social organization and behavior

A READER IN GENERAL SOCIOLOGY

Edited by RICHARD L. SIMPSON
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Social Organization and Behavior: *A Reader in General Sociology*

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Preface

This book brings together selected readings which cover the basic foundations of sociology and represent the chief fields of specialized sociological inquiry. Each of the sixteen chapters begins with a somewhat fuller and more systematic introduction by the editors than is found in most collections of readings. Together, the chapter introductions and readings are built around the basic concepts of social organization. Social organization is viewed as involving differentiation and integration. These are not static states but dynamic processes as well, and we have tried to show social organization as a set of relationships in which change is an integral element. "Social change" is not relegated to a separate chapter—though the concluding chapter deals explicitly with contemporary world movements—but is treated as a central aspect of many facets of social organization which are analyzed throughout the book.

Although social organization and its components, differentiation and integration, provide the central theme of the book, social-psychological topics are not slighted. They are dealt with in a number of readings as they relate to social organization. Our aim in organizing the book around a common theoretical framework has been to convey the idea of social life—and the discipline of sociology which studies it—as a unity. Values, cultural norms, socialization, interpersonal influence, and reference group behavior—to name a few special topics—are in fact bound up with the general processes of social organization, although it is often useful to examine them separately, as some of the readings do.

In presenting an overall analytical approach to social organization, and the fairly extended chapter introductions within it, our purpose has been to develop the habit of interpreting specific writings in general theoretical contexts, which students who take more than the introductory sociology course will need, and to make it clear that the individual reading selections do not simply give isolated facts, but illustrate general principles. At the same time, most selections analyze contemporary society and contribute to the liberal education of students who will take only one sociology course.

In our chapter introductions we have kept technical definitions of concepts to a minimum, although some have been necessary, mainly in the first two chapters. We have concentrated on analysis and left the definition of most concepts to the textbook used in conjunction with these readings, or, if no accompanying text is used, to the instructor. In selecting readings from the

journal and monographic literature we faced the fact that the authors were writing for their professional colleagues, not for undergraduate students. A growing percentage of sociological writings presupposes a knowledge of statistics or is heavily laden with undefined theoretical concepts. Nevertheless, it has been possible to select empirical research reports which are sophisticated in design but use only elementary modes of data analysis, such as simple percentage differences. Similarly, theoretical readings have been selected which, though analytical and sophisticated, define their technical concepts or use them in a way that is understandable from the context.

This book is intended primarily for use in conjunction with a general textbook in introductory sociology courses. It can also serve, along with a text or additional readings, in courses on social organization or the analysis of American society, and in advanced "principles" courses for senior sociology majors.

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We wish to express our thanks to the publishers and authors of the reading selections in this book for their generous permission to reprint their work. We are especially grateful to David Street and Herman Turk, who made extensive adaptations of previous reports of their research for inclusion in this volume. Allan W. Eister suggested editorial changes which improved the value of his article for use in undergraduate instruction, and Martin Trow and Harold L. Wilensky went over our abridgments of their selections carefully and made useful suggestions for improving our handling of their material. Joel Smith's advice aided us in choosing some of the material for the chapter on population.

Mrs. Myra Bass and the secretarial staff of the Institute for Research in Social Science, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, spent many hours in the arduous tasks of preparing the manuscript and securing permissions. Mrs. Bass' discovery of some of our mistakes spared us their ill effects. Hugh P. Whitt, Charles R. Wingrove, and Sarah Halberg gave bibliographic assistance of various kinds.

Finally, we owe a debt of gratitude to several anonymous critics who read early drafts of our chapter introductions and table of contents. Several of the readings are included as a direct result of their suggestions, and the introductions to the chapters have been greatly improved on the basis of their criticisms.

R. L. S.

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Contents

SECTION

I

Social Organization and Its Transformation

Sociology aims at understanding the patterns of social organization which arise as people strive to satisfy their needs, accomplish their goals, and deal with their problems. The readings in Section I discuss some general aspects of social organization. Chapter 1 presents the basic concept of social organization and its component elements, social differentiation and social integration. Chapter 2 considers the transformation of social organization that has occurred in advanced industrial societies during recent centuries. Chapter 3 treats population composition and growth, which are of fundamental significance for social organization.

chapter 1

Social Organization: differentiation and integration

Every enduring social group must deal with recurring yet everchanging problems if it is to accomplish its goals and survive in its environment. It must maintain cooperation among its members, prevent internal conflicts from getting out of hand, marshal whatever material resources it needs, and manage its relations with outsiders.* In coming to terms with these necessities each group develops a scheme of *social organization* in which *functions,* or problem-solving activities, are allocated to members and coordinated.† To allow predictability and planning of behavior the social organization of an effective group needs to be relatively stable, yet at the same time it must be flexible since the group has to adapt to changing circumstances.

When different kinds of functions are allocated to different group members, this is *social differentiation.* Besides performing distinct functions, group members may also be differentiated in other ways. Any difference between people in what they do, what is expected of them, or how others regard them constitutes social differentiation.

Since groups are differentiated, they must have means of *social integration:* they must be able to control the behavior of members and to coordinate their activities so that they will work toward the common purposes of the

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* These four group problems are a slight modification and a considerable oversimplification of the set of system-problems presented by Talcott Parsons in "A Revised Analytical Approach to the Theory of Social Stratification," in Reinhard Bendix and Seymour Martin Lipset, editors, *Class, Status, and Power,* Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1953, pp. 92–128, and refined in subsequent writings by Parsons, e.g., "General Theory in Sociology," in Robert K. Merton, Leonard Broom, and Leonard S. Cottrell, editors, *Sociology Today,* New York: Basic Books, 1959, pp. 3–38.

† Sociologists and anthropologists define "function" in various ways. Some have defined it as the contribution an activity makes toward the maintenance of the existing social organization, others as the contribution of an activity toward meeting the needs of individuals, and still others as any relation between one sort of activity and another sort of activity. Varying definitions of function are discussed in George C. Homans, *Sentiments and Activities,* New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1962, pp. 23–24; and Robert K. Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure,* rev. ed., pp. 23–24; and Robert K. Merton, *Social Theory and Structure,* rev. ed., Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1957, pp. 20–23. The definition we have suggested is one intended to fit our discussion of social differentiation and the use we make of the concept later in the book.

group. Social integration comes about in several ways. Through agreed-upon social norms—shared beliefs about right and wrong behavior—people are able to predict each other's conduct, adjust their own activities accordingly, and thereby mesh their diverse activities into a coordinated system. Through a variety of social exchanges—conscious or unconscious bargains—people gear their behavior to that of others so that all are rewarded for performing necessary tasks.‡ Through the exercise of superior power or authority, some group members can coordinate the activities of others.

Social differentiation and integration can be seen not only in small face-to-face groups, but also in larger *structures* ranging from schools and business firms to entire societies. Formal definitions will be at a minimum in this book, but it may be helpful to start to indicate the use of some concepts having related but not identical meanings, since sociological writers are not always consistent in their usage. A *structure* is any set of interrelated social roles which make up a recognizable unity, or a set of people with such roles. Structures vary in size and complexity from small groups through large organizations, communities, and societies. A *group* is a small face-to-face structure. An *organization* is a structure established to accomplish specific and limited, though sometimes numerous, goals. *Social organization* in general, as distinct from specific organizations, encompasses all of these and the relations among them. Just as different functions may be allocated to the members of a small group, they are allocated in larger structures to the groups and organizations which constitute them. The social integration of a large, complex social structure consists of the ways in which the activities of its component elements are coordinated.

Social integration is never complete. Human society is not a machine or organism in which all the parts and functions fit together perfectly. Any society has disagreements over the proper norms of behavior, the terms of social exchange, and the proper division of power among members. Such conflicts are especially prevalent in a highly differentiated society such as our own, with its variety of subcultures and specialized groups. Moreover, no scheme of social organization could ever be final and unchanging, since social organization is in essence a set of problem-solving arrangements and the problems a society faces are continually changing.

* * *

In Reading 1, Sorokin shows the complexity of social differentiation and at the same time analyzes how this very complexity can contribute to social integration. Most social groups are multibonded; their members affiliate on the basis of more than one social tie. This fact has the effect of linking each individual with many others with whom he shares one or more social bonds. It also reduces the severity of social conflict, since very few groups incorporate all the relevant social bonds of their members; two groups which

‡ See George C. Homans, "Social Behavior as Exchange," *American Journal of Sociology*, 63 (1958), pp. 597–606; and Homans, *Social Behavior: Its Elementary Forms*, New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1961.

are in conflict on the basis of one social bond of their members may both contain individuals who are united on the basis of some other social bond.§

Readings 2 and 3 reveal some of the relations of social norms to other elements of social life. The Hutterites, a religious group in western Canada and the United States described by Eaton in Reading 2, have achieved a remarkably stable social organization built around universally held, strongly ingrained norms; yet their ability to accept new practices which can be incorporated into their way of life without modifying their basic values has enabled them to survive in spite of strong pressures against them from the surrounding North American society. The Hutterites' strong, shared system of norms has survived because they have kept their essential isolation from outsiders despite frequent business contacts, and because their communities have little internal social differentiation. All Hutterites are communal farmers.

The Israeli *kibbutz,* another sectarian community analyzed by Vallier in Reading 3, has been less resistant to change. Unlike the Hutterite communities, *kibbutzim* have become integral parts of the surrounding society, which has placed heavy agricultural production demands on them. Their increasing specialization of function has led them to become internally differentiated. As a result, their equalitarian, communal norms have undergone intense strain and modification in a short period of time.

§ Sorokin's theoretical analysis of social organization is directly pertinent to the discussions of religious subcommunities by Lenski and Herberg in Chapter 4 of this book, and to the discussion of cross-pressures and voting and Kornhauser's analysis of political pluralism in Chapter 8.

1

Differentiation of Population into Multibonded Groups

PITIRIM A. SOROKIN

THE CONCEPT OF MULTIBONDED GROUPS

Material bodies such as a table, a stone, a plant, or water are not composed of a single chemical element but of a compound of different elements forming molecules. Similarly, social groups are not composed merely of unibonded groups but often contain multibonded groups made up of two or more unibonded components. For instance the professors and students of Harvard University not only constitute a unibonded group tied together by common membership in Harvard University, but most of them are also linked by a common language (English) and by the tie of a local or territorial group. Part of them, in addition are related as Roman Catholics or Protestants, Republicans or Democrats, and so on. Almost every population consists of a constellation of diverse multibonded groups. *The totality of interacting persons linked by two or more unibonded ties (values, meanings, or norms) constitutes a multibonded group.*

CLASSIFICATION OF MULTIBONDED GROUPS

Since there are many unibonded groups, and since these combine in various ways, any society exhibits an enormous number of diversified multibonded groups. We may classify these groups according to *the number of unibonded ties compounded; the quality of the compounded unibonded ties; the mutual relationship of the compounded ties (antagonism or solidarity, affinity and lack of affinity); the open or closed character of the groups.*

According to the Number of Bonds (Meanings, Values, or Norms) Compounded. Just as physiochemical bodies are made up now of two chemical elements, such as H_2O (water); now of three (such as H_2SO_4), now of four (such as $KHSO_4$), and so on, so multibonded groups represent a compounding of two, three, four, or a greater number of unibonded ties. The members of double-bonded groups may be linked together by language plus religion (for example, French Protestants), by occupation plus sex (for example, women factory workers), by race plus locality (for example, Boston Negroes), by kinship plus political affiliations (for example, the Republican faction of the Smith kinship group). The members of triple-bonded groups may be united by such factors as race, occupation, and religion (for example, Protestant Negro porters); sex, age, and locality (for example, a gang of Charles Street boys in their teens); political party, religion, and occupation (for example Protestant Republican miners), and so on. Quadruple-bonded groups are all illustrated by the following Harvard students who are at once Democrats, Catholics, and Irish or who are French Canadians, members of the same scientific club, and citizens of Quebec. Among Bostonians all persons who are at once electricians, males, Socialists, and Unitarians are examples of a four-bonded group. There are many groups of a still more complex character, whose members are bound together by five, six, or more unibonded ties.

According to the Quality of the Ties. Since any unibonded tie may combine with any others,

▶ SOURCE: Reprinted from *Society, Culture, and Personality*, New York: Cooper Square Publishers, 1962, pp. 236–242.

the character of the multibonded group obviously varies according to the character of its components. A double-bonded group may consist of a religious plus a language bond; of a religious plus an occupational bond; of an occupational plus a party bond; of an occupational plus a race, sex, or age bond, and so on. Similarly, a triple-bonded group may be a combination of a territorial with a language and religious tie or of territorial, racial, and sex bonds, and so on. More complex combinations may be represented by N, according to the binomial formula of combinations. The population of modern metropolises, for instance, consists of an enormous number of multibonded groups of diverse composition. It resembles, in a sense, a geological formation composed of multitudes of chemical compounds each of which is formed through the combination of various elements and molecules. The elements are parallel to unibonded social groups; the compounds, to multibonded social groups.

According to Mutual Solidarity, Antagonism, or Neutrality of the Compounded Bonds. Like the members of unibonded organized groups, those of multibonded groups may be (*a*) *antagonistic,* when the compounded bonds repel one another and incite the members to mutually contradictory actions, ideas, and impulses; (*b*) *solidary,* when the compounded bonds are mutually consistent and induce the same actions, ideas, emotions, and volitions; (*c*) *intermediary or neutral.* It is usually held that the greater the number of compounded bonds the more solidary the group is. The actual situation is different. Owing to various factors, sometimes two or more mutually antagonistic bonds are imposed upon a group of individuals; the result is an antagonistic multibonded group. Consider, for instance, the situation of a medieval population who, during the feud between Pope Gregory VII and King Henry IV, were at once Catholics and subjects of King Henry. The religious group headed by Gregory VII issued one set of orders; the state group headed by Henry IV issued a contrary set. As Catholics the population had to follow the injunctions of the church and oppose the king; as the king's subjects they had to obey the orders of the state and denounce the pope. Another example is afforded by the position of "conscientious objectors." Their state citizenship impels them to defeat the enemy, whereas their pacifist and Christian convictions exhort them to abstain from any active part in warfare.

The solidary multibonded groups are still more numerous and diverse. Americans who at the same time belong to a religious denomination, a trade union, and a political party that urge their members to the maximum war effort constitute a quadruple-bonded group in which all the bonds induce the same action and mentality. Such a group is an inwardly solidary multibonded collectivity.

Finally, if we take the line of conduct recommended by Jesus to Christians who were simultaneously subjects of the Roman Empire: "Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's" (Matthew xxii, 21), we have (in this matter of paying or not paying state taxes) a neutral double-bonded group, in which the performance of religious duties neither conflicts nor is solidary with that of political duties. (If, however, we consider all the actions prescribed by the Roman Empire and those prescribed by the Christian Church at that period, we find that they conflicted in many ways. Hence the group of Christians who were citizens of the Roman Empire were an inwardly antagonistic body, as evidenced, for instance, by the persecutions of the Christians by the state and the denunciation of the state by the Christians.) A group of Harvard professors who are at the same time Protestants and members of a garden society is a triple-bonded neutral group in which each bond (occupational, religious, and recreational) neither reinforces nor is antagonistic to the others. This inner solidarity, antagonism, or neutrality of a multibonded group notably influences the behavior of its members and the cohesiveness of the group itself.

EFFECTS UPON THE BEHAVIOR OF THE MEMBERS. Lucky is the man who is a member of a solidarily compounded group! All the compounded bonds and their groups, with their values and vehicles, impel him to the same kind of actions, thoughts, feelings, emotions, and duties. He is like a ball pushed by several forces in the same direction. He experiences no conflict of duties, no doubts or hesitation. His conscience is clear, and his actions are resolute.

Quite different are the mind and behavior of a member of an inwardly antagonistic multibonded group. The conflicting bonds and values issue, as it were, contradictory orders. Such a person is subjected to forces which tend to push him in opposite directions. Hence he is assailed by conflicting duties, self-contradictions, doubts, and irresoluteness, especially