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BEYOND THE SOCIOLOGY OF CONFLICT

David Binns

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Contents

<i>Preface</i>	vii
1. Max Weber and the Sociology of the Market	1
Introduction: Weber and Class Conflict	1
Social Science and Social Action	2
Weber and Capitalism	8
Conclusion	19
2. Max Weber and the Legacy of Political Economy	21
Weber and Utility	34
Class and Occupation	39
3. Market Sociology Today: Anthony Giddens	47
4. Consciousness and Society: Weber, Schutz, Ethno- methodology and Rex	55
Weber: Understanding Society	55
Schutz: Meaning as a Problem	58
Schutz and Ethnomethodology	59
Strategies and Structures	66
John Rex: Structural Phenomenology	72
5. Ralf Dahrendorf: Conflict and the Dimension of Authority	78
Introduction	78
Dahrendorf and Marx: Departures into Conflict	79
Class Revisited	85
Power and the Kantian Heritage	87
Dahrendorf, Liberalism, and the Ghost in the Market Place (in which Kant Makes a Second Appearance)	93

Appendix to Ralf Dahrendorf: Conflict and the Dimension of Authority: New Liberty and Old Ideas	98
6. C. Wright Mills: the Struggle to Make History	106
Introduction	106
Sociology: Towards the Unity of Theory and Programme	108
Pragmatism: the Philosophical Background	111
Mills' Social World: Meanings and Structures	117
Liberalism and the Legacy of Weber	123
Wright Mills and Marx: the Question of Labour	127
Two Views of History-Making	137
7. Parsons and the Functionalist Utopia	143
Functionalism in Context	143
Social System and Social Action	148
On Power and Class: Parsons' Value-added Taxonomy	153
Parsons and Weber: the Tradition of Pathos	166
8. From Natural Law to Sociology	174
Greece: the Beginnings	174
Bacon, Descartes and the New Science	180
Hobbes and the Embourgeoisement of Nature	182
After Hobbes: the Pacification of Nature	184
Towards Enlightenment	187
The Sociological Synthesis: 1, Capitalism Sanctified	195
The Sociological Synthesis: 2, Durkheim and Weber: the Rejection of Natural Law	197
<i>Notes and References</i>	211
<i>Bibliography</i>	237
<i>Index</i>	251

Preface

This book, a critical examination of sociological theories of social conflict, grew out of a number of themes explored in my M. Litt. The initial work was undertaken at the University of Glasgow during 1973–5. In anticipation of two possible lines of criticism, it is intended neither to exhaust the range of sociological conflict doctrines, an impossible task in a single volume, nor to offer a full elaboration of the alternative approach which stands behind my discussion of the theories in question. More positively, what I have attempted to do is to explore the content, assumptions and implications of some Weberian-influenced approaches to class conflict, and to demonstrate their historical and theoretical relationship to Marxism, from which they often claim a direct or indirect descent.

I would particularly like to thank Paul Walton and Professor J. E. T. Eldridge of the University of Glasgow, whose discussions and comments have helped, I hope, to curb some of the initial excesses, stylistic and spatial, of my earlier efforts. Also, a word of thanks to Nelio Oliveira, now at the University of Oporto, Portugal; Derek Bryant of Bradford University; and Ian Roxborough at the London School of Economics. Should any other colleagues and friends, past or present, detect an unacknowledged debt, I offer both gratitude and apologies. The book, finally, is dedicated to my parents.