuum is something I expect Rudner would find quite agreeable, although he might prefer to express the point more in other terms). Finally, Rudner's main thesis, though expressed in terms of a comparison between physical (particularly, meteorological) inquiry and social inquiry, does not beg the question of which type of reflective understanding is required for the task of social description: Rudner does not have the exclusionary attitude toward nonscientific understanding Harrison attributes to him, and, moreover, his thesis about reproduction is generalizable to other descriptive endeavours.

Rudner offers two general lines of argument, aimed at what he perceives as two lines of argument in Winch (though it is Rudner, not Winch, who so sharply differentiates them). The first line, wherein Rudner perceives the occurrence of the reproductive fallacy, is a positive thesis meant to establish that the study of symbolic behaviour, owing to its rule-governed character, calls for a special sort of descriptive apparatus. This thesis springs from an analysis of the social scientist's particular subject matter. The second line Rudner views as a negative thesis aimed at showing that there are inherent shortcomings in any scientific attempt to describe symbolic behaviour. Rudner's main concern in this latter context is to consider the adaptability of W. V. Quine's radical indeterminacy thesis to positions such as Winch's, for Quine's detailed and powerful analytic arguments to the effect that most interpretive hypotheses (and those that rest on them) are indeterminate can be viewed as showing that the methodology Quine employs in establishing his thesis (a 'standard' one) is thus demonstrated to be inadequate. (This is not Quine's contention, of course, for he is a firm supporter of standard methodology, and his aim is to show that the object of inquiry, the description of objectively determinate word- and sentence-meanings, is misconceived from the start.)

Again, with respect to both theses, Rudner's stated aim is only to fend off Winch's efforts to establish that a special methodology must be used. He does not mean, here at least, to render Winch's form of understanding counterfeit. It is Winch's 'methodological *separatism*' that he intends to discredit (EO, p. 122). Moreover, I believe he remains consistent to this purpose throughout his discussion—though I shall consider only his assessment of Winch's positive thesis, as it is only to this that his account of the reproductive fallacy pertains.

Rudner sees the crux of Winch's positive thesis in *ISS*, chapters 1 and 3, in the exposition and development of Wittgenstein's analysis of the rule-governed character of symbolic behaviour, and in the application of this analysis to a critique of Mill. The central point of chapter 1 of *ISS* is that the notion of following a rule is 'logically inseparable' from that of making a mistake. Symbolic or meaningful acts must commit agents to future actions, and this is possible only if the present act is an application of a rule. This latter condition, in turn, is sensible only if it makes sense to distinguish between a right and a wrong way of performing the act in question—something which demands the recogni-

tion of publicly accessible criteria (*ISS*, pp. 32, 50; *EO*, p. 120). When 'making sense' of social phenomena is thus construed, Winch contends, it becomes clear that the understanding of such phenomena cannot be achieved by scientific methodologies, for these methodologies are governed by canons of inductive inquiry which individuate actions differently, by and large, from the ways in which the source-culture rules (that give significance to and constitute the subjects' actions) individuate them. What is required is a type of investigation designed to spell out what it is to follow a rule, that is, conceptual-analytic epistemology, which explains reality by examining, clarifying and showing the limits of certain key concepts employed in scientific and other forms of confrontation with reality. What results is a genuine knowledge of social reality that consists in a 'philosophical understanding of what is involved in the concept of intelligibility' (*ISS*, p. 20; cf. *EO*, pp. 122-23). When concerned with the scientist's key concepts, i.e., when employed in philosophizing about science, philosophical method requires, of course, an understanding of the scientist's concepts. When philosophical method is turned to religion, on the other hand, it must concern itself with, and be privy to, key concepts and strategies involved in a religious understanding:

... the philosophy of science will be concerned with the kind of understanding sought and conveyed by the scientist: the philosophy of religion will be concerned with the way in which religion attempts to present an intelligible picture of the world; and so on. And of course these activities and their aims will be mutually compared and contrasted. The purpose of such philosophical inquiries will be to contribute to our understanding of what is involved in the concept of intelligibility, so that we may better understand what it means to call reality intelligible. [*ISS*, pp. 19-20.]

Winch sharply distinguishes his view of philosophy from the 'underlabourer' view of Locke, Hume and the Logical Positivists, i.e., the view that 'philosophy cannot contribute any positive understanding of the world on its own account: it has the purely negative role of removing impediments to the advance of our understanding' (*ISS*, p. 4). The insight into forms of intelligibility is the positive contribution the underlabourer conception overlooks (*ISS*, p. 20).

The crucial point in the context of Rudner's critique is this: Winch maintains that this valuable task of contributing to the idea of intelligibility—scientific, religious, etc.—can only be achieved in the realization of a certain systematic ambiguity of each form of intelligibility (they are not entirely distinct, Winch reminds us, but bear only a family resemblance [*ISS*, p. 19]). The form of understanding must itself change in keeping with its subject matter, and conceptual analysis, given that it can *accommodate itself* to the relevant practices in a way that scientific inquiry does not, fills the bill. Its implementation draws the inquirer into the language-games of the subjects in a way that is required by good social inquiry, on Winch's view, whereas the scientist remains bound by the rules of an external practice. Specifically, Rudner sees Winch's thesis as involving the *incorporation* of subject rules and criteria into the inquirer's analytic framework. For Rudner this is what underlies the genuinely *methodological* thesis that Winch maintains, i.e., when he is insisting that the *logic* of social inquiry, and not simply its subject matter or its discovery procedures, is special.

Given Harrison's stern denial that Winch is saying anything like what Rudner attributes to him, it is important to be sure that Winch is demanding the inquirer's *use* of subject notions as components of the apparatus of justification. This is where Winch's discussion of Mill's and related views is relevant. It is clear that Winch demands that the inquirer be *able* to understand the criteria of individuation and other rules of the social subjects. But are these also required as components of the social description itself? Many of Winch's formulations of his

central contention seem to fall just short of saying this. It is clear that he believes that the inquirer must grasp the subjects' concepts in order to produce a correct social description *and* that Winch sees this as intimately bound up with having an unreflective understanding of the practices under study (whether it comes from participation in the practices of the society being studied or in relevant practices of another social group, say, the inquirer's own society) (*JSS*, p. 89). It is also clear that there must be some sort of logical relationship between the technical concepts of the inquirer and those of the subjects. For example, with respect to a technical concept such as liquidity of preference, 'its use by the economist presupposes his understanding of what it is to conduct a business, which in turn involves an understanding of such business concepts as money, profit, cost, risk, etc.'. Generally,

... although the reflective student of society, or of a particular mode of social life, may find it necessary to use concepts which are not taken from the forms of activity which he is investigating, but which are taken rather from the context of his own investigation, still these technical concepts of his will imply a previous understanding of those other concepts which belong to the activities under investigation. [*JSS*, p. 89.]

Now these passages give some evidence that Winch demands the use of subject-concepts. The remark that technical concepts *may* be necessary would seem to say that they are admitted *in addition* to something else—and what else could this be other than the subjects' concepts? Also, if the logical relations Winch demands here between technical- and subject-concepts involves anything like the definability of the latter in terms of the former, a commitment to subject-concept use would also clearly follow. However, Winch's treatment, in these and other passages, of logical relationships such as implication and presupposition as holding among activities, actions and perhaps epistemic states, makes this matter somewhat unclear.

I believe the clearest way to discern this commitment is this: since the inquirer's judgements of identity seem proper components in the validation of social descriptions, and since Winch demands that such judgements must be made on the basis of the subjects' criteria of individuation, this would seem to entail use of those criteria and of the rules and concepts bound up in them:

The concepts and criteria according to which the sociologist judges that, in two situations, the same thing has happened, or the same action performed, must be understood *in relation to the rules governing sociological investigation*. But here ... *what the sociologist is studying* ... is carried on according to rules. And it is these rules, rather than those which govern the sociologist's investigation, which specify what is to count as 'doing the same kind of thing' in relation to that kind of activity. [*JSS*, pp. 86-87; cf. RF, pp. 38-39.]

This passage, if no other, makes Winch's commitment to the use of subject-concepts clear, and leaves us with no other evident alternative way of reading remarks such as that the inquirer's 'understanding of social phenomena is more like the engineer's understanding of his colleagues' activities than it is like the engineer's understanding of the mechanical systems which he studies' (*JSS*, p. 88), except as entailing a commitment to accommodation of inquirer description to described social activity by partial concept-sharing.

However, it is just here that Rudner (who, by the way, cites the above-quoted passage from Winch to support his case [EO, p. 24]) becomes suspicious. Why must there be this sort of accommodation? Why is the '*real point*' of subject behaviour revealed in only this way? (And it is this that is at issue here: Rudner is not challenging the role of translation in social inquiry.²) Rudner wonders what

2 Harrison's claims that Rudner takes language-learning to be a paradigm of knowledge by

substantiates the inference from premisses about the nature of the subjects' discourse to the demand that the inquirer's understanding be like the subjects'. And, indeed, the same puzzlement arises equally from Harrison's accurate summary of Winch (RF, pp. 39-40) as it does from Winch's discussion itself.

Rudner believes that implicit in this inference is an unwarranted belief that scientific descriptions are lacking in some important respect. Rudner groups Winch with the bad company of certain philosophers 'who, while agreeing that attainment of scientific explanation of physical phenomena is as much as can be attained by physical science in the way of understanding such phenomena, have nonetheless taken this to be symptomatic of the deficiency or limitations of the scientific method in general', contending, in effect, 'that science distorts through abstraction from physical reality' (EO, pp. 126-27). But this criticism of science, Rudner claims, is unwarranted:

We, most of us at any rate, comprehend the point of Einstein's remark that 'it is not the function of science to give the taste of the soup.' It is the function of science to describe the world, not to reproduce it. Of course a description of a tornado does not provide us with a tornado; it is not the same thing as a tornado! And, incidentally, the description does not fail to be a tornado on account of being incomplete, or truncated, or generalized. Even if it were a 'complete' description of a tornado—whatever that might be—it would still be a description of a tornado and not a tornado. [EO, p. 127.]

Winch commits the reproductive fallacy by implication: *X* can be blamed for failing to do *A* only if it is warrantable to insist that *X*'s function is to do *A* in the first place. Thus the charge of distortion implies the reproductive fallacy that science's function is to reproduce reality.

Rudner characterizes Winch's thesis as that 'the only methodology appropriate to the investigation of a rule-governed phenomenon is one that issues in a reproduction of the condition it investigates' (EO, p. 127). More specifically, he sees Winch as demanding the reproduction of the perspective or 'teleology' of the subjects whose beliefs and behaviour comprise the subject matter of social inquiry:

Suppose, for want of a better, we employ the term 'teleology of the observer' to refer to the relevant characteristics of the scientists' 'game'—including the verificational canons, instances of conformance to them, the conceptual apparatus of nomological or causal theories, explanatory uses of these, predictive uses of these, etc. And, correspondingly, suppose we use the term 'teleology of the observed' to refer to relevant characteristics of some social phenomena (e.g., religious behavior) which we wish to investigate. What Winch, and others who hold similar views are claiming then is that the only way in which such a social science investigation can achieve understanding is via the adoption by the social scientist of the teleology of the observed. [EO, p. 127.]

However, Rudner finds this contention untenable:

But this surely is an idea of no social science. It is, logically, the same as claiming that the only understanding appropriate to investigation of tornados is that which is gained in the experience of tornados; and anyone who put forward the idea that the only kind of understanding at which we should, or could, aim in connection with the investigation of tornados comes to us in the experiencing of tornados, would be having an idea of no Meteorology. Notice that in rejecting Winch's thesis, it is not necessary to deny that some

acquaintance (see pp. 2-3) can give the impression that Rudner does mean to do this. However, Rudner distinguishes 'language-learning' from other forms of language-*understanding*, such as translation, about which he has no qualms (EO, p. 132). This impression is also reinforced by Harrison's contention that Rudner is out to discredit Winch's mode of understanding and not just his exclusionary attitude toward it.

sort of knowledge or understanding of, say religion, is gained in 'playing' the religious 'game' any more than it is necessary to deny that some sort of knowledge or understanding is gained in experiencing tornados or in driving on English roads. The point is that nothing whatever in such a concession implies that these 'direct' understandings are the only possible ones; nor would such a concession imply that the scientist's 'game'—the adoption of the teleology of the observer—is at all inappropriate for achieving the sort of understanding, a quite different one to be sure, which it is the function of successful scientific investigation to provide. [EO, pp. 127-28.]

HARRISON'S MISCONSTRUAL

Now let us consider Harrison's objections.

First, every one of the above-noted statements of the reproductive fallacy clearly concerns the idea that 'reproductive knowing' is the *only* sort that will do. Rudner is not here providing any considerations intended to be sufficient to make Winch's preferred form of understanding inadequate. Thus the remarks at the heart of Rudner's argument are perfectly in keeping with those, noted earlier, in his introduction. The 'idea of no social science', like the 'idea of no Meteorology', is not the positive idea that Winch presents, but rather the idea that reproductive or direct knowledge is the only adequate type.

Further, Harrison's charge that Rudner is imposing scientific reflectiveness on Winch is also incorrect. As we have seen, Rudner draws out the reproductive fallacy from Winch's insistence that special, nonscientific forms of understanding are required for social inquiry. He wonders why scientific method must be displaced and supplemented and suspects that a tacitly and mistakenly assumed failure on its part motivates Winch's thesis. And though this leads Rudner to dwell on the nonreproductive character of science, the problem he sees in Winch, as Einstein's remark clearly suggests, is quite generalizable to other types of description. A recipe for cakes is not a cake, nor does it typically taste sweet. A musical score is not a performance and typically makes no music. There seems nothing particularly question-begging about Rudner's reference to meteorology (in which he simply follows Mill's and Winch's lead) or about his use of terms such as 'social science'. The choice of these terms is perhaps potentially misleading, but exchanging terms like 'social science' for terms with a less committal ring to them, such as 'social inquiry', does not seem to alter significantly any of Rudner's major claims or inferences.

As for Harrison's remarks about the conflation of Winch's reflective-unreflective distinction, this is also incorrect. However, certain aspects of Rudner's own meteorological example may contribute to Harrison's perplexity here. The problem is that Rudner's charge of reproduction, in the context of the meteorological example, amounts to two fairly distinct claims. In the first passage quoted above in this connection (p. 23), Rudner is attending to the demand for *reproduction* of tornados. However, as is clear from the subsequent passage that remarks on this being an 'idea of no Meteorology' (p. 13), though it is clearly intended as an elucidation of the first, Rudner's concern shifts to the insistence upon *direct acquaintance* with tornados. Meanwhile, Rudner's summary, which immediately follows this passage, emphasizes the first reading again:

Again, notice that the mere fact that both the observed and the observer in social science investigations are rule-governed, the fact that the teleology of the observed and the teleology of the observer are both teleologies, does not *per se* demonstrate that the teleologies must be identical. No more than does the fact that both verbal inscriptions describing tornados, and also tornados, have mass, demonstrate that inscriptions are tornados. [EO, p. 128.]

These differences might seem to aid Harrison and Winch, and Rudner's view that the claim that 'the only understanding appropriate to investigation of tornados is that which is gained in the experience of tornados' is 'an idea of no Meteorology' must be carefully considered in light of them. For if we read this as pertaining to the need to 'directly observe' tornados, it might seem that Rudner is treating the Winchian inquirer unfairly. To insist upon knowledge gained *in* experiencing tornados must mean, if it is to be clear that this produces 'an idea of no Meteorology', that knowledge acquisition must always be immediately accompanied by direct observation. But meteorological knowledge of tornados is obviously served by knowledge about spatially and temporally distant causes of tornados, couched, moreover, in well-confirmed hypotheses gained in the experience of other things besides tornados. Thus it might seem that Winch is being made out to insist that social inquirers are in the same position, which of course he is not. He does not believe that the inquirer must always be at the subject's side. It also might help create the impression that Rudner is generally equating Winch's reflective understanding with 'direct' varieties such as knowledge by acquaintance or knowledge how. Indeed, on this reading, it might well seem that Rudner is, after all, out to discredit Winch's notion of understanding itself. For one could hardly see how it could exist at all unless largely comprised of 'indirect' forms of knowledge.

However, Rudner does not believe this. Instead he means to reject Winch's reproductive notion. What bothers him is that the subject's conceptual scheme, not the subject, must always be ready at hand.

It is important to see that despite the fact that the two meteorological readings are different, both seem to bring out aspects of Winch's thesis: They are both reasonable articulations, in physical terms, of Winch's claims; moreover, while the difference is clear in the meteorologist's case, there really is none in the social inquirer's. When Winch demands that the subjects' criteria be used by the inquirer, he in effect demands both (1) that the understanding be in an important sense 'direct', since it is the sort that must be acquired through full participation in relevant social activities; and (2) that the original scheme be partly reproduced insofar as certain subject-concepts be expressed by elements of the inquirer's descriptive idiom. (One could, I suppose, argue that having unreflective knowledge of a practice and grasping certain concepts in order to master it need not be so closely wedded—but, as we have seen, Winch does so relate them.) It is, as Rudner says, 'teleologies' that are being reproduced, and these pervade virtually every component of the social inquirer's account. When 'direct understanding' is seen as being another way of describing Winchian reproductive understanding, then I think it is fair to add to the burdens that the 'tornado-reproduction' parallel placed on Winch, those that result from reading the example in terms of a demand for knowledge gained 'in the experiencing' of a tornado.

Rudner is not resting his case on a differentiation of direct from indirect understanding. Instead, his point is that he does not see why the knowledge gained 'in the direct experience of society', i.e., in becoming a fully enculturated member, must play such a broad and fundamental role in social description. And the insistence on the logical priority of subject criteria of individuation, if nothing else, would seem to have an extremely pervasive impact (as Winch claims it does). Also, realizing the character of Rudner's notion of direct social understanding eliminates the appearance that his arguments are intended to reject not only the necessity, but also the possibility, of Winchian understanding. For nothing now evidently discredits the idea that this sort of concept-use is feasible as either a minor or a major component of various approaches to social inquiry.

REPRODUCING SOCIAL REALITY

Of course, an attack on a popular or initially attractive line of argument that concludes that we must adopt Winchian understanding gives some basis for doubt about the feasibility of the form of understanding itself. And while this is much weaker than the critical thrust Harrison perceives in Rudner's arguments, it is worth some brief reflection. This is especially so given Rudner's sympathies for philosophical critics of theories of meaning, such as Quine and Nelson Goodman. For if one shares their general scepticism regarding the sensibility of talking about expressions embodying or sharing concepts (whether mentalistically or behaviouristically construed), it would seem that Winch is asking the impossible. What reason could there be, then, to think Rudner leaves any real alternatives?

One way to respond to this query is this: Given that what is really at stake is whether a special methodological strategy shall be adopted, it may be possible to argue for its adoption without making the philosophical presuppositions that Winch makes. For example, anthropologists who argue for 'emic' analysis (roughly, analysis from the subjects' point of view) often argue on the basis of the interesting and important data that use of different methodologies produces.³ An analysis of behaviour in terms of the reasons the subjects give for it might provide insights into the resources available for social adaptation that other approaches might not reveal. Of course, if the viability of 'reproductive' descriptions is being called into question, it would be improper to view such success as supporting the idea that we can reproduce social reality. But what such inquirers are doing can be described in other terms. We could say that they are endeavouring to use, in the explanation of subjects' behaviour, concepts that seem to translate correctly subject concepts (which may or may not be embodied in particular source-language expressions). Of course, to some this latter formulation may seem to amount to the same thing; but good reasons exist, I believe (Quine's among them), to differentiate successful translation from 'meaning recovery' (or even 'rule-recovery').

Harrison creates the impression that Rudner is championing 'standard' scientific methodology in social inquiry. This might seem to be so if one considers the above-noted contrasts that Winch delineates between himself and logical positivism on the matter of the purpose of philosophy: it might seem that such a vigorous critic of Winch would side with the positivists not only on this matter but also on the matter of the supremacy of scientific method. However, to attribute this view to Rudner is to overlook his allegiance with Goodman, who is decidedly contrary to positivism on this score.⁴ In EO (p. 134) and elsewhere Rudner vigorously advocates Goodman's view that there are as many adequate accounts of the world (and thus as many worlds) as there are adequate systematizations of it.⁵ This general view is potentially quite accommodating to

3 See, e.g., Lawrence Watson's "'Etic" and "Emic" Perspectives on Guajiro Urbanization', *Urban Life*, 9, 1981, 441-68. Also relevant are pragmatic trends in the healthy literature on the 'psychological reality' of elements of componential, transformational and other analytic frameworks.

4 See, e.g., his 'The Way the World Is', in his *Problems and Projects*, Indianapolis and New York 1972, pp. 24-32; *Languages of Art: An Approach to a Theory of Symbols*, Indianapolis and New York 1968, pp. 241-65; *Of Mind and Other Matters*, Cambridge, Mass. 1984, esp. chap. 1. Somewhat ironically, Goodman, in the latter work, must deal with potentially threatening 'reproductive' consequences in his own equation of worlds and world-visions. (See, e.g., p. 41).

5 Rudner also cites Quine as being in substantial agreement with Goodman here. In many

Winch's thesis that social inquiry should enable us to 'learn different possibilities of making sense of human life' (UPS, p. 182). An important difference, however, lies in the fact that Rudner would acknowledge that there are *many* 'real points' to social subjects' behaviour.

Noting Rudner's sympathies with Goodman is also helpful in dispelling the impression that Harrison gives that Rudner rejects the idea that reflective and unreflective understanding form a continuum. I noted earlier that Rudner would agree with this, though he might prefer to state the point in other terms. What I mean can be best seen in terms of a parallel to a logical example Winch himself adopts from Michael Oakeshott to elucidate his general thesis. Winch and Oakeshott take the infinite regress encountered by Lewis Carroll's Achilles, in trying to justify Modus Ponens in terms of an explicit logical principle, to show that 'learning to infer is not just a matter of being taught about explicit logical relations between propositions; it is learning to do something' (ISS, p. 57). The general lesson to be drawn from this is that 'a form of human activity can never be summed up in a set of explicit precepts. The activity "goes beyond" the precepts' (ISS, p. 55).⁶ However, Rudner shares with Goodman a very similar attitude toward deductive principles: Their justification *consists* in improving an *already existing* deductive practice by codifying it, i.e., by deriving from it general principles to be used for future justification of deductive inferences, but which principles themselves must conform to the clear judgements of validity made by competent parties to the practice on some acceptable prior basis.⁷ Whether this account is cogent is beside the present point: what is clear is that Rudner joins Winch in emphasizing the ways in which a practice 'goes beyond' its precepts. The corresponding general point would be, roughly, that any systematic account of something, whether it be a codification of logical or legal practice, or an account of the grammar or semantics of a natural language or an account of the rules governing manners or kinship or economic activity, depends on principles culled from a fairly stable and successful 'unreflective' practice, i.e., the practice as it proceeds prior to explicit formulation of principles. In a very similar sense the activity 'goes beyond' the precepts, and mastery of the activity is not simply a matter of learning what the principles are.

Of course, this similarity should not cloud the important differences that remain. While Rudner would acknowledge that a certain degree of unreflective understanding is required by the working anthropologist, he would still object to the idea that that understanding be, to the extent that Winch demands, identical with the understanding of full-fledged members of the social community under study.

In summary, Rudner welcomes, rather than rejects, pluralism with respect to social-analytic frameworks. What he rejects is the idea that something about the phenomena under study *settles* how systematic accounts of them *must* be structured. More specifically, he rejects the idea that the description of a social reality must be largely comprised of elements of that reality. It is not Rudner who maintains an exclusionary attitude, but Winch. And even if it is finally shown that Rudner's account is (and perhaps is designed to be) fatal to Winch's very idea of reflective understanding, the fact remains that Harrison has not ex-

ways he is; however, Quine differs significantly from Goodman in conferring a greater degree of primacy to scientific systems.

6 Cf. Oakeshott's 'Rational Conduct', reprinted in *Rationalism in Politics and Other Essays*, London 1962.

7 See Rudner's 'Goodman, Nelson', *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, vol. 3, p. 371; and Goodman's *Fact, Fiction, and Forecast*, 3rd ed., Indianapolis 1973, p. 64.

plained how this is so. As things presently stand, there appears to be far more compatibility between them than Harrison allows.

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