The Two Sociologies

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The thesis that sociology is centrally concerned with the problem of social order has become one of the discipline's few orthodoxies. It is common as a basic premise to many accounts of sociological theory, which otherwise differ considerably in purpose and perspective.[1] Essentially, the argument is that sociology was shaped by the nineteenth-century conservative reaction to the Enlightenment, the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution. In opposition to what was seen as the subversive rationalism of the first, the traumatic disorder of the second and the destructive egoism of the third, the conservative reaction sought the restoration of a supra-individual hegemony. In so doing, it created a language which, at once, defined the solution to the problem of order and the sociological perspective; hence the centrality of such concepts as authority, the group, the sacred and, above all, the organic community.

The essence of this language lies in its dependence upon notions of externality and constraint, for the problem of order is defined in Hobbesian terms. Indeed, the historical movements which led to the conservative reaction could be seen as confirmation of the Hobbesian view of human nature. It is central to this view that, in the absence of external constraint, the pursuit of private interests and desires leads inevitably to both social and individual disintegration. For 19th-century Hobbesian revisionists, therefore, society became the new *deus ex machina*.

In this perspective, the development of sociological thought appears as a series of mutations in the notion of external constraint. Externality becomes internalization, constraint becomes a moral imperative, the individual becomes the social self, and society as a *deus ex machina* becomes society as a reality *sui generis*. In Weber's typification of bureaucratic order, in Durkheim's abiding concern with moral solidarity and, latterly, in the conceptual web woven by Parsons around the 'collectivity-integrative sub-type of the moral type of evaluative action-orientation', the basic continuity is clear.

One conclusion to be drawn from this is that the thesis in question

involves much more than a mere account of the origins and develop-
ment of sociology. It is, in Aron's term, a doctrine.

> A *doctrine* is more than or different from a *theory*. The word *doctrine*
> suggests a complex body of judgments of fact and judgments of value,
> a social philosophy as well as a system of concepts or of general
> propositions.[2]

For present purposes, the point is that the doctrine is the inclusive
category. Systems of concepts and general propositions derive their
significance, their meaning and their relationships of interdependence
from it. In this sense, the problem of order is a label for a doctrine
which defines a universe of meaning for sociological concepts and
theories. As such, by a logical progression, it penetrates and shapes
sociology at both the metatheoretical and substantive levels of analysis.
The progression begins from a view of human nature, from which
follows a view of the relationship between the individual and society.
The doctrine thus entails not only a theory of society, but also a charac-
teristic approach to the analysis of society, that is, an equivalent set of
propositions about the language and structure of sociology itself.

It is in terms of this progression that the notion of external constraint
links the problem of order to sociology in such a way as to generate a
distinctive sociological perspective: what it is appropriate to call a
sociology of social system. This becomes clear when the propositions
embedded in the notion of constraint are drawn out. Reduced to its
essentials, the argument is that, since individuals cannot of their own
volition create and maintain order, constraint is necessary for society
to exist at all; without it, the only possibility is the war of all against
all. Accordingly, society must define the social meanings, relationships
and action of its members for them. And, because it is thus assigned
priority over them, it must in some sense be self-generating and self-
maintaining.

This is precisely the logic which combines, in the familiar schema,
the concepts of central value system, structure, function, equilibrium
and structural differentiation. In a nutshell, the central value system
is the ultimate source of the moral authority which sets the social
system over its participants in such a way as to impose a common
meaning and, therefore, order upon them. Hence the familiar systems
hierarchy. At the same time, the concepts in combination embody the
notion of the self-production of the system. Central values, through the
medium of functionally-specific norms, structure roles and institutional
sub-systems into the total system by defining the network of functional
activities necessary for the latter's survival. When survival is threatened,
from whichever environmental source, the system adjusts in such a way
as to restore equilibrium. Moreover, it generates its own dynamic of
change through the process of structural differentiation, in which

concept the idea of the system's self-production receives its clearest expression.

Here, though, it may seem that the argument jumps too large a gap between the origins of the social system perspective in the classic Hobbesian problem and its latest manifestation in structural-functionalism. In particular, it may be objected that successive attempts to account for the subjective dimension of action have led to the conceptual substitution of internalization for externality. The position taken here, however, is that this change has not altered the basic logic of the social system perspective. For it boils down, in that perspective, to the concept of socialization. And this, whilst it may refine the description of how constraint is achieved, does not alter the way in which the source of constraint is conceptually located. From the point of view of the actor in the social system framework, that source still has the attribute of externality. To put it crudely, the actor is still on the receiving-end of the system.

To amplify, the argument here is that subjective meanings are, through the postulate of consensus, ultimately derived from the central value system and are thus, at root, external conditions of the actor's situation; essentially, objects of the environment. The important, if paradoxical, consequence of this is that, once subjective meaning is incorporated into the social system perspective, it *reinforces* the latter's basic dependence on the notion of external constraint and, therefore, its link with the problem of order. For, given the view of the relationship between the social and the individual inherent in that problem, meaning can only be conceptualized by postulating social norms as being constitutive, *rather than merely regulative*, of the self. That is, the problem of order can only be solved by conceiving of the actor as a reflex of the social system and meaning as a reflex of the cultural system. Far from disappearing, constraint becomes total through internalization. No matter how many qualifying clauses may be introduced, it remains decisive because it is basic to the logic of the social system perspective. Hence the inevitability of 'the oversocialized conception of man'.[3] It merely remains to utilize whatever conceptual tools may be to hand—such as Freudian notions, suitably amended—to justify it.

This argument has a further consequence. If subjective meaning is derivable, through the postulate of consensus, from a prior characterization of the central value system, then it does not have to be treated as a significant variable.[4] All that has to be explained is the process of internalization. In short, its treatment of the subjective dimension of action is basic to the metatheoretical, as well as the substantive position of the social system perspective. The former position, as Finlay Scott has pointed out, is behaviourist;[5] the methodological corollary of viewing subjective meanings as, at root, external conditions of the actor's situation and thus as objects of the environment. As such, they become

amenable to the methods of the natural sciences, upon whose logic sociological enquiry can therefore be modelled. Thus social systems can be conceptualized in terms of convenient analogies with natural-scientific system constructs. And, of course, given the view of society central to the social system perspective, the convenient analogy is the organic. The logical progression is complete: the substantive and meta-theoretical positions in question are defined and indissolubly linked by the doctrine of order.

It follows from the argument so far that if the problem of order is *the* central problem for sociology, then the social system perspective must be *the* sociological perspective. This, indeed, is not an uncommon claim, nor one which cannot find support in the literature of the discipline. Certainly, there appears to be a widely-accepted sociological language which is comprised of social system concepts, in the meaning they derive from that perspective. And this language is by no means confined to 'grand theory'. Irrespective of the extent to which the assumptions behind it are made explicit, it has become common currency at virtually every level in sociology, from the basic text to the specialist sub-discipline. An obvious example here is provided by the universality of the language of role, the crucial bridging concept between the social and the individual in the social system perspective.[6]

At this point, however, a question arises. Throughout the history of sociology, there has also been a manifest conflict between two types of social analysis; namely, the conflict variously labelled as being between the mechanistic and organismic approaches, between atomism and holism, methodological individualism and collectivism, and so on. How does the pre-eminence of the social system perspective, which appears to opt for one side of the debate, square with the latter's persistence in sociological thought? Here, the considerable claim is made that it resolves the issue. It is said—to translate the conflict into the relevant terms—to bring together the social system and social action approaches to sociological analysis in one coherent, comprehensive schema. But does this synthesis work? It has, after all, been attempted many times; yet the conflict seems to endure. For example, Finlay Scott has pointed to its persistence in the powerful attempt at synthesis by Parsons.[7]

The first point to be made about this concerns the languages of the two approaches. As it has been developed in sociology,[8] the language of social action begins with the subjective dimension of action; conceptualizes it as the definition of the situation; spells this out in terms of actors defining situations on the basis of ends, means and conditions; and posits action as a process over time, i.e. as history. It is at this point, however, that the language of social action is absorbed by that of social system. By a combination of the principle of emergence and the postulate of consensus, unit acts are systematized in terms of central values.

In the consequent synthesis, actors derive their definitions of situations from the central value system, through their internalization of the social roles ultimately defined by that system.

From the earlier argument, it will be evident that there is a conflict of meaning between the two languages. The point is that, as soon as definitions of the situation become properties of the central value system—that is, as soon as the elements of action are, in effect, reduced to the single element of situational conditions—then, *in terms of its initial premises of subjectivity and historicity*, action disappears. In short, the attempted synthesis subordinates action to system concepts in such a way as to remove the concept of action altogether. Perpetual 'orientation' takes its place.

On the analytic level, therefore, the synthesis fails. But behind this failure lies a second, more fundamental point. In that synthesis is attempted on the basis of the language of consensus, central value system and internalization, it is clearly dependent upon the 'problem of order' thesis. And the fact is that attempts at synthesis have always rested upon precisely this foundation.[9] A sociological language which cannot be reconciled with the social system perspective without losing its meaning must, therefore, derive that meaning from some other source than the concern with the problem of order. The conclusion has to be that, whilst that problem has undoubtedly been central to much of sociology, it has not been the *only* central problem; from which it follows that the conservative reaction was not the only source of inspiration for the development of sociological thought.

For the location of a second source of inspiration, Nisbet's characterization of 'the age of Enlightenment' is suggestive.

> The dominant objectives of the whole age . . . were those of release: release of the individual from ancient social ties and of the mind from fettering traditions.[10]

This interpretation sums up the essential character of the Enlightenment more accurately than those, common to most historians of sociology, which emphasize its rationalism and empiricism.[11] Whilst it is dangerous to attribute an obvious intellectual coherence to that movement, Nisbet's summary points to one general aim the *philosophes* did have in common: that of human liberation. For them, the application of reason and the scientific method to social analysis was merely a means to the solution of the problem which constituted the whole point and purpose of their thought. This was the problem of how human beings could regain *control* over essentially man-made institutions and historical situations.

The movement was, of course, historically specific. Its attack was upon a specific set of hitherto-inviolable institutions and relationships

sanctioned by the belief in divine authority.[12] Divinely-ordered, universal situations became man-made, historical situations. Social institutions became the subject and object of social action. In a word, the Enlightenment postulated the human, as opposed to a divine construction of the ideal. It fashioned the logical gap between the 'is' and the 'ought' into a weapon of social criticism, transforming it into the gap between the actual and the ideal, in which the attainment of the ideal entailed the creative imposition of an human, as opposed to a supra-human meaning upon the actual. In such a perspective, action constitutes an unceasing attempt to exert control over existing situations, relationships and institutions in such a way as to bring them into line with human constructions of their ideal meanings.

In sum, the suggestion here is that the Enlightenment generated what it is proposed to call, for obvious reasons, *the problem of control*. And this leads to a further proposition, to the effect that sociology has been concerned, not with one central problem, but with two. It is not difficult to see the connection between the problem of control and the language of social action. The basic point is that the initial premises of subjectivity and historicity, in which that language is grounded, are implicit in the gap between the actual and the ideal; for the attempt to transcend that gap is essentially an attempt to impose ideal meanings on existing situations. Hence the linking concepts of meaning and action; the concepts of ends as desired future states, and of the existing situation as providing conditions to be transcended or overcome and means to be utilized; and the notion of actors defining their own situations and attempting to control them in terms of their definitions.

If these were the only points of connection, however, they would not be sufficient to establish the problem of control as having a centrality in sociology equal to, and distinct from, that of the problem of order. For the language of social action does not, as it stands, comprise a complete sociological perspective. If, for the reasons given, it cannot be genuinely reconciled with the social system perspective, then it requires new emergent concepts; without them, it is open to the damaging charge of individualism or atomism.[13] By the same token, the problem of control could not be counted as a doctrine in the same sense as the problem of order.

In point of fact, it is here that the real significance of the problem of control as a second major concern in sociology becomes clear. For it generates two emergent concepts through which, like the problem of order, it penetrates and shapes a distinctive sociology at both the substantive and metatheoretical levels. The first concept, emerging from the transcendental relation of meaning to actual historical situations, integrates unit courses of action into meaning-systems. The attempt to impose ideal meanings upon actuality can be conceptualized as an attempt by the actor to make sense of his situations in terms of some

overarching meaning. Thus definitions of the different situations of everyday life—work situation, family situation, political situation and so on—can be understood by means of a concept of *central meaning*.[14] It should be clear that this notion is diametrically opposed to that of central value, since its basic reference is not to the social system, but to the social actor. The latter is conceptualized as integrating his different situations and biographical episodes in terms of an overall life-meaning, from which he derives his situationally-specific goals and definitions.[15]

It is at this point that the notion of *control* enters the action framework as an analytic concept, in the same logical progression whereby the notion of order enters the social system framework. In the first place, it adds the dimension of action to that of meaning: to control a situation is to impose meaning upon it by acting upon it. Secondly, it adds the dimension of interaction, or relationship between actors: to control a situation is to impose one's definition upon the other actors in that situation. The concept of control refers essentially to social relationships whose properties cannot be reduced to the individual definitions and courses of action from which they emerge; it integrates actors into interaction systems.[16]

The properties of these systems, however, are not prejudged. There is no postulate of consensus or, for that matter, of co-operation, conflict or constraint. The extent to which a concrete interaction situation turns on any or all of these becomes the empirical question it really is. Nor are prior assumptions made about the extent of control itself, for it is clear that the capacity for control will, in the typical case, be differentially distributed. It depends partly on the nature and scope of situational definitions; partly on the relationship, in terms of projected outcomes, between the consequent courses of action; and partly on differential access to facilities and subjection to limiting conditions. By the same token, the relative significance of evaluation and cognitive elements in interaction, and the extent to which control depends upon normative, calculative and/or coercive mechanisms become empirical questions.[17]

Together, the concepts of central meaning and control produce the social action view of the nature of society. Social systems are conceptualized as the *outcome* of a continuous process of interaction, which turns on the 'projects' and differential capacities for control of the participants. Institutions and roles are thus conceptualized at two emergent levels.[18] At the level of the social actor, they are linked by their relationship to a central meaning and by the attempt to activate that meaning across the institutional board. At the social system level, they are linked by relationships of control and by the purposes which emerge as the result of interaction. Typically, these will be the purposes of no single actor to the extent that they will embody elements of compromise

and, more important, in that they will involve unforeseen consequences. This is not, however, to divorce them from the reference to subjective meaning, for systems as unintended consequences are always referred back to the interaction from which they emerge. A social action approach always and necessarily 'demystifies' them by revealing their roots in human action. Again, the link with the problem of control is obvious.

It is also obvious at the metatheoretical level. Since the base unit of analysis is the social actor, the notion of subjective meaning is again decisive. The human capacity for the construction of meaning is taken as differentiating the subject-matter and, so, the logic of sociological enquiry from that of the natural sciences. Hence the *verstehen* view of the nature of sociology.[19]

There are, then, two sociologies: a sociology of social system and a sociology of social action. They are grounded in the diametrically opposed concerns with two central problems, those of order and control. And, at every level, they are in conflict. They posit antithetical views of human nature, of society and of the relationship between the social and the individual. The first asserts the paramount necessity, for societal and individual well-being, of external constraint; hence the notion of a social system ontologically and methodologically prior to its participants. The key notion of the second is that of autonomous man, able to realize his full potential and to create a truly human social order only when freed from external constraint.[20] Society is thus the creation of its members; the product of their construction of meaning, and of the action and relationships through which they attempt to impose that meaning on their historical situations.[21]

In summary, one views action as the derivative of system, whilst the other views system as the derivative of action.[22] And the contention here is that sociology has developed on the basis of the conflict between them. Hence the conflicts in 'the classic tradition'; for example, the obvious conflict in Durkheim's ideal of 'a sociology justifying rationalist individualism but also preaching respect for collectivist norms',[23] and the consequent ambiguities in his view of the relationship between the social and the individual and of moral consensus. There is a similar conflict in the Marxian dialectic between the notion of socially-creative man and the essentially Hobbesian view of nineteenth-century capitalist man. And in Weber, too: the pessimistic chronicler of the 'supreme mastery of the bureaucratic way of life' is clearly concerned with the problem of control and begins with a sociology based upon the subjective dimension of action. But, partly because of his pessimism and partly because the sociologist of the *machstaat* and of religion is also concerned with the problem of order, he finishes with a sociology in which the bureaucratic system is totally compulsive from the point of

view of its participants. The obvious example in American sociology is provided by the change from the 'creative relation of men to norms' in the early work of Parsons to the 'passive, adaptive' relation in his later work.[24]

Once again, however, the conflict is not confined to the abstract realms of theory, nor indeed, to the classic tradition in general. For it seems to have spread from the latter to the modern research specialism, with the result that the issues discussed here have a contemporary relevance. It has certainly spread to a field noted earlier as comprising an archetypal example of the social system perspective; that of role analysis. Here, the removal of the postulate of consensus, on the grounds that it stands in the way of research, casts severe doubt on the whole social system approach and provides pointers towards a social action conception of role analysis.[25] In the sociology of deviance, the work of Douglas on suicide stands in the opposition suggested here to the Durkheimian tradition,[26] whilst the work of Cicourel has given the concept of meaning a new centrality.[27] In industrial sociology, there is currently a debate about the relative merits of the socio-technical systems model and the action approach.[28] In the study of social class, the role of consciousness has been of increasing concern since the *embourgeoisement* thesis and, in significant ways, the response to that thesis has led social class analysis away from its exclusive preoccupation with structural conditions.[29] And, in general, the emergence of neo-phenomenological social analysis reflects a revived interest in the *verstehen* view of the nature of sociology.[30] In that all these areas manifest a preoccupation with the imperatives of research, one criterion of choice between the two approaches is clearly that of research utility.

It is not, however, the ultimate criterion. For it is a major consequence of the whole argument that sociology is ultimately defined by its historical contexts. It is from those contexts that the problems of order and control, and so the concepts and propositions to which they lead, derive their meaning. They are generalized expressions of the human, social and moral concerns of their time and place.[31] In other words, the problems of order and control are problems of value and, to the extent that they penetrate sociology in the logical progression suggested here, it follows that values shape the discipline from beginning to end.[32] This is not to say that ethical arguments about those values can be settled within sociology itself; this would be circular.[33] But it is to say that values play a much more pervasive role in sociology than is allowed by the conventional wisdom of value-neutrality. In a very significant sense, both sociologies propose utopias. And it is from those utopias that they derive their meaning and their use; they are, indeed, doctrines.

Notes

1. See, for example, Talcott Parsons, *The Structure of Social Action*, Glencoe, Free Press, 1949; R. A. Nisbet, *The Sociological Tradition*, Heinemann, 1967; Leon Bramson, *The Political Context of Sociology*, Princeton Univ. Press, 1961; Percy S. Cohen, *Modern Social Theory*, Heinemann, 1968; Raymond Aron, *Main Currents in Sociological Thought*, vol. 2, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1968.

2. Aron, op. cit., p. v.

3. D. S. Wrong, 'The Oversocialized Conception of Man in Modern Society', *Amer. Sociol. Rev.*, vol. 26, (1961), pp. 184–193.

4. Cf. N. Gross, W. S. Mason, A. W. McEachern, *Explorations in Role Analysis*, New York, Wiley, 1958, in which they demonstrate the consequences of the failure to treat role consensus as a significant variable.

5. J. Finlay Scott, 'The Changing Foundations of the Parsonian Action Scheme', *Amer. Sociol. Rev.*, vol. 28, (Oct. 1963).

6. See especially 'Homo Sociologicus' in R. Dahrendorf, *Essays on the Theory of Society*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968, in which the centrality of the role concept to the social system perspective becomes very clear.

7. Finlay Scott, op. cit.

8. The most obvious reference here is to Parsons, op. cit.

9. For example, Cohen, op. cit.; Parsons, op. cit.; P. Berger and T. Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality*, Allen Lane, Penguin Press, 1967.

10. Nisbet, op. cit., p. 8.

11. See, for example, Irving M. Zeitlin, *Ideology and the Development of Sociological Theory*, Englewood Cliffs, Prentice-Hall, 1968, in which he characterizes the influence of the Enlightenment on sociology in precisely these terms. True, he is aware of the 'critical-revolutionary tendency' of the Enlightenment, but he becomes too immersed in a prolonged celebration of Marx to develop the point.

12. The stress on reason has to be understood in the light of the attack upon what the *philosophes* saw as the major characteristic of religion: its unreason. This did not mean that they wished to posit reason as the sole characteristic of man. Rather, autonomous man was whole man, in whom neither reason nor feeling were subordinated to the other. On this, see especially Peter Gay's *The Party of Humanity*, 1964, and *The Enlightenment: An Interpretation*, 1966, both Weidenfeld & Nicolson.

13. In this context, see Steven Lukes, 'Methodological Individualism Reconsidered', *Brit. J. Sociol.*, vol. 19 (1968), pp. 119–29.

14. A notion which has appeared in many guises in sociology. However, since it has generally been translated into that of central value, it has not become a key concept in a distinct sociology of social action.

15. Subjective meaning is, of course, a complex construct derived from a combination of observers' and participants' definitions and purposes. Thus the sociologist himself becomes a variable in the interaction he studies. On this, see Aaron V. Cicourel, *Methods and Measurement in Sociology*, Glencoe, Free Press, 1964.

16. As it is used here, the notion of control refers neither to notions about controlling the environment (especially technology—cf. Amitai Etzioni, *The Active Society*, New York, Free Press, 1968), nor to the structural-functionalist concept of social control. Clearly, it is close to notions of power and authority.

17. It is important to stress that the distinction between the social system and social action perspectives is not synonymous with the distinction and the dispute between consensus and conflict theories. Insofar as the latter both rest on *postulates* of consensus and conflict, and locate them as properties of the social system, they fall within the social system perspective.

18. It is important to note here the way in which Parsons uses the principle of emergence in his early work, where he demonstrates it by means of the

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example of economic rationality, which refers to the process whereby an actor balances choices so as to achieve optimum satisfaction; i.e., the reference is to the integration of choices *by the actor*. By an intellectual sleight-of-hand, a principle referring to a system of meaning produced by the actor is then transferred to a system of meaning derived from central values. There is no logical connection between the two, and it can be argued that this is the source of later reification in Parsons.

19. The schema does not imply an assumption of rationality as the basis for explanation. A major feature of the concept of central meaning is that it overcomes the unnecessary and damaging distinction between rational and other types of action which, in particular, has made it impossible for sociology to deal adequately with affective meaning. The layers of expressive content in many 'rational' means-end relationships cannot be grasped by what is basically a distinction between reason and feeling, in which feeling is merely a residual category. In sociology, nothing more need be meant by 'rational' than that which is comprehensible in terms of participant views of the situation. There is nothing inherently rationalistic in a language of goals, means and conditions. It only becomes so through association with a nineteenth-century economic model of man. In short, change the historical context and you change the meaning of the language. On this, see I. C. Jarvie, *The Revolution in Anthropology*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1964.

20. The contrast between these postulates is pointed by the opposition between the concepts of anomie and alienation: see J. Horton, 'The Dehumanization of Alienation and Anomie', *Brit. J. Sociol.*, vol. 15 (1964), 4.

21. Cf. Berger and Luckmann, op. cit. They reconcile the perspectives in terms of a dialectic which, in fact, seems to be a simple juxtaposition. Institutions are, by definition, objectified, and once objectification occurs, the analysis depends on the concepts of socialization and internalization; it is thus essentially a social

system analysis. What seems to happen is that the concepts of meaning and action are divorced, for the latter only appears in terms of an a-historical, dyadic situation. Once the dyad becomes both historical and more than dyadic, meaning is objectified and action becomes a derivative of system.

22. Obviously, the social action perspective in no way rules out the notion of system. In this context, the logical version of the 'problem of order' thesis proposes that the question of order is logically prior to all other questions. If we are not to confuse the analytic and the concrete, this can mean nothing more startling than that we impose a conceptual order on empirical reality. On this level, order is axiomatic rather than problematic in the same sense that 'man is social' is a *conceptual* precondition for the existence of sociology. From this, the real question is, what kind of conceptual order? Other questions about the nature and extent of order are essentially empirical.

23. Aron, op. cit., p. 97.

24. The terms here are Parsons' own —op. cit., pp. 396–7.

25. Gross, Mason and McEachern, op. cit. For similar implications, see also Jack J. Preiss and Howard J. Ehrlich, *An Examination of Role Theory*, Nebraska Univ. Press, 1966; Robert L. Kahn *et al.*, *Organizational Stress*, New York, Wiley, 1964.

26. J. D. Douglas, *The Social Meanings of Suicide*, Princeton Univ. Press, 1967.

27. Aaron V. Cicourel, *The Social Organization of Juvenile Justice*, New York, Wiley, 1968.

28. See J. H. Goldthorpe, D. Lockwood, F. Bechhofer, J. Platt, *The Affluent Worker: Industrial Attitudes and Behaviour*, Cambridge Univ. Press, 1968; Goldthorpe's 'Attitudes and Behaviour of Car Assembly Workers', *Brit. J. Sociol.*, vol. 17 (1966), pp. 227–44 is also relevant. For an explicit statement of the point, see D. Silverman, 'Formal Organizations or Industrial Sociology', *Sociology*, vol. II, 2, pp. 221–38 (and his letter in *Sociology*, vol. III, 3).

29. Again, the work of Lockwood, Goldthorpe *et al.* is suggestive. And in

their notion of a group defined in terms of family-centredness, one can begin to see a central meaning, in terms of which different institutional situations link at the level of the actor and the system. Attitudes to work and relationships with work-mates, which have consequences at both levels, are defined by the primary value placed upon family relationships. On the concern with the role of consciousness in general, see also W. G. Runciman, *Relative Deprivation and Social Justice*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966; D. Lockwood, *The Black-Coated Worker*, Allen & Unwin, 1958; and, of course, F. Zweig, *The Worker in an Affluent Society*, Heinemann, 1961.

30. This I take to be a major point of Cicourel's critique of quantitative methods, op. cit.

31. In generalized form, however, they transfer, within broad cultural traditions, from one historical context to another. In Europe, from their origins as consequences of and reactions to the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, the two central problems came to represent, above all, conflicting responses to the overwhelming experience of nineteenth-century industrialism. In America, sociology developed as a response to the rampant economic individualism of the post-bellum period and to the cultural diversity created by the 'great migrations'; hence the problem of order. But it was also affected by that part of American liberal ideology which stresses grass-roots participation and which was used to legitimate the Populism and the Progressive movement, which coincided with the early years of American sociology; hence the problem of control. It can be speculated that current movements in both Europe and America, focused on the theme of participation, might have something to do with a revived concern for the problem of control in sociology.

32. The two problems do not only create sociological languages. Similar oppositions can be seen in many areas; in psychology, psychoanalysis, literature and, obviously, political thought. They, and sociology, are all creatures of the same context and thus share the same concerns. The point may seem obvious, but it is implicitly denied whenever sociologists arrogate to themselves, through claims to detachment and scientific objectivity, the capacity to stand above their own socio-historical contexts.

33. Nor is it to deny the need for increasingly sophisticated methods of social inquiry. After all, it is a requisite of all good argument that it should have recourse to accepted criteria whereby its empirical propositions can be justified.