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**СБОРНИК ТЕКСТОВ
НА АНГЛИЙСКОМ ЯЗЫКЕ
по специальности «Социология»**

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В сборнике содержатся тексты, освещающие проблемы социологии, социальной психологии, развитию социологии в различных странах, а также биографии известных социологов.

Адресовано студентам по специальности «Социология».

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СПЕЦИАЛЬНЫЕ ТЕКСТЫ

Text 1

Ethnomethodology

Two preliminary points should be made about what is sometimes regarded as a very obscure area of sociology. The first is that its obscurity is caused more by the way in which ethnomethodologists express themselves than by the actual complexity of their ideas, which are based, fundamentally, on a very simple argument. The second point is that ethnomethodology is exactly what its name suggests. It is the study of the ways in which people create and construct their way of life. It is not a theory, or a perspective, but rather a way of analysing everyday life according to a particular set of assumptions. Accordingly, it is appropriate to say a few words about it as a method, though the reader who wishes to explore it further should read the relevant chapter in *Perspectives in Sociology*, edited by Cuff and Payne (1984).

The central idea of ethnomethodology is that the orderliness of social life is not the result of people obeying social norms or giving way to social pressures, but rather that orderliness is attained by all those involved working to achieve it. The orderliness is produced by the participants, on every occasion that they interact. For Garfinkel, the founder of ethnomethodology, social events are entirely the product of the actions of those 'members' involved at any particular moment. People perceive the world as though it were guiding and constraining them. Garfinkel's interest is not in whether they are right or wrong in perceiving it in this way, but rather in how they come to perceive it in this way, and what effect this perception has on their actions. People need to make enough sense of any social event to be able to act appropriately. Garfinkel's recommendations to sociologists is:

'Look around you and everywhere you will find ordinary persons going about their everyday business performing familiar, unremarkable activities. This mundane fact is the very crux of the social world. The ability of members successfully to perform practical activities in collaboration with others is what makes the social world possible. Therefore, take these practical actions and examine them for how they are accomplished. You will find that the methods involved are complex and

sophisticated, yet they are possessed (and require to be possessed) by pretty nearly everyone.'

Ethnomethodology has developed various ways of demonstrating these unwritten rules of social life, and of showing how they are continuously achieved by social actors. There is the disruptive experiment, invented by Garfinkel himself. In this, the ethnomethodologist deliberately disrupts the taken-for-granted routine of social life, and watches what happens. One famous example of this was when he asked students to pretend that they were boarders in their own homes, and to behave accordingly. That is to say, they were more formal, more polite, and rather more distant than usual, asking permission to do things that usually they would have done without question. The effect on others in the home highlighted, for Garfinkel, the taken-for-granted rules of family life, which became apparent when they were broken rather than when they were being achieved and observed. The taken-for-granted world was shown as the fragile construction that it really is.

Another strand of ethnomethodology is conversational analysis. Given that social order is continuously worked at and achieved by members, the question arises, 'How is this done?' What is the main method that people use to achieve social order? The answer is 'conversation and talk', and this led ethnomethodologists like Harvey Sacks into detailed analysis of conversation as a practical accomplishment of ordinary people. His aim is to show what are the taken-for-granted rules of conversation and how we describe the world to one another so that we all make sense of it in similar ways. As a result, we are able to interact with each other. He is particularly interested in the way that words and sentences change their meaning according to the context in which they are said or heard, and in the ways in which we all fill in the unspoken background of what is said to us.

Text 2

The Subfields of Sociology

Just as the various disciplines do not represent a systematic division of social-scientific labor, so the subfields of sociology itself do not represent a rational partitioning. One set of divisions come about because of interest in specific institutional complexes and, correlatively,

sponsorship by particular agencies for sociological research into the functioning of these complexes. Thus there has been, since the early 19th century, a sociology of medicine, particularly oriented toward the study of hospitals, physicians, and nurses, and a sociology of education, oriented toward schools and educators. Even older, dating back to moral philosophers of the 17th century, is the sociology of religion, which began with a broad comparative and genetic interest, although in the 20th century and within the United States it has concentrated on the study of churches, denominations, and sects, together with their ministers and priests. There are sociologies of industrial enterprises, the family, governmental bureaucracies, penal institutions, the military, voluntary associations, and the arts.

Social organization

Inasmuch as many of the above institutional complexes have a similar pattern of organization, researchers have been led to develop a general subfield of sociology that is termed “social organization.” For examples, in the United States, a number of institutions have a tripartite structure that includes (1) professional staff that performs a set of services; (2) a clientele that receives the services; and (3) a board that mediates between the staff and the larger society and that recruits from the latter the financial support for the activities of the institution. This model could be used to analyze the social processes within such diverse institutions as, for example, symphony orchestras churches, or different parties concerning the nature of the services given, or duties performed, by the professional staff. For example, parents, students, and educators tend to have different notions of desirable classroom activities and, more fundamentally, different notions as to who should control the classroom. In all these instances the professional staff will elaborate ideologies serving to confirm its activities, while parents and students may occasionally develop less elaborate and more blunt counterstatements. With respect to the control that may be exercised upon the professional staff, a very important characteristic is the distinctive career patterns associated with the institution. For where the professionals are itinerant, they will tend to orient themselves according to professional creeds and norms, which are independent of local peculiarities, whereas where they remain settled, they will be more subject to pressures emanating from the community than from their professional colleagues.

Social Psychology

Where social organizational approaches begin by focusing on similar patterns in the way men organize themselves for the accomplishment of social tasks, social psychological approaches begin by focusing on human actors and discerning similar patterns in their modes of conduct. Thus two of the major areas of social psychological investigation are (1) the nature of human communication, such as speech, symbol systems, and meanings; and (2) the process of socialization of the young, including the acquisition of language and the development of self-control. There is a special interest in the way the family functions in the young person's development of self-control and also in the influence of that crucial voluntary association, the peer society of younger children. Stemming from the pioneer work of George H. Mead and of Charles H. Cooley is the set of basic propositions that concern the role of language in enabling the individual to perceive himself as an object and thus to gain conscious control of his actions. Likewise, by the use of symbols the individual is able to anticipate the consequences of his own actions and thus to organize them toward a desired goal.

Psychoanalytical Approach

As formulated by Sigmund Freud, psychoanalytical psychology met severe criticism from most sociologists. Later, with the development of neo-Freudian (or depth) psychologies by sociologically sophisticated scholars such as Erich Fromm, Harry Stack Sullivan, and Erik H. Erikson, many of the insights have been incorporated into sociological work.

Behaviorism

The interaction with behaviorist psychology followed a similar pattern. The earliest theories formulated by John B. Watson implied a denial of much that was basic to sociology. In response, sociologists engaged in arguments about the reality of groups or the necessity for dealing with the meaning of symbols. These debates led to modifications and extensions of the behaviorist theories in directions that some sociologists have found highly congenial. Thus Parsons worked in collaboration with the molar or purposive, behaviorist Edward C. Tolman, and George G. Homans expounded a program for reducing sociological propositions to a behaviorist basis.

Other Schools

Other psychological schools have also been incorporated into the activities of social psychologists. Through the research of Kurt Lewin and Muzafer Sherif Gestalt psychology exercised significant influences upon American sociologists. Also, after World War II, phenomenological psychology, as developed by Alfred Schutz, Gustav Ichheiser, and Kurt Riezler had a steadily increasing impact. This latter school found much in common with the older American tradition of George H. Mead and Charles H. Colley, which had come to be spoken as the Symbolic Interactionist School.

Psychologically oriented sociologists are more inclined than are teachers of psychology to be concerned with normal, rather than pathological conduct and with how the individual acquires a role in group life. Where clinical psychologists often start with the presupposition that a criminal or delinquent is a person suffering from pathology as a consequence of failure in the process of his upbringing, social psychologists tend to presuppose that he has been socialized by his peers into modes of conduct that other agencies classify as criminal or delinquent. In this debate the sociologists are inclined to point to the longevity of the criminal subculture and the venerability of such occupations as pimp, prostitute, pickpocket, and confidence man — as exemplified by an argot that is centuries old — while the clinical psychologists emphasize the inadequate formation of the self and other psychic deficiencies.

Another basis of comparison between the disciplines of psychology and sociology, as they meet in the mid-ground of social psychology, is the greater emphasis the psychologists put on earlier training and the sociologists put on the learning and gaining of mastery throughout the entire span of life.

Biological Sociology

The subfields of demography and ecology form another important branch of sociology, in a sense representing a biological approach to study of human societies.

Demography

Demography investigates how many people there are in what locations, as well as their composition by age and sex. This then leads to

questions concerning relative fertility of populations and to the development of such precise and refined measures as age at conception and specific birthrates. Correspondingly, there are questions of mortality and of the incidence of disease.

For maximum efficiency at minimal cost, demographers have developed an armament of statistical techniques enabling them to measure and control their errors while utilizing relatively small samples of the total population. Also important have been the development of electronic modes of sorting and tabulating and the correlative development of statistical techniques of appraising and of testing hypotheses. In the United States, the requirement, specified by the federal constitution, that a census be taken every ten years has proven very fruitful for the development of the sub-discipline; it has also led to the amassing of great stores of data that have been available for refined analyses of the tendencies within the national population.

Text 3

Sociology in Other Countries

Despite the significant contributions that were made to the early development of sociology by scholars in England, France, and Germany, the later growth of the discipline proved to be far slower in these nations than it has been in the United States. In part this has reflected a different division of social-scientific labor, so that activities that in the United States were classified as sociology appeared everywhere under other names and were even undertaken outside the university context. One example is the work of Georg Simmel, who was marginal to the German university system most of his life and only late in his career received an appointment as a professor of philosophy but lost his chance when his academic sponsor, Bruno Bauer, himself ran afoul of the authoritarian control of the German university system. And August Comte had never received a university appointment. Durkheim began his career with appointments in philosophy and education.

In England there had been a fine tradition of social inquiry associated with the 18th century Scottish moral philosophers — for example, Adam Smith, David Hume, and Adam Ferguson. Also, as already noted, there was the strong development of empirical social research, including

not only the studies of John Sinclair and Charles Booth, but subsequent studies by Benjamin Seenbohn Rowntree and by Sidney and Beatrice Webb, focusing on the 19th and 20th century problems of urban and industrial England, especially the nature and situation of the urban poor. On the theoretical level, Herbert Spencer had risen to great eminence, and his books were widely read throughout the English-speaking countries. Although Spencer was offered university posts, he preferred to remain outside the academic life.

Overlapping terms

In comparison with the organization of much of the sociology in the United States, the work associated with the theorists Simmel, Weber, Durkheim, and Spencer was historical, comparative, and theoretical — and thereby often closer to what some Americans, following Sir Edward B. Tylor and Alfred L. Kroeber, have tended to classify as anthropology. In most European countries, at least until World War II, there has been little interest in sponsoring the growth of an academic discipline that would focus principally on modern urban and industrial society. Accordingly, the remainder of what Americans have labeled as sociology has instead occurred under the rubrics of anthropology, history, or philosophy. The American political sociologist Edward B. Shils has suggested that in England the failure of sociology to develop before World War II was due to the unwillingness of the elite to subject themselves and their own national society to critical examination. Meanwhile, in contrast, they encouraged the studies of alien and colonial peoples and, thereby, the growth of social anthropology. In England and on the Continent at that time, the critical examination of modern society was, by default, most actively conducted by Fabians, the Marxists, and free-lance intellectual critics of a sociological persuasion. These writers, it is true, did not have at their disposal the interests or resources for the kinds of detailed empirical investigations that have been developed by academic sociologists in the United States. The growth of academic sociology in the above-mentioned countries since World War II may reflect both a change in the composition and attitudes of these elites as well as a national recognition of the need for systematic investigations into modern social life.

In Central and South America, the writings of Auguste Comte have had a powerful impact. Sociology established itself in the universi-

ties, but in a non-empirical, historical, and ideological context and with a distinctly conservative political bias.

Recent International Developments

Sociology has grown as an international discipline. Students have journeyed to universities of other countries for training, researchers have found it valuable to study cultures other than their own, and either because of political oppression or superior opportunity elsewhere, so many prominent sociologists have emigrated from the land of their birth to other countries that it sometimes is difficult to assign a nationality to a sociologist. The Bolshevik Revolution in Russia sent Pitirim Sorokin to the United States and Georges Gurwitsch to Czechoslovakia and to France, where he came to occupy Durkheim's chair at the Sorbonne. Nazi persecutions caused the departures of numerous sociologists from Germany and central Europe: England received from Karl Mannheim; Denmark and Sweden, Theodor Geiger; and Israel, Martin Buber.

United States

In the United States, there arrived a galaxy of scholars. Among the immigrants were social psychologists such as Erich Fromm, Marie Jahoda, and Else Frenkel-Brunswik, and the pioneers of phenomenological social psychology, Alfred Schutz and Gustav Ichheiser. There were methodological innovators such as Paul F. Lazarsfeld, social theorists such as Hans Gerth, and students of comparative sociology such as Worfham Eberhard and Hans Speier. The United States also received a vigorous group of younger people who had begun training in Europe but earned their doctorates at American universities, including Reinhard Bendix, author of the prize-winning *Work and Authority in Industry* (1956), and Lewis A. Coser and Rose Laub Coser, a distinguished husband-and-wife pair of sociologists.

Germany

Among eminent sociologists, only Leopold von Weise remained in Germany during the Nazi regime. After the war, a number of those who had fled returned. One of the most notable was Max Horkheimer, who had been associated with the prewar Frankfurt school of social theory.

Herkheim's student Jurgen Hübermas continued the Frankfurt tradition with its philosophical sophistication and its attempt to integrate Marxist sociology with psychoanalytic social psychology. Other eminent sociologists of postwar Germany include Thomas Luckmann, sociology of cognition and knowledge; Ralf Dahrendorf, the study of the conflict of social classes in modern industrial society; and Renè König, who served as president of the International Sociological Association.

Scandinavia

Scandinavian sociology has also grown strongly since World War II. As distinct from German sociology of the Frankfurt school, its orientation has been positivistic and quantitative, and much of its research has been in the field of demography. In 1945, Geiger, who was then at Aarhus, Denmark, founded the first institute of sociological research in Scandinavia. Later Jonah Galtung (Norway), acquired renown for his studies of international politics and the development of non-Western nations; Gösta Carlsson (Sweden) studied social stratification and social mobility; and Vilhelm Aubert (Norway) studied the sociology of law.

France

In addition to émigrés such as Gurvitch, France itself produced a number of eminent sociologists of the mid-20th century. Georges Friedmann was distinguished by his studies of industrial sociology. Raymond Aron acquired renown for his studies of the history of sociology and social thought. Social philosophers such as Jean Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir might be said to have worked in areas either of sociology or Marxist sociology.

Israel

In Israel, Martin Buber became first chairman of the department of sociology at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. His student Shmuel N. Eisenstadt won a prize from the American Sociological Association for his volume *The Political Systems of Empires* (1963). Israeli sociology has been enriched by the methodological sophistication of immigrants and visitors from the United States.

International Organization

Despite the various conditions restricting the development of sociology throughout the world, international associations have functioned since the beginning of the 20th century. In 1949, under the sponsorship of UNESCO, the International Sociological Association (ISA) was organized, with the American Louis Wirth as its first president. By 1966 the ISA was holding the Sixth World Congress of Sociology, and the sessions in (!) Evian-Les-Bains, France, attracted almost 2,000 delegates who represented almost every nation in the world, with the major exception of Communist China. The seventh was held in 1970 in Varna, Bulgaria.

Another international effort sponsored by UNESCO was the publication of a series of bilingual (French-English) bibliographies and reviews of research in several subfields of sociology. Students needing guides to relatively recent bodies of research will find these excellent.

Text 4

Max Weber (1864 — 1920)

German sociologist, economist, and political writer: b. Erfurt, Germany, April 21, 1864; d. Munich, June 14, 1920. He taught, with an interruption of many years because of illness, at the universities of Freiburg, Heidelberg, and Munich. During the first third of his career he was largely involved in problems of social history. In contrast to his forerunners he demonstrated the facts of the rerulization of the later Roman Empire, its return to an economy based on kind, and the uninterrupted continuance of the latifundia of the later Roman Empire into the Carolingian epoch. Later Weber shifted more and more to a view of sociology as an empirical science based on comparative social history, including preliterate cultures, and based on the elimination of every judgment of value. Among other things, he dealt especially with the sociology of leadership, state, economics, law, music, and religion.

Weber was particularly interested in the fact that capitalism and the rationalization of economic production had not emerged in the Orient, as it had in the West, and he attributed this, among other things, to differences in religion. On the origin of capitalism in the West, his fa-

mous theory was as follows: Calvinism, Anabaptism, and their various combinations consider that man's economic success, achieved by an industrious life, prove that he is a chosen child of God. These religions thus provide an impulse to build up capital and to develop a capitalistic mentality, as occurred especially in the United States. In his sociology of music, Weber was mainly interested in the sociological causes of the rationale of the Western music, particularly with reference to its adoption of equal temperament.

Throughout his life, Weber felt ethically obliged to participate in politics, but he never obtained an influential political position and thus had to content himself with writing political newspaper articles. He did, however, advise and influence politicians before, during, and after World War I. Weber loved Germany deeply but desperately deplored her political development. He denounced Otto von Bismarck's unwillingness to tolerate independent politicians other than himself, and he deplored the unsteady foreign and international politics of William II, whom he disdained. He also denounced the bureaucratization of Germany her Protestant state church, the predominance of the landed aristocracy of the East in army and administration, and the desire of the military leaders during World War I to make annexations in the West. Against these policies, he emphasized a radical democracy similar to that of the United States, which he admired, and social politics favorable to labor, combined with a strong foreign policy. He therefore favored an armed Germany in view of the threat to Occidental culture from czarist as well as Soviet Russia.

Weber influenced Michael I. Rostovtzeff by his socio-historical theories; Talcott Parsons, Howard Becker, and many other American sociologists by his methodology; and almost everyone who worked in the sociology of religion by his contributions to this field. His Calvinism-and-capitalism theory became the object of a large and continuing controversial literature.

Text 5

Sociology in the United States

Although the pioneer theoretical developments and empirical researches took place in Europe, it was American concepts in sociology that tended earliest and most firmly to establish an academic discipline.

First American University Course

The influence of Comte, of Herbert Spencer, and of other European builders of vast intellectual systems was at first very strong. Then their systems were further elaborated by such 19th century American scholars as Lester Frank Ward and William Graham Sumner. In 1874, Sumner introduced at Yale University the first university course in sociology in the United States. He also wrote a book, *Folkways* (1907), that had a great influence on subsequent generations. This work ingeniously utilized a great mass of ethnographic and historical data in support of a theory that was socially most conservative. Like the syntax of a natural language, folkways were the product of unconscious growth over the centuries; any attempt to alter social customs deliberately, as by legislation, was doomed not merely to fail, but to induce grave disharmonies.

Distinguished Advances

The University of Chicago established the first academic department of sociology in 1893. Two years later, the university launched a pioneer sociological journal, *the American Journal of Sociology*. Under the leadership of Albion Small, the department at Chicago quickly became a major influence in academic life. Within a generation most colleges and universities in the United States were offering courses in sociology.

Chicago attracted a number of the outstanding sociologists and social scientists of the time. The university's orientation was pragmatic, or instrumental, rather than simply empirical or theoretical. Philosophically, and with especial reference to social psychology, this orientation was formulated by George Herber Mead in a profound series of lectures that illuminated such basic notions as *symbol*, *self*, *meaning*, and *role*. In terms of research during the first half of the 20th century, William I. Thomas and Robert Ezra Park regarded cities, especially Chicago, as the natural laboratory for their work. Finding in the city a fascinating variety of social processes, Thomas and Park and their colleagues and students studied ethnic enclaves, hoboes, thieves, "taxi-dance" girls (who dance with patrons for pay), and real-estate agents. The two sociologists studied in Europe and were themselves learned men, familiar with social theory as developed by Emile Durkheim, Ludwig Gumplowicz, Gustav LeBon, or Walter Bagehot. However, Thomas and Park felt that the

place of the sociologist was in the social arena, where processes were observable, rather than in the professorial library. They also felt that social research should have relevance to contemporary social problems, such as those created by the migrations that were bringing vast numbers of Polish peasants to metropolitan Chicago. Park was especially influenced in these respects by the investigations performed by the English students of urban life and poverty, Charles Booth and Sidney and Beatrice Webb.

Harvard University: Sorokin

A different orientation evolved at Harvard University, where in the 1930's Pitirim Sorokin became a major figure. He expounded a more scholarly orientation that was concerned with the history of civilizations and, especially, the history of social theory. Among those influenced by Sorokin was Talcott Parsons, a Harvard professor, who also studied with Lawrence J. Henderson, and in England with the anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski. Parsons was lead toward a sociological orientation that variously is termed "structural-functionalism" and "social-systems analysis". His *The Structure of Social Action* (1937) stimulated a fresh interest in grand social theory, as exemplified by Durkheim, Weber, and Vilfredo Pareto, and in the development of sociology as an abstract science. Within this orientation there is a strong tendency to emulate the approach of economics and so to study society from a particular point of view and by the use of models.

Developments at Columbia: Merton

Another Harvard student of Sorokin's Robert K. Merton, who continued to work at Columbia University, became involved in a series of studies that combined a structural-functionalist theoretical approach with the sophisticated research methodology developed by Paul F. Lazarsfeld for the sample survey. In this type of survey, samples of relevant populations were chosen at random and were interviewed by trained persons with carefully prepared schedules. The responses were transferred to punch cards, tabulated electronically, and subjected to statistical analysis. This methodology proved especially appropriate for analyzing the effects of mass media, whether radio or television broadcasts, campaigns for political candidates, or governmental programs.

Also, Columbia was distinguished for many years by the presence of C. Wright Mills, whose writings blended American native populist radicalism with the sophisticated critical analyses of Marx and Weber.

Academic Growth

By the 1970's the number of U.S. departments offering programs leading to the doctorate in sociology had increased to more than 100. Although Chicago, Harvard, and Columbia remain among the more eminent, producing large numbers of professional sociologists, they receive increasing competition, especially from such state-supported institutions as the University of California at Berkley, the University of Michigan, and the University of Wisconsin, among others. The American Sociological Association (ASA) has a large professional membership of whom about 20 % in 1972 were "fellows" — members holding the Ph. D. degree and having a major professional commitment to the discipline. The national association is subdivided into sections, including the sociology of education, the sociology of medicine, and the sociology of law, as well as social psychology, methodology, and theory.

The USA has sponsored a series of journals including the *American Sociological Review*, *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, *Sociology of Education*, and a newsletter, *American Sociologist*. Besides the ASA there are various special-purpose organizations of sociologists, such as the Society for the Study of Social Problems (publishing the journal *Social Problems*), the Association for the Sociology of Religion (publishing *Sociological Analysis*), and the Rural Sociological Society (publishing *Rural Sociology*). In addition to the national association, a large number of regional societies have come into existence, such as the Southern, Eastern, and Midwest sociological societies.

In addition to the journals sponsored by the professional sociological associations, a number have been sponsored by universities. These range from the prestigious, well-established *American Journal of Sociology* at the University of Chicago and *Social Research* at The New School for Social Research, New York, to the modest *Kansas Journal of Sociology* at the University of Kansas. Since 1952 the periodical *Sociological Abstracts* has provided an expanding range of helpful services.

ОБЩЕОБРАЗОВАТЕЛЬНЫЕ ТЕКСТЫ

Text 1

The USA

The United States of America is the fourth largest country in the world (after Russia, Canada and China). It occupies the southern part of North America and stretches from the Pacific to the Atlantic Ocean. It also includes Alaska in the north and Hawaii in the Pacific Ocean. The total area of the country is about nine and a half million sq. km. The USA borders on Canada in the North and Mexico in the South.

The USA is made up of 50 states and the District of Columbia, a special federal area where the capital of the country, Washington, is situated. The largest state is Alaska. Major cities include New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Philadelphia, Detroit, San Francisco, Washington D.C. and others. The population of the country is about 260 million. Americans are made up from nearly all races and nations, including Chinese and native Americans, Europeans and Africans.

The American flag is known as 'The Stars and Stripes'. The 13 stripes represent the original number of states in 1776. The 50 stars represent today's total. The national symbol is the bald headed eagle.

Americans are often called the nation of immigrants because at present the US continues to take more immigrants than any other country in the world. America is often called the "Melting Pot", the "Salad Bowl" or the "Pizza". "Melting Pot", because many of the earlier immigrants have been assimilated, using or giving up the language and traditions of their ancestors. The US is one of the few countries in the world that has no "official" national language. Major languages are American English and Spanish.

The population is 250 million, of which 81% are white, 12% African American, 2% Orientals (mainly Japanese, Chinese and Filipino), 1% Native American and 4% of other races.

The US of America is a country of great contrasts and similarities. If we look at the map of the USA, we can see lowlands and mountains. The highest mountains are the Rocky Mountains, the Cordillera and the Sierra Nevada. The Rocky Mountains divide the country into two parts

— the East and the West. The Appalachian Mountains run along the Atlantic coast of the country. They are ancient, strongly destroyed mountains of no great height. The highest peak is Mound McKinley, which is located in Alaska.

America's largest rivers are the Mississippi, the Missouri, the Rio Grande and the Columbia. The Great Lakes on the border with Canada are the largest and deepest in the USA. The largest lake is the lake Superior. Between Erie and Ontario, on the Niagara River are the powerful Niagara Falls (50 metres).

The climate of the country varies greatly. The coldest regions are in the north. The climate of Alaska is arctic. The climate of the central part is continental. The south has a subtropical climate.

The USA is a highly developed industrial country. It's the world's leading producer of copper and oil and the world's second producer of iron ore and coal. Among the most important manufacturing industries are aircraft, cars, textiles, radio and television sets, armaments, furniture and paper.

The US is a federal union of 50 states, each of which has its own government. The seat of the central government is Washington, D.C. According to the US Constitution the powers of the government are divided into 3 branches: the executive, headed by the President, the legislative, exercised by the Congress, and the judicial. The Congress consists of the Senate and the House of Representatives. There are two main political parties in the USA: the Republican and the Democratic.

Text 2

Parties and Elections

The USA is a federative republic. The President is the head of the State and the Chief Executive that is the Prime Minister.

The President of the USA is George Junior Bush. He became the 43rd President of the USA. Bush is a representative of the Republican Party.

He is also a Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy of the USA. The President and vice-President are elected for a term of 4 years.

No person can be elected to the office of President more than twice, Roosevelt is an (1933 — 1945) exception. The national presidential election consists of three stages. The first is the Primaries. These mini-elections give voters in each state a chance to choose between several candidates from their own party. As a result of the primaries, a small group of leading candidates emerge.

The next stage is the Conventions. Each party then holds a huge conference or convention and it's here that the two Presidential candidates are nominated. At these conventions the Republicans and the Democrats officially declare the third stage, i.e. the General Election. This is where the next US President is actually elected by the entire nation. At these conventions the Republicans and the Democrats officially declare the names of their candidates for the presidency and vice-presidency. The candidate with the largest number of these electoral votes wins the election. The President and the Vice-president are considered officially elected only when the results are officially announced in the US Congress in January of the next year. Anyone who is an American citizen, 18 years of age may vote.

Americans vote in each of the 50 states. There are 100 Senators. Every state elects 2 senators. Senators are elected to serve six years. The Senators represent all the people in a state and their interests. The House of Representatives has 435 member. The number of Representatives from each state varies according to its population. They are elected every 2 years for two-year terms.

The Constitution says nothing about political parties, but the USA has a two-party system. The two leading parties are the Democrats and the Republicans. There are other parties, among them a Communist party and several Socialist parties, but they do not play a role in national politics. In fact, one does not need to be a member of a political party to run in any election at any level of government.

The Democrats are often associated with labour, and the Republicans with business and industry. The Republicans also tend to oppose the greater involvement of the federal government in some areas of public life. The Democrats, on the other hand, tend to favour a more active role of the central government in social matters. The Republicans are mostly conservative and their symbol is a donkey. The Democrats are mostly liberal and their symbol is an elephant.

To distinguish between the parties is often difficult. Terms “right” and “left” do not fit the American system. They are not strong ideological organizations, but loose alliances of state and local parties that unite every 4 years. The political parties have much less actual power than they do in other nations.

Text 3

Great Britain

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is situated on the British Isles. The British Isles consist of two large islands: Great Britain and Ireland, and about 5 thousand small islands. Their total area is over 244,046 sq. km. The UK is made up of four countries: England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Their capitals are London, Edinburgh, Cardiff and Belfast respectively. Great Britain contains England, Scotland and Wales and does not include Northern Ireland. But in everyday speech “Great Britain” is used to mean the United Kingdom.

The British national flag is the Union Jack. It combines the red cross of St. George (England), the red diagonal cross of St. Patrick (Ireland) and the white diagonal cross — on a blue background — of St. Andrew (Scotland).

The capital of the UK is London. London is the world’s 7th biggest city. It’s one of the biggest commercial centres and ports of the world. It’s also an important political, cultural and educational centre. The largest cities of Great Britain are: Birmingham, Glasgow, Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield, Bristol, Leeds.

The British Isles are separated from the European continent by the North Sea and the English Channel. The western coast of Great Britain is washed by the Atlantic Ocean and the Irish Sea.

The surface of the British Isles varies very much. There is a dramatic contrast between “highland” and “lowland” Britain.

Highland Britain consists of Scotland, most of Wales, the Pennines, the Lake District. The Lake District contains the beautiful lakes that give it its name. This district is widely known for its association with the history of English literature and especially with the name of William

Wordsworth, the founder of the Lake School of Poets. Lowland Britain comprises southern and eastern England.

Mountains are not very high. Ben Nevis in Scotland is the highest mountain (1343 m). There are a lot of rivers in Great Britain but they are not every long. The Severn is the longest river, while the Thames is the deepest and the most important one. The Thames flows through London and makes it a large seaport, though London is 84 km away from the sea.

The climate of Great Britain is mild, humid and changeable. The Atlantic Ocean and the warm waters of the Gulf Stream influence the weather on the British Isles. The summers are cool and rainy; the winters are not very cold. This humid and mild climate is good for plants. The UK is one of the world's smaller countries. Its population is over 57 million. About 80% of it is urban. The official language of the country is English, though in Wales people speak Welsh that is different from English, while the Scottish dialect differs little from English.

The UK is a highly developed industrial country. It is known as one of the world's largest producers and exporters of machinery, electronics, textile, aircraft and navigation equipment. One of the chief industries of the country is shipbuilding. There are many big industrial cities in Britain, such as Birmingham and Sheffield, Manchester and Liverpool (the biggest centres of textile industry), Cardiff and others.

The UK is a constitutional monarchy. The Head of the State is a monarch. The monarchy is hereditary. Laws are made by the Parliament which consists of the House of Commons and the House of Lords. The main parties are the Conservative party, the Labour Party and the Liberal Party.

The present British monarch is Queen Elizabeth II. She succeeded to the throne in 1952. The Labour Party is the ruling party nowadays. The Prime Minister is Tony Blair.

Text 4

Political Set-Up

The UK is a parliamentary democracy with a constitutional monarch, without a written constitution. The British constitution is based on Acts of the Parliament and “convention”. British sovereignty consists of three elements: the Crown, and the Parliament’s two chambers: the House of Lords and the House of Commons.

This curiosity is a result of a long struggle for power between the Crown and the Parliament during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The Parliament won that struggle, but it agreed to allow the Crown to continue to function within certain limits. The British constitution is not a single document. It is made up of a combination of laws and conventions.

The monarch is not only the head of State but also a symbol of the unity of the nation. The British monarchy is over a thousand years old. The monarch has very little power and can only reign with the support of the Parliament. The functions of the Sovereign are as follows:

- opening and closing the Parliament;
- approving of the appointment of the Prime Minister;
- giving her Royal Assent to bills;
- giving honours such as peerages, knighthood, medals;
- Head of the Commonwealth;
- Head of Church of England.

The present British monarch is Queen Elizabeth II, who succeeded to the throne in 1952.

In theory the constitution has three branches. They are the Parliament, which makes law; the government, which “executes” laws; the law court, which interprets laws.

The Parliament is the oldest one in the world. Its functions are:

- making laws;
- getting money for the government, through taxation;
- examining government policy administration and spending;
- debating political questions.

The Parliament consists of the House of Lords and the House of Commons.

The House of Lords consists of more than 1000 hereditary lords and peers. About 70% of them are hereditary peers, because their fathers were peers before them. The other 30% are “life peers”, whose titles are not passed on to their children. They are officially appointed by the

Queen. The House of Lords has very little power. The function of the House of Lords is debating a bill after the House of Commons. It works as the highest and final Court of Appeal. The chairman of the House of Lords is the Lord Chancellor who sits on the Woolsack.

The House of Commons is the only one that has true power. The House of Commons is made up of 650 elected members, known as Members of the Parliament (or MPs), each representing an area of the UK. The function of the House of Commons is introducing and debating the Bills. The political parties choose candidates in elections. The party, which wins the majority seats in the House of Commons forms the Government and its leader usually becomes Prime Minister. The functions of the Prime Minister are:

- leading the majority party;
- running the Government;
- appointing Cabinet Ministers;
- representing the nation in political matter.

The Prime Minister chooses about 20 MPs from his party and forms his Cabinet of Ministers. Each minister is responsible for a particular area of government. The chief ministers are the Home Secretary, the Foreign Secretary and the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Home Secretary is responsible for home affairs, the Foreign Secretary is responsible for foreign affairs, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer is responsible for finance. The chairman of the House of Commons is the Speaker. At present Tony Blair, the leader of the Labour party, is Britain's Prime Minister.

The largest minority party becomes the Opposition. Its leader forms a "Shadow Cabinet".

The two Houses of Parliament, the Lords and the Commons, share the same building, the Palace of Westminster.

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