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社会学经典教材影印丛书



# 后现代 社会理论

[美] 乔治·瑞泽尔 (George Ritzer) 著

# POSTMODERN SOCIAL THEORY



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# **Postmodern Social Theory**

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**POSTMODERN SOCIAL THEORY**

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## 出版说明

我们引进这套丛书的目的是介绍当前国外社会学理论和方法,使我国的读者能够直接阅读到西方学者撰写的社会学教材。

需要重申的是,作者本人的观点和结论有些值得商榷,甚至是不可取的,对此我们提请读者加以甄别,书中的观点均不代表我们出版社。

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## 序 言

这里以影印本形式推荐给大家的是美国马里兰大学社会学系教授、美国著名社会学理论家乔治·瑞泽尔(George Ritzer)撰写的多种社会学理论教材当中的一部分。为了使读者能够在短时间内对这些教材及其作者有一个基本的了解,我们在这里首先对瑞泽尔其人以及他撰写的这些教材的主要内容与特征做一个简单的介绍。

自1969年发表第一篇研究论文以来,迄今为止,瑞泽尔已经发表了60余篇学术论文,撰写和编辑了20余部学术著作和教材。就其发表的学术性作品来看,瑞泽尔是从职业社会学方面的研究开始其学术生涯的,并且也取得了一定的成就(这使他在1980年当选为美国社会学组织和职业社会学分会主席),后来他的兴趣转向了社会学理论方面的研究。而使瑞泽尔最终名扬学界的也正是他在社会学理论方面所取得的成果。

1975年出版的《社会学:一门多元范式的科学》是瑞泽尔的名成之作。在这本书中,瑞泽尔借用科学哲学家库恩提出的“范式”概念,并对其略加修正和扩展,明确地提出了社会学是一门与自然科学有着重大区别的科学的观点:社会学是一门具有多元范式的科学。瑞泽尔指出了社会学中的三种基本范式:社会事实范式、社会释义范式和社会行动范式。社会事实范式的主要代表是涂尔干的社会学理论以及当代的结构功能主义和社会冲突理论,其特征是强调将社会事实作为社会学的研究对象。这种“社会事实”一方面是一种和个人事实一样的客观实在,另一方面又是一种不同于个人事实、不能够简单还原于个人事实的“社会”性事实。社会释义范式的主要代表是韦伯的社会学理论、帕森斯早年提出的“社会行动理论”以及由米德、库利等人的著作引发出来的符号互动主义等理论,其基本特征是强调社会现实的主观性质,强调要把行动者建构社会现实的主观过程作为社会学的研究对象。社会行动范式的主要代表则是霍曼斯的社会交换理论,其基本特征是认为对社会现实的科学探究只有以对个人行动之外显过程进行客观的、经验性的具体研究为基础才能够达成。瑞泽尔认为,这三种范式有着各自不同的理论预设,虽然它们之间存在着相互通融的可能性,但却很难将它们最终综合成一个单一的范式。这三种范式又有着各自的视野和局限,因此只有将它们结合起来才能够使我们得到一个更为完整的社会图像。瑞泽尔说:“如果不从所有的范式吸取有益的见解,社会现实的任何方面都不可能恰当地得到解释。”<sup>①</sup>瑞泽尔的上述说法在社会学界获得了很高程度的认同,瑞泽尔也因而被人们看作是一个重要的社会学理论研究专家。之后,瑞泽尔又出版了

<sup>①</sup> George Ritzer, *Sociology: A Multiple Paradigm Science*, Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1975, p. 211.

《走向一个整合的社会学范式》等著作,进一步拓展了上述观点。1989年瑞泽尔当选为美国社会学会理论社会学分会主席。

然而,瑞泽尔最重要的社会学理论著作是出版于1993年的《社会的麦当劳化》一书。在这本书中,瑞泽尔以韦伯的“理性化”理论为指引,以麦当劳快餐店的经营方式为范例,对“理性化”过程在当代西方世界的扩展情况及其后果进行了新颖、细致的讨论。瑞泽尔认为,在韦伯的时代,社会理性化的典范是官僚体制,但在当代西方世界,社会理性化的典范则是麦当劳一类的快餐店。和官僚体制一样,麦当劳式快餐店的经营管理方式具有高效率、高度的可计算性、可预测性、可控制性等特征,因而能够在现代社会的市场竞争中脱颖而出,成为最具竞争力和扩张力的一种经营模式。麦当劳快餐店的巨大成功对现代世界产生了“惊人的冲击力”,“它引起的反响远远超出了美国的疆域,也远远超出了快餐店的范围。它在世界的很大部分影响了各行各业,也影响了人们的生活方式。而且,这种冲击力可能正以一种加速度进行着扩张”。由此造成了一种可以被称之为“麦当劳化”的社会过程,在此过程中,快餐店的原则正在主导美国社会以及世界其他地方的越来越多的部门。麦当劳化不仅影响到餐饮业,也影响到教育、工作、医疗、旅游、休闲、饮食、政治、家庭,事实上影响到了社会的各个方面。<sup>①</sup>和官僚体制一样,社会的麦当劳化既给人们的生活带来了许多积极的变化,但同时也带来了一些负面的影响,形成了一些不合理的社会后果。例如它造成了进餐和饮食工作场所的非人性化,因而扩大了社会的非人性化范围;它所到之处,都对当地的传统文化造成了一定程度的破坏;它还带来了许多新的社会问题,如破坏人类的身体健康和自然环境、新的无效率、虚假的乐趣等等。如何来减轻或抵制麦当劳化所造成的这些消极后果已经成为当代社会的一项重要议题。<sup>②</sup>瑞泽尔的这部著作引起了人们的广泛兴趣。此书自首版以来已先后被译成德文、西班牙文、捷克文、丹麦文、意大利文、波兰文、葡萄牙文、法文、土耳其文、匈牙利文、希腊文、韩文、日文和中文等,并被美国二百余所大学采用为“社会学”、“现代社会”和“当代美国文化”之类课程的参考读物。瑞泽尔的这项研究在学术界也引起了广泛的反响。

瑞泽尔不仅是一个优秀的社会学理论家,而且还是一个出色的社会学理论教材的编撰者。自1983年出版第一部社会学理论教材以来,瑞泽尔已经先后撰写了5部社会学理论教材:《社会学理论》、《古典社会学理论》、《现代社会学理论》、《后现代社会理论》和《当代社会学理论及其古典根源》。这些教材不仅在美国而且在世界许多国家都深受欢迎,其中印行历史较长的前三本多次再版并被翻译成不同文字在不同国家出版:《社会学理论》一书曾先后再版6次,并被翻译成韩文、中文和俄文等文字;《现代社会学理论》也曾再版6次,并被译成西班牙文、韩文和克罗地亚文等文字;《古典社会学理论》一书再版4次,并被翻译成西班牙文等。《后现代社会理论》虽然目前只出版过一次,但也已有中文等不同文字的版本发行。这些教材的出版使瑞泽尔在各国的学者和学生当中获得了很高程度的欢迎。

<sup>①</sup> 乔治·里泽尔:《社会的麦当劳化》,顾建光译,上海译文出版社1999年版,第1—2页。

<sup>②</sup> 在《后现代社会理论》一书中,瑞泽尔又尝试从“后现代主义”的角度来分析“麦当劳化”现象。见瑞泽尔:《后现代社会理论》,第11章,华夏出版社2003年版。

瑞泽尔撰写的这几本教材相互之间在内容上虽然存在着密切的联系乃至重叠之处,但也有着一定分工或差异。大体上说,这几本书各自的内容与特点如下:

1. 《社会学理论》一书在内容上涵盖了自马克思、涂尔干和韦伯等古典社会学家以来至本书各版出版时为止,西方社会学理论当中最主要的社会学家和社会学理论流派的理论观点。该书的前两版(1983、1988)包括“导论”、“主要的社会学理论家”、“主要社会学理论流派”和“结论”四部分。第三版之后(1992、1996、2000、2004)有了较大调整。其中最主要的调整之一是将“主要的社会学理论家”这部分的标题改成了“古典社会学理论”,内容也由介绍马克思、涂尔干、韦伯、齐美尔以及帕森斯、舒茨这几位最主要的社会学家的理论改为只包括了前四位古典社会学家的理论。后两位的理论则在经过适当的修改后被分别插入到“主要社会学理论流派”的相应章节中去了。《社会学理论》一书的主要特点是:一册在手,便可将西方社会学理论最主要的代表人物和理论流派尽览无余;缺点则是对古典社会学理论的介绍相对比较薄弱。

2. 《现代社会学理论》一书的第1版是与《社会学理论》一书的第1版同年(1983)出版发行的,以后的各版(1988、1992、1996、2000、2004)也是如此。在内容上,《现代社会学理论》一书只比《社会学理论》一书少了“古典社会学理论”部分,其余则完全相同。对于只想了解现代社会学理论而对古典社会学理论没有兴趣或兴趣不大的读者,读这本书也就可以了。

3. 《古典社会学理论》一书初版于1992年,以后又分别于1996、2000、2004年四次再版。与《现代社会学理论》一书相对应,《古典社会学理论》一书则只包括了古典社会学理论方面的内容,但它却并非是《社会学理论》一书中“古典社会学理论”部分的简单重印或扩展,而是增加了不少的内容。除了与上述两本书一样,卷首有一个全面概括社会学理论发展过程的“导论”(由两章组成,分别介绍“早期”和“近期”社会学理论的进展)外,这本书的初版比较全面地介绍了包括孔德、斯宾塞、马克思、涂尔干、韦伯、齐美尔等古典社会学家的理论和 H. Martineau, C. Gilman, J. Addams, A. Cooper, M. Weber, B. Webb 等早期女性社会学家的理论,以及米德、舒茨和帕森斯这几位被认为与古典社会学理论有着深厚的渊源关系的非古典社会学家们的理论。以后各版则又陆续加入了凡勃伦、曼海姆和杜波伊斯等人的理论,使得该书成为一本比较全面地介绍古典社会学理论的著作。对于那些有兴趣全面了解古典社会学理论的读者来说,此书应该是一部较有价值的入门书。

4. 《后现代社会理论》一书出版于1997年,是一本以介绍“后现代社会理论”为主要目的的教科书。本来在《社会学理论》和1992年版的《现代社会学理论》中,瑞泽尔就已经开始增加介绍“后现代社会理论”方面的内容,以后各版又陆续加以扩充,但是,总的来说这方面的篇幅有限,内容比较单薄。《后现代社会理论》一书则对法国、德国、美国等欧美国家中与后现代社会理论相关的著名理论家如罗蒂、福柯、布希亚、德里达、德勒兹、拉克、利奥塔德、维里利奥、吉登斯、贝克、哈贝马斯、鲍曼、哈维、詹明信、丹尼尔-贝尔等人以及当代女权主义者们的理论观点进行了简明扼要但却全面系统的介绍,并对后现代社会理论与社会学理论之间的关系等问题进行了富有启示的探讨。从社会学理论的视角出发来考察“后现代社会理论”是使这本书与其他介绍“后现代社会理论”的读物区别开来



的一个重要特点。

5. 《当代社会学理论及其古典根源》一书出版于2003年,是瑞泽尔最新编撰的一本社会学理论教材。这本书是为了满足部分学校开设为期一学期的短期社会学理论课程而编撰的。它在内容上与《社会学理论》一书相似,涵盖了自古典社会学以来迄今为止西方社会学理论中最主要的代表人物和理论流派,但在篇幅上却有相当大的压缩(《社会学理论》一书有近800页的篇幅,《当代社会学理论及其古典根源》一书则只有不到300页的篇幅)。与此相联系,本书的写法也有了较大的变化,不再是按照人物或理论流派而是按照主题来安排章节。除了导论外,全书另设8章,分为“古典理论”、“现代理论”和“后现代理论”三组。其中“古典理论”包括“古典的宏大理论”和“古典的日常生活理论”两章;“现代理论”包括“社会世界的现代理论肖像”、“现代的宏大理论”、“现代的日常生活理论”、“现代的整合理论”和“现代女权主义理论”5章;“后现代理论”则只设有“后现代的宏大理论”一章。此书简明扼要,对希望全面系统地了解社会学理论而又时间有限的读者来说不失为一本很好的入门书。

除了上述各自的特点之外,条理清晰、行文晓畅则是这些教材的共同特征,以至于有人评价瑞泽尔是“我们所拥有的最清晰的社会学理论表述者之一”。穿插在每本书中的主要社会学理论家们的生平传记,更为它们增添了一份趣味性和可读性。

北京大学出版社这次推出的是瑞泽尔上述教材中的《古典社会学理论》、《现代社会学理论》、《后现代社会理论》和《当代社会学理论及其古典根源》四书最新版本的影印本。推出这些影印本的主要目的是为了使我们更多的读者能够直接阅读到西方学者撰写的社会学理论教材,这也是北京大学出版社为配合北京大学创造世界一流大学而推出的一项重要举措。希望在今后的时间里北京大学出版社能够推出更多和更好的社会学方面(包括社会学理论方面)的英文影印本书籍,以推动我国社会学事业的发展。

谢立中

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# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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GEORGE RITZER is Professor of Sociology at the University of Maryland. His major areas of interest are sociological theory and the sociology of work. He has served as Chair of the American Sociological Association's Sections on Theoretical Sociology (1989–1990) and Organizations and Occupations (1980–1981). Professor Ritzer has been Distinguished Scholar-Teacher at the University of Maryland and has been awarded a Teaching Excellence award. He has held the UNESCO Chair in Social Theory at the Russian Academy of Sciences and a Fulbright-Hays Fellowship. He has been Scholar-in-Residence at the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study and the Swedish Collegium for Advanced Study in the Social Sciences.

Dr. Ritzer's main theoretical interests lie in metatheory as well as in the theory of rationalization. In metatheory, his most recent book is *Metatheorizing in Sociology* (Lexington Books, 1991). Earlier books on this topic include *Sociology: A Multiple Paradigm Science* (1975, 1980) and *Toward an Integrated Sociological Paradigm* (1981). He has written a number of essays on rationalization as well as *The McDonaldization of Society* (Pine Forge Press, 1996) and the forthcoming *The McDonaldization Thesis: Explorations and Extensions* (Sage). Professor Ritzer is also the author of another work in applied social theory, *Expressing America: A Critique of the Global Credit Card Society* (Pine Forge Press, 1995). Professor Ritzer's work has been translated into a number of languages, including Chinese, Croatian, Danish, German, Farsi, Italian, Korean, Russian, and Spanish.

In 1996 McGraw-Hill published the fourth edition of Professor Ritzer's basic text *Sociological Theory*, the fourth edition of his *Modern Sociological Theory*, and the second edition of his *Classical Sociological Theory*.

To Sue, with Debts Too Numerous to Mention

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# PREFACE

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**T**HIS is an effort to offer a readable and coherent introduction to the often self-consciously unreadable and incoherent body of work known as postmodern social theory. It is designed to be an introduction to the fundamental ideas, and most important thinkers, associated with this perspective.

This also involves an attempt to look at this body of theory from the vantage point of the field of sociology. While some postmodern social theorists are sociologists, most are not. Indeed, one of the defining characteristics of postmodern social theory is that it is interdisciplinary. It is certainly possible to look at this theory from a sociological vantage point, but it is also possible to look at it from the point of view of many other fields (literary criticism, anthropology, and so on). Thus, this book will constitute only one of many possible "readings" of postmodern social theory. We will see throughout the book, and especially in Chapters 10 and 11, that postmodern social theory is of great relevance to sociology.

Relatedly, this book undertakes a modern reading of postmodern social theory. That may sound odd, but it is perfectly appropriate given the tenets of postmodernism (and modernism). I accept the view in this book that modernism and postmodernism are not mutually exclusive perspectives but rather alternative ways of looking at the social world. In this light, it is quite acceptable to look at postmodern social theory from a modern point of view. Among other things, a modern viewpoint means that there is an effort here to find some coherence, some underlying order, in the seemingly chaotic world of postmodern social theory.

More generally, this book can be seen as an effort to modernize postmodernism. Some, perhaps most, postmodernists will look askance at such an effort. Most postmodern social theorists are renegades, and they want their theoretical orientation to remain at odds with modernism. Fine! However, it is time for modernists to appropriate some of postmodernism's best ideas and perspectives for their own use. Postmodernists really should have no objection to this since they emphasize the importance of readers rather than authors. Thus, what follows is one modern reading of postmodern social theory.

The most radical of postmodernists not only proclaim the death of modernity but also of modern disciplines like sociology, as well as its subject matter, the social. Such contentions can be rejected out of hand, or they can be taken, as they are in this



book, as essentially healthy challenges to sociology. Sociology will be a stronger discipline by understanding and finding ways to respond to these criticisms.

All good postmodernists, radical or moderate, have created perspectives, ideas, and concepts that deserve, nay need, a hearing in sociology. Sociological theory may, in many ways, be quite vibrant, but it seems to lack a plethora of new ideas. What postmodern social theory offers is a storehouse chock full of such ideas. Some will not prove very useful, but my guess is that many will be of great interest and utility to sociologists. In any case, the infusion of so many new ideas cannot help but invigorate sociology and sociological theory.

This is certainly not the first time, nor the last, that sociological theory has turned to other disciplines for new ideas. Since its inception, sociological theory has been the recipient of a steady stream of such ideas from many different fields. It is now time to add postmodern social theory to that list of fields. Of course, the flow has always gone in both directions, and sociological theory has contributed its share of ideas to other disciplines.

Thus, this book comes at an exciting time for sociological theory. There is a brilliant set of new ideas out there, and many of them are beginning to find their way into sociological theory. Sociological theory will never quite be the same. The reader of this book is about to be immersed in that set of ideas as well as in a discussion of what they mean for the revitalization of sociological theory.

**Plan of the Book** Chapters 1 and 2 constitute a general introduction to the topics to be covered in this book. Chapter 1 offers an overview of postmodern social theory as well as a discussion of its implications for sociology and sociological theory. Chapter 2 presents a brief description of the development of postmodern social theory. Special attention is devoted to the various theoretical precursors that played central roles in shaping postmodern social theory. With these two chapters as background, we move directly into a discussion of postmodern social theory. Rather than discuss that theory in general terms, the body of the book will focus on the ideas of specific thinkers associated with postmodernism (thereby challenging another tenet of postmodernism—its rejection of a focus on the author). The next five chapters are devoted to the work of French postmodern social theorists; clearly postmodern social theory has been dominated by the French.

In Chapters 3 and 4 we focus on the work of Michel Foucault. As he himself was quick to point out (he died in 1984), Foucault is difficult to categorize. He is sometimes thought of as a poststructuralist and at other times as a postmodernist. We will not dwell on this distinction since many poststructuralists, especially the most radical of them, are also considered postmodernists.

Chapters 5 and 6 deal with another French social thinker, Jean Baudrillard, who is generally considered to be the most important postmodern social theorist. Early in his work, Baudrillard might have been better thought of as a poststructuralist or a post-Marxist, but during the past few decades his work seems clearly postmodern. While this may seem clear to outside observers, it should be pointed out that Baudrillard rarely uses the term and often seeks to dissociate himself from postmodernism.