MACRO SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY

PERSPECTIVES ON SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY

VOLUME 1

Editors

S N Eisenstadt

H J Helle

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Macro-Sociological Theory

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For information address

SAGE Publications Ltd
28 Banner Street
London EC1Y 8QE

SAGE Publications Inc
275 South Beverly Drive
Beverly Hills, California 90212

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General introduction to perspectives on sociological theory

S.N. Eisenstadt and H.J. Helle

The essays on macro- and micro-sociological analysis collected in these two volumes — most of which were presented at the symposia on Macro- and Micro-Sociological Analysis at the Tenth World Congress of Sociology in Mexico, in August 1983 — present from different vantage points some of the major dimensions of theoretical controversy in sociology in general.

These controversies — and the papers presented here — have several major, closely interconnected thrusts which cut across macro- and micro-sociological analysis alike. First, they indicate an important shift from concerns that were dominant in the 1950s and early 1960s, especially under the influence of the structural-functional school and the way in which it was accepted in the sociological community. This shift implied that no institutional order or any structure of social interaction in general, is any longer taken as given, nor explained by its needs and configurations as shaped, above all, by the extent of its differentiation; nor its functioning analysed according to the contribution of its different parts. Instead there developed a strong emphasis on the process of construction of such order.

Institutional orders and situations of interaction are more and more seen as being constructed by the activities of different actors — groups and individuals in different social areas and situations. Hence there also took place a shift to the analysis of the processes and mechanisms through which the different aspects of social order of macro- and micro-situations alike are being constructed by such activities.

Second, and closely connected with this shift to the analysis of the construction of patterns of social institutions and of institutional order, another shift has taken place — namely the emphasis on the autonomy of the major social actors. Individual social actors are seen as being of crucial importance in the very process of the contruction of social roles, structures and orders and it is stressed that they cannot be subsumed under these roles or structures. Indeed, potentially they are also creators of roles, of their meanings and of the definitions of situations. Hence, a major problem here is

to identify the different levels and types of such structure — or counter-structures.

Third, also of special importance in this context, has been the strong emphasis on the dimension of power and of the symbolic construction of reality in shaping situations of interaction and institutional orders.

The studies presented in these two volumes bring out these major theoretical themes in a great variety of ways and from different points of view — but they do indicate that these problems are common to all areas of sociological endeavour — above all to macro- and micro-sociological analysis alike.

Margaret Archer, Ralph Turner, Jef Verhoeven and others spell out in their chapters that macro- and micro-theory show promising signs of convergence after too many decades of senseless separation. It will be the task of historians of sociology to retrace the curious steps the field has taken in theory formation during the century from about 1850 to 1950. Here we can but sketch how a one-sided selection from the pioneering work of Comte, Spencer, Marx, Durkheim, Simmel and Weber caused unnecessary narrowness in the continuity of sociological theory, and how partisanship resulted in separating the field into camps whose members looked at each other with, at least, suspicion. One of the fissions that in retrospect seem particularly strange is the separation of macro- and micro-theory.

The classical sociologists, all of whom were born and received their academic training during the nineteenth century, have been very sensitive to problems of epistemology. Given the sound philosophical background — which Marx and Simmel of course had as trained philosophers, and which Comte, Spencer, Durkheim and Weber acquired before they started writing sociology — none of them could ignore the problem, that what reveals itself to superficial sensual perception is certainly not all there is to know in the context of social reality. Faced with the dilemma that, in many respects, what could be known reliably was not very relevant, and what seemed of great importance was impossible to find out with sufficient precision, the great pioneers of our field did not therefore react with naïveté, but instead were prepared to make conscious decisions.

No matter which direction their decisions would take, the classical sociologists remained conscious of the dilemma that Plato had already captured in his parable of the cave, but their successors tended to misrepresent as a clean solution to an epistemological problem what from Comte to Weber was taken to be just the lesser of two evils. And this was probably the beginning of methodological

cleavages of the kind that this volume is designed to overcome. Various brands of Marxism have thrived, but Marx is quoted as not wanting to be counted among the Marxists. Comte coined the concept of the positive stage in the evolution of human knowledge. He, as well as Spencer, was a follower of Francis Bacon in the desire to collect data on nature in order to gain control of nature, but with their incredibly rich studies in history and comparative culture, neither of them would fit the strict rules of modern behaviouristic positivism.

Durkheim wanted to draw a sharp line between sociology and psychology, to him the whole had a reality of its own that could not be explained in terms of individual parts that formed it. In his books of 1893 to 1897 he does lay the foundation for modern functionalism, but in 1912, in his great study on religion, he shows that the origin of the sacred cannot be nature as wind and lightning, nor as the sun, the moon or the planets, that it cannot be the dreams and hallucinations of individual sorcerers. Instead, Durkheim claims nothing less than that the sacred is generated and maintained in the interaction of the human cult. And Max Weber could be used selectively by almost anyone in support of his version of theory as long as Weber's indebtedness to Simmel was ignored, and as long as Simmel was reduced to the founder of formal sociology.

Fortunately, the field of sociological theory has moved beyond these misrepresentations, and as partisan, selective and one-sided readings of the classics become obsolete, many of the schisms grow to be part of the less pleasant aspects of the history of the discipline. The cleavage between different methodological schools, and certainly the confrontation between micro- and macro-theory belong to the past, and the following pages are designed to help us recognize that in our future projects as students of sociology.

Introduction to macro-sociological theory

S.N. Eisenstadt

The essays on macro-sociological analysis collected in this volume present, from several vantage points, some of the major dimensions of theoretical controversy in sociology in general, and in macro-sociological analysis in particular, as they have developed in the last two decades or so, and which have been indicated in the General Introduction. These chapters indicate several aspects of these controversies as they apply to macro-sociological analysis.

The first such aspect is that of the problem of the different systemic qualities of social order, that is, with respect to the problem of to what degrees any pattern of social institution in general and the macro-sociological order in particular constitute 'systems'. All the studies presented have emphasized that while such systemic qualities of different levels of social order and activities certainly are not necessarily denied — although some such tendency has also developed — yet they are no longer taken as given. They have to be seen rather as a part of the broader process of the crystallization or structuring of social institutions and of the institutional order. Hence there arises the necessity to analyse first the ways in which such systemic qualities and boundaries are organized, maintained and changed, and second, the specific interactions of the social actors, which are central to the construction as well as to the change of such systemic boundaries.

Second, we find in these studies the growing recognition not only of the importance of the dimension of power and of symbolic construction of reality in the shaping of macro-societies' structures and institutional orders, but also of the continuous confrontation between these dimensions of social action and the exigencies of division of labour, and it is shown that such institutional configurations and forms are constructed through the combination and continuous confrontation with all of these dimensions of social activity.

Third, these studies indicate that these considerations have also greatly affected the analysis of social change — a central topic in the history of sociological analysis. Going against the different evolutionary perspectives which have stressed structural differentiation as the major aspect of such change or even against the Marxist

approach which has constituted an evolutionary perspective with strong emphasis on (especially class) conflict, the present approach stresses more and more the great diversity of patterns of social change through the combination of the different dimensions of social action.

Within this broad context of special interest is the recognition that, while growing structural differentiation is indeed one of the most important aspects of social and historical change, yet not only can the process of differentiation not explain all aspects of such change, but also that differentiation involves, by necessity, possibilities of de-differentiation — one of the important foci of bringing together macro- and micro-societal analysis.

Thus in many ways these studies indicate that, from the point of view of the history of sociology, the future of macro-sociological analysis in general and analysis of change in particular may lie in a combination of building on the strength of the functional-structural school and its critics with a rethinking of some of the basic insights of the founding fathers — Marx, Durkheim and above all Weber.

1

Macro-societal analysis — background, development and indications*

S.N. Eisenstadt

In the following pages I shall attempt to present some observations about the present state of macro-sociological analysis, about possible directions for its further development and the basic perspectives on which it is based. I shall indicate how these theoretic observations are rooted in the classical concerns of sociological theory and how this is developed, first from a consideration of new perspectives and controversies in the social sciences that developed from the 1960s on (Eisenstadt, 1973; Eisenstadt and Curelaru, 1976; Eisenstadt, 1978) and secondly from a critical revaluation of the assumptions in the studies of modernization developed in the 1950s and 1960s.

The perspective of the classical period of sociology

As is well known, macro-societal and comparative-institutional analysis constituted the major focus or arena for sociological theorizing in the formative stages of sociology (Eisenstadt and Curelaru, 1976). Thus many of the forerunners, and above all the founding fathers of sociology, already addressed themselves to such macro-societal analyses and comparisons, and the first great apogee of such studies was in the evolutionary and positivistic schools and in the controversies that focused round them. The major initial concern of these comparative macro-societal analyses was the understanding of the peculiar 'quantitative' and 'descriptive' characteristics of pre-modern European and non-European societies in relation to, and especially in contrast with, modern (initially European) societies.

These macro-sociological analyses were informed by some of the basic insights of sociological analysis fully developed by the founding fathers — Marx, Durkheim and Weber; above all, the

* The exposition in this chapter is based on several works of the author cited in the References. In these works very detailed bibliographies of the problems discussed here are provided — and for reasons of space they have not been presented here.

insights about the nature and construction of social order. These insights showed that the problem of social order is generated not through the existence of a pre-social man, but rather through the very construction of social division of labour, and, second, that organizational aspects or the mechanism of the social division of labour are unable to explain the nature and continuity of any specific social order.

These insights were developed by the founding fathers of sociology by their stressing the non-acceptance of the assumption, implicit in utilitarian ethics and in classical economics, of the predominance and sufficiency of social division of labour and of the market as the regulator of social order, as a mechanism which ensures the maintenance and reproduction of any concrete social order.

The founding fathers did not deny the importance of the market as such a mechanism — indeed, in many ways, they elaborated some aspects of analysis of the market as well as of other processes and mechanisms of social division of labour — as well as the impact of different aspects of the structure of social division of labour on the behaviour of individuals and on the crystallization of forms of social life. But they all questioned the sufficiency of such mechanisms to explain the working of any concrete social division of labour, of any concrete social order. In different ways they all showed how such mechanisms in general and the market in particular cannot assure such workings.

They stressed several crucial aspects of social order which, according to them, are not explained by the various mechanisms of social division of labour in general and of the market in particular.

These aspects of social order have been, first, the construction of trust and solidarity — stressed above all by Durkheim and to some degree by Toennies; second, the regulation of power and the overcoming of the feelings of exploitation attendant on it — stressed above all by Marx and Max Weber; and third, stressed in different ways by all of them, the provision of meaning and of legitimation to different social activities.

They all stressed that the very construction of social division of labour generates uncertainties with respect to each of these dimensions of social order — that is, with respect to trust, regulation of power, the process of meaning and legitimation — but at the same time, and because of this, no concrete social division of labour can be maintained without these dimensions or problems being taken care of. Therefore they all stressed that the construction of these dimensions of social order is a crucial aspect of the organization of social order; that the construction and maintenance

of social order is conditioned on the development of some combination between the organizational structure of division of labour with the construction of trust, meaning and legitimation.

Yet despite their stress on the importance of analysis of the regulation and legitimation of power relations and the construction of trust and meaning, the founding fathers did not — with the exception of Weber in his analysis of charisma, and of Durkheim in his analysis of ritual — analyse systematically the concrete institutional structure of a society. They did of course point to some of the most important areas of social life — especially those of legitimation, ideology and ritual — which bear on such construction, but their analysis of the institutional structure of these dimensions of social order was, on the whole, much weaker than that of the working of market or of direct power relations.

This situation was of course partially due simply to the relatively low level of development of the appropriate analytical and conceptual apparatus — something which was to take place, as we shall see, only later. But it was also probably related to a strong awareness on the part of the founding fathers of the great tension between, on the one hand, the organizational division of labour and the regulation and legitimation of power and, on the other hand, the construction of trust and meaning. The focus of such tension has probably been one of the most important heritages of the classical period.

The perspective of the structural-functional school

It is against this background of the heritage of the classical period that the initial prominence of the structural-functional school as developed by Talcott Parsons, Robert K. Merton, K. Davies, Edward Shils and others can be best understood (Eisenstadt and Curelaru, 1976; Eisenstadt, 1981). From the late 1940s, this school has provided the most important analytical map for sociological work: (1) it analysed in depth the relations between social systems, personalities and cultures; (2) it related itself to many of the most important contemporary developments in psychology, cultural anthropology and systems and organizational theory; and (3) it attempted to develop them further by analysing the ways in which together they informed the construction and working of social systems. Above all it concentrated on analysis of the major mechanisms through which patterns of individual behaviour and organizational structure contributed to the functioning of societies conceived as social systems.

The relative predominance of the structural-functional school was due to a combination of reasons: first, its close relation to the

classical problems of sociology; second, its elaboration of a new systematic, conceptual and analytical apparatus for analysis of social relations, behaviour and organization; and third, and closely related to the first two, its generation of far-reaching systematic research programmes.

Thus, first of all, the structural-functional school or approach addressed itself squarely to the problem of how the dimensions of solidarity, meaning and trust are institutionalized in the construction (or 'production') of social order.

Trust (solidarity), meaning and, to some degree, power were defined as needs with which every social (and in a different way also personality and cultural) system must cope. In one version — probably the best-known one — they were defined as the need for solidarity (integration) with trust, pattern maintenance (meaning), instrumental goals (closely related to, but not entirely identical with, regulation of power), concerned largely with the organizational mode of division of labour. In this conception the 'trust' and 'meaning' were seen as having a higher cybernetic role in the regulation of social activities than 'power'. Thus, using the terminology of cybernetic theory, Parsons indicated that the first two provide the actors or the systems with energy, the latter with information which 'moulds', as it were, such information.

By so defining the construction of trust, provision of meaning and to some degree the regulation of power and by analysing them systematically, Parsons, Merton and others were able to achieve systematically what the classics were able to do only tangentially, namely, the specification of the institutional process through which these dimensions are interwoven in the structure of society.

Second, this achievement and the concomitant analytical and research potentialities of the structural-functional model were made possible through the restructuring of certain widely accepted concepts in sociology, such as roles, status, institutions, prestige, power or solidarity.

Third, all these developments had many impacts on research. As with many classical approaches, the structural-functional approach was very much oriented to macro-sociological analysis. Moreover, the 'functionalists' remained open to the development of new fields and methods of research, continuously attempting to spell out in greater detail analytical and research implications in many additional areas of research. Hardly an area of research was untouched by these developments. For almost all fields of sociological research, the structural-functional approach provided both a general view, image or map of the social system, as well as guidelines for analytical specifications that became foci of far-reaching research

programmes, the likes of which had not hitherto been seen in the history of sociology.

The assumptions of studies of modernization

Among such research areas which were greatly influenced by the structural-functional school was that of macro-sociological studies in general and of theories of modernization in particular (Eisenstadt, 1973). As is well known, the theories of modernization were initially concerned with a fuller elaboration of the basic characteristics of traditional and modern societies and of the differences between the two, an elaboration which greatly benefited from the various methodological and analytical advances in the social sciences. Of major importance in this elaboration was the development of various indices according to which these two broad categories of societies could be distinguished.

The research that developed out of these concerns and dominated comparative studies in the social sciences in the 1950s and 1960s attempted first of all to identify the differences between traditional and modern societies. These were defined in many ways by using sociodemographic indices such as urbanization, occupational structure, spread of media communication and the like. They were also defined in terms of structural differences — traditional societies being characterized, to use Parson's terminology, by particularistic and ascriptive criteria of role allocation, and modern societies by universalistic and achievement criteria. These differences between traditional and modern societies were couched in most of the studies in terms of the respective range of systemic problems with which they could cope or of the environments — both internal (social, cultural) and external (technological, economic) — which they could 'master'.

From this perspective, traditional societies were perceived as basically very restrictive and limited, whereas modern societies were seen as much more expansive and adaptable to a widening range of internal and external environments and problems. Special emphasis was given to the ability to cope with change in general, and with economic development and industrialization in particular.

These theories of modernization, development and convergence of modern and modernizing societies have assumed, as is well known, that it is the organizational dynamics of institutions (economic, industrial, political — especially those shaped by the exigencies of industrial technology) that provide the dynamic force of structure of any complex society. These theories have assumed that, as the world becomes more and more developed and

industrialized, societies will become relatively more similar. This tendency to similarity was explained in terms of the internal dynamics of modernization and institutional problems which tend to obliterate significant differences between the major institutional patterns of these societies — thus these approaches portrayed the image of a world that, because of the strong drive of basic technology and industrialization and, to some degree, because of tendencies to growth and political participation, becomes more and more homogeneous.

Finally, the vision of the historical process which was connected to all these developments was very much in line with the classical evolutionary one; it stressed the passage of most societies through relatively similar stages and the movement towards the common-end-stage of modernity.

Paradoxically, many of these assumptions, as well as the conceptions of the political systems and tensions between state and society which were inherent in all the research, were also shared by many, if not all, Marxian analyses. Above all, they share some crucial assumptions about the nature of the transition between different *stages* of social development — a concept which was central to evolutionary and Marxist sociology alike. All these schools or approaches, as well as the contemporary neo-evolutionary theories and neo-Marxist approaches, assumed that the transition from one stage to another involved a radical break with the past and concomitant change in all spheres — political, social, economic. Only such changes were seen by both the evolutionists and the Marxists as the 'real' and most significant changes in the development of societies in general, and modern societies in particular. Those who believed that such changes occurred through a revolutionary process assumed also that this process would take place through the combination of several types of collective action, such as rebellions, intellectual or religious heterodoxies and central political struggle as well as potential institution-building.

New perspectives and controversies

From the early, and especially the mid-1960s, the momentum of research as well as developments on the world scene gave rise to far-reaching criticism of these assumptions. It arose from a variety of vantage points, and touched not only upon the problems of development and modernization, but also on some very central questions of sociological analysis. Behind much of the debate there also loomed political and ideological differences, sometimes forcefully expressed. The two major foci of criticism were the alleged

ahistoricity and Europocentricity of this initial model for modernization, and the closely related doubt about the validity of the tradition-modernity dichotomy (Eisenstadt, 1973).

The allegation of ahistoricity and Western centricity of the model evolved into two concrete directions that bear directly on the problems of the dynamics of civilizations. One direction pointed to a reappraisal of the importance of historical continuity in shaping the contours of societal development. The other and, in a sense, opposite direction emphasized the unique historical experience of the modern era. This approach, most apparent in the works of many modern Marxists and semi-Marxists, stressed that the modernization process was not universal or inherent in the nature of every society. Rather, it was stressed that it represented a unique historical situation connected with various aspects of European expansion, especially capitalism, and the consequent establishment of a new international system composed of hegemonic and dependent societies.

Out of the latter view developed a strong sense of the necessity to analyse different modern and modernizing societies from the viewpoint of their place in the international world (especially capitalist) system in order to see how this placement influenced their institutional contours and dynamics.

The reappraisal of theories of modernization became closely related to some of the major analytical controversies in the social sciences in general and in sociology in particular, most of which arose out of criticism of the structural-functional school and the limits of its application to the analysis of social and historical change.

The more general criticisms of the structural-functional school focused round several different but interconnected themes. First, this model was seen as unable to explain social conflicts and social change because it assumed a basic social consensus round central societal values and goals, it emphasized boundary-maintaining mechanisms of social control, and it implicitly minimized the importance of power and coercion as a means of social integration.

Closely connected with these criticisms was the charge that the structural-functional model was necessarily ahistorical. More specifically, the charge was that in their explanation of concrete historical situations or phenomena, this school neglected past influence and processes in favour of a 'static' or 'circular' explanatory theory. This was because they were said to explain social phenomena as functionally adjusted to one another through their contribution to societal needs, and to assume that there are equilibrating mechanisms in the social system which counteract functional maladjustments or inconsistencies.

But perhaps the most general and principled accusation of the structural-functional school was that it claimed or assumed that the analysis of the various mechanisms of the social division of labour solved the problem of social order as formulated in the sociological tradition.

Thus, paradoxically enough, what was initially seen as the great strength of this approach — namely, its analysis of the manner in which meaning and trust were institutionalized and, above all, its definition in terms of needs or phases of social systems — became perceived as its major weakness.

This contribution of the structural-functional school was interpreted as if it conflated aspects of the organizational division of labour on the one hand, and the regulation of power, the construction of trust and meaning, on the other — with the result that the tension between these dimensions of social order, so strongly emphasized by the classics, disappeared.

This impression was reinforced, of course, by the fact that the structural-functional school analysed all these aspects of the social order in systemic terms, in terms of their contribution to the maintenance of the boundaries of respective social (or personality and even cultural) systems — seemingly taking their very emergence and crystallization for granted. Because of this the structural-functional school was seen as negating the creative autonomy of groups or individuals in the very construction of such order, and as denying the tension between the organization of the social division of labour and the regulation of power and construction of trust and meaning.

Closely related to this was the allegation that the structural-functional school in general and Parsons in particular almost entirely neglected the component of power — and exploitation — in the construction of social order.

Criticisms of this model were connected with the development of the research perspectives and *problématiques*, of new theoretical approaches as well as with attempts to revive older theoretical approaches.

The most important of such new research perspectives were, first, the reappraisal of the whole process by which the social order was constructed and especially of the relations between the organization of the social division of labour and the construction of trust, meaning and legitimation in the social order; second, a major, relatively new, research perspective examined the basic dimensions of the ecological and international environments of societies; third, a major new research perspective renewed and theoretically

invigorated the whole area of 'social' morphology in general and the processes of intra- and inter-generational mobility in particular.

It was around these perspectives — especially the first — that there developed attempts to construct new and revive alternative theoretical approaches.

The most important of these approaches or models (Eisenstadt and Curelaru, 1976; Eisenstadt, 1981) were the conflict model espoused by Ralf Dahrendorf; the exchange model by George C. Homans and to some extent by Peter Blau; and the symbolic structuralist one of Claude Lévi-Strauss. Other older models were reaffirmed or elaborated further, such as the symbolic-interactionist one out of which ethnomethodology grew, and the Marxist one — or rather the great variety of different Marxist and neo-Marxist approaches. The discussions around these models and especially around the confrontation of these models with the structural-functional one constituted the focus of theoretical discussion and controversy in sociology in general and in macro-sociological analysis in particular.

Whatever the differences among these models, they all shared the unwillingness of most of these views to accept the 'natural' givenness of any single institutional arrangement in terms of the systematic needs of the social system to which it belonged. Any given arrangement — be it the formal structure of a factory or hospital, the division of labour in the family, the official definition of deviance, the place of ritual in a given social setting, or the patterns of behaviour that developed round that setting — were no longer examined mainly in terms of their contributions to the maintenance of any given group or society. Instead, the very setting up of such institutional arrangements was transposed from a given into a problem to be explained, or was problematized; and it was asked what the forces were beyond the major organizational needs of the society that could explain the institutional arrangements.

The various models differed in their proposals as to how to cope with this problem, how to explain any concrete institutional order. One such approach, found in the individualistic and conflict models, as well as among the symbolic-interactionist ones, stressed that any such institutional order develops, is maintained and is changed through a process of continuous interaction, negotiation and struggle among those who participate in it. In this approach, it was stressed that the explanation of any institutional arrangement has to be attempted in terms of power relations and negotiations, power struggles and conflicts and the coalitions during the processes. Concomitantly, a strong emphasis was laid on the autonomy of any

subsetting, subgroup or system, that could find expression in the definitions of goals that differed from those of the broader organizational or institutional setting and of the groups dominant in it; on the 'environments' within which the social setting operates, and, above all, on the international system for the analysis of 'total' societies or macro-societal orders.

The second, seemingly contradictory, approach is found among the structuralists and Marxists. As noted above, that approach explained the nature of any given institutional order and especially its dynamics in terms of some principles of 'deep' or 'hidden' structure, akin to those which, according to linguists such as Chomsky, provide the deep structure of language. In attempting to identify the principles of this framework, the structuralists stressed the importance of the symbolic dimensions of human activity, of some inherent rules of the human mind, while the Marxists stressed above all the rules of production and reproduction of different social formations, and of the relations between modes and relations of production as carried by different classes.

Indications for a new approach — social division of labour and the construction of systemic boundaries

Out of these controversies and the research programmes they generated, there emerges the possibility of a new perspective on macro-sociological analysis or of a new approach to such an analysis.

The possibility of such a new approach is rooted in the fact that theoretical developments have given rise, first, to a new perspective on the historical process and, second, to a more differentiated approach to the process of institution-building in general, and to the analysis of the relations between the symbolic dimension of human activity and process of power on the one hand, and the shaping of institutional contours on the other, in particular.

This new perspective on historical process emphasized above all the fact that the institutional dynamics of any society are shaped by its historical experience and, further, that in the shaping of such historical experience, two aspects of forces seem to be of special importance: their cultural traditions and their political-ecological settings in general, and their placement in the international systems in which they participate, in particular.

This perspective on the historical process is also connected with a new approach to the analysis of institution-building and of the major social actors which participate in it.

The major points of this approach are: first, the construction of the boundaries of collectivities and of social and above all of

political systems is a basic component or aspect of human social life.

Second, such systems and boundaries do not exist, as has been often assumed in sociological, anthropological and historical analysis, as some sort of natural, closed systems. Rather, they are continuously constructed, and they are open and very fragile.

Third, no human population is confined within any single such system, but rather in a multiplicity of only partly coalescing organizations, collectivities and systems.

Fourth, such systems and the division of labour which they entail, and which are not naturally given, are constructed by special social actors, by different carriers and in the process of such construction ideological, power and material components are always closely interwoven.

Fifth, such construction of boundaries denotes the delineation of definite relations of the various collectivities or systems with their respective environments, but such environments are not given in 'nature' — they are themselves constructed by social actors through the very construction of the respective boundaries and social systems.

Sixth, of central importance in the construction and maintenance of such systems are different integrative mechanisms, which acquire an autonomy of their own and the assurance of the working of which is of crucial importance in the maintenance and change of societies or civilizations.

Seventh, such integrative mechanisms become more important and autonomous the more complex different social and political systems and civilizational frameworks become.

Eighth, such complexity is manifest not only in different levels of structural differentiation, of division of labour, but also according to other dimensions, such as the degree of overlapping or coalescing and difference between different organizations and collectivities which are, in their turn, influenced by different ideological and power elements.

The starting point of our approach is that the construction of boundaries is part of human conditions; that human social life, social interaction and division of labour are continuously organized in some systemic way, i.e. there is some tendency to organize activities in systems, and that a crucial part of such construction is the construction of symbolic-institutional boundaries which delineate the relations between any single such system, other systems and their respective environments.

Unlike, however, the view of what can be found in large parts of sociological and anthropological studies — namely that social

systems are natural or given, and change through some internal processes of differentiation — we stress that such systems are constructed through continuous processes, and that such construction is always both there and very fragile. It is very important not to underrate these systemic qualities of human interaction and social organization but, on the other hand, such different systems are in a continuous process of construction.

Such systems never develop as entirely self-enclosed ones. The populations which live within the confines of what has usually been designated as a 'society', or of a macro-societal order, are not usually organized in one 'system', but rather in several different ways and on several levels, the most important of which are political systems, economic formations, different ascriptive collectivities and civilizational frameworks. These different structures evince different patterns of organization, continuity and change, and these structures and patterns may change within the 'same' society to different degrees or in different constellations.

The construction of the boundaries of social systems, collectivities and organizations, necessarily delineates the relations of the respective systems with their environment or environments. However, it has become more and more clear that it is wrong to assume that there exists a natural environment of any society. Rather, the obvious point that each society constructs its own environment has become continuously highlighted, i.e. that there is no such thing really as the 'natural' environment 'out there'. Any environment is, within very broad limits, constructed by the society and can be understood only in relation to the society. Of course in the construction of environment any society has some material to go on. Each 'natural' environment provides several possible institutional choices, and one of these choices is being chosen by the respective social actors, by the respective carriers. Once such choices have been made, they create the limits or the boundaries of the system and generate the systemic sensitivity to environmental changes. These sensitivities are created not by the environment as such, or by technology as such, but by society, in reconstructing such environment or environments by using different technologies.

The processes of construction of collectivities, social systems, civilizational frameworks, are processes of continuous struggle in which ideological, 'material' and power elements are continuously interwoven. These processes are structured, articulated and carried by different social actors and carriers. Each of these boundaries is carried probably by different coalitions of such carriers.

Several types of such social actors or carriers have to be

distinguished: namely, first, those which structure the division of labour in a society, the level of its economic and ecological differentiation; second, carriers which articulate ideologies and political control; and last, carriers which are extremely important in the study of the construction of boundaries of collectivities, namely those carriers of solidarity of different ascriptive solidarities.

Between these different carriers there develops a very complex interaction which goes beyond what has been assumed in sociological, anthropological and historical analysis in general, and in that literature which dealt with collapse in particular.

Thus, our analysis points out that there is no human social life without structures, without boundaries, without systemic qualities, and, at the same time, that these are very fragile. But being fragile does not mean that they are non-existent. Rather, it means that, in order to maintain and to reproduce themselves, they need special mechanisms of control and integration, regulative mechanisms which try to overcome the inherent instablility and fragility in the construction of boundaries. Among such mechanisms we may list those mechanisms of bureaucracy, processing of information, rituals or the law.

The more complex societies are, the more autonomous are such mechanisms, and it has been the great contribution of Herbert Simon to point out a matter of crucial importance, perhaps not even strongly enough, that the mechanisms of control are autonomous analytical entities. Every such mechanism of control has an inbuilt second order of stability and instability. So there are really at least two orders of sensitivity, of stability and instability of social entities: there are the instabilities which are built into the very construction of the system, and then there are the instabilities in the mechanism of control. And it is only when we look at both working together that we come to understand better these different dynamics of social systems in general and of their change in particular.

Elites, cultural orientations and systems of control

This approach to the analysis of institution-building and of the major social actors which participate in it stresses that the setting up of any institutional setting is affected by the combination of several major components: first, the level and distribution of resources among different groups in a society — i.e. the type of division of labour that is predominant in a given society; second, the institutional entrepreneurs or élites which are available, or competing, for the mobilization and structuring of such resources and for the organization and articulation of the interests of major groups generated by the social division of labour; third, the nature of the

conceptions of 'visions' which inform the activities of these élites and which are derived above all from the major cultural orientations or codes prevalent in a society.

The institutionalization of these visions provides the arena for the concretization of the charismatic dimension of social order, for the quest for a meaningful social order, and it is affected and crystallized by the activities of the major élites.

The most important among such élites are, first, the political élites who deal most directly with the regulation of power in society; second, the articulators of the models of the cultural order whose activities are oriented to the construction of meaning; and third, the articulators of the solidarity of the major groups who address themselves to the construction of trust.

The structure of such élites is closely related on the one hand to the basic cultural orientations or codes prevalent in a society, or, in other words, different types of élites are carriers of different types of orientations. On the other hand, and in connection with types of cultural orientations, these élites tend to exercise different modes of control over the allocation of basic resources in the society, through which they combine the structuring of trust and provision of meaning and regulation of power with the division of labour in society — thus institutionalizing the charismatic dimension of the social orders.

Such control is exercised by these élites (or rather by coalitions of élites) primarily through control over access to the major institutional markets (economic, political, cultural, etc.), over the conversion of the major resources between these markets and over the production and distribution of that information which is central in the structuring of cognitive maps of the members of their society, perception of the nature of their society in general and of their reference orientations and reference groups in particular.

Such control is effected by a combination of organizational and coercive measures, together with the structuring of the cognitive maps of the social order and of the major reference orientations of social groups.

It is the different coalitions of such élites and the modes of control they exercise that shape the major characteristics and boundaries of the respective social systems which they construct — the political system, the economic one, the system of social stratification and class formation as well as of the overall macro-societal one.

Such differing modes of control shape the control aspects of institutional structure in different societies. Especially important among these are the structure of authority; the conception of justice; the structure of power and of political struggles; principles

of social hierarchization; the definition of the scope of membership of different communities.

The concretization of these tendencies takes place in different political-ecological settings. Of special importance are two aspects of such settings: one, heavily stressed in recent research, is the importance of international political and economical systems in general and of the place of societies within them, and of different types of relations of hegemony and dependency in particular; the second is the more general recognition of a great variety of political-ecological settings of societies, such as differences between small and large societies, their respective dependence on internal or external markets, and the like. Both of these aspects greatly affect the ways in which institutional contours and dynamics tend to develop.

Protest, conflict and change

Thus it is the different coalitions of such élites that construct the boundaries of social systems, collectivities and organizations. Yet no such construction can be continuously stable.

The crystallization and reproduction of any social order, of any collectivity, organization, political system or civilizational framework, is shaped by the different forces and factors analysed above, and generates processes of conflict, change and possible transformation.

Conflict is inherent in any setting of social interaction for two basic reasons: namely, first, because of the plurality of actors in any such settings; and second, because of the multiplicity of the principles inherent in the institutionalization of any such setting, the multiplicity of institutional principles and of cultural orientations — and of power struggles and conflicts between different groups and movements which any such institutionalization entails.

Thus, in greater detail, any social setting or social interaction in general, and the macro-societal order in particular, involves a plurality of actors — élites, movements and groups — with differential control over 'natural' and 'social' resources, which continuously struggle over such control and ownership and over the possibility of using such resources, and which generate the ubiquity of conflicts on all levels of social interaction.

Second, the ubiquity of conflicts in any setting of social interaction is intensified by the interweaving of such plurality of actors with the basic characteristics of the organization of the social division of labour and the setting up of the institutional principles. Such specification entails often conflicting principles, premises and prerequisites, each of which are carried by different social actors

which may also carry different cultural orientations. Such different actors may stress the centrality of their respective spheres as distinct from others; and develop their own autonomous dynamics at the expense of others, thus generating different types of systemic contradictions.

Thus, the very process of institutionalization of any social order entails a certain heterogeneity and pluralism. Such heterogeneity is, above all, rooted in the very multiplicity of actors as well as of cultural orientations which are inherent in any such institutionalization and in the incipient tendencies to heterodoxy, which we have mentioned above.

Accordingly, whatever the success of the attempts of any coalition of élites to establish and legitimize common norms, these norms are probably never fully accepted by all those participating in a given order. Most groups tend to exhibit some autonomy and differences in their attitudes towards these norms and in terms of their willingness or ability to provide the resources demanded by the given institutional system.

Some groups may be greatly opposed to the very premises of the institutionalization of a given system, may share its values and symbols only to a very small extent, and accept these norms only as the least among evils and as binding on them only in a very limited sense. Others may share these values and symbols and accept the norms to a greater degree, but may look on themselves as the mere truthful depositories of these same values. They may oppose the concrete levels at which the symbols are institutionalized by the élite in power, and may attempt to interpret them in different ways. They may not accept the models of cultural and social order which they think are upheld by the centres as the legitimators of the existing distribution of powers and resources and they may uphold cultural orientations different from or being counter to those upheld by the centre. Others may develop new interpretations of existing models.

There is, thus, always, in any social order, a strong element of dissension about the distribution of power and values. Hence, as we have seen, any institutional system is never fully 'homogeneous' in the sense of being fully accepted or accepted to the same degree by all those participating in it.

However, even if for very long periods of time a great majority of the members of a given society may be identified to some degree with the values and the norms of the given system and willing to provide it with the resources it needs, other tendencies develop in connection with the processes analysed above which may give rise to changes in the initial attitudes of any given group to the basic premises of the institutional system.

Thus, there exists in any society the possibility that 'anti-systems' may develop. While the anti-systems may often remain latent for very long periods of time, they may also constitute, under propitious conditions, important foci of systemic change.

The existence of such potential anti-systems is evident in the existence, in all societies, of themes and orientations of protest and of social movements and heterodoxies which potentially exist in any society and which are often led by different secondary élites.

Such latent anti-systems may be activated and transformed into processes of change by several processes connected with the continuity and maintenance, or reproduction, of different settings of social interaction in general and of the macro-societal order in particular.

The most important of these processes are, first, shifts in the relative power positions and aspirations and different categories and groups of people; second, the activation among members of the new generations in general and those of the upper classes and élites in particular, of the potential rebelliousness and antinomian orientations inherent in any process of socialization; third, several sociomorphological or sociodemographic processes through which the biological reproduction of population is connected with the social reproduction of settings of social interaction; and, fourth, the interaction between such settings and their natural and inter-societal environments — movements of population, conquest and the like.

The crystallization of these potentialities of change takes place usually through the activities of secondary élites which attempt to mobilize the various groups and resources in order to change some aspects of the social order as shaped by the ruling coalition of élites.

Thus, the possibility of the failure of the integrative and regulative mechanisms is inherent in any society. Every civilization or every type of political or economic system does on the one hand construct some specific systemic boundaries within which it operates, while on the other hand the very construction of such civilizations, or of social (economic or political) systems, also generates within them various conflicts and contradictions which *may* lead to change, transformation or decline — to different modes of restructuring of their boundaries.

But while these potentialities of conflict and change are inherent in all human societies, their concrete development, their intensity and the concrete directions of change they engender, differ greatly between different societies and civilizations according to the specific constellation within them of the specific forces analysed above, i.e. different constellations of cultural orientation, élites, the pattern

and social division of labour, and political-ecological settings and processes.

Such constellations shape, in different societies, the various patterns of social conflicts, social movements, rebellions and heterodoxy that develop with them, and the relation of these movements to processes of institutional building. They shape the direction of the institutional change, the degree to which changes in different aspects of the institutional order coalesce together and the consequent pattern of transformation of such an order.

This assertion goes against the assumptions of many of the earlier studies of modernization, as well as of Marxist analyses which, as we have seen, have seemingly implied that processes of change will develop in all societies in relatively similar directions.

And yet the approach presented here, as well as the research on which it is based, has indicated that these assumptions are indeed wrong (Eisenstadt, 1978). It has become clear that in different civilizations and historical settings, a variety of combinations of continuity and change have developed in different spheres of institutional life. Moreover, in only very few societies have such changes taken place through the combination of rebellions, heterodoxies, central political struggle, and institution-building as envisaged in the 'revolutionary' model. In each civilization a variety of combinations formed among different movements of change and these combinations followed their own course toward change and transformation, giving rise in different societies and civilizations to different patterns of coalescent change, of authority and political organizations and of the structure of regimes; of class relations; of distribution of wealth, as well as of collective symbols.

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2
The 'individualist dilemma' in phenomenology and interactionism*

Jeffrey C. Alexander

In this essay I will try to delineate the positive accomplishments of the schools of phenomenology and symbolic interactionism while, at the same time, exposing the limitations which have prevented either from becoming a fully satisfactory theoretical tradition of contemporary social thought. I will try to demonstrate that while each can enrich the collectivist understanding of social order developed by the classical tradition of sociology, neither can replace it. Yet the classical approach to collective, 'social' order can be powerfully enhanced by incorporating the 'individual moment' of phenomenology and interactionism, even if the collectivist tradition cannot completely defer to it.

The distinctiveness of what follows rests within the general framework of analysis which I bring to bear on the topics at hand. While the nature of this framework should become increasingly clear in the course of my analysis, I will try to present its essentials at the outset.[1]

Introduction: some analytical considerations

It is possible to make theoretical explorations of social thought at very different levels of analysis. I could, for example, explain the problems of phenomenological analysis by examining specific empirical studies conducted from the phenomenological point of view, examining the particular *propositions* advanced about the detailed structure of empirical 'reality'. Or, to consider another level, I could focus on the distinctively *methodological issues* involved in producing such propositions. I could also look at the *models* employed, or I could look at the *normative-ideological assumptions* phenomenologists make, if, in fact, they make them in a consistent way. While each of these different levels of analysis will reveal significant aspects of theory and of the relative power of

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different theories, I would like to focus here on a level of analysis more general and, I believe, more generally ramifying than any of these, namely, on the level of analysis I will call the 'presuppositional'.

The presuppositions of any social theory are the positions which a theory takes about the nature of human action and the manner in which plural actions are interrelated. The problem of action refers to what are basically epistemological questions: to problems of idealism and materialism, which are usually formulated sociologically in terms of the relative 'rationality' of the prototypical actor in any theoretical system. The problem of order, on the other hand, refers to the problem of how consistent patterns of such rational or non-rational actions are created: are patterns of action the result of continuous negotiation between relatively separated individuals or is this patterning — at least in part — the result of the imposition (either consensually or coercively) on individuals of a *sui generis*, prior structure or pattern?

While the options for 'the problem of action' are rational versus non-rational (not irrational), the theoretical options for addressing the order problems are individual versus collective. It is possible to develop a synthetic approach to action, which would attempt to integrate materialist and idealist concerns without adopting either in an exclusive way. *It is not possible, however, to adopt a synthetic approach to the order question if this implies that the alternative approaches be regarded as theoretically symmetrical.* To do so would be to adopt a theoretical agnosticism which is precisely the opposite of the truly synthetic position required. Social theorists must, and do, choose either collective or individualist positions, though within the context of either choice theorists may be more or less receptive to the problematics of the counter-position. Thus, a collectivist theorist may be concerned to incorporate into his or her conceptualization the (relatively small) element of negotiation that goes into the creation of any specific historical construction of a particular social order, for only in this way, he or she might wish to argue, can the processes of creativity and change which characterize any empirical order clearly be analysed.

As these comments indicate, I believe strongly that a successful social theory must be synthetic *vis-à-vis* the problem of action and collectivistic *vis-à-vis* the problem of order.[2] At the same time, I believe that collectivist theories can and must incorporate some of the empirical insights of more individualistic theories if they are to succeed as empirical descriptions of the actual historical world. These statements raise two final general considerations which must

be explicated before more detailed analysis can proceed: the problem of the 'individualist dilemma' and the problem of 'levels of empirical analysis' versus 'kinds of presuppositional commitments'.

One advantage that accrues from focusing on the most general presuppositional level of social theory is that problems of the most ramifying and complex empirical character can be discussed in the general and abstract terms of theoretical logic. There is one such problem which will be vital for the discussion which follows. I call it the 'individualist dilemma', and its logical structure follows from the nature of the presuppositional issues I have described above. To maintain an approach to order that is individualistic in a clear, consistent and honest way, a theorist must introduce into his or her construction a level of openness to contingency that, in the final analysis, makes the theorist's understanding of order approximate randomness and complete unpredictability. Most theorists of society, of course, unless they are 'closet psychologists' or absolute nominalists, will simply not be satisfied with such randomness, even if they consciously feel they should live with it and, indeed, promote it. Because of this dissatisfaction, individualist theorists will move towards the more collective moment by trying, in one way or another, to embrace some aspect of supra-individual pressure or sustenance.

The individualist dilemma is created because this 'theorist with second thoughts' will not give up on his or her formal claims to a thorough-going individualism; for this reason, the 'collectivist moment' he or she has introduced must be camouflaged by residual categories. Because it cannot be part of the systematic and forthright argument of the theory itself, the collectivist reference will be indeterminate and vague. This indeterminacy and vagueness make it theoretically and empirically frustrating and incomplete. To resolve this problem, obviously, the dilemma itself (i.e., the choice between randomness or residual indeterminacy) must be transcended; this can come about, however, only if the formal adherence to individualism is abandoned. Only with the movement towards an explicitly collectivist theory can the *sui generis* autonomy of social order be clearly stated rather than camouflaged in an ambiguous way. Only in this way, moreover, can the contingent and indivualistic elements of order be inserted into a collectivist theory as significant insights into specific levels of empirical analysis, and as nothing more.

This raises the second general issue I would like to clarify. I regard as fundamental the distinction between empirical-level-of-analysis and presuppositional-approach-to-order. Stated in less

oblique terms, I want to insist that it is one thing to focus on the individual as the point of one's empirical analysis and quite another to adopt an 'individualistic' position in terms of one's presuppositions about the sources of patterned action in general. A collectivist theorist may, indeed, focus empirically on the level of individual interaction or even at the level of the personality itself. Likewise, an individualistic theorist may focus not on the isolated individual but on a collectivity or even a nation-state. The point is the more general *analytical* assumptions which are made about such empirical individual interaction or collective processes, e.g., how relatively important are *a priori* socialized attitudes as compared with historically specific, completely contingent individual signals and responses?

One cannot argue, then, that symbolic interactionist or phenomenological theories are preferable because they focus empirically on individual interaction, for this could quite plausibly be — and indeed, has often been — the province of collectivist theories as well. Indeed, I wish to argue in this chapter that while the general framework for social theory can be derived only from a collectivist perspective, the empirical analysis of individual interaction should strive to incorporate wherever possible the empirical insight of individualistic theories into the concrete operations, structures and processes of the empirical interactions of concrete individuals. I believe that these insights are substantial even if, in more general theoretical terms, they are incapable of supplying the presuppositions of theoretical analysis itself.

'Phenomenology' strictly and traditionally perceived

In terms of Hegel's debate with Kant, in terms, that is, of strictly philosophical usage, phenomenology might be applied to any theory that accepts the independent structuring power of consciousness while denying the dualism Kant posited between phenomenal and noumenal (the phenomenal in Kant's terms) and external objects (the noumenal realm). In terms of its approach to action, then, phenomenology, since it believes objects are constituted purely by consciousness, is radically and thoroughly idealist. Any theory that would hope to go beyond the confines of an idealist, or materialist, theory would have to incorporate and transcend Kant's dualism rather than reject it out of hand.

The question which remains is the approach that such phenomenology strictly considered takes to the problem of order. Hegel's theory must be considered the prototype of a collectivist phenomenology, though in its specific form it certainly does not exhaust all possible shapes of the genre. Hegel focused on the

structure, continuity and development of supra-individual *Geistes* — 'spirits' or 'cultures'. His method was descriptive and reductionist, and it is not surprising that in the supple hands of Dilthey his phenomenology of the spirit could become the basis for a science of the spirit, or *Geisteswissenschaft.* Dilthey called this science 'hermeneutics', and both as method and as theory this commitment to the structuring power of ideational patterns has in the ensuing years become a central current of collectivist-idealist thought. We can see the Dilthey-Hegel tradition of phenomenological hermeneutics in significant aspects of Weber's work; in the superb if little noticed writings of Weber's contemporary, Jellinek; in much of Parsons's sociology; and in such contemporary 'post-' or 'neo-Parsonians' as Clifford Geertz and Robert Bellah. For most of these collective phenomenologists, the individual actor is conceived as a representation of a broad cultural type. Through a process of internalization, the individual becomes identified with the collectivity, and through externalization the collective becomes identified with the individual. As Hegel (1977: 110) describes 'the experience of what spirit is' in the chapter on Lordship and Bondage in his *Phenomenology of Spirit:* it is 'the unity of itself in its otherness... the unity of different self consciousnesses which, in their opposition, enjoy perfect freedom and independence: "I" that is "We" and "We" that is "I"'.[3]

It is possible, on the other hand, to adopt a more individualistic approach to the phenomenal realm, and it is to this approach that the term 'phenomenology' has traditionally been applied in social theory. Such theory begins, of course, with Husserl. Husserl accepted the structured, patterned quality of reality, but he insisted that the source of such structure must be found in the constituting processes of the human mind itself. After Husserl, the legacy of phenomenology as traditionally understood moved in two quite different directions, each movement addressing itself to the individualist dilemma. Moving towards rapprochement with more collectivist theory, Merleau-Ponty, Scheler and Schutz, among others, formulated the notion of tradition-bound 'life worlds'. In so doing they tried, either directly or indirectly, to reconcile phenomenological hermeneutics with the more traditionally understood phenomenology in its individualist sense.

At the same time, however, another school of Husserl's followers moved towards the dramatically less structurally sensitive, more purely individualistic phenomenology of existentialism. Alongside his notion of '*lebenswelt*', which inspired movement in a collectivist direction, Heidegger emphasized historicity and immediate experience (existence) in opposition to Husserl's insistence on structure

and essence. Sartre completed this 'purification' of Husserl by insisting that it is out of the individual experience of nothingness that all consciousness arises. Existential phenomenology takes the dynamism of Hegel's dialectical emphasis on movement and change and separates it from any consideration of over-arching 'spirit'. The result is an individualistic theory *par excellence* — the 'I' without a 'we', self-consciousness without any society. Once existence is accepted as the ultimate arbiter of society and structure, the relation between individual and structure becomes in principle unresolvable; the vagaries, inconsistencies and dead-ends of the argument between existentialism and structuralism amply attest to this rupture.[4]

This dead-end can be avoided only by combining a sensitivity to the individual operations that constitute ongoing 'existence' with an appreciation for the structuring qualities of mind: both moments must be inserted, moreover, into the theory of more inclusive life-worlds and traditions towards which some of Husserl's students haltingly moved and which has been articulated independently by the collectivist tradition of hermeneutics of Hegel and Dilthey. For several years this seemed, in fact, precisely the promise of the American school of phenomenological sociology called 'ethnomethodology', but while the movement has yielded brilliant empirical insights this more general theoretical promise was never fulfilled.

I will now look more closely at the movement from Husserl through Schutz and his followers. It is in the vicissitudes of this theoretical development, I believe, that one can discover precisely what needs to be done if theoretical reintegration and synthesis is to be attained, even if such synthesis would be anathema to some of phenomenology's recent practitioners.

Husserl's individualistic phenomenology

Though I will insist that Husserl illuminated individual processes from within an individualistic presuppositional framework, it is important to recognize from the outset that Husserl was, indeed, very aware of the existence of structure and patterning in the real world: he simply argued that phenomenology correctly understands that this order proceeds from consciousness, and from consciousness that is understood in a decisively individualistic way. This order must come from, and somehow be completely produced by, the individual: 'The Objective world, the world that exists for me, that always has and always will exist for me, the only world that ever can exist for me — this world, with all its Objects ... derives its whole

sense and its existential status ... from me myself.' (Husserl, 1977: 26.)

To understand the role that individual consciousness plays, one must make the 'phenomenological reduction' — one must place into radical doubt the realness of the world as such: 'The world is for us something that only *claims* being.'(Husserl, 1977:18, italics added.) The 'sense of reality' or 'sense of structure' comes only from the individual person: 'It is given to the consciousness *perceptually* as it itself by me.' (Husserl, 1977: 19, emphasis added.) To understand the process of perception by which a sense of reality is constructed — in another phenomenological vocabulary, the process of reification that objectifies the otherwise random stream of subjective perceptions — involves stepping outside of the 'natural' or 'naïve' attitude:

> Daily practical living is naïve. It is immersion in the already-given world, whether it be experiencing, or thinking, or valuing. Meanwhile, all those productive intentional functions of experiencing, because of which physical things are simply there, go on anonymously. The experiencer knows nothing about them, and likewise nothing about his productive thinking. The numbers, the predicative complexes of affairs, the goods, the ends, the works, present themselves because of the hidden performance; they are built up, member by member; they alone are regarded ...The intentional performances from which everything ultimately originates remain unexplained. (Husserl, 1977: 152–3)

Husserl wants to focus, in other words, on those productive intentional functions which go on anonymously as hidden performances, and as a result of which, in his view, there is an external world. He calls this the realm of 'transcendental subjectivity', for it focuses on the objectivity-creating functions of the mind which exist apart from the particular nature of any historically specific or context-dependent reality. Only by bracketing such particular details, indeed, can the realness of existence which stems from the essential intentional structures of mind be discovered. This definition of the phenomenological reduction is the source of Husserl's distinctive programme and of his enormous empirical contribution; it is, at the same time, the source of his — and his students' and followers' — greatest theoretical weakness.

What Husserl accomplished was to outline some of the essential 'constitutive techniques' of consciousness. Through intentional analysis, he discovers 'a mode of combination exclusively peculiar to consciousness' (Husserl, 1977: 39) by which the streams of atomized experience are transformed into an apparently transcendental and authentic reality. Husserl suggests that these are, in the first instance, techniques by which consciousness arranges the

experience of ongoing space and time. Rather than 'incoherent sequencing', for example, the mind assumes that spatial connections exist between elements of perceived reality even when these connections cannot, in fact, actually be seen. Consciousness establishes a 'horizon of reference' such that one always connects things one sees to things one has not yet perceived but anticipates that one will see or must see if shapes and forms are to be completed. Such spatial abilities rely on temporal capacities as well. Only because of memory can temporal sequences be connected to each other instead of seeming like random occurrences. The capacity for connecting past, present, and future provides that 'new evidences are restituting of the first evidences' (Husserl, 1977: 60), i.e., that the mind constitutes a whole from which each successive sequence seems to be merely a part. More generally, this constitutive technique means that 'the object is always met expectantly as having a sense yet to be actualized; in every moment of consciousness it is an "index" of prior expectations.' (Husserl, 1977: 46.)

To allow newly encountered objects to maintain this status as index, specific techniques are required. There is the constant use of analogizing: 'Each everyday experience involves an analogizing transfer of an originally instituted objective sense to a new case, with its anticipative apprehension of the object as having a similar sense...at the same time that sense-component in further experience which proves to be actually new may function in turn as institutive and found a pregivenness that has a richer sense.' (Husserl, 1977: 111.) There is, further, constant association and 'pairing' of things with other things, people with other people, and each with the other.

The suggestiveness of such insights into the order-creating capacities and order-creating activities of the mind should be obvious for all who would wish to understand the sociological structure of the world around them. These contributions will be examined further when Husserl's contemporary followers are discussed below. At this point, however, some of the limitations of this position must be discussed.

First, of course, there is the problem of idealism itself. Husserl does not shirk from the idealist label: 'I ... have objects solely as the intentional correlates of modes of consciousness of them,' he asserts (Husserl, 1977: 37), and he describes his method as 'transcendental idealism.' Even though purposefully one-sided, however, this method is one-sided none the less, for although objects may, in fact, always be mediated by consciousness, they are not by any means always created by it; any theory that looks only at such subjective

mediation will leave unexplored structures of power and cultural constraint through which some aspect of this object became constituted before its conscious mediation.

But even within the framework of idealism, there is the problem of Husserl's choice of an individualistic versus a more collectivist mode of proceeding. Husserl looks into the structure-producing capabilities of the individual mind rather than into the typical structures and processes of culture or collective world-view. While Hegel and Dilthey developed the latter kind of idealism, Husserl proceeds in an individualistic mode that has some of the intellectual weaknesses of traditional religious thought. Indeed, in one of his last major works, Husserl approvingly quotes Augustine: 'Do not go out; go back into yourself. Truth dwells in the inner man.' (Husserl, 1977: 91.)

Husserl was not completely unaware of such shortcomings. Towards the end of his life, in published and unpublished work (e.g., Husserl, 1965), he indicated a desire to combine his insights with an account of the *sui generis* social element. Borrowing from some aspects of Heidegger, he suggests that the intentional construction of meaning results in, and is made from within, *lebenswelten* or 'life-worlds' — cognitive styles, symbolic patterns, communities that are given. It is important to see, however, that, while achieving this illumination about the limitations of his work as a social theory, Husserl did not succeed in reconceptualizing the presuppositions of his theory as such. He was so consistent a thinker, indeed, that, for the most part, he succeeded in introducing *lebenswelt* into his theory without even making it into a residual category. This external, collective world, he insists, is constituted merely by the extension of the techniques which individuals use to construct their individual worlds — through analogy, pairing and other techniques that make things similar to the experience of one's past. One creates, in this way, the understanding of a 'normal' world of others who are like oneself (Husserl, 1977: 99, 119, 125).

But this is still a mode of consciousness, and it still starts with oneself: What Husserl has concluded is simply that 'not all my own modes of consciousness are modes of my *self*-consciousness.' (Husserl, 1977: 105.) The 'others' who are the objects of such associational techniques are still completely unexplained. Husserl can say only, 'let us assume that another man enters our perceptual picture' (Husserl, 1977: 110). Although he acknowledged, after reading the work of the Durkheimian-*manqué* Levy-Bruhl, that cultural analysts — not simply phenomenologists — could also illuminate a reality beneath the 'natural attitude,' he still insists that understanding the structure of the *lebenswelt* (the task of cultural

analysts like Levy-Bruhl and Durkheim as well as of the hermeneuticists like Dilthey and Hegel) is only 'preparatory' to showing how *lebenswelt* itself is the result of transcendental consciousness and abstract intentionality (see the unpublished statement cited in Merleau-Ponty, 1978: 154). In such moments, it seem even Husserl himself succumbed to the temptation of transforming the collectivist moment from a logical part of his theoretical individualism into an unexplained residual category.

Husserl's collectivist revisers

Some of Husserl's most important students and followers transformed these later references of his work from residual categories into theories about the relation between intentionality and the impact of supra-individual collective order. Merleau-Ponty, for example, writes about Husserl's 'dilemma,' which concerns, in fact, precisely whether the *lebenswelt* will remain a residual category or a source of independent determination *vis-à-vis* the objects produced by individual consciousness. Intentionality, Merleau-Ponty suggests (1978: 153), operates only in reference to the culturally-given: 'It is not the mere sum of expressions taken in isolation.' Another significant revisionist, Alfred Schutz, argued that 'our everyday world is, from the outset, an intersubjective world of culture' (Schutz, 1978: 134–5). Schutz develops what he calls a mundane rather than transcendental phenomenology: he inserts transcendental intentional activity into the context of supra-individual culture and tries to give both important roles (e.g., Schutz, 1967). Schutz and Merleau-Ponty issued strong and perceptive programmatic statements about the individual-order relationship, and Schutz, much more than Merleau-Ponty, conducted detailed empirical studies that were so programmatically informed. That there remained even in Schutz's efforts an 'amalgamating' rather than a completely 'theoretized' quality is clear from the summarizing statement offered in the first, and perhaps still most famous, article he published in English:

> The naïvely living person ... automatically has in hand, so to speak, the meaningful complexes which are valid for him. From things inherited and learned, from the manifold sedimentations of traditions, habitually, and his own previous constitutions of meaning, which can be retained and reactivated, his *store of experience* of his life-world is built up as a closed meaningful complex. The experience of the life-world has its special style of verification. This style results from the process of harmonization of all single experiences. It is co-constituted last but not least, by the perspectives of relevance and by the horizons of interest which are to be explicated. (Schutz, 1978: 137)

The last three sentences refer to Husserl's techniques for 'verifying' the familiarity and objectivity of the external world: through spatial and temporal consistency, through analogizing from oneself to other people, through pairing, through expectant meanings, through indexing; the culture that is already shared is made more widely applicable to new actors and to ongoing events. The first two sentences refer, by contrast, to collective cultural complexes that precede such individual constitution. The relation between the two is posited, but it remains unexplained.

Early ethnomethodology: Garfinkel's revolutionary pursuit of theoretical compromise

In the early and early-middle phases of his career, Harold Garfinkel continued this camouflaged effort to resolve the individualist dilemma by transforming its polar choices: to restore a social, supra-individual moment that is neither a residual category nor a vaguely defined indeterminacy. Husserl's mathematical background gave him the false sense of order as 'just being there'; Merleau-Ponty's political activism and socialism gave him a more accurate understanding of historically-specific supra-individual order which could, in principle, include collective constraint; Schutz, trained within the collectivist idealist tradition, absorbed from Weber the notion of collectively-rooted normative patterns. Garfinkel was trained by Parsons as well as by Schutz. He could more easily understand, therefore, that order is given and persistent and outside of any individual actor. Yet, while acknowledging this order as based upon institutionalized culture, he could see that it had to be, and was, continuously revived through individual practices.

Though Garfinkel produced a variety of articles in the 1950s and 1960s, the most powerful statement of his initial, and I believe his most successful, position was his magnificent essay, 'A Conception of and Experiments with "Trust" as a Condition of Concerted Stable Actions' (Garfinkel, 1963), where he introduced an entire conceptual schema in the context of a series of ingenious empirical tests. Was it merely an accident that this great attempt to incorporate individual intention into the study of supra-individual order was devoted to the study of 'games', the very prototype of institutions which link individual desires to social needs and which civilize intense rivalry by submitting it to the mutual acceptance of common rules?

Garfinkel's work has so rarely been properly understood as central to the classical sociological tradition that it is worthwhile to study this first and most important article at some length.

Garfinkel identifies the games he is studying as supra-individual 'normative orders' and 'disciplines'. Trust occurs to the degree that this normative order is maintained. How is it sustained? To answer this question Garfinkel tries to synthesize the traditions of Parsons and Durkheim, on the one hand — the traditions, that is, of phenomenological hermeneutics — and the phenomenological tradition more traditionally conceived which goes back to Husserl through Schutz, on the other.

Rules are, and have to be, internalized. But they must also be 'worked at'. They must be worked at because norms, or rules, are effective only because they operate in conjunction with 'consciousness' in a phenomenological sense: they produce expectations and behaviours which mesh with the order-creating functions of consciousness in Husserl's sense. A game's rules rely on certain intentions; they create certain 'constitutive expectancies' among the players. Rules, therefore, exhibit the following characteristics: (1), players in the game (i.e., the members of a group) expect the rules to be unquestionably accepted — they assume the natural and naïve attitude towards them which, as Husserl suggested, is part of everyday life; (2), players expect all other participants in the game to exhibit the same attitude.

How are these expectations confirmed? How is this natural attitude maintained? Actors must constitute reality to conform with their expectations. If rules provide 'categorical possibilities', then they are also intended events. People work to bring 'all actual observations ... under the jurisdiction of intended events as particular cases of the intended event.' (Garfinkel, 1963:194.) Every new situation in a game, therefore, is referred for definition and interpretation to 'rules', which are viewed as embodying past experience, and which, in fact, helped produce and direct this prior experience just as they are doing so with this new event in turn. There is, then, in every game an ongoing process of 'normalization', the depiction of all new events as normal and consistent with past events and with the over-arching rules. The specific techniques of normalization, Garfinkel follows Schutz and Husserl in suggesting, are comparability, typicality, analogy, association and, most interestingly of all, the 'etc. clause', which holds that no given set of rules can be expected to refer beforehand to every possible kind of event. In this way, every given set of rules can be extended and reformed to cover new situations. Because these intentional techniques are continuously employed, the 'natural attitude' can be maintained towards rules by members of social groups: rules exist, they work, we believe them and so does everybody else. If what really happens is that we elaborate and extend rules to fit our new

situation and thereby force the rules to fit the objective reality rather than limiting each reality to the rules — this is the nature of normativizing action.

What threatens social order is the violation of constituent expectations in such a drastic way that the new event cannot be normalized. The new event, in this case, produces senselessness rather than sense, and though Garfinkel does not say so, in such periods radical or revolutionary norms would have to be produced which would allow a new and different game to be played. Senselessness in this subtle use follows an operational, sociological definition: it implies an event that defies analogizing. When this occurs, there has been, in Garfinkel's words, a 'breaching [of] the congruency of relevances' and of the 'interchangeability of standpoints'. The 'etc. clause' is not plastic enough: collective memory malfunctions; it cannot traditionalize reality. Normative order breaks down.

Because of his commitment to supra-individual social order, Garfinkel's sensitivity to phenomenology more traditionally understood has produced some remarkable results. He has shown that normative order, that is, cultural integration, does — as Durkheim himself insisted — depend upon the processes of individual representation.[5] In important ways such integration is sustained from event to event through the normalizing processes Husserl first described. For this reason, Garfinkel can insist that rules exist within rather than without actors, and he can argue that sociology should pay careful attention to such 'accommodative work'. Although from this perspective, collective order does indeed have the quality of an emergent product, Garfinkel clearly realizes, at this stage of his career, that this accommodative work occurs only with reference to internalized rules: constitutive expectations exist, and intentions are carried out, only in relationship to an internalized culture that produces a sense of the nature of a legitimate order. When discussing the breakdown of order, therefore, Garfinkel does not point merely to individual failures of typification — though these certainly would, perforce, have to be involved — but rather to social processes: to the 'modifications of real environments' which occur because new cultures are introduced which demand new learning and create new ceremonials or because instrumental transformations have been carried out by coercion or force.

The 'individualist dilemma' and later ethnomethodology's return to an anti-collectivist stance

To appreciate the difficulties that Garfinkel tentatively overcame in this early work we must remind ourselves of the dilemma that

individualistic thought involves. If theorists are to maintain their individualism in a clear and honest way, they must introduce fantastic randomness into their picture of the world, basically denying that patterning exists outside of specific situations. Most theorists, however, unless they are psychologists or nominalists, will not be satisfied with such a position and will move towards embracing the collectivist moment. Yet as long as formal commitments to individualism are maintained, such a collective moment can be introduced only in a residual way: it will inevitably be indeterminate, and theoretically and empirically frustrating. The tension produced by being stranded on the horns of this dilemma — being pulled between randomness and indeterminacy — usually produces resorts to 'last instance' arguments, which suggest that, though collective dimensions may exist, 'in the last instance' individual negotiation actually creates social order.

Garfinkel, by contrast, offered some tentative steps at true theoretical resolution. His detailed attention to intentional practices seemed designed to show how omnipresent collective, supra-intentional rules really were; his emphasis on the significance of rules, on the other hand, was used to testify to the absolute ingenuity with which individuals must continuously 'work' if this order is to be maintained. On the one hand, *a priori* trust is fundamental to the very sensicality of an individual's life, on the other this trust relies completely on the normativizing actions of single individuals. What Garfinkel has been able to do, and here I return to a distinction offered in the Introduction to this essay, is to embrace the contingent, purely individualist element as a level of empirical analysis rather than as a presupposition of social order itself.

Despite this general synthetic thrust, even in this earlier work there are some troubling ambiguities in Garfinkel's approach. Though he has clearly argued that collective rules are, in fact, *sui generis* and not reducible to intentions and practices, he suggests in several programmatic statements an exactly opposite point. 'The way a system of activities is organized *means the same thing as* the way its organizational characteristics are being produced and maintained.' (Garfinkel, 1963: 187, emphasis added.) Can Garfinkel really mean here that rules (the way a system of activities is organized) are the same thing as practices (the way these organizational activities are produced and maintained)? He seems tempted here to return to the individualism of Husserl. The ambivalence about whether contingency is, in fact, an empirical-level-of-analysis or a presuppositional position is strikingly revealed in the following statement from that early work: 'Structural phenomena ... are

emergent products of ... accommodative work whereby persons encountering from within the environments that society confronts them with establish the social structures that are the assembled products of action directed to these environments.' (Garfinkel, 1963: 187.) Now if structural phenomena are, indeed, merely emergent products, then they are, it is true, simply the assembled products of action; but such structures cannot, at the same time, confront individuals from without.

In these studiedly ambiguous statements, Garfinkel has moved back within the horns of the individualist dilemma: to retain a commitment to individualism, evidently, he has felt compelled to make his assertions of collective constraint extremely indeterminate. This strain in his early work emerges full blown in *Studies in Ethnomethodology* (1967), and his more recent work moves towards a decisively individualistic position.

But before examining this desynthesizing movement, it is important to recognize that in *Studies* there remains a strong thrust of valuable synthetic conceptualizing and, especially, of empirical investigation informed by it. Garfinkel here declared that his subject is 'accounts'. Actors believe that they must be able to account for new events, and they can do so only in terms of their prior expectations and normatively structured common sense. But these accounts, Garfinkel suggests, are actually constitutive of the settings they purport merely to describe. Precisely this circularity allows us to understand the reproduction of norms and rules in the face of continously changing external events and situations. The necessity for accounts, of course, is merely another way of saying that action is 'indexical', that new objects are treated as signs of prior knowledge: this quality of 'indexicality' is basic if a smooth and continuous normative order is to be maintained. Through 'members' practices', therefore, social action is an 'accomplished familiarity'. All such practices, however, must still be conceived as occurring in relation to 'background assumptions'. Intentional actors, Garfinkel often still maintains, 'consult institutionalized aspects of the collectivity'. There is, he acknowledges, a 'common culture' from which intentional action must always draw. Thus, in discussing how a public health staff investigates suicides, Garfinkel argues that they employ the 'documentary method': they use the scraps of information they find not to 'induce' in an objectivist way what 'really happened' but to 'document' the prior expectations they had. This practice of '*ad hocing*' is fundamental, he suggests, to the maintenance of any common culture.

There are currents in contemporary ethnomethodology that, despite their individualistic and iconoclastic self-presentation, con-

tinue this train of Garfinkel's work, maintaining the attempt to synthesize individual intentional techniques with the power of normative culture. In this work the attention on 'members' practices' is important as an illuminating new level of empirical analysis: it is not the basis for an alternative to collectivist sociology, that is, it is not taken as the necessary presupposition for a completely individualistic understanding of social order. Perhaps the most systematically developed example of such ethnomethodology is Cicourel's. In *Cognitive Sociology* he criticizes collectivist sociologies for 'not address[ing] *how* the actor perceives and interprets his environment, *how* certain rules govern exchanges, and *how* the actor recognizes what is taken to be standard, "familiar," "acceptable"...' (Cicourel, 1974: 16, emphasis added). He is suggesting, in other words, the need for a new level of empirical analysis to be brought into play. Of course, Cicourel exaggerates the importance of such intentional rules, arguing that they supply the 'deep structure' of norms and values and the 'critical' feature of all role behaviour. He ignores, further, the illuminations of intentionality which have been developed outside the Husserlian tradition, e.g., in Freud's theory of defence-mechanism and Mead's theory of the 'act'. None the less, Cicourel has utilized the middle-period conceptualizing of Garfinkel to explore significantly new aspects of normative order in the social world. Molotch (1974) and Tuchman (1978) have similarly made good empirical use of these insights, suggesting that newspaper reporters do not so much discover new empirical facts as normalize them, that they use the documentary method to demonstrate and specify pre-existing expectations. Leiter (1976) has shown how teachers, without knowing their students, read in expectations and interpret their actions in ways that sustain the often self-defeating normative order of the classroom. Zimmerman (1969) has shown how welfare agencies transform client records that are fragmentary and doubtful into hard and fast records that simply reproduce conventional expectations about their behaviour. Kitsuse (1969) (and Cicourel, of course) have shown how the social control of deviance is often no more than finding ways of documenting prior expectations. Other analysts, like Zimmerman and Pollner (1970), have described how even objective social science relies on concepts which are indexical not only for the scientists but for the subjects, and which for this reason tend to reproduce the common-sense knowledge of a given society rather than studying it from a truly independent position.

I must now turn to the developments in Garfinkel's *Studies* which failed to transcend the individualist dilemma, for in the very midst

of this richer and more elaborate conceptualization of a new level of empirical analysis — the level of contingency and individual intentionality — Garfinkel simultaneously suggests that ethnomethodology should, in fact, be viewed not as an empirical illumination but as a counter-theory of order: as an individualistic theory that is an alternative rather than a complement to the classical sociological tradition.

To understand the difference between these two versions of what is, apparently, in Garfinkel's and his followers' minds, still the 'ethnomethodological' tradition, it is sufficient to examine closely Garfinkel's treatment — or rather his two treatments — of the intentional practice he calls '*ad hocing*'. On the one hand, he utilizes this notion in a way that makes it parallel to what semioticians call 'signification': an actor, encountering an object, uses it as a sign, or symbol, to 'represent' or 'signify' the relation of a more general system of meaning to this particular circumstance. To engage in *ad hocing*, then, is to use some new object indexically. This approach clearly exemplifies Garfinkel's synthetic ambition, for it is a way of neatly combining contingency with the importance of sustaining collective order. Thus, Garfinkel describes how a graduate student 'coder' engages in *ad hocing* in the course of the research he is doing on a clinic's files:

> He treats actual folder contents [i.e., the material he is to code] as standing in a relationship of trusted signification to the 'system' in the clinic activities [i.e., the organization to which the folder contents refer]. Because the coder assumes the 'position' of a competent member to the arrangements that he seeks to give an account of, he can 'see the system' in the actual content of the folder. (Garfinkel, 1967: 22)

> [The coder] must treat actual folder contents as standing proxy for the social-order-in-and-of-clinic-activities. Actual folder contents stand to the socially ordered ways of clinic activities as *representation* of them; they do not describe the order, nor are they evidences of the order. It is the coder's use of the folder documents as *sign-functions* to which I mean to be pointing in saying that the coder must know the order of the clinic's activities that he is looking at in order to recognize the actual contents as an appearance-of-the-order. (Garfinkel, 1967: 23)

Yet only a few pages later, Garfinkel suggests that this vital connection between the practice of *ad hocing* and the broader referent upon which it is based should be broken.

> Suppose we drop the assumption that in order to describe a usage as a feature of a community of understandings we must at the outset know what the substantive common understandings consist of. With it, drop the assumption's accompanying theory of signs, according to which a 'sign' and 'referent' are respectively properties of something said and something talked about, and which in this fashion proposes sign and

> referent to be related as corresponding contents. *By dropping such a theory of signs we drop as well, thereby, the possibility that an invoked shared agreement on substantive matters explains a usage.* If these notions are dropped, then *what* the parties talked about could not be distinguished from *how* the parties were speaking. (Garfinkel, 1967: 28, emphasis altered)

In this statement Garfinkel makes a sharp and, I believe, fateful move towards individualism. He is suggesting that the contents of what people talk about — the meaning of what they are saying — can be understood without reference to the broader normative or cultural framework within which they speak. If the sign can be separated from the cultural referent, then to understand the meaning of the sign we are left only with the techniques of individual intentionality themselves. Garfinkel maintains, indeed, that the meaning of a sign is the product of interactional techniques, the constitutive gestures Husserl called analogy, normalization, shared perspective, to which Garfinkel adds some more of his own.

> An explanation of what the parties were talking about would then consist entirely of describing *how* the parties had been speaking; of furnishing a method for saying whatever is to be said, like talking synonymously, talking ironically, talking metaphorically, talking cryptically, talking narratively, talking in a questioning or answering way, lying, glossing, double-talking, and the rest. (Garfinkel, 1967: 28–9, emphasis added)

'The recognized sense of what a person said,' Garfinkel now concludes, 'consists only and entirely in recognizing the method of his speaking, of *seeing how he spoke.*' (Garfinkel, 1967: 29.)

Yet this movement toward embracing individualism as a presuppositional position rather than simply as a level of empirical analysis transforms an important, synthetic insight into a dubious, one-sided presumption. The fact that a speaker used synonym, irony and metaphor actually tells us nothing about what was said; it simply allows us to understand how this 'what' was produced. Yet it is precisely by this insistence on breaking apart signs and their referents — practices from rules — that Garfinkel can insist in *Studies* that social structures are completely emergent from practices; it follows from this, he reasons, that ethnomethodology need not follow 'sociology' in its analysis of rules and institutionalized culture. 'Organized social arrangements,' Garfinkel writes, employing phraseology that became a by-word of the ethnomethodological movement, '*consist of* various methods for accomplishing the accountability of a setting's organizational ways.' (Garfinkel, 1967: 33–4, emphasis added.)

This radical individualism completely contradicts the more

synthetic strand of Garfinkel's work, a strand which, we have seen, was still very visible in *Studies* itself. When Garfinkel argues, for example, that 'recognizable sense ... is not independent of the socially organized occasions for their use' (Garfinkel, 1967: 3), he is denying the very phenomenon of indexicality which he had earlier laboured to conceive, for according to the notion of indexicality *a priori* notions of recognized sense are precisely the means by which the meaning of any particular occasion is ascertained. When he argues that 'rational features *consist of* what members do' (Garfinkel, 1967: 3, emphasis added), he is similarly eliminating the very collective referents which had allowed him to avoid the randomizing, asocial qualities of earlier phenomenology: he had once assumed that cultural rationality set a standard of legitimate order to which ongoing 'members' actions' had necessarily to be compared. Garfinkel has reduced his theory to a pragmatism of the purely experiential kind. As he writes in the very first line of *Studies*, introducing a chapter which was clearly written just before publication: 'The following studies seek to treat *practical* activities, *practical* circumstances, and *practical* sociological reasoning.' (Garfinkel, 1967: 1, emphasis added). As we will more clearly see in the latter part of this essay, this reduction to the 'practical' makes Garfinkel's later work fundamentally similar to the tradition of symbolic interactionism which he has always despised.

Before turning to the interactionist tradition, however, let us follow out the implications of the individualist turn that occurred in Garfinkel's middle period work. What was critical about this turn was that it established the official self-understanding of the ethnomethodological movement. Garfinkel's *Studies*, after all, were conducted during the 1960s, the same decade in which 'ethnomethodology' first gained controversy and attracted to itself younger students. The most rebellious and apparently revolutionary thrust of this approach, as these younger students viewed it in relation to the reigning functionalist sociology of the day, was, ironically, precisely that individualistic and anti-normative quality that undermined the potentially most significant parts of Garfinkel's contribution. To champion 'ethnomethodology' was to reject 'sociology', that is, to reject a discipline committed to a more collectivist thrust. Therefore, whether or not this individualism correctly characterized ethnomethodological studies in fact, it certainly informed their self-understanding. Indeed, each of the more synthetic studies I have referred to above — by Cicourel, Zimmerman, Kitsuse, Pollner, Leider et al. — tries to articulate its findings not in terms of the relation between intentionality and belief but in terms of practices alone. In the later period, the actual conduct of

ethnomethodology conformed more closely to his self-understanding.

Probably the most conspicuous corpus of later work which has given up the theory of signification is the language analysis first initiated by Sacks and now carried on by a network of researchers which constitutes a self-conscious school of 'Conversation Analysis'. For this group it is entirely the nature of the conversational interaction itself which determines the actions of each speaker: the necessity for exchanging speakers without excessive gaps or overlaps, the problem of changing a subject without losing continuity, the number of speakers, the visibility or lack of visibility of the partners in a conversation. Not only is the *a priori* meaning of language considered irrelevant — the intertwined culture of the 'language game' in Wittgenstein's sense — but meaning itself has dropped completely from concern. Not surprisingly, this branch of later ethnomethodology is more positivistic and latently materialistic than any other, though it can range from the focus on individual decisions (Pomerantz, 1980) to the elaboration of 'speech exchange systems' which are held to allocate turns according to an economy of interaction (Sacks et al., 1974).

More revealing perhaps of Garfinkel's later individualist turn is the work by Pollner, for it continues to preoccupy itself with meanings as such. In 'Explicative Transactions: Making and Managing Meaning in Traffic Court' (1979), Pollner provides an elegant description of the enormous interpretive efforts that everyday life entails, even in the well-institutionalized location of a court of law. Because of the contingency produced by temporality, actors employ a repertoire of techniques to enable meaning to proceed: they make examples, they take exception, they make things visible, they arrange and rearrange temporal sequences, they carefully try to maintain the 'horizons' of their actions. Yet Pollner wishes to do more than describe intentional techniques in an ethnographic setting: he wants to describe how the meaning of the courtroom experience is created as such. He is proposing that the meaning of what goes on in a traffic court is, quite simply, the product of the interactive techniques he has described. 'What one does next,' he writes, 'will be seen as defining the import or significance of what another did before.'

But can significance really be so shorn of referent? A succeeding action can define my own only in so far as both mine and the succeeding act refer to, and can be clearly interpreted by, an elaborate and complex cultural system of prior meaning. Is the judge in a court 'constituting' meanings, as Pollner would like to suggest, or is he, with significant individual variation, 'enacting'

them? When a judge expresses incredulity at a guilty plea that is lodged in an awkward and illegitimate way, is he 'inventing' a legitimate guilty plea, or is he merely using normalizing techniques to ensure that ongoing events conform to well-established norms about what guilty pleas 'should be'? That Pollner concludes this paper by lauding Mead's insistence that the meaning of an act is determined by the response to it — a position, we will see, which is not necessarily representative of the main line of Mead's thought — shows, once again, how later ethnomethodology has moved back towards the tradition to which it was originally opposed.

It has been a long time since Garfinkel himself has provided published work in which the later individualist strand could be examined in 'pure' form: he has confined his public efforts, in the main, to being a *maître* of students who have themselves articulated his later position in effective ways. What Garfinkel and his students now study is 'work', the details of 'practical' action in highly circumscribed natural settings. Garfinkel's own recently published essay on science, however, allows some insight into what this new vocabulary implies. In studying how the initial scientific observations of the optical pulsar came to be made, Garfinkel et al. (1981) insist that they are concerned only with the '*in situ* ... efficacy' of the scientists' actions. Without reference to scientific norms, either formal or informal, or to the paradigmatic or thematic prior expectations of the scientists themselves, they suggest that 'the properties that their [i.e., the scientists'] competent practices have in local production' are completely 'interactionally produced'. This study is concerned, indeed, with the tools and instruments the scientists used, the words they spoke and the notes they took, with the 'worldly objects' that allowed 'embodied practice' and which, together, created 'the pulsar's existing *material* shape' (emphasis added). Garfinkel's later ethnomethodology, it is clear, has become more like the conversational analysis which his individualizing movement first stimulated: it is a study of situated material practice without reference to meaning, let alone to the traditions of culture by which, according to Garfinkel's earlier work, such meaning would have to be informed.

Mead's interactionism: the individualist dilemma resolved or reinstated?

George Herbert Mead's theorizing developed from American pragmatism, and this quintessentially American philosophy, as Lewis and Smith (1980) have recently affirmed, was itself sharply, if subtly, rent between more individualistic and more collectivist understandings of action. Most well known, of course, is the strand

of pragmatic individualism. James developed a personalized theory of meaning which claimed that a concept *means* the experience to which it leads. The mandate of the pragmatic method is, from this perspective, to test all conceptual beliefs with practical experience, in James's words 'to determine the meaning of all differences of opinion by making the discussion hinge as soon as possible upon some practical issue.' Though Dewey's work is more ambiguous, it often shows a similarly exclusive focus on the 'here and now', and evidences a similar opposition to the notion of the existence of over-arching tradition and idealized, *a priori* commitments. His 'American' individualism often decisively colours his thought: subjectivity is 'initiative, inventiveness, varied resourcefulness, and the assumption of responsibility in choice of belief and conduct' (Dewey, 1957: 200). Individuals, he often holds, are not simply morally but *theoretically* responsible for their choice of beliefs. Social order, therefore, must be continually started over anew: 'Society is one word, but infinitely many things.' When he writes in this vein, Dewey's theory precludes the symbolic generalization upon which any notion of a subjective supra-individual order must rest. He writes, for example, that 'the new pragmatic method, takes effect by substituting inquiry into these specific, changing and relative facts for solemn manipulation of general notions.' (Dewey, 1957: 200.)

Against this nominalist strand in pragmatism there stands a more collectivist and synthesizing strain that is less well known. The work of Charles Peirce has not been given its due, yet it was he who actually founded pragmatic philosophy and who was acknowledged as its most original and systematic thinker by his contemporaries. Although Peirce's theory will not be considered systematically here, its fundamental point can, none the less, be stated in stark and relatively simple terms. Peirce strove mightily to reconcile the need for, and the empirical existence of, a community of ethics and obligation with a pragmatic emphasis on experience in the real world as the basis of truth. To pursue this synthesis, he developed the first elaborate theory of signs, and he argued that such systems of symbols would have to provide the context for every experiential act. Peirce was not wholly successful in this synthetic effort, but there can be no doubt about the nature of his ambition or the synthesizing thrust of this work. Far from separating signs from referents — the problem we find in the later ethnomethodology — Peirce developed his theory of signification better to explain practical reason. We can understand the nature of this accomplishment by examining the thought of Mead, for while Mead was only indirectly affected by Peirce (particularly via Royce), his rela-

tionship to more individualistic pragmatism was much the same (see, e.g., Mead's discussion of realism and pragmatism in Mead, 1936: 326–59).

In the work of Blumer and most of contemporary symbolic interactionism, 'symbolism' as such seems to have completely disappeared, and with it the possibilities for any integration of interactionism with the collectivist tradition. What must be understood, however, is that, contrary to the thrust of contemporary interactionism, symbolism was, in fact, absolutely central to Mead's thought. He did not accept contingency as a presupposition; he preserved it as a vital empirical moment. He realized, indeed, that supra-individual symbolic systems were the most important creators of an individual's objects. It is 'symbolization', he wrote, not the individual *per se*, which 'constitutes objects not constituted before ', and he asserted that 'objects ... would not exist except for the context of social relationships wherein symbolization occurs.' (Mead, 1964: 165)

> Language does not simply symbolize a situation or object which is already there in advance; it makes possible the existence or the appearance of that situation or object, for it is part of the mechanism whereby that situation or object was created ... Objects [are] dependent upon or constituted by these meanings. (Mead, 1964: 165)

At the same time, however, Mead emphasized, more than those in the tradition of phenomenological hermeneutics, the significance of concrete individual interaction, what he called the 'conversation of gestures'. Gestures are every kind of movement or expression in which people engage, including language. With gestures, Mead entered the pragmatists' world of experience and activism, but he entered in a distinctive, synthesizing way.

'Gestures' can, in principle, be treated as dependent for their meaning either on individual stratagem or on more generalized symbolic frameworks. It is this latter position that Mead takes, though we will see that he does not forsake the former as a significant empirical dimension. The meaning of gestures, Mead insists, is not open to individual manipulation in a major way: 'Gestures ... are significant symbols because they have the same meanings for all individual members of a given society or social group, that is, they respectively arouse the same attitudes in the individuals making them that they arouse in the individuals responding.'(Mead, 1964: 159.) Far from providing the rationale for a return to individualism, then, Mead actually views his theory of gestures as a means of understanding how the contingency of individual action is enmeshed within symbolic structure. Gestures,

he believes, make possible 'the symbolization of experience' within the broader field of meaning (Mead, 1964: 128). Gestures allow people to link their ongoing, novel experience to social categories, in Durkheim's words to 'represent' the world to themselves in the process of objectivizing themselves in the world. It was, in fact, to emphasize and elaborate the social character of gestures that Mead developed the notion of the 'generalized other'.

> The individual experiences himself as such, not directly, but only indirectly, from the particular standpoints of other individual members of the same social group or from the generalized standpoint of the social group as a whole to which he belongs ... The individual [brings] himself into the same experiential field as that of the other individual selves in relation to whom he acts in any given social situation. Reason cannot become impersonal [a development upon which this inter-individual experience depends] unless it takes an objective, non-affective attitude toward itself; otherwise we have just consciousness, not *self*-consciousness. (Mead, 1964: 202)

The socializing impact of this 'generalized other' is critically elaborated in Mead's theory of the game, an analysis that makes the same kind of profound contribution to empirical integration as Garfinkel's early essay on trust in experimental games. When children are very young, Mead believes, the sense of other individuals has not become generalized; as a result, children engage in 'play' rather than in games. They take the role of other children, moving from one kind of behaviour to another in an individualistic way. Children at this early point in their development, then, can only put themselves in place of another. With further development, however, children incorporate into themselves an abstract understanding of the roles which other members of the game assume. This incorporation constitutes the 'rules' of the game, or the 'generalized other' which now invisibly regulates the behaviour of all. Only with rules are real 'games' possible, for only with the rules that a generalized other provides are individualized interests and goals pursued in a simultaneously social way. When older, game-playing children gesture, Mead insists, they are gesturing for themselves but for others too, for they have automatically taken into account — by virtue of their personal identities and actual perceptions — the positions and obligations of their fellow-players.

> The baseball player who makes a brilliant play is making the play called for by the nine to which he belongs. He is playing for his side. A man may, of course, play the gallery, be more interested in making a brilliant play than in helping his team to win, just as a surgeon may carry out a brilliant operation and sacrifice the patient. But under normal conditions, *the contribution of the individual gets its expression in the social*

> *processes that are involved in the act, so that the attachment of the values to the self does not involve egoism or selfishness.* (Mead, 1964: 239, emphasis added)

> The taking of all of those organized sets of attitudes gives him ... the self he is aware of. He can throw the ball to some other members because of the demand made upon him from other members of the team. That is the self that immediately exists for him in his consciousness. He has their attitudes, knows what they want and what the consequences of any act of his will be, and he has assumed responsibility for the situation. (Mead, 1964: 230)

The game for Mead is an analogy, or microcosm, of all social systems and groups. His understanding of the nature of gestures in games, therefore, allows him to maintain that gestures *are* social institutions. Institutions are conventionally understood as structured and objective orders, but Mead has shown that such collective order corresponds to the generalized others of its members. 'An institution,' he can then suggest, 'is, after all, nothing but an organization of attitudes which we all carry in us.' (Mead, 1964: 239.)

Yet the contingent and individualizing aspect of action still has not been expressed. Mead attends to gestures not simply because they show how the social is specified but also because they show how the social is changed. The gesture involves an element of freedom because it involves the passage of time, and temporality is, for Mead as for Heidegger, the essence of contingency. Mead talks about the 'temporary inhibition of action' which signifies thinking. In carrying out his act the individual is presented in his consciousness with 'different alternative ways of completing [what] he has already initiated' (Mead, 1964: 169). For this reason, every new gesture has an emergent property that distinguishes it from those preceding: 'That which takes place in present organic behaviour is always in some sense an emergent from the past and never could have been precisely predicted in advance — never could have been predicted on the basis of a knowledge, however, complete, of the past, and of the conditions in the past which are relevant to its emergence.' (Mead, 1964: 177.)

The 'I' and the 'me', then, are 'two distinguishable phases' of the same act. In describing the genesis and constitution of acts, Mead carefully outlines the alternation of contingent and determined phases. The 'attitude', in Mead's terms, constitutes the first part of the response to another's gesture, and he insists that one's 'attitude' is socially determined by the nature of the internalized symbolic order: the meaning an actor gives to another's gestures is immediately given in a completely unconscious way. Yet, Mead

cautions, this does not constitute one's 'response' to a gesture. Within the context of the act — unconsciously, pre-consciously, or consciously — one performs various rehearsals, feeling and seeing imagery of various kinds, exploring the ramifications of this or that response. Only after such 'rehearsal' does one make one's response. Afterwards, one evaluates the relation between the meaning given to the other's gesture and the effect of the response on the immediate and generalized others involved.

To the degree that Mead so separated 'attitude' from 'response' — without, in other words, reducing one to the other[6] — he made a fundamental contribution to the integration of individualist and collectivist phenomenologies, for by doing so he significantly elaborated how contingency becomes incorporated in the moment-to-moment specification of collective order. Though empirically different, this contribution parallels in its implications those of Garfinkel in his earlier work. Yet, although Mead's position was more stable than Garfinkel's, not even Mead is able to maintain such a synthetic and integrated position in a completely consistent way. There are significant places in Mead's work where the autonomy of attitude and response is collapsed. He proclaims, in these instances, that the meaning of a gesture is determined by the response itself, that is, by contingent and purely 'pragmatic' individual considerations.[7]

> The response of one organism to the gesture of another in any given social act is the meaning of that gesture and also is in a sense responsible for the appearance or coming into being of the new object ... The act or adjustive response of the second organism [therefore] gives to the gesture of the first organism the meaning which it has. (Mead, 1964: 165)

This individualistic strand in Mead's work is, in part, the result of problems which are inherent in the philosophy of pragmatism itself, which is too anti-Kantian and anti-Hegelian fully to transcend an individualistic point of view. Whatever it source, this individualism came home to roost in a way that eventually undermined Mead's synthetic accomplishment. It did so because the interpreter of Mead's thought for contemporary interactionists has been a pragmatist so infected by individualism that when reading Mead's work he evidently could perceive the individualistic strand alone. This man was Herbert Blumer.

Blumer as Mead's misinterpreting interpreter: 'symbolic interactionism' as the reinstitution of individualism

The history of the interactionist tradition foreshadowed in eerie ways the more recent history of ethnomethodology: this tradition,

which initially promised to transcend the individualist dilemma, concluded by actually reinstating it. Mead's thought contained certain deep-seated ambiguities, much as did Garfinkel's early work. The difference is this: the internal transformation into an unambivalent and radical individualism, a change which Garfinkel carried out for ethnomethodology within the context of his own earlier thought, was accomplished for interactionism more by Mead's followers than by the founder himself.

When Blumer defined Mead as a 'symbolic interactionist' in his famous article on 'Social Psychology' in 1937, he tainted him with the brush of individualism from which the interactionist tradition has never recovered. Until recently, Blumer remained the principal interpreter of Mead's thought and the most forceful teacher of interactionism's most promising students. Of course, the 'reason' for the reinstatement of individualism in this quintessentially American tradition certainly cannot be the fault of a single person alone; the roots lay in deeper historical developments and in fundamental, unresolved problems of theoretical logic itself. The structure of Blumer's thought is, none the less, worth examining. The manner in which he has reinstated the individualist dilemma provides fascinating evidence for the universal, 'structural' status of theoretical problems: Blumer's forceful individualism, though conceived entirely from within the intellectual traditions of American culture, bears a striking resemblance to the individualism that emerged in Garfinkel's later version of phenomenology, a tradition originally conceived in a very different time and place.

Blumer collapses the autonomy of 'attitude' and 'response' upon which any successful integration of contingency and order depends. In doing so he returns to the pragmatic emphasis on practical experience and quasi-Darwinian adaptations: 'Culture,' Blumer writes 'is clearly derived from what people *do*.' (Blumer, 1969: 61, emphasis added.) It is the *response* to the gesture that determines meaning, not the pre-given cultural background within which the gesture itself is initiated: 'Meaning is derived from or arises out of the social interaction that one has with one's fellows' (Blumer, 1969: 2); 'the meaning of a thing grows out of the ways in which other persons act towards the person with regard to the thing.' (Blumer, 1969: 4.)

To argue that action and response so directly determine meaning is, of course, to insist on an absolute individual control over meaning: 'The *actor* selects, checks, suspends, regroups, and transforms the meanings in the light of the situation in which he is placed and the direction of his action.' (Blumer, 1969: 5, emphasis added.) Whereas Mead usually, though not always, spoke of

meaning as the product of an unconscious attitudinal specification of general cultural patterns, Blumer proposes, in direct contrast, that 'self-indication' is the basis of meaning attribution. Through 'self-indication', the individual organism 'makes an object of what *it* notes, gives it a meaning [and] uses the meaning as the basis for directing its action' (Blumer, 1969: 15, emphasis added). Blumer's individual is given incredible control over the meaning of his acts — a control contested only by the presence of other, equally separated selves. The individual, in Blumer's world, consciously 'takes account of', and decides the rational appropriateness of, his 'wishes and wants' and even his 'images of himself' (Blumer, 1969: 15). Individuals are given the ability to stand not only against the entire external world but against their internal world as well.

> Self-indication is a moving communicative process in which the individual notes things, assesses them, gives them a meaning and decides to act on the basis of the meaning. The human being stands over against the world, or against 'alters,' with such a process ... The process of self-indication cannot be subsumed under the forces ... which are presumed to play upon the individual to produce his behaviour ... It stands over against them in that the individual points out to himself and interprets the appearance or expression of such things, noting a given social demand that is made on him, recognizing a command, observing that he is hungry, realizing that he wishes to buy something, aware that he has a given feeling, conscious that he dislikes eating with someone he despises, or aware that he is thinking of doing something. By virtue of indicating such things to himself, he places himself over against them and is able to act back against them, accepting them, rejecting them, or transforming them in accordance with how he defines or interprets them. (Blumer, 1969: 81–2)

We are in the midst, here, of the 'I' without the 'we', of the childlike self who can put himself 'in the place of the other' but who does not carry within himself the 'generalized other' which allows him automatic and unconscious resource to the meaning of others' acts. As in the later Garfinkel, the symbolic language of signification completely disappears in Blumer's work; it is not surprising that when he mentions 'interpretation' — the process by which in hermeneutical theory new events are related to background assumptions — he always subordinates it to practical purpose and to the need for immediate results. 'Interpretation,' he says, 'is a formative process in which meanings are *used* and revised as *instruments* for the guidance and formation of action.' (Blumer, 1969: 5, emphasis added.)What we have left is the same world of 'local production' that is the focus of later ethnomethodology: 'The

sets of meanings that lead participants to act as they do ... have their own setting in a localized process of social interaction.' (Blumer, 1969: 19–20.)

Blumer is caught firmly between the horns of the dilemma that Mead had shown a way of transcending: his thought moves back and forth uneasily between the unattractive choices of randomness and residual indeterminacy. On the one hand, Blumer posits a radical uncertainty about the course of every interaction, a randomness which he not only accepts as the price for absolute freedom but usually seems to glory in. Structural factors, he writes, are 'matter[s] the actor takes into account. [But this] does not explain how they are taken into account in the situation that calls for action'. (Blumer, 1969: 16) How could one, then, explain how they are taken into account, an explanation which obviously would be basic if the patterned processes of interaction were to be understood? Blumer suggests merely that 'one has to get inside of the defining process', a process he has defined as completely within the moment of contingency itself. The evanescent, indeterminate quality of this accounting for structures comes through even more clearly when Blumer writes that one must 'catch the process of interpretation through which actors construct their actions' (Blumer, 1969: 82, emphasis added). Even Blumer, however, does not entirely escape 'second thoughts' about such randomizing implications. One can find in the interstices of even his theorizing residual references to supra-individual structures, references which Blumer attempts to camouflage by indeterminate and often extremely vague formulations (see e.g., Blumer, 1969: 17–19).

In the double shadow of Blumer's own work and his misinterpretation of Mead, the tradition of symbolic interactionism has produced compromise formations that constitute a continuum from pure individualism to its purely social critique. One strand of interactionism has simply focused on events and 'one time only' processes like historical episodes or collective outbursts. In another strand, external structures are acknowledged but they are treated as parameters which become, in effect, glaring residual categories. In still another strand, the social self of Mead becomes the entire focus of analysis, an interactionism from which any focus on the 'I' and on contingency has completely disappeared. Finally, there are some attempts, as in the best works of Goffman, where, under the guise of explicit obeisance to astructural individualism, a forceful and illuminating integration of contingency and structure is conceived. Only in this last and much too infrequent genre is the potential for theoretical synthesis pursued that Mead originally introduced.

Conclusion

The preceding analysis has sought to demonstrate that such supra-individual elements are not, in fact, necessarily absent from the 'individualist' traditions. When we look at the most sophisticated and most successful strands of phenomenology and interactionism, we see that they were not intended to be epistemological and ontological confrontations with theories which posit supra-individual order; rather, they intended to give greater urgency to an empirical aspect of order which has been neglected by most such collectivist theories, at least post-Hegel: the relationship between the prior, supra-individual order and the moment-to-moment unfolding of real historical time. The relations between order and contingency, these traditions have argued, can be illuminated only by a more detailed empirical understanding of the processes of individual consciousness. Garfinkel and the phenomenologists discussed the intentional strategies by which normative order is specified in each concrete situation; Mead analysed the social self and the nature of gestures — which did much the same thing. Both traditions emphasized that this contingency introduces change even while it ensures specification. These changes are usually far outweighed by the impact of collective normation, but they are individual innovations none the less.

The initial development of ethnomethodology, the subsequent strains and schisms within it, have revolved precisely round this question of empirical versus presuppositional individualism. The conceptualization and empirical studies of Garfinkel's earlier work synthesized a focus on empirical contingency with an analysis of social order. In this work, and in subsequent strands of the ethnomethodology school which considered these studies paradigmatic, the integration of phenomenology strictly and traditionally considered was powerfully begun. Yet in the more individualistic work which Garfinkel created after, and alongside, this synthetic work, a paradigm was established through which ethnomethodology sharply separated signification from the signified. With this movement, the effort at theoretical integration was just as powerfully opposed.

The same kind of fateful dialectic occurred in the history of interactionism. Mead created a powerful individually-focused theory which precisely interrelated contingent creation and collective constraint. But when Blumer interpreted Mead, he drew upon an anomalous strand of individualism to elaborate, in the founder's name, the radically anti-collectivist theory which he has called, incongruously, symbolic interactionism. The followers of Blumer, with rare if important exceptions, have been caught within the individualist dilemma ever since.

It is precisely this individualist dilemma that sociology must transcend if the individual is to be 'brought back in' to the classical tradition of sociological thought. If this individual cannot be the isolated, pristine individual that Homans wanted to bring back long ago, we are all so much the better for it.

Notes

1. This general framework is much more elaborately discussed in the first volume of my *Theoretical Logic in Sociology*, Vol.1, *Positivism, Presuppositions, and Current Controversies* (1982a), though in the present context I am specifying it in relation to a problem not directly considered in that work.

2. It is the collectivist position on order that must be regarded as the major, and least disputed, contribution of the classical tradition of sociology, the tradition initiated by Marx, Weber, Durkheim and Simmel, and carried forward by numerous 'schools' and followers today, including perhaps most conspicuously the functionalist.

3. It is precisely this 'strict' tradition of phenomenological analysis that, we will see later in this essay, provides the justification for allowing so much of sociology the designation 'phenomenological'. This is the philosophical rationale for Tiryakian's (1965, 1970, 1978) position over the years, a position which has drawn much criticism from those who would defend the individualism of a more 'traditional' phenomenological position but, which, none the less, is absolutely correct in terms of the synthesis of 'phenomenology' and 'sociology' which must be carried out.

4. The debate between Sartre and Lévi-Strauss shows how the traditions of phenomenology traditionally and strictly perceived have been so taken to their extremes that their leading proponents believe they have nothing in common at all. In *Being and Nothingness* (1966: 46), Sartre individualized the phenomenological movement traditionally understood: 'My freedom is the unique foundation of values ... As a being *by* whom values exist, I am unjustifiable. My freedom is ... itself without foundation.' Freedom, therefore, 'is characterized by a constantly renewed obligation to remake the Self which designates free being'. In reacting against such thought, Lévi-Strauss in *The Savage Mind* collectivized the idealist tradition so far that he suggested that cultural themes proceeded without being internalized by individuals and, in fact, had nothing to do with 'meaning' *per se*. 'Linguistics ... presents us with a dialectical and totalizing entity but one outside (or beneath) consciousness and will. Language is human reason which has its reasons and of which man knows nothing.' (1966: 252). Or, as he insists (1970: 64) at another point, 'in my perspective meaning is never the primary phenomenon ... Behind all meaning there is a non-meaning.' While Sartre (1971: 111) in his later years tried to hedge his bets, he would not give up his individualism; the result was a frustrating series of residual categories and theoretical indeterminacy, e.g., 'what is essential is not that man is made, but that he makes that which made him.'

5. One typical case of the frustrating, and entirely inappropriate, theoretical distance that has developed between the phenomenological traditions strictly and traditionally defined has been the inability of most theorists and interpreters to understand that Durkheim himself relied heavily on a theory of individual 'intention', or 'signification' to develop his later theory of symbolic collective order

(Alexander 1982b: 247–50). Durkheim discovered that through 'representation' individuals continuously 'named' external objects (ideal or material); this naming specified some prior expectations and traditions, and it simultaneously internalized and externalized the object it created. I want to suggest that Durkheim articulated here much the same kind of phenomenological, subjective process as Husserl and his followers.

6. I have benefited greatly in my understanding of this distinction from the excellent piece by Lewis (1979).

7. The reference to this individualistic strain in Mead in Pollner's work (cited above) clearly reveals the link between the individualistic, 'practical' emphasis of later ethnomethodology and the contemporary reading of Mead.

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3

Structuration versus morphogenesis*

Margaret S. Archer

The fundamental problem of linking human agency and social structure stalks through the history of sociological theory. Basically it concerns how to develop an adequate theoretical account which deals simultaneously with people constituting society and the social formation of human agents. For any theorist, except the holist, social structure is ultimately a human product, but for any theorist, except advocates of psychologism, this product in turn shapes individuals and influences their interaction. However, successive theoretical developments have tilted *either* towards structure *or* towards action, a slippage which has gathered in momentum over time.

Initially this meant that one element became dominant and the other subordinate: human agency had become pale and ghostly in mid-century functionalism, while structure took on an evanescent fragility in the reflowering of phenomenology. Eventually certain schools of thought repressed the second element almost completely. On the one hand structuralist Marxism and normative functionalism virtually snuffed-out agency — the acting subject became increasingly lifeless while the structural or cultural components enjoyed a life of their own, self-propelling or self-maintaining. On the other hand, interpretative sociology busily banished the structural to the realm of objectification and facticity — human agency became sovereign while social structure was reduced to supine plasticity because of its constructed nature.

Although proponents of these divergent views were extremely vociferous, they was also extensively criticized and precisely on the grounds that both structure and action were indispensable in sociological explanation.[2] Moreover, serious efforts to readdress the problem and to reunite structure and action had already begun

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from *inside* 'the two Sociologies',[3] when they were characterized in this Manichean way. These attempts emerged after the early 1960s from 'general' functionalists,[4] 'humanistic' Marxists[5] and from interactionists confronting the existence of strongly patterned conduct.[6] Furthermore, they were joined in the same decade by a bold attempt to undercut the problem by disclosing 'hidden structures' which simultaneously governed overt structural organization and observable action patterns.[7]

Building on these bases in a very eclectic manner, two new perspectives have *since* begun to mature which *directly tackle* the relationship between structure and action and seek to unite them. One is the 'morphogenetic approach',[8] advanced within general systems theory, whose best known exponent is Walter Buckley.[9] Its sociological roots go back to the three kinds of theoretical revisionism mentioned in the last paragraph, but the other part of its pedigree is cybernetics. The second perspective is 'structuration', recently spelt-out by Anthony Giddens. While integrating some of the same revisionist material, this approach leans much more heavily on the newer linguistic structuralism, semiotic studies and hermeneutics.

Both the 'morphogenetic' and 'structuration' approaches concur that 'action' and 'structure' presuppose one another: structural patterning is inextricably grounded in practical interaction. Simultaneously both acknowledge that social practice is ineluctably shaped by the unacknowledged conditions of action and generates unintended consequences which form the context of subsequent interaction. The two perspectives thus endorse the credo that the 'escape of human history from human intentions, and the return of the consequences of the escape as causal influences upon human action, is a chronic feature of social life'.[10] Where they differ profoundly is in *how* they conceptualize it, and *how*, on that basis, they theorize about the structuring (and restructuring) of social systems.

Structuration and morphogenesis

Structuration

In dealing with 'structuration' this chapter concentrates exclusively upon Anthony Giddens's book *Central Problems in Social Theory: Action, Structure and Contradiction in Social Analysis*,[11] since its density and range require close textual attention. Giddens's whole approach hinges on overcoming *three dichotomies* and it is these dualisms which he strips away from a variety of sources, then recombining their residues.

1. First, he insists on an account of human agency which is intrinsically related to the subject acting in society, thus seeking to transcend the dualism between voluntarism and determinism. Hence both deterministic attempts to get behind the 'backs of actors' (as in organic functionalism and orthodox Marxism) and the excessive voluntarism which neglects the structural context (as in contemporary action theories) are equally condemned.

2. Second, he seeks to mediate the dichotomy between subject and object by assigning a prime role to the knowledgeability of actors in producing and reproducing their society, while acknowledging that they necessarily employ societal properties in the process. Thus structuralism and functionalism are criticized for subordinating the individual to society and Giddens aims to transcend the subject/object dualism by elaborating on common elements in the work of Marx and the later Wittgenstein which construe the generation of society as the outcome of praxis.

3. Finally, he rejects any theory which represses time by separating statics from dynamics and analysing the two separately. For to Giddens, any theory embodying the interdependence of structure and action is predicated upon grasping the temporal and spatial locations which are inherent in the constitution of all social interaction. Thus the division between synchrony and diachrony must also be transcended in order to capture the temporal release of unintended consequences and their subsequent influence on later action.

Because of this rejection of the three dichotomies, 'structuration' is quintessentially concerned with *duality not dualism*, with amalgamating the two sides of each divide. This is to be achieved through the central notion of the 'duality of structure' which refers to 'the essential recursiveness of social life, as constituted in social practices: structure is both medium and outcome of the reproduction of practices. Structure enters simultaneously into the constitution of the agent and social practices, and "exists" in the generating moments of this constitution'.[12] This involves an image of society as a continuous flow of conduct (not a series of acts) which changes or maintains a potentially malleable social world. In turn it obviously proscribes any discontinuous conceptualization of structure and action — the intimacy of their mutual constitution defies it. 'Structuration' is predicated upon the 'duality of structure': analytically it disengages continuities or transformations in the reproduction of social systems. Because of the dynamic interplay of the two constituent elements, 'structuration' does not denote fixity, durability, or even a point reached in development. 'Structuration' itself is ever a process and never a product.

In elaborating his theory of 'structuration', however, Giddens completely ignores existing efforts to perform the same task of reuniting structure and action from within general systems theory.

Morphogenesis

This perspective has an even better claim than the former to call itself a 'non-functionalist manifesto',[13] since a major part of its background was the growing disenchantment on the part of neo-functionalists with every remnant of the organic analogy — with the over-integrated view of social structure and the over-socialized view of man; with the assumption of immanent equilibration unrelated to human decision-making; with its failure to incorporate time — a double failure involving the absence of an analytical *history* of systemic emergence (grounded in human interaction, taking place in prior social contexts) *and* a failure to appreciate that the structural elaboration thus produced carries over to *future time*, providing new contexts for subsequent interaction.

'Morphogenesis' is also a process, referring to the complex interchanges that produce change in a system's given form, structure or state (morphostasis being the reverse), *but it has an end-product*, structural elaboration, which is quite different from Giddens's social system as merely a 'visible pattern'. This to him can best be analysed as recurrent social practices, whereas to general systems theorists, the elaborated structure has properties which cannot be reduced to practices alone, although these are what generated both it and them.

The emergent properties[14] which characterize socio-cultural systems imply discontinuity between initial interactions and their product, the complex system. In turn this invites *analytical dualism* when dealing with structure and action. Action of course is ceaseless and essential both to the continuation and further elaboration of the system, but subsequent interaction will be different from earlier action because conditioned by the structural consequences of that prior action. Hence the morphogenetic perspective is not only dualistic but sequential, dealing in endless cycles of structural conditioning/social interaction/structural elaboration — thus unravelling the dialectical interplay between structure and action. 'Structuration', by contrast, treats the ligatures binding structure, practice and system as indissoluble hence the necessity of *duality* and the need to gain a more indirect analytical purchase on the elements involved.

Hence Giddens's whole approach turns on overcoming the dichotomies which the morphogenetic perspective retains and utilizes — between voluntarism and determinism, between syn-

chrony and diachrony, and between individual and society. In 'place of each of these dualisms, as a single conceptual move, the theory of structuration substitutes the central notion of the *duality of structure*'.[15]

The body of this paper will: (a), question the capacity of this concept to transcend such dichotomies in a way which is sociologically useful; (b), defend the greater theoretical utility of *analytical dualism*, which underpins general systems theory; and, (c), seek to establish the greater theoretical utility of the morphogenetic perspective over the structuration approach.

The 'duality of structure' and voluntarism/determinism

Basically what Giddens is seeking to enfold here are two views of social institutions — institutions as causes of action (which has certain deterministic overtones) and institutions as embodiments of action (which has more voluntaristic connotations). Condensed in the brief statement that 'structure is both medium and outcome of the reproduction of practices'[16] is his method of bridging this dichotomy. The central notion of the 'duality of structure' makes up the bridge by dropping two planks from opposite banks so that they lie juxtaposed. First he advances the essential contribution made by knowledgeable actors in generating/transforming recurrent social practices — which in turn creates the 'visible pattern' that constitutes the social system for Giddens. Simultaneously, he lays down the fundamental proposition that when actors produce social practices they necessarily draw upon basic 'structural properties' — these essential factors being viewed as a matrix of rules and resources.

Ideally what he wants to integrate is the way in which the active creation of social conditions is itself unavoidably conditioned by needing to draw upon structural factors in the process. Perhaps this is clarified by consulting the kind of practical images Giddens has in mind. The references to agents producing recurrent social practices summon up a picture of the 'ruttedness' of routine action — in bureaucracy, for instance, where life is constantly breathed into inert rules which then deaden their animators through routinization.[17] But this is not the only picture he invokes. There is also metamorphosis, the generation of radically new practices when agency rides on the coat-tails of structural facilitation to produce social change of real magnitude. Although the 'duality of structure' spans both images, it provides no analytical grip on *which* is likely to prevail under what conditions or circumstances. The theory of 'structuration' remains fundamentally non-propositional.

In other words the 'central notion' of the 'structuration' approach

fails to specify when there will be 'more voluntarism' or 'more determinism'. In fact, on the contrary, the 'duality of structure' *itself* oscillates between the two divergent images it bestrides — between (a), the hyperactivity of agency, whose corollary is the innate volatility of society, and (b), the rigid coherence of structural properties associated, on the contrary, with the essential recursiveness of social life.

(a) Hyperactivity is an ineluctable consequence of all rules and resources being defined as *transformative*, in contradistinction to the rigid transformational grammar of linguistics. Resources are readily convertible, rules endlessly interpretable; the former providing material levers for transforming the empirical domain, the latter transfiguring codes and norms. Consequently the spatio-temporal constitution of society is ordered in terms of the mediations and transformations made possible by these two structural properties, as manipulated by agents. However, it follows that if structural properties are inherently transformative then actors generically enjoy very high degrees of freedom — at any time they could have acted otherwise, intervening for change or for maintenance. Hence the counter-factual image of hyperactivity in which actors explore and exploit these generous degrees of freedom. Hence too the outcomes must be correspondingly variegated; society is not just 'potentially malleable',[18] it becomes highly volatile if 'the possibility of change is recognized as inherent in every circumstance of social reproduction'.[19]

(b) The other side of the 'duality of structure' is intended to rectify the image and introduce a more recognizable picture of social life. Instead I believe over-correction takes place, generating a counter-image of 'chronic recursiveness' in society. Basically this arises because actors have to draw upon rules and resources in social interchange and these structural properties are thus *reconstituted* through such interaction. However, Giddens goes further than this, now endorsing the kind of linguistic analogy disavowed in (a). Thus when actors do draw upon rules and resources they necessarily invoke the whole matrix of differences which constitute structures, 'in the sense in which the utterance of a grammatical sentence presupposes the absent corpus of syntactical rules that constitute the language as a totality'.[20]

In this way Giddens commits himself to an enormous coherence of the structural properties, such that actors' inescapable use of them embroils everyone in the stable reproduction of social systems. The pendulum swings so far the other way that we are now presented with another over-integrated view of man, for the 'duality of structure' relates the smallest item of day-to-day behaviour to

attributes of far more inclusive social systems: 'when I utter a grammatical English sentence in a casual conversation, I contribute to the reproduction of the English language as a whole. This is an unintended consequence of my speaking the sentence, but one that is bound in directly to the recursiveness of the duality of structure.'[21]

This rigidity of the recursive image is open to criticism on two counts. On the one hand, rules and resources are not so coherently organized as grammar, often lacking the mutually invocating character of syntax (to have a council house does not *necessarily* mean no telephone, low income, job insecurity, etc.). On the other hand, action is not really so tightly integrated by these structural properties: not only may some of the smallest items of behaviour be irrelevant to the social system, certain larger ones may also be trivial, mutually cancelling or self-contained in their effects, while still other actions can produce far-reaching aggregate and emergent consequences — yet these different possibilities remain undifferentiated by Giddens. What is wrong with this image, as with the previous one, is that it does not allow for *some* behaviour engendering replication while *other* action initiates transformation. Rather than transcending the voluntarism/determinism dichotomy, the two sides of the 'duality of structure' embody them respectively: they are simply clamped together in a conceptual vice.

This *oscillation between contradictory images derives from Giddens not answering 'when' questions* — when can actors be transformative (which involves specification of degrees of freedom) and when are they trapped into replication (which involves specification of the stringency of constraints)? These answers in turn require analysis of the potential for change, which is rooted in systemic stability/instability, and the conditions under which actors do/do not capitalize on it. Although Giddens admits that structures are both facilitating and constraining, indeed it is one of the major theoretical tasks to discover what aspects of social organization govern the interconnection between the two,[22] this is precisely, with one exception, what he does not do. His theory consistently avoids concrete propositions of this type.

Stringency of constraints

The reason for this omission is his principled but misguided distaste for the constraint concept (contaminated by functionism):[23] the exception, his analysis of contradiction, is of course, on the contrary an example of systemic facilitation. Specification of the stringency of constraints is sedulously avoided at all three levels of analysis — structural properties, social institutions and social systems.

Structural properties are integral to social constitution and reconstitution, but when do they throw their weight behind the one or the other? Generally in sociology this has been tackled through an appreciation that some properties are more resilient or engender more resistance to change than others, at any given time. This specification of the strength of constraints is both impossible in Giddens's conceptualization and unacceptable to him. First his properties (defined reductively as rules and resources) are outside time and space, having a *'virtual existence' only when instantiated by actors*. Second, since what is instantiated depends on the *power of agency and not the nature of the property*, then properties themselves are not differentially mutable. Excessive voluntarism enters through these two doors which are conceptually propped open.

However, why should one accept this peculiar ontological status for structural properties in the first place? Where resources are concerned he argues that what exists in a spatio-temporal sense is only a 'material existent' which, to become operative as a resource has to be instantiated through power relations in conjunction with codes and norms.[24] This is an argument of *necessary* accompaniment and it is not a very convincing one, for the so-called 'material existents' often constrain in their own right. Examples include various kinds of scarcity which can arise without power or normative regulation and involve nothing other than physiological signification, like famine, over-population, shortage of skills or land. In what possible sense do these require instantiation? *They are there* and the problem is how to get rid of them or deal with them.

Less obviously, why should World Three knowledge, even if it lives on only in libraries, be regarded as outside time and space; it is there continuously and thus awaits not instantiation but activation.[25] Yet when it is activated it contains its own potentials and limitations independent of the constuctions and regulations imposed upon it. The fact that resources and their uses *are* usually entangled with rules of signification and legitimation and that these do make a difference should not be confounded with them making all the difference. Indeed, the rules themselves are usually contested and are so precisely because the distribution or use of real resources is at stake. The latter in turn can also affect signification and regulation, instead of the relationship being exclusively the other way round.

Furthermore, the quality of the structural properties makes its own contribution to differential malleability, independent of the amount of power actors bring to bear. Some properties can be changed relatively quickly (tax rules), some take longer to change (demographic or knowledge distributions), some prove highly

resistant to change (bureaucracy, gender distinctions, ethnicity), and some are unchangeable (exhausted natural resources or environmental ruin). Even more importantly, central configurations of rules and resources (the law, the constitution or capitalism) display this differential mutability *among* their internal components.

The key point here is that during the time it takes to change something, then that thing continues to exert a constraint which cannot be assumed to be insignificant in its social consequences, while it lasts. Nations can fall, polities be deposed and economies bankrupted, *while* efforts are being made to change the factors responsible. As a general theoretical proposition this holds good however short the time interval involved. Yet this is what Giddens spirits away by making structural properties atemporal and according them only a pale 'virtual existence'.

Social institutions are conceptualized as standardized practices, enduring and widespread in society.[26] In dealing with social *practices* rather than with institutional *operations*, the earlier conceptual exercise (in which structural *properties* were transmuted into agents' *power*) is directly paralleled. It has identical effects; it amplifies voluntarism and minimizes constraint. The combined accentuation of actors' institutional knowledgeability and underemphasis of how institutions work 'behind our backs' (or before our faces for that matter) produces a complementary neglect of institutional characteristics in their own right. What this omits are characteristics of which people may well be aware (such as centralization, electoral systems or inflation), but which constrain them none the less (as well as others which constrain without much 'discursive penetration' of them, like international monetary policy or high science).

Here explanatory reductionism attends treating the *effects* of, say, centralization as reducible to the exercise of power by determinate actors.[27] The voluntaristic bias means that institutions are what people produce, not what they confront — and have to grapple with in ways which are themselves conditioned by the structural features involved.[28] For Giddens institutional recursiveness never reflects the durability of constraint: it always represents the continuity of reproduction.

Social systems. Only at this level does Giddens concede that 'unintended consequences of action stretch beyond the recursive effects of the duality of structure',[29] producing what others would term 'emergent properties', but which he calls 'self-regulating properties'. Immediately and categorically he asserts that it is their *facilitating effects* upon which theory should centre — 'the self-

regulating properties of social systems must be grasped via a theory of *system contradiction*'.[30] The reason for this one-sidedness is that to Giddens contradictions represent cracks through which radical change can be forced by social conflict — *'ceteris paribus*, conflict and contradiction have a tendency to coincide'.[31] But is he warranted in concentrating on systemic contradiction alone and in ignoring systemic compatibilities altogether?

From the morphogenetic perspective, contradictions, though very important, are only one of many deviation-amplifying mechanisms. To Maruyama, the latter:

> are ubiquitous: accumulation of capital in industry, evolution of living organisms, the rise of cultures of various types, interpersonal processes which produce mental illness, international conflicts, and the processes that are loosely termed as 'vicious circles' and 'compound interests': in short, all processes of mutual causal relationships that amplify an insignificant or accidental initial kick, build up deviation and diverge from the initial condition.[32]

Obviously some of the above examples involve conflict, but 'felicitous circles' and 'compound interests' do not, yet they contribute to structure-building. The close relationship between conflict and change belongs more to the history of sociology than to theories of self-regulation in complex systems.

Giddens's studious neglect of compatibilities — those relations and exchanges among components which tend to preserve or maintain a system's given form, organization or state — derives partly from his valid rejection of functional equilibration but perhaps owes more to the fact that such morphostatic processes are experienced as *constraints* by others in social life. Nevertheless, in complex sociocultural systems, the positive and negative feedback loops producing morphogenesis and morphostasis respectively, also circulate simultaneously.

This means that Giddens provides an inherently partial account of the systemic conditions of change and stability. His attempt to bow out of this by contesting that there is 'little point in looking for an overall theory of stability and change in social systems, since the conditions of social reproduction vary so widely between different types of society'[33] fails on three counts. First, it implies a descent into specificity (not necessarily historical uniqueness) which Giddens himself tends to eschew throughout the book. Second, in pin-pointing 'contradiction' as the focus of theoretical analysis he *is* specifying a general condition of change and to do so must have eliminated other contenders. Third, he does indeed provide an overall theory of stability, if rudimentary in form, to which we will now turn.

Degrees of freedom

As we have seen, the systematic underplaying of constraints artificially inflates the degrees of freedom for action. To correct this Giddens counterposes two factors which limit them, thus tempering hyperactivity and volatility, i.e. his 'attempt to show the essential importance of tradition and routinization in social life'.[34] However, while a full specification of constraints details who is limited, when and how, distinguishing these people from others with vested interests in stability, Giddens stresses only that society forms actors in general terms by inducing habitual action. Yet 'habit' lumps together a variety of conditions promoting stability in a way which is not only methodologically unhelpful but is also positively misleading in its implication that *all* that is required for destabilization is a change of habit.

Thus, instead of a specification of degrees of freedom related to systemic features and the action contexts they create, Giddens provides a general account of 'deroutinization', detached from variations in structural configurations. Primarily it is treated as a passive process in which external events (war, cultural contact, industrialization) disrupt ingrained habits. In practice this repudiates Weber's tenet, embodied in the studies of world religions, that it is only through acknowledging both the restrictions that social organization imposes on people, and the opportunities for action that are rooted in the internal instability of social structures, that we arrive at detailed theories of deroutinization, rationalization and change.

At most Giddens allows that there are 'critical situations' or 'critical phases' where the drastic disruption of routine corrodes the customary behaviour of actors and heightens susceptibility to alternatives. Then 'there is established a kind of "spot welding" of institutions that forms modes of integration which may subsequently become resistant to further change'.[35] Not only is the concept of a 'critical situation' dubious because of its *post hoc* designation, but also this formulation begs more questions than it answers. What makes a phase 'critical' — are structural factors not always germane? What produces a particular crisis — do specific systemic features not generate distinctive crises?[36] What produces subsequent resistance? Logically *this* cannot be attributed to the long-term sedimentation of habits.

Does Giddens's formulation fare any better if we look at it the other way round, i.e. not focusing on what curtails freedom (tradition and routinization), but on the conditions under which higher degrees of freedom prevail? Unfortunately this is not the case, the reason being that the 'transformative capacity' of actors is

immediately conflated with the concept of power. On the contrary, I would maintain that degrees of freedom are logically independent of the power of agents, the relationship between them being one of contingency. Systemic patterning determines a given potential for transformation, but: (a), this may not be capitalized upon by those with the power to do so; (b), its exploitation does not necessarily involve power; and (c), considerable power can be deployed in this context without producing any transformation.

The example of our decentralized educational system should clarify points (a) and (b), for this provides considerable structural degrees of freedom for innovation and change. Sometimes these remain unexploited, not because teachers lack the power to innovate but because they do not want transformation; sometimes they are used for the internal initiation of change without any application of power. Always to Giddens 'transformative capacity is harnessed to actors' attempts to get others *to comply with their wants*'.[37] This was not the case with the foundation of experimental schools nor with the move to progressive schooling, which involved a cumulative change in educational philosophy[38] which could be termed compliance only by rendering that term vacuous (i.e. to accept anything is to comply with it). To clinch point (c), degrees of freedom may be large, but powerful contestants can lock in immobilism, as in cases of political 'centrism', like Fourth Republic France. In other words, there are even some circumstances under which the use of power and the achievement of transformation are antithetic.[39]

Once again the contrast between the structuration approach and the morphogenetic perspective becomes pointed. In the latter, structural elaboration can arise from three sources of interaction (besides their unintended consequences): the confluence of desires, power induced compliance or reciprocal exchange. Therefore in any given case the relationship between power and morphogenesis remains to be determined. Structuration, on the other hand, makes transformation logically dependent on power relations alone.[40]

While structuration attempts to *transcend* the voluntarism/determinism divide by a single conceptual leap (the 'duality of structure'), morphogenesis *tackles* the respective weightings of the two aspects by analysing the stringency of constraints and degrees of freedom in different structural contexts and for different social groups. The hare and the tortoise analogy is equally pertinent to the way these perspectives approach the next 'dualism'.

'Structuration' and synchrony/diachrony

Giddens maintains that 'the conception of structuration introduces

temporality as integral to social theory; and that such a conception involves breaking with the synchrony/diachrony or static/dynamic divisions'.[41] While agreeing whole-heartedly that the incorporation of time is a condition of theoretical adequacy, one may doubt whether 'structuration' does integrate the temporal dimension adequately. Just as the attempt to transcend the voluntarism/determinism dichotomy produced two images of hyperactivity and routinization which were not successfully united, so in this attempt to overcome the static/dynamic division, two equivalent images emerge — those of chronic recursiveness and total transformation — but are not successfully reconciled. The reason for this is identical in both cases, his unwillingness to examine *the interplay between* structure and action because the two presuppose one another so closely.[42]

Immediately following his discussion of the system and its self-regulating properties he proposes 'two principal ways in which the study of system properties may be approached'.[43] This involves an exercise of 'methodological bracketing'. Institutional analysis brackets strategic action and treats structural properties as 'chronically reproduced features of social systems'.[44] This image of recursiveness figures prominently, but many would deny that these features necessarily are 'chronic': though they *may* be long lasting they are nevertheless temporary (e.g. feudalism) or may change frequently (e.g. resource distributions). Instead, through this kind of institutional analysis, they acquire a spurious methodological permanence.

On the other hand, to examine the constitution of social systems as strategic conduct, Giddens brackets institutional analysis and studies actors' mobilization of resources and rules in social relations. This leads immediately to the reverse image — '*Change, or its potentiality, is thus inherent in all moments of social reproduction*'.[45] ('Moments' have now replaced 'circumstances' in the quotation reproduced on page 63.) Here an equally spurious changeability appears as a product of this methodological device — systemic malleability is *not only high but is constant over time*. On the contrary many would argue that it is variable and that its temporal variations are partially independent of strategic action, however intensely it is mobilized or knowledgeably it is conducted. This methodological bracketing has again produced the pendular swing between contradictory images — of chronic recursiveness and total transformation.

Giddens might reply in defence that since both occur simultaneously in reality, then no contradiction is involved as the social system is inherently Janus-faced. But hardly anyone would deny

this, i.e., that there are long tracts of steady institutional replication (sometimes eroded by cumulative action) or that collective action can reshape social structure (without necessarily erasing every familiar regularity or routine). What most of us seek instead of these truisms are theoretical propositions about when (more) recursiveness or (more) transformation will prevail — a specification which would necessitate unravelling the relations between structure and action. This Giddens refuses to give on principle because to specify their interrelationship would involve dualistic theorizing. Yet, ironically, what does his bracketing device do other than traduce this very principle, since it merely transposes dualism from the theoretical to the methodological level — thus conceding its *analytical* indispensability.

More importantly this bracketing approach has serious implications concerning time which seem to contradict the aim of making temporality integral to explaining the system and its properties. To Giddens what is bracketed are the two aspects of the 'duality of structure', institutional analysis and strategic conduct being separated out by placing a methodological *epoché* upon each in turn. But because they are the two sides of the same thing, the pocketed elements must thus be co-terminous in time (the symmetry of the *epochés* confines analysis to the same *époque*); and it follows from this that *temporal relations between* institutional structure and strategic action *logically cannot be examined.*

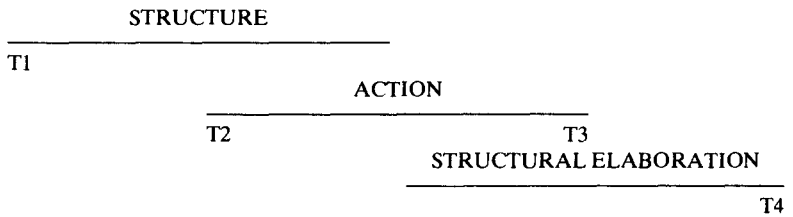
The attempt to reunite the two elements under the rubric of 'structuration' consists in the introduction of three 'modalities', drawn upon by actors strategically but at the same time constituting the institutional features of the system — 'interpretative scheme', 'facility' and 'norm'.[46] To Giddens the 'level of modality thus provides the coupling elements whereby the bracketing of strategic or institutional analysis is dissolved in favour of an acknowledgement of their interrelation'.[47] But the interrelationship is not really at issue (or more precisely it is only an issue for hard-line ethnomethodologists and extreme structural determinists). The real theoretical issue is not whether or not to acknowledge it but how to analyse it, and how to explain the systemic properties it generates and elaborates. Yet little of this can be tackled from an approach which precludes theorizing about the *temporal relations* between structure and action.

The basic notion of the 'duality of structure' militates against the latter because it resists untying structure and action, except by the bracketing exercise. In turn this means Giddens cannot acknowledge that structure and action work on different time intervals (however small the gap between them). This, ironically, leads him

to underplay the full importance of time in sociology. What he stresses is that theorizing must have a temporal dimension: what he misses is time as an actual variable in theory. In consequence Giddens asserts that 'social systems only exist through their continuous structuration in the course of time',[48] but is unable to provide any theoretical purchase on their *structuring over time*.

The morphogenetic argument that structure and action operate over different time periods is based on two simple propositions: that structure logically pre-dates the action(s) which transform it; and that structural elaboration logically post-dates those actions, which can be represented as shown in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1

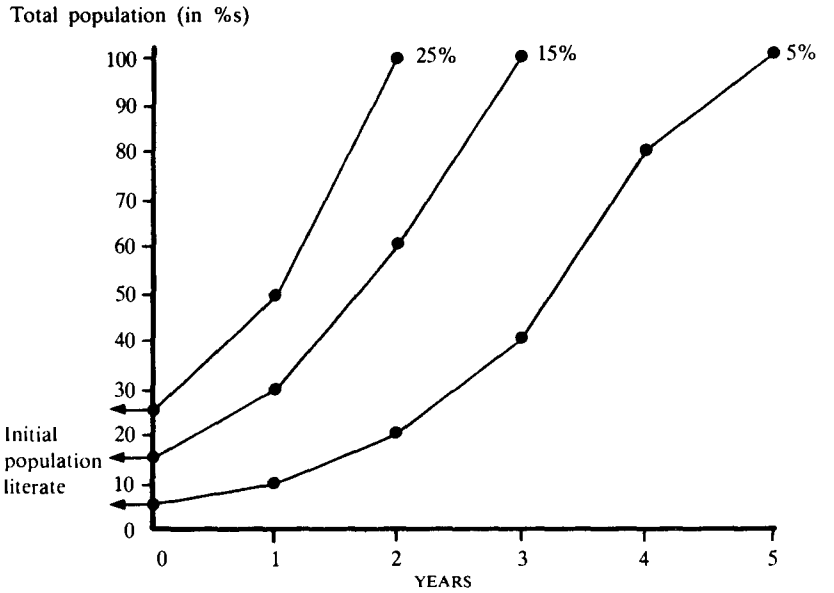


Although all three lines are in fact continuous, the analytical element consists only in breaking up the flows into intervals determined by the problem in hand: given any problem and accompanying periodization, the projection of the three lines backwards and forwards would connect up with the anterior and posterior morphogenetic cycles. This represents the bedrock of an understanding of systemic properties, of *structuring* over time, which enables explanations of specfic forms of structural elaboration to be advanced. (Since time is equally integral to morphostasis there is no question of the temporal being equated with change in general systems theory.) 'Castro's example' will be used to demonstrate how time is incorporated as a theoretical variable since it lends itself to simple quantitative illustration.

After the revolution Castro confronted an extremely high rate of illiteracy which he sought to eliminate by the expedient of 'each one teach one'. Now let us make a number of arbitrary and hypothetical assumptions about a situation like the Cuban one, namely that the proportion of the total population literate at the start was 5 percent (15 percent or 25 percent), that to become literate took precisely a year, and that the policy was 95 percent successful (no society ever

achieves 100 percent literacy). From these the diagram shown in Figure 2 can be produced. For all its oversimplification the curves demonstrate some vital points about the relationships between time and the morphogenetic sequence.

FIGURE 2



1. *Structure*. The initial structural distribution of a property (i.e. the aggregate consequence of prior interaction) influences the time taken to eradicate it (five years versus two years for the outer and inner curves), through its effect on the population capable of transforming it. Certainly only some kinds of properties would approximate to this exponential pattern of change (skills, knowledge, capital accumulation, demographic distribution), but this does not affect the basic point that all structures manifest temporal resistance and do so generically through conditioning the context of action. Most often perhaps their conditional influence consists in dividing the population (not necessarily exhaustively) into social groups working for the maintenance versus the change of a given property, because the property itself distributes different objective vested interests to them at T2 (rather than abilities as in the example used). This would be the case where properties like citizenship, political centralization or wage differentials were concerned.

Furthermore, what the diagram serves to highlight is that the

initial structural influence does not peter out immediately, even given a collective determination to transform it (indeed here the major burden of illiteracy in dispersed only towards the end, in the last or penultimate time interval). In other words it takes time to change *any* structural property and that period represents one of constraint for some groups at least. No matter how short, it prevents the achievement of certain goals (those which motivate attempts to change it). Structural influences extend beyond T2 and it is essential to know whether this is because they (temporally and temporarily) resist collective pressures to change, remain because they represent the vested interests of the powerful, or are in fact 'psychologically supported' by the population. To regard every institutional regularity as the result of 'deep sedimentation' is to assimilate them all to the latter category. Yet without these distinctions it remains inexplicable *when* (or whether) the property will be transformed.

2. *Action.* On the one hand, action initiated at T2 takes place in a context not of its own making. In our example, those who were literate initially were not responsible for their *distribution* in the population; this group property resulted from the restrictive educational policies of others, probably long dead.[49] Here it appears impossible to follow the methodological individualist and assert that any structural property influential after T2 is attributable to contemporary actors (not wanting or not knowing how to change it), because knowledge about it, attitudes towards it, vested interests in retaining it and objective capacities for changing it have already been distributed and determined by T2. Yet without analysing these we cannot account for *when* the '*longue durée*' is broken, *who* is primarily responsible for it, or *how* it is accomplished (by collective policy, social conflict, incremental change etc.).[50]

On the other hand, between T2 and T3 agency exerts two independent influences, one temporal, the other directional. It can speed-up, delay or prevent the elimination of prior structural influences. In our example, (a) popular commitment to self-instruction could reduce the time taken to eliminate illiteracy, thus improving on all three curves (though not obliterating them entirely because of the need for personnel to prepare, disseminate and guide in the use of materials); (b) lack of enthusiasm or ability to teach among literates and lack of willingness to participate and learn among illiterates can delay the process[51] and damage the project. (Determinism is not built in to the morphegenetic perspective.) Simultaneously, agents, although partly conditioned by their acquirements (whose contents they did not themselves define) can exercise a directional influence upon the future cultural definition of 'literacy' thus affecting the substance of elaboration at T4.

(Voluntarism has an important place in morphogenesis but is ever trammelled by past structural and cultural constraints and by the current politics of the possible.)

3. *Structural elaboration.* If action is effective then the transformation produced at T4 is not merely the eradication of a prior structural property (illiteracy) and its replacement by a new one (literacy), it is the structural elaboration of a host of new social possibilities some of which will have gradually come into play between T2 and T4. Morphogenetic analysis thus explains the timing of the new facilitating factors and can account for the inception, in this instance, of say a national postal service, mail-order businesses, bureaucratization and less obvious but more significant developments like international communication with its ramifications for religion, technology, political ideology, etc. From the 'structuration' perspective, these remain the capricious exploits of indeterminate 'moments'.

Simultaneously, however, structural elaboration restarts a new morphogenetic cycle, for it introduces a new set of conditional influences upon interaction which are constraining as well as facilitating. T4 is thus the new T1, and the next cycle must be approached afresh analytically, conceptually and theoretically. Giddens is completely correct that laws in the social sciences are historical in character (i.e., mutable over time), but whereas his endorsement of this view rests principally on the reflexive knowledge and behaviour of actors,[52] mine resides on changes in the social structure itself which require us to theorize about it in different ways since our subject matter has altered. A new explanandum calls for a new explanans, though this does not rule out the possibility that the latter can be subsumed under a more general law.

Paradoxically, for all Giddens's stress upon the importance of time, it is the past *in* the present and the future *in* the present which matter for him; the present being a succession of 'passing moments' in which, quoting William James approvingly, 'the dying rearward of time and its dawning future forever mix their lights'.[53] This continuous flow defies periodization. Consequently he has to stress the quintessential polyvalence of each 'moment', both replicatory and transformatory (reproduction always carries its two connotations). Yet he is nevertheless driven to recognize the existence of 'critical phases' in the long term and to accord (excessive) theoretical significance to them (as times of institutional spot-welding). What is lacking in Giddens's work is the length of time between the 'moment' and the 'critical phase' — in which the slow work of structural elaboration is accomplished and needs theorizing about.

Social systems and the individual/society dichotomy

Giddens's basic aim here is to bring together the development of the individual as a social product and the generation of society by human agency, within a single theoretical framework. Essentially this means giving a 'parts-whole' account which explains the *articulation* of the two components. Giddens's account accepts the 'problem of scope':[54] he rightly rejects homology as a solution, denying that the system is small-scale interaction writ large, or that the small is a miniaturized version of the large. His distinction between social and systems integration widens this rejection to include any view which presumes that what integrates the individual into society automatically explains what integrates society itself — thus illegitimately conflating social integration with systemic integration. Such views foreclose the possibility of society consisting of groups in tension, yet he argues that those who have accepted such tension as their premise (like Merton) have then wrongly relinquished an understanding of *the totality as in some way implicated in the parts*.[55] It is this implicative 'parts-whole' relationship that he seeks to develop. Already two controversial points should be noted.

On the one hand he implies that all current theories endorsing intergroup tension at the level of social integration also share the defects of Mertonian functionalism at the systemic level, i.e. they cannot handle the mutual implication of parts and whole. This might be challenged from a number of different perspectives, but what is of particular relevance here is that it would be rejected by those who expressly broke with functionalism to achieve an implicative but non-homological 'parts-whole' account — like Gouldner, Blau, Etzioni or Buckley — namely just those theorists who began to explore morphogenesis in the context of general systems theory. (Interestingly, given the sweep and erudition of Giddens's work, these are the sociologists who never receive sustained attention.)

On the other hand, although Giddens accepts *a* 'problem of scope' he does not see this as intimately allied to transcending micro-macro dualism in sociological theory. On the contrary, instead of conceptualizing scope as the problem of charting a methodological path leading from the smallest-scale interaction to large-scale complex systems, Giddens transmutes the notion of successive concrete *levels* of increasing size into one of abstract 'dimensions', which affect all sizes of group and operate simultaneously. Thus the 'crunching-up', which has already been discussed, of transformation and recursiveness (equally salient and eternally operative) and of moment and totality (no sequence only

simultaneity), is now joined in his 'dimensional approach' by a compacting of the micro- and the macro-, which are not teased out in scale or time. Can this yield an adequate, let alone a superior account of the 'parts-whole' relationship?

Giddens's articulation between the two is achieved through his concepts of 'modalities' and 'structural principles' which are intimately related to one another. We have seen that the three modalities — 'interpretative scheme', 'norm' and 'facility' — serve to articulate interaction and structure. Through being drawn upon by actors in the production of interaction while also constituting the structural media of systems, 'the "modalities" of structuration represent the central dimensions of the duality of structure'.[56] All three dimensions are combined in different ways to produce the range of social practices generated within the intersecting sets of rules and resources that ultimately express features of the totality. How then are we to grasp the observable regularities (the 'visible pattern') produced through this dimensional interplay? (Giddens of course rejects the procedure of separating out 'upward' and 'downward' influences or disentangling interconnections between 'context' and 'environment'.)

His answer is given at length because of the need to dwell on his precise formulation. 'Each of the three sets mentioned above thus has to be interpolated as elements of cycles of social reproduction producing systemness in social relations. In the context of such interpolation, we can identify structural elements that are most deeply embedded in the time-space dimensions of social systems ... I shall refer to such structural elements as *structural principles*. Structural principles govern the basic institutional alignments in a society'.[57] They may operate at all of the three levels of system integration: homeostasis, feedback or reflexive self-regulation.[58] Difficulties in this 'parts-whole' account surround both the *identification* of the two keys concepts and their *interrelationship*.

The 'structural principles' are *abstractions*, manifesting themselves as institutionalized connections governing the reproduction of a particular social system or type of society. How then can they be grasped unequivocally? In practice Giddens advances two different procedures, though they are not clearly distinguished as such.

1. The first method turns on his distinction between 'primary principles' and 'secondary' or derivative ones. 'Primary principles', he argues, can be identified as being fundamentally and inextricably involved in systemic reproduction because they enter into the very structuring of what that system is. In other words, they can be detected *directly* by virtue of their *centrality*. However, when

practical examples are adduced, the procedure appears to lead to considerable equivocation. For instance, he claims that in Marx's characterization of early capitalism the 'forces/relations of production scheme may be read as asserting the universal primacy of allocation over authorization', but in what Giddens calls 'class-divided societies' (where accumulation is not dominated by private capital), the principle is reversed, authorization having primacy over allocation, as in the early civilizations.[59] Not only are such 'principles' far from self-evident, they are incapable of commanding public assent. Indeed the whole 'industrial society' debate is precisely about what its central principles are, the various terms used providing a good indication of divergence over what is considered to be central — 'technological society', 'affluent society', 'consumer society', 'welfare society', 'managerial society' or 'new industrial state'.

The distinction between 'primary' and 'secondary' principles is open to the same objection (and has fuelled the above debate, a major aspect of which is whether we should talk about industrial *economies* or are justified in speaking more extensively about industrial *societies*). In other words all such 'structural principles' are in fact contested. Their ultimate status is that of hypotheses advanced by investigators and *not* that of structural elements integral to societies.

2. However, Giddens's work does contain an alternative method for the identification of 'structural principles', namely by interpolation of the 'modalities' which will reveal the most deeply embedded structural elements, as the earlier quotation stated. Here the 'structural principles' are not identified (at the macro-level) by inspecting the system itself, as in (1), but rather, *indirect* identification takes place instead, by examining the mechanisms (at the micro-level) producing systemness, which the principles govern. In other words, governance is detected through its effects. Yet this method of identification does not seem any more satisfactory for it has exactly the same weakness as the first, namely that indirect interpolation has the same contested nature and hypothetical status as does the direct induction of principles. Since there are no grounds of validation which would command public agreement, each and every interpolation must remain equivocal.

Moreover, not only does the latter method fail to solve the problem of identifying 'structural principles', it also reveals a major difficulty surrounding the *relationship* between the 'principles' and the 'modalities'. This is crucial because it is their articulation which constitutes the mainstay of Giddens's 'parts-whole' account. In (2) the combination(s) of the 'modalities' is held to be governed by

principles operative at higher levels (homeostasis, feedback or reflexive self-regulation), otherwise the 'principles' are not identifiable through the 'modalities'. Here social interchange at lower levels is being presented as the product of the system (incidentally a much stronger influence than the structural conditioning of the micro- by the macro- endorsed in general systems theory). But this is not consistent with Giddens's own conceptualization of the 'modalities' and specifically the *generative* powers with which he endows them — put another way, it conflicts with the micro-level acting back on the macro-level.

To him, for all that the three 'modalities' are media (structural components) of the system, they nevertheless have significant autonomy as drawn upon creatively by actors. If each 'mode' presupposes unprogrammed transformations, then their combinatory possibilities are open not closed, problematic not given. This Giddens considers as quintessential to the duality of structure. Yet if this autonomy is granted, then the combinations of these three dimensions actually manifested in interaction are not necessarily governed by the 'structural principles'. In other words, any regularities detected via interpolation of the 'modalities' need not be the effects of the 'principles' but may reflect the regular exploitation of autonomy by agency. Giddens wishes to say that they are both, but if he wants to have it both ways then he is left with no method for detecting his 'principles'.

Once again the duality notion has produced two unreconciled images: the one presents the 'principles' as governing the 'modalities' (the macro- dominating the micro-), the other portrays the 'modalities' as cyclically transforming the 'principles' (the micro- directing the macro-). The attempt to interrelate them fails on logical gounds, the attempt to identify the principal components also fails on practical grounds. The unsuccessful articulation of the two key concepts which these failures imply undercuts the claim to have advanced a superior 'parts-whole' account.

The 'parts-whole' account proffered from the morphogenetic perspective links structure and interaction in an entirely different way — the structured whole being understood in terms of the social processes which articulate relations between individuals and groups. In contrast to the structuration approach there is investigation of *processes* instead of imputation of *'principles'*, and identification of *mechanisms* in place of the interpolation of *'modalities'*. This account of the whole as a negotiated order is based four-square on the following assumptions which Giddens barely acknowledges and grossly underplays: interaction generates emergent properties which must figure in explanatory statements; scope is a crucial

variable which precludes an undifferentiated theory covering the micro- and macroscopic; the dynamics producing the elaborating of the complex whole can be modelled. By working through these sequentially I will seek to show not only that a better 'parts-whole' account results but also one which fulfils Giddens's desiderata of treating society as consisting of parts in tension and of understanding the totality as implicated in its parts.[60]

Emergence is embedded in interaction: in the latter 'we are dealing with a system of interlinked components that can only be defined in terms of the interrelations of each of them in an ongoing developmental process that generates emergent phenomena — including those we refer to as institutional structures'.[61] Emergent properties are therefore relational: they are not contained in the elements themselves, but could not exist apart from them. As Blau puts it, 'although complex social systems have their foundation in simpler ones, they have their own dynamics with emergent properties'.[62] The latter can arise at all levels from small-scale interaction upwards, although as scope grows they are increasingly distanced from everyday psychological dispositions but never ultimately detached from interaction. The highest orders of emergence are nothing more than the relations between the results of the results of interaction. Nevertheless, these feed bac' to condition subsequent interaction at lower levels.

It follows that the problems of scope cannot be side-stepped if an adequate 'parts-whole' account is to be given. In this perspective the task 'is to specify and conceptualize the processes and mechanisms by which the more complex and indirect sociative structures or communication matrices are generated out of less complex, less indirect and patterned sociative processes — on how the former feed back to help structure the latter; and on how each may continually interact to help maintain or to change the other'.[63] Thus *the first implication* of a full acceptance of emergence is the need to *disentangle the micro-macro connections* which lead to the genesis of social structures. Although the problem of scope has not yet been fully transcended, Blau's analytical history of emergence is what later morphogenetic accounts must improve on.

Blau provides a starter motor at the micro-level in exchange relations, derives integration (reciprocal exchange) and differentiation (power stemming from lack of reciprocity) directly from these elementary transactions, and shows how macro-level political organization with its inherent tension between legitimation and opposition are indirect consequences of them. This painstaking derivation of large-scale structures from small-scale interaction gives much more analytical purchase on the social system and its

parts than does Giddens's procedure of positing 'modalities' and conceptualizing their interplay as dimensional permutations. In the latter the middle ground of transactions, accommodations, aggregations and emergence is dealt with by conceptual manipulation rather than processual exploration. In the former, institutional structure is understood as generated by determinate social processes taking place under specified conditions.

The second implication of emergence is the need to grapple with the ongoing interplay between micro- and macro-levels, where the broader context conditions the environment of actors whose responses then transform the environment with which the context subsequently has to deal, the two jointly generating further elaboration[64] as well as changes in one another. Analytical complexity is enormous precisely because morphogenesis is a multi-level affair and no level can be dropped or conflated without making the unwarranted assumption that some level has ultimate primacy. The multiple feedback models of general systems theory are basic tools for teasing out the dynamics of structural elaboration: though complex to operationalize, they are not defied by complexity. This kind of modelling can yield up the practical mechanisms of morphogenesis which provide a better explanatory grip on complex social systems than do hypothetical 'structural principles'.

It should be clear from the foregoing that Giddens's two criteria for a satisfactory 'parts-whole' account are met. From the morphogenetic perspective the whole is implicated in the parts in two senses — it emerges from them and it acts back upon them — though the full implicative force can be grasped only *over time* since feedback takes time. Part of this force is therefore lost by truncating mutual implication into the moment/totality relationship. Equally, the parts themselves are in tension and the nature of the tension produces the state of the whole. Inevitably, social processes generated to meet certain requirements represent impediments to other groups. Integrative and differentiating processes come into conflict as do legitimate organizations and the opposition provoked by the constraints they exert.[65] As Blau argues from this, the 'perennial adjustments and counter-adjustments find expression in a dialectical pattern of social change',[66] much of which would be lost by unduly restricting analytical focus to certain tensions, hypothetized but not substantiated, as 'primary'.[67]

Conclusion

The differences explored between the morphogenetic perspective and the structuration approach stem from an initial parting of the

ways over the endorsement of 'analytical dualism' or the adoption of the 'duality of structure'. The following points summarize how 'analytical dualism' *tackles* the dichotomies which the 'duality of structure' fails to transcend.

1. The specification of degrees of freedom and stringency of constraints makes it possible to *theorize about variations* in voluntarism and determinism (and their consequences), whereas conceptual insistence on the simultaneity of transformative capacity and chronic recursiveness inhibits any theoretical formulation of the conditions under which either will predominate.

2. The analytical separation of structure and interaction over time permits theorizing about temporal structuring and restructuring which is precluded when the conceptual bonding of the synchronic and the diachronic produces a seamless web of 'instantiations'.

3. The analytical distinction between subject and object over time allows for theorizing about the influences of people on society and vice versa, avoiding the 'desperate incorporation'[68] of society into man or the dubious imputation of 'principles' articulating the two.

It should be clear from the foregoing discussion that the 'analytical dualism' advocated is artificial and methodological: it implies no commitment to the philosophical dualism which Giddens rightly attacks.

Postscript

However, it would be unfair to conclude without noting Giddens's view that the two approaches are engaged upon different sociological enterprises. To him the 'identification of structures can in no sense be regarded as the only aim of sociological investigation. The instantiation of structure in the reproduction of social systems, as its medium and outcome, is the proper focus of sociological analysis'.[69] However, this distinction is not one of substance as is implied, but harks back to a difference of origins, to potent images of society carried over from analogical starting points, i.e. from cybernetics and linguistics respectively.

In view of this the contrast appears particularly inapposite as far as the morphogenetic perspective is concerned. For general systems theory has already shed that part of its cybernetic heritage which led it to focus on the identification of structures. It has abandoned the sterile exercise of terminological redescription in which to translate conceptions of social structure into the language of systems theory was either the end-product or was confused with an understanding of the logic of social systems.[70] Indeed, it is now explicitly recognized that basic cybernetic models are of no help in identifying, much less in theorizing about complex social systems. Essential-

ly a 'simple, cybernetic feedback model of explicit group goal-seeking does not fit most societies of the past and present because of a lack in those societies of informed, centralized direction and widespread, promotively interdependent goal behaviours of individuals and sub-groups'.[71] Hence the morphogenetic perspective now concentrates *on the socio-cultural system in its own right, identifying and explaining the real and variegated structures which have emerged historically and theorizing about their concrete elaboration in the future.*

It is these italicized features which properly distinguish between the two perspectives. For the structuration approach has shaken-off much less of the linguistic analogy and this means that Giddens still addresses the social system indirectly, hoping that its variations can be subsumed under the principles governing the analogue which will also provide the key to its transformations.

Although Giddens states clearly 'I reject the conception that society is like a language',[72] the late Wittgenstein stalks the text — to know a form of life is to know a language.[73] Thus the key concepts themselves come direct from linguistics: the 'recursive character of language — and, by generalization, of social systems also'[74] — is the source of the 'duality of structure': 'the notion that society, like language, should be regarded as a "virtual system" with recursive properties'[75] comes direct from Saussure. Certainly he breaks away from some of these starting-points, Saussure in particular, but his ultimate aim is the closer integration of semiotic studies with social theory in order to develop 'a theory of codes, and of code production, grounded in a broader theory of social practice, and reconnected to hermeneutics'.[76] As Gellner aptly commented in a wider context, a culture, a form of life, and we can add a code, 'is a *problem* — never a *solution*'.[77] What Giddens has done in shackling sociology to semiotics is in fact to transfer several problems to our domain — insubstantiality, indeterminacy and intractability.

His approving quotation from Eco gives the full flavour of insubstantiality, light years away from the examination of real structures. 'Semiotics suggests a sort of molecular landscape in which what we are accustomed to recognize as everyday forms turn out to be the result of transitory chemical aggregations ... revealing that where we thought we saw images there were only strategically arranged aggregations of black and white points, alternations of presence and absence'.[78] To ground this view of codes in a 'broader theory of social practice' merely adds the indeterminacy problem. For practices themselves are seen as transformations of virtual orders of differences (of codes in time and space). Societal changes

thus become indeterminate, they are like the shaking of a kaleidoscope — shifting patterns produced by the manipulation of oppositions by the population at large.

Finally, given the mutuality of codes and practices (in which we cannot simply identify pre-existing codes which generate messages because messages also enter into the reconstitution of codes in the duality of structure), their interplay becomes analytically intractable, for how can we 'break-in' to the circuit? (Analytical dualism is of course the device employed in morphogenesis to deal with *its* ongoing, circular systemic processes, but this is proscribed here.) In practice the answer is, by imputation, interpretation or interpolation — as was seen with the 'structural principles' — but this merely reinvokes Lévi-Strauss's problem of the absent context of justification.

The difference in sociological enterprise, as Giddens initially stated it, is illusory. The morphogenetic perspective is not only concerned with the identification and elaboration of social structures, it is preoccupied above all with the specification of the mechanisms involved — with the feedback 'process that contains both negative (stabilizing or rigidifying elements and positive (structure-elaborating, or increasingly disorganizing) features'.[79] This is the way in which institutional structures help to create and re-create themselves in an ongoing developmental process. The ultimate difference is not one of enterprise, for an adequate theory of stabilization, disorganization and elaboration obviously incorporates the instantiation of structure, just as an adequate theory of instantiation must specify the conditions of morphostasis and morphogenesis. The theory of structuration remains incomplete because it provides an insufficient account of the *mechanisms* of stable replication versus the genesis of new social forms, and will do so while ever it resists unpacking these two connotations of 'reproduction'.

Notes

1. This article first appeared in *The British Journal of Sociology*, 33 (4), December 1982.

2. The most detailed argument for the indispensability of both structure and action appeared in the late 1960s: Cohen, Percy S. (1968) *Modern Social Theory*. London: Heinemann. See also Blau, P.M. (ed.) (1976) *Approaches to the Study of Social Structure*. London: Open Books; Blau, P.M. and R.K. Merton (1981) *Continuities in Structural Inquiry*. London and Beverly Hills: Sage.

3. Dawe, Alan (1970) 'The Two Sociologies', *British Journal of Sociology* 21 (2).

4. E.g. Blau, P.M. (1964) *Exchange and Power in Social Life*, New York, John Wiley; Gouldner, A.W. (1976) 'Reciprocity and Autonomy in Functional Theory', in

N.J. Demerath and R.A. Peterson (eds.) *System, Change and Conflict*, New York: Free Press; Buckley, Walter (1967) *Sociology and Modern Systems Theory*, Englewood Cliffs, Prentice-Hall; Etzioni, A. (1968) *The Active Society*, New York: Free Press; Eisenstadt S.N. and M. Curelaru (1977) 'Macro-Sociology', *Current Sociology*, 25 (2).

5. E.g. Lockwood, D. (1964) 'Social Integration and Systems Integration', in Zollschan, G.K. and H.W. Hirsch *Explorations in Social Change*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin; Pizzorno, A. (1968) 'A propos de la méthode de Gramsci', *L'Homme et la Société*, 8; Touraine, A. (1968) *Le Mouvement de Mai ou le Communisme Utopique*, Paris: Seuil; Wellmer, Albrecht (1971) *Critical Theory of Society*, New York: Herder & Herder; Habermas, Jürgen (1971) *Towards a Rational Society*, London: Heinemann; and (1972) *Knowledge and Human Interests*, London: Heinemann; Anderson, Perry (1976) *Considerations on Western Marxism*, London: New Left Books.

6. E.g. Goffman, E. (1964) 'The Neglected Situation', *American Anthropologist*, 66; Sacks, H., E.A. Schegloff and G. Jefferson (1974) 'A Simplest Systematics for the Organization of Turn-Taking in Interaction', *Language*, 50.

7. Lévi-Strauss, C. (1963) *Structural Anthropology*, New York: Basic Books; Sebag, L. (1964) *Structuralisme et Marxisme*,, Paris: Payot; Piaget, Jean (1968) *Structuralisme*, Paris: P.U.F. See also Boudon, R. (1968) *A quoi sert la nation de 'structure'*, Paris: Gallimard; Glucksman, M. (1974) *Structuralist Analysis in Contemporary Thought*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul; Bottomore, Tom and Robert Nisbet (1979) 'Structuralism', in their (eds), *A History of Sociological Analysis*, London: Heinemann.

8. Morphostasis 'Refers to those processes in complex system-environment exchanges that tend to preserve or maintain a system's given form, organization or state. Morphogenesis will refer to those processes which tend to elaborate or change a system's given form, structure or state', Buckley, *Sociology and Modern Systems Theory*, op.cit., 58–9.

9. Buckley, Walter, *Sociology and Modern Systems Theory*, op.cit.; Buckley, Walter (ed) (1968) *Modern Systems Research for the Behavioural Scientist*, Chicago: Aldine. See also Maruyama Margoroh (1963) 'The Second Cybernetics: Deviation Amplifying Mutual Causal Processes', *American Scientist*, 51.

10. Giddens, Anthony (1979) *Central Problems in Social Theory: Action, Structure and Contradiction in Social Analysis*, London: Macmillan, 7.

11. Ibid.

12. Ibid, 5.

13. A label Giddens appropriates. Ibid, 7.

14. See Brodbeck, May (1971) 'Methodogical Individualisms: Definition and Reduction' in her (ed.), *Readings in the Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, New York: Macmillan. For my own defence of this concept and its place in theorizing about social structure see 'In Defence of Macro-Sociology', in Archer, M.S. (1979) *Social Origins of Educational Systems*, London and Beverly Hills: Sage, 5–42.

15. Giddens, *Central Problems in Social Theory*, op.cit., 5.

16. Ibid., 69.

17. I am indebted to Dr John Heritage for this insight.

18. Ibid., 56.

19. Ibid., 210.

20. Ibid., 71.

21. Ibid., 77–8.

22. Ibid., 69–70.

23. Ibid., 50–2

24. Ibid., 104.

25. Activation need not involve power relations unless Giddens's premise that all action is logically tied to power is accepted. See ibid., 88.

26. Ibid., 80

27. As Gellner succinctly puts it, group variables 'can indeed only exist if their parts exist — that is indeed the predicament of all wholes — but their fates *qua* fates of complexes can nevertheless be the initial condition or indeed the final condition of a causal sequence', 'Holism Versus Individualism', in Brodbeck, May, *Readings in the Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, op.cit., 263.

28. For example I have tried to show at length how a centralized system of education conditions subsequent patterns of educational interaction and profoundly influences the processes by which change can be introduced in ways quite different from those characteristic of decentralized systems. See my *Social Origins of Educational Systems*, op.cit., especially ch. 5, 265–8.

29. Giddens, *Central Problems in Social Theory*, op.cit., 78.

30. Ibid., 76.

31. Ibid., 144.

32. Maruyama, M. 'The Second Cybernetics: Deviation-Amplifying Mutual Causal Processes'; op.cit., 164.

33. Giddens, *Central Problems in Social Theory*, op.cit., 215.

34. Ibid., 7.

35. Ibid., 229.

36. Amitai Etzioni provides the boldest illustrations of this point in his discussions of 'under' and 'over' managed societies and their typical and very different kinds of crises, *The Active Society*, op.cit.

37. Giddens, *Central Problems in Social Theory*, op.cit., 93.

38. See Selleck, R.J.W. (1972) *English Primary Education and the Progressives, 1914–39*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

39. It should be clear from the foregoing that I endorse Lukes's approach to the concept of power rather than that of Giddens. Once again this is a question of dualism versus duality. Lukes maintains analytical dualism by seeking to draw a line between structural determination and the exercise of power. Hence he talks of 'where structural determination ends and power begins' (Lukes, S. *Essays in Social Theory*, London: Macmillan, p. 18) and is predictably chastised by Giddens for tending to 'repeat the dualism of agency and structure' (*Central Problems in Social Theory*, op.cit., 91). Giddens wants to overcome this divide by defining power as 'transformative capacity', hence maintaining duality by viewing structure as implicated in power relations and power relations as implicated in structure. Now Lukes does not deny these interconnections but he avoids Giddens's compacting of the two elements which blurs the distinction between responsible action and determined action, severing the tie between power and responsibility which is essential to Lukes. On the contrary he tries to discover, explain and assess the weight of structural limitations on action which delimit the zone in which it is proper (and profitable) to speak of power relations. Thus to Lukes, in general, 'although the agents operate within structurally defined limits, they none the less have a certain relative autonomy and could have acted differently' (Lukes, ibid., 6–7). What is then required in this dualistic approach 'is a sustained discussion of the nature of, and conditions for, autonomy (and its relation to social determination)' (Lukes, S. (1974) *Power: A Radical View*, London, Macmillan) — in other words a specification of the degrees of freedom *within which* power can be exercised.

40. The following statement that 'power within social systems can thus be treated *as involving reproduced relations of autonomy and dependence in social interaction*' (Giddens, *Central Problems in Social Theory*, op.cit., 93) is significant in view of the connection he makes between power and transformative capacity. What is neglected throughout the book is *interdependence*, where two parties can achieve joint control over something (thus directing subsequent transformations of it) on the basis of *reciprocal* exchange between them. Yet transformative capacity can depend just as much upon balanced transactions as upon power relations.

41. Giddens, *Central Problems in Social Theory*, op.cit., 198.

42. Ibid., 53.

43. Ibid., 80.

44. Idem.

45. Ibid., 114.

46. I shall say more in the next section about the location of these modes and will only concentrate now on their significance for time.

47. Ibid., 81.

48. Ibid., 217.

49. One of Auguste Comte's rate and valid aphorisms was that human society has more dead than living members.

50. 'Institutions are constituted and reconstituted in the tie between the *durée* of the passing moment, and the *longue durée* of deeply sedimented time-space relations', Giddens, *Central Problems in Social Theory*, op.cit., 110.

51. The curves *are* purely hypothetical, without being wholly unrealistic (i.e. they embody no known counter-factuals). Certainly exponential growth will probably be distorted as universal literacy is approached, because pockets of high resistance are encountered (made up, for example, of the geographically inaccessible, those culturally antagonistic, the very old and those who are diffident or discouraged). Simultaneously however, social learning will have improved teaching techniques between T2 and T3, thus offsetting resistance to some (unknown) extent. In any case the diagram specifically excludes 100 percent success, and it makes no difference to the argument if literacy in only achieved at the 85 percent level, say, rather than the 95 percent level used for illustration.

52. Giddens, *Central Problems in Social Theory*, op.cit., 243–4.

53. Ibid., 3.

54. See Wagner, H.R., 'Displacement of Scope: A Problem of the Relationship between Small Scale and Large Scale Sociological Theories', op.cit.

55. Giddens, *Central Problems in Social Theory*, op.cit., 111.

56. Ibid., 81.

57. Ibid., 106.

58. Ibid., 141.

59. Ibid., 162–3.

60. Ibid., 111.

61. Buckley, Walter, *Sociology and Modern Systems Theory*, op.cit., 125.

62. Blau, P. *Exchange and Power in Social Life*, op.cit., 20.

63. Buckley, Walter, *Sociology and Modern Systems Theory*, op.cit., 128.

64. I have provided an extended illustration of these context/environment/elaboration interplays in relation to growth in school enrollment. 'Theorizing about the expansion of Educational Systems' in Archer, M.S. (ed.), (1982) *The Sociology of Educational Expansion*, London and Beverly Hills: Sage.

65. 'Such conflicting social forces give rise to alternating patterns of structural change', Blau, P., *Exchange and Power in Social Life*, op.cit., 321.

66. Ibid., 314.

67. Percy Cohen has convincingly demonstrated the supreme difficulty of designating or distinguishing 'primary', core or fundamental features of a social system from minor, superficial or peripheric ones. The same arguments hold for processes of social change.

'Even if there were no problems of *identifying* core elements of a system, there would still be a problem of distinguishing basic from superficial changes. This is important for the following reason: even if one identifies factor A as strategic in relation to B, C, D and E, this does not mean that these other, non-core features do not change at all without an initial change in A, nor does it mean that changes in them have no effect at all on changes in A ... The crucial question is: do changes in A produce *radical* changes in B, C, D or E, while changes in B, C, D and E produce only superficial changes in A? And if the answer to this question is affirmative, does one have some measure for distinguishing radical changes from superficial ones? And, if one does have such a measure, when does one apply it? For the short-run effect of B on A might be superficial, while the long-run effect might be radical! The gist of all this discussion is that one can only know *ex post facto* whether a particular change was or was not a change in a "core" feature of the social structure.' (*Modern Social Theory*, op.cit., p.177 (see 176–8).)

68. Gellner, E. 'Holism versus Individualism', op.cit., 267.

69. Giddens, *Central Problems in Social Theory*, op.cit., 106.

70. An ambitious attempt, which nevertheless manifests this defect, to unify the concepts used in all the social sciences by translating them into the terminology of systems theory is Alfred Kuhn, (1976) *The Logic of Social Systems*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

71. Buckley, Walter, *Sociology and Modern Systems Theory*, op.cit., 206.

72. Giddens, *Central Problems in Social Theory*, op.cit., 4.

73. Ibid., 251.

74. Ibid., 18.

75. Ibid., 47.

76. Ibid., 48.

77. Gellner, Ernest (1964) *Thought and Change*, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 184ff.

78. Eco cited by Giddens, *Central Problems in Social Theory*, op.cit., 106.

79. Buckley, Walter, *Sociology and Modern Systems Theory*, op.cit., 137.

4

Values and power in macro-sociological processes and formations

François Bourricaud

If by consensus we mean the two-fold fact that people may agree and make their actions compatible, we have to ask ourselves on which conditions depends such a surprising convergence, given the fact that the individuals who are part of the society are extraordinarily different. It is true that the so-called consensus is most of the time an ideal. But what force does bring individuals together, even if it does not thoroughly assimilate them? Is it their 'well understood' interest? Are there 'commonly shared values'? It is as difficult to build the consensus on the 'interests' of the people, as it is to build it on 'common values'. Both are hazy, and may be so in order to justify the most contradictory stances and statements. 'Values' and 'interests' bring about as many conflicts as they resolve.

We are then led to look for a primary 'experience' or background, prior to any opposition of opinion or interest. The ground on which that primary experience would be built, constitutive of any meaning and value, we may call *symbolism*. In fact, it is the way we come to sense our bodies, to perceive some of our more intimate relations — for instance, with our sexual partners. It is often said that such a perception is 'primitive'. True, but it also plays with details, arbitrarily and infinitely magnified. This is the case with sexual fetishism which plays with the most unusual associations. But beside that *personal* symbolism, there is in our most primitive experience many references which apply to a broader context. So to some parts of our body is attached the possibility of recalling sentiments and attitudes which may be, at least partially, understood by other members of our society.

We are now in a condition to ask ourselves whether or not the social consensus so often qualified as 'symbolic', shares the attributes of symbolism alluded to, mainly its primitive and thorough character. At any rate, these attributes can be found in two groups of social phenomena, in relation to which the classical philosophers raised the question of symbolic thought and its statute:

I refer to 'tradition' on one hand, and 'charisma' on the other. I use the word 'tradition' in the same way as Weber, in order to designate any action for which there is a rule or formula which is 'taken for granted' but only on the grounds that 'people have always done it that way'. The authority of tradition may be said to be symbolic in two areas. First, it refers to an undifferentiated background within which the distinction between 'before' and 'after' remains, at best, implicit. Second, tradition may also be said to be symbolic by its content. It relies on persuasion by images, pictures and examples. Weber contrasts tradition with 'charisma'. Charisma makes changes, whereas tradition confirms and repeats. Charisma proceeds by making a breakthrough. But from the point of view of its cognitive content, charisma is akin to tradition. It appeals to the imagination. The prophet fills the people with wonder, either by his doings or by his sayings.

From the Reformation on, modern thought has examined the status of the religious experience of which the main components are tradition and charisma revelation. That reflection took place before any sociological theory had been constituted. Nevertheless, in that respect, as in many others, the classical philosophers were our forerunners. Spinoza (1955), for instance, sees in the Mosaic tradition a set of institutional devices intended to impose *obedience* on the people of Israel. This obedience is worked out through the prestige of miracles. But religion does not only teach obedience; it also teaches the love of God and, through that love, the love of our fellow human beings. That is precisely the teaching of the Prophets, If they speak so loudly, if they play upon our imagination and our sensitiveness, it is because the properly rational content of their message cannot be directly apprehended by the minds of people who have not yet reached an adequate knowledge of the nature of God and Man.

To prompt obedience to the law and inspire the love of God — such is the function of religion; but in order to persuade us to do this, religion cannot simply appeal to ceremonies and tales. Religion, then, is a form of persuasion and rhetoric. But for the ancient Greeks, rhetoric could be used by the 'true philosophers', as well as by the sophists. Similarly, religion could be used as an instrument of conversion to the true God, but also as an instrument of enslavement to idols.

The question of symbolic action was raised long before sociology emerged as an independent discipline. But while sociology, having started a career of its own, has recognized the paramount importance of the action paradigm (notably in its Weberian version) it is our task now to assess how the concept of a genuinely *social*

process of communication has clarified the notion of symbolism.

At the beginning of what we call the 'sociology of knowledge' Marx (Labica, 1982: 846–51) and the Marxian tradition developed a view of ideology which reduced symbolism to the condition of a *reflet*. Marx defines ideology in very broad terms: these include religion, art, law and even science-religion. Then Marx proceeds by a sweeping generalization to the case of the all-embracing 'superstructure', and notably ideology. Ideology is an 'inverted world consciousness' (*ein verkehutes Weltbewusstsein*). Religion is the opium of the people. Symbolism, as it includes both religion and ideology, is not just a deception, but a fraudulent deception.

It seems to me that Tocqueville deals with the same problem, but in sober terms. We find a quite sensible conception of ideology in Tocqueville's work, which relies on the two interdependent notions of *passions générales et dominantes* and *croyances dogmatiques* (Bourricaud, 1980: ch. 1). The 'passions' to which Tocqueville alludes are freedom and equality, which commonly prevail in our industrial societies. With these 'passions' are associated some 'beliefs' the main function of which is to support our trust — or mistrust — of the institutions which foster equality and freedom. In relation to that process, the intellectuals — or *philosophes* , as the French used to say at the days of the Enlightenment — played a very active role indeed.

Tocqueville deals with the question of the symbolic effectiveness of ideology in two distinct contexts. First he tries to elucidate the role played by the 'philosophers' in the French pre-revolutionary process at the end of the eighteenth century. Although in French society at that time intellectual activities were highly praised, they could not facilitate the *de plano* admission of the 'philosophers' to the *élite*. Philosophers were members of the élite to some degree, but only on a precarious and partial basis. As a result they felt frustrated, and developed a critical and negative attitude towards the 'establishment'.

Tocqueville is also concerned with the *message* that the intellectuals addressed to the educated part of the population, the only people they could reach. How could they become influential in giving expression to the 'passions' and shaping the 'beliefs'? It was because of their ability to symbolize ideas, to make ideas attractive, moving and easy to grasp. The symbolic efficiency of the *Aufklärung* ideology derives from the 'philosophers'' mastery in handling abstract ideas. Similarly, the American 'publicists' at the time of Andrew Jackson, when Tocqueville visited America, owed their influence over the audience to their skill in 'catching' the significance of a situation and making the people 'feel' and 'realize' it.

(Tocqueville, 1856: bk. 3; 1836, vol. 2, pt. I, chs. 3 and 4.)

The Durkheimian analysis of the religious life may be usefully compared with the concepts of ideology which we have drawn from the works of both Marx and Tocqueville. Durkheim uses almost the same analytical components as Tocqueville: 'beliefs' on the one hand, 'rites' on the other. Obviously, 'rites' and 'passions' are different, but they have in common a very important feature: they deal with the *dynamic* aspects of the action process. They relate the people who adhere to a religious or a 'philosophical' creed to powerful motivations, and to a set of common practices and patterns of behaviour. 'Passions' — in Tocqueville's definition — and rites *orient* the actors towards a set of legitimate patterns of behaviour.

Durkheim, in his definition of the religious life, underscores two traits: it deals with sacred things, and it is expressed through symbolic media. But the way Durkheim defines these two notions unfortunately remains vague and confusing. In relation to sacred things, Durkheim hesitates between two positions. On the one hand, he tends to look at sacred things only in terms of taboo; on the other hand, he also uses a broader conception which assimilates the attitudes towards sacred things with the attitude of *respect* towards moral principles (*la vie prise au sérieux*). Similarly, his conception of symbolism is obscure. Symbolism is equated with image or imagination (treated as a general power of producing images), or with 'projections', or with 'derivations', or with logical relationships and reasoning.

In fact, there is not one, but two Durkheimian views of social symbolism. On the one hand, Durkheim looks for the 'reality' which is hidden 'behind' the symbolic images, but he also sees that the symbol is not just an image of a *physical* reality. On the other hand, Durkheim realizes the active, the *dynamic* character of symbolism as it can be seen in the case of religious ceremonies and 'fêtes'.

Concerning the *cognitive* content of symbolism, Durkheim's thought is highly ambiguous. As a system of classification, totemism constitutes the first sketch of the science of physics. But Durkheim does not discuss a problem that has puzzled the philosophers: was the transition from 'primitive' physics to the physics of the modern time a gradual process? Or did it imply a radical upsetting of all our mental categories? Either way, Durkheim seems more interested by the discovery of the so-called 'reality', of which symbolism would be merely a 'trace' or copy. Finally, Durkheim comes up against his familiar *deus ex machina*, 'la société'. But, obviously, *all* aspects of the social life cannot be comprehended within the range of religious

symbolism. Only, the 'ideal' aspects of society can be expressed symbolically: norms, values, prohibitions and prescriptions upon which some sort of moral authority had been bestowed.

Finally, it is no more satisfactory to treat ideologies, as Marx did, as the inverted image of 'class conflict' than it is to treat religion, as Durkheim did, as an image of society. In both cases there is the assumption that 'behind' symbolism lurks a still mysterious 'reality' that the social scientist is entitled to 'unveil'. I am tempted here to a whiff of Gnostic realism. I do not mean that Marx and Durkheim were 'mystics'; I only imply that because of their crude 'realist' (or 'materialist') positions they were led to call for the most arbitrary hypotheses in order to make the case for a supposedly 'hidden' reality.

Linguistics and social psychology, proceeding along independent but converging lines, have brought about notable progress in the discussion about symbolism. Mead has shown that communication between partners depends on the ability of each partner 'to take the role of the other'. But Mead's thinking is far from clear: he assumes the objectivity of symbolic communication, but he does not explain clearly how this is achieved.

Altogether, it may seem convenient to distinguish 'sign', 'signal' — as does Charles Morris — and 'symbol'. Signs and signals provide us with *information*, but there is no interaction between the transmitter and the receiver. When we say that smoke is a sign of fire, we are referring to the stability of the relationship between these two categories of events. But we are not inquiring about the person who lit that fire, or for what purpose it was lit. Semiology, in the old sense, tries to establish constant correlations between natural phenomena in order to predict whether or not B is likely to happen when A is given. But semiology does not pay attention to the interaction between the people who may have originated the phenomena.

'Signal' is different: it is a sign, but a *conventional* one. It has been instituted by the decision of a qualified authority. Moreover, signal is an *instruction*: it provides me with a warning or a hint to do, or not do, specific things. Therefore, it has to be precise and explicit. Moreover, one class of signals may correspond to another class of signals. For instance, the musician who deciphers the score he looks at, moves his fingers accordingly on the keyboard. When we speak of a 'code', too often in a loose way, we are referring confusedly to two distinct mechanisms. We may think of equivalence relations, as is the case between two synonymous words belonging to the same language; but we may also think of the so-called 'servo-mechanisms', which have been investigated by the cyberneticians.

Can social symbolism be reduced to a system of signs or signals? Certainly not. A social symbol is not a natural sign, because intention is absent in the case of signs and signals, while it is central in the case of symbols. Now, a symbol is also different from a signal, because the action following from a social message is not 'triggered' in the same way as servo-mechanisms trigger heating systems.

It is true that modern linguistics has helped the progress of our reflections on social symbolism, but it is also true that some arbitrary and risky analogies between language and society have misled many famous theoreticians. Lévi-Strauss has drawn undue conclusions from that comparison. Saussure (1974: xii) himself, according to Tullio de Mauro, has emphasized the 'radically social aspect of the language'. What Saussure calls *le circuit de la parole* (the circuit of speech) which 'requires at least two individuals', is close to Mead's view of interaction. But he is also careful to distinguish between language and speech. Language, says Saussure, is the social aspect of speech, whereas speech 'can be a strictly personal matter'. Saussure emphasizes the link not between words and things, but 'between a concept and an acoustic image'. Therefore, Saussure does not speak of linguistic symbols, because symbols are not totally arbitrary and a somehow *natural* relationship remains, at least implicitly, between the meaning and its content.

Obviously, the relation between the rite and the ceremony as it is actually performed, between the belief and the way it is actually believed, is different from the relation between the concept and the *acoustique image*. It is at least hazardous to reduce social symbolism to a set of linguistic signs, or social communication to a set of servo-mechanisms of the thermostat variety. An impressive effort at rendering the *meaning* of many tales from North and South American Indians has been carried by Lévi-Strauss in his *Mythologiques* through methods explicitly borrowed from the structural analysis of the linguists. But Lévi-Strauss is clever enough to abstain from treating any social fact, as it it were merely a system of linguistic signs. He limits the scope of the method of analysing myths, but not all myths, only to the myths of some primitive tribes. Even in that case, Lévi-Strauss's method meets with very severe problems. 'Myths', says Dan Sperber (1974: 94), 'do not constitute a language ... Symbolic phenomena are not signs.'

In fact, a linguistic code has a very strictly defined structure, whereas symbolism works on the basis of free and sometimes loose association. Thus, André Martinet asks whether or not it is right to speak of linguistic signs when talking about any kind of arbitrary sign. 'Language is a process of social communication, symbolism also.' But from there, it is hard to conclude that social symbolism,

has all the characteristics of language. 'Speech,' writes Dan Sperber, 'is a very specific way of communicating information. In contrast to speech, symbolic information has no distinct and specific property.'

If we want to look for a more adequate notion of social symbolism, we may explore beyond the domain of linguistics. We may investigate what Geertz calls 'thick description', and we may also pay some attention to what the ethnomethodologists have to say.

As we find in Ryle's book mentioned by Geertz, 'thick description' for the detached observer of a human action, consists of taking into account something more than the strictly objective and immediate facts, like the physical motions of a person. Suppose I am looking at a person who is squinting. A strictly behaviourist description will record only the contraction of the eyelid. But this does not allow me to decide if the person squints because he is dazzled by the light, or because he has glanced at me. I have to take into account more complex data if I want to disentangle the possible *intentions* of that person. Is he really looking at me? Does he want to carry a specific message? Or does he intend only to give a few hints of interest and sympathy? In order to interpret his intentions, I have to take into account an increasing number of more complex data. My description is becoming 'thick', but it is also becoming ambiguous.

This is the way anthropologists interpret their field data, but these data themselves are interpretations of the actors about their own behaviour, or the behaviour of their partners, or even interpretations of the anthropologists about these various layers of interpretation. Then there exists a risk that 'thick description' leads to confusion.

The act of interpreting is different from the act of observing on two grounds at least. First, it deals with intentions and strategies, whereas the observation alone records only behaviour data. Second, the interpreter can shift from one domain to another, according to his other own interests and to the way data associate. In other words, the 'interpreter' does not deal only with data, but also with contingencies. Moreover, the 'interpreter' may face contingencies, either logical or fictitious. When an economist has to interpret (*verstehen*, in Weber's sense) the way a businessman is planning his output, he assumes that, under given conditions, the businessman is likely to take such and such decisions. The economist tries to assess the probability of logical contingencies.

The situation is totally different when, instead of a logical contingency, we are dealing with a fictitious contingency. Suppose

we are looking at a small boy who is 'playing at being a driver'. He puts on airs, *as if* he were actually driving a *real* car. Nevertheless, he knows very well that the 'car' is a toy which has been given to him for his birthday, and has nothing to do with the real car that his parents drive. The child plays with an 'as if' fiction, and he can delude himself. It is the function of imagination to deal with a fictitious situation as if it were a real one, and the problem for the interpreter is to assess correctly to what extent the actor is, so to speak, trapped into his own role. But, on the other hand, fiction is also a way to treat a real situation as if it were merely a possibility. Fiction allows us to treat many unpleasant facts as if they were 'irrelevant'. I know people who do not bother to open the letters coming from the Inland Revenue. For a while it could work ...

The distinction between 'logical contingency' and 'fictitious contingency' suggests that interpreting behaviour is not the same thing as interpreting a speech or written material. Interpreting the behaviour of another person presupposes that I choose between the intentions of that person, whereas I am not even sure what that person intends to choose, and I am not sure according to which criteria he would choose, if he did. This point has been well seen by the ethnomethodologists who look at symbolic interaction not just as a *game*, but also as a *play* and at the intentions of the actors, not always as *strategies*, but also as *fancies*.

Whereas for Mead the 'generalized other' may substitute a kind of objective point of view for particularistic interests and passions, ethnomethodologists have a more subtle view of the so-called 'reciprocity of perspectives'. To quote Cicourel, interpretive procedures rest on the largely ideal assumption of 'interchangeability', on the existence of an 'et cetera', on the belief that the obscurity of a gesture or a word will be cleared up 'later on'.

These shifts are at the root of what Sartre (1942: 95) calls 'bad faith' (*mauvaise foi*) that is 'the art of forming contradictory concepts which make it possible at the same time to conceive an idea and the negation of that idea'. The red box in which the little boy sits is for him a car, *and* also it is not a car. *Mauvaise foi* does not express only our more intimate fantasies (*fantasmes*). It pops up every time we have to think of 'something' which dodges conceptualization, as the notions of 'person', 'society', 'world'. For Freud, 'person' is built through the mechanisms of identification. Identification has two contradictory aspects. I want *to be* the person I love, but I also want *to have* that person for me. The child who identifies himself with his father knows that he *is not* his father, and he knows also that he will not *have* his mother for him the way his father has. Most illusions of love derive from the fact that these 'contradictions' cannot but be fictitiously reconciled. In fact, these

contradictions are at least partially resolved for adults through a process of idealization. To be my father finally means to be *like* my father. To have my mother for me means to have later on a spouse *vis-à-vis* whom I may then behave the way my father does today *vis-à-vis* my mother.

The notion of 'society', as well as the notion of 'person', cannot but be symbolic. On that score, Durkheim, who is so misleading when he speaks of religion as an image of society, is better inspired when he tries to describe the forms under which the social life can be symbolized. In a well-known text, Durkheim analyses the relationships between a religious ceremony and an aesthetic play:

> Rite is different from play: that is life taken seriously [*de la vie serieuse*]. In performing the prescribed rites, the believer does not spend all his energies, he does not concentrate upon them all his attention. Something remains at his disposal ... which can be directed towards a partially fictitious [*imaginaire*] world and which for that reason can be freely handled by the creative resources of the mind. (Durkheim, 1912: 545)

Then the believer turns into an artist who, as among the Greeks for instance, uses the material of rites and myths as a springboard for the elaboration of tragic or poetic works.

Now Durkheim makes a second observation, which helps us to understand the nature of symbolism. 'It is not in order to get rain, that people celebrate rain-ceremonies, but because the ancestors have always celebrated it, and also because the believers come out with a feeling of moral welfare.' So the believer is not stupid enough to believe that the performance of the rite has a material efficiency. A little earlier, Durkheim observed: 'if religion to some degree implies frenzy, it is a well-grounded frenzy.' 'Frenzy' is probably not the right word. But Durkheim means a state of mental confusion where we are unable to distinguish our fantasies from objective data. Durkheim denies that the outcome, or function of religious ceremonies could be to bring about that state of mental confusion. It is true that rites evoke the past or even the future and give us the illusion that past and present can be made actually present. So we are tempted to speak of 'frenzy'. But on that score we could as well call any 'collective representation' frenzy. So Durkheim says that religious 'frenzy' is 'well-founded'. Durkheim's mention of 'moral welfare', is a timely warning against any hazardous generalizations which reduce religious life to a sheer bachanal and orgy. So Durkheim invites us to treat symbolic efficiency not in terms of instrumental or material consequences, but relatively to the cohesion — or *consensus* — of the group.

The notion of symbolism applies to a huge and loose domain which includes ideology, religion, even law and perhaps science.

But it applies to them only in a partial way. Can religion be reduced to a collection of symbols? Is it possible to stick to a strictly symbolic interpretation of science? The same set of behavioural patterns may, for an observer, be treated as a religious ceremony or dealt with as a play. The same behaviour can be performed with seriousness and respect, or in a derogatory way. Symbolism allows for a variety of playful attitudes.

Now, if we also try to characterize symbolism by a set of attitudes towards symbolic objects, we have to consider the degree to which these attitudes are held as *acceptable*. Some symbols — not all — are treated as if they were taken for granted. In that category belongs what Montesquieu calls *les moeurs et les manières* . It is assumed among us that black clothes indicate mourning and bereavement. It goes without saying that you take your hat off in a Christian church. Such gestures are sometimes called 'rites'. I feel this is somehow a misleading expression. First, rites constitute a set of prescribed gestures, centred round a common theme or situation (like birth, marriage, death, etc.). Second, the sanctions which are mobilized against a person who transgresses a religious rite are different from the sanctions against a person who ignores proper manners when eating or drinking. But in both cases, a supposition exists that, under normal circumstances, it is pointless to question these rules.

Some cognitive symbols enjoy the same degree of acceptability as *moeurs et manières* . Let us turn to what Durkheim and Marcel Granet call *emblèmes* . In *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, Durkheim distinguishes family, clan and even individual *emblèmes*. They mark off their 'owners' and give a status and a ranking to them. But *emblèmes* also express the sentiments and attitudes that are conveyed, when they are presented to us. The important thing here is, so to speak, the natural 'evidence' of the relationship. Marcel Granet extends, in the case of the 'Chinese civilization', the Durkheimian conception of *emblèmes*, to the speech and the written word, and their common absorption into the overall experience they are supposed to designate. 'As a spell produced by a talisman, the effectiveness of sounds is reinforced by the effectiveness of the writing. The registered word or the written sign correspond emblematically to the phenomena they are denoting or designating.' (Granet: 1950: 51.)

In contrast to that sort of 'taken for granted' symbol, some are of a *problematic* nature. The recognition that some symbols are problematic, probably constitutes one of the more important achievements of Greek culture, and makes highly original their conception of mythology. Greeks do not treat their myths as do

Jews or Lévi-Straussian Indians. What specialists call mythology is in fact a highly heterogeneous domain. Bor-oro myths are obviously very different from modern physics or history, but they do not constitute a 'Revelation' in the Jewish or Christian sense of that word.

Between the myths of the American Indians and Biblical mythology, Paul Ricoeur (1963) notes two differences. First, the Jewish myths tell a real history, open and progressive. These tales refer to an 'after' and a 'before', they are geared towards a future and, even more fundamentally, they bring forward a Revelation. These traits may be summed up by saying that they deal with history — a *sacred* history. 'Totemic myths', according to Ricoeur, would be deprived of two characteristics. They are referring to a 'motionless time', as in dreaming when we arbitrarily associate events without paying attention to their order of succession. Moreover, they evoke indistinctly all the aspects of human experience, whereas the Bible would rely, according to Ricoeur, on a clear-cut distinction between sacred and secular things.

The great conception of mythology, according to Detienne, does not explicitly refer to any Revelation, and therefore does not present itself as the paramount source of all knowledge, but more soberly as a form of cognition — among others. If we think of the changing conditions that made mythology acceptable to the Greeks, we start realizing the importance of the attitude of *trust* towards the relevance and the efficiency of problematic symbols.

Let us think of some of the most venerable — and useful — fictions upon which our political culture rests. In relation to medieval concepts of monarchical power, Kantorowitz had brought forward the surprising concept of the 'two persons of the king'. Maitland, says Kantorowitz, tells us the story of King George III who had to come before Parliament in order to be allowed to buy some land because, as King of England, he was deprived of the right granted to all his subjects to own a piece of *private* property. On the other hand, the tenants of a baron who rebelled against the king, believed, erroneously, that after the fief of the rebellious baron had been confiscated by the king, they would no longer have to pay the duties they had to pay every time the lord died. But Parliament then decided that the king was also a man bound to die, like any of his subjects. Consequently, the tenants were required to go on paying their duties ...

Is the fiction of the king's two bodies a mere absurdity? We had better see how this surprising 'theory' is made acceptable. First, it is 'useful' because it allows us to distinguish the situations in which the king must be treated as a private person from those in which he

must be treated as a public person. Consequently, it makes it possible to lay the ground for the very important notion of 'commonweal'. It remains now to be understood how the distinction between the 'two persons of the king' and, on the other hand, the identification of the king and of the commonweal, could be made 'acceptable' through the use of appropriate images and ceremonies.

None of the arguments that are supposed to make the 'theory' *acceptable* is convincing by itself. Lawyers and theologians are invited to draw on the most subtle quibbles. Finally, the acceptability of the theory rests on *institutional* grounds. It is reinforced by ceremonies like the coronation, by the etiquette which surrounds the king, and even by beliefs in the thaumaturgic capacities of the Lord-anointed monarch.

In the preceding pages, I intended to present the phases through which the notion of social symbolism has been elaborated. First, I want to stress that reflections on symbolic phenomena ante-date the constitution of an autonomous sociological theory. Second, that these reflections can hardly be said to be consistent and integrated. They proceed quite often through hazardous analogies. Social symbolism is not the same thing as linguistic symbolism. A religious belief cannot be said to be symbolic in the same sense as we speak of the 'symbolic' dimension of dream or neurosis.

We are now in a condition to discuss the relationships between consensus and social symbolism. Previously it has been necessary to put aside some grossly realist misconceptions. We had first to eliminate any conception of ideology or religion as a *reflet* of society or 'production relationships', and at the same time any reduction of the 'consensus' to 'ideal' values or 'material' interests. Consensus is a sort of agreement or convergence, but each one of us, within limits, is entitled to interpret it according to our views.

Consequently, symbolism cannot be treated as a class of special objects which we would have to oppose to 'material' objects, but as a system of attitudes ranging from trust and acceptance to rejection — focused round categories that provide some meaning, confused though it may be, to the most puzzling aspects and perennial problems of the human condition. In the cognitive as well as in the practical field, symbolism can be characterized as a short-circuit between a project and its realization. Rites lend themselves to such an interpretation. They belong to what Merton calls 'self-fulfilling prophecy'. By performing them, the faithful trust that they make real the situation they are supposed to work out. On the other hand, 'dogmatic beliefs' bring about order and hierarchy in the hodge-podge of sense data, which makes it possible to apprehend them.

They institute between experience, on the one hand, and our expectations and interests on the other, a link which allows us to think — or imagine — that we master these data. So totemic classifications, as well as political ideologies today, establish too often a connection between the world and our intelligence.

The nature of the symbolic short-circuit touches upon the nature of consensus. A strict connection between rite and belief on the one hand, and social practice on the other, can be observed in the case of tradition. It can also be observed in some cases of charismatic flare-up. But the two situations are different. In the first case, the link is provided by the 'gentle force of custom'. In the second case, it is provided by the imagination. But in both cases, the link could be relatively weak. Tradition can turn properly meaningless. Charisma, through 'routinization', loses its efficiency.

Finally, I would like to emphasize that symbolic function can be treated in the way another classical notion, that of value system, has been quite conveniently dealt with. For a long time, sociologists have contented themselves with stating the existence of collective perferences, but the way these preferences were supposed to act upon the functioning of society remained obscure. Decisive progress was achieved when it was realized that the 'spirit of capitalism' for instance, was not a set of free-floating ideas but was embodied in a system of roles, norms and expectations. Collective preferences are diffuse orientations which have to be learned and transmitted. Therefore the comprehension of values (collective preferences) requires that we know how they have come into being and have been accepted and recognized.

The same type of *institutional analysis* has to be applied to the case of symbolism. The meanings that social symbols convey, their logical or fictitious possibilities and their implementation depends on their acceptability. Instead of assuming that they are so to speak *intrinsically* acceptable and consequently that they are founding a mysterious *consensus*, it is more advisable to ask how they come to be accepted. We may start looking at them as a set of given preconditions, but they also tend to become organized or crystallized in a ramified system, exposed to change and even disruption of the cognitive fields through which we attempt to orient our personal and social action.

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5

Political powers and class structure

Torcuato S. Di Tella

We have been accustomed, since Max Weber, to differentiate between class and power, that is, between economic privilege and political power. We know that political power does not cling to economic privilege like a shadow to its body, but how independent can it really be? Or, putting it in another way, to what extent can political power be used to change the structure of economic privilege? The two dimensions are separate, but obviously there are a lot of connections between them. Mostly, it is the economic structure that sets limits to what can be done in the political realm.

Marxist theory, of course, has insisted on the limitations that the economic structure sets on the political arena, and at times has almost denied any independence to the latter. On the other hand, and somewhat contradictorily, it believes that through a certain type of political action the structure of privilege can be totally overthrown, though little can be done in the direction of gradual changes or adjustments. It maintains, in a sense, that 'nothing is possible, except everything'. This more extreme version of Marxist doctrine is now less often heard in the 'developed' part of the world, but is much more current in third world countries. It is based on the assumption that the capitalists dominate the state apparatus and its legal and constitutional systems, manipulating the middle classes, public opinion and often also the working class. Capitalist omnipotence, by contrast, disappears in front of a resolute revolutionary movement. But how can the existence of this movement be explained or considered at all feasible, given the omnipotence of the dominant classes? Often the answer is of a voluntaristic type, thereby contradicting most of the theoretical construction of Marxism. A more realistic answer would have to rely on Marx's own analysis of the proletarization of the middle classes, which by disappearing leave a void and deprive the bourgeoisie of its allies and shock-absorbers, making the co-optation of the rest of the popular classes impossible. But this catastrophistic revolutionary prediction runs counter to the facts in 'advanced' countries, where the numbers and influence of the middle classes have been

preserved. Marxist theory builders and politicians must either deny this fact (Braverman, 1974), or adapt their doctrine to the realities of gradualism; this is being done by 'Eurocommunist' thinkers increasingly since the consolidation of postwar prosperity in the 1950s. The present world recession encourages hopes of a radical and final capitalist crisis, but most observers would agree that what is at stake is not the destruction of the middle classes or the workers' aristocracy, but a relative diminution in their well-being. As a consequence of the crisis, a more polarized politics may develop in Western Europe or even in the United States. But total polarization, as a result of the disappearance of the middle strata, is not likely, and therefore theory has to account for the politics of reform, however radical, rather than revolution. This requires an understanding of the various ways in which a mass movement based principally on the have-nots can accumulate political power and introduce important changes in the structure of economic privilege, that is, into the class structure, without totally abolishing it.

In third world countries this gradualist perspective is not so obvious, as in them, very often, the mediating influences of the middle classes or of a unionized and established working class are not present. The possibility of the middle classes becoming decisively debilitated, if not disappearing, cannot be discarded. At the same time, the prevalence of authoritarian capitalist regimes encourages the belief that 'nothing is possible, except everything'. In fact, as is well known, the only radical eliminations of capitalism have occurred in what can be described summarily as 'third world' countries, a concept that should be extended to include tsarist Russia. What is common to all those revolutionary experiences is that they occur in places where the middle classes are either few in number, weak economically or somehow disaffected (Almond, 1954; Huntington, 1966). It is also by now quite clear that the groups that emerge as dominant are certainly not the peasant or working classes but the new administrators of the productive apparatus, that is, the bureaucratic class (Granick, 1954; Melotti, 1971). The etiology of the revolution, therefore, can be ascribed not so much — or not only — to conditions prevalent among the masses of the population, as to those obtaining among sectors of the middle classes: students, marginally employed aspirants to higher status, 'jacobins' of various sorts who become the embryo of the new class. The capacity or incapacity of the existing capitalist systems to absorb and integrate those marginal elements of the middle classes is more important for the outcome of the revolution than the conditions prevailing among the working class or peasantry. Both

the latter classes, by themselves, do not seem to be capable of really toppling the social order, though they certainly can provide the cannon-fodder.

For the analysis of post-revolutionary situations Marxist analysis is often blind, as it does not see classes where their existence is obvious to anyone else (Mandel, 1972; Poulantzas, 1973). As post-revolutionary 'socialist' societies become more numerous and stable, the need to understand them among Marxist theoreticians is increasingly felt, but so is the pressure to use Marxism as a justificatory dogma. Independent, critical Marxism is coming increasingly to the conclusion that the division of labour and not the existence of private property is the ultimate origin of social classes — not strata, not degenerate workers' states, but classes (Bettelheim and Sweezey, 1972; Modzelewski and Kuron, 1969). This realization has incalculable theoretical consequences, as it puts the objective of a classless society in the realm of utopia, to the extent that such a society would involve the elimination of a hierarchical division of labour, not a sensible prospect within our historical horizon (Di Tella, 1975). Surprisingly, this type of neo-Marxian analysis of Soviet-type societies can be at the same time their most radical criticism and their possible justification. This is so because, on the one hand, it would burst the ideological bubble which maintains that those societies are 'classless' — a very important component of the doctrine. But, on the other hand, it would imply that the class character of those post-revolutionary societies is not *due* to exploitation — though it may be accompanied by it — but is functionally necessary as long as the productive apparatus is what it is. We would have here a convergence between the results if not the theoretical arguments of a critical Marxism and the classical functionalist argument about the inevitability of stratification (Levy, 1952; Moore and Davis, 1945; Parsons, 1960).

To go back now to capitalist societies and to 'Western' sociological thinking, it must be observed that the inevitability of stratification — derived either from critical Marxism or classical functionalism — says nothing about whether *capitalist* stratification is inevitable. Of course it is not inevitable, as has been demonstrated by so many instances of its elimination. What is inevitable is some kind of stratification, and therefore of economic privilege, call it functional or not. And in most capitalist societies one has a combination of the purely property-based privileges with those based on professional or skill differentiation. What has sociological theory to say about this peculiar combination of class privilege, both for the central countries of the world and for those of the periphery?

Most Western sociological thinking, in contraposition to Marxist theorizing, is not overly concerned with this problem, but takes the present structure much for granted. Given the 'mixed' structure, it explores the forms in which political opinions are disseminated among the population (Almond and Verba, 1963; Barnes et al., 1979; Campbell et al., 1960; Katz and Lazarsfeld, 1955; Kornhauser et al., 1956; Lazarsfeld et al., 1944; Milbrath and Goel, 1977), and surely enough it often finds a weak association between social class and political opinion — a finding considered to be a refutation of one of the main tenets of the Marxist theoretical system. A connection generally exists, but often the degree of correlation is rather low, and it is also commonly found that the tendency is towards its diminution. This 'trend' analysis is open to a lot of methodological reservations, as the object of social science is not mainly to establish trends in time, but to seek associations between variables (Popper, 1957). If the strength of association varies in time, then we should ascribe the change to some other variable which is present and in turn changing in time, and not to time itself. It could be argued, admittedly, that the independent variable is not time itself but economic and technological growth, which in turn generate a number of other phenomena: disaggregation of social classes, proliferation of intermediate positions as to power and privilege, independence of political attitudes from class moorings, diffusion of power, pluralization of the state and in general democratization, or at least what Mannheim (1941) called basic democratization (Bell, 1960; Bendix, 1964; Deutsch, 1953; Germani, 1962; Inkeles and Smith, 1974; Lerner, 1958; Lipset and Rokkam, 1967). This is an arresting perspective, and undeniably some indicators point in that direction. The objection, often raised on the strength of a few cases where things have been moving in the opposite direction, is not too cogent, as a few — even important — counter-currents are quite compatible with the statistical, and therefore social, existence of the main current.

The point is not so much the discussion of trends, but the consideration whether trend analysis is what should be done. I would say that in many Western societies, for a number of decades to date, trends in the direction of 'convergence', as it is usually named, have existed. The point, though, is that trends may go as they come, as has already happened many times in Western societies since the days of Pericles. And, besides, in non-Western societies those trends themselves are not so obvious (Apter, 1965; Cardoso, 1972; Geertz, 1963; Kothari, 1976; O'Donnell, 1973). Sociological theorizing should move away from the determination of trends, to concentrate on the study of relationships between

variables, and preferably relationships between groups of variables, that is, multidimensional structures of interaction (Almond et al., 1973; Hirschman, 1970; Riker, 1962; Simon, 1957; Tilly, 1978).

The search for a prince

When Count Kentaro Kaneko asked Herbert Spencer for some advice on Japanese politics, the answer had little to do with the sage's theoretical system. Spencer recommended him to keep 'Americans and Europeans as much as possible at arm's length', and after stating a number of highly protectionist policies he added ominously that if the Japanese opted for a policy of 'opening up' their country they might as well read the history of India to know what was in store for them. After this he warned that 'you will have a great difficulty in avoiding [being dominated] but you will make the process easier if you allow any privileges to foreigners beyond those which I have indicated' (Duncan, 1908: 321–2). Spencer, in dealing with a particular case, allowed for a possible exception to the trends he believed operated in society. His friendship with the Japanese politician, and his genuine concern for that country, made him look for a more complex and detailed variability than his general theory allowed for.

A similar thing happened to Kark Marx when he had to address a gathering of his followers in Holland who were preparing for an election. In the presence of that concrete challenge Marx had to water down the strong wine of his doctrines about the socialist revolution, allowing for the possibility of socialism coming to power by peaceful means in such countries as Great Britain, Holland or the United States (Landauer, 1959: 132–3).

The fact is that when an influential 'prince' is likely to listen to one's theories, one must necessarily adapt them to a new format, amenable to the immediate requirements of action. The 'prince', who exerts some degree of power, is apparently in a position to alter the social structure according to his volitions. This is at least the common-sense attitude, i.e., the belief that a person or group in power can, if they really want, introduce rather deep innovations into the social system. The sociological tradition, on the other hand, has generally pointed to the limitations under which individuals or élites operate, even when they are in positions of power. Leaving aside classical Marxism, for which this is obvious, the functionalist approach has also emphasized the degree to which one aspect of society is linked to many others, so that changes are difficult to introduce and, if at all introduced, likely to produce results different from those expected. This is because, unseen by individuals, *latent*

structures exist which control their behaviour (Dahrendorf, 1959; Kornhauser, 1959; Lasswell, 1960; Mannheim, 1941; Touraine, 1965). Not only do they control people's behaviour, but they also put ideas into their heads, so that they come to want what the social system makes them want. When we reach this point, of course, the closure is complete.

One way out of closure is to look for exceptions, and the Marxist system is one of the richest in providing theoretical escape routes so as to accommodate freedom of volition against crass economic or social determinism. In this it is not too dissimilar from the preoccupation of earlier generations to reconcile free will with God's omniscience. It can be done, but at the cost of weakening the theory, or introducing some non-logical elements into it. In the best of cases, the theory can be left intact, but applicable only to 'large numbers', to 'statistical aggregates'. The more one gets close to the individual or to the small group or élite, the less the theory applies. This is serious when the individual or small group is powerful -- a 'prince'. This is so because the theoretically unpredictable volitions or strategic decisions of that élite may affect important political outcomes and therefore alter the course of history, or reaccommodate the relations between elements of the social system. The worst of all is that, if the theory forecasts only very 'macro' relationships or trends of events, the detailed alterations produced by the unforeseeable decisions of powerful individuals or groups will have consequences which are not studied by the theory. If, under those circumstances, a theoretician in the service of a prince tries to advise on short-term policies, he will be able to use the broad theory only as a sort of backdrop, supposedly a 'frame of reference' but more often a piece of ritual. He will have to rely on his common sense or on a hodgepodge of unrelated pieces of information in order to guide action.

The challenge, then, for sociological analysis, is to cope with the actual level at which decisions are made and confrontations between groups or individuals take place. Other social sciences, notably economics and psychology, have had a better experience in dealing with this situation. Economics enjoys the advantage of having a lot of private and governmental institutions collecting easily measurable data relevant to its subject matter. There is also a large number of princes, private or governmental, in need of advice as to what to do. With psychology, for different reasons, a similar phenomenon has occurred: rather than princes there are patients who — maybe because of the truly princely fees they are made to pay — require results. This has induced a fusion of the theorist with the practitioner, responsible for the growth of psychoanalytic and other related types of theory. In contrast to economics, psychology does

not find readily measurable and objective facts, and therefore has to rely much more on subjectivity, evne imagination. The field of the study of personality is so complex and multidimensional that no array of purely empirical, theory-shy gathering of facts can hope to bring much light to the subject matter. The great breakthrough in it was brought about by the bold, relentless and somewhat fanatical constructions of Freudian theory. This type of theorizing, true enough, has come under a lot of criticism of late, and painstaking demonstrations are put together to show that many of its axioms and theorems are difficult or impossible to validate, its concepts not easily amenable to measurement or control, and the like. This may be so, but what then? An excessive methodological purism will only lead to sterility, or to what amounts to a know-nothing attitude under scientific garb. The subject matter is complex, almost intractable, but if we wish to know something about it we must venture into risky paths. I would not go as far as those who argue that the disciplines given to the study of man have scientific criteria radically different from those that deal with the natural world. Scientific criteria are in the last resort the same, but the complexity of the subject matter forces us to accept riskier constructions, to use — subject to review and reconsideration — shakier hypothetical structures, to go ahead with scanty and unsure evidence. We must always be ready to throw those constructions into the dustbin if evidence really mounts against them, but it would be a waste of effort to throw them away simply because they have not been adequately proved, as a strict criterion (Popper, 1959) would require.

I would say that a similar situation arises in sociology as in psychology, only much more complex and involved with values and ideology. 'Western' sociology, in its attempt to discredit the crassest simplifications of Marxism, often throws out the baby with the bath water. The basic economically- or class-determined latent structures of society are ignored, and attention is concentrated on the empirical, immediately observable phenomena, refusing to let the theoretical imagination loose for the discovery of the latent structures. This is a potentially self-destructive operation, as I would argue that the task of sociology is the discovery not of the obvious empirical correlations, but of the less obvious though no less real latent structures, where theoretical terms lie, so to speak (Braithwaite, 1959; Nagel et al., 1962). The fact that the world is full of vendors of nostrums under the guise of supposedly scientific 'latent structures', 'real interests', and the like, should not discourage us from the search. Theory is a construction of the imagination, not a gathering and ordering of data.

Sociology — a word I am using widely, to include political science

and anthropology — shares with psychology the complexity and multidimensionality of its subject matter. But it does not have clearly structured patients or clients, at least not for its most interesting problems or areas of study. The result is that theorizing has remained too abstract, and is often more useful in providing an ideology than a kit of problem-solving orientations. Far be it from me to deny the importance of ideology, and if social science does contribute elements to it, they are welcome. My object in this chapter, though, is to concentrate on a level of abstraction such that it can lead to useful advice for practical action, by organizations such as governments, political parties, institutional groups like churches or the military, and other associations concerned in one way or another with the reform of society. These are the princes of our time. They generally have enough power — in or out of government — to introduce changes in society, or to stop ongoing changes and so to provide an interesting focus not only for action but for theory-building.

Political power and the reform of society

Let us see, then, what sociology has to say about the capacity of political power wielders to introduce changes into the structure of society. One of the main structures to be analysed will be the economic one, that is, the arrangement of the forces of production and of the privileges derived from their control.

If we think a bit about the question we will realize that it can be stated at two different levels of abstraction. The higher level of abstraction would try to locate power, in general, or maybe a peculiar type of organizational power, as being derived from, say, division of labour, or market relations, or legitimation (Eisenstadt, 1981). It could also enquire whether power is an independent or a dependent variable, and whether or not it can be wielded intentionally by individuals and political élites (Coleman, 1974; Lukes, 1974). It might also try to establish connections between various components of the polity and the society, at a high level of generalization (Almond and Coleman, 1960; Deutsch, 1963; Easton, 1965; Eisenstadt, 1963, 1966; Jaguaribe, 1973). Important conclusions can be derived from this sort of analysis, but at the present stage of development of sociological theorizing I believe we need to proceed to a lower level of abstraction. This would require more concrete studies of how such and such a group used power in order to introduce a given set of reforms (Hirschman, 1963; Lipset, 1950, 1956); where they derived their power from, how they clashed with others, or what type of electoral support they had (Cardoso and Lamounier, 1975; Linz and Stepan, 1978; Mora and Llorente,

1981; Sartori, 1976; Tilly, 1965); what ideas they had of their role in society and how their organization and attitudes evolved over time (Crouch and Pizzorno, 1978; Lipset, 1963; Sundquist, 1973; Touraine, 1968); or how power is distributed in a community (Dahl, 1961; González Casanova, 1965). This does not imply necessarily going the whole way to the level of '*histoire évènementielle*', sociographic accounting or anthropological case studies. This descriptive level is certainly very important, as it provides the source of data on which any understanding of society must be based. But an understanding of society cannot simply rely on gathering large amounts of data, minutely subdivided into what one might call 'atoms of information' and bound together through common-sense connections. Relationships between events, even when they appear to be of an obvious nature, must be selected, and this implies a theoretical perspective, however latent and denied. Most often the same process can be described and interpreted truthfully at various levels of abstraction, and with different sets of concepts. Thus, at a more immediate empirical level one can describe the way Robespierre came to a position of leadership as a result of his forceful personality and the work he had done among the clubs and the Convention. On the other hand, one can at a more theoretical level point to the need, under certain circumstances, for the emergence of a charismatic personality combining a millenarian approach with a great capacity for practical politics. This type of 'law' would not, by itself, suffice to explain the emergence of Robespierre at a certain time, but it is this sort of middle-level hypothesis that should be searched.

In this matter of the use of power to introduce changes into the social order — the 'negotiability of the social order', as Eisenstadt (1981) has called it — social scientists have been attracted to the more extreme situations, that is, those where a revolution of a radical nature has taken place. We have then a series of studies on 'revolution', trying to locate the sources of tension leading to this type of outcome. Basically two approaches are possible, exemplified respectively by the work of Ted Gurr (1970, 1980) on the etiology of violence and that of Barrington Moore (1966) on the conditions for democracy and dictatorship in modern societies.

Studies on the etiology of violence, of the Ted Gurr type (Duff and McCamant, 1976; Gamson, 1968), are more in the tradition of empirical sociology. They specify, for a given group, what combination of variables produces which results, that is, certain attitudes or traits. They do not forecast long-term historical events, but simply predict the values, in a given population, of some variables given the presence or absence of other variables. They look for what

Popper calls 'sociological laws', concerned with *associations between variables*, not historical paths. On the other hand, many studies, inspired by Barrington Moore's work, focus on the prediction of *historical paths*, given the presence in society as a whole of some set of characteristics (Holt and Turner, 1966; Skocpol, 1979). Thus they aim at what Popper (1957) calls 'historical laws' rather than sociological ones. The subject under analysis is the total society, rather than groups, élites or even individuals, as is the case for the previous set of studies. This results in some rigidity, and not much room is left for the unpredictability of decision-making by groups or for the many combinations and interactions between groups. It is a much more 'macro' approach and therefore much more difficult to test or contrast. Typically, five or six societies at most are taken, and the *total outcomes* of historical processes, that is, historical paths, are compared, and attributed to some traits of those societies. Thus, the presence of democracy may be linked to the previous experience of having had an agrarian transformation. The connection is somewhat gross, not allowing for the tortuous meanders of actual historical processes. It smacks too much of historicism, though somewhat reformed by the inclusion of alternative outcomes rather than a uni-directional or cyclical scheme (Melotti, 1971; Wallerstein, 1974). But still, the historicist approach of taking the whole society as an individual undergoing some sort of process is retained as an underlying assumption.

Without denying the important contributions that this school of research has made to our understanding of society, I would say that a further step has to be taken, in the sense of a greater awareness that the path taken by historical events is the result of the interaction of a multitude of variables *acting not on society as a whole but on its components.* Those interactions, plus 'initial conditions', and the facts of chance and human volition, result in a concrete historical path, or series of events, which cannot be deduced directly from the laws governing the relationships between variables. We can have quite a developed set of sociological laws, applicable to the many component elements of society, and at the same time a rather unpredictable set of results of the interactions between those laws and the initial conditions prevailing. This highly complex system of interactions cannot be easily summarized in the way the more historicist approach does.

Strangely enough, today few historians take the 'historicist' approach, which by contrast is more cultivated by sociologists, especially those bent on the formulation of broad generalizations. Modern professional historians, on the other hand, by their attention to detail and to the many-sidedness of social reality,

provide the ideal materials on which to base attempts at the elaboration of sociological concepts and hypotheses of an adequate level of abstraction. They stop short, though, in most cases, from explicitly stating the generalizations or empirical regularities or theories which apply in each case. They tend rather to establish connections of cause and effect — explicitly or implicitly — between given singular events, as though the causal link were itself a singular fact, that is, without stating whether the causation under analysis is the result of the application of some general law (Di Tella, 1977; Scriven, 1959). Here is where the field for cooperation between historians and sociologists is greater. The historian can contribute his awareness of detail, of peculiar combinations of circumstances, of the operation of élites and individuals, of the 'uniqueness' of situations. The sociologist, accepting the need to study society at that level of disaggregation, can bring in his comparative knowledge and question the reasons why certain causal links — perhaps taken for granted by the historian — have actually taken place. The 'uniqueness' of a given historical circumstance, then, can be seen to depend on the unique set of, precisely, circumstances — 'initial conditions' in the language of scientific methodology — but not on the application of a unique set of laws. General laws, applied to a unique combination of circumstances, give a unique path. In the same way, a unique combination of mountains, rivers, temperatures, pressures, masses of water and so on, gives a unique storm, but as a result of the application of a generally valid set of laws.

If we now pass from the study of revolution to that of reformist processes, the need to refer to a complex system of interactions as an explanatory model is much more evident, as we do not have an 'event' equally attractive and equally applicable to the whole of society as a revolution is. Much sociology, though, reproduces for these cases what is really almost an historicist approach, predicting some *trends*, as was mentioned earlier in connection with convergence or modernization hypotheses. These trends may not be wrong as descriptions of actual events, but something more is needed. For example, what can sociology or political science say towards an understanding of what is going on in present-day France, with the wide expropriations occurring in industry? Or how can we come closer to an understanding of the economic and political plight of Great Britain, including its Northern Ireland component? Or, to shift continents, what can we learn about the various forms of reforming Mexican society, short of pronouncements as to whether it can or cannot continue as it is? — too much of an 'all or nothing' and therefore historicist question. One would need to know more — or speculate theoretically, if evidence is not widespread enough —

about the results of large-scale nationalizations of industry on trade-union power; or, conversely, about the effects of strong unions on the capacity of industry to adapt to new conditions and to international competition; or about what kind of forces can decentralization be based on in order to be efficient and responsible to public opinion; how can a mass political party incorporate the many 'one-issue' groups that proliferate in many mass societies; and so forth. These, and other similar problems, should provide the building blocks of a theoretical construction usable by the princes and counter-princes of our time, bridging the gap between grand theory (verging towards, what I have called historicism) and the medley of unconnected case studies of a sociological or historical nature. This requires the development of complex models of interaction, capable of incorporating many variables, which should do for sociology what econometrics is doing for economics: the integration of various strands of theory into a demanding theoretical construction, formalizable if possible, and measurable as an ideal.

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6

On the significance of de-differentiation

Edward A. Tiryakian

At least since Herbert Spencer's characterization of the general evolutionary process 'from homogeneity to heterogeneity', differentiation has been recognized as a fundamental aspect of living systems, including social ones. In more recent times, both mainstream/'establishment' sociological theory and neo-Marxist theory, such as 'world-system analysis', have retained this fundamental perspective, however much they may be separated in other respects. Thus, the theory of action of Talcott Parsons gives a great deal of attention to 'structural differentiation' (Effrat, 1976: 670), while Wallerstein's paradigm of the 'world-system' (1974) revolves round the structural differentiation of the capitalist order in terms of countries occupying positions of 'core' or 'periphery' (or in between) in the dynamic international beehive.

What I would like to explore in this essay is the neglected obverse side of the coin, namely the process of de-differentiation. As we shall see, it has tended to suffer from benign neglect for the most part, in both camps of the broad structuralist orientation in sociology (Parsonian and neo-Marxist). Perhaps this neglect may be attributed to the awkwardness of the word representing the concept. Perhaps, and I suspect this may be a deeper reason, it is because both Parsonian and Marxist analyses are implicitly grounded in an evolutionary perspective that has tended to assume that progress and structural differentiation are coextensive. This does not allow de-differentiation much room under the theoretical sun, except as an image of going backwards, against progress.

I will not endeavour here to develop more than an important corrective. The thrust of my remarks will be that (1) de-differentiation is important for the theory of action because, as it is complementary to differentiation, it is linked to other major components of action systems besides the social one; (2) it is of importance in periodically providing for the integration of social systems (rather then their disintegration); (3) a re-examination of Durkheimian sociology, the inspiration for so much of our stress on

structural differentiation, will suggest that his last major work provides a major place for de-differentiation, albeit Durkheim did not use this term.

De-differentiation in the sociological literature

I trust that in the interest of parsimony I need not go over the very substantial attention given in sociology to the process of structural differentiation. Coupled with occupational and role specialization stemming from growth in the (industrial) division of labour, it has an undeclared status as the accepted building blocks of the modern social order, and this from various theoretical perspectives. The social consequences of this manifold process may be interpreted differently given different ideological persuasions (Marxism and Romanticism see different negative consequences, liberalism tends to encourage it), but that is another matter, one not in question in this essay. It is necessary, however, to see what sort of a nexus has been drawn between differentiation and de-differentiation.

Talcott Parsons gave a great deal of theoretical and empirical attention to structural differentiation (e.g., 1960) but as Effrat noted in a volume honouring Parsons, 'the general phenomenon of de-differentiation is rather important but relatively unexplored in the theory of action' (Effrat, 1976: 680). He used the term in an essay examining the concept of 'value-commitment' as a societal medium of interchange, in a discussion marked by various economic metaphors, including those of 'inflation' and 'deflation' as applicable to all media. Implicit in his analysis is that, given certain broad historical patterns of value-commitments (which may be innovated in one subsystem of society), there may arise strains and reactions against these patterns. These reactive processes are those Parsons designated as 'de-differentiation' (1969: 470); one form of these, he proposed, was in the nature of movements seeking what Weber termed 'Gesinnungsethik' (an 'ethic of absolute value') — and Parsons saw both religious fundamentalism and communism as subject to seeking de-differentiation. In the conclusion of this essay (written in the early phase of the national debate over Vietnam), Parsons indicated that de-differentiation processes ran against the 'progressive' evolution in social systems, in terms of the major patterns of value-commitments that have unfolded in Western societies since the Reformation. He presented as a challenge for sociology the responsibility of sifting out between further institutionalization of the general value system (i.e. of progress) or (a) 'fundamentalist regression to more primitive levels', and (b) 'schismatic revolutionary outcome, which will tend to maximize conflict' (Parsons, 1969: 472).

In a companion essay pertaining to political legitimation, Parsons treated de-differentiation in a related manner. The primary trend in Western societies was seen in terms of structural differentiation between leadership elements of government and whatever is the important legitimizing agency (Parsons, 1969: 494). Parsons went on to suggest two instances that departed from the trend towards the relatively 'full' modern type of democratic political organization, namely charismatic legitimation of regimes: the two instances being the Puritan Calvinistic movement and modern Communist parties (Parsons, 1969: 497). If these two are noted as instances of de-differentiation by Parsons, it is because they went counter to the 'secularization' of government and the routinization of charisma. There is a suggestion in this essay (Parsons, 1969: 498) that de-differentiation — in the form of charismatic movements — may be an integral aspect of the dynamics of social change, but the theme is not developed. Finally, a few years later, writing about the significance of the 'cognitive complex' in the evolution of western societies and its institutionalization in the 'university bundle' (an expression he borrowed from Neil Smelser), Parsons again made reference to de-differentiation in respect to two ideologies, that of the new left and that of the cultural revolution (or counter-culture), which sought to 'minimize, if not destroy, the autonomy of the cognitive complex by incorporating it into a diffuse matrix of *Gesinnung*' (Parsons, 1978: 148–51).

In the context of Parsons's own writings, then, de-differentiation appears as a counter-progressive process, going against the general progressive trends of history. There are suggestions of its analytical and theoretical significance in a total framework of the sociology of development, but its status is very much secondary: de-differentiation appears to be treated as if it were a temporary foil to secular progress.

This residual orientation, so to speak, towards de-differentiation persists in the writings of perhaps the most creative neo-Parsonian contemporary social system theorist, Niklas Luhmann. The rich essays brought together in his volume *The Differentiation of Society* (1982) comprise an important upgrading of the theory of system differentiation as a key aspect of modernity, but in these as well as in very recent writing (1984), Luhmann's treatment of de-differentiation suggests the latter appears as a temporary counter-trend to the more progressive pluralization and differentiation of society. As an instance of de-differentiation, Luhmann notes (1982: 187) the identification of the political code with a moral code, originating, for example, in youth or religious movements, but this is not examined extensively.

Two other writings that merit attention complement each other in that one focuses on de-differentiation at the level of micro-analysis, the other at the level of macro-analysis; both avoid the tacit negative evaluation of Parsons that de-differentiation is a counter-progressive process, an infantile 'fundamentalist reaction', so to speak. Lipman-Blumen extensively treats de-differentiation in her discussion of the stages of role development in the wake of crisis: the particulars of her discussion focus on how wars and depressions have led to women being incorporated in role activities in formerly exclusive male domains. Structural de-differentiation may occur in two forms, she proposes: *structural* and *occupant* (Lipman-Blumen, 1973: 107). The former is the obverse of structural differentiation, which she notes leads to the exclusion of certain individuals or groups from occupying a role. Formally speaking, structural de-differentiation occurs when role elements of Role A are taken over or incorporated in Role B — these elements may overlap A and B, or may be exclusively taken over in Role B. This does not mean that B becomes undifferentiated; a de-differentiated role 'does not return to the structurally prior level of development characterized by lack of specialization' (Lipman-Blumen, 1973: 107). So, for example, the roles of thoracic surgeon, or personal banker, or commercial airline pilot, formerly differentiated by gender, are becoming de-differentiated in this respect without loss of specialization; and one might also mention a de-differentiation of the role of 'mothering' or 'parenting'.

Lipman-Blumen points out that during periods of stability, differentiation tends to be favoured by the existent stratification system and its sanctions; in situations of crisis, the greater flux permits greater change in role elements and role occupants (Lipman-Blumen, 1973: 117). Following crisis, the social structure will tend anew to rigidify or crystallize, leading to a stage of reconfiguration. De-differentiation, then, is implicitly viewed in this micro-perspective as actually providing a greater level of societal integration by breaking down the rigid barriers imposed by structural differentiation. Although this is not part of Lipman-Blumen's discussion, it may be seen in the same positive perspective that Duvignaud has interpreted Durkheim's notion of *anomie* (Duvignaud, 1970). We shall return to this later.

In a recent critique of Durkheim's *Division of Labor*, Rueschemeyer has faulted this classic for failure to distinguish between different forms and levels of the division of labour or structural differentiation: the conditions which give rise to the differentiation of roles are not the same as those giving rise to the differentiation of organizations. De-differentiation and fusion of functions, Rue-

schemeyer proposes, may be operative at one level in a given time period as structural differentiation, and both of these should be part of the explanation of the causes of the division of labour (Rueschemeyer, 1982: 588). An earlier article of his is even more germane in examining the theoretical import of de-differentiation (Rueschemeyer, 1977). There he began with a cogent critique of theories of differentiation really being descriptive generalizations or conceptualizations which do not explain the process. One missing factor, he asserts, is the absence of a discussion of power; that is, what are the vested interests which stand to gain or lose by the increased efficiency of structural differentiation?

What has also been left out from previous research on structural differentiation is the sphere of de-differentiation, which Rueschemeyer sees as a process or processes of fusion of previously separate roles or organizations; both should be treated within the same theoretical framework (Rueschemeyer, 1977: 8). Examples of fusions of functions at the organizational level, he mentions, would include the politicizing of universities and churches. He also argues that certain forms of such fusion are 'of strategic importance for far-reaching transformations of a social order' (Rueschemeyer, 1977: 22), and here he follows the analysis of Weber concerning the role of charismatic change. The most insightful point made in this piece, in my judgement, is Rueschemeyer's passing observation that differentiation and integration are heterogeneous concepts (Rueschemeyer, 1977: 20n), since the former refers to structure and the latter to function. This implies that the integration of social systems, as a fundamental functional problem of social existence, entails *both* differentiation and de-differentiation, or, in alternative terms, specialization and fusion.

De-differentiation in other action spheres

Some additional perspectives on the process of de-differentiation may be obtained by examining other areas that interrelate with social systems in the general action frame of reference. I have in mind here the biological and the personality subsystems of human action. Moreover, it seems rather striking that *de-differentiation* at the level of social development is a recognized process of the same designation in biology and histology, while in terms of personality development it has been generally recognized as *regression*. We seem to be dealing, then, with a very general process that is complementary to that of differentiation.

In one instance, the process of de-differentiation is clearly recognized as pathological and that is in the case of cancers where in the afflicted body there is a breakdown of the 'cybernetic hierarchy

of control', so to speak, and cells 'high in energy but low in information' disrupt the chain-of-command and can totally disrupt the vital differentiation of cells and tissues. However, there are other instances of de-differentiation that present a different image.

Sinex (1977: 37–62) provides an important discussion of the molecular genetics of the aging process. Aging — indicated by a decrease in the activity of a certain enzyme in a cell population — may be viewed as caused either by a well-ordered genetic programme operating efficiently or as a result of defects in the control of the genetic programme (Sinex, 1977: 51). This ambiguity of the process of aging has not been resolved, namely whether or not we are programmed for aging. However, although adequate at some early stages of cell development, the genetic code may later in life become inadequate in coping with aging injury 'due to deficits in biochemical repair tools' (Sinex, 1977: 52). Cell development or embryogenesis occurs in a calibrated sequence, but what happens if an aging injury takes place, so that rather than further development, the pathway must be retraced?

Sinex proposes first the normal process of sequential maturation, as shown below:

A	b	c	d	e	f	initial state, only A is active
A	B	c	d	e	f	B activated
A	B	C	d	e	f	B activates C, which activates D, etc.
A	b	C	D	E	F	normal maturity, B becomes ina tive

This is a normal, matured differentiated state, whose pathway is opened by genetic switches (genes) in a proper order. So, for example, gene C can be activated only after B is activated (the state of activation is indicated by a capital letter, inactivity by the lower case). Now, let us suppose that protein-activating gene C has an aging injury, blocking further normal development. One possible form of repair, proposes Sinex, is 'for the cell to de-differentiate to the point where B is first activated' (Sinex, 1977: 55), and this is schematized thus:

A	b	[illegible]	D	E	F	aging hit on C
A	b	[illegible]	d	e	f	de-differentiation back to initial state
A	B	[illegible]	d	e	f	B reactivated in repetition of first step
A	B	C	d	e	f	C activated
A	b	C	D	E	F	repair complete, B once again inactivated

Although Sinex does not use this term, one might infer that de-differentiation as one means of reversing aging caused by injury is a process of 'rejuvenation', a restoring of energy to a system at

early levels of development. I find some additional plausibility for this in another recent complementary discussion of cell development. Ham and Cormack (1979) speak of differentiation as the process by which cells gain new properties at the expense of their former potentiality. They point out that there are examples in the animal kingdom of apparently differentiated cells which, under very unusual circumstances, can regenerate a lost appendage by reverting back to an earlier stage of differentiation: 'It has therefore been suggested that it is possible for differentiated cells to "de-differentiate", in which process they regain potentiality.' (Ham and Cormack, 1979: 166)

They go on to point out that if cells can demonstrate potentiality previously possessed at an earlier state of differentiation, this would imply they had never lost it; in turn, this implies that cells do not 'lose' genes but that the function of certain genes in normal cellular development is suppressed, and for all practical purposes turned off permanently (Ham and Cormack, 1979: 166–8). It would seem here as if the notion of 'latency', which figures importantly in the A–G–I–L schema of Parsonian action theory, may have an important cognate in all biological systems: de-differentiation, occurring in unusual or extraordinary circumstances (for example, in the sort of crisis situation which forms the context of Lipman-Blumen's discussion), reactivates the seemingly suppressed potentiality of the subsystem in question. In the normal process of differentiation, that is, of development along a given pathway, Ham and Cormack point out that there is a negative feedback which keeps some genes turned off and others turned on, even as the cell is later exposed to conditions that might otherwise have turned the former on; this overall process of development, entailing a turning on of some genes permitting differentiation and specialization is called in embryology *commitment* (Ham and Cormack, 1979: 168).

It is possible to see 'commitment' operative in both personality and societal systems; this would suggest that certain personality dispositions and certain cultural elements (including value orientations) are 'turned off', allowing specialization and concentration of activities in a given channel. But this would also make possible the phenomenon of 'de-differentiation' as a return to a state of higher potentiality; then a new set of 'commitment' is possible for further and later differentiation. I would like to propose among several instances of large-scale societal systems that have altered their development commitment, the cases of post-second world war Germany and Japan, particularly striking in the case of Japan. That is, Germany and Japan underwent modernization with a very strong emphasis on 'militarism' (Bendix, 1977); their respective defeat,

including loss of territory and break-up of the structures of the prewar economy — which in effect involved a process of de-differentiation — was then followed by or made possible a later course of economic development freed from the feudal trappings of a previous tradition. In essence, Germany and Japan have flourished with a new 'commitment' to worldwide economic activism without a military emphasis. At the personality level, there are innumerable familiar instances of conversion experiences, particularly following a crisis, in which the person begins a new career with a new set of commitments; at the crisis state is where we would expect de-differentiation as a process of undoing the old patterns of specialization, and regaining a potentiality which is necessary for a new pathway of personality development.

Having started to talk about the personality aspect, it is relevant here to extend the discussion because of the association, if not identification, in the literature between the processes of de-differentiation and *regression*. The latter concept comes out of Freudian psychoanalysis. Freud gave initial attention to 'regression' in analysing the structure of dreams. Following a theme pointed out by Albertus Magnus and later by Hobbes, Freud noted that, in the dream, an idea is turned back into the sensory image which stimulated the dream: 'In regression, the fabric of the dream thoughts is resolved into its raw material ' (Freud, 1962: 543) He proposed three kinds of regression ('topographical', 'temporal' and 'formal') which need not be detailed here, but it might be noted that Freud held all three to be unitary and to occur together as a rule, 'for what is older in time is more primitive in form and in psychical topography lies nearer to the perceptual end' (Freud, 1962: 548).

Freud's later analysis emphasized regression as a process involved in neurosis (that is, neurosis involves a regression from an adult, mature level of ego development to an earlier state of libidinal development). This is reflected in the contemporary psychoanalytically-inspired psychological literature. Thus Suinn approaches regression as involving 'a return to earlier forms of activity to reach a current goal ... or selection of a goal once held at an earlier time, or reversion to earlier, less mature needs' (Suinn, 1975: 212); regression, if it takes place, is assumed to be to 'some point of fixation' (Suinn, 1975: 224).

Martin suggests that illness normally promotes a degree of regression, which he treats as a 'retreat from the adult standards of independence and self-determination to a more infantile level of weakness, passivity and dependence on others' (Martin, 1980: 2033).[1]

A very extensive discussion of regression is found in a companion

essay by Meissner (1980: 631–728). In discussing the important study of Balint on regression (1968), Meissner distinguishes between benign and malignant regression. The former, in the therapeutic process, enables the patient to return gradually to primary objects at what Balint termed 'the level of the basic fault' (Meissner, 1980: 696); this regression enables a reworking of the quality of the relationships with the patient, that is, the patient in this form of regression can rework his basic assumptive framework towards primary objects. Since regression is a return to a pre-verbal and pre-genital level of object relationship, what the analyst provides is 'empathic acceptance and recognition' rather than verbalized interpretations (Meissner, 1980: 696). In malignant regression, however, the anxiety is experienced so traumatically as to prevent a reworking of object relationships when the basic fault level is reached; the latter is reinforced rather than overcome. But there is a third level of regression, according to Balint, one lying beyond the area of communication, beyond object differentiation, and this is 'the inner core of creativity' that 'lies at the heart of the patient's being and that accounts for his capacity to become ill or well' (Meissner, 1980: 696). What seems very intriguing to me is that Balint's discussion of regression to a deep, primordial level of personality creativity, one characterized by 'an almost undifferentiated interaction of the infant and his environment' (Meissner, 1980: 696), is quite congruent with Ham and Cormack's discussion of cellular development cited earlier; de-differentiation for them, it will be recalled, is a process of regaining the potentiality which is at its maximal state in the *totipotential* or ancestral cell for all kinds of cells that develop in the body (Ham and Cormack, 1979: 166). Totipotentiality and the inner core of personality creativity would certainly appear to be cognate conceptions.

Meissner also discusses schizophrenic regression, precipitated by loss or frustration of object needs. This upsets the self-organization of the patient, including the balance between positive and negative 'introjects that compose the structure of the self' (Meissner, 1980: 716). Loss of this balance, resulting in a flooding of self with destructive feelings, necessitates a regression to a point of 'deepest fixation'; the patient's regressive disorganization 'is accompanied by a de-differentiation of boundaries between self and object' (Meissner, 1980: 716). Meissner also notes an essential aspect of the process of regression, its two faces, so to speak. On the one hand, regression in the psychoanalytical therapeutic process has a progressive potentiality for reopening and reworking infantile conflicts and for bringing about a reorganization of the personality on a healthier plane of development. Yet, it also has a destructive potentiality in

returning to 'an earlier state of narcissistic gratification' (Meissner, 1980: 721).

Before concluding this consideration of regression as a cognate process of de-differentiation, let me observe that Parsons's treatment suggested he himself saw the two as interrelated; needless to point out, Parsons was very steeped in the psychoanalytical literature, at least Freud's writings, and he used 'regression' and 'de-differentiation' in drawing out instances of societal reactions to strain which he viewed as counter to the secular trends of modern society — in other words, social forms of regression were viewed as potentially destructive rather than as therapeutic. An even more pronounced psychoanalytic use of 'regression' in the sociological literature is the essay of Slater (1963), who sketched out a theory of small groups subject to libidinal withdrawal of cathexis from larger groups; this withdrawal or contraction (e.g. from commitment to larger aggregates such as community to confines of the nuclear family or even the 'intimate dyad') is the process of social regression, which takes many forms, and which is the obverse of libidinal diffusion or attachment in the process of socialization. Suggestive as Slater's discussion is, it tends to reinforce the negative image of regression rather than broaden the Parsonian and Freudian perspectives on which it is grounded.

Yet another consideration of *The Elementary Forms*

The last volume of essays published by Parsons in his lifetime includes a 'revisit' he wrote about ten years ago on Emile Durkheim's *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*. Parsons was certainly highly appreciative of Durkheim's great contributions to action theory, particularly concerning the interpenetration of social, cultural and personality systems via the generalized medium of affect and its linkage to expressive symbolization; the latter is generated in ritual ceremonies of the religious life (Parsons, 1978: 222–3). My purpose here is not to detail Parsons's 'revisit', nor his original 'visit' (in *The Structure of Social Action*). It is to suggest that Parsons, as well as many other commentators who in recent years have taken another look at *The Elementary Forms*, myself included (Tikyakian, 1981), have missed one connection that needs to be made between Durkheim's last major work and his first one, *The Division of Labor*. It is that they are complementary works of what might be thought of as a general theory of social solidarity and societal development, a theory which in the first work lays out the broad process of structural differentiation and in the last work lays out (though without naming it) the significance of de-differentiation. Let me try to explicate this.

In Book II, Chapter 7 of *The Elementary Forms*, Durkheim traces the genesis of the religious idea to the effervescent state produced by the assembly of the collectivity on extraordinary occasions (Durkheim, 1961: 250). Such occasions of a very intense emotional experience for its participants, Durkheim notes, provide a double function of *recreation*. The religious gathering is a celebration which recreates the individual 'fatigued by the too great slavishness of daily work' (Durkheim, 1961: 426) and it is also a collective renovation or regeneration (Durkheim, 1961: 390f). Durkheim's references to the French Revolution (e.g. 1961: 245) and its sacralization of objects and beliefs indicate that renovation or regeneration is not limited to 'traditional' societies. Very broadly speaking, it may be argued that revolutions and religious revivals are structurally related as instances of collective gatherings that renew (or renovate) a collective identity and provide inspiration for collective action as well as renewed individual activity.

So far I have articulated a reading of Durkheim which has informed various anthropological studies of 'revitalization movements' (Wallace, 1956). But these have not been linked, as far as I am aware, to structural processes of differentiation and de-differentiation. This is what I propose to do, in reconsidering certain features of Durkheim's analysis.

Durkheim posits a differentiation of social life in terms of the famous profane/sacred dichotomy of things and activities. Recall that he viewed economic life as the sphere of the profane *par excellence*, and religious life as that of the sacred (Durkheim, 1961: 246). The former, I would propose, manifests the process of structural differentiation (particularly the division of labour), which Durkheim had studied extensively in his first major study as a structural base of solidarity in advanced societies. In *The Elementary Forms*, it is not the sphere of the profane, or the economic life, which is at issue. Rather, what is at issue is that the economic life differentiates and disperses members of the collectivity. Left unattended, this would ultimately result in the loss of a common identity, of group ties and solidarity and, by extension, of a sense of common purpose. The religious renewal is a re-creation of the collectivity, of the society (or the societal community).

But, structurally speaking, what is involved in this process? Basically it is the process of de-differentiation. That is, the hitherto differentiated members of the collectivity, coming together in the extraordinary assembly, establish or re-establish their commonality in intensive and extensive interaction. De-differentiation here involves both roles and organizations; it also entails a de-differentiation of activities from the public/private differentiation of

social life which is customary of the 'profane' sphere. In other words, social life becomes more intense the greater the extent to which it becomes 'public'. Both religious revivals and revolutions manifest de-differentiation. They tend to level social differences which had previously differentiated the societal members: in religious revivals the stress is placed on the commonality of all 'brethren', while in revolutions there is a removal of the social bases of differentiation, symbolized in everyone being called 'citizen', 'comrade', and the like.

Obviously, de-differentiation in large-scale societal systems involves a political transformation, an altering of the power dimension operative in the pathway of structural differentiation. That, however, is not the same as a breakdown of integration, It does mean that elements previously excluded or made to feel excluded from the *res publica* are 'upgraded' or provided with inclusion in the polity. Nationalist movements, religious revivals and revolutions do have in common an endeavour to mobilize (or 'awaken') a population against the powers that be; this mobilization entails a de-differentiation of the population into 'one people'. The reunification of a socially and economically differentiated population is a special and important subset of the general process of de-differentiation.

Durkheim observed that there is periodicity in the life of society, with religious renewals (whose latent function is the renewal of the societal community) alternating with periods of differentiated economic activity. Drawing upon this, it might be proposed that de-differentiation is a periodic or occasional necessity for providing a large-scale social system with renewed energy, ultimately with a renewed sense of collective identity, for commitment to common symbols and value-orientations. There is need, in other words, for a periodic renewal of actors' 'enthusiasm' as well as commitment. In Parsonian terms, the 'L' sector has to be reactivated to restore the 'potency' of the overall system. In traditional societies, this restoration took place in ritualized processes of de-differentiation, such as rituals of initiation, saturnalias and so forth. In 'modern' societies, the extraordinary occasions have tended to become increasingly political ones, but their religious aspect, if not underpinning, remains an integral component: Mao's 'Cultural Revolution' and Khomeini's 'Islamic Revolution' are instances of large-scale, intensive processes of de-differentiation.

Conclusion

This chapter has drawn attention to a neglected process of action systems, namely de-differentiation. The emphasis in the sociological

literature on structural differentiation, viewing this as the master process of development, has slighted or taken for granted the question of how complex social systems regenerate actors' commitment to and participation in their societal community. I have suggested that the process of de-differentiation — which of course requires much greater scrutiny than provided in these pages — is of central significance in understanding the general phenomenon of 'rejuvenation', or renovating the energy available to action systems. De-differentiation underlies interrelated problems of restoring the potency of systems, such as reversing entropy in open systems, coping with injuries involved in aging processes or accounting for factors making for new collective directions.

From this perspective, de-differentiation should not be equated with being a pathological tendency or process that can lead only to a reversal of progressive development. De-differentiation, thus, is not tantamount to *anomie*, which as a societal condition is closer to being a state of entropy.[2] To be sure, de-differentiation may have an aspect of destructuration, for example, the dissolution of the *status quo ante bellum* stratification system, whose emergence and crystallization stem from antecedent consequences of structural differentiation. De-differentiation involves a regrouping of the parts, or differentiated components, into a whole at a more fundamental level of unification or organization than prevailed. If de-differentiation occurs, this may well reflect that the nature of integration of the system in a relatively advanced state of structural differentiation was inadequate to cope with either internal or external strains, traumas, catastrophes and so forth. Some of these strains, upon closer examination, may be generated by the very process of structural differentiation (for example, increased social distance between dominating and dominated strata, loss of affective ties of solidarity between components, etc.). The net effect of this is that development of the system overall is impaired or rendered less productive by further structural differentiation; a phase of destruction is necessary to produce new forms of organization and integration, that is, to re-form the development process.

In examining the sources of emergence of Western modernity, Eisenstadt raises important new considerations of the Weberian thesis, and in particular directs attention to accounting for the *transformative* capacities of different religions: 'that is, their capacity for *internal transformation* which may then facilitate the development of new social institutions and individual motivations in directions different from their original impulses and aims' (Eisenstadt, 1973: 221, emphasis added).

I would like to propose that if Weber (and Eisenstadt) have

correctly sensitized us to a major facet of the development of large-scale social systems by examining the source of impulsion, we should consider Durkheim's *The Elementary Forms* as providing complementary materials pertinent to the explanation of societal renewal. More broadly speaking, however, we need to couple de-differentiation with structural differentiation in reaching a general theoretical model of development.

Let me end with the passing observation that although this chapter has concentrated on the theoretical significance of a process seemingly remote from our more familiar concerns, its relevance may be enhanced if we consider that some of our contemporary 'megatrends' (Naisbitt, 1982) pertain more to de-differentiation than to differentiation. The most striking, in my judgement, is in the sphere of the social organization and regulation of sexuality. A fundamental aspect of the division of labour has been the sexual division of labour, not only in 'primitive' societies but in the occupational structure of 'advanced', industrial societies as well. The de-differentiation of sex roles in various spheres of social life — related to an overall orientation of sexual de-differentiation known as 'androgyny', which has very complex cultural roots (Singer, 1977) — is an emergent 'megatrend' of major import. It is one that could well call for a structural overhauling of social values and institutions no less profound than the restructuration of the 'post-industrial' economy. But although this process will cause or is causing some difficult readjustment, it may also provide an overall upgrading in social skills and talent in unanticipated consequences of new forms of sexual integration.

A second empirical instance of de-differentiation at the macro-level, I would propose, is the attempt by the Sandinista government of Nicaragua to alter radically the structures of the country's economic development and to offer this as a viable alternative model for the entire Caribbean-Central American region (Institute of Social Studies and INIES, 1983: Gorostiaga, 1984). We have to consider Nicaragua, until the Sandinista revolution, as a third world country integrated into the world system's international division of labour; its structural position was that of being on the 'periphery', whose differentiated functions include that of exporting commodities to the 'core' (mainly to the United States) and importing finished products and luxury goods for a ruling élite. Although one may argue that Cuba sought, successfully, to extricate itself from a similar structural situation of dependency on the United States, one could say that its subsequent economic and military dependency on the Soviet Union has not led to a radical change of that third world country's situation *vis-à-vis* its global environment. On the other

hand, Nicaragua's economic planning — sharply impeded in implementation by a variety of harassment tactics of the Reagan administration — is geared to have that country *and its regional environment* change the configuration of the social system so as to sharply increase its autonomy and relationships *vis-à-vis* the world capitalist system. Whether this effort at de-differentiation can succeed is more than theoretically intriguing, since no other third world regional export economy has sought to and been successful in both internally and externally transforming the environment — certainly not the OPEC third world countries. The very magnitude of the White House's efforts to block and eliminate the Sandinista threat is an indication that de-differentiation is not an automatic process, but that, as a social process which is a counter-tendency, it generates opposition and reaction from the social environment.

In brief, these and other related trends of de-differentiation merit our attention, theoretically and substantively, as we seek to formulate the parameters of the next round of modernity.

Notes

1. There is substantial agreement or overlap between Martin's discussion of regression in the context of the 'culturally accepted sick role' and the much older discussion of the sick role by Parsons (1951).

2. I take *anomie* as a state of disorder reflecting the absence or loss of actors' commitment to a common set of normative standards of moral discipline. Anomie entails the breakdown of what Weber termed *legitime Heerschaft*, or voluntary compliance with public authority (Weber, 1978).

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7

The rise of social scientific Marxism and the problems of class analysis

Göran Therborn

A third epoch: Marxism as a social science

From the critiques of political economy and philosophy to the critique of sociology

The 1960s constitute a rupture in Marxist thought, a rupture consummated and consolidated in the decade from the mid-1970s to the mid-1980s. What will happen in three or four years hence is beyond the scope of this history. The first epoch was that of classical Marxism, that of the critique of political economy, as *Das Kapital* was subtitled.

'Western Marxism', and its theorists of the 'revolution against *Capital*' (Gramsci) and, even more, of revolutionary defeat in the West ensued. Marxism retreated to the womb, so to speak, i.e., to philosophy, in the works of Lukacs, Korsch, the Frankfurt School, Lefevbre, Sartre, della Volpe, Althusser. Gramsci, of course, is unique in this context, as in so many, but his background was also philosophy (Croce), not political economy. The story has been told, and brilliantly dissected, by Perry Anderson.[1]

To Anderson's analysis one point at least should be added, it seems to me 'Western Marxism' was not simply a retreat to those questions which preoccupied the young Marx, the critic of Hegel's Philosophy of Law; it also indicated a crisis of bourgeois central and Latin European philosophy, manifested by the rise of eminent Marxist rebels in the midst of it.

The upheavals of 1956 and 1968 created new variants of the Marxist political language, with new mixtures of the combination of analytical, normative and exhortative enunciations characteristic of Marxist political discourse, but hardly a new *mode* of discourse. The cracking up of Stalinism opened up a new space for advances in thought and discourse, and the student mass movements, which swept the universities throughout the capitalist world, provided academic housing and an institutional infrastructure for the new kind of Marxism. But the latter's propelling cause was rather a geological shift in the position and the predominant idiom of the

western European intelligentsia after the war, largely under the impact of American influence; it was the accelerating growth of university education and, in particular, of empirical social science, sociology and 'behavioural' political science. Marxist theory became again, after the philosophical preoccupations of 'Western Marxism', social theory, theory about contemporary society and politics. Sociology, general sociological theory, political sociology and historical sociology, replaced philosophy and political economy as the main — though by no means exclusive — frame of critical reference and as the grammar of its language. Marxist analysis became, first of all, sociopolitical analysis. We may call this new stage of thought, analysis and discourse, *social scientific Marxism.*

An outcome of the 1970s: Marxism goes west

Anderson, in his *Considerations on Western Marxism* pointed to the geographical shifts accompanying epochal changes in Marxist thought, from western Europe at the time of the founders to eastern Europe in the second of the classical generation, of Kautsky, Lenin and others, and then west and southwards with the advent of 'Western Marxism', mainly centred in France and Italy, and in West Germany.[2]

The relocation of the centre of gravity of Marxist intellectual thought to the Anglo-Saxon world is in one sense an expression of strength and promise, since the latter is, by and large the contemporary centre of the intellectual world — France still being a very important centre of historiography and anthropology, for instance. But it also manifests an inherent weakness of the new Marxism, its disjuncture from Marxist politics. Though social scientific Marxism is more concretely engaged with contemporary politics and the actual class struggle than the philosophy of latterday 'Western Marxism', the third epoch of Marxist theory in one respect constitutes a further separation of Marxist scholarship from Marxist politics. The founding fathers of what became the tradition of 'Western Marxism', Gramsci, Lukacs, Korsch, all once held positions of prime political significance. The intellectual vanguard of social scientific Marxism, by contrast, all politically committed and most of it politically active in some form, includes no one who has ever had a position of political responsibility of any general significance. There is, then, an inherent danger of either a meticulous, specialized scholarship capped by a schematic politics in the air, abstracted from contemporary reality, or an apolitical academicism, practically severed from the emancipatory aims of proper Marxism. There have been streaks of the former in the recent past, whereas the latter is a risk to watch out for in the future.

The rise of neo-Marxist class analysis: background and achievements

As is well known, Marx, when he began his work of historical materialism, disclaimed for himself the discovery of the existence of classes and of the struggle, their historical development and their 'economic anatomy'. What Marx, in his own opinion, had done was to show 'that the existence of classes is bound only to certain historical phases of development of production; 2. that the class struggle necessarily will lead to the dictatorship of the proletariat; 3. that this dictatorship itself only forms the transitions to the abolition of all classes and to a classless society'.[3]

That was said in 1852, but in his posthumous edition of *Capital*, Engels had to conclude the chapter on 'The Classes', *Hier bricht das Manuskript ab*', before Marx had entered into an exposition of his own class conception. Of course, Marx wrote much more on classes and class struggle, but it is important to remember that before the rise of social scientific Marxism in the 1960s, class analysis — its theory, methodology and practice — remained in roughly the same fragmented state as when Marx laid down his pen.[4]

Whereas Marxist class analysis hardly made much progress, in non-Marxist social and historical analysis after Ricardo and Guizot class had rather tended to disappear, to be marginalized, or to be turned into something upside down. The marginalist turn in economics had largely banned classes from economic analysis. Mainstream historiography had come to see history only marginally as a history of class struggle, at best. What was left of scholarly interest in class was largely concentrated into the new discipline of sociology. In the hands of leading sociologists, however, classes and class struggle have been subjected to a strange fate.

The American sociology of class and stratification

By the late 1960s prevailing sociology offered two chief alternatives to Marxist class analysis. One was the theory and the study of 'stratification', the implicit conception of social dynamics which is illustrated by the term's origin, in the earth sciences.[5] The theoretical line of it was developed by functionalist theorists Talcott Parsons and Kingsley Davis.[6] A less lofty, empiricist variant derived from Cecil North's and Paul Hatt's American survey in 1947 of occupational prestige.[7] The second, primarily represented by Seymour Martin Lipset, retained class and, to some extent, even class struggle as central concepts, but with a new, quite original twist.[8]

The condition of classes in the discipline of sociology at the time of the rise of student rebellions and of social scientific Marxism can be ascertained with some objectivity from two sources with seals of official *imprimatur*. One is a reader, *Class Status and Power. Social Stratification in a Comparative Perspective*, edited by S.M. Lipset and R. Bendix. It had a great commercial success and, one might safely assume, a considerable influence upon the profession. At the time of its second, enlarged and revised edition (New York: Free Press, 1966) its first edition (of 1953) had been reprinted nine times. The other, even more solemn source is the *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* (New York: Macmillan, 1968).

A glimpse of the trajectory of sociological wisdom may be captured by relating this encyclopedia to its predecessor, the *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* (New York: Macmillan, 1930). In 1930 it was held appropriate that an encyclopedia of the social sciences had entries on Class, Class Consciousness and Class Struggle. By 1968, readers of canonized social science were instead referred to Social Stratification. Under that rubric, the keynote Introduction was commissioned from the disciple of Talcot Parsons, Bernard Barber. Seymour Martin Lipset contributed a piece on Social Class, and there were also subentries on The Measure of Social Class, The Structure of Stratification Systems, and Class Culture. All six (because of one joint contribution) contributors were American, whereas in 1930 the key article on Class had been asked from the German disciple of Max Weber, Paul Mombert.

The dominant trend of sociology had thus been one from attention to problems of class, class consciousness, and, on special occasions even, class struggle, to social stratification, i.e., to differential ranking, according to this or that criteria, preferably many at the same time (a 'multidimensional' conception of stratification).[9] To functionalists Parsons and Davis, stratification — or, more vulgarly put, inequality — was necessary, positive, and integrative.[10]

In the functionalist and the empiricist conceptions of stratification, class relations of exploitation, and domination had been turned into a ladder of strata; the problem of how class position determines class consciousness had been turned into one of how societal consciousness determines class or stratum by ranking social functions or occupations; instead of viewing classes as manifesting themselves in class struggles, bearing upon the maintenance or the transformation of exploitation and domination, stratification was now looked upon as an aspect of societal integration, manifesting social consensus.

This complacent preoccupation with consensus and prestige was a

significant sociological contribution to the 'Great American Celebration' of the 1940s and 1950s, a contribution rooted in a revamped import of European idealism married to the status concerns of prospering and upwardly mobile middle classes. But sociology also harboured, in central locations, another tendency of which Lipset at the time was the prime representative. This tendency was largely made up of liberal ex-Marxist recruits to sociology, to which they carried over, and put to radically novel uses, certain aspects of their earlier formation. By the time of the late-1960s — when The Other America (of poverty) had been discovered by a middle-class public, when the student movement had begun at Berkeley, when the Vietnam war was in progress and when Europe had recovered — ignorant idealism was being eroded and ex-Marxist liberalism was on its way up the ladder of sociological prestige. Since the late-1950s a number of European sociologists, Ralf Dahrendorf, David Lockwood, Stanislaw Ossowski[11] and others, had been submitting stratificationism to a series of critiques, drawing upon Marxian and Weberian notions. In the second edition of the Bendix-Lipset reader, Parsons's 1953 paper on stratification had been dropped, and in his encyclopedic article Parsons's disciple Barber called Marx the 'Copernican hero' in the 'history of the evolution of social stratification theory'.[12] To Barber, Marx had, of course, now become completely eclipsed by the lights of functionalism, but Lipset, in his article, stated that 'the ideas generated by Marx and Weber remain the most fruitful sources of theory on social stratification'.[13] Already Bendix and Lipset had written a sober exposition of Marxian class theory in the Cold War edition of *Class Status and Power*.

However, Lipset used Marx for his own variant of the American Celebration. The reader includes a chapter from Lipset's book *Political Man* (cf. 1960), entitled 'Elections: The Expression of the Democratic Class Struggle'. And for the encyclopedia Lipset concludes that 'an unpolitical Marxist Sociology would expect the social class relationships of the United States to present an image of the future of other societies that are moving in the same general economic direction'.[14] If anything was to be left of the class struggle, then it would apparently look like the electoral contests of Democrats and Republicans.

The strange mixture of well-meaning eclecticism — sometimes muddle-headed confusion might be more apt — and blatant self-congratulation, illustrated by the stances on 'stratification', is part of the story of why sociology became an intellectual tempest zone in the late-1960s. Sociology invited critics — of itself and of society — in its pre-paradigmatic vast-embracing heterogeneity, and

it invited, in the sense of deservedly drawing upon itself, frontal criticism in its provocatively complacent ideology. But when the dust settled after the battles of protest and reprisals, Marxism had acquired a certain, guarded right to exist in sociology, a space wider than in any other social science.

In fact, sociology was not Panglossian, corrupt or vicious all through, as it seemed to many rebels at the time. In spite of some people's strenuous efforts, sociology had never succeeded in forging strong links with the economic and political centres of power, and with its own internal divisions even in its core, sociology was the soft underbelly of bourgeois academia. More than that, outside its mainstream, but nevertheless in respected positions, pre-1968 sociology included figures clearly sympathetic to Marxism in a non-emasculated sense (though one unrelated to contemporary revolutionary politics). One remarkable representative of this scattered but significant tradition was the patrician Harvard Professor Barrington Moore Jr, who in an essay of 1958 on 'Strategy in Social Science' had listed Marx, Weber and Parsons in a descending order of moral fibre and scholarly acumen in their treatment of social classes and affirmed the importance of considering 'the class struggle as the basic stuff of politics'.[15] In 1966 Moore published a major work of historical sociology, written in a clearly Marxian vein, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (Boston: Beacon Press). Ten years earlier, Thomas Bottomore, who was to become the President of the International Sociological Association in the mid-1970s, had together with a French Marx scholar put together a selection of Marx's writings on 'sociology and social philosophy'.[16] In a little book of theoretical introduction and overview, *Classes in Modern Society* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1965) Bottomore had himself taken a social scientific Marxist position and cautiously predicted a resurgence of working-class struggles.

There was also the radical-democratic tradition in American social thought, represented first of all by the widely inspiring oeuvre of C. Wright Mills. In his *The Power Elite* from 1956 he had preferred a power élite approach to a Marxist class analysis,[17] for which he was taken to task not only by Paul Sweezy, the unswerving upkeeper of independent classical Marxism in the United States but also by an older eminent sociologist out of the radical-democratic tradition, Robert Lynd.[18] But in 1962 Mills compiled, with clear sympathy, an anthology of Marxist selections, classical and contemporary, analytical and political, *The Marxists* (New York: Dell, 1962). And parallel to the mounting attacks by young radical Marxists upon the 'Sunshine Boys' (Lipset et al.),[19] one of the

postwar converts from Marxism to sociology, Alvin Goulner, was writing a radical full-scale critique of Parsonsian sociology and arguing the sibling relationship of Marxism and academic sociology (thus equally legitimate, *The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology*, London: Heinemann, 1971).

Here was a basis for a positive confrontation of sociology and Marxism, to the benefit of both, and of social science as a whole. However, in the first decade of social scientific Marxism it came to function mainly indirectly, giving Marxism a sociological bent and opening up sociology to Marxist influences. But the new Marxism first had to assert its own independence and to re-establish its own tradition before it could sit down to separate the wheat from the chaff in contemporary academia.

The problematic reality of class

The meaning as well as the relevance of class in the world of contemporary advanced capitalism were both ambiguous and controversial by the 1960s. The postwar boom in this part of the world had largely broken up or eroded old class communities and commonalities of class experience. Peasant villages and workers' neighbourhoods were being depopulated in migration to new, historyless urban and suburban conglomerations. Memories and fears of unemployment faded away in the unprecedented boom. In the big and rapidly growing corporations the chain of hierarchy became vastly extended and complicated. The state apparatuses also expanded, both in functions and in size. On the basis of some parts of the fruits of the boom, novel patterns of mass consumption and of social relations emerged in the new, fragmented residential areas, seemingly sealed off from the punch of capital: the family life of the holy trinity of mass consumerist secularization, the family home, the family car and the family television. And surrounding each little family was not only the unclouded sunshine of the boom but also the net of public social security.

In the US the class crystallizations, however twisted, of the New Deal period, had been eroded or smashed. In western European politics, this was the moment of Bad Godesberg, the programmatic abandonment of every trace of Marxist class politics by Social Democracy,[20] the protractions of the French left before the rise of Gaullism, the break-up of the socialist-communist alliance in Italy. And the first waves of a new oppositional politics hardly grew in a very direct manner out of the capital-labour nexus either, the campaigns, in Britain and in other northern European countries, against nuclear armament, and somewhat later the student movements from Berkeley to West Berlin.

What scholarly discourse there was about class, was mainly located within the sprawling academic aggregate called sociology, and within sociological discourse on class and stratification, confusion and controversy over basic principles were dominant features by the mid-1960s. From Marxists had come hardly a single major analysis of postwar advanced capitalism, till Paul Baran's and Paul Sweezy's *Monopoly Capital* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1966), which provided a sort of living bridge, but as it turned out, a minor one, between classical Marxism and the new post-philosophical Marxism. But it was clear that the class relations of contemporary capitalism had little of the apparent immediacy, either evolutionary or apocalyptic, of the classical periods of the Marxist labour movement.

This background of social complication, ideological denial, and of theoretical confusion will account for some characteristics of the new Marxist treatment of class. Its elaborate, often book-long efforts at the conceptualization of class;[21] its overriding concern with the determinants rather than the experience or 'consciousness' of class; its focus on mapping the whole class structure and not just the ruling class or the working class. The political rationale of this perspective was to find, beneath the bewildering and partly depressing appearances of the present, the bases of strategies for the future, an inventory of forces and allies available in coming struggles for the overthrow of capitalism. But the care of detail also betrays sheer intellectual curiosity, an interest simply in finding out what a given advanced capitalist society's social relations looked like, and not only from a particular Marxist angle but also more generally. For all its funds and tenured academics, emipirical sociology had not embarked on studies of the overall social structure on a scale and scope matching the most ambitious and comprehensive new Marxist projects.

Four empirical class analyses

The extensive and intricate statistical compilations and calculations by the West German Institute for Marxist Studies and Research (IMSF) and Project Class Analysis (PKA)[22] will constitute the most comprehensive quantitative sociography of any country. These heavy, table-packed tomes, clearly products of large *Autorenkollektive*, even appear rather awe-inspiring. The empirical parts of the IMSF study make up some 1,050 pages, that of the PKA 560. For all their length, the breadth of these studies is rather narrow, however. The PKA study is, by and large, a duplication of the slightly earlier and larger IMSF one, applying a different conceptualization of class but using largely the same kind of data and the same empirical

approach. Both deal with the German Federal Republic 1950–70, with certain backward glances into the earlier Germany. The focus is concentrated on data of population, the macro-economics of national product industry, and capital, employment, and, in the IMSF case, on education. Figures on wealth and income distribution and on social mobility are also reported. But there is nothing about how class relations are actually lived in the Federal Republic, about the functioning of class domination, about ideologies or about class struggles, only little (in the PKA) about organizations and institutions of class. Class is here, in both studies, used as a descriptive sociographic category with a view to mapping the terrain for the future politics of the 'party of the working class', the existing DKP in the case of the IMSF, a somewhat changed DKP in the case of the PKA.

The two other large-scale empirical Marxist class projects are much more analytically edged. Neither of them is completed at the time of writing, but the reports published and, mostly, unpublished and the information available about them makes it possible and safe to note their outstanding importance. One is conducted by Adam Przeworski at the University of Chicago. It has an overriding explanatory objective: to explain the history of electoral strategies and electoral performance of workers' parties by the constraints of the class structure.[23] As part of this analysis Przeworski and his research associates have put together a report on the evolution of class structure in Denmark (1901–60), France (1901–68), Germany (1882–1933, 1950–61) and Sweden (1900–60).[24] The data are taken from national censuses and refer both to the total adult population and to the economically active, divided into occupational categories and by sex and age, and regrouped into broader class categories; the occupational categories are claimed to have been made roughly the same over time and across countries. A major finding, so far, of this model of clarity and systematicity, is that the working class in the classical Marxist sense of manual wage-workers in production, transport and storage, has never constituted a majority of the adult population.

The project of Erik Olin Wright, at the University of Wisconsin in Madison, cuts the most novel path in Marxist class analysis. Whereas almost all other Marxist researchers on class structure have started from the occupations listed in official statistics, trying to translate them, sometimes with the help of other pieces of statistical social historical information, into class categories, Wright is putting the sociological survey technique to use for getting first-hand information about class. Class location is tapped by asking interviewees questions about their control or not over

investments, other employees and over their own working conditions. A number of other questions, from kind of employer or business, income, sex and ethnicity to attitudes on social problems and political affiliation make possible a long series of analyses of the effects of class. It is also a comparative project, with representative national surveys conducted in the United States, Sweden, Finland, Australia, Norway, Canada, Italy and planned in Britain and Israel.[25] The project is organized somewhat like a multinational corporation, originated and set up in the US, spreading through locally funded projects in other countries operated by native researchers.

If and when they are completed according to their design, the projects of Przeworski and Wright will certainly constitute landmarks of social scientific research as well as of Marxist scholarship.

Alongside the boldly pioneering, thought-provoking — and therefore always controversial — oeuvre of Poulantzas, mainly theoretical and politically interpretative but clearly empirically related, the massive Teutonic sociographies, and the unusually successful marriage of historical materialism with the vanguard of American social science in the projects of Przeworski and Wright, the corpus of recent Marxist class analysis includes a number of remarkable special studies, to be signalled below, and a series of more modest-sized studies of national class structures and their evolution in the twentieth century.[26] Thus, an important body of empirical knowledge has been produced which has a lasting value to everybody interested in social structure and social relations, regardless of one's opinion of the particular conceptualizations of class used or even of the degree of relevance of class.

The sociological impact

Theoretically, the new Marxist class analysis has brought about a shift in academic social science. The bend of academic social vision from at least some recognition of the salience of class and class struggle to a focus on 'social stratification', as indicated by the entries of the 1930 and the 1968 encyclopedias of social science, has been turned left again, to a focus more on the centre of society, so to speak, after the previous right-wing twist. Capitalism, capitalist property and wage labour are now regarded by non-Marxist sociological wisdom as central features of contemporary western societies, without doubt overriding standard notions of pre-1968 sociology, such as 'industrial society' and its offspring 'post-industrial society', stratification of 'occupational status', manual/non-manual categorizations. The best tribute to this is paid by prominent contemporary sociological critics of Marxism. Thus, for

example, Frank Parkin, in a perceptive but completely disrespectful critique of Marxist class theory, takes his fellow bourgeois sociologists to task for having turned a blind eye to property, forgetting that 'Weber was in full accord with Marx in asserting that "Property" and "lack of property" are the basic characteristics of all class situations'.[27] In the same vein Parkin also attacks Ralf Dahrendorf — the sociological theorist of authority relations instead of property as the basis of class domination and social conflict[28] — for not asking 'for what *purpose* is authority exercised and occasionally challenged?' Parkin supplies the answer: 'The command structure of a business enterprise is geared directly to the pursuit of profit, and those who staff the key posts are in effect the guardians of capital; they are not concerned with the enforcement of obedience as an end in itself.'[29]

Similarly, in another contemporary sociological critique of Marxism, not maliciously ironic but rather somewhat glibly pretentious in the shaping of its often very thought-provoking and insightful observations and arguments, Anthony Giddens puts capitalism and wage labour straight into the centre of his perspective on contemporary western society. The distance travelled by mainstream sociological theory, of which Giddens must be regarded as a leading proponent among the younger generation, is indicated by the following verdict:

> There seems equally little doubt that Marx was right to locate this impetus [to economic growth and technical innovation] in the dynamic nature of production governed by price, profit and investment. If this appears something of a banality on the face of things, it becomes less so when in the light of the rival theory which for a long while dominated sociology, the theory of 'industrial society' ... (and its latter-day affiliate, linked to a conception of a supposedly 'post-industrial' world) ...[30]

Certain Marxist themes are now regarded as self-evident to the extent that their lack of banality has to be explained by the weird ideas dominating sociology only a decade earlier.[31]

Hard-nosed empirical sociologists have also got, by Erik Olin Wright, a demonstration on their own terrain — of operationalized concepts, representative quantitative data and explanation by regression equations — of the significance of class in the Marxist sense in accounting for income variations, in competition with rival theories of returns to occupational status or education.[32]

Problems of class analysis and tasks for the future

The empirical and the theoretical achievements indicated above bear witness to the vitality and the viability of social scientific

Marxism, in stark contrast to the crisis of philosophico-political Marxism. However, the development of Marxist class analysis has hardly yet reached the state of a consolidated, cumulative enterprise of knowledge production, neither theoretically nor empirically. And Marxism would stagnate if it grew complacent basking in the unreliable sun of non-Marxist sociological homage.

The unresolved problems cluster in two main areas. One of them may be said to relate primarily to *understanding the present* of class societies, the other to the understanding and to the *affecting of their future*. The former refers to issues of how to map the existing patterns of class relations and to find the processes making and sustaining them. The latter pertains to the political commitment of Marxist scientific analysis to contributing to the struggle for the abolition of exploitation and domination by providing knowledge about and for that struggle.

Four unresolved problems of contemporary Marxist class analysis

The difficulties may all be regarded as coming out of the confluence of three sources, the fragmentary ambiguity of Marx's own treatment of class beyond a paradigmatic core, the vastly increased complexity of the social relations of capitalist societies since the time of *Capital* and thirdly, to some extent, also the still patchy structures experienced in sustained serious international Marxist discussion — a legacy of 'Western Marxism' and its break-up of the classical international Marxist discourse into self-contained philosophical schools mainly ignoring each other.[33] The amplitude of the problems involved here may be illustrated by the fact that the classes which correspond to the largest common denominator of definitional agreement among the major Marxist class analyses of the 1970s together make up one-sixth of the Swedish population eighteen years older *c.* 1980. Put in other terms, all Marxists would unambiguously identify the class location of one-sixth of the Swedish electorate. The proportion is unlikely to be substantially higher in any advanced capitalist country, and in some, such as the United States, it would most likely be not insignificantly lower. The rock-bottom agreement concerns manual wage-workers in the production, transport and storage of goods, who work (or are looking for work) for capitalist enterprises, and, on the other side, owners-entrepreneurs-employers.[34]

a. The pertinence of Marxian economic theory: The largest common denominator of Marxist class analyses derives from Marx's most unambiguous formulations about the production and the appropriation of surplus-value. The low figure coming out of it raises the

question of the pertinence of Marxian economic theory to contemporary class analysis of advanced capitalism. The background of the new social scientific Marxism in critiques of certain philosophical traditions of 'Western Marxism' (Poulantzas *vis-à-vis* Lukacs) and of sociology rather than of political economy has resulted in some theoretical confusion, it seems.

Poulantzas argued very strongly, that 'it is mistaken to claim that ... relations of production are alone sufficient to define social classes'. Instead, classes should be seen as 'an effect of the articulation of the [ideological and jurido-political as well as the economic] structures either of the mode of production or of the social formation'.[35] Herein Poulantzas was primarily concerned with avoiding the counter-position of economic stasis and politico-ideological dynamics, class-in-itself as opposed to class-for-itself, of '[economic] class situation' on the one hand, and politico-idealogical class position on the other.[36] That is a misleading way of putting the issue. The Marxian conception of regarding classes as the bearers (*Träger*) fo the relations of production does *not* — in contrast to a strict definition in terms of property and non-property — denote a situation but a *process*. The classes are the bearers of the ongoing processes of the given mode of production. This constitutes the particular strength of Marxist class theory, that class denotes ensembles of men and women converging in wide-ranging conflictual relations and practices as they go on keeping a given kind of society going. While it is correct, as Poulantzas pointed out, that classes have necessary juridico-political and ideological *conditions of existence*, it does not follow from that, that classes have to be *defined* as the bearers of the overall social structure. The main reason why a class definition should not be extended in that direction is the loss of analytical edge resulting from such an operation. Historical materialism has identified the economic mode of production not simply as a structure but as a structured system of processes with an inherent dynamics accessible to economic analysis. But neither Marx nor Poulantzas has defined any inherent dynamic in the state or in the system of ideology corresponding to that of capital accumulation.

Poulantzas's anti-economics led him to absurd conclusions about that major aspect of modern social complexity: the white collar strata (to use a deliberately banal commonsensical term). Poulantzas suggested that they and service and sales workers (non-producers of surplus value) should be regarded as a 'new petty bourgeoisie', thus a fraction of a class location in common with the traditional petty bourgeoisie of commodity producers and commercial middlemen not employing wage-labour. The argument was that, though

economically differently located, the two were bearers of the same or similar ideology and politics.[37]

The absurdity resides in the cavalier manner with which this theses is presented. First, if it was true that distinctly different locations in the economic mode of production — one the product of developed capitalism, the other the social bearer of non-capitalist simple commodity production, an economic form preceding industrial capitalism — produced the same kind of politics and ideology, then that should be considered a major flaw of historical materialism, requiring further questions as to what extent the latter could still be held valid, if at all. But Poulantzas sees no problem at all. Secondly, the 'evidence' supplied for this far-reaching contention boils down to a few assertions simply meaning that neither faction tends to have a revolutionary socialist or communist idealogy. The common 'class determination' of the two petty-bourgeois factions derives from the following 'main ideological features': '(a) An ideological aspect that is anti-capitalist but leans strongly towards reformist illusions/new petty-bourgeoisie/' — 'an ideological aspect that is anti-capitalist but in a "status quo" fashion ... often afraid of a revolutionary transformation of society' etc., till aspect (d). Needless to say, not a shred of any empirical evidence for these theses is offered.[38]

Wright criticizes and rejects both Poulantzas's narrow definition of the working class (including manual productive workers only) and his notion of the new petty bourgeoisie. For the latter Wright substitutes the concept of 'contradictory class location', between the bourgeoisie and the working class. The latter is defined much more broadly as all wage-workers having positions excluded from all control over money capital, physical capital and labour power.[39]

However, in spite of the reference to 'capital', Wright, in fact, makes a consistent break with any dependence on capitalist economics for the analysis of class. The key criterion of class is *control* or no control, not location in the capitalist process of production. Therefore, bourgeoisie and working class can be identified as easily in the state and in private non-profit organizations as in capitalist enterprise.

> In practice, these three levels [i.e., bourgeois, working class and contradictory] within the political and ideological apparatuses can be operationalized in much the same way that the social relations of production at the economic level were operationalized. That is, the working-class position in both cases involves exclusion from control over *resources, physical means* of production/administration, and labour power.[40]

The rationale of this seems to be a substitution of an exclusive

problematic of 'interest' — in preserving or in overthrowing the existing capitalist society — for the Marxian notion of class balances of force changing with changes in the capitalist mode of production. The quiet abandonment of Marxian economic analysis in the cited essay coexists unmediated, within the same book covers, with lengthy and insightful discussion of Marxist crisis theory.

In his ongoing research project Wright is revising his position. In a first data report, the bourgeoisie is now strictly confined to owners-employers with ten employees or more, and though state employment is still 'merged with capitalist production proper', Wright now holds that 'in many ways it may be more fruitful essentially to separate state production as a distinct form of production relation'.[41] In any case, as a well-designed empirical investigation, Wright's project and what can come out of it is largely independent of some questionable conceptualizations and theoretical assumptions.(Data on public employment, for instance, have been gathered and are reported.[42])

It would seem that the substitution of a critique of sociology for the one of political economy has not been without certain costs,[43] although, on the whole, it has proved a very fruitful road. And, as we shall see in a while, strict adherence to (a certain) analysis of economic form (as in the case of PKA) has not been without problematic effects either. The direction of the criticisms above have mainly been towards the need for clarifying the relationships between economic and sociological analyses. But my own conclusion from this need for more clarification is that class analysis would lose much from divorcing itself from analyses of the economic dynamics of capitalism, and from using basic Marxist tools of such analyses.

b. The implications of the state: One of the most immediate and simple consequences of linking class analysis with the processes of capital accumulation would obviously be a look at the actual range of wage-labour for capital accumulation. Certainly, the totality of a capitalist society is dependent upon, crucially affected by capital, by the rate of profit and its use by capitalists. But, equally certain, it makes a significant difference to your social location whether you work for capital or not. Not necessarily always in your immediate working conditions but in your place in the class struggle.

The size of the *economically active* population which is not directly and immediately imbricated in the capital-wage-labour nexus is quite considerable in contemporary advanced capitalist societies. In West Germany in 1970 those who were neither capitalists and capital executives nor employed by capital constituted at least 34 percent of the economically active population,

which is an understatement since it excludes employees for cooperatives and of public capital.[44] In Sweden in 1972 only about 49–50 percent of the economically active population was employed by capitalist enterprises (private corporations or non-incorporated business enterprises having at least ten people or more occupied for a whole year). One-third of the gainfully employed Swedish population in 1972 was not involved in any 'business-making' activity at all, i.e., in any production and circulation of commodities (other than their own labour-power).[45] For both countries, these figures of non-capitalist employment and non-commodity involvement will have increased significantly since 1970.[46]

The great majority of these, between a third and a half or more of the economically active population of contemporary European advanced capitalist countries, who are not immediately involved in capitalist accumulation, are employed by the state. Some are self-employed, some work in petty-bourgeois enterprises, to which the personal work of the employer is crucial, others are employed by consumers' or producers' cooperatives, a few by private non-profit organizations. In Sweden in 1979 about 40 percent of the gainfully employed population (working at least twenty hours a week) were publicly employed, *c.* 37 percent if public enterprises are excluded.[47]

Marxist writers on the capitalist state, among whom Poulantzas was a modern pioneer, have, on the whole, paid scant attention to the massive growth of the state as employer.[48] Lacking are both any explanatory theory of this growth and any developed elucidation of its implications for the class relations of society. The state as an institution of power may well be characterized, *pace* Poulantzas, as a crystallization of the class relations of force in society, but public employment itself has become a heavy part of the class relations of advanced capitalism.

When looking at the composition of this swollen public employment a striking novelty appears in comparison with the state at the time of Marx and, therefore, with the state in classical Marxian theory. A large part of public work – and the part which, above all, accounts for the growth of state employment – consists of what we might call work of *human reproduction.* Deliberately, the term 'reproduction of the labour power' is avoided here, because a main point is that this work can hardly be said to be exclusively or even chiefly geared to commodity (re)production. Even though it certainly bears upon the latter, while itself, like almost everything else in a capitalist society, being affected by capitalist commodity relations. It includes care for the aged, who will never re-enter the labour force, social work directed towards the marginal population,

child-care, health care, the payment of social insurance to people who are not working, education, the provision of meals for schoolchildren and such like. In 1975 this kind of work made up 47 percent of Swedish public employment, 40 percent in 1965, 28 percent in 1950.[49] In West Germany the figure is lower, but still very high, around 35 percent in 1970, *c.* 30 percent in 1960.[50] Even the class analysis which has paid most attention and given weight to state employment, the PKA, has failed to grasp this feature other than negatively, as a form of public employment deriving exclusively neither from the 'bourgeois' nor from the 'societal' division of labour. To PKA, public employees, regardless of power and function, have the same intermediary class location as recipients of public revenue.

The reasons for this development, I would suggest, run deeper than the immediate politics of the welfare state. It turns out that there are two major forms of work which have never been more than marginally subjected to capitalist relations of production. One of them is human reproduction, in the immediate sense of which the word 'care' is a key denotation, the other is temperate agriculture. The latter has had, the former is having and will have, very important effects upon the class relations of capitalist societies. To grasp this, however, we had better start from the third problem area of class theory, the *family*.

c. The effects and the legacy of the family: The articulation of the family with commodity relations of production has been little observed, understood and theorized.[51] Rather, the general tendency both within Marxism and in non-Marxist social science has been to regard the family as simply outside commodity relations, either preceding commodity production as a productive unit or as living its own life, dependent upon what happens in the commodity sphere but with little or no significant effects upon the latter. However, simple commodity production has usually been linked with family production, the petty bourgeois *pater familias* being assisted by his wife and his children. Nowhere has this been as important as in the major branch of simple commodity production in modern capitalism, in agriculture. To give a Swedish empirical illustration again: in 1930, after sixty years of extraordinarily rapid and successful capitalist industrialization, agriculture still occupied almost half of the population active in the productive sector. And within agriculture wage-labour supplied only 25 percent of the labour force, the rest was provided by the farmers and their family helpers.

This resilience to temperate climate agriculture to capitalist penetration blocked the development of class polarization predicted

by Marx, as was noticed in German Social Democracy already around the turn of the century. In recent times the political problem has subsided with the rapid post-second world war decline of the farming population in countries of advanced capitalism. But this decline is *not* an effect of simple agrarian commodity production being overtaken by capitalism. Mainly it derives from the vastly increased productivity of non-capitalist agriculture, which is now producing food surpluses with a fraction of its former labour force.

Reproductive work, too, has never been more than marginally subjected to capitalist organization. Classically, up to the most recent times, it has been carried out mainly in two forms, as unpaid family labour and as domestic labour, by servants paid out of household revenue. Then and today, reproductive work is overwhelmingly female work. In recent times, reproductive work has become increasingly public and regulated, on the one side by the development of public revenue, and on the other by the rate of participation in the labour force of married (or cohabiting) women. Public non-commodity reproduction thus seems to take up the abdicated part of family commodity production in seriously complicating capitalist class relations. The trend certainly takes different forms and force in other societies from the one described here. As illustration, clearly the family, and more generally, gender relations should no longer be regarded as extrinsic and unimportant to class relations. The inner connections of these articulations of family and gender relations with non-capitalist forms of labour still have to be worked out.[53]

d. The corporation and the prospects of the collective worker: The complicating effects upon class relations of the development of the big business corporations with their large offices of employees separated from the shop-floor workers as well as from the board of directors and with their elaborate managerial chains were first signalled and hailed as a challenge to Marxists some seventy years ago by Emil Lederer.[53] It took some time for Marxists to take it up seriously, a relative neglect deriving its material sustenance from the obvious continuation of capital and wage-labour in constituting the decisive poles of class struggles. Here recent social scientific Marxism has made many important contributions. The two most perceptive analyses appear to be those of Carchedi and Wright. Both of them give due weight to complexity as well as to the off-centred character of the corporate hierarchy by focusing on the *contradictory* locations of managerial personnel.[54]

They differ, however, in their definition of the basis of contradictority. Carchedi's discussion centres on two different functions in

the production process, one deriving from the specific mode of production, the second from the technical division of labour. He identifies two global functions, the 'functions of capital', defined as the 'work of surveillance and control', and the 'function of the collective labourer', the 'work of coordination and unity of the labour process'.[55] The development of the corporation then means the growth of a 'new middle class' of employees hired by capital who have the task of simultaneously carrying out these two functions.

Wright questions the designation of the function of coordination as a technical relation and sees it as a power relation, with the result that participation 'in major decisions concerning the coordination and planning of production then becomes an aspect of ... closeness to capital', even though it does not involve surveillance and control of workers.[56] To Wright, the contradictory location of the managerial strata derives instead from their having various degrees of partial control or power, over money capital, physical capital, and labour.

Future developments of class analysis would do well to try to combine the two perspectives, of function and of power. Because the development of power relations between the classes of capital and labour will depend upon what pole can appropriate for itself the function of the collective worker. The critical condition for capitalist power within the enterprise is that the cooperative production process of the enterprise, the function of planning and coordination, is an attribute of capital. Marx and Engels predicted a development of capitalism leading to this becoming an attribute of the collective worker, with capital and capitalists becoming increasingly externalized from the production process, retreating into the function of money capitalists only and thus becoming, in Engels's words, a 'superfluous' class.[57] Now, so far at least, that Marxian hypothesis has not come true. But the task for Marxist analysts is to find out exactly what has happened to the function of collective worker, and to its relationships with the poles of capital and wage-labour, and why. Here neither Poulantzas's emphasis on the ideological demarcation of mental and manual labour, nor Harry Braverman's thesis[58] of a constant tendency towards degradation of work, clerical as well as manual, in the course of capitalist development, appears very satisfactory. It seems that over the last century there has been a tendency towards the coming together of a 'collective worker', less internally divided and with a larger weight upon the prerogatives of capital. On the other hand, the scope of top managerial control has been vastly extended, as exemplified in the mega-corporations, whose executives can control and coordinate the production processes spread across the five continents of the

globe. It would seem that one of the most important aspects of the class relations determined by the rise of the big capitalist corporations which should be investigated, is *the opposing tendencies of collective worker unification* and *expanding range of* possible *top managerial control.*

Another aspect of crucial importance appears to be the expanding size of markets in relation to the spatial organization of the non-capitalist classes and strata. Because, in one sense, the conventional Marxist term for these big corporations, 'monopoly capital' is profoundly misleading. Though they certainly do not have to take prices as simply given by the market as other firms have to under perfect competition, these corporations operate under conditions of competition in worldwide markets. And this impersonal whip of the market is a crucial buttress to the increasingly anonymous power of capital in the big corporations.[59] Contrary to Marxian expectations, the biggest corporations have a size and a capacity of economic coordination surpassing most current political units of the globe, and more adapted to the functioning of the world market than the territorial divisions of working-class politics. Thus, an unexpected correspondence between the private character of the relations of production and the increasingly social character of the productive forces is being maintained.

The Marxist class analyses of the 1970s have left a rich, complex heritage of analytical insights and elucidations and empirical knowledge. From there the tackling of further questions and problems can begin. Compared to that achievement, the mixed and sometimes bewildering bag of disagreements over definitional criteria, forms of conceptualization and boundary-drawing, also a part of the inheritance, are of secondary significance. What is important, however, is to develop further analytical approaches which are capable of grasping both the specifics of the capital-labour relation and the social complexity in which the latter is imbricated. Most immediately this means at least three things. First, class analyses should never lose contact with economic analyses of capitalist dynamics. Second, class analyses should either start from or at least take into account the totality of the adult population, and not only what, according to this or that criterion, is regarded as the economically active population. Third, whatever conceptualization is finally adopted, it is necesssary to pay attention to the multiple determination of locations with regard to the relations of production. As Przeworsky has stressed, the people directly involved in the capitalist production process are a minority of the total population, and the class struggle cannot be reduced to struggles between class. It is also *struggles about class*, about the patterning of the field of

social forces and conflicts in relation to the dynamics of capitalist societies, the process of capital accumulation and the social conflicts inherent therein.[60]

Some more specific implications about conceptualization and boundaries also follow from what has been said above. Positions in the state cannot simply be assimilated to positions in the direct accumulation process, as Poulantzas did, and Wright in his first formulations. But whether all public employees should be put together as part of 'the middle class', as the PKA did on the basis of using source of income as a key criterion of class location, seems more doubtful. IMSF and Pzreworski divide them according to their position in the public hierarchy and attach them as specified strata to what is regarded as corresponding positions in the accumulation process. If the analysis of the petty bourgeoisie, in its relation to the simple commodity form of production and circulation and to the family is taken seriously, then it should not be assimilated to employees of capital, as Poulantzas did under the common rubric of 'petty-bourgeoisie', or IMSF in regarding as 'middle strata' or the PKA in calling them 'middle classes'. Good arguments have been marshalled for different solutions as to where the boundary of the working class should be drawn. It is crucial to allow for several specifications and not to swamp them in one single definition. But it seems that little understanding of the issues and struggles over the attribution of the 'collective worker' is promoted by the PKA method of counting all the employees of capital — apart from top managers receiving part of their income from participation in profits — to the working class. Wright's concept of 'contradictory class locations', between the working class and the bourgeoisie and between the former and the petty bourgeoisie has an attractive logic of systematicity to it, clearer than corresponding IMSF conceptions of 'in-between groups' and 'middle strata', but it might turn out that the very neatness of Wright's conceptualization fails to tap some of the important complexities (e.g., those following from the expansion of the state), which the second round of Marxist class analyses will have to pay attention to and to elucidate.

The working class and the perspective of Marxist politics

The fate of the working class in the hands of social scientific Marxism so far is rather perplexing. If we look at the works of lasting theoretical and empirical achievements, beyond conjunctural polemics and stances now passed by, we find the working class of contemorary advanced capitalism mainly in three locations. First, in the elaborated works of class cartography we find the working class as a structurally delimited take-off area for future revolutionary

socialist politics, at some unspecified time, in unspecified forms, under unspecified conditions. Secondly, in some outstanding empirical works of the working-class condition the class is left stranded in the gloom of US 'monopoly capitalism'. Thirdly, when a major empirical study deals with the untemporary working class and its politics in advanced capitalism and finds the Marxian thesis of the working class as the agent of socialist transformation corroborated, this class then assumes the shape of existing Social Democracy, in particular Swedish Social Democracy.

The first major work on the American working class was Harry Braverman's *Labor and Monopoly Capital* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1974). Braverman injects a rare non-academic freshness into Marxist analyses of the contemporary period, drawing upon his own variegated experiences as a craftsman and as a non-academic socialist intellectual. Its theme is given in the subtitle of the book, 'The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century'. This process is portrayed as a constantly forward-rolling juggernaut in the course of capitalist development, concentrating on the separation of conception and execution, investing the former increasingly upwards in the managerial heirarchy while subjecting manual and clerical work alike to the execution of increasingly fragmented, pre-controlled tasks.

Less path-breaking than Braverman's book, but more brilliant in its analyses, is Michael Burawoy's *Manufacturing Consent* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1979). In format a monograph of industrial sociology, based on participant observation, it branches out into a more general analysis of class relations as they are shaped by the organization of production. Burawoy did not find an intensification of the labour process or an increase of managerial control through the separation of conception and execution compared with thirty years earlier. On the other hand, this had consolidated the rule of capital even more. By constituting 'games' of limited choices, in which workers participated, games of affectable piece-rate systems, internal labour markets and an 'internal state' of grievance procedures and collective bargaining, surplus value was simultaneously secured and obscured and consent was manufactured by participation in the games on the shopfloor offered by capital.[61]

Walter Korpi's *The Working Class in Welfare Capitalism* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul), by contrast, deals with the cumulative impact of a series of victories of the Swedish social democratic labour movement. According to Korpi the basic Marxian hypotheses about the tendency of the working class to grow in unity and strength and to develop into the 'grave-diggers' of

capitalism have been borne out, contrary to arguments by non-Marxist sociologists. The working class and the reformist labour movement have not been 'incorporated' into capitalism, but gradual and decisive shifts of power are taking place in favour of labour and its strengthening organizations. The book ends by saying, referring to the unity call of the Communist Manifesto as well as to the Swedish union which organizes the great majority of all workers and employees: 'When the competition among the wage-earners ceases, the foundation of capitalism has eroded'.

Korpi's book is a remarkable social democratic *tour de force* both with respect to Marxism and to the sociology of industrial relations, from which the book originated. It is by no means a smug exhibition of social democratic self-congratulation, but rather an expression of the radicalization of the trade-unionist wing of Swedish Social Democracy in the mid-1970s — when it presented a proposal for the gradual collectivization of the major means of production — as well as an outstanding contribution to social scientific Marxism.[62] Whatever socialist hopes one may have in Swedish Social Democracy — and its mid-1970s' proposals have at the time of writing been watered down quite a number of times already — Korpi's analysis has at least one serious lacuna. It is almost completely centred on the labour movement, and therefore provides little analysis of what is being or is to be eroded, the 'foundation of capitalism'. What he has achieved, however, is in eroding much of the foundations of the various incorporationist theses.

Reformist trade unions, following the institutionalized rules of the game, and Social Democracy are the dominant forms of the working-class movement in advanced capitalist societies. There is no visible challenge to capitalist power in the United States. These are hard facts, which no Marxist can deny with his or her eyes open. But there is more to the history of the present than that. However, in the first ten to fifteen years of social scientific Marxism there has been a strong tendency to concentrate on the *structure* of the present, on its structured class boundaries for example, and to abdicate from serious analysis of the *history* of its class struggles.

The difficult relationship of the new Marxism to present working-class history is indicated by the works, and the relation between them, of Nicos Poulantzas, the most central figure in the emerging neo-history of *The Making of the English Working Class* (1963). This falls outside the set task of this article, but it is a work which, without doubt, is the most monumental Marxist study of class in the period under review. Two things are striking in the Poulantzasian oeuvre in this respect. His *Political Power and Social Classes* comments on and relates to a considerable number of

Anglo-Saxon sociologists and political scientists, but he does not say a word about Thompson's book. It is mentioned once, and then rather out of place, in a footnote of references about the capitalization of ground rent in the 1640 revolution.[63] Secondly, Poulantzas himself never even wrote a chapter about the working class; his *Classes in Contemporary Capitalism* deals exclusively with the other classes of the contemporary world. Poulantzas's silence is more than a singular evasion. It covers a major theoretical problem never directly confronted, the problem of class agency. The question which Thompson's work provides an elaborate and fascinating answer to, about the formation or making of a class in the sense of class agency, is hardly even askable within the Althusserian-Poulantzasian problematic where classes are always already formed or made.[64]

For his part, Thompson, though he has written proficiently on current affairs, has never written anything about modern working-class history. As a master craftsman Thompson also has an immense pride in his historian's craft — 'the Queen of the humanities'[65] — with little more than utter contempt for the social sciences. And Thompson has his own particular way of evading the tricky but challenging problems of class agency, short-cutting the issue by defining class exclusively in terms of collective self-identification. This also had the remarkable consequences of allocating only a minor and marginal part of the formation of the world's first industrial proletariat in the vast drama of the 'making of the English working class'.[66]

In the relationship of Poulantzas, and many other Marxists of this period, to bourgeois sociology and political science there is also a remarkable gap. There is no discussion of, no reference to that part of political sociology which might seem most directly pertinent to a development of a Marxist theory of politics as class struggle, the works on 'political cleavages' and their social bases and historical origins by people like S.M. Lipset, Juan Linz, Stein Rokkan.[67] Instead, the references are to the most general and ahistorical works of academic political science and sociology.

Future developments will have to theorize and to analyse the historical articulation of patterns of capital accumulation and forms of class struggle with other, irreducibly different processes and forces, as well as forms of class organization and class struggle which do not correspond to classical canons.

Future Marxism will have to confront directly the problems of classes as historical actors of the present. This in turn will require the clarification of two crucial questions which so far have received little serious theoretical attention. One concerns the meaning of

class agency, the other the *relationship of class as a political* (and social) *subject to non-class subjects*.

Classes are not actors in the same sense as individuals, groups or organizations are, decision-making actors bringing about events or 'monuments', such as programmes, codes, etc. A class can never make a decision as a class. But nor is class agency, in the Marxist sense, a series of isolated actions, the indirect effects of which are gauged by the analyst in the form of a statistical measure of some sort, such as rates of economic growth, social mobility or electoral participation and the distribution of income or of votes. Class is a third kind of agency, of tendentially acting forces defined by their economic location, acting collectively, to an ever-varying but (virtually) never complete degree.

There is a Marxist tradition, which has tended to treat class as an agency in the first sense, but this has meant little more than a metaphor or device for summing up some social process, referring to the bourgeoisie or to working-class thinking or to doing this or that. In political sociology, on the other hand, class agency is usually conceived of in the second meaning, as an analytical construct for the ordering of individual acts, most often voting. But the intellectual, and political, challenge to social scientific Marxism will be to elucidate and to elaborate class agency as a specific, third kind of agency.

Classes act through the actions of individuals, groups and organizations. The operation of class agency may be seen in a commonality of concerns, in a parallelity of strivings, a similarity of the forms of actions and in interrelationships of mutual reinforcement between the actions of members of the same class. To what extent this commonality, etc., becomes conscious and manifested in processes of collective decision-making with a specific outcome is a set of empirical questions about class formation and class history. The specific efficacy of class agency may be identified, not in the causing of particular events but in affecting their repercussive range, not in the making of a particular institution but in the form of social relations functioning in it,[68] not in the destruction of a particular social arrangement but in bearing upon its duration. The history of classes and class struggles should not be reduced to an *histoire évènementielle*. However, this is no more than a hint at the intellectual challenge to future Marxism.

Confrontation with the best of political sociology as well as with contemporary politics will make it necessary for Marxists to think about the relationship between class struggles and other forms of social conflict and of political cleavages, about the relationship between classes and other social and political subjects. This is

something which will require not only *ad hoc* empirical attention but also, and first of all, systematic theorization. A first attempt has been made, by outlining 'the universe of ideologies' in the sense of the universe of forms of human subjectivity. There, class has been situated as one variant of one of four irreducible dimensions of human subjectivity, the historical-positional one. The other three being an historical-inclusive one (illustrated by the nation), an existential-inclusive one (exemplifiable by religion), and an existential-positional subjectivity (such as gender-subjectivity).[69] The tenability and the fruitfulness of this particular conceptualization still have to be demonstrated, but some such endeavour is needed. Class struggles are not only struggles between classes and about class unity, class boundaries, and class alliances. They are also about link-ups with non-class subjectivities and non-class struggles.

It is in the vacuum of serious Marxist theories and analyses of the social struggles of the present that new anti-Marxist fads and utopias have begun to mushroom on the left, as substitutes for the abandoned extrapolations of the revolutionary Marxist faith of yesterday.

However, what some searchers of a new faith have come to regard as a God that failed is likely to be considered by more secularized Marxists as a stage of infancy and adolescence. And there is little reason to believe that social scientific Marxism will stop at this stage. Rather, it seems more probable that after its political experiences of the 1970s, one of its future tendencies will be to drop its aloof silence about the actual history of the present and to develop a historical materialism of current social struggles and forces of stability, taking their intriguing complexity as an intellectual challenge. And such an open-ended, non-reductionist Marxism is likely to be of more use to socialist and other emancipatory politics than its more self-contained versions of the past.

Notes

1. Anderson, P. (1976) *Considerations on Western Marxism*. London: New Left Books.

2. Ibid., p. 26.

3. Marx to J. Weydemeyer 5 March 1852, pp. 507–8 in *Marx-Engels Werke*. Vol.28. East Berlin: Dietz.

4. This state refers to class analysis as a mode of comprehensive analyses of social structures and social processes. The analysis of class relations of force in political conjunctures has advanced considerably since Marx, very often as part of an outstanding political leadership, as in the cases of Lenin, Trotsky, Gramsci, Bauer, Mao Zedong.

5. Barber, B. (1968) 'Introduction', entry 'Stratification, Social', p. 289 in *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences.* Vol.15. New York: Macmillan.

6. Parsons, T. (1940) 'An Analytical Approach to the Theory of Stratification', *American Journal of Sociology*, 45: 841–62; Davis, K. (1945) 'A Conceptual Analysis of Stratification', *American Sociological Review*, 10: 242–9.

7. North, C.C. and P.K. Hatt (1949) 'Jobs and Occupations: A Popular Evaluation', pp. 464–73 in L. Wilson and W.L. Kolb (eds), *Sociological Analysis: An Introductory Text and Case Book.* New York: Harcourt. A congenial presentation and discussion of this kind of work may be found in Reiss Jr., A. et al. (1962) *Occupations and Social Status.* New York: Free Press.

8. The best of Lipset's class-conscious sociology of politics is accessible via his collection of essays, *Political Man* (London: Heinemann, 1960). For Lipset's perspective on class and class struggle, see further below.

9. In a somewhat more sophisticated and roundabout way, Lipset in his Encyclopedia article finally comes down to a stratificationist position too: 'Highly developed societies ... are more likely to possess systems of social stratification — varied rankings — than social classes.' Lipset, S.W. (1968) 'Social Class', p. 314 in *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* Vol.15, op. cit.

10. True, this was not swallowed by the whole sociological community. In fact, the Davis-Moore article referred to above triggered off a lengthy debate about the functionalist theory of stratification, with the more egalitarian US liberal sociologist Melvin Tumin as the most persistent critic. Part of that debate is reprinted in the second edition of Bendix and Lipset, *Class, Status and Power*, pp. 47–72. Probably the most extensive analysis of the whole debate is Therborn, G. (1971) 'The Classes of the Disappeared Society. The Stratification Principles of Davis-Moore and Modern Sociology' (in Swedish), in Therborn, *Klasser och ekonomiska system.* Staffanstorp: Cavefors.

11. Dahrendorf, R. (1959) *Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society.* Stanford: Stanford University Press; Lockwood, D. (1964) 'Social Integration and System Integration', pp. 244–57 in G.K. Zollschan and W. Hirsch (eds) *Explorations in Social Change.* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul; Goldthorpe, J. and D. Lockwood (1963) 'Affluence and the British Class Structure', *The Sociological Review*, 11: 133–63. Lockwood also published a very important empirical work on class in this period, *The Blackcoated Worker*, London: Allen and Unwin 1958; Ossowski, S. (1963) *Class Structure in the Social Consciousness.* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

12. Barber, 'Introduction', op. cit., p. 289.

13. Lipset, 'Social Class', op. cit., p. 305.

14. Ibid., p. 314.

15. Moore Jr, B. (1958) *Political Power and Social Theory.* New York: Humanities Press, pp. 116 (citation) and 123ff.

16. Bottomore, T.B. and M. Rubel (eds) (1956) Karl Marx, *Selected Writings on Sociology and Social Philosophy*, London: Watts.

17. Mills, C.W. (1959) *The Power Elite.* New York: Galaxy, p. 277n.

18. P. Sweezy, 'Power Elite or Ruling Class?' and R. Lynd, 'Power in the United States', in G.W. Domhoff and H.B. Ballart (eds) (1969), *C. Wright Mills and the Power Elite.* Boston: Beacon Press. See pp. 115–32, especially pp. 124ff; and pp. 103–15, espeically pp. 111ff, respectively. Domhoff has established himself as an important analyst of the American ruling class, in a series of works beginning with *Who Rules America?*, Englewood Cliffs NJ.: Prentice-Hall, 1967.

19. Smith, Dusky Lee (1964) 'The Sunshine Boys: Toward A Sociology of Happiness', *The Activist.* Extended and reprinted pp. 28–44 in D. Colfax and J.

Roach (eds), *Radical Sociology*. New York: Basic Books, 1971. Apart from the 'Supreme Sunbeam' Lipset, Smith treats the 'Subsidiary Sunbeam', Nathan Glazer and the 'Sustaining Sunbeam' Amitai Etzioni, who together make up the 'Sunshine Guild'. Smith's conclusions were representative of thousands of sociology students of the latter half of the 1960s:

> The Sociology of Happiness, scientific liberalism, by taking the ongoing process as its frame of reference then becomes objective and with its objectivity it perpetuates domination ... The strength of the ongoing socio-economic processes and the Sociology of Happiness is revealed in their ability to contain all contradictions and to confuse all issues. Domination becomes freedom, progress results in the pollution of land, air and water, civilization exists when farmers are paid not to grow foodstuffs while people are starving, objectivity exists as ideology, pacification means aggression, preparing for peace means preparing for war, Lipset writes for a magazine called *Dissent* and Etzioni believes in participatory democracy. (op. cit., p. 42).

20. Austrian Social Democracy cut itself off from any programmatic link to Marxism in 1958, West German Social Democracy in 1959, and the Swedish one in 1960.

21. Typical was a two-volume pattern. Poulantzas's *Political Power and Social Classes* was wholly theoretical and methodological, whereas his next book, *Fascism and Dictatorship* (original French edition 1970) brought concepts of the first book to bear upon an analysis of the rise of fascism and of the Comintern's relationship to it. *Classses in Contemporary Capitalism* (of 1974) had more empirical content in its theoretical argumentation, but the conceptualization of kinds of the bourgeoisies developed there were actually used in Poulantzas's subsequent book (1975) on the *Crisis of Dictatorships*. The collective IMSF and PKA works on the West German class structure each start with one volume of extended theoretical exposition followed by one of the vast statistical data collection, or even in the case of IMSF of three empirical volumes. Erik Olin Wright's currently ongoing empirical research project on comparative class structure has been preceded by several theoretical articles, the most extended one included in his book *Class, Crisis and the State* (London: New Left Books, 1978). Likewise, Adam Przeworski's big and, at the time of writing, unfinished empirical project has been preceded (1977) by an elaborate theoretical discussion of class conceptualization, 'Proletarians in to a Class: The Process of Class Formation from Karl Kautsky's *The Class Struggle* to *Recent Controvesies', Politics and Society* (4), Guglielmo Carchedi's also noteworthy volume *On the Economic Identification of Social Classes* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1977), however, has no empirical companion in print or, as far as this writer knows, in the making.

22. See: Autorenkollektiv des IMSF, *Klassen und Sozialstruktur der BRD*, 4 vols. (Frankfurt/M: Verlag Marxistiche Blatter, 1973 and 1975); Projekt Klassenanalyse, *Materialien zur Klassenstruktur der BRD*, 2 vols. West Berlin: VSA, 1973 and 1974).

23. An idea of the project may be gained from Przeworski's article (1980) 'Social Democracy as a Historical Phenomenon', *New Left Review* 24:38ff.

24. Przeworski and E. Underhill (1979) 'The Evolution of European Class Structure during the Twentieth Century' (unpublished paper). Department of Political Science, University of Chicago.

25. Wright, E.O. (1981) 'The Comparative Project on Class Structure and Class Consciousness: An Overview' (unpublished paper). Department of Sociology, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

26. Social Scientists of the French Communist Party pursued studies of the French class structure within the framework of an empirical as well as theoretical

project on French 'State Monopoly Capitalism'. The journal, *Economie et Politique*, was the public centre of these studies, among which the articles by Serge Laurent in nos. 149–50 (1966–7) and 186–7 (1970) should be noticed in particular. Concerning Italy the best work to my knowledge is that of Sylos Labini. Memorable, also, as a significant work by a major political leader, is G. Amendola's *La classe operaia italiana* (Rome: Riuniti, 1968). About Danish class structure, J.G. Andersen has made an important study, *Mellemlagene i Danmark* (Aarhus, 1979). I have contributed to the genre myself too (1981), *Klasstrukturen i Sverige 1930–1980.* Lund: Zenit (1st ed. 1972).

27. Parkin, F. (1979) *Marxism and Class Theory: A Bourgeois Critique.* New York: Columbia University Press, p. 48. Like much else in Parkin's book, the subtitle is meant ironically. Parkin's own perspective is rather that of a neo-Weberian social democrat.

28. Dahrendorf, *Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society*, op.cit.

29. Parkin, op.cit., pp. 51–2.

30. Giddens, A. (1981) *A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism.* London: Macmillan, p. 122. Giddens's own venture into class analysis, more theoretical than empirical, *The Class Structure of the Advanced Societies* (London: Hutchinson, 1973), is a mélange out of Marxisant and neo-Weberian elements.

31. Another interesting bow to Marxist class analysis is the version of a post-capitalist knowledge-producing society developed by another intellectually stimulating and thought-provoking critic of Marxism, the late Alvin Gouldner. The rise of the new society is supposed to be that of a new class, the intelligentsia, with a scenario and its main actor – elaborately analogized on Marxist class analysis of capitalism, envisaging the rise of a 'cultural bourgeoisie', the owner of 'cultural capital'. Gouldner, A. (1979) *The Future of Intellectuals and the Rise of A New Class.* New York: Oxford University Press. When he died, in 1981, Gouldner was engaged on a large-scale critical study about Marxism. His last book (1980) was the first in a planned series of four, *The Two Marxisms* (London: Macmillan). The 'two Marxisms' are 'Scientific' and 'Critical' Marxism, which in Gouldner's view constitute a fundamental and dialectical 'unity of opposites', which clot around the tension between determinism and voluntarism inherent in Marxism, and in sociology. Gouldner's distinction is analytical rather than historical, and 'Critical' Marxism he finds predominant not only in the Hegelian-oriented tendencies of philosophical 'Western Marxism' but also in the Marxism of Lenin, Mao and Castro, whereas 'Scientific' Marxism inclues the orthodox critique of political economy in the period of the Second International as well as the philosophy of Althusser and, one would assume although it is not properly treated, contemporary Marxist social science.

32. Wright, E.O. (1979) *Class Structure and Income Determination.* New York: Academic Press. The data analysed are taken from a national American survey. A less methodologically rigorous but broader-ranging Marxist empirical study of property and inequality is Westergaard J. and H. Resler (1975) *Class in A Capitalist Society. A study of Contemporary Britain.* London: Heinemann.

33. Cf. Anderson, *Considerations*, etc. op. cit., p. 69. The new social scientific Marxism has certainly broken with the extreme parochialism of the schools of 'Western Marxism', but as yet it has hardly reached a stage of regular international communication and debate. Thus, Poulantzas never confronted his conception of class with that of Edward Thompson — more about this below; Heinz Jung, the director of the IMSF study, made references both to West German non-Marxist sociology — e.g., IMSF, op. cit., Vol.1, p. 186n — and to Soviet, GDR and PCF

works, but he did not take issue with the work of Poulantzas; the PKA took up for critical discussion some West German works, Marxist and non-Marxist, and contemporary East and Western European Communist Party discussions, but likewise refrains from any confrontation with Marxist social science outside the Federal Republic and of the orbit of the journal *Problems of Peace and Socialism* PKA, op. cit., Vol.1, Part B). Przeworski and Wright, like the West Germans, discuss Marxist classics and non-Marxist sociology, but limit their discussion of contemporary Marxism to Anglo-Saxon works and to French works out of the Althusserian tradition, neither touching the West German endeavours. Przeworski, 'Proletarians into a Class' etc., op. cit.; Wright (1980) 'Varieties of Conceptions of Marxist Class Structure', *Politics and Society*, 9 (3): 323–70.

34. Class figures are taken from my *Klasstrukturen i Sverige*, the main sources of which are censuses and official labour force surveys, and the size of the electorate from the official statistical publication *Allmänna valen 1979*, Stockholm, 1980.

35. Poulantzas, N. (1973) *Political Power and Social Classes*. London: New Left Books, p. 72.

36. Poulantzas, N. (1978) *Classes in Contemporary Capitalism*. London: Verso, p. 16. Cf. Poulantzas, *Political Power*, etc., op. cit., pp. 60–61.

37. Poulantzas, *Classes*, etc., op. cit., pp. 205–6, 287ff.

38. Ibid., pp. 290ff. It should be added, however, that Poulantzas also presents a number of perceptive observations about the implications of the mental/manual labour distinction.

39. Wright, *Class, Crisis and the State*, op. cit., Ch.1.

40. Ibid., p. 96n. Emphasis added.

41. Wright, E.O. et al. (1981) 'The American Class Structure' (unpublished paper). Department of Sociology: University of Wisconsin, Madison, p. 10.

42. The paper cited in the previous note contains a first, preliminary data report.

43. This statement includes self-criticism, in particular for the first two editions (of 1972 and 1973) of my work on Swedish class structure. But criticism may, of course, come from other directions too. One of Wright's associates in his ongoing international project makes an analysis of Sweden from Wright's point of view, and is therewith comparing the results of that with mine. A first outcome is Ahrne, G. 'Report on the Swedish Class Structure 1' (unpublished paper). Department of Sociology, Uppsala University.

44. Calculated from PKA, op. cit., Vol. 2, pp. 215 and 240. The figures include self-employed, state or non-business-employees, 'Middle class' plus 'wage workers in non-capitalist commodity production'. The latter are workers in establishments with at most four employees (ibid., p. 156).

45. Calculations based on the Swedish 'Enterprise Census' (*företagsräkning*) of 1972, pp. 100–101 in Therborn, *Klasstrukturen*, etc., op. cit.

46. For Sweden see the text below. For West Germany, calculations from a new book by Joachim Bischoff and associates — *Jenseits der Klassen*? Hamburg: VSA, 1982, a follow-up, a deepening of and a more circumspect political rationale for the PKA study — yield a figure of 36 percent of the economically active population as 'either self-employed or non-capitalistically employed (pp. 88 and 96).

47. Therborn, *Klasstrukturen*, etc., op. cit., pp. 115, 152–3. IMSF op. cit., Vol. 2, pp. 152–3 gives a corresponding West German figure for 1970 as 19.4 percent of the economically active population. The Swedish figure for 1965 was 21–22 percent, including employees of public capital.

48. The American economist James O'Connor is in this sense somewhat of an exception in paying significant attention to state employment through his trichoto-

mozation of the economy, into monopoly, competitive and state sectors, *The Fiscal Crisis of the State*, New York: St Martin's Press, 1973.

49. Therborn, *Klasstrukuren*, etc., op. cit., p. 116. Public employees here exclude employees of public corporations, who make up about 10 percent of all public employees.

50. Calculations form PKA, op. cit., Vol. 2, pp. 309, 553 and 572–3, including what PKA calls 'branch B' of public employment — which to them comprises a mixed bag of functions, deriving both out of the 'bourgeois' and the 'societal' division of labour — minus priests, clergymen and broadcasting personnel plus employees of public social insurance systems. The total number of public employees in West Germany in 1970 (including social insurance employees) would then be barely 16 percent — a figure reached in Sweden by 1950. IMSF gives a slightly higher figure, 18 percent (excluding employees of public corporations with an autonomous legal form), IMSF, op. cit., Vol. 2, Ch. 2, p. 231.

51. Important exceptions are the works of the American Marxist sociologist Harriet Friedmann on wheat production. Her fascinating Harvard dissertation on the establishment of a world market of wheat and its effects upon the relations of wheat production in various countries of the world between the 1870s and the second world war is still being prepared for publication, but see, e.g., her article 'World Market, State, and Family Farm', *Comparative Studies in History and Society*, 20(4), 1978.

52. In the case of simple commodity production in temperate agriculture, the reason appears to be that the productive forces of the kind of agriculture dominating the temperate zones have all the time remained correspondent to 'the demographic range' of the family. That is, workable with little increased productivity returns to scale by members of a family, supplemented by a relatively small pool of agricultural labourers including younger sons of other farmers.

53. Lederer, E. (1912) *Die Privatangestellten in der modernen Wirtschaftsentwicklung*, Tübingen.

54. Carchedi, G. (1977) *On the Economic Identification of Social Classes.* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, Ch. 1, esp. pp. 87ff. Wright discusses Carchedi's work in his 'Varieties of Marxist Conceptions of Class Structure', op. cit., pp. 356ff.

55. Carchedi, op. cit., p. 65.

56. Wright, 'Varieties', etc., op. cit., p. 363.

57. Engels, F. 'Necessary and Superfluous Social Classes', *Marx–Engels Werke* Vol. 19. East Berlin: Dietz, 1973, pp. 287–90. This kind of analysis is elaborated and discussed in my paper (1979) 'Enterprises, Markets and States', Working Paper Series No. 9, Department of Sociology, University of Toronto.

58. Braverman, H. (1974) *Labour and Monopoly Capital.* New York: Monthly Review Press. Braverman's chapter 15 on the degradation of clerical work and on clerical workers' inclusion in the working class appeared the same year as Poulantzas, in his *Classes in Contemporary Capitalism* (in the original French edition by Seuil), and Baudelot et al., in their *La petite bourgeoisie en France*, op. cit., were arguing the crucial importance of the distinction between mental and manual labour, between office and shopfloor. It is tempting to believe that these different Marxist conceptualizations of class boundaries partly reflect differences in the development of French and American capitalism.

59. With their particular penchant for carrying arguments to their utmost conclusions, however absurd, the iconoclastic British Marxists Barry Hindess, Paul Hirst and their associates have characterized the class power configuration of temporary corporate capitalism thus: 'it is "capitals" which exist, not "capitalist",'

while managers are separated from the means of production like all other workers, Cutler, A. et al. (1977) *Marx's Capital and Capitalism Today* (2 vols). London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, Vol. 1, p. 312. Whatever one's taste for the authors' mode of argumentation, always arrogant and extreme in form while changing in content from one book to the next, and whatever one's degree of being convinced, the one mentioned is (also), in the best sense, a very thought-provoking work.

60. Cf. Przeworski, 'Proletarians into a Class', etc., op. cit., pp. 385ff.

61. Though they might be said to have the character more of a synoptic overview than a full historical treatment, two long essays by Mike Davis (1980) on the socio-political history of the US working class from its formation till the recent post-war period, should be noted as probably the sharpest political analysis of the modern working class of any advanced capitalist society (*New Left Review*, 123, 124). Its running theme is neither any capitalist, steam-rolling, game-induced consent or any specific American values or institutions, but the class struggle and, more precisely, 'the cumulative impact of the series of historic defeats suffered by the American working class (See in particular, 'The Barren Marriage of American Labour and the Democratic Party', *New Left Review*, 124: 7ff.).

62. Korpi is not alone among senior left-wing social democratic academics in turning towards a Marxist position. Another very interesting example is Ulf Himmelstrand, 1978 – 1982 President of the International Sociological Association, and senior author of another significant work which posits the Swedish Social Democratic working class as an agent of socialist transformation, Himmelstrand, U. et al. (1981) *Beyond Welfare Capitalism*. London: Heinemann.

63. Poulantzas, *Political Power and Social Classes*, op. cit., p. 169.

64. Poulantzas says, for instance: 'One reading of these texts [by Marx] must be rejected from the start, for it is connected ultimately with the problematic of the "social group" which has no place in Marx's analyses: this is the historico-genetic reading.' *Political Power* op. cit., p. 60.

65. Thompson, E.P. (1978) *The Poverty of Theory*. London: Merlin Press, p. 262. 'Bourgeois sociology' and 'Marxist structuralism' are just 'unhistorical shit' according to Thompson's smelling conclusion (ibid., p. 300). For a sober and incisive reply to Thompson, see Anderson, P. (1980) *Arguments within English Marxism*. London: New Left Books and Verso.

66. Thompson chose to concentrate on the field labourers, the urban artisans and the hand-loom weavers 'because their experience seems most to colour the social consciousness of the working class in the first half of the nineteenth century'. Thompson, E.P. (1966) *The Making of the English Working Class*. New York: Vintage, p. 212n.

67. See, e.g., Lipset, S.M. and S. Rokkan (eds) (1967) *Party Systems and Voter Alignments*. New York: Free Press; Rokkan, S. (1970) *Citizens, Elections, Parties*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget. The structural, exclusively 'objectivist' class analyses of the first wave of social scientific Marxism and the historical 'subjectivist' work of Thompson are situated rather symmetrically in their distance from the actual class struggles and other social conflicts of the present. Whereas Thompson went back in time to dig up 'insights into social evils which we have yet to cure', pointing out that causes which were lost in England might, in Asia or Africa, yet be won' (*The Making*, etc., op. cit., p. 13), the structural class analyses looked for their hopes for the future into the latent structure of the seemingly largely 'unmade' classes of the present. In both there was a hiatus, between the history of the past and the history of the present and between the structure of the present and the (transformed) structure of the future. Future Marxism will have to try to close these gaps with

structural-historical analyses of the recent past and of the ongoing tendencies of the present.

68. For an attempt at developing this idea, in the form of specific 'organizational technologies' governing state apparatuses, see my (1980) *What Does the Ruling Class Do When It Rules?* London: Verso.

69. Therborn, G. (1980) *The Ideology of Power and the Power of Ideology*. London: New Left Books and Verso, pp. 22ff.

8

Typology in the methodological approach to the study of social change*

Ken'ichi Tominaga

The problem

It is well known among sociologists that those who are oriented to conflict theory have condemned the alleged absence of a theory of social change in sociology (Dahrendorf in Zapf, 1979), while those who are oriented to historical sociologoy have condemned the alleged lack of historicity in sociology (Dreitzel in Wehler, 1976). However, the fact is that the study of social change such as modernization, industrialization and social evolution has been the field of sociology in which much prominent work has recently been concentrated. It is particularly essential to call attention to the fact that the recent stage of social change theory is no more characterized by the formulation of propositions about general development trends than was the classical stage of social change theory. Rather, the present stage is at a more advanced level in, for example, analysing the components of social change, clarifying the impetus leading to development, and formulating the conditions of success and failure in industrialization and modernization (e.g., Eisenstadt, 1966; Etzioni, 1968; Lenski, 1966; Tominaga, 1965; Zapf, 1975). The point is that these endeavours can be interpreted as examples, *par excellence*, of theorizing about historical materials from the sociological viewpoint on the one hand, while they can also be understood as efforts to make sociological analysis dynamic on the other.

The world in the forty years since the second world war has been, above all, full of those events which arouse the interest of theorists of social change. The United States and the west European countries have developed via 'high mass consumption' into 'post-industrial' societies, and Japan which started late in industrialization

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has come up to this level. The Soviet Union and east European countries have tried to demonstrate a possible way to economic development different from the form of modernization under capitalist regimes. The new states that acquired political independence after the second world war have made an effort to transform their traditional social structures under the leadership of their modernizing élites. We would expect that these worldwide situations would have been reflected in the research trends of sociology, and this has actually been the case. Through the relevant studies there has been the development of conceptualization of indices of industrialization and modernization, development of international comparisons of the degree in economic as well as political development (e.g., Bendix, 1964; Eisenstadt, 1964; Lipset, 1959). There has been a reappraisal and reformulation of the theory of social evolution as an attempt to make the classical form of nineteenth-century sociology up-to-date by adapting, for example, knowledge of recent developments of information theory to the examination of the relation between biological and social evolution (e.g., Lenski and Lenski, 1978; Parsons, 1966, 1971).

Why are there still, despite the richness of these studies of social change in recent sociology, those who do not evaluate these studies highly, and continue to blame sociology for the absence of studies of social change and of historical materials? Why are there accusations, even today, contrasting 'sociologism that is alien to history' with 'historical positivism that is alien to theory' (Dreitzel in Wehler, 1976: 40)? While these sorts of assertions seldom seem to reflect prejudice and ignorance, it cannot at the same time be denied that such assertions are caused by a situation in which the confrontation of different methodologies in the approach to social change hinders the development of a single theory that satisfies all of these critics. While to have such a single theory which satisfies all the sociologists in the present world would be almost impossible, it seems nevertheless meaningful to investigate fundamentally how and why such confrontation is produced. The task of this paper is to make a survey of the contemporary research situation of social change in its worldwide perspective, to classify principal types of theories of social change according to the underlying methodologies, to apply them to the case of social change in Japan, and to examine the points of mutual difference as well as the possibility of their interpenetration.

Approach to social change

A temporal change in the physical world can be causally explained as a regularly determined alteration of state. Evolutionary change in

the biological world can also be objectively explained as the working of natural selection on gene variation without the intervention of subjective factors such as motivation and consciousness. Such change is not purposive for the individual. Evolutionary process in the social world, on the contrary, is intrinsically an event in the domain of human action. It is a process of human endeavour to remould the social state under the shared system of — explicit or implicit — goals and subgoals. What corresponds to the gene variation in biological organisms in the social world is the actual or possible variation in roles and institutions, as well as in the culture underlying them as components of the social structure. While these structural elements are objectively given, it is human action, which is motivated by need and is oriented to goal attainment, that makes selection among the variations of social structure an equivalent to natural selection (Tominaga, 1981b). Such a conceptualization of social change leaves room for methodological diversity peculiar to social phenomena, in contrast with the physical and biological worlds which are objectively and unequivocally explicable independent of the intervention of human action.

Before entering into the argument about this methodological diversity, some minimum exposition on the concept of social change as it is here used is necessary. Social change is the change of the state of a social system. There are two types of indication of change in the state of a social system. One is quantitative indication, which refers to the *activity level* of the social system concerned. Illustrations are: level of production, level of standard of living, level of education, level of health and level of welfare, The other is the qualitative indication, which refers to the *structure* of the social system concerned. A social system, it can be said, is structured, when and to the extent that the potential patterns of interactions and the resource distribution among its members are restricted so as to facilitate the fulfilment of the functional requirements of that system. Illustrations are: role structure such as occupational division of labour, institutional structure such as private firms and governmental bureaucracy, and distributional structure such as distribution of physical, relational and cultural goods — that is, social stratification. Change in the quantitative indication is *level change*, whereas change in the qualitative indication is *structural change*. In sum, social change is the change of the social state, either quantitative as level change or qualitative as structural change.

Actually, however, level change and structural change are closely interrelated, in the sense that level change demands structural change, and structural change brings about level change. There are three types of level change: ascending, descending and, as a

successive combination of the previous two, cyclical. Among them, the most frequently discussed type has been the ascending pattern and then the cyclical pattern. The descending pattern has been considered mainly either as a phase of the cyclical pattern or as the reverse side of the ascending phase in which the conditions for ascension are not met. Ascending level change can be called *social growth*, and when social growth accompanies resulting structural change, *social development* takes place. Descending level change accompanying structural change is *social decline*. Cyclical change can also include structural change as an alternation of development and decline. But even these morphological categories are not independent of the methodological background in the conceptualization of social change.

Our present task here, then, is to distinguish the basic methodological types in the approach to social change. While, as is well known, the distinction between empiricism in Britain and rationalism in the European continent was the major confrontation in the development of epistemological theory in the history of philosophy, the methodological confrontation in the social sciences has centred round another axis. I would call it by the name of positivism versus idealism.[1] *Positivism* in the social sciences, whose formation was strongly stimulated by the success of the natural sciences that developed on strictly empirical bases, was, in fact, asserted to be a methodological extension of the natural-scientific way of thinking to the study of social world, and hence had a naturally close relationship with empiricism. At the same time, however, natural sciences, especially physical sciences, depend upon rationalistic deductive inference, typically represented by mathematical tools. Therefore, positivism also has a close relationship with rationalism. This latter relationship being strengthened since the appearance of logical positivism in the early twentieth century, rationalism is now in no sense the opponent of positivism. The real opponent of positivism is the lineage of traditional metaphysics, which is neither empirical nor rationalistic, and is quite a different matter from, and far older than, modern science. What I would like to call here by the name of *idealism* is that pattern of thinking in the social sciences which is oriented to the inheritance of the tradition of metaphysics in the social world, as separated from scientific thinking. It is essential to note that idealism is used here, in the context of the methodology of science, as an assertion that the object comes to be known, unlike the realist view of positivism, only relative to the subjective 'perspective' of the knower.[2]

Positivism follows the approach that has obtained success in the natural sciences. Therefore, knowledge of social change in terms of

positivism brings about a *naturalistic approach*. Naturalism here means an assertion that the method of natural sciences is to be applied to the study of social phenomena and it is further divided according to the types of natural sciences it follows as an exemplar: biological naturalism versus physical naturalism. From the former the theory of social evolution and from the latter the theory of social equilibration were respectively formulated. Later, when positivism experienced innovation because of the impact of logical positivism, a new idea of the unification of the sciences in terms of a common methodology emerged, and system theory which aimed at overcoming the separation of biological and physical naturalism was formed. A recent trend of social change theory in the positivistic camp is thus towards reformulating social evolutionism in terms of this *system approach*.

Idealism, on the other hand, was formed with the intention of reinstating the tradition of metaphysics in the field of social theory, after it was broken down by rationalism during the Enlightenment and the French Revolution. *Historism* emerged, when idealism, based on a strong antagonism towards the methodology of natural sciences, rejected the possibility of making cognitive generalizations about the social world.[3] On the other hand, with the emergence of the *dialectic approach*, idealism found the way to formulate the theory of social development by using dialectics as a tool. In the following I would like to observe some further details of this four-fold methodological typology in connection with social change as defined above, and to examine how different methodological backgrounds have produced different treatments of this common subject.

Positivism: the naturalistic approach

Positivism is an assertion that the empirically observable fact is the only basis of knowledge, and that there can be no learning beyond it.[4] The term empiricism is also frequently used as a synonym of positivism, but while empiricism is, in its original use, the opposite concept of apriorism, the opposite of positivism is, as C.-H. de Saint-Simon and Auguste Comte put it in the well-known 'law of three stages', non-scientific thinking like theology and metaphysics. Unlike the logical positivism of the Viennese circle and its related group in the early twentieth century, classical positivism in the nineteenth century emphasized only induction from empirical observations and did not pay attention to the role of deductive logic and mathematics in scientific knowledge and their relationship to empirically observable facts as the origin of knowledge. But both types of positivism are essentially the same, in so far as they refer to

the method of natural sciences of their contemporaries, extend it to the study of social phenomena, and exclude those types of knowledge that are not compatible with the scientific thinking from the realm of the learning.

For classical positivism there were two types of approach in natural sciences that could be usefully applied to sociological studies. One was biology and the other was physics. When the approach of *biological naturalism* was applied to theorizing about social change, the theory of social evolution was formulated, which was most successfully completed by Herbert Spencer. Application of *physical naturalism* to the study of social change had been less successful, until Vilfredo Pareto worked out the theory of equilibration of the social system. While the former approach produced the theory of social growth and development, the latter approach brought the theory of cyclical change. However, noting the full flower of the empirical studies of social development such as those of industrialization and modernization after the second world war, it can be maintained that the former proved much more fertile in provoking empirical research than did the latter. In this sense, the methodological importance of the role performed by Spencerian theory needs to be reappraised.

Spencer extracted three core sociological concepts from his conceptual comparison of society with biological organisms: social growth, social structure and social function. Social growth is the quantitative aspect of social change, and it provides two criteria of social evolution: augmentation of size and of complexity. Social structure is the concept that describes this complexity. It has three aspects: the maintenance system, the distribution system and the regulation system, in each of which there is a process of structural change from less to more complex. Social function is the concept used to designate interdependence among the differentiated structural parts of society, whereby these structural parts are inseparably connected to each other and to society as a whole. To sum up, evolution of society for Spencer is the growth of the society manifested in the increasing size and structural complexity of each of the three subsystems of maintenance, distribution and regulation. From the viewpoint of function the process is one of increasing interdependence of the activities of the parts. The development from the simple to the compound, doubly compound and trebly compound society on the one hand, and from the militant to the industrial society is the summary expression of these trends (Spencer, 1876–96).

It is well known in the history of sociology that the success of Spencer's 'trend propositions' produced a series of similar types of

statement which assert the existence, in the development of history, of a particular trend from a structural state A to another structural state B. This is not only seen in such classical writers as Toennies (1887), Simmel (1890), Durkheim (1893), Max Weber (1972) and Yasuma Takata (1919), but also in post-second world war theories such as structural differentiation trend (Parsons and Smelser, 1956; Smelser, 1959), industrialization-democratization trend (Lipset, 1959), modernization-differentiation trend (Marsch, 1967), and density-mobility trend (Tominaga, 1965). Of course this is not to say that they are in any sense direct successors of Spencerian evolutionism. But the point is that the spate of these 'trend propositions' is the result of those endeavours that have been oriented, based on the positivistic thinking, to the formulation of more or less generalized propositions on the problems of social change.[5]

Karl Popper once argued 'the law of evolution cannot possibly fall within the scope of scientific method, whether in biology or in sociology' and 'a statement asserting the existence of a trend is not a universal law' (Popper, 1957: 108, 115). But are we to admit that the sociological endeavours from Spencer to Parsons to formulate the theory of social evolution have been outside of 'the scope of scientific method'? In this argument the central problem is the criterion of determining whether a formulation is 'within the scope of scientific method' or not. It is evident that for Popper only the application of the method of physics is recognized as 'scientific method'. I have, on the contrary, maintained that the exemplar taken by naturalism in the social sciences was not limited to the method of physics, and that especially in sociology, biological naturalism has been more successful than physical naturalism. The spate of 'trend propositions' in the field of social change theory clearly has to do with this methodological situation. Although it may not be 'scientific' according to Popper's criterion, from the viewpoint of the many sociologists who are interested in the nature of those social changes from less to more modern, or from less to more industrialized societies, the formulation of a specific trend and the discovery of the conditions on which the emergence of such a trend depends is a meaningful, theoretical goal worth striking for.[6]

It is striking that the formulation of social change theory in terms of physical naturalism has been less successful than the formulation based on biological naturalism. Among the list of names mentioned by Sorokin (1928) as the 'mechanical school', only Pareto continues to be read. The methodology of physics that Pareto applied to the analysis of the social system was a system of simultaneous equations, formulating the interdependent relations of its components such as residues, derivations, economic factors, social groups and social mobility. For Pareto social structure is the equilibrium

solution of this equations system, and social change is the cyclical fluctuation indicated by the shift of these equilibrium solutions when the time variable is introduced to the equations system. The thesis of the 'circulation of élites' that brought fame to him is the formulation of cyclical alterations between the ruling and the ruled class, caused by the shift of the equilibrium state in the distribution of two kinds of 'residue', the instinct of combination and the persistence of the aggregate (Pareto, 1916).

There is an interesting contrast between the different types of the change concept in biological and physical naturalism: the propositions of *linear trend* derived from the former, and those of *cyclical fluctuation* from the latter. From the viewpoint of the methodologist of science such as Popper, the latter formulation would be praised as more scientific. But what has occurred actually is that while there have been many trend propositions in empirical studies of social change, empirical illustrations of fluctuation propositions in sociology are scarce. Sorokin's view of cultural history as an alternation of ideational, sensate and idealistic culture (Sorokin, 1937–41) is well known, but with regard to it an epigram 'the incomparable abundance of historical and sociological nonsense' (Dreitzel in Wehler, 1976: 38) seems to be adequate. The reason for this scanty success of cyclical theory in explaining social change is, I should say, that there is no clear empirical referrent that exactly fits the cyclical model in sociological phenomena in the way the business cycle fits the cyclical model in the economic world. On the other hand, phenomena that fit trend propositions are abundant in the industrial and post-industrial social world.

Positivism: the system approach

Positivism, after it had been formulated by Saint-Simon, Comte, John Stuart Mill and Spencer, entered upon a new phase with the appearance of logical positivism of the Viennese circle and its related groups. The important innovation in the methodology of science introduced by the logical positivists was to elucidate that in order to arrive at an empirical and 'synthetic' statement, not only are empirical observations indispensable but also propositions of logic and mathematics, which are devoid of empirical content but invariably true as 'tautology'. This was no doubt a very important contribution to the history of philosophy because with this elucidation the traditional dualism of empiricism versus rationalism virtually disappeared. But, apart from the problem inside philosophy, what was the impact of logical positivism on the empirical sciences? Natural sciences were by nature not the recipient, but the sender of the impact, because the methodology of science raised by logical positivism was nothing but what was extracted from that of

natural sciences. Therefore, outside of philosophy, the only possible recipients of the impact had to be the social sciences.[7] But the impact of logical positivism on social sciences required time, because there were few social scientists in the Viennese circle and its related groups.

The explicit impact of logical positivism on the methodology of sociology has emerged in West Germany since 1961 under the name of the 'positivism dispute in German sociology' (Adorno, Popper et al., 1969). It is worth noticing that such an overt dispute took place for the first time in no other country than Germany, where, unlike Austria, to say nothing of Britain and the United States, the intellectual climate of empiricism and logical positivism had been very limited. In German sociology after the second world war there have been, on the one hand, Hegelian-Marxian philosophical schools such as those of Max Holkheimer and Theodor Adorno, and on the other hand, empirical social research schools such as those of Helmut Schelsky and René Koenig. While at present the latter is the majority, in prewar German sociology the mainstream was historicism with which we deal later on, not positivism. The simultaneous coexistence of these mutually exclusive types of thought seems to be the reason why such a dispute emerged in German sociology. But even in Germany it is asserted that the positivism dispute is now brought to a close, which means that positivism is already institutionalized so that it is no longer a subject of dispute (Lenk, 1979: 112).[8]

In the United States positivism has been taken for granted in sociology so fully that there seems to have been no need for a 'positivism dispute'.[9] In the United States, logical positivism merged with its antecedents such as pragmatism and has been more or less routinized. But this is not to say that it has had no important impact upon American sociology. In particular the two innovations which occurred in American sociology in the 1950s and 1960s are to be understood as products of logical positivism and the related ways of thinking.

First, the misconception that positivism means non-theoretical mere empiricism and excludes the use of theoretically abstracted concepts was rapidly swept away by the refinement of the methodological arguments developed under the influence of logical positivism. It came to be widely recognized in America that empirical studies require the methodological principle of the verification of theory, and that for this purpose there must be developed a 'language' or logic of data analysis (Lazarsfeld and Rosenberg, 1955).

Second, the level of abstraction of naturalistic thought in the

theoretical conception in sociology has been elevated to the extent that the classical distinction between biological and physical naturalism is overcome. While classical positivism started from the directly analogical conception of society with organism in the case of biological naturalism and with machine in the case of physical naturalism, logical positivism had a strong commitment to the idea of Ernst Mach, of methodological integration of sciences on a more abstract level than analogical thinking. Thus, the diffusion of the logical positivists' thought promoted the movement of integrating social sciences with natural sciences. Ideas of the 'behavioral sciences' (Berelson, 1963) and the 'general system theory' (Bertalanffy, 1968) are typical examples of such movement which involved sociological theory.

Talcott Parsons's 'general theory of action' as well as his 'theory of the social system' (Parsons and Shils, 1951; Parsons, 1951) was constructed on the basis of the idea of the methodological integration of social sciences on the level of sociological theory. He himself admitted that his 'general theory' was still far from the ideal of the 'logico-deductive system' that the philosophy of science of logical positivism demands (Black, 1961: 321f.). Nevertheless, it must be asserted that the concept of the Parsonian type of social system incorporated the innovation in thinking of logical positivism, in the sense that the Parsonian approach can be characterized as abstracted naturalism, being composed of such highly generalized concepts as 'boundary from the environment', 'the relationship of mutual dependency' and 'functional requisites', and free from the use of direct analogy as occurred in organismic and in mechanistic theories of society. Thus, we can assert that the theory of social system, founded by Parsons and developed by the next generations, which includes the theory of action as a premise in viewing the units of social systems and structural-functional analysis as a methodological principle in analysing the working of social system, is different from both biological naturalism of the Spencerian type and physical naturalism of Pareto's type. This difference corresponds to the difference between the classical and the new positivism.

If we apply the Parsonian social system theory to the analysis of social change, the following statements seem plausible. From the *structural* viewpoint social change is the change of social structure, and from the *functional* viewpoint it is the change in the level of attainment of functional requirements in the social system concerned. Changes in social structure, such as role differentiation, change in the institutional framework of the role allocation, change in the distribution of income and property, and of power and privilege, bring about a change in the capacity of the social system

to meet the economic, political and sociocultural functional requirements for its continuation. Social development based on industrialization is the typical case in which the change of social structure from pre-industrial to industrial society is necessary for the sake of increasing such system-capacity. When the system-capacity is, generally speaking, great enough for fulfilling the functional requirements desired by the constituent members of the social system concerned, then no motive force to change the existing social structure is induced within the system. *When the system-capacity is, in contrast, not enough in everyone's eyes under the existing structure, then the motive force to change that structure in the direction of elevating the system-capacity tends to be produced.* As is clearly shown in these statements, it is the concept of function that explains whether the existing social structure is preserved or the motive force towards a new social structure that corresponds to higher system-capacity is generated (Tominaga, 1965, 1981a, 1981b; Naoi, 1974; Yoshida, 1974).

Among the types of social change already given, it is above all on the social development through industrialization and modernization that many empirical studies have been concentrated. These studies are not simply confined to the formulation of the pattern of the trend, but aim at theorizing about the motive force as well as about the conditions of success and failure in social development (Eisenstadt, 1966; Lenski, 1966; Etzioni, 1968; Zapf, 1975). It is no doubt the development of the functionalistic social system theory that has contributed theoretically to the success of these studies on social change. We may say, following Zapf (1979: 20), that approaches to social change can be characterized as a development in the direction towards macro-sociological system-theory. Or we may say, following Luhmann (1970: 143–53), that social evolution can only be adequately grasped and exactly explained by applying the theory of social system.

Idealism: historism

Historism, as was clearly defined by Ernst Troeltsch (1922: 9f., 102f.), is a movement of thought that is directly opposed to naturalism. Naturalism, according to Troeltsch, seeks to formulate quantitative relationships that can be dealt with mathematically, and leaves out all qualitative characteristics and direct experience. Historism, on the other hand, aims at the fundamental 'historicizing' (*Historisierung*) of our knowledge and thinking, and endeavours thereby to become the most important of the new world-views (*Weltanschauungen*) that Troeltsch expected to replace the 'dogmatism' of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution. It is clear

that Troeltsch is antagonistic to the success of the natural sciences. He regards them as above all the result of Cartesian rationalism which arose after the decline of ancient and medieval metaphysics, and he manifests the intention of reinstating the tradition of metaphysics by confronting historism with naturalism.

While sociology in France and Britain, from the first generation of Saint-Simon, Comte and Spencer to the second generation of Durkheim and his followers, was always guided by positivism, in Germany it was strongly influenced by historism. The high point of historism's opposition to positivism took place in the 1920s, and was represented by Karl Mannheim and Alfred Weber. Being opposed to naturalism, historism tends to be antagonistic, above all, to the positivists' view that the object of cognition exists independently of the subjective viewpoint of the knower. This leads to the epistemological view that the knowing process itself cannot be otherwise than relative to the subjective standpoint of the knower. This view, when it is applied to scientific knowledge, produces what is here, in the methodological sense, meant by the word 'idealism'. It states that even scientific theory can never be independent of the knower's 'idea' or 'perspective'.

In so far as the role of the subjective idea or perspective of the knower is emphasized in this way, it comes to be concluded that the same object is cognized differently by the different individuals if their perspectives are different. When a condition is further introduced that the perspective of the knower changes in the historical process, a proposition is derived that no cognition is generalizable beyond the time it is made: all cognition changes with history. In this context, two major streams have decisively dominated German social-scientific thought: the historical school and the Hegelian school. Troeltsch points out that although these two streams have often been confused, the difference between them is actually very large. There is the contrast between the 'constructive-logical' spirit of Hegel and the 'lively-vivid' and 'artistic-intuitive' character of the German historical school. They are also contrasted by the difference between the 'logicalization' (*Logisierung*) of history and the 'rationalization' of dynamics in Hegelianism and the renunciation of, and absence of the need to develop, the integration of the universal history and, above all, the rejection of the rational-dialectical elements in historism (Troeltsch, 1972: 273–8). Thus historism, although belonging to the same camp as Hegelianism in its opposition to natural-scientific positivism, rejects the Hegelian dialectic as representing logical-rationalistic bias.

What do we get when we apply this view of historism to social

change? If the object of cognition is, as historism asserts, always relative to the perspective of the knower, and if a person's perspective in his cognition is always changing because of differences in time and place, it is in principle impossible to compare cognitions of two or more events that are different in time and place. Thus, it is argued by an advocate of historism that the content of cognition cannot be in many cases free from constraints coming from the particular 'position' of the cognizing individual in terms of his time and place (Mannheim, 1924). From this viewpoint, one can discuss social development only when it is guaranteed that the 'position' of the cognizing individual is invariant, or when cognition of the relevant object escapes the constraints coming from that 'position'. According to historists' view, the historical events that meet these conditions are limited to the history of natural sciences and technology, that is, what was called 'civilization process' (that means 'material' civilization) by Alfred Weber (1920). Weber maintained that, on the other hand, in the sphere of 'cultural movement' (that means 'spiritual' culture) in which the meaning is diversely interpreted depending upon the perspectives of the different knowers, there is no criterion to determine progress. In sum, in Mannheim and Alfred Weber's type of 'cultural' sociology, the distinction between civilization and culture is emphasized, and it is insisted on the basis of this distinction that the possibility of applying the naturalistic approach is confined to the former, leaving the latter as the sphere for the historistic approach.[10] But in this schematization of the distinction between culture and civilization there is no clear location for the direction of social-structural changes such as the change of role structure, institutional structure and social stratification structure.

Historism in sociology had its peak in the 1920s and 1930s in Germany as well as in Japan,[11] and is now of past history.[12] In the 'positivism dispute in German sociology' since 1961 which represented the confrontation between positivism and dialectic sociology, no role was played by historism. Of course, historistic 'sentiment' as a negative attitude against such attempts as highly abstracted general theory or mathematical-statistical analysis continues to exist among no small numbers of sociologists as an undercurrent that intermittently explodes on the surface. As historism is by nature not so much a theoretical system as an expression of sentiment, we may say that historism continued to exist in so far as there is antagonistic feeling against positivistic theories, which is based on the belief that historical differences in the vantage points from which cognitions are made limit the possibility of developing generally applicable laws about social phenomena. At least one thing is clear: whereas

the cultural sociology of the 1920s and the 1930s as an application of historism to the problem of social change was based on the dichotomy of culture and civilization, such a simplified notion is of no use for the study of social change today, in which the analysis of economic, political and social-structural changes from pre-modern to modern society is essential. In the cultural sociology of historism such analysis was impossible.

The most prominent roles in reducing the effect of historism in sociology have been played by the intellectual inheritance of Max Weber. His methodological works criticizing the German historical school as well as on freedom from value-judgement were written in the context of his own transition to positivism (Weber, 1922). While after his sudden death in 1920 the influence of these methodological arguments did not develop until after the second world war, one direction that the influence of Max Weber since the 1950s has taken is an orientation to functionalism and the social system approach (Zingerle, 1981). It was above all Parsons's proposal of the voluntaristic theory of action that prepared this direction in the interpretation of Max Weber.

Idealism: dialectic theory

Dialectic was, as is well known, originally a form of thinking inside the knower. From the positivistic viewpoint, therefore, it is an unthinkable confusion to regard dialectic as the law of movement of the objective world. Hegelian idealism, however, sought to abolish this distinction between thinking and existence by interpreting dialectic as concerning the ontological development of the whole of existence. In Hegel, however, dialectic was not an instrument for formulating the law of social development. When Hegel said, for example, that the 'contradiction' of the civil society against the family is '*aufgehoben*' by the state, he meant that the state is at a 'higher' level of human morality than the family and civil society, but not that the family and civil society are transitional stages in the development of the state. It was Karl Marx who transformed dialectic into an instrument of theorizing about social development.

An objection is anticipated that Marx's dialectic cannot be interpreted in the context of idealism, because it is a 'materialistic' dialectic. But, needless to repeat, idealism as meant here is the opposite concept of positivism, being on the methodological plane, not on the materialistic-spiritualistic one. While Hegel's dialectic is typically based on idealistic thinking, especially in that it abolishes the distinction between idea and reality by integrating the latter to the former, we can say that to the extent that Marx's dialectic inherited Hegel's form of thinking, the social theory of Marxism,

together with that of historism, methodologically belongs to the camp of idealism.[13]

When the above-mentioned common feature in the methodology of historism and Marxism is understood correctly, it becomes possible to explain the reason why the role, which was originally played by historism, of criticizing and confronting positivism is at present played by Marxism (Albert, 1972: 17). In the 'positivism dispute in German sociology', in which the argument started with Adorno's definition of the contemporary sociological situation as one in which positivistic sociology and dialectic sociology are 'the two different types of sociology that concurrently coexist' (Adorno, Popper et al., 1969: 10), there was no mention of historistic sociology; thus, the role of the opponent of positivism was played exclusively by Adorno and Habermas who can be designated as neo-Marxist theorists.

Marxism, unlike historism which has no theory because it excludes all the possibilities of generalization, has a social theory. That part of Marxism which corresponds to the theory of social change in the sociological context is historical materialism, in which contradiction between two opposing elements is regarded as the prime mover of the development of history through dialectical process. In recent sociology this contradiction thesis in Marxism is interpreted as a form of conflict theory, in terms of which two closely connected sources of conflict are recognized: *structural contradiction* on the one hand, and the *class antagonism* on the other (Strasser and Randall, 1979: 56–62). As an important aspect of social change is the change of social structure, the central interpretative problem in understanding Marxism from the sociological context is how the concept of social structure appears in historical materialism. The above-mentioned interpretation means that two kinds of structural concept are recognized, and that in both cases the relation between the structural elements is that of conflict.

The first structural concept concerns the three-tiered structure of 'production capacities' (*Produktionskraefte*), 'social relations in production' (*Produktionsverhaeltnisse*), and 'superstructure' (*Ueberbau*), or more simply, the dual-strata structure of sub- and superstructure. The nature of the conflict among them is such that the ceaseless increase of productive capacities brings about 'contradiction' with the existing social relations in production and superstructure. In this model the increase of production is assumed to be exogenously determined. That is, the model explains the structural change by maintaining that it occurs whenever the existing structure turns out to be maladjusted to the environment as the result of an increase in production. If such a theory can be seen

as a modernized interpretation of historical materialism, it is basically parallel with, or at least not far from, the mode of explanation in structural-functional analysis. According to my version of structural-functionalism mentioned above, social-structural change occurs whenever the system-capacity under the existing system-structure is unable to fulfil the functional requirements necessary for the functioning of the system.[14] At the same time, however, we must not overlook the difference between the two in the nature of the concept of structure. Structure in the sense of structural-functional theory is that which demarcates interaction patterns such as status, role and institution, and hence affects norms and value.[15] Structure in the sense of historical materialism is conceptualized in terms of the spatial analogy of vertical relationships in which the factors 'above' are determined by the factors 'below'. This spatial analogy in the structural concept has a definite affinity with such sociological theories as Gurvitch's 'structure in profoundness' and Lévi-Strauss's 'deep structure' (Gurvitch, 1957; Lévi-Strauss, 1947), but not with the structural-functional theory (Tominaga, 1981a).

In contrast, the second structural concept of Marxism has a great deal in common with social-structural analysis in 'normal' sociology. Whatever definition of social structure one may adopt, no social-structural analysis can fail to be concerned with the structure of inequality in distribution of social resources, in other words with social stratification. The so-called conflict-theorists in sociology have emphasized the difference between the functionalist theory of social class and that of Marxism (Dahrendorf, 1959; Collins, 1975). However, on the one hand, no stratification theorist who refers to the structural-functional theory denies the fact of conflicting interests in the distribution of social resources. On the other hand, there have been attempts on the side of historical materialism to reformulate the social class theory of classical Marxism so as to adapt it to the contemporary situation of advanced industrial societies (for example, Habermas in Habermas and Luhmann, 1971: 285–90). In this sense, the difference has at least to some extent been mitigated. Important differences still remain: the structural-functionalist analysis of social stratification lays stress on empirical studies of the inequality structure, and endeavours to conceptualize the fact of inequality in empirical terms, whereas the Adorno-Habermas type of dialectic theory rejects the significance of empirical studies with depreciating words like 'primacy of the method over the fact' and 'the arbitrariness of the scientific arrangement' (Adorno in Adorno, Popper et al., 1969: 86). We may summarize the difference as being one of attitude towards the

usefulness of scientific methodology in the analysis of social structure, rather than one in the concept of social structure itself.

An application to the case of social change in Japan

The international methodological situation of sociology before the second world war was such that the positivist sociological methodology was applied mainly in English-speaking countries and France, whereas idealist methodology was used mainly in Germany and Japan. This geographical pattern can be interpreted to indicate that positivism methodology was dominant in the countries industrialized and modernized early, while idealist methodology was dominant in countries in which these processes started relatively late and intellectuals were conscious of the fact of backwardness.

The pattern, however, has become more fluid in the research situation since the second world war, especially after the 1960s. While there has been a great development since the second world war of positivist methodology in the United States as represented by the functionalist system theory as well as by quantitative data analysis, there has also been a more recent reaction which is critical of functionalist theory as well as of quantitative analysis. This counter-development has its root in the idealist methodology. In contrast, the mainstream of recent German sociology is also structural-functionalism and empirical social research. The 'methodological dispute in the German sociology' since 1961 was a product of the transition period from the predominance of idealism to that of positivism.

In Japan the influence of historism remained longer than in Germany, and the weight of Marxism in the postwar social sciences has been larger than in Germany. However, functionalist methodology as well as methods of quantitative analysis gradually came to be understood. Around the 1960s these methods took root so that the confrontation between positivism and idealism came into the open. The two opposing interpretations of social change can be illustrated by examining their explanations of the industrialization and modernization of Japan around the Meiji Restoration.

The first disputes about the interpretation of Japanese industrialization and modernization took place in the 1920s among historians. While Marxist thinking dominated the field of modern history, the Marxists split into two camps in terms of the interpretation of the nature of social change in the Meiji Restoration. One group interpreted the economic and political system of Japan after the Meiji Restoration in terms of the development towards modern market relations and modern democracy ('Labour-Farmer' school), whereas the other interpreted it as still stagnant in the stage of pre-modern 'feudal' relations and absolute monarchy

('Lecture' school).[16] When confronted with the 'modernization' theory introduced from American sociology in the 1960s Marxists generally took an antagonistic attitude, the descendents of the 'Lecture' school were especially strongly opposed, on the grounds that modernization theory tends to evaluate excessively highly the attainment of modernization in Japan. As the high growth rate of the Japanese economy and the political stability of the Japanese democracy since then have become evident to everyone, the 'Lecture' school's extremely pessimistic view has rapidly lost its persuasiveness.

Generally speaking, the fact that idealism of the German type was dominant in Japan in the prewar time, and even until the 1950s in the postwar period, can be seen as closely connected with Japan's late development of industrialization and modernization. First, the central thesis of the historist formulation of the social change, in which 'material' civilization is sharply distinguished from 'spiritual' culture, was quite an acceptable idea for the Japanese intellectuals. This was especially so since the eighteenth-century Western learning was received under the conceptual scheme of 'the Oriental spirit versus the Occidental science'. This was interpreted to mean the separation between the Confucian doctrine as moral philosophy and social sciences on the one hand, and Western learning as natural sciences and engineering on the other.[17] Second, Marxism was accepted by the Japanese historians and social scientists as a general theory of history that readily explains the transition from the feudal stage to modern capitalism. From this viewpoint their interests focused on the application of this general theory to the interpretation of the nature of the big social change of the Meiji Restoration. According to the first structural concept in the theory of historical materialism mentioned above, structural change occurs when the existing social relationships of production reach the point where they cannot be adapted to the rising productive capacity. This thesis can be persuasively applied to Japanese society: the change in the institutional structure in and after the Meiji Restoration can be seen as occurring because the institutional structure of the shogunate-daimyo regime, which had remained unchanged during the 270 years since its first formation became ill-adapted to the gradually ascending level of economic production during these years.[18] On the other hand, the second structural concept of Marxist thought — the concept of class struggle — cannot be persuasively applied to this social change, because the Meiji Restoration was carried out mainly by the lower samurais who were part of the ruling class in the Tokugawa age, and not by peasants and merchants who were ruled by samurais.

Compared to Marxist theory, which has had broad popularity

among Japanese historians and social scientists since the 1920s, structural-functionalist theory is new and known only in the limited circle. But it seems extremely useful to apply it to the sociological explanation of the success of industrialization and modernization of Japan during the Meiji Restoration (Tominaga, 1976). Instead of simply repeating my own earlier work, I here depict the outline of the logical framework of this explanation of industrialization and modernization of Japan in the structural-functional terms.

For Japan, industrialization and modernization started with the acceptance of Western culture through cultural diffusion. It must be noted that such diffusion can occur only under specific conditions. If people of a particular society are satisfied with their traditional structure, there would be no particular motivation for them to change their inherited social structure by accepting foreign culture. Motivation to change traditional structure by accepting a foreign culture could occur only when it becomes clear to the eyes of those who are in a position to mobilize public opinion that the level of meeting the functional requirements of society that people desire cannot be realized under the existing structure of the social system. Let us postulate this condition as a *functional impediment* under which structural change is generated. Since such a functional impediment appears as internal strain and resulting social conflict in the social system, one may call it a postulate of conflict. Conflict in terms of a functionalist framework is the situation where there is a shortage in the level of attainment of functional requirements under the specified structure of the social system.[19]

To illustrate it in the case of Japan, there were at least two prominent symptoms of functional impediment towards the end of the Tokugawa age. One was the financial difficulty of the shogunate and daimyos. The origin of this difficulty was the fact that in spite of the high rate of urbanization and commercialization under the Tokugawa regime the revenue of the shogunate as well as of the daimyos continued to depend solely on agricultural production in kind, especially rice. This financial difficulty brought about both impoverishment of the lower samurais and imposition of an excessively heavy tax burden upon peasants. The other symptom was the problem of national defence. Despite the growing necessity for an integrated national defence system because of the imperialist policies of the Western countries, such a unified national defence was not possible under the shogunate-daimyo regime in which the entire nation was divided into some 250 financially independent fiefs. When the news that Great Britain had defeated China in the Opium War arrived at Japan, the intellectuals concentrated their interest on the problem of national defence because of their fear

that the Western powers might come to attack Japan as they had China. The intellectuals were critical of the Tokugawa shogunate because it did not have the ability to cope with this national crisis, and took part in the attempt to organize a movement for overthrowing the shogunate-daimyo regime. It was, we can argue, the recognition of these facts of functional impediments and the resulting dissatisfaction with the existing regime that motivated the attempt to change the traditional 270-year-old social structure through the introduction of industrialization and modernization as a cultural diffusion from the West.[20]

The above illustration of the interpretation of social change in terms of structural-functional analysis, as contrasted to Marxist theory, with the materials of modern Japanese history demonstrates that, if Marxist theory is applied to the empirical analysis of social change, there is, apart from some extreme interpretations of the 'Lecture' school Marxism and despite differences in terminologies, a development to a certain extent of parallel logic in the two theories. Of course this is not the case if Marxism, like the Adorno-Habermas version, adheres to the methodology of idealism. There would be no room for mediation between positivism and idealism, and it would not make sense to seek the third position that stands 'in the middle'. But if Marxist theory is considered as applicable to empirical materials, then both approaches can, to some extent, be interpenetrative. Through this interpenetration in the empirical application it can become more evident that the image of positivistic sociology — that it cannot deal with historical materials and cannot explain social change — is not correct. At the same time such interpenetration of the two approaches through the common field of empirical studies would be useful for making Marxism as empirical research-oriented as is positivistic sociology.

Summary and conclusion

The starting point of this chapter was the problem that depsite the many prominent studies of social change in recent sociology the field is still blamed by some for not doing such studies. According to the interpretation I presented, such accusations, apart from possible prejudice and ignorance, stem from the confrontation of different methodological approaches to the study of social change.

I observed that the methodological confrontation in sociology has developed centring round the axis of positivism versus idealism. Positivism in the classical sense is the methodological assertion that only the empirically observable fact that exists independent of the subjective viewpoint of the knower is the object of science. The natural world is more obvious as such an empirically observable fact

than the social world, so that positivism in social sciences took the view that the methodology of natural sciences must be extended to the study of social phenomena. This methodological attitude I called naturalism, and it is divided into biological and physical naturalism. In the study of social change, the theory of evolutionary change was formulated from biological naturalism, whereas the theory of cyclical change was developed from physical naturalism. Such was the situation of positivism before the second world war.

Logical positivism originated the innovation that the role of a priori theoretical thinking must be combined with the empirical knowledge emphasized by classical positivism. After a long time lag, the impact of the neo-positivism reached sociology after the second world war, and it contributed greatly to making empirical research theory-oriented. As a result the level of abstraction of naturalistic thought was elevated, to the extent that system theory, which overcame the distinction between biological and physical naturalism, came to be applied to social phenomena. Structural-functional analysis was obviously formulated in this context, and, as a direct application of structural-functionalism, I have developed a theory of social change explaining structural change in functional terms. Structural-functional theory was formulated in the United States, but it must be emphasized that its logical extension to the explanation of social development was done in Japan. In Germany the impact of neo-positivism produced the 'positivism dispute', in which the contemporary methodological situation was very clearly manifested as a confrontation between neo-positivism represented by system theory and structural-functionalism on the one hand, and neo-Marxism as dialectic or critical theory of society on the other.

Idealism, which is essentially a movement for reinstating the old tradition of metaphysics into the field of social theory, is strongly opposed to the naturalistic attitude of positivism. Historism emerged when idealism rejected any possibility of cognitive generalization about the social world. From this view it was asserted that because the knower cannot be free from constraints of time and space, there can be no unequivocal criteria of progress and development in social and, above all, cultural phenomena. Although as a school it is already past history even in Germany, historism still continues to exist as a negative 'sentiment' against abstracted general theory or quantitative analysis.

Dialectic theory shares the anti-naturalistic attitude with historism because, instead of regarding the object of cognition as independent of the knower, it removes the distinction between thinking and existence. However, unlike historism it has a generalizing theory concerning social structure and its change. There are

two kinds of structural concept: the 'vertical' three-tiered structure of productive capacity, social relationships in production and superstructure (or more simply, the dual strata of sub- and superstructure) on the one hand, and the structure of social class on the other. The first structural concept has no counterpart in the concept of social structure in structural-functionalist sociology. However, the way in which dialectical theory explains the motive force of structural change in terms of maladjustment or 'conflict' between ceaselessly growing productive capacity and the social relationships of production as well as the superstructure is basically parallel with the mode of explanation of the structural-functional model, in which the focus is on the relationship between the system's capacity to meet the functional requisites and the existing social structure. Social class, the second structural concept, is much the same as the concept of social stratification, in the sense that both are concerned with inequality, although the methodological approach is different.

Now that historism as a school has almost disappeared and classical positivism has been methodologically almost replaced by neo-positivism, the focus of the methodological confrontation is between neo-positivism and neo-Marxism.[21] In the contemporary international situation of sociology the mainstream of neo-positivism is composed of structural-functionalism and quantitative analysis. Neo-Marxism now strengthens the anti-positivistic tendency as is typically seen in its Adorno-Habermas version, but there is still another possibility — empirically-minded Marxism.

My illustrative analysis of industrialization and modernization in Japan indicates that in a practical empirical investigation of a particular case of social change the application of my reformulation of structural-functional analysis to the Meiji Restoration has a somewhat similar logic to the results of the Marxist approach which has been very popular in Japan. It would thus seem useful to apply the principle of structural-functional analysis to those historical empirical materials that have so far been monopolized by the Marxist approach in the Japanese situation in order to correct the mistaken stereotype of 'sociology without history'. Conversely, if Marxism were to be oriented to a more positivistic approach as sociological analysis, it would contribute more to empirical social research than Adorno's long eloquence concerning dialectic theory in the 'methodological dispute'.

From this viewpoint, recent concern about social history among historians is worth noticing. Social history needs to be studied and taught in close relationship with sociological theory, in the same way that economic history is linked to economic theory or political

history to political theory. More concretely, sociology can offer social history the generalizing conceptual tools that would help the study of past social actions, social relations, organizations, social structure and social change, while social history can offer sociology knowledge of past social actions, social relations, organizations, social structures and social change that are empirical materials for sociological analysis.

Notes

1. The term 'positivism' as used here stands in opposition to 'idealism' to be discussed later. This contrast is related to the distinction between the 'positivistic theory of action' and 'the idealistic theory of action' in Parsons (1937) on the one hand, and that between the 'naturalistic doctrine' and 'anti-naturalistic doctrine' in Popper (1957) on the other. While Parsons was concerned with the utilitarian thought as the nineteenth-century form of the positivistic theory of action and the transition of utilitarian thought to the 'voluntaristic theory of action' through its convergence with idealism, my concern here consists in the problem of how social change has been dealt with by the positivistic and idealistic camps respectively. On the other hand, Popper's concern lay in distinguishing pro- and anti-naturalistic attitudes using as his criteria the applicability of the methodology of physics to sociopolitical phenomena and in examining each of these attitudes as subdivisions of the stream of 'historicism' in the usage peculiar to him. In my view, however, his criteria, because they stressed only on the *pro et contra* of the applicability of the methodology of physics, are not appropriate for examining sociological thinking in which successful influences came more from biology than from physics. Thus the context in which that contradistinction is used here is different from both of these authors.

2. The word 'idealism' is used in several different contexts. The most popular usage is in the context that opposes it to materialism, in which the problem is whether mind has primacy over matter or the reverse. My conceptualization here has nothing to do with this context. Another usage is in the context that opposes it to realism, in which the problem is whether things exist independent of human cognition or not. While this second context concerns the epistemological problem in general, it is connected with my conceptualization here is so far as the methodology of science involves the epistemological problem of the 'scientific' cognition of objects. Idealism as used here, in the context of the methodology of science, is an assertion that the object of cognition exists, as opposed to the realist view of positivism, only relative to the subjective 'perspective' of the cognizing individual, which can never be universal. This methodological assertion is usually applied only to social-historical phenomena as distinguished from natural phenomena. The result is the methodological dualism in which it is maintained that the social sciences can never be scientific in the same way as the natural sciences.

3. The German word *Historismus* might be more commonly translated into English as 'historicism' rather than 'historism'. The problem in using the word 'historicism' in my context is that Popper's earlier widely known use of this word in his book *Poverty of Historicism* (the English edition is the original version; in the German edition Popper uses the word *Historizismus* instead of *Historismus*) implies a quite different

meaning. While historism in my context is Troeltsch's, historicism in Popper's usage denotes social-scientific theories that search for 'trends' and 'laws' in history and predict the future on the basis of these findings.

4. It was taken for granted in the assertion of positivist thought that knowledge of natural sciences satisfies this criterion, so that there was no need for the nineteenth-century positivist philosophers to contend that natural sciences must be positivistic. The real point of dispute for positivism as a philosophical school lay in the demand that positivist methodology be extended to other fields, and social sciences were above all the central arena for this contention. This was also true for the twentieth-century neo-positivist philosophers mentioned below.

5. Among the classical writers illustrated, Durkheim most obviously manifested a pro-naturalistic attitude in his methodological study (Durkheim, 1895). Max Weber, while he was a 'son of the Historical School' of the German economics, also took a surprisingly pro-naturalistic view in his criticism of Roscher and Knies (Weber, 1922). Yasuma Takata, the greatest sociologist Japan has ever had, developed his theory of social change as a system of generalized propositions in a logical-deductive form (for English readers, see Tominaga, 1975). In Parsons, biological naturalism was evident in his early methodological notes, in which 'structural-functional analysis' was advocated under the strong influence of the physiological theories of W.B. Cannon and E.J. Henderson (Parsons, 1954). In the later stage of his thought, however, such direct analogical thinking was overcome by the more abstract naturalism of the system theory (Parsons, 1966, 1969, 1971).

6. Even Karl Popper approved of attempts to formulate trend propositions, as long as it was recognized that a trend cannot be an absolute, unconditional direction, and that the persistence of a trend always depends on whether or not and to what extent a particular set of initial conditions persists. What Popper opposed was the overlooking of the fact that the persistence of a trend is always dependent on particular conditions and the consequent absolutizing of a particular trend (Popper, 1957: 128f.).

7. Among many disciplines of social sciences, neo-classical economic theory is the only case in which the theoretical level demanded by the methodology of logical positivism is already realized. Therefore, those who are not economists but wish to examine the methodology of social sciences from neo-positivist viewpoint tend to extend this type of economic analysis to non-economic fields. Hans Albert (in Topitsch, 1980) thus argues that economic theory is nothing but a product of individualistic sociology, that elucidated the problem of social control based on the analysis of exchange process in human interactions. This would be to some extent true, and Homans (1974), for example, clearly showed such an orientation. But of course this does not mean that the simple imitation of economic theory in the analysis of social interaction can always by meaningful.

8. Lenk's (1979) argument that the 'positivism dispute' did not deal with the essential point of positivist methodology in sociology is attributable to the fact that Popper, the first leader of the positivist side, did not adequately develop the central tenets of positivism as they related to the study of substantial sociological problems. This occurred because Popper in his report laid too much emphasis on the criticism of the 'wrong naturalism' (Popper in Adorno, Popper et al., 1969: 107f.). As a result he gave the impression that he stands on the same side as his opponent Adorno. I believe that Popper did not actually intend to deny the significance of naturalistic methodology in general. He intended only to develop his own thesis of 'critical rationalism', which was based on the assumption that objectivity of science can be realized only by criticism, and that even naturalistic methodology cannot always be

objective without critical activity. Of course, this assertion is not equal to a totally negative attitude towards naturalism like that of Adorno. However, there was a discrepancy between the role of proponent of positivism expected of Popper and his actual assertions.

9. In contrast to the recent trend of the German sociology, there has been an increase of anti-positivistic 'schools' in American sociology especially since the 1970s. We may call this increase the augmentation of non-Anglo Saxon elements or simply the diversification of American sociology. In this sense something like the 'methodological dispute in American sociology' may occur in the future.

10. Alfred Weber (1920) argued that there is an intermediate sphere named 'societal process' between civilization and culture, but in his discussion what it actually means and what is the nature of this 'process' in the history were not developed. Mannheim (1924) specified the nature of the process of this third sphere as 'dialectical development' as contrasted with the 'progressive development'. But this distinction is not convincing, because one can also assert that natural sciences and technology develop through the 'dialectical' process of criticizing the antecedents and of synthesizing the thesis and antithesis.

11. In Japan, historism in sociology was advocated in the 1930s under the name of the realistic movement as an opponent of 'formal' sociology. One of the strong advocates of this movement, Masamichi Shimmei, argued that while human action has two aspects, cultural meaning and social interaction, Shimmei felt that formal sociology committed a mistake by arbitrarily ignoring the former aspect in separating the 'form' from the 'material' of social life. This anti-formalist movement developed into the rejection of abstract theory in general, and produced, when merged with the Marxism stream of the same period, the realistic and historic school.

12. It is interesting to pay attention to the fact that Mannheim, one of the central advocates of historism in German sociology in the 1920s, changed his methodology to the direction of functionalism by introducing an intervening conceptual instrument named 'principia media' in his later work *Man and Society* (Mannheim, 1940).

13. Among many subtypes of contemporary Marxism, there is one in the United States and in Japan which is oriented to empirical research. In contrast with it, the Adorno-Habermas version of neo-Marxism which is opposed to positivism in the 'positivism dispute' in Germany has very strong orientation to extreme idealism in that it raises acute objections to the positivistic view that regards society as an object of scientific observation. Adorno asserts that society is of dual character in that it must be object and subject at the same time (Adorno in Adorno, Popper et al., 1969: 43f.).

14. While for historical materialism the function of 'substructure' is economic production, for structural-functionalism economic production is one of the many functional requisites that a social system must fulfil. Apart from the spatial analogy in determinism, we may say that the concept of system-capacity in structural-functionalism is a generalization of the concept of 'productive capacity' in historical materialsim.

15. While there are almost unlimited possibilities of human action in a free situation, the structure of a social system actually delimits the range of potential actions through the restriction of role-expectations and organizational rules. This is the institutional device for directing the actions of its members to the fulfilment of the functional requirements of the system concerned. However, at the same time it must be noted that such an institutional restriction can never by complete, so that there is still room both for some individual selectivity and for the emergence of conflict that hinders the smooth fulfilment of the functional requisites.

16. In the Japanese political situation of the 1920s, the 'Lecture' school (this name had its origin in the publication of a 'Lecture on the Development of Capitalism in Japan') acquired the status of orthodoxy in the Communist Party, whereas the 'Labour-Farmer' school (this name came from that of a revisionist faction in the Communist Party) was free from such a political commitment. While both schools continued until the post-second world war period, many of the members of 'Labour-Farmer' school left Marxism in this period. The important point in this controversy was that since most of the members of both schools were either historians or economists, the nature of the dispute was basically empirical, not idealistic, although political and ideological elements were, of course, strong.

17. The main intellectual tradition of the Tokugawa age (1603–1867) was Confucianism, which served as a doctrine of moral philosophy as well as of economic and political order. While in Confucian learning commentaries and recitation of Chinese classics played a central role, Confucianism in Japan, unlike that in China, developed a positivistic and rationalistic spirit that valued the observation of empirical facts. Therefore it is not surprising that some Confucian scholars conducted some natural-scientific studies as did Ekiken Kaibara (1630–1714) in medical botany. Generally speaking, however, compared to the remarkable advancement of natural sciences in European countries during the same period, the development of natural sciences in Japan was very limited, except for some work in mathematics and astronomy. For this reason natural sciences and engineering had been imported since the eighteenth century from Europe and called Western learning ('*Yogaku*') in contrast to the study of Chinese classics ('*Kangaku*') and of Japanese classics ('*Kakugaku*'). In the well-known epithet of Zozan Sakuma (1811–64) 'Oriental morality versus Occidental science', there is a strong consciousness of separation between the 'spiritual culture' of Confucian thought and the 'material civilization' of modern Western science and technology, although, of course, Sakuma saw the two as compatible.

18. The shogunate-daimyo regime ('*Bakuhan-sei*') in the Tokugawa age was, unlike European feudalism, an economically decentralized but politically centralized form of feudalism. The nature of the power of the Tokugawa shogunate (Bakufu) was of supreme authority over the entire nation, in which the shogun controlled all daimyos, who in turn held independent sovereign power over their fiefs (Han). In terms of revenue, most of which came from a land tax paid by farmers in the form of rice, the shogunate was but one, although the largest one, of those daimyos by whom the whole country was divided into some 250 fiefs. The shogunate, however, in addition to its own land called Tenryo, owned all mines and several important cities, and moreover monopolized foreign trade. Above all, it is important that in spite of the decentralized fiefs the shogunate maintained the integrated jurisdiction and kept the right to issue money over the whole country in its own hands.

19. Equilibrium in the sense of structural-functional analysis can be defined as the state in which there is no internal strain to induce structural change in a social system. Actually, however, there are incessant causes of internal strain, which we may call 'conflict', under any existing social structure. These come about because of changing environment conditions as well as socially determined changes in people's expectations about the attainment levels of various functional requirements. Whenever a system is in such a state of internal strain, there is a process of equilibration which is nothing but a structural change process, aiming at changing the structural state so that the expected levels of functional requirements can be met. In so far as the equilibrium analysis is the analysis of such a process of equilibration, it is the analysis of structural change of the social system. The assertion that structural-functional

theory cannot be a theory of social change represents mere ignorance of this very simple logic.

20. The above statement about how functional impediments under existing social structures and the resulting dissatisfactions motivate activities towards institutional reform is confined to the analysis of the conditions necessary to originate the large movement to disorganize the traditional social structure of Tokugawa Japan. For a systematic explanation of the conditions that led to the successful industrialization and modernization of Japan and of the difficulties that arose in that process, more is needed including comprehensive investigations of the degree of maturity in economic and social development up to the end of the Tokugawa age, and of the internal tensions between modernized and unmodernized sectors in the early phase of industrialization. Some such explanations are given in my previous paper in English (Tominaga, 1976).

21. In contemporary sociology there are, of course, many other 'schools': e.g. symbolic interactionism, phenomenological sociology, conflict theory and structuralism. Among them phenomenological sociology stands on the idealistic side, but the others are more or less ambiguous or can be on either side. Symbolic interactionism and phenomenological sociology have solely to do with micro-level analysis, and therefore they are not our concern here. Structuralism, as I mentioned earlier, has some parallel relation with the 'vertical' structural concept of Marxism in its conceptualization of structure, but its applicability is limited only to kinship structure of primitive societies. Conflict theory cannot be an independent 'school' in my view, because structural-functional theory also deals with conflict phenomena.

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Notes on contributors

S.N. Eisenstadt is Professor of Sociology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. His publications include *From Generation to Generation*, *The Political Systems of Empires*, *Israeli Society* and *Revolution and the Transformation of Societies*.

H.J. Helle is Professor of Sociology at the University of Munich. He is the author of *Soziologie und Symbol* and *Verstehende Soziologie und Theorie der Symbolischen Interaktion* and the editor of *Kultur und Institution*.

Jeffrey C. Alexander is Professor of Sociology at the University of California, Los Angeles. He is author of *Theoretical Logic in Sociology* (four volumes), *Twenty Lectures: Sociological Theory since World War Two*, and *Structure and Meaning: Essays in Sociological Theory*. He is editor of *Neofunctionalism*, past chair of the American Sociological Association and currently a Fellow at the Princeton Institute for Advanced Studies.

Margaret S. Archer is Professor of Sociology at the University of Warwick. Her publications include *Social Origins of Educational Systems*, and *The Sociology of Educational Expansion*. She is Chairman of the Committee on Educational Sociology of the International Sociological Association and a leading sociologist of education and sociological theory.

François Bourricaud is Professor of Sociology at the Sorbonne. He is author of *L'individualisme institutionnel*, *Le bricologe ideologique*, many works on Latin America and recently, together with R. Boudon, *Dictionnaire Critique de Sociologie*.

Torcuato S. Di Tella is Professor of Sociology and Director of the Di Tella Institute in Buenos Aires. A leading Latin American sociologist, he is author of many papers and monographs on Latin American society and on theoretical sociology.

Edward A. Tiryakian is Professor of Sociology at Duke University (North Carolina). He has written extensively on various aspects of sociological theory. His recent publications include *The Global Crisis: Sociological Analyses and Responses* (edited) and *New Nationalisms of the Developed West* (edited with R. Rogowski).

Göran Therborn is Professor of Political Science at the Catholic University of Nijmegen, the Netherlands. His books in English include *Science, Class and Society*, *What Does the Ruling Class Do when It Rules?*, *The Ideology of Power and the Power of Ideology* and *Why Some Peoples are More Unemployed than Others*. He is currently working on a book on the welfare state and advanced capitalism.

Ken'ichi Tominaga is Professor of Sociology at the University of Tokyo. A leading Japanese sociologist, he is the author of many books in Japanese on sociological theory, social change in general and in Japan in particular.

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S.N. Eisenstadt is Professor of Sociology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

H.J. Helle is Professor of Sociology at the University of Munich.

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