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Sondernummern

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- V 1 Organisation der Macht, Macht der Organisation.
 2 Tocqueville, Marx, Weber.
- VI 1 Simulation in Sociology.
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 On Suicide.
- VIII 1 Paradoxes of Transitional Societies.
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- IX 1 Weber et Durkheim : le solitaire et le chef d'école.
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 2 Myths and Mass Media.
- XI 1 La planification dans des nations du tiers monde : bilan critique.
 2 La foi et les mœurs or Faith and Morals.
- XII 1 Permanent non-Revolution.
 2 Reflections on Durkheim.
- XIII 1 Permanent non-Revolution (*continued*).
 2 "A Sack of Potatoes"?
- XIV 1 The Political Elite, British and French.
 2 *Tantum Religio...*
- XV 1 Faith and Power.
 2 Citoyens armés, prétoriens désarmés.
- XVI 1 Observer's Analysis of Caste and Clientele.
 2 From Madness to Mental Illness.

T A B L E
D U T O M E X VI
1975

- ...
...
FEULDRE, John.
The Particular Theory of Exchange, p. 171.
- FELDMANN**, Jacqueline.
Les rapports nationaux sur les comportements sexuels : un exemple de deux types d'interaction science-société, p. 95.
- GIROD**, Roger.
Inégalité des chances : perspectives nouvelles, p. 111.
- GREENWOLD**, Stephen M.
Kingship and Caste, p. 49.
- HEIBERG**, Marianne.
Insiders/Outsiders : Basque Nationalism, p. 169
- HOROWITZ**, Tamar R.
From Élite Fashion to Mass Fashion, p. 283.
- KEYSER**, James M. B.
Keeping, Solomon Legitimate, p. 134.
- LA FONTAINE**, Jean S.
The Mother's Brothers as Patron, p. 76.
- LUCKMANN**, Thomas.
On the Rationality of Institutions in Modern Life, p. 3.
- MORGAN**, David.
Explaining Mental Illness, p. 262.
- SCULL**, Andrew T.
From Madness to Mental Illness : medical men as moral entrepreneurs, p. 218.
- SHASKOLSKY SHELEFF**, Leon.
From Restitutive Law to Repressive Law, p. 16.
- SPENCER**, Martin E.
Images of Groups, p. 194.
- STAHL**, Anne VERGATI.
M. Greenwold et les Néwars. Doit-on vraiment recourir à deux modèles du système des castes au Népal? p. 310.
- TAYLOR**, Brian K.
The Absence of a Sociological and Structural Problem Focus in Community Studies, p. 296.



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the human context

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Seven years ago this summer *The Human Context* first saw the light of day; in a sense it was an illegitimate birth: the journal was not the progeny of established groups whose institutional interests it was to represent and protect. It was free from formal and informal group ties, from the prescriptions of schools of thought or doctrines. It professed partisanship for a philosophy of human experience, phenomenology, but without any strings attached to participation.

Surrounded by the still dominating traditions of British Empiricism, *The Human Context* took the view, as Whitehead did before, that the overemphasis on "clear and distinct ideas" had more to do with the survival of Puritan Ethics in language and imagination than with the answers of a self-assured pure empiricism. Independence and the total absence of any corporate power influence was and remains the aim to the end. There was, of course, a lesson to be learnt. Independence did nothing to blunt the edge of competitive pressures and individual freedom often meant a struggle with isolation. Problems such as these frequently played havoc with thematic planning, team-work and the wider programmatic discourse.

The Human Context has tried to explore the philosophical assumptions and the methodology of the human sciences (the different fields of psychology, sociology and anthropology); it has aimed at a critical dialogue between different orientations in philosophy itself and at a confrontation with science. The journal's editorial board comprised authorities in their respective fields in universities in the United Kingdom, the United States of America, France, Germany and other countries, as well as independent authors of the younger generation. Particular attention was paid to movements not yet established by majority traditions in the English speaking world — such as modern phenomenology — or those of contemporary or widely expanding schools which originated on the Continent. The journal published conference reports and the documentation of direct personal experience. It also had an extensive book review section. Among some of its more notable contributors were: Roger Bastide, Basil Bernstein, Alex Comfort, Amitai Etzioni, Henri Ey, Marjorie Grene, Georges Gurvitch, Ervin Laszlo, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Arnold Metzger, Jacques Monod, Jean Piaget, Paul Roazen, Nathan Rotenstreich, Jean-Paul Sartre...

With the next issue (VII/3 Autumn 1975) *The Human Context* must cease publication. We write this with sadness particularly since *The Human Context* met with more acknowledgement, approval and encouragement than could be expected. Inflation, however is a respecter of none and it has become impossible to continue. Throughout the seven years of its existence Paul Senft has been the journal's Editor and guide. His failing health has regrettably coincided with the end of *The Human Context*.

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FASC. III-IV

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SOMMARIO

G. P. CELLA, *Per l'analisi dei rapporti tra azione operaia e mutamento sociale*

F. FERRARESI, *Studi sul radicalismo di destra. I, La destra radicale americana nell'interpretazione neo-pluralista*

S. J. SURACE, *Teoria sociale e storia della modernizzazione in Italia : sindacati e politica*

L. GRAZIANO, *Schema concettuale per lo studio del clientelismo.*

NOTE E DISCUSSIONI

S. BURGALASSI, *La sociologia della religione in Italia dal 1968 ad oggi*

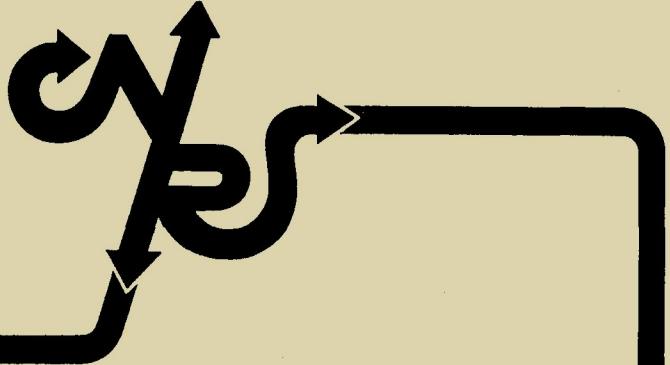
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DANIEL BELL

Marxism, Psychoanalysis, and the Problem of a Unified Theory of Behavior

ROBERT L. HEILBRONER

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EDWARD PETERS

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Inhalt Heft 61/4 1975

I.

THOMAS R. KEARNS, Amherst, Mass : Rights, Benefits and Normative Systems

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II.

GERHARD DILCHER, Frankfurt/Main : Der rechtswissenschaftliche Positivismus. Wissenschaftliche Methode, Sozialphilosophie, Gesellschaftspolitik

KURT SALAMUN, Graz : Bacons Idolenlehre aus der Sicht der neueren Ideologiekritik

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Autumn 1975

COMMENT

Alternatives to Judgement by Peers

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TABLE QUINQUENNIALE
DES TOMES XI À XV
1970-1974

- A GASSI**, Judith.
The Worker and the Media, XI 1.
- A LATAS**, Syed Hussein.
Religion and Modernization in Southeast Asia, XI 2.
- ANDREJKI**, Stanislav.
On the Likelihood of a Collapse of the Political System of the United States of America, XIII 1.
- A RON**, Raymond.
Remarques sur un débat, XIII 1.
Récit, analyse, interprétation, explication : critique de quelques problèmes de la connaissance historique, XV 2.
- B AECHLER**, Jean.
Le problème de la rupture révolutionnaire. A propos des origines de la Révolution française, XV 1.
- B ARNES**, S.B.
Sociological Explanation and Natural Science : a Kuhnian reappraisal, XIII 2.
- B ARNES**, S.B. and **DOLBY**, R.G.A.
The Scientific Ethos : a deviant viewpoint, XI 1.
- B AUER**, Zygmunt.
Social Dissent in the East European Political System, XII 1.
- B ERGER**, Peter.
On the obsolescence of the concept of honor, XI 2.
- B LOCH**, Maurice.
Symbols, Song, Dance and Features of Articulation or Is religion an extreme form of traditional authority? XV 1.
- B OPEGAMAGE**, A. and **KULAHALLI**, R.N.
'Sanskritization' and Social Change in India, XII 1.
- BOURDIEU**, Pierre.
Une interprétation de la théorie de la religion selon Max Weber, XII 1.
- B ROWN**, James.
The Military and Society in Greece, XV 2.
- B URKE**, Peter.
Problems of the Sociology of Art : the work of Pierre Francastel, XII 1.
- C AHNMAN**, Werner J.
Rolle und Bedeutung der jüdischen Handwerkerklasse, XIII 1.
- Der Pariah und der Fremde : eine begriffliche Klärung; XV 1.
- C OLONNA**, Fanny.
Le système d'enseignement de l'Algérie coloniale, XIII 2.
- C ONTÉ**, Claude.
Vers une épistémologie des sciences du comportement, XI 2.
- CRUISE O'BRIEN**, Donal.
Don divin, don terrestre : l'économie de la confrérie mouride, XV 1.
- DOLBY**, R.G.A. and **BARNES**, S.B.
The Scientific Ethos : a deviant viewpoint, XI 1.
- D OURNES**, Jacques.
Sous couvert des maîtres. Aperçu sur la pensée politique d'une ethnie indochinoise, XIV 2.
- D UPIRE**, Marguerite.
L'incohérente endogamie des sociétés peul : une analyse comparative, XIII 1.
- E UCHNER**, Walter.
Hobbes und kein Ende? Problème der neueren Hobbes-Forschung, XII 1.
- F L EISCHMANN**, Eugène.
Le rôle de l'individu dans la société pré-révolutionnaire : Stirner, Marx, Hegel, XIV 1.
Fin de la sociologie dialectique? Essai d'appréciation de l'École de Francfort, XIV 2.
- FURTADO**, Celso.
Planification et réforme de structures en Amérique latine, XI 1.
- G ELLNER**, Ernest.
Our Current Sense of History, XII 2.
The Pluralist anti-Levellers of Prague, XII 2.
- G IDDENS**, Anthony.
Recent Works on the History of Social Thought, XI 1.
Recent Works on the Position and Prospects of Contemporary Sociology, XI 1.
The 'Individual' in the Writings of Émile Durkheim, XIII 2.
- G OLDTHORPE**, John H.
Theories of Industrial Society : reflections on the rerudescence of historicism and the future of futurology, XII 2.
Class, Status and Party in Modern Britain : some recent interpretations, marxist and marxiant, XIII 2.
- G REENWOLD**, Stephen M.
Buddhist Brahmins, XV 1.
- G ROHS**, Gerhard.
Probleme einer Soziologie der bildenden Künste, XI 1.
- H ALSET**, A.H.
Sociology and Race Relations, XII 2.
- H EATH**, A.F.
The Rational Model of Man, XV 2.
- H OROWITZ**, Dan and **KIMMERLING**, Baruch.
Some Social Implications of Military Service and the Reserves System in Israel, XV 2.
- J OHNSON**, R.W.
The British Political Elite 1955-1972, XIV 1.
- K IMMERLING**, Baruch, and **HOROWITZ**, Dan.
Some Social Implications of Military Service and the Reserves System in Israel, XV 2.
- K OŁAKOWSKI**, Leszek.
A Pleading for Revolution : a rejoinder to Z. Bauman, XII 1.
- K ULAHALLI**, R.N. and **BOPEGAMAGE**, A.
'Sanskritization' and Social Change in India, XII 1.

- LANE, David.**
Dissent and Consensus under State Socialism, XIII 1.
- LEHMANN, David.**
Peasant Consciousness and Agrarian Reform in Chile, XIII 2.
- LITTLEWOOD, Paul.**
Strings and Kingdoms. The activities of a political mediator in Southern Italy, XV 1.
- LOVELL, Terry.**
Weber, Goldmann and the Sociology of Beliefs, XIV 2.
- LUKES, Steven.**
Prolegomena to the Interpretation of Durkheim, XII 2.
- LUKES, Steven and TIRYAKIAN, Edward A.**
Durkheim confirme Tiryakian : un échange de correspondances, XV 2.
- MALAMAT, Abrahm.**
Tribal Societies : biblical genealogies and African lineage systems, XIV 1.
- MANENT, Pierre.**
Le discours sans maître de Claude Lefort, XIV 2.
- MAYNTZ, Renate.**
Role distance, Role Identification and Amoral Role Behavior, XI 2.
- MC SWEENEY, Bill.**
Meaning, Context and Situation, XIV 1.
- MOLINO, Jean.**
Structures et littérature, XIV 1.
- ORE, John.**
German Social Theory and the Hidden Face of Technology, XV 2.
- PARKIN, Frank.**
System Contradiction and Political Transformation XIII 1.
- PARKIN, Rose and Charley.**
Peter Rabbit and the Grandrifice, XV 2.
- PARRY, Geraint.**
All Power to the Communities? XIII 1.
- PEEL, J.D.Y.**
Cultural Factors in the Contemporary Theory of Development, XIV 2.
- PINCOTT, Roger.**
The Sociology of Literature, XI 1.
- PITT-RIVERS, Julian.**
Race in Latin America : the concept of 'raza', XIV 1.
- POGGI, Gianfranco.**
The Place of Religion in Durkheim's Theory of Institutions, XII 2.
- POPPER, Karl R.**
Reason or Revolution? XI 2.
- POST, Ken.**
'Peasantization' and Rural Political Movements in Western Africa, XIII 2.
- Peasants and Pundits, XIII 2.
- RAPHAEËL, Freddy.**
Max Weber et le judaïsme antique, XI 2.
- SACHS, Ignacy.**
Drame et développement en Asie, XI 1.
- SCHNEIDER, Peter T.**
Coalition Formation and Colonialism in Western Sicily, XIII 2.
- SCOTTOF ARCHER, Margaret.**
Egalitarianism in English and French Educational Sociology, XI 1.
- SHANIN, Teodor.**
Peasantry : delineation of a sociological concept and a field of study, XII 2.
- SHARLIN, A.N.**
Max Weber and the Origins of the Idea of Value-free Social Science, XV 2.
- SHOKEID (MINKOVITZ), Moshe.**
Fieldwork as Predicament rather than Spectacle, XII 1.
- SNOWDEN, Frank M.**
On the Social Origins of Agrarian Fascism in Italy, XIII 2.
- SPENCER, Martin E.**
Contractual Legitimacy in Organizations and Governments, XIII 1.
- STREETEN, Paul.**
An International Critique of Development Concepts XI 1.
- TIRYAKIAN, Edward and LUKES, Steven.**
Durkheim confirme Tiryakian : un échange de correspondances, XV 2.
- TORRANCE, John.**
Max Weber : methods and the man, XV 1.
- URRY, John R.**
Some Notes on the Study of the Promotion Finding in "The American Soldier", XII 1.
- WEITMAN, Sasha R.**
Intimacies : notes toward a theory of social inclusion and exclusion, XI 2.
- WRIGHT, Frank.**
Protestant Ideology and Politics in Ulster, XIV 2.
- YAKUSHEV, Alexei.**
Are the Techniques of Sociological Surveys Applicable under the Conditions of Soviet Society? XIII 1.
- YEO, Stephen.**
On the Uses of 'Apathy', XV 2.
- ZAGORIA, Donald S.**
A Note on Landlessness, Literacy and Agrarian Communism in India, XIII 2.
- ZIJDERVELD, Anton C.**
The Problem of Adequacy : reflections on Alfred Schütz's contribution to the methodology of the social sciences, XIII 1.

November 1975