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Social organization: a structural functional approach

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SOCIAL ORGANIZATION: A STRUCTURAL-FUNCTIONAL APPROACH

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Like Topsy, the divisions of the social sciences have "just growed." The divisions and special fields are more readily explained by their history and development than by some immanent logic. It is the purpose of this research to explain the background and development of one of the fields of sociology—the field of social organization—in order to give some understanding of how it has come to occupy the position that it does in the division of labor within sociology.

The directions of interest in courses and research are better understood, as are the relationships between seemingly disparate courses and research areas, when the common problems to which the field addresses itself are made explicit. It is hoped that such analysis of background and relationships will provide students within the field, or planning to enter it, with a better defined set of expectations as to the scope and direction of interest in the field. In addition this research will indicate the extent and areas of knowledge which students in this field should consider in the preparation of their examinations. It will indicate to students the kinds of competence which study in this field can make available and the areas within which that competence may be practiced. And finally, this research will indicate the links between this field and others in sociology and elsewhere. Such connections with other fields are the borderline of shared knowledge and inquiry.
THE AIM OF THE FIELD

The aim of the field of social organization, stated quite simply, is the acquisition of social knowledge—the acquisition of knowledge about society secured within a framework of social science categories and concepts. The particular categories and concepts which it uses are preconditioned by the kinds of knowledge it seeks, and condition the knowledge it obtains. Therefore, a statement of its framework of inquiry is of crucial importance as a guide to an understanding of the field. Institutions, community, family—these are the fulcrums for its levers of learning. But a more basic kind of inquiry is involved—the concern with the nature of society itself, and of man's relationships with society. It is this concern which provides a common substratum for the variety of courses and researchs in the field. Analysis of this level of its concern provides the keys to what the field is and what it is trying to achieve. We will attempt to analyze this basic concern of the field—the nature of society itself—and see how it leads to the particular problem areas of institutions, community, and the family, providing a focus and a cohesion for a seemingly unrelated group of courses and researches.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The background of the field is a quite eclectic one. It has borrowed from a variety of sources for its basic conceptual framework. There is, however, an important component of unity among all the sources from which it has borrowed and upon which it depends for its theoretical position—each of the sources is a person whose scientific life's work was the actual study of some on-going social activity. This core of some empiric reality common to all has permitted the establishment of connections between systems of thought which may, in part or in their totality, be
incompatible or irrelevant, or perhaps not strictly comparable. References to such background material for the field will begin the clarification of its position with regard to the study of society.

It is not the aim here to provide an exhaustive analysis of the entire theoretical background of the field. The aim is, rather, to select, from among the theoretical literature, material which best represents and highlights the conceptual framework which underlies the field of social organization. The work of Cooley, Park, Weber, Radcliff-Brown, Simmel, and Malinowski is considered as being most representative in this respect.

THE GOAL

The ultimate goal of sociology is the establishment of recurrent regularities (laws, generalizations) of human behavior in social contexts. The proximate tasks required for the achieving of that goal are the central concern of the field of social organization. Its immediate aim is the understanding of the nature of society and of man’s relationships with society, an aim which it implements through addressing itself to the study of group organization. Social organization is the study of groups, and of grouping—of the processes in and through which society comes into being, and of the fates of what is brought into being—human societies. The problems which it sets itself are not "social problems" but problems of the nature and modes of society, the study of which will supply knowledge about the structure of societies and principles of group organization. One of its immediate related tasks is the establishment of sets of general concepts for use as tools of social description and analysis.

Procedure.—The field proceeds about its task of the study of society
in a variety of ways. At one level there is the description of societies. Of description, Radcliffe-Brown has stated:

Obviously, if you are going to study societies, you have to describe them. The first task of the social scientist is to describe societies as they can be directly observed. But that is not science. There can, however, be different kinds of descriptions. In a certain sense, some descriptions can be more scientific than others. If there is a set of concepts which has been scientifically developed, a description which uses them will be more scientific than one which does not.1

Such description must be carefully separated from a history. Although the data of sociological description are historical events, they are described in terms of general and generalizing concepts. There is interest in the unique historical occurrence only insofar as it can be demonstrated to be a particular instance of a general pattern of grouping or social process. Emphasis must be placed on the work sociological in the phrase sociological description since it involves the application of general sociological concepts to the ordering of the seemingly chaotic data of human social behavior.

More important is the work of sociological analysis. At this level classification and the sociological explanation of human social behavior are engaged in. Here the testing of scientifically formulated hypotheses against the observed data of society appears as an important mode of procedure. It is at this point of analysis that controversies proliferate. They focus on the question of whether or not sociology is a science. As this question is generally asked the use of the term "science" is trammeled up with the particular procedures which the physical sciences normally follow—from hypothesis to observation (or experiment) to general

1Class Notes from "Seminar in Social Organization" by Professor John D. Reid, Atlanta University.
laws. For the field of social organization this mode of procedure is considered as only one among several. Without trying to solve the controversy as to whether the social sciences are "science" or not it takes the position that science cannot be equated with any set of techniques or procedures but it is, in its essence, the pursuit of knowledge in terms of logical rigor. In this basic sense the field of social organization is a field of science. It uses the rigorous logic of science in its empirical observation and analyses of society in pursuit of knowledge about society. There are certain points, however, at which it emphasizes special procedures of science in order to meet the peculiar and particular demands of the study and analysis of society and of man in society. Chief among these procedures is the comparative method.

One end-purpose of the description of societies is that of setting up classifications and establishing typologies. The basic questions at this level are: What kinds of societies are there? In what respects are they similar to and different from one another? What are the apparent universals in society? What are the limits of variation? By studying a series of individual societies (social groups), and of observing their characteristics, we may decide in which ways they represent variations and what they have in common. This, in essence, is comparative sociology—and such sociological comparisons are the root-stock of the field of social organization. Only in this comparative fashion can the recurrent regularities of human behavior in social contexts be isolated. Thus, for example, a study of authority relationships in a large series of social

Ibid.
groups would permit us to set up a typology of authority relationships. An analytical understanding of the kinds of social contexts in which particular forms of authority occurred would permit us to approach the further study of authority in social structures with a sophisticated set of expectations as to the modes and forms we might encounter. The further knowledge of such modes and forms of authority in a great many kinds of social groups would permit us to make general statements about types and forms of authority relative to organized society. The field of social organization reaches its understandings about society in large part through this method of comparisons. Such comparisons form the basis of the general concepts it has established and which it uses in the further study of society. In the following section we will present the chief concepts used for analysis in the field, and will indicate some of the chief problems in the study of which they are used.

In its pursuit of social knowledge, then, the field of social organization follows two main procedures. In some of its researches it establishes hypotheses which it follows through the observation of empirical data to arrive at general statements. In another body (perhaps the larger one) of its researches it proceeds from the use of general concepts to the understanding of specific social occurrences. In this type of research the general concept is literally a tool of analysis, used to explain and understand social behavior, forms of groups, or processes of grouping. But whether the procedure used is from hypothesis to generalization or from general concept to an understanding of a specific event, the scientifically justifiable goal of the pursuit of knowledge is identical. And, of course, both approaches often fructify the same piece of research.
CONCEPTS AND PROBLEMS

The main areas of inquiry of the field of social organization may be characterized by the concepts of social structure and social process. This chapter will deal first with the concepts and problems pertinent to the study of organized groups, and then with the processual analysis of grouping.
CHAPTER II

SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND SOCIAL PROCESSES

Social Structure

The components of a definition of society best suited to the kind of formulations presented here include the following: Society, in its essence, is the organized set of reciprocal relations in which human beings exist beside, for, and with each other. It is the system of interactions of these human beings. Both individual and society are inseparable correlates, inseparable phases of a common whole. These relations between humans exist and develop through mental communication. This communication involves a universe of shared meanings and rules, the culture of the group.

The field of social organization is not primarily concerned with any such abstract entity as the "society" defined above. Its primary concerns are with the study and analysis of particular societies. In the words of Park, "...Society is made of societies, and societies, and societies are social groups." Our locus of investigation is, therefore, the social group. It is about social groups that the following areas proliferate: What are the kinds and varieties of social groups? How do they arise? How do their structures develop? By what mechanisms do they persist and change? It will be noticed that these questions include both structural and processual considerations. Although these areas of analysis have been separated for purposes of this presentation they may not be separable in any actual situation. Social structures arise in and through social pro-
processes, and the study of processes is implemented by the study of the groups involved.

Some preliminary definitions are in order here. We have used the terms "group" and "structure" interchangeably and will make our reasons explicit. In so doing, we will add another term, "chance aggregate." The explanation of the relationships among these terms involves a preliminary answering of the questions of how groups arise and persist. Not every chance aggregation of people is a social group. Only when some meaningful interactive relationships are established between and among them do we call them a group. Those groups which persist through time and develop a somewhat established pattern of relationships and a shared set of rules and definitions we call social structures. The audience of a television station is thus a chance aggregate, a casual card game represents a group relationship, and an organized club for card playing represents an added structure in a society. Such classifying of groups, with analyses of their structural stage and the processes involved, lies at the core of our scientific task.

The actual locus of any particular society, in fact of any area for study, must be arbitrarily established. This establishing of the limits of any given society or unit entity for observation is a complex process. The delineation may be in spatial terms, defined by locality as in the study of a village, or by the limits of a parish. It may be in terms of administrative or political area, as in some studies of modern communities. Considerations of size may also affect such delineation. Considerations of intensity of relations between groups, a relatively intangible but vital consideration, may be the deciding factor. Conven-
tionally anthropology has been able to study societies which were explicitly delimited by locality. This has also been done in the case of modern community studies. But in this case, the whole has been too large and complex to be apprehended as a unit entity and other modes of analysis have had to be developed. One of these methods has been to consider the society being studied as an area of "social space" and attention has been paid to the placing, the social position, or particular individuals and groups in this social space. Their distance from each other or proximity to each other in terms of "social distance" has then been emphasized. This particular frame of analysis is usually combined with another and perhaps more important method—the method of institutional analysis. Classically, sociology has selected social institutions are microcosms of society in its largest aspects.

Within social institutions (and through them) individuals establish reciprocal relationships within culturally defined forms. They are the structures within which culture, society, and the individual fuse and become a unity. Thus the classification and analysis of institutions, as distinct, typical, and manageable unit entities, can provide us with the increase in knowledge which is the goal of our study.

The field of social organization, in its study of social institutions, concentrates on their analysis as structural-functional systems (or sub-systems of the larger "total" social system in which they are located), as well as on the assignment of individuals within them to particular statuses with their concomitant roles.

Much controversy has arisen over the definitions of "social institution." This focuses on the difference between the societal aspects in social institutions and the cultural—or roughly on the distinction between
the groups of people involved and the particular set of rules and values in terms of which their relationships are ordered. The people in such relationship have, by some sociologists, been referred to as an "association," with the word institution being reserved for the system of rules and definitions. Here such distinctions are looked upon as an enfeebling dichotomy. It is precisely the strength of the social institution as a unit of analysis that it is such a locus of rule-ordered group behavior. Seen in this fashion are dimensions of the problem of social control emerge. Society is seen as being control in its very essence—a control which is not only a form of limitation but a prescription also of areas of permissiveness for human behavior.

A social institution has been defined as a "mature, specialized, and comparatively rigid part of the social structure."\(^1\) The study of institutions is the study of the formally established aspects of group behavior. Their study helps bridge the gap between the "whole" approach of the anthropologist and the "part" approach of the sociologist. They are studied not only for their internal relations but also for the ways in which they are articulated with and affected by the remainder of the "total community" in which they are in effect.

We stated that social institutions were analyzed as structural-functional systems. We must now make somewhat more explicit what these terms "structure" and "function" mean, and how they appear to be related. We have already indicated partial meanings of the concept "structure." It is the set of actually existing relationships, which, at a given moment

of time, link together certain human beings. Direct observations may be made on these relationships. Although the actual people comprising a social structure change through time, the structural form remains the same. It is this form of the relationships rather than the actual relationships themselves which provides the social scientist with the desired end-product—the structural analysis of a particular society or institution. After such persisting patterns of relationships have been abstracted the next problem to be confronted is that of how much structures persist—by what mechanism do they maintain their identity? The theory of function provides a partial answer to this problem. In this theory particular social structures are considered as being types of systems in balance. Change in any one aspect of the system will entail compensatory changes in all other aspects. Each item of a structural system thus has its function of maintaining the entire structure in balance and of contributing to its integration and to that of its social matrix. Functional analysis of social institutions, therefore, must demonstrate the part of any item of analysis plays in the on-going activity of the institution as well as the contribution of the institution itself to the integration of the larger social unit which contains it. The relationship between structure and function in any particular social institution is a close and intimate one. The functional relationships within an institution, and between it and its larger social context, determine the structure and patterns of control which it develops in its on-going activity. In this sense structure and function are correlative aspects of organization—the patterns of organization (structure) express the authority and responsibility by which the functions are affected.

Considerations of status and role are also peculiarly suited to
institutional analysis. It is in the relationship of status and role that the demarcation between the individual and his society blurs to the point of vanishing. A status is a position in a particular pattern of society. (Note that this links together analysis in terms of social space and institutional analysis. The locus of a status in social space within a particular institution). A role represents the behavioral aspect of a status—the set of behavior prescribed for the position by the social group. This status and role are the point of meeting between the individual in a social group and the controls and prescriptions of the group. Social life is here expressed in individual terms. The terms the status and the role of an individual are derived from some combination of all the particular statuses and roles occupied by the individual.

SOCIAL PROCESSES

In addition to the structure analysis indicated above, the study of organized groups, there is another type of analysis which is engaged in. This type is the analysis of grouping rather than of the group itself—of the processes in and through which social groups arise, persist, and change. It is the analysis of the dynamisms of group life, processual analysis.

The term "social process" has come into use as an indicator of the fact that societies cannot adequately be understood as static states of being. They are in a constant state of becoming. Motion, development, continuous operation, change—these are some of the components of the concept of process. Comprehension of these dynamic aspects of society must be added to our analysis of forms of structure and an important problem to be attacked is the relationship between the changing aspects of
process and the patterned aspects of structure.

We stated earlier that society was a system of interactions. This statement can now be enlarged upon. In a processual analysis individuals are seen as "the bearers of the processes of association, who are united by these processes into the higher unity which one calls 'society'." The master process, it has been called the social process, is interaction. The field of social organization must address itself to the study of all the processes of association by which a mere sum of separate individuals are made into a society. These processes of association are not subsequent to the existence of society, but are the forms in which society comes into being.

Systematic processual analysis of society is still in its beginning stages, is often implicit, and is itself very much in need of systematizing and organizing. In its present stage it has reached a phase of what can be called "process atomism" which closely parallels the fate of instinctual theory in psychology. Just as the instinct psychologists, dealing with the instinct as the unit entity of analysis, were soon postulating separate instincts for vast numbers of forms of individual behavior so the process sociologists are in the dilemma of postulating new and separate processes for a multitude of forms of social behavior. An adequate grouping of these processes must wait upon their explicit and extended use in comparative sociological research. At present they have begun to be grouped in the analysis of certain delimited areas of society, such as

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in the area of institutions where a cycle of institutionalization has been elaborated. A typical life cycle, or course of change, is postulated, by which institutions are established and take form.\(^1\) This is based upon increasing formalization of the relationships within a social group with the consequent development and elaboration of a new social structure. Study in this area is the study of the nascence of society. It is also primarily the point at which the fields of social organization and collective behavior merge in the attack upon a set of common problems. Groups exhibiting unorganized behavior, rooted in social unrest and collective excitement, may under certain conditions assume a somewhat permanent aspect. Their behavior tends to follow precedent, sets of rules and controls develop, and increasing formalization results in the elaboration of a new social structure which takes a recognized place in the established social order. In similar fashion collective bodies which originated in voluntary social organs. The end-product of the operation of these processes which are phases of interaction is the generalized process of organization. And at this point the analyses of structure and process merge in the contemplation of structured interaction—organized society.

The theory of social evolution advanced by Radcliffe-Brown (On Social Structure) is another use of processual analysis which subsumes and organizes a variety of processes under a master-process. In this case social evolution is seen as the process in which many social forms develop from a few prior ones and in which complex forms arise from simpler ones—in general, the process of emergency of new forms of structure.

\(^1\)Everett C. Hughes, *op. cit.*
The work of Max Weber on the problem of legitimation of authority and the routinization of charisma is a prime example of the use of processual analysis, (Parsons, Gerth and Mills), in this case of the recurrent processes through which societies maintain themselves.¹

And finally, the work of Park in the establishment of a "race relations cycle" indicates the scope and complexity of social events which may be analyzed in terms of the social process which are their moving forces.²

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN FIELDS

There are other points at which the fields of social organization and social psychology merge in these areas of analysis. One of the crucial processes for the establishment and maintenance of a society is the process of socialization—in which individuals are incorporated into their social-moral order. Intensification of our knowledge of the ways in which the biological individual becomes a social person through the process of socialization requires the continuing close collaboration of researchers in social psychology and social organization. In structural analysis there is also a close dependence between the fields of social psychology and social organization. Here, once the individual has been placed in a position within society, the effects of that position upon his behavior need to be studied. This study may be effected through the analysis of the behaviors demanded by the particular roles prescribed for the statuses the individual occupies. Studies of class-typed behavior and of the psychic pressures


on "marginal men" are examples of the researches in this area which involve both fields.

At many points there is an identity of interest and of problem in the fields of social organization and social anthropology. Both have addressed problems of the structure of society on a comparative basis. As social anthropology has sophisticated its interest in modern society it has effectively converged with the field of social organization which was in process of broadening its observations to include primitive societies. One of the recent effects of that convergence has been the frank interest and explicit use of the concept of "culture" within the field of social organization. Hitherto used solely by anthropology, the concept has been applied to the analysis of modern urban situations and researchers have treated social classes as "sub-cultures" in the analysis of patterns of child care, personality development, and, most recently, symbol systems.

**Foci of Inquiry.**—It is the purpose of this section to indicate the areas of empirical inquiry to which the field of social organization address itself. These specific areas of research interest arise from the background of theoretical considerations presented in the previous section of this research, and are listed under two headings: (a) Social Structure and Social Control, (b) Social and Cultural Processes.
The definitions and propositions which follow indicate the orders of phenomena and, consequently, the orders of problems dealt with in the section on Social Structure and Social Control.

Social Structure and Social Control are two facets of the social processes.

The social structure is the system of social relations which are, in a given society, the object and instrument of social control. In order to define social relation, however, one must take account of status. A status is one of the several standardized categories to which persons are assigned with reference to their relations with other persons. Statuses tend to be ranked, with reference to deference due, power and access to material goods. The system of ranks is what is meant by the term social stratification.

Social control refers, in its broadest sense, to any influencing of the behavior of people by virtue of their interaction with others. In a narrower sense, it refers to the development and enforcing of social rules. Social sanction refers to the enforcing and the subjective reinforcing of social rules by rewards and punishment. A social rule is a way of behaving accepted as right in certain situations, that is, in certain contingencies the people of various positions in the social structure are expected...
to behave in certain ways, accept certain responsibilities, etc.

The social structure and social control depend, for their existence and operation, upon a body of social values which are shared by the members of the society. Thus, in the completely ordered society, one would find consensus of beliefs supporting regulated differences of behavior of persons of various status positions in the social structure.

The social structure and social control come to a head in certain nuclei of social ruses governing the relations of people with reference to special activities or interests. These nuclei of regulated relations are called institutions. Each of them is a special mobilization of some or all of the people of the society for action or expression. Characteristically, there are specially named capacities or offices at the center of institutional activity. The incumbents of these special offices are selected in various ways, generally involving the status structure of the society.

Social anthropology and sociology "raise other problems than history (ethnology) and ethnography." They ask: What are the kinds of systems and subsystems (e.g., kin with territorial groups?) How are systems of social organization and social control maintained through time and under what conditions do they change? What needs of man, the cultural and biological animal, are satisfied by social systems? It is true, as Sumner said, that the mores can make anything right and anything wrong? From the diversities and uniformities of the social structures and rules of human societies, what basic principles can we gain which will help us to understand better the "essential and permanent" aspect of human society?

The social anthropologist has characteristically emphasized the study of the whole group, looking upon and analyzing the special parts as
to their place in the whole. Sociologists, generally studying in large societies in which the whole is harder to grasp and define, have been inclined to study separate institutions, selected territorial groups, or special problems. This difference may have been due to the fact that anthropologists began by studying primitive peoples, who ordinarily lived in small, relatively self-contained social units. The whole was easier to see than the parts within. The first empirical sociologists (not the early general sociologist such as Spencer, Comts, Simmel, et al.) studied the poverty stricken areas of cities. The whole society was immense and hard to comprehend while the parts with it seemed more discrete and observable. But these parts were too numerous for it to be hoped that they could all be studied in detail. Many of the problems of a comparative study of social systems can be solved only by drawing together these two basic methods. One methodological lead is the study of representative units within larger societies; these units are studied for discovery of (1) their operating structure and their culture, (2) their connections with and susceptibility to the larger society (e.g., Redfield, 1941; Warner and Lunt, 1941; Davis, Gardner and Gardner, 1941; etc.). Some social scientists insist that study of large societies will be sound only if the investigator has had experience in studying small, self-contained structures.

The problem of method is complicated by the fact that small self-contained societies are continually being drawn into relations with larger,}

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and the contrary, though limited, phenomenon of the formation of new structures within larger societies. The effects of these two processes upon social structures, social control, and upon the supporting body of sentiments and beliefs is a major problem of social science.

SOCIAL STRUCTURES

The local group.—In the simpler societies the local group is usually an informally organized foraging group (the Australian horde, the hunting bands in North America). In more complex non-literate societies it may be an agricultural, fishing or pastoral village with a local organization that sometimes has a clan, age-grade or political structure to hold it together. The local group may be an autonomous tribe or a subsidiary of a larger territorial group.

In still more complex societies, the local group tends to be subject to more and more contingencies of the larger society. The local group is less self-contained as to adjustment to physical environment, making a living, making and enforcing of social rules, as communication and symbolic life.

In both rural and urban parts of complex societies, there are many kinds of local group; ethnic, religious and social class. Consciousness of being part of a local group likewise varies, according to circumstances not yet fully understood. Within the same locality, some people may be acutely sensitive to local opinion, others indifferent. In rural parts of North America are many cultural enclaves in which there live people who maintain a highly local social system and culture—sects, ethnic remnants, "backward" elements, etc. (["Cajuns," Carolina "Brassankles," Adirondack, Vermont, and Southern "poor whites," River-bottom people, Piney-woods]
people, trappers, shepherds, etc.). In cities, are "natural areas" with strong local life, on the basis of common ethnic affiliation, common economic or social position.

In simpler societies, the questions about local groups have been (1) How are they organized internally and what are their external relations? (2) How is order maintained? (3) What is the relation of their economic behavior (foraging, etc.) and their social structure? What connections are there between density of population and local group, and of the two to the productivity of the territory?

About the more complex and territorially more extensive societies, one asks: In what respects is the local group relatively autonomous, and in what subject to contingencies of the larger society? What are the circumstances under which the processes by which the change from small local units to larger proceeds? By what processes of selective migration are the population of localities, rural and urban, recruited?

What differences are there in the processes of social control between local groups produced genetically and those recruited largely by adult migration? What typical kinds of local groups are found in cities, and what is the relation between them? Given the mobility of urban populations, to what extent do localities retain their social reality and by what processes?

The relation of small local groups to the national territory of ethnic groups, and of the territory of ethnic groups to politically organized territories presents problems more properly dealt with under political and governmental institutions.

The informal group.—The informal group is a loosely organized primary group. Its rules are more often implicitly understood than
explicitly stated. In fact, a condition of membership is often that the individual shall absorb and accept the rules without their ever having been expressly stated to him. In both simple and complex societies, "spontaneously" formed friendship groups are common. The clique, characteristic of more complex societies, after structured by age, sex, class, occupation, etc., plays a significant role in organizing the more intimate behavior of individuals within more formal organizations. The clique is often an "inner circle" of dominant and successful individuals in a professional or other occupational group. The "work team" and other informal groups are formed in industrial, business, educational and other formal organizations. The gang is a common form of age-sex informal loyalty group in cities, often associated with cultural change, poverty, etc.

In form, the gang is like the peer group of children of "respectable" neighborhoods. Children's and groups provide a situation in which young people learn the rules, values and beliefs of their culture or segment of a culture.

Many of the problems of society with elaborate formal substructures have to do with the relations of informal groups to the operation of the formal groups. Some contend that formal organizations are kept in equilibrium only by a system of informal interaction and informal groups within, and by informal relations between formal structures. One hypothesis is that people acting in formal offices and capacities cannot face all kinds of realities and hence some adjustments must be made informally (e.g., informal connections between police and criminals in all countries).

From this stems a fundamental problem: In what circumstances do informal groupings enliven and reinforce the formal organization and in what do they tend to disrupt formal and informal organizations? Is there
some sort of ideal balance between formal and informal organization? For instance, in the Roman Catholic Church, what degree of informal organization of the people is most conducive to successful operation of the formal organizational unit, the parish? Or, in industry, what measure of informal organization is conducive to most successful functioning in production and in labor-management relations?

**Family and kinship.**—The family is an interactive set of social relations which inter connect a number of statuses into a social unit. It is the only institution which combines the function of controlling sexual behavior for purposes of reproduction with that of organizing the development of the resulting offspring. Most individuals in most societies belong to two elementary families, the family of orientation which provides care and training for them during their immaturity, relates them to the larger world and establishes their status in the group and the family, and the family of procreation, in which the individual becomes a parent and is given the responsibility for the care and training of the young.1

Around the elementary family is the larger kinship system; kinship systems are composed of (1) a set of terms (2) which refer to statuses and the relations among them which (3) are related to a body of customary behavior and sentiments.

There are a number of kinship institutions including the clan, moiety (dual organization), phratry, lineage, section and sub-section. Although the family and extended kinship are world wide in their distribution the other systems of kinship are found in more limited areas.

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The study of the family and kinship has been concerned with a great variety of problems; some of them are (1) hypothetical reconstructions of the social history and evolution of these institutions, (2) reconstruction of the family and kinship and their institutions of two or more regions, (3) studying the observed historical changes in a system, (4) examining the adjustments of the family and kindred to the rest of a society.¹

With the problem of the larger family in mind some writers have studied the different statuses and relations within it particularly the husband-wife and parent-child reciprocals. The study of the parent-child relations has had the added interest of (1) learning how human organisms become socialized and autonomous beings and what the intimate dynamics are of cultural change and cultural constancy.

Kinship institutions such as the clan, moiety, phratry, lineage, section and sub-section, and gotra, have been studied cross-culturally to discover the principles operating in their organization or among older writers to reconstruct what men believed to be evolutionary levels.² The usages of kinship such as the soroate, Levirate, parent-in-law taboos and many others have given extensive study (1) distributionally for historical reconstruction and (2) analytically for social and psychological interpretations which include such concepts as "need"; biological satis-


factions, incest, fear, etc., and for social functions.¹

The family of contemporary society has had intensive study, particularly the American family. Some of the principal problems studied are (1) How have the forms and functions of the family shifted during the period of urbanization?² (2) What is the form and function of the ethnic family? (3) How the form and function of the ethnic family shift from one social level to another?³ (4) What happens to the personalities of people in a disorganized family?⁴ (5) How has the family changed from earlier to later periods in American history?⁵

Study of the contemporary family, however, remains weak on several crucial points. The actual device by which family lands are passed on from generation to generation among farming people are only now being studied. In this is involved a fundamental question: How and to what


is it possible to maintain a system of family agriculture in a highly commercial and industrial society?¹

The actual practices of mutual aid in families (parents and children, siblings) and among kin have not been studied in detail, except for very limited groups (ethnic sects, etc.). A crucial question is this: How do American people compromise between the urge for social and economic advancement and the various obligations to family and kin?

The role of ceremonial in the American family has likewise not been studied in any fundamental way.

**Formal groupings.**—The formal associations here referred to are those which do not ordinarily consist of all members of the local group or society, those which a person finds himself identified with involuntarily. Associations of this kind characteristically have explicit rules which govern entrance, continued affiliation and exit of members, and to govern some of their relations with outsiders. They are often secret, sometimes have political function, and in most if not all societies are related to age and sex divisions. Associations are more often found in the more complex societies.

The social functions of associations in a complex society as integrator of other institutions, and as an agency for and against social mobility in a status system have been studied by Warner and Lunt, Cayton and Drake, Max Weber; as a political instrument or an integrator of ethnic

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groups by these people, Wirth and others.¹

Societies differ greatly as to the areas of activity in which voluntary associations are permitted, or if permitted, are of importance.

Thus, the extreme protestant conception of religious organization is that of the voluntary association joined by the individual at puberty or later, and without reference to other status characteristics. This is in contrast with the usual complete integration of religious organization with kin and local group in primitive societies and with the Catholic and national conceptions of religious organization as something one is born into and something administered on a territorial basis. Hence, the question is what circumstances voluntary religious organization arises, and the conditions under which it is so maintained. Material pertinent to these questions is to be found in the history of sects, and religious movements. In this connection, Heterington and Muirhead say that an association is purely voluntary only at the moment of its inception.

STATUS, RANK AND STRATIFICATION

In all societies the membership is divided into formal or informal age and sex divisions which recognize at least the three major divisions of age, the immature, the mature, and the old, and sex divides them; often the age levels are redivided into a much larger number. These societies which have formal age grades possess rules of entrance, exit and occupancy for each grade and for the relations among them (Malanesia, Africa, etc.). Often the age grade provides the basic system of control

¹Warner and Lunt, op. cit.; Cayton and Drake, op. cit.; Gerth and Mills, from Max Weber, op. cit.; and Wirth, op. cit.
for the group. The symbolic rites marking the passage of an individual from one age level to another, called *rites de passage* (Van Gennep 1909) express the beliefs and values the group has about this change in individual's age status and about the modification of their relations of others with him as well as the feelings and beliefs the society has about what it means to be a man or woman. *Rites de passage* are most often associated with the crises of birth, puberty and death.

Ordinarily in formally age-graded societies men are superordinate to women and younger people are subordinate to older ones. In simpler societies the age levels cut across the whole membership, everyone and all of his or her activities are involved in the grading; in complex societies the definition of age and sex status may be limited to the confines of a particular institution and this definition of age and sex status may shift from one institution to another. The school in complex societies has taken over many of the functions of the age grade but most other institutions in this society are involved with ordering age relations. Special attention is being given to the "peer" groups of children and their effects on socialization of the child.

Social stratification, the common, but metaphorical terms used to apply to rank, is a type of system which places the members of a society in superordinate subordinate statuses. Statuses are evaluated as superior or inferior by the society. Some rank orders cross out the whole society, for they include everyone and the entire life of an individual, others are segmentary since they organize statuses in a vertical order but the behavior they control includes but part of the total social system and but part of any individual's life. Caste and class are systems of the former type and social hierarchies such as factories, church and associ-
Caste is an hereditary endogamous group which distributes the members of a society into superior and inferior levels; social mobility is impossible in such a rank order. Caste-like systems are found in India, East Africa, South Eastern India, and in the Deep South. The rules of marriage for class orders permit marriage within a class or outside it, above all status is not fixed, for social mobility, upward or downward, is possible within the system. Ordinarily there is a close relation between the economic position of a family (or person) and its class position.

Ethnic groups are often placed in superordinate and subordinate positions and sometimes develop sub-systems which are caste-like. (Some of the writers who have written on caste and class are Marx, Weber, Simmel, Myrdal, Dollard, Davis, Gardner and Gardner, Warner, etc.).

Societies vary greatly as to the relative importance of birth and personal achievement in determining the status and ranking of individuals. They also vary as to the sharpness of definition of the criteria by which individuals are ranked and the rules governing the relations of people of one rank to another.

An empirical question concerning our society, in which the status ranks are considered "open" is the actual extent to which this is so, and what are the ranks which tend to be closed? A more theoretical question is that of the manner in which closed ranks become more open, and open ones become relatively more closed.

\[1\] Weber, op. cit.; Simmel, op. cit.; Myrdal, op. cit.; Dollard, op. cit.; Davis, Gardner and Gardner, op. cit.; and Warner, op. cit.
Also, as ranks become more open it is probable that the criteria for admission and that the canons of proper conduct become confused. The social role of persons of confused status ranking is an important problem in this area; e.g., of the individual who, by one set of characteristics, may be expected to be accepted as one of status, but by another set, is assigned to a different status.

POLITICAL AND GOVERNMENTAL INSTITUTIONS

The state and the tribe (as a political unit) are usually the institutions which provide integration for the diverse institutions of a group ordinarily by having the power of applying sanctions to enforce the rules of the group; they also relate a territorial group to the peoples who surround it or with whom they have social relations. The state and tribe sometimes are the symbols used by individuals who belong to a particular society for identifying and socially placing themselves and thereby providing themselves with a set of beliefs and values of what they can or cannot do as members of a given state or tribe.

The tribe or state is composed of governing officials, with varying degrees of power and prestige, and ordinary members ("citizens"). The term tribe, when referring to simple societies often means no more than a linguistic (dialectic) territorial group with little or no organizational autonomy (Australia, Shoshone, etc.). The more complex nonliterate societies have tribal (state) systems running from simple organizations which function but part of a year (Plains) to elaborate hierarchies (West Africa, Inca, Mexico, the Iroquois Confederacy).

The study of the state and political institutions achieved early recognition as a separate science and has accumulated a large body of
theoretical literature about the nature of the state and its proper functions and its historical and prehistorical development. Some of this literature is important and significant for this course since the ideas advanced about the nature of men, society and politics have influenced contemporary sociology and social anthropology. Sociologists and social anthropologists have also theorized about governmental institutions including the state, tribe, party and their officials. The origin of the state is a problem that has interested many writers; some have considered such questions as the priority of the blood over the territorial tie.\(^1\) Others have viewed the state as a "natural" development out of such institutions as the association (Lowie), still others have looked at it as a product of conquest and social stratification.\(^2\)

Always involved with the theoretical problem about the nature and "proper" functions of the state are those connected with law and sanctions. Some writers have made law largely coterminous with custom (Malinowski 1934), etc.), others have argued that the law can only refer to rules in societies which have the sanctioning power and authority of a state back of them, (Pound),\(^3\) others hold an intermediate position saying that the law being "what the court says it is" and the court in non-governmental societies being the people, the ruler of such societies are laws so long as they are backed by the ultimate sanctions of group actions.\(^4\)


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