

Imaginario, imaginary, imagery (definiciones)

(*Imaginario*, imaginary, imagery [definitions])

«Imaginario colectivo»: han pasado más de 4 años desde el inicio de esta sección^{1,2}, es tiempo de saber mejor –de otro modo– de qué hablamos. Unas definiciones...

Imaginary = imaginario.

Imagery = imágenes, metáforas, imagería.

Imagery. The production of vivid mental representations by the normal processes of thought (Concise Medical Dictionary. Oxford University Press; 2002)³.

Class imagery. The commonsense or everyday beliefs about social class that are held by ordinary members of society –particularly in respect of the number, size, and characteristics of the various classes in their society. Studies of social stratification often distinguish objective and subjective structure, the former –«objective»– pertaining to relationships of power or privilege, the latter –«subjective»– being the domain of class imagery. The term itself dates from 1957 and gained British currency through David Lockwood's influential work on working-class images of society. Two main accounts of subjective stratification exist. One is Marxist, in which consciousness or awareness of the class structure is postulated as arising from class conflict and experience of social inequality, and any departure from a conception based on class interest is deemed to be false consciousness. Reputationalist studies, on the other hand, based on community studies of class and occupational prestige, have also detected different perceptions of the class structure, noting that people differ in the extent to which their image is dichotomous («us» versus «them») or multiple and finely graded. Different bases for these images or models (such as power and money) have been described by a number of sociologists –but, in most cases, systematic class images are difficult to identify empirically–. The most recent studies of class imagery and connotations suggest that there exists a more fluid, complex, and open stock of such class and occupational images and meanings than is usually assumed, and that individuals use different imagery and conceptions for different purposes and strategies (Scott J, Marshall G. A Dictionary of Sociology. Oxford: University Press; 2005)³.

Collective conscience. Defined by Émile Durkheim as «the body of beliefs and sentiments common to the average of members of a society», it comprised a form and content which varies according to whether society is characterized by mechanical or organic solidarity. In «mechanical solidarity» the collective conscience is extensive and strong, ranging far and wide into people's lives, controlling them in detail through various religious or other traditional means of sanction. It emphasizes the primacy of society over the individual and his or her dignity. However, with the coming of the Enlightenment the collective conscience waned, becoming less extensive, weaker in its grip on the individual, secular, and sanctioned through the imposition of general rule rather than specific codes. The growth of individualism undermined the collective conscience. In the transition to «organic solidarity» this could be observed in the replacement of repressive by restitutive systems of law. Whereas repressive systems punished for the violation of solidarity itself, restitutive law is geared to maintain the normal contact and social intercourse in society. Durkheim's argument is that a society-wide collective conscience can only hold a segmental society together; a more differentiated society must be held together by a more differentiated moral consciousness, whose foci would be occupational groups and the specialized norms issuing from them. The collective conscience becomes a diffuse, abstract «cult of the individual» which, as a civil religion, supplies ultimate principles and justifications, but cannot bear the whole weight of social cohesion (Scott J, Marshall G. A Dictionary of Sociology. Oxford: University Press; 2005)³.

Collective representations. The ideas, beliefs, and values elaborated by a collectivity and that are not reducible to individual constituents. They are central to Émile Durkheim's search for the sources of social solidarity. The concept largely supersedes Durkheim's earlier notion of «collective conscience». In *The elementary forms of the religious life* (1912), these representations are seen as being created through the intense interaction of religious rituals, and being richer than individual activities they come to be autonomous of the group from which they emerged. Collective representations help to order and make sense of the world, but they also express, symbolize, and interpret social rela-

tionships. Collective representations inhibit and stimulate social action. Their force or authority comes from their being within all of us and yet external to the individual. Durkheim explained great value transformations (such as the propagation of Enlightenment values in the French revolution) by reference to the power of this «coming together» (or dynamic density), whereby the religious world is rooted in collective life, leaving the profane to the individual. Assembly of an intense kind generates collective representations, which then survive the disintegration of this higher collective life as sacred and therefore morally coercive beliefs, values, and symbols (Scott J, Marshall G. *A Dictionary of Sociology*. Oxford: University Press; 2005)³.

Memoria colectiva y memoria individual. Conciencias. Recuerdos, sueños, imágenes. Representaciones. El colectivo y el individuo. La salud pública y las personas: ¿una relación no necesariamente dicotómica,

acaso un continuo? Poblaciones enfermas e individuos enfermos; poblaciones expuestas e individuos expuestos^{1,2,4-6}.

Bibliografía

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