
Summaries

How anti-positivist was Max Weber in his social-empirical research?

by A.Th. Derksen

Recently Max Weber's methodological ideas have received ample attention. Many people regarded his conception of sociology, with its stress on *Verstehen* and *Idealtypen*, as a startingpoint for an alternative, anti-positivist social science. In this article the author tries to find out how anti-positivist Weber was in his so-called social-empirical research (This type of Weber's work, which has been neglected on a rather large scale in sociology, includes e.g. his extensive studies about landlabourers and factoryworkers). That question is answered on the basis of seven criteria among which are the positivist notions of objectivity, intersubjectivity, quantification and universality. It is investigated further whether Weber took account of the interpretation-ladenness of social reality and whether he held the idea that social phenomena are reducible to biological or psychological characteristics. Outcome of the inquiry was the finding that Weber was anti-positivist to a small degree only.

Interpreting Action: Central Issues in the Schutz-Parsons Debate

by H.P. Gallacher

In 1940-41 Talcott Parsons and Alfred Schutz have been in correspondence on matters concerning the theory of action and the subjective point of view in sociology. The lively argumentation with which they address themselves to each other provide the debate with a fascinating character. The opponents however fail to reach any common conclusions except that their discussion must remain unfinished. Thanks to the integral publication of the debate (Grathoff 1978) it is possible for others to continue and to try to disentangle the old intricacies by way of new philosophical and sociological insights. Three issues are reconsidered in this way.

Appraisal of the theory of action. Laudan's conception of science as a problem-solving activity is able to discriminate between the empirical and the conceptual achievements of a theory and consequently to evaluate differentially the various aspects of both Schutz' and Parsons' exemplification of the theory of action.

Status of the sociological fact. It can be shown that Parsons' criticism on Schutz' so-called 'phenomenological' idea of facts is not correct, and that Schutz' treatment of sociological facts is as much 'kantian' as is Parsons'.

Meaning of the subjective point of view. Schutz' thesis concerning the exclusive knowledge of the actor of his project might be emended through Wittgenstein's analysis of doubt and certainty. As a result of this it can be concluded that the thesis does express certainty with respect to actor's identifications rather than knowledge of states of affairs. Consequently

Parsons' refutation of Schutz' thesis is not to the point.

Crisis, affluence and distributional conflicts

by F. Vuijsje

In The Netherland redistribution of incomes was a source of social and political conflicts throughout the early 1970s. As from 1975 onwards unemployment increased and the overall growth of real wages slowed down, these conflicts were generally expected to escalate. However, the opposite happened: the distributional issue became less controversial. Widely shared equity-considerations forced a conservative government to implement a moderately egalitarian incomes policy, which was hardly opposed by the higher income groups. The economic crisis was generally considered to justify more than proportional sacrifices of the part of these groups.

Examples from other periods, and other countries, suggest that this combination of crisis and harmony is not at all unusual. On the other hand, some of the more severe distributional conflicts took place in years of uninterrupted economic growth.

This article tackles, on a general plane of reasoning, the question which social and economic conditions produce either harmony or conflicts relating to the inequality of incomes. Some new concepts are introduced, in order to distinguish types of wage demands by the degree to which they reflect a concern with either absolute or relative income-positions. The possible forms of interplay between simultaneously pursued wage demands from different income groups are investigated, especially in terms of implications for distributional harmony and conflict. It is shown that socio-economic conditions differ in the specific combinations of types of interplaying wage demands they give rise to. The analysis is illustrated by references to the postwar history of dutch labor relations.

Frisian of Dutch? The behaviour towards language of bilinguals

by D. Duipmans

The results of a survey-research in a Frisian community towards the behaviour towards language of bilinguals show that such behaviour cannot be explained by one single variable. It is necessary to consider this behaviour as one aspect of the culture of the social group to which the bilingual individual belongs. Attention should be given also to the social position of this group in the social structure and the degree to which the individual is attached to this group-culture.