

Engelsk studielitteratur

Utdrag frå Anthony Giddens: *Sociology*, s 18

The social environments in which we exist do not just consist of random assortments of events or actions – they are *structured*. There are underlying regularities in how people behave and in the relationships in which they stand with one another. To some degree it is helpful to picture the structural characteristics of societies as resembling the structure of a building. A building has walls, a floor and a roof, which together give it a particular shape or form. But the metaphor can be very misleading if applied too strictly. Social systems are made up of human actions and relationships: what gives these their patterning is their *repetition* across periods of time and distances of space. Thus the ideas of social reproduction and structure are very closely related to one another in sociological analysis. We should understand human societies to be *like buildings that are at every moment being reconstructed by the very bricks that compose them*. The actions of all of us are influenced by the structural characteristics of the societies in which we are brought up and live; at the same time, we recreate (and also to some extent alter) those structural characteristics in our actions.