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Studies in Sociology: Symbols, Theory and Society

Edited by

Elżbieta Hałas and Risto Heiskala



6 · Elżbieta Hałas

Towards the World Culture Society

Florian Znaniecki's Culturalism

Frankfurt am Main, Berlin, Bern, Bruxelles, New York, Oxford, Wien, 2010. 258 pp.
ISBN 978-3-631-59946-4 · hardback € 41,80

If the new cultural sociology is to gain firm grounds, it should rediscover the classic studies on cultural dynamics and cultural systems. This book contributes to a better understanding of Florian Znaniecki as an eminent culturologist and the lasting relevance of his theory of cultural becoming. Znaniecki opted for a humanistic approach that he called culturalism. Culturalism, founded on the principle of the humanistic coefficient, is applied also to the cultural person. The concept of social values makes this cultural approach an original one. The cultural logic and cultural ethos of Znaniecki's thought is inherent in the very principle of a creative evolution of culture, augmenting his vision of a new civilization of the future and a world culture society.

Contents: Classical Cultural Sociology · Semiotic Interpretation of the Humanistic Coefficient · Constructing Social Values · Cultural Approach to Social Sentiments · Dialogical vs. Hegemonic Models of Interaction between National Culture Societies · Culture and Power · Possibilities and Responsibilities for the World Society

5 · Thora Margareta Bertilsson

Peirce's Theory of Inquiry and Beyond

Towards a Social Reconstruction of Science Theory

Frankfurt am Main, Berlin, Bern, Bruxelles, New York, Oxford, Wien, 2009. 236 pp., 3 fig.
ISBN 978-3-631-58878-9 · pb. € 42,50

About a decade ago, an antagonistic debate on the 'science war' arose on both sides of the Atlantic. At issue was how far the social sciences could intervene in disentangling the practice of science. The debate has now calmed down, but has by no means been solved. As a continuation of the antagonism that once haunted the advocates of Karl Popper against those of Thomas Kuhn, versions of this animated debate are likely to arise again. In this light, the theory of inquiry once launched by Charles S. Peirce may prove valuable. Despite early efforts by, amongst others, Karl-Otto Apel and Jürgen Habermas, Peirce's theory of inquiry remains largely unknown in the social sciences. It is the aim of this publication – the bulk of which was written long ago as a doctoral thesis – to place Peirce's theory of inquiry in the centre of social science theory.

Contents: Critical Rationalism and the Psychology/Sociology of Research · The Actuality of Charles Sanders Peirce · The Theory of Inquiry · The Community of Inquiry as a Normative and as a Descriptive Concept · Reflection on the Problem of Theory and Praxis · Pragmatism Rediscovered: The Relevance of Peirce for the Social Science

4 · Horst Jürgen Helle

Symbolic Interaction and *Verstehen*

Frankfurt am Main, Berlin, Bern, Bruxelles, New York, Oxford, Wien, 2005. 141 pp.
ISBN 978-3-631-53917-0 · pb. € 28,80

The approach of Symbolic Interaction (SI) which Herbert Blumer called “Symbolic Interactionism”, is regarded as a modern version of the sociology of *Verstehen*, originally outlined by Georg Simmel and Max Weber. This book is divided into four chapters. In the first the relevant philosophical sources are indicated, particularly those relating to Georg Simmel. The second chapter examines the basic principles of *Verstehen* and the construction of ideal types. In the third chapter an account is given of the intellectual background of SI, with an introduction to the main proponents involved in its inception: Charles Horton Cooley, William Isaac Thomas, and George Herbert Mead. The fourth chapter discusses the writings of Herbert Blumer, Anselm Strauss, Tamotsu Shibutani and Erving Goffman. Transcriptions of tape recordings of important statements by Shibutani and by Goffman are included to assure authenticity on critical issues.

Contents: Philosophical sources are introduced relating to Simmel, and texts of the main proponents are discussed: Charles Horton Cooley · William Isaac Thomas · George Herbert Mead · Herbert Blumer · Anselm Strauss · Tamotsu Shibutani · Erving Goffman

3 · Jacob Alsted

A Model of Human Motivation for Sociology

Frankfurt am Main, Berlin, Bern, Bruxelles, New York, Oxford, Wien, 2005. 220 pp., num. tables
ISBN 978-3-631-52907-2 · pb. € 43,20

Many macro-sociologists have insufficient understanding of the roots of human motivation and this seriously hampers the effort to build theoretical models of society, social organisations and social change. The aim of this work is to remedy this deficiency. In this book, a model of motivation is constructed in order to demonstrate how it can improve our understanding of society. The aim here is an integration of concepts from psychology and sociology. Furthermore, it is the aim to clearly demonstrate that such a model adds new insights to our understanding of society. It can enrich key concepts used for analysis of meso- and macro-level phenomena. The author argues that the model of motivation can increase our understanding of, on the macro-level, the history of the state and, on the meso-level, dynamics in organisations.

Contents: The Basic Questions to a Model of Motivation · Micro-level Theory of Motivation · Meso-level Theory of Motivation · The Phases of Development of the Self · Social Structures as Psychological Defenses · Individual Motivation and the Agent · Structure Problem · Understanding Groups and Organisations as Collective Psychological Defenses · Societal Structure as Motivational Structure.

2 · Risto Heiskala

Society as Semiosis

Neostructuralist Theory of Culture and Society

Translated by Akseli Virtanen in collaboration with Kaisa Sivenius and the Author

Frankfurt am Main, Berlin, Bern, Bruxelles, New York, Oxford, Wien, 2003. 387 pp., num fig.
ISBN 978-3-631-39828-9 · pb. € 61,80

Action theory, phenomenological sociology, pragmatism and (post)structuralism are often seen as mutually exclusive currents of meaning analysis. This book shows that these traditions are actually complementary, and builds a neostructuralist synthesis on this finding. It also outlines the implications of this cultural theoretical synthesis for the field of social theory. What emerges is a variant of the theory of practice, habit and structuration of society. It shares the contemporary common belief that social theory should be based on cultural theory. Its distinctive mark is that this is done in systematic semiotic terms within a conception which provides mediation between the two most influential schools of semiotics, namely Charles Peirce's American pragmatism and Ferdinand de Saussure's French structuralism.

Contents: Critique of Action Theory and Phenomenological Sociology: Meaning and Rational Action in Weber's Sociology · Quarrelling Heirs: Parsons and Schutz · Meaning and Intentional Acts: Schutz's Phenomenological Sociology · Ethnomethodology: Garfinkel's Reconstruction of Schutz and Parsons · From Intentional Action to Structuralism · Neostructuralist Theory of Culture: Saussure's Structuralism Reconstructed · The Specificity of the Saussurean Approach · Neostructuralist Semiotics · Towards a Neostructuralist Social Theory: The Levels of Cultural Analysis · Beyond the Culture/Society Split · Symbolic Signs, Socialization, and the Sacred · Power · Conclusion

1 · Elżbieta Hałas (ed.)

Symbols, Power and Politics

Frankfurt am Main, Berlin, Bern, Bruxelles, New York, Oxford, Wien, 2002.

193 pp., num. fig. and tables

ISBN 978-3-631-39060-3 · pb. € 43,20

The volume is the first one in the series *Studies in Sociology: Symbols, Theory and Society*. The authors from Australia, Finland, Germany, Poland, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, who contributed to it, are sociologists bound by a conviction that the study of the social context of making use of symbols cannot be underestimated. Conception of symbolism as a social phenomenon and not an autonomous semiotic system is of their common interest and a symbolic interactionist perspective is apparent in many texts. The readiness to trespass the boundaries of various approaches and disciplines is noticeable. The volume is divided into three parts: *Symbols and Society*. Theoretical Perspectives; *Political Discourse and Symbolic Action*; *Religious Symbolism and Power*. Symbolism of discourses, symbolic objects and symbolic actions are three intrinsically related domains that were studied.

Contents: Gary Alan Fine: Coordination, Symbolic Action and the Quadrants of Social Order · Richard Grathoff: Symbolic Types in Political Actions: A Phenomenological Perspective on Symbols, Powers and Politics · Marek Czyżewski: Collective Symbolization in Public Debates on Right-Wing Extremist Violence · John Borland: Let's Go Walking: History, Symbols and Action in the Reproduction of Ulster

Loyalism · Elżbieta Hałas: Public Symbols and Polish Identity. Change and Ambiguity of Meaning in State Holidays Calendar of the Third Republic of Poland · Jerzy J. Smolicz: Native Tongues and Family Structures as Symbols of Ethnic Identity: an Australian Experience · Grażyna Woroniecka: Conflict Over Joint Householders' Possession in Perspective of Discursive Symbolism · Annamaria Orla-Bukowska: Religious Symbols, Political Power: the Cross, the Star of David and Auschwitz-Birkenau · Martti Muukkonen: Less Than a Confession but Much More Than a Mere Formula of Agreement. The YMCA's Paris Basis as a Symbol of Unity



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