

VILFREDO PARETO

THE MIND AND SOCIETY

A TREATISE

ON GENERAL SOCIOLOGY

TRANSLATED BY
ANDREW BONGIORNO AND ARTHUR LIVINGSTON
WITH THE ADVICE AND ACTIVE COOPERATION OF
JAMES HARVEY ROGERS.
EDITED BY ARTHUR LIVINGSTON

FOUR VOLUMES BOUND AS TWO
VOLUME ONE: NON - LOGICAL CONDUCT

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项目策划 张自文 任建成

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Editor's Note

Vilfredo Pareto's *Trattato di Sociologia generale* appears in this English edition as the realization of dreams and efforts that extend over fifteen years. My first moves towards the introduction of this work to the English-speaking world go back to 1920 and they were successful in the sense that from that date an eventual publication of the *Trattato* in English in some form or other was assured. I had published what I believe to be the first American note on Pareto November 25, 1915 (*Nation*), and the second in 1916 (*International Year Book*). These two articles were anterior to Professor Robinson's now famous footnote on Pareto in his *Mind in the Making*, 1921. I reviewed Pareto's *Trasformazione della democrazia*, with allusions to the *Trattato* in the *New York Herald*, April 19, 1922, and gave what I believe to have been the first American course on the *Trattato* in Will Durant's Labor College in New York in the autumn of that same year. I introduced Pareto for the first time to large audiences at meetings of the Foreign Policy Association in New York in December, 1923, and in Philadelphia, January, 1924, and lectured on him again at Columbia in the summer of 1924 and during the spring of 1925. An article called "The Myth of Good English" which I published in *Century*, August, 1925, and which Edward Valentine Mitchell, of Hartford, included in his *Essays of 1925*, made explicit reference to Pareto's theory of group-persistences. Disregarding the much writing and lecturing that I did on Pareto between 1925 and 1930, I will note that an article I published in *Nation*, May, 1926, in view of a certain resonance that it chanced to obtain in the West, I at the time regarded and still regard as the beginning of the Pareto vogue in America. To summarize, and saving correction, the enterprise that finds its completion in these volumes was at least five years old at the time of the opening of Professor Henderson's epoch-making seminar in Harvard; eight years old when Mr. Aldous Huxley first called public attention to Pareto in England; thirteen years old at the

time when the Pareto vogue burst upon us in full force as the result of Mr. Canby's notes in the *Saturday Review of Literature*, and of Mr. DeVoto's brilliant, spirited and effective campaign in that same review and in *Harper's*, 1933.

I must beg the reader's forgiveness for mentioning these facts just here in this form. I do so only because a voluminous Pareto literature already exists in which they are differently, and sometimes fantastically, recounted.

This enterprise in publishing has been promoted since 1920 on the assumption that there is no priesthood of learning from which the profane are to be forever excluded by reticence on the part of those who know. It is my faith, which I assert as a faith, and perhaps *quia absurdum*, that the general public is interested, and has an interest, in objective thinking apart from sentiment, and in the methods by which the rational state of mind can be cultivated in the face of the countless pitfalls that environment, temperament, the struggle for life, strew in our way. I believe—again an act of faith—that the work that is here offered to the public is the greatest and noblest effort in that direction to which literary history can point.

That faith betrays itself, to the extent of the capacities of four words, in the title which I have ventured to give this work in preference to the original title. I am aware that there are other points of view from which Pareto's masterpiece may be envisaged (I even share some of them) and for which the original title would better serve. But from the outset the chief purpose in this enterprise has been to make the *Trattato* accessible to the general public to which it belongs. I have called it "The Mind and Society" because it illumines the whole relation of thought to conduct, and of thought to sentiment, and the relation of the individual in all his mental processes to the society in which he lives. That particular stress may not reflect Pareto's original stress and intent. It certainly represents his objective achievement.

This edition is a reproduction without any abbreviations or omissions of the last, the 1923, edition of the *Trattato* in its Italian

original. One or two explanations will be in point, however.

The division into volumes is quite arbitrary and is based on typographical considerations only. The Italian original is in three volumes. M. Boven's French translation is in two. The larger units in the treatise are the chapters. The smaller unit is the paragraph, for which I retain a peculiar system of numbering that Pareto used, with one variation or another, in many of his writings. Strange as it may appear to the general reader this device justifies itself once one reflects that the inductive and deductive portions of the exposition are closely related, that the theory is built up systematically like an architectural structure in which the parts are all mutually explanatory and where a cross-reference is now and again most useful.

Pareto first expounded the subject matter of these volumes in the form of lectures that were delivered orally and taken down stenographically. Many traces of that origin survive in the body of the printed Italian text. In this translation I eliminate them. Pareto also makes frequent remarks as to the mechanism of his book or as to his manner of developing his thought. Such comments I regularly throw into footnotes, and in so doing I merely generalize a device that Pareto used to an extent himself. Pareto's original contains a number of repetitions. These too I eliminate, barring exception, inserting cross-references if anything is to be gained by them. In cases where substantial departures from Pareto's text are made, I warn and explain in footnotes.

There has been some public speculation of late as to the whys and wherefores of the many delays that have occurred in the appearance of "The Mind and Society." As a venture in publishing this enterprise has been replete with surprises, difficulties, paradoxes, from its very inception fifteen years ago. As a bookmaking enterprise it has consumed some 9,000 hours of my personal toil spread over the last five years. Nearly half of that has gone into editing the bibliographical material in the notes. Unimportant, from any ordinary point of view, as such problems were, it really seemed that if, in a spirit of textual fidelity, one were compelled to reprint

on possible misprints, they should prove useful to readers who may care to see ampler contexts of interesting quotations either in the originals from which they were taken or in standard translations. Where Pareto quotes from English writers the originals are, of course, restored.

In solving these thousands of bibliographical problems, finding these hundreds of books, identifying exact references, correcting texts on the originals and checking the translations, I would still be nowhere save for the devoted assistance of Mr. Charles H. Tutt and Miss Elisabeth Abbott, to whom I must extend my sincerest appreciation for their rapid, accurate and ingenious researches on hundreds of points. I must also thank Miss Abbott for her painstaking work in twice copying and proofreading my manuscript; Mr. Gaudence Megaro for valuable researches on a number of points, and the indispensable Miss Isabel Lord for the relentless war she has waged (and doubtless could still wage) on my typographical and other inconsistencies. Presuming to speak now in behalf of Paretan studies in America, I would still have to add many words of appreciation for two gentlemen whose names a code of ethics, which they perhaps too rigorously enforce, keeps from appearing in this note. Their diplomacy and courage have helped this enterprise over many barriers that without them would truly have seemed insuperable. It is with deep regret that I find myself restricted to this indirect allusion.

Another regret is that this edition must go to press without a critical introduction to Pareto from some outstanding American scholar. Pareto, however, was most averse to any introduction that should attempt to summarize, epitomize or otherwise interpret his thought. He left directions covering the point with his heirs and the prohibition was included formally in our agreement with them.

ARTHUR LIVINGSTON

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Biographical Note

Vilfredo Federico Damaso Pareto was born in Paris, July 15, 1848. He died at Céligny, near Geneva, Switzerland, August 19, 1923. His birth in Paris was incidental, though his mother was a Frenchwoman, Marie Mettenier, and his father, the Marquis Raffaele Pareto, had become a naturalized French citizen. The Paretos were Genoese, and since the days when Napoleon Bonaparte conferred a coronet on Vilfredo Pareto's grandfather, Agostino, the family had been distinguished as conspirators in the cause of Italian independence, and as statesmen. Furious Liberals and Mazzinians, they fought for Italy against Austria and for an Italian republic against Cavour and the monarchists. The Marquis Agostino represented the Republic of Genoa at Vienna in 1815. The Marquis Lorenzo, an uncle of Vilfredo, was involved in the conspiracy of Santarosa, went on to ministerial honors under Charles Albert of Savoy, and was President of the Italian Senate under Victor Emmanuel II. In 1856 an aunt by marriage of Pareto's, an Irishwoman, hid Mazzini in her house and sewed him into a mattress when the police came to arrest him. The Marquis Raffaele himself was in exile in Paris at the time of Vilfredo's birth.

Before the Corsican adventurer made nobles of the Paretos, the family had for generations been prominent in the mercantile bourgeoisie of Genoa. Actually Paretos are numerous all along the two Rivas into Catalonia. A Bartolommeo Pareto was famous as an astronomer in Catalonia in the days of Columbus.

Vilfredo Pareto left Paris for Turin when he was eleven years old, his father, who was an engineer of note, having accepted a post in the railways under the first great administrator of the new Italy, Quintino Sella. The young man seemed to have inherited his father's talents as a mathematician, but he was just as brilliant in the classics and in history. He completed his elementary education at Turin and graduated from the celebrated Polytechnic Institute in that city at the age of twenty-two. His dissertation dealt with

"the index functions of equilibrium in solid bodies." Adepts in mysteries of that sort recognized already in that treatise the germ that was to produce such wonders as Note 2022¹ in the treatise hereafter following.

Faced with the problem of a career, Pareto followed his father through the famous Breach in Porta Pia into a post in the railways at Rome. He was to work four years as a consulting engineer in the new capital of the kingdom. In 1874 he passed into the employ of the Banca Nazionale of Florence, which selected him as general superintendent of three iron mines that it owned in the Valley of the Arno. He held this post for six years. They were the critical years of his career. As a manager of an important business enterprise he was drawn into the question of free-trade and protection and first began to interest himself in economic questions. On the theoretical side he became impressed with the fact that there was a great deal of "literature" and very little "science" in the political economy that was practised and especially preached in those days. On the practical side he became disgusted with the restraints that a government puts upon free initiative when bureaucracy begins to regulate and manage business. He stood for parliament for the district of Pistoia on the free-trade platform and was defeated.

In Florence during these years he made decisive friendships—Domenico Comparetti, the revered and greatly beloved author of *Virgil in the Middle Ages*, Arturo Linacher, a learned classicist, Sydney Sonnino, the statesman, Giustino Fortunato, the biographer of Giordano Bruno. They were all members of a company of brilliant minds that foregathered in the salon of Emilia Toscanelli-Peruzzi, one of the most charming hostesses of that era in the life of Florence. At this time, too, Pareto fell under the spell of Auguste Comte's writings, and began seriously to ponder the problems of scientific sociology. On his father's death in '82, his mother came to live with him and he retired with her and his wife—for he was now married—on the small competence that was left him, to Villa Rosa in Fiesole, with the idea of preparing himself for a professorship in economics. For twelve years he knocked in vain at the doors of academic Italy, though the papers he read before the Academy

of the Georgiofili attracted wide attention. His great friend during this period was the economist, Maffeo Pantaleoni, who figured in the next decisive change in Pareto's life. Pareto had had a poor opinion of Léon Walras, the great Swiss economist. Pantaleoni not only opened Pareto's eyes to the merits of Walras but opened the eyes of Walras to the merits of Pareto. Invited to nominate his own successor to the chair of political economy at Lausanne in 1894, Walras designated Pareto.

Pareto bade farewell to his country with a certain bitterness, which manifested itself in a consistent scorn for such honors as, in the days of his greatness, it would willingly have accorded him. Already he had conceived that utter contempt for plutocratic democracy which finds its completest expression in "The Mind and Society." He was convinced that ten men of courage could at any time march on Rome and put the band of "speculators" that were filling their pockets and ruining Italy to flight. During the great years in Switzerland he scanned the heavens continually for any signs of the certain cataclysm, and thought he saw them, now in 1904 when the Czar's visit to Italy was cancelled in deference to a Socialist protest, now in 1914 when all northern Italy rushed into the wild orgies of the "Red Week." When, in 1922, the unspeakable Facta was frightened by the March on Rome into one of the most abject surrenders known to history, Pareto was able to rise from a sick-bed and utter a triumphant "I told you so!"—the bitter exultance of the justified prophet, not the assertion, and by far, of a wish.

As the "Socialist Systems" followed on the Cours and the Manuale on the "Socialist Systems," Pareto moved to the forefront in social science in Europe as one of the founders, if not the founder, of mathematical economics and of mathematical sociology, and the measure of that eminence was furnished by the jubilee which was celebrated in his honor by his colleagues in science in 1917. Meantime he had acquired a quite different sort of fame in both Italy and France by a long list of trenchant comments on European and world affairs which he contributed to newspapers in Paris, Rome, Turin and Genoa. Noteworthy in this regard was his association with the group of the *Indépendance* in Paris, headed by Georges

Sorel. In 1907 he had inherited a considerable fortune from a parallel branch of his family. He had already settled in the villa at Céligny with which his later years were associated. Born gentleman that he was, he was famous among his friends for his indifference to the exteriors that go with wealth and fame. There is a legend that the whole *Trattato* was written in one pair of shoes and one suit of clothes, and anecdotes abound in that sense. Giving a lecture before a convention of scientists at Geneva, Pareto was interrupted from the floor by a patronizing cry from Gustav Schmoller, an economist of the then German Strassburg: "But are there laws in economics?" Schmoller had no personal acquaintance with Pareto at the time. After the lecture Pareto recognized his heckler on the street and sidled up to him in his shabby clothes and in guise of a beggar: "Please, sir, can you direct me to a restaurant where one can eat for nothing?" "Not where you can eat for nothing, my good man," the German replied, "but here is one where you can eat for very little!" "So there *are* laws in economics!" laughed Pareto as he turned away.

At the time of his death Pareto had accepted a royal appointment to the Italian Senate, and was nominally economic delegate of Italy to the League of Nations. Pareto married twice, the first time unhappily. His second wife was a Frenchwoman, Jane Régis, to whom "The Mind and Society" was dedicated.

A. L.

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THE MIND AND SOCIETY

Volume I: Non-Logical Conduct

