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REFERENCE

THE PENGUIN

DICTIONARY OF SOCIOLOGY

NICHOLAS ABERCROMBIE,
STEPHEN HILL AND BRYAN S. TURNER

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PENGUIN REFERENCE BOOKS
THE PENGUIN DICTIONARY OF
SOCIOLOGY

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Bryan S. Turner was born in Birmingham in 1945 and attended the University of Leeds where he completed his B.A. (1966) and Ph.D. (1970), specializing in sociological theory and the sociology of religion. He was a lecturer in sociology at the University of Aberdeen from 1969 to 1974 and then at the University of Lancaster until 1978, when he returned to Aberdeen as senior lecturer and subsequently reader. He was Morris Ginsberg Fellow at the London School of Economics for 1981. In 1982 he was appointed to the chair of sociology at the Flinders University of South Australia, where he teaches medical sociology, the sociology of religion and sociological theory. His publications include *Weber and Islam*, *Marx and the End of Orientalism*, *For Weber, Confession* (with M. Hepworth), and *Religion and Social Theory*. His present interests include the problem of the individual in capitalist society, gender and sickness, and global religious systems. Professor Turner is on the editorial board of *Theory, Culture and Society*. •

The three authors have collaborated extensively before and particularly in writing *The Dominant Ideology Thesis*.

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Preface

A dictionary of sociology is not just a collection of definitions, but inevitably a statement of what the discipline is. It is also prescriptive in suggesting lines of development and consolidation. The problem of definition in a subject as diverse and dynamic as sociology is to strike a balance between an existing consensus, however fragile and temporary, and a developing potential. The unifying theme of this dictionary is our conviction that sociology is an autonomous, elaborated and vital discipline within the social science corpus. Our enthusiasm for the subject was sustained rather than diminished by the experience of seeking precision within the conflicting range of perspectives that constitute modern sociology.

Our view of sociology as a result runs counter to the usual batch of criticisms mounted against the work of sociologists. Three negative evaluations of sociology are frequently encountered; it is immature, riddled with unnecessary jargon and biased by extreme political persuasions. The notion that sociology is a young discipline – and hence inadequately developed – is a misconception which is probably based on the assumption that sociology was invented during the expansion of university education in the 1960s. In fact, sociology as a self-conscious, organized and independent discipline is well established. In order to establish the credentials of sociology, there is no need to trace the subject back to Aristotle or to the Islamic historian and legal theorist, Ibn Khaldun. The term 'sociology' was first systematically used in its modern sense in 1824 by the French writer Auguste Comte and came into wide circulation in his *Cours de philosophie positive* in 1838, replacing the older term 'physique sociale'. By the middle of the nineteenth century, small groups of intellectuals throughout Europe were busily engaged in promoting the 'new' discipline. In the late 1880s, Emile Durkheim was teaching sociology courses at the University of Bordeaux, subsequently gathering a brilliant group of sociologists around him at the Sorbonne, and founding the journal *L'Année Sociologique* in 1898.

Similar developments took place elsewhere in Europe. In Germany, early interest in sociology was stimulated by the *Verein für Sozialpolitik*, whose journal the *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaften und Sozialpolitik* dominated German sociology up to the outbreak of the First World War. The first classics of German sociology were published in the 1880s – Gumplowicz's *Grundriss der Soziologie* (1883) and Toennies' *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft* (1889). Georg Simmel started a lecture course in sociology in 1894 at the

University of Berlin which proved one of the most popular undergraduate courses. Max Weber, professor of economics at Freiburg and Heidelberg in the 1890s, moved towards historical sociology and pioneered the comparative analysis of capitalist societies. The first major congresses in sociology were held at Frankfurt-on-Main in 1910 and in Berlin in 1912. In Italy, Roberto Ardito published his *Sociologia* in 1879, but the principal Italian contribution to classical sociology came from Vilfredo Pareto, whose *Trattato di Sociologia Generale* (1916) was an attempt to provide a systematic account of the sociological perspective. In Belgium, Guillaume de Greef published his *Introduction à la sociologie* between 1886 and 1889.

In America, particularly at the University of Chicago, sociology also enjoyed a vigorous foundation. Albion Small founded the *American Journal of Sociology* in 1895 and the American Sociological Society in 1905; the *Publications of the American Sociological Society* were first issued in 1907; and by 1910 most universities offered courses in sociology. This early development laid the foundations for the pre-eminent position which American sociology has held throughout most of the twentieth century.

In Britain, Herbert Spencer (*Study of Sociology*, 1873), Benjamin Kidd (*Social Evolution*, 1894) and Patrick Geddes (*Cities in Evolution*, 1915) had an international reputation in early sociology, but sociological courses and departments within the universities were slow to become established. A national Sociological Society was formed in 1904 and its annual publications eventually appeared as *The Sociological Review* in 1908. In 1907, T. H. Hobhouse at the London School of Economics became the first British professor of sociology, holding the newly created Martin White Chair of Sociology in the University of London. As with other subjects, sociology expanded greatly in the 1960s with the creation of a series of sociology departments in the new universities. The uneven development of sociology in Britain has often been explained by reference to the traditionalism, empiricism and individualism of British culture, but a more immediate cause may lie in the hostility of the academic establishment, especially at Cambridge and Oxford, towards the 'new' discipline. Much to the dismay of conservative academics, sociology was well established in university and secondary education by the mid-1970s, but the economic crisis of the 1980s, the attitude of the Conservative Government towards university development and the negative approach of the Social Science Research Council towards sociology suggest that the future of British sociology is unpredictable. This dictionary was written in the context of this educational climate; it is intended to form part of the defence of academic sociology as an essential component of the modern curriculum.

Part of the antipathy towards modern sociology is based on the belief that the language used by sociologists is barbaric, unnecessary or, worse

still, a conceptual confidence trick. Once translated back into a common idiom, this sociological jargon would impress us only by its banality. However, every academic discipline, whether in the arts or sciences, has a specialized vocabulary by which it seeks to describe the phenomena to be studied without the judgmental implications which are inevitably tied to everyday discourse. The aim of sociology is to describe, understand and explain social reality with concepts which are abstract, neutral and unambiguous. To achieve this end, it develops a terminology which is specific to its purpose. In this case, it is difficult to see how sociology differs from other human sciences, or why it should. Modern economics has its own terminology that is not accessible to the non-specialist, for example 'marginal productivity', 'perfect competition' or 'consumer price index'. The same is true of linguistics and phonetics, witness 'morphosyntactic', 'lexeme', and 'Katz-Postal hypothesis'. Of course it is also true that sociology uses a vocabulary perfectly familiar in everyday English. However, difficulty may be caused to the lay reader because sociologists rightly give these terms a more technical meaning. The words themselves may be familiar, but their use is not. Perhaps it is unfortunate, therefore, that there are so few genuine neologisms in sociology: on the whole, sociologists have been forced to adopt an existing vocabulary which is then stripped of its normative implications. This is not a perversion of the English language but a scientific necessity.

The charge that sociological theory is simply jargon has little substance. A more important objection to sociology is that it is biased, where 'biased' usually means 'Marxist'. For such critics, sociology is socialism, masquerading as a social science. There is some weight to this charge, since, for example, Saint-Simon in the nineteenth century can be regarded as the founder of both sociology and socialism. The paradox is, however, that sociology is also regarded, particularly by its left-wing critics, as a conservative discipline which sought to revive social harmony in a world being torn apart by revolution, industrialization and religious decline. It is true that in the 1970s Marxism became an influential perspective in the social sciences generally, although it never achieved anything like a monopoly in the sociology curriculum. Two points can be made about this influence. First, Marxist sociology became one of the principal vehicles for sustained criticism of orthodox Marxism. For many Marxist sociologists, the scientific claims of Marxism never survived this critical inspection. Secondly, there are strong indications in the 1980s, partly as a result of internal criticism within sociology, that the neo-Marxist paradigm has become a post-Marxist paradigm, with many sociologists showing a renewed interest in Weberian sociology, critical theory, hermeneutics and so forth. Sociology is a diverse, open and expanding subject, without any permanent commitment to any single perspective, and sociologists adhere to the conventions and procedures which in all disciplines guarantee, or at least promote, objectivity.

Sociological propositions are open to public scrutiny, evaluation and refutation. Sociological evidence is collected by observation, experiment and surveys which are designed to ensure, as far as possible, reliability and replication. Unlike many public institutions – the police, the BBC and Parliament – sociology as a professional discipline is open to both internal and external inquiry.

This dictionary makes no pretence that sociology is a unified approach to social phenomena. Indeed, we have made every effort to consider rival schools, controversial issues, contradictory definitions and unresolved problems. Where terms are confused and imprecise, we have said so. One reason for the existence of widespread controversy in sociology is the fact that different national schools of sociology (in France and Germany, for example) have developed in very different directions. Some forms of sociology are very close to history and philosophy, while others have sought to be quantitative and experimental, taking experimental psychology and economics as models of social science. There is an important division between American sociology, which from its inception has regarded sociology as an exact science that produces 'hard' data and contributes to the formation of public policy, and European sociology, which has adhered more closely to its roots in certain philosophical traditions, stemming for example from Hegel, Marx and, more recently, Heidegger. European sociologists are more familiar with the notion that to be useful sociology has to be critical. Encompassing this diversity within a single dictionary is difficult, but our aim has been to display the complexity of sociology rather than imposing an arbitrary unity on it – a unity which in any case would be premature. Despite this lack of unity, sociology as both science and calling remains the main perspective on the central problems of living in an industrial and secular civilization.

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How to use this dictionary

In this dictionary we have tried to represent concepts, debates and schools that are both important and current. Our entries include not only technical definitions (like Standard Deviation) but also running debates (Agency and Structure, for example), types of argument (like Organic Analogy), major writers (for example, Durkheim), and whole schools (Labour Process Approach, for instance). We therefore recommend readers to use the book freely to provide guidance on any sociological topic and not only to give a simple definition of a troublesome word.

As with any dictionary, we have provided a cross-referencing system. At the end of each entry there is usually a list of other relevant entries which can usefully be followed up. For example, at the end of Anomie we suggest that you also look at Durkheim, Relative Deprivation, and Suicide. In addition, in the text of an entry, we will often use a number of technical terms which will themselves need explanation. These will be followed by the letters q.v. placed in brackets. For example, in the entry Comte the reader will find Positivism, Organic Analogy and Functionalism all followed by (q.v.), these terms also being in the dictionary. The same convention is used when names are mentioned in the text of an entry, if these are also entries in their own right. However, some terms are used so frequently that we have not given them a (q.v.). This is particularly true of Durkheim, Marx and Weber.

At the end of many entries we have suggested some further reading, the full details of which are given in the bibliography at the back of the book. In general we have given further reading for entries which cover a large subject or are technically difficult. When an author's name is followed by a date in brackets in the text of an entry, this indicates that a corresponding publication will be found in the bibliography.

A

ted Empiricism. See: *Grand*

Accommodation. In the sociological analysis of race relations this describes the process whereby individuals adapt to situations of racial conflict, without resolving the basic conflict or changing the system of inequality. The term derives from experimental psychology, where it denotes how individuals modify their activity to fit the requirements of the external social world. See: *Acculturation; Assimilation; Racism.*

Accounts. The language by which people justify their behaviour when challenged by another social actor or group is an 'account'. Following the philosopher J. L. Austin (1962) who was particularly interested in 'excuses', and C. W. Mills (1940) who referred to the 'vocabularies of motives', the idea of accounts has been widely used in the sociology of deviance to study the ways in which criminals or deviants attempt to deny or to reduce their responsibility for behaviour which is regarded as untoward or socially unacceptable. The use of accounts is a method of avoiding the stigma of an accusation of criminality or deviance. Because sociologists have concentrated on denials of responsibility in accounts, they have to some extent neglected the analysis of alternative responses to social accusation, such as confession. See: *Labelling Theory.*

Bibl. Scott and Lyman (1968)

Acculturation. This term is used to de-

scribe both the process of contacts between different cultures and also the outcome of such contacts. As the process of contact between cultures, acculturation may involve either direct social interaction or exposure to other cultures by means of the mass media of communication. As the outcome of such contact, acculturation refers to the assimilation by one group of the culture of another which modifies the existing culture and so changes group identity. There may be a tension between old and new cultures which leads to the adaptation of the new as well as the old. See: *Accommodation; Assimilation.*

Achievement Motivation. The need to perform well, or achievement motivation, significantly determines a person's effort and persistence in reaching some given standard of excellence or in comparison with competitors, and the level of aspiration that is involved in that standard or competition. Seen by D. C. McClelland (1961) as a major determinant of entrepreneurial activity and as a cause of rapid economic growth when widely dispersed in a society, the concept has been criticized as neglecting social structural factors. See: *Asceticism; Capitalism; Protestant Ethic.*

Achievement Orientation. See: *Ascription; Parsons.*

Action Theory. Action is to be distinguished from behaviour in that it involves meaning or intention. Action theory is then analysis of action starting

with the individual actor. Analysis proceeds in terms of typical actors in typical situations by identifying actors' goals, expectations and values, the means of achieving those goals, the nature of the situation and the actors' knowledge of the situation, among other elements. T. Parsons (q.v.) refers to these elements as the action frame of reference.

There are two main forms of action theory, the 'hermeneutic' and the 'positivist', and both are also closely related to the doctrine of symbolic interactionism (q.v.). Both have their origins in the work of M. Weber (q.v.). Weber distinguished four types of action: traditional, affectual, *zweckrational* and *wertrational*. Traditional actions are those performed simply because they have been performed in the past. Affectual actions are those performed simply to express an emotion. However, Weber was relatively little interested in these two forms of action, being more concerned with rational action. *Zweckrational* (instrumental action) is action in which the actor not only compares different means to a goal, but also assesses the utility of the goal itself. In *wertrational* (value-rationality), the actor takes the goal as an end in itself and may not even compare different means to that goal. Weber makes it clear that the four types of action are ideal types (q.v.) and it is empirically possible for actions to be a mixture of one or more of the types.

For Weber, it is important that action is defined in terms of 'meaningfulness' and sociological analysis must proceed by identifying the meaning that actions have for actors. Hermeneutic action theories are those which make this meaningfulness an absolute theoretical priority; acting and meaning are inextricably linked. A. Schutz (q.v.) is one writer who adopts this perspective. He

argues that Weber does not provide a satisfactory account of meaningful action in that meaning is too much divorced from the actor; it becomes an objective category imposed by the sociologist.

Schutz holds that the key to the interpretation of action lies in the notion of a stream of experiences in time. Our experiences form a continuous flow. Each experience has no meaning in itself but can be given meaning by reflection on it as it recedes into the past. Actions may, however, be reflected on in what Schutz called the future perfect tense, i.e. one may reflect on future actions as if they had been in the past. For Schutz, this form of reflection is crucial, for action is the product of intention and reflection. It is that which is determined by a project or plan. Schutz further distinguishes 'in-order-to motives' from 'because motives'. The former refer to the future and are roughly equivalent to the goals for which actions are the means. The latter refer to the past and are the immediate reasons for undertaking actions. Social actions are those whose in-order-to motives contain a reference to someone else's stream of experience, and if social actions defined in this way take place on both sides, there is social interaction.

Generally, the more seriously hermeneutic action theorists take the meaningfulness of action, the less easy is it for them to include conceptions of social structure in the theory. Schutz is ambivalent on the question of the relationship of the individual actor to a determining social structure. On the other hand, positivist action theories, the most distinguished example of which is that of T. Parsons (q.v.), tend to be more interested in social structure and how it sets the goals and means available to actors. There is a tendency in the positivist theory, therefore, to make action and

interaction residual concepts less important than the analysis of the social system as a whole; the notion of social structure as simply the outcome of the projects and actions of social actors is largely abandoned in favour of seeing the human actor as socialized into a common culture.

For Parsons, action is behaviour directed by the meanings attached by actors to things and people. Actors have goals and select appropriate means. Courses of action are constrained by the situation and guided by symbols and values. The most important category is interaction, i.e. action oriented towards other actors. When interaction between two parties is frequent, mutual expectations will emerge. Both parties will have to adjust both their expectations and behaviour to match up with the other's behaviour and expectations. As expectations are established as reliable predictors of behaviour, they become the norms governing the interaction and following the norms not only makes action more effective, it also gives actors intrinsic satisfactions since, for Parsons, actors 'need' the approval of others. These norms are the basis of social order institutionalized in society and internalized in the individual. See: *Agency and Structure; Behaviourism; Hermeneutics; Methodological Individualism; Phenomenological Sociology; Rationality; Symbolic Interactionism; Verstehen*.

Bibl. Cohen, P. S. (1968); Dawe (1978)

Adaptation. See: *Evolutionary Theory*.

Addiction. This is the devotion to or enslavement by a substance, typically a drug, which is regarded as physically or socially harmful. Within the perspective of conventional criminology and applied sociology, research has concentrated on: (1) the analysis of addictions related to

criminal behaviour (such as driving offences); (2) the social distribution of addictions according to age, class and sex; (3) the social and psychological origins of addictions (such as parental influences). Such research emphasizes learning and opportunity in addictive behaviour. Positivist approaches are more concerned with the physiological and psychological determinants of long-term addiction and with questions related to possible recovery.

A more radical approach to addiction has been based on symbolic interactionism (q.v.), and is interested in: (1) the social processes and social context by which individuals become, for example, drug-users within a deviant subculture; (2) the maintenance of a commitment to drug use; (3) social reactions to or labelling of the addict as a social deviant. Becoming an addict is conceptualized in terms of a career with definite stages, in which the addict comes to accept a stigmatizing label and responds to that new identity. The sociology of deviance therefore treats 'addiction' as a problematic and ambiguous label by which law enforcement agencies and public opinion exert social control over individuals regarded as harmful or anti-social. In this perspective, reactions to addiction have the unintended consequence of amplifying primary deviance. Furthermore, there is evidence of a medicalization (q.v.) of behaviour so that the notion of 'addiction' is extended to include a variety of 'harmful' activities, such as gambling. This perspective has proved valuable in sociological research, but it does not offer any practical therapeutic guidelines, being more concerned with the nature of public opinion and official responses to drug cultures. Treatment of addiction either involves some form of 'aversion therapy' in which the use of drugs comes to be associated with unpleasant experiences, or a pro-

gramme of learning to reduce and remove addiction through membership of a voluntary association such as Alcoholics Anonymous. However, recovery rates under both methods are low, addiction tending to be a recurrent problem. See: *Deviancy Amplification; Deviant Behaviour; Social Pathology; Social Problems.*

Bibl. Duster (1970)

Adolescence. In general, the sociology of adolescence has been dominated by a 'social problems' approach, that is, basic research has centred around those phenomena which appear to characterize adolescence as a period of individual crisis. Thus, adolescence is a period in the life cycle when there is a sudden increase in delinquency which rises to a peak among boys at the age of fifteen years. Many psychiatric and behavioural problems have their onset or greatest incidence in adolescence. Sociologists and psychologists have focused on the effect of transitions from home to school and to work on emotional stress in young people.

The term 'adolescence' raises interesting questions in historical sociology. Sociologists have argued that the notion of a separate and specialized age group called 'adolescence' is the product of the late nineteenth century. Historians claim that specialized youth groups can be traced back to at least the sixteenth century in France. The unresolved nature of this debate makes it important to raise the issue of whether so-called 'youth problems' really are specific to urban, industrial society. See: *Generation.*

Affectivity. See: *Parsons.*

Affluent Worker. It was widely believed that post-war affluence in Britain had led to the embourgeoisement (q.v.) of the manual working class. J. H. Goldthorpe,

D. Lockwood, F. Bechhofer and J. Platt investigated this issue among workers in Luton and published their findings as *The Affluent Worker* (1968a; 1968b; 1969). They distinguished traditional-proletarian and affluent workers. Traditional proletarians lived in closed and isolated working-class communities in single-industry areas, formed gregarious social communities of workmates, kin and neighbours, and had a conflictual, power-based class imagery (q.v.). Work formed a central life interest and was more than just a means to earn money. Traditional proletarians were found in older industries and long-established industrial areas. Affluent workers had migrated to the newer industrial centres of the Midlands, drawn by the attraction of the very high wages. They were privatized workers, in the sense of being home- and family-centred and not participating in community life, did not see work as a central life interest or as anything more than a means of satisfying their instrumental needs for money and security, and had a non-conflictual, money image of class. These differences between traditional and affluent workers did not indicate that the Luton workers were becoming more middle class, however, because the money class image was not similar to the middle-class prestige model, and Luton workers continued to support trade unionism and vote Labour like other workers.

Subsequent criticism and research suggest that Goldthorpe *et al.* may have exaggerated the distinctiveness of their sample, and that many of the attitudes and life-style attributes of affluent workers are widely shared in the working class: supposedly traditional workers have been shown to be similar to affluent workers. There is also a body of opinion which suggests that the money image of class structure cannot easily be distinguished from the power model. How-