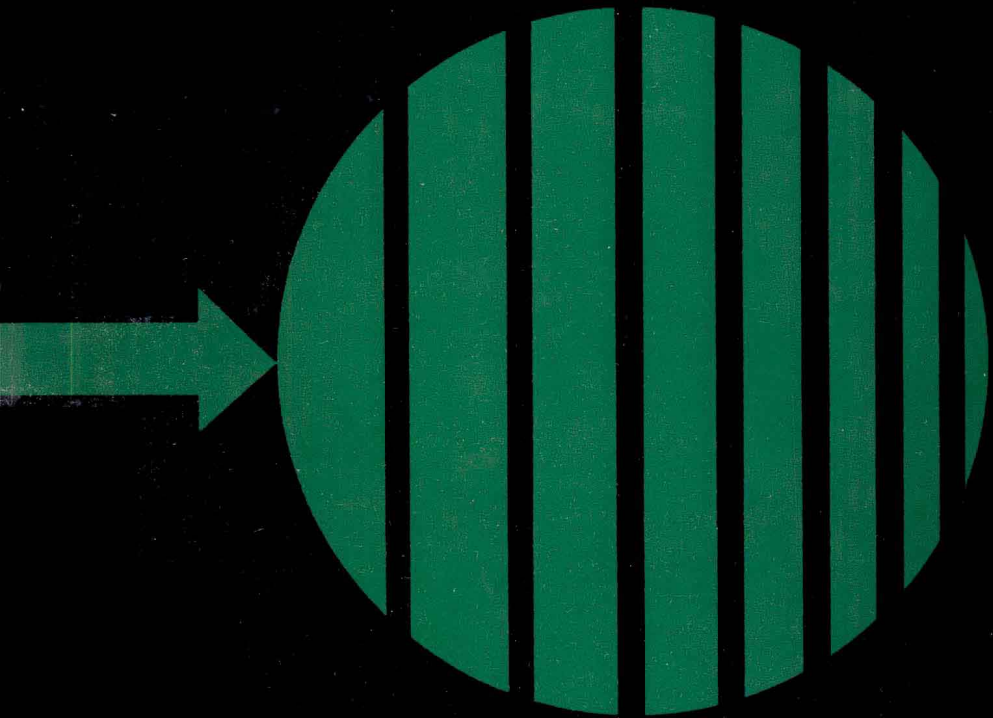


FOUNDATIONS OF MODERN SOCIOLOGY SERIES

social change

WILBERT E. MOORE



*To Pitirim A. Sorokin, longtime analyst
of the changeful qualities of social existence
and my sometime mentor in matters sociological.*

Prentice-Hall Foundations of Modern Sociology Series

Alex Inkeles, *Editor*

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preface

The discipline of thought to which scholars subject themselves can occasionally have odd results. The scientist that concentrates his attention on deeper understanding of a fairly narrow aspect of the universe thereby, and properly, neglects other aspects. It sometimes happens, however, that the conventional usages of a scientific field leave relatively untouched large areas of observation and potential generalization, areas that appear to be an important part of the field's charter. So it has been with the study of social change in the field of sociology, the social science that claims an interest in the most general features of social organization and social behavior.

Why this relative neglect has occurred is discussed early in this book. It is noted here in advance because the result has been odd: the ordinary intelligent layman, the person innocent of special training in social science, has seemed more acutely aware of changes in life's circumstances than have the "experts."

When Professor Alex Inkeles offered me the opportunity to participate in the Foundations of Sociology series by writing a short book on Social Change I accepted with enthusiasm. A very considerable period of work on industrialization and its associated changes had led me to a broader concern with social dynamics. Yet I too had been long subject to the discipline of thought in sociology that discouraged the study of change, and I had to seek ways of relating the realities of change to the more extensively documented realities of order,

structural regularities in social arrangements, and continuities. I have thus approached change as a *part* of the qualities of social systems rather than primarily as an alien and intrusive element.

Because the treatment of social dynamics in sociology does not have a well-established and conventional protocol, I prepared in advance of actual writing an extensive summary of the book for comment and criticism by others. In this connection I should like to thank certain otherwise innocent scholars who kept me from making a worse fool of myself in dealing with a subject where only fools rush in and authentic angels have not yet trod. These innocents, by name and in cautiously evasive alphabetical order, are Professors Harry H. Eckstein of Princeton University, Arnold S. Feldman of Northwestern University, and Norman B. Ryder of the University of Wisconsin.

Professor Inkeles, aforementioned, gave me the benefit of critical comments on the first draft of the manuscript. Mr. Mohammed Guessous, a graduate sociology student at Princeton, worked under my supervision and the auspices of the Social Science Research Council during the summer of 1962 on some aspects of the measurement of change, and his comments have also been valuable.

Whether my conviction of the importance of the strain between the ideal and the actual is borrowed from my colleague, Professor Marion J. Levy, Jr., or independently developed I cannot guess, since we share a common intellectual background, many theoretical interests, a common employer and department, graduate students, and mutual esteem.

By permission of the American Sociological Association I have drawn freely from my article "A Reconsideration of Theories of Social Change," published in the *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 25 (December 1960), pp. 810-815. I wish to thank the Association for this permission, and similarly thank the several other publishers who have permitted me to use short excerpts that are duly cited in footnote references.

Although acknowledging editorial suggestions by a publisher's employee appears to be rare, I do wish to express my gratitude for the exceptionally careful and creative work on the manuscript by Mr. Wilbur E. Mangas of Prentice-Hall. Editors sometimes appear to authors as "the enemy." I wish to record that I view Mr. Mangas as a true friend.

Though change is general, some things fortunately endure. Among these is the patience of my wife, Jeanne Yates Moore, including her willingness to continue typing the product of my rather active writing schedule.

Finally, and conventionally, I do accept complete responsibility for what is here presented, while secretly holding the view that my critics might share that responsibility just a little.

Wilbert E. Moore

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the normality of change

one

In these times scarcely a day passes without the newspaper and other mass media reporting a new or continuing crisis of grave international import in some little-known part of the world. The technology of communication and travel has, it is said, shrunk the size of the world. The politics of international tension have made that small world a dangerous place for human habitation.

The pace of change in general, and particularly the rate at which the world is becoming a single though highly disordered system, gives a kind of urgency to the notion that crisis is the ordinary state of affairs. It would be silly to argue that the contemporary condition of constant crisis is historically "normal," that men have "always" lived out their lives in a state of uncertainty not essentially different from the situation in which we find ourselves today. The contemporary world is more hazardous than the past, and the hazards affect more people. Social change, on the other hand, is not a uniquely modern phenomenon. Some kinds and degrees of change are universal in human experience. The speed of contemporary change is not totally illusory but it can be exaggerated, as when we pass a much slower-moving auto on the road and it seems to be standing still.

The Contemporary Chaos

By any crude measurement, the contemporary world appears to be changing more rapidly than at any time in human history, particularly if we accept an arbitrary division and define the contemporary period as the twentieth century. In fact, the early part of the century looks rather placid by comparison with the last two decades. Unless our vision is simply myopic and distorted, this strongly suggests that the rate of change is accelerating. And so it is.

This allegation is tenable only if the world setting is underscored. Wars and conquests, natural disaster, and social upheavals have occurred from time to time and here or there throughout recorded history, and there is no reason to suppose that prehistoric or non-literate peoples were exempt from radical dislocations. But in the modern world social change has taken on some special qualities and magnitudes.

Characteristics of Contemporary Change

The peculiar features of contemporary change may be summarized by a set of generalizations:

1. For any given society or culture rapid change occurs frequently or "constantly."
2. Changes are neither temporally nor spatially isolated—that is changes occur in sequential chains rather than as "temporary" crises followed by quiet periods of reconstruction, and the consequences tend to reverberate through entire regions or virtually the entire world.
3. Thus, since contemporary change is probable "everywhere" and its consequences may be significant "everywhere," it has a dual basis.
4. The proportion of contemporary change that is either planned or issues from the secondary consequences of deliberate innovations is much higher than in former times.
5. Accordingly, the range of material technology and social strategies is expanding rapidly and its net effect is additive or cumulative despite the relatively rapid obsolescence of some procedures.
6. The normal occurrence of change affects a wider range of individual experience and functional aspects of societies in the modern world—not because such societies are in all respects more "integrated" but because virtually no feature of life is exempt from the expectation or normality of change.

*Some Elements
of Predictability and Uncertainty*

The word "chaos" in our heading should not be taken too literally. Many features of social life persist from day to day and even from year to year. In terms of these *persistent patterns of action*, tomorrow will be about the same as today and yesterday, and next year will be about the same as this year and last. Many other features change, but in an orderly and thus fairly predictable way and amount. For these *trends* tomorrow will differ from today in about the degree that today differed from yesterday, and next year can be expected to prolong the trend established by previous annual comparisons. Some other elements of the future are predictable because the changes will be the product of *plans*, of deliberate intent and action. Even very rapid and complex changes have sources and consequences that are delimited rather than random, and therefore may be understood and predicted.

Yet if the contemporary world is not uniformly chaotic, there are complexities in social change that are likely to manifest themselves as *tensions* and *strains*. Persistent patterns in one field of action may eventually collide with trends in another—for example, the persistent pattern that impels nearly everyone to go to work at the same hour in the morning may be increasingly inconsistent with urban growth, the resulting strains being reflected in overloaded transportation facilities and traffic congestion. Trends that are relatively impervious to attempts to alter them may offset deliberate planning—for example, trends in birth rates may be out of phase with respect to plans for improving schools. Slow and simple changes may intersect with rapid and complex transformations—for example, the steady rate of economic growth through private investment may be inadequate to meet sudden and complex changes in national defense needs and foreign-aid policies.

Strains thus arise from lack of *synchronization* of types and rates of change. Uncertainty and lack of precise predicability arise from the *complexity of dynamic patterns*—that is, from a rather large "error" factor owing to the number of interplay of uncontrolled variables. The difficulty is in some measure intrinsic to the kinds of actions and events, of patterns and their alterations, with which we are dealing, for all science deals with standardized interrelations, with recurrent sequences, and has only a very limited capacity to predict unique combinations and events. An astronomer can predict the orderly relations among planets in a solar system, and the relations among such systems in a galaxy, but not the occurrence of a stellar explosion. Even variations in solar radiation are not precisely cyclical with regard to the earthly calculations of years, which is based precisely on another characteristic of the system, the orderly recurrence of the earth's

migration around the sun. A physicist can formulate the general principle of gravitation, but cannot predict the behavior of a single atom. In order to forecast atomic behavior, he requires statistical probabilities based on large numbers. A human geneticist, by knowing the hereditary characteristics of an unborn child's parents and ancestors, can predict with some probability certain genetic traits and with fair confidence rule out others, but would not even consider an attempt to forecast the child's adult appearance or, for that matter with the current state of knowledge, its sex.

The Quest for Dynamic Laws

Part of the difficulty in predicting social change, however, is not intrinsic and ultimate, of a piece with "chance" events throughout nature and universe, but arises from ignorance of the possibly knowable. The reduction of ignorance and the consequent capacity to predict, if not control, the concatenation of events depend on careful observation and speculative thought, on continuous effort to bring order out of seeming chaos.

Because by definition the observation of change takes time, and because the complex interplay of factors requires a rather elaborate "intellectual model" for analysis, all scientific fields first develop an understanding of simple, *static* relationships. These relationships rest on coexistences repeatedly observed, but with each observation essentially photographic or "cross-sectional." Dynamic models and laws require knowledge of sequences of cause and effect in a temporal order. Simple and short-term relationships tend to be established before complex and long-term ones, and relationships observed under controlled, experimental conditions to precede relationships that occur "in nature."

Some of the nuances with respect to "static" and "dynamic" principles can be illustrated from the study of astronomy. Many carefully recorded observations, plus the integrative capacity of several brilliant theoretical minds, went into the theory that explains the orderly interdependence and movement of planets of our solar system.¹ Yet that system is essentially "functional," the cycles neatly recurrent and the longest one requiring only a few earth-years to run its course. The impressive manner in which scientists predicted the position of unseen planets was, however, a static prediction, based on the characteristics of the visible system and "necessary" in order to complete an orderly picture of its operation. A truly dynamic theory of the solar system, to say nothing of the universe, is very much lacking. That is to say, there is no commonly accepted and moderately verifiable formulation that is concerned with changes in the system itself, its history, and its destiny.

¹ Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Copernican Revolution* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957).

The evolution of our contemporary scientific understanding of the solar system occurred over many centuries,² but that passage of time is somewhat misleading. Prior to Newton's time astronomers devoted relatively little time to observations of the solar system or to formulating observationally based theories about it. Today, however, we allocate time and resources freely to the pursuit of increased knowledge. Although time can never be a long-run substitute for intelligence, there is some prospect that both time and intelligence will now and in the future be devoted to the subjects of theoretical as well as practical interest, including the course of man's own changing destiny.

The present, then, is characterized by a much greater degree of change than was the past, and some of the changes in magnitude—for example, in the emphasis now placed on problem solving and planning—are so great as to suggest changes in kind. The distinction is not terribly important, for novelty is rarely rootless and total, exhibiting no elements of continuity with antecedent conditions. And social change as such is not a peculiarly modern phenomenon. It is the intent of this book to underscore the normality of change as well as its special contemporary characteristics and magnitudes, to explore causes and directions, and to establish such a measure of understandable order as our present knowledge and thinking permit.

Order and Change

Many of the significant components of man's social existence are persistent even if examined over considerable periods of time. The daily, weekly, and annual schedules of man's activities show a remarkable consistency, as do the forms and patterns that deal with life's major events, such as birth, marriage, and death. The persistence of patterns gives order and constancy to recurrent events. In terms of behavior, many elements of persistence are more nearly cyclical, the near repetition of sequences of action over various time periods.³ If we analyze these, we see that even order is marked by change from moment to moment, and persistence is the characteristic of the pattern, of the *system* of action, but not of single actions. Other elements of persistence are not so narrowly timed, but are exhibited "on occasion," such as the prescribed rational and ritual procedures attendant on transitions in life-stages. These patterns are marked by two components of change: the moment-to-moment sequence of prescribed actions, and the differences in behavior before and after the transition. Yet still the pattern persists.

We come therefore to an important distinction: that between mere

² *Ibid.*

³ See Wilbert E. Moore, *Man, Time, and Society* (New York: Wiley, 1963), Chap. 2, "The Temporal Location of Activities."

sequences of small actions, that in sum essentially *comprise the pattern*, the system, and *changes in the system itself*, in the magnitude or the boundaries, in the prescriptions for action, in the relation of the particular system to its environment.

This is a distinction that may have to be made more than once in any analysis of order and change, since the system that is the focus of attention may be very simple or extremely complex. The concept of “system” is applicable to any situation in which units are interrelated long enough or regularly enough to be observed. A social system requires that the units be persons—more properly, *actors* or *role-players*—whose interaction is governed by rules or *norms*. Particular systems may be organized as groups, which then take on such additional characteristics as collective goals or *values*. The units of larger systems may in fact be aggregates of actors who thus constitute sub-systems. And here is the source of the difficulty in analyzing order and change or any other characteristic of patterned behavior: Care must be taken to identify the system that is under analysis, for like Joshua’s vision there are wheels within wheels. We are not told of that vision whether the wheels were connected and synchronized, but we do know that in complex systems the parts often have considerable autonomy and independent variability.

The persistent and repetitive character of many aspects of social behavior gives a kind of “static predictability” to human life and thus makes it tolerable. There appear to be psychological limits to people’s tolerance for chaos—and, incidentally, limits to their tolerance for endless repetition.⁴

Orderly persistence and the “systemic” qualities of life in human aggregates are also significant for a broad area of social science. A great deal of sociological (or economic or political) theory is based on answers to the question, What patterns of action coexist and how are they inter-related? Such “static” propositions are by no means inconsequential. Indeed it is doubtful that the understanding of change, detecting orderly properties in the transformations of behavior patterns or social structures, would be possible without an underlying basis of persistence and regularity.

Backgrounds of Contemporary Theory

Many earlier theories of society that claimed to be scientific were in fact theories of change. They sought to explain the present in terms of the past. Comte,⁵ the French sociologist who coined the term “sociology,” saw civilization as starting with a “theological” stage

⁴ Sylvan Tomkins, *Affect-Imagery-Consciousness*, Vol. I (New York: Springer, 1962), Chap. 3, “Amplification, Attention, and Affects.”

⁵ Auguste Comte, *Cours de Philosophie Positive* (Paris: Rouen, 1830–1842).

in which the explanations of all things and events were supernatural, passing through a “metaphysical” stage in which abstract conceptions and reasons were the basic explanatory principles, and finally reaching a “positivistic” stage in which both nature and society would be understood and ordered on the basis of scientific study.

Following the publication of Darwin’s revolutionary idea of biological evolution, the notion of extending evolutionary principles to account for changes in societies and differentiation among them became very popular, with the British anthropologists and sociologists Morgan,⁶ Tyler,⁷ and Spencer⁸ enjoying a substantial influence. Yet the social evolutionists fell out of favor rather rapidly, in part because they tried to order the extreme diversity of contemporary non-literate and advanced societies into a single evolutionary scale according to stages. Moreover, most of their evidence was either contemporary and essentially cross-sectional, or even if historical, the period represented was relatively short in evolutionary terms.

Once the notion that contemporary “primitive” societies could be taken as equivalent to early stages of “civilized” societies was seriously challenged, the evidence for long-term evolutionary change of particular societies or cultures became extremely thin. Archaeology had not then (in the late nineteenth century), and has not yet, provided a very extensive prehistoric base for social change, and it is unlikely to do so in any direct way. The essential features of social systems—patterns of action and constellations of beliefs and rules of conduct—are not such as to leave archaeological remains. They must be inferred from remnants of so-called material culture: tools, containers, and weapons; types of dwellings; evidences of use of fire; and perhaps kinds of food. Reconstructing cultures or societies from pottery shards and flakes of flint paradoxically requires reading backward from contemporary or historically recorded evidence concerning the kinds of social structures likely to be associated with particular material products of human action.

Early in the century some scholars⁹ began to advocate abandoning the “fruitless quest for origins,” on grounds that were essentially what would now be called “functionalistic”; that is, that social behavior and various items of culture could be understood only within their setting or context, and not by the vain attempt to seek their first appearance.

Although the systemic qualities of social life were not denied nor totally neglected by earlier theorists, it remained for such functionalists as

⁶ Lewis Henry Morgan, *Ancient Society* (New York: Holt, 1877).

⁷ Edward B. Tyler, *Primitive Culture*, 3rd American ed. (New York: Holt, 1889).

⁸ Herbert Spencer, *First Principles* (New York: Appleton, 1890); also his *Principles of Sociology*, 3 vols. (New York: Appleton, 1898–1899).

⁹ Albion W. Small, for example, in articles in the early volumes of the *American Journal of Sociology*.

Radcliffe-Brown¹⁰ and Malinowski,¹¹ both British social anthropologists, to formalize certain methodological assumptions into a kind of doctrine. One of the most significant of these assumptions was that any item or component of the system (say a society or culture) could be explained in terms of the system as a whole. Thus, to take a seemingly trivial but actually fairly challenging example, the buttons on men's jacket sleeves should not be explained by tracing their origin to the fastening of armored gauntlets in Medieval Europe but simply in terms of the functions of conventional style. The notion of a "survival" of a functionless form was rejected and replaced by the notion that forms would survive only if they were related to the system's operation.

The Amendment of Functional Theories

As some of the functionalist assumptions were more fully developed and made more explicit they began to be challenged and amended,¹² and in some cases extended. These challenges and modifications deserve notice for the important bearing they have had on the problems of social change.

The functionalist assumption that has been most severely challenged but that still exhibits a hardy power of survival in one form or another involves the "integration" of social systems. In its most extreme form, rarely if ever openly espoused as a serious scientific generalization, the assumption could be expressed as "what is, must be." Criticized by Professor Pitirim Sorokin as "functional teleology,"¹³ this notion that "everything works out for the best in the best of all possible worlds" has been generally rejected, with theoretically important results:

1. Social systems, and particularly large-scale ones such as entire societies, exhibit possible discordant elements.

2. Thus the relation of an element to a system is not necessarily "eufunctional"; that is, it does not necessarily contribute to the continuity or survival of the system. It may be "dysfunctional"; that is, it may contribute to the disruption or eventual destruction of the system.¹⁴ It is, indeed, even possible that an element within a system may have no significant consequences.

3. Because of uncertain but latent relations within systems, particular

¹⁰ A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, *Structure and Function in Primitive Society* (London: Cohen, 1952).

¹¹ Bronislaw Malinowski, "Culture," in *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* (New York: Macmillan, 1930). (Vol. IV in 1930 ed.; Vol. II in 1937 ed.)

¹² See Robert K. Merton, "Manifest and Latent Functions," in his *Social Theory and Social Structure*, rev. ed. (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1957), Chap. 1.

¹³ For reference to Sorokin's criticism, see Marion J. Levy, Jr., *The Structure of Society* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952), pp. 52-53.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

elements may be eufunctional for part of the system and disfunctional for the over-all system. For example, the code of "honor among thieves" serves professional criminals better than it does the maintenance of a society's legal codes.

4. The relation between form and function is neither random nor precise. The principle of "structural suitability" is always subject to a possible modification in terms of "structural substitutability." For example, utility does not demand that men's jackets come adorned with buttons. Less trivially, an industrialized economy does not *require* a parliamentary democracy.

5. The fact of survival provides an inferential, but not conclusive, test of suitability in view of the possible looseness and discontinuities of social systems.

From Functionalism to Dynamics

The introduction of the idea that elements of social systems had "survival value" for the system had interesting and important consequences. Implicitly at least the idea of survival indicated that some form of selectivity occurred, with disfunctional or irrelevant patterns being dropped and useful patterns persisting. Since such selectivity could only take place over a considerable span of time, systems must change through time. Thus a seemingly static theory became in fact a dynamic one.

Functionalism has been extended to the attempt to identify the "functional requisites of any society."¹⁵ By this view certain kinds of social action—for example, legitimate reproduction, socialization of the young in terms of both education and acceptance of moral precepts and maintenance of order—must be performed if any society is going to operate as a system and persist through time. The functional requisites provide a key to the *common* structural features of society, since the patterns of action and forms of social organization must be suitable. Thus functionalism in this form provides the basis of essentially static generalizations about human societies. This approach, however, also reintroduces an implicitly evolutionary notion, since the presumption is that various social systems have failed to persist for want of some requisite function.

Yet most sociological propositions are relational or correlational. The fact that sociologists have directed their attention primarily to the orderly characteristics of social systems has had the unnecessary but real consequence of distracting their interest from intrinsic sources of change. Thus change in the sense of alterations in systems rather than repetitive sequences is often viewed as an unexplained external variable, significant only in its systemic consequences. The view that society is comprised of

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, Chap. 4.

functionally interdependent units provides, of course, an excellent basis for an orderly and coherent analysis and account of the result of given changes. It does not always provide an adequate basis for predicting change, or even for explaining it in a general or "lawful" and not simply historical or unique way.¹⁶

Some of the potential mischief derives from the concept of a social system as in "equilibrium"—that is, in a steady state owing to the balance of complementary forces. Now an equilibrium model can be as useful as any theoretical tool that asks how "nature" would look if it followed the characteristics of the artificially created order. All analytical sciences use such models, for they afford investigators a way of abstracting and generalizing, a way of selecting relevant phenomena from the irrelevant. Yet all models provoke some questions and inhibit others, and the inhibited questions may also be interesting from other points of view.

The equilibrium version of systems analysis either forecloses questions about the sources of change, or if discordant internal elements are brought into the analysis, the theoretical model will predict one direction of change, and one only—change that restores the system to a steady state.

Social systems do indeed exhibit persistent patterns and complementary functions. Specialization, for example, "requires" coordinating differentiated activities, including some way of exchanging goods or services among the specialized producers. An equilibrium model is perfectly appropriate for the kind of generalized statement about the interdependence of structural variables (specialization, coordination, exchange) that we have just made. It would be impossible from such a model to predict an initial change in any of the variables. If such a change were observed, or imagined for purposes of theoretical analysis, the model would predict only such other complementary changes as would restore the equilibrium.

*Society as a Tension-Management System*¹⁷

The view of society as a tension-management rather than as a self-equilibrating system has distinct advantages in making both order and change problematical, but also "normal." Tensions—or inconsistencies and strains, if the word "tensions" is too subjective or has too psychological a connotation—are intrinsic to social systems, not simply accidental accompaniments or the product of changes that impinge on the system from external sources. Once the tensions characteristic of all or of particular types of social systems are identified, they are predicted to be

¹⁶ See Wilbert E. Moore, "A Reconsideration of Theories of Social Change," *American Sociological Review* (December 1960), 25: 810–818.

¹⁷ See Wilbert E. Moore and Arnold S. Feldman, "Society as a Tension-Management System," in George Baker and Leonard S. Cottrell, Jr. (eds.), *Behavioral Science and Civil Defense Disaster Research Group*, Study No. 16 (Washington: National Academy of Sciences, National Research Council, 1962), pp. 93–105.

the probable sites of change. Now, as an equilibrium model would indicate, the predicted change may well reduce the strain. And the postulate that social action is interconnected—that it is to be analyzed in terms of a system—permits hypotheses to be formulated concerning the effects of particular changes, the secondary consequences, including those that come full circle and make additional alterations in the original tension point. Yet the theoretical tension-management model differs from the presumption of equilibrium in several significant respects:

1. To the degree that at least some tensions are really intrinsic, and not simply organizational problems that can be readily resolved, the predicted change will neither restore an equilibrium or static state nor create a new one.

2. The consequences of change will almost certainly be tension-producing as well as possibly tension-reducing.

3. The use of the term “tension” does not imply that change will initially reduce tension. For some sequential analyses it may be appropriate to identify or predict tension-producing changes rather than change-producing tensions, not to evade the postulate of intrinsic tensions, but rather to take into account the necessity for a starting point and the frequent desirability of “getting particular,” of making rather specific predictions rather than highly general ones. For example, there is an intrinsic tension between any social system that endures beyond the lifetime of its members or the age limits of membership, and the system’s mode of recruiting new members. Here, then, is a likely place to look for change. The analysis may begin, however, by identifying a change in the number or qualities of recruits and then predicting the tensions that the change can be expected to produce.

4. The conception of society (or any social structure) as a tension-management system involves no presumption at all that the management is “successful,” or that the system as identified in fact persists, or even that it will last long enough to permit us to speak of “transitions” from one system to another. The probability of any of those things happening can be determined only by identifying the system and the variables that will determine the course of its change. One possible course may be destruction.

The Ubiquity of Change

Once we have arrived at the point where we can speak systematically about social change, where we can regard at least some of the changes in people’s lives, in groups, and in entire societies as possibly regular or lawful, then we can see change virtually everywhere we turn. Of course this situation comes about in part because of the especially changeful character of the contemporary world. But if we ask of historical