CLASSICAL SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY AND FOUNDATIONS OF AMERICAN SOCIOLOGY (HURST)

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Detailed Licensing

Introduction

Aims and Goals

There are many excellent introductory readers to sociological theory out there. Why another one? The primary reason is that this is an Open Access textbook, free to you, the student, thanks to Oregon State University. We know that textbooks can be very expensive, and we think it is particularly problematic to charge students for access to work that has been published, in its original form, several decades ago. If you wanted, you could find all of the work included here in your local library, although you would have to put together many different books and articles. That is the second reason for this textbook – important passages have been collected for you, assembled here in one handy volume.

There are a few features unique to this particular selection of texts. First, when not originally published in English, they have been freshly translated for the 21st century student. Some license has been taken in making these translations, as described in more detail below. All work, even that originally published in English, has been represented for contemporary eyes. For example. although some may find this an editorial overreach, masculine pronouns have been changed whenever doing so does not detract from the original intent of the authors. Also, many passages have been shortened and ideas presented more simply than may be the case in the original. It is best to read the selections as very loose translations. More advanced students are welcome to read other more exact translations (or the original), and suggestions for finding these are included at the start of each passage.

Another unique feature of this volume is the inclusion of a section on early American sociological theory. It is often thought that American sociological theory did not really begin until well into the twentieth century. Although it is true that what we consider "classical" sociological theory came almost exclusively from Europe, there were quite a few American sociologists struggling with similar issues as those Europeans. More importantly, they read those Europeans. By including these early American sociologists here, we hope to provide you a better understanding of the context in which sociological theory was first advanced. It is hoped that a better understanding of the "greats" of classical sociological theory can be achieved by reading these Americans alongside Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim, and Max Weber.

Why read classical sociological theory at all? There are a few reasons. First, knowing the "classics" in many ways makes one a sociologist. The concepts of Marx, Durkheim and Weber are our shared language, our common heritage as sociologists. Second, an introduction to classical sociological theory will help you think differently about the world. It *disciplines* the mind to see the world in a particular way, using the concepts and approaches of the sociologist. This new disciplined way of thinking is essential for conducting sociological research. As one of our eminent contemporary sociologists points out, "Questions are not generated simply by curiosity and imagination encountering the empirical world; they are generated by curiosity and imagination, *organized by theoretical assumptions and animated by normative concerns*, encountering the empirical world."[1] Without theory to guide us, we are likely to be overwhelmed with the complexity of empirical reality. Knowing theory is like carrying a vial of magic solution we can lay out on the ink of the world to see its hidden messages.

It is for this last reason, helping to shape our vision of the world so that we can conduct sociological research, that key passages in which these early sociologists discuss *what sociology is and how it should be done are* included and foregrounded. So, this textbook is more than just a bunch of outdated ideas from some nineteenth century Dead White Guys. It is a living and breathing repository of concepts and approaches that still to this day guide the conduct of all sociologists. If you read and pay attention, you too will be a sociologist, whether or not you ever go on to graduate training in the field. Trust me, this stuff stays with you for a very long time. Treasure it.

Organization Overview

Outline of the Textbook

The textbook is divided into four primary sections three of which correspond to a key theorist (Marx, Weber, Durkheim) and the fourth being a compendium of selections from early American sociologists. Each of the four sections begins with a descriptive biography (or set of biographies in the case of the American sociologists) and concludes with a "blank" index of key concepts.

As you read, take note of passages in which key concepts are discussed and fill in the index for your use. Between the biography and the index, you will find between ten and fifteen key passages, arranged chronologically for each theorist. Your instructor may point you towards which passages are most important for your particular course of study. It is not supposed that *all passages* have

equal importance. Furthermore, your instructor may ask you to read these in a different order than that which is presented here. Think of this book as a reference from which your actual readings may be derived. Each passage includes a brief overview, an explanation of the original source and how to find it, and a set of questions to guide the reading.

Translating Passages

Each passage that you read has been translated by the author from its original text. These translations are not often *literal*(word for word) translations, but are meant to be concise and appropriate for college students today. Although the meanings have never been altered in these translations, sometimes the examples have been updated for a contemporary audience. This is especially true in cases where monetary units are employed. Line numbers are included on each selected passage page so that students and teachers can easily locate appropriate sections of the text. Original headings and subheadings have been retained so that the reader can easily move from this translation to any other translation, or the original.

There are a few other things to know about the way the translations are presented here. Because these are not literal translations, omitted words and sections are not always indicated by an ellipsis (…). Ellipses are only used when it is important to the meaning of the text that something has been omitted. In general, readers should always remember that this is an abbreviated non-literal translation. Sometimes, whole sections are summarized in the words of the translator, and these will be indicated by italicized font in brackets. You should never mistake these sections for the original text!

Information on the original source of each translated passage can be found at the beginning of each section. Readers interested in reading the full passage in context should follow the recommendations found in this paragraph.

Modernizing the Text

In keeping with contemporary practice, male pronouns have been changed throughout the text – "he," "she," and "they" have been substituted whenever such substitutions do not damage the original intention of the author. Thus, when Durkheim discusses the typical worker and uses the word "he," the reader may instead find "she" in its place. On the other hand, when Weber discusses a typical Protestant entrepreneur of the seventeenth century, "he" is retained. Another modernization comes when referring to humans as "human animals" as distinct from "non-human animals." This usage undercuts prior usage (humans vs. animals) which reinforced a false dualism between the two.

Some Useful History

All of the passages here were originally written in the nineteenth or early twentieth centuries. Although the language has often been updated to make the meaning clearer to a contemporary reader, the historical examples used remain. Further, the theorists were trying to make sense of the world they saw around them – its origins and its current manifestations. So, it is important for you to know a little history before delving into the material. In some cases, the introductory passage to a given selection may provide relevant historical detail. A big picture understanding of major historical shifts, however, is needed as well. This section will supply an abbreviated overview of some of the historical events you will need to know to properly understand classical sociological theory. You may also refer to the included "Timeline" that shows the overlap between the lives of the theorists and major historic events. Also included are suggestions for further reading.

Ten Things Marx, Weber and Durkheim Took for Granted about the History of the World that You Might Want to Read More about

1. The land mass of Europe became a configuration of European "nations" only several centuries after the Roman Empire first brought it together under a shared governance in the years in the first centuries of the millennium. After a period of "dark ages," from the fall of the Roman Empire in the 5th century CE to around the 14th century, a viewer would find only scattered instances of political authority and little evidence of the existence of "nations" as we know them. During this time, **feudalism** emerged as the dominant economic system: most people (operating in family units) were legally bound to work for a lord or master, whose power was close to absolute over his territory.
2. Beginning with Charlemagne in the 8th century but continuing up until the 18th century CE, European nations emerged as distinct political entities, with rulers that we would consider "monarchs" through a system of hereditary succession. The monarch was often chief member of the aristocracy (rule by "the best"), a group whose power was ascribed by birth and whose property was passed on through hereditary succession. Feudalism continued to be the predominant economic system, although trade and commercial ventures slowly brought into being a new class, neither lord nor serf, housed in the new urban centers ("cities," from which we derive the term **citizen**).

3. For many of these years, the aristocracy shared powers with the Catholic Church, whose presence preceded the rise of the new nations and monarchs. As the primary landowner on the European landmass, the Church was wealthier and more powerful than local rulers. The **Church** was also the primary educational institution, training young men in the arts and sciences of the Roman civilization, as well as theology.
4. There were many critiques of the power, wealth, and administration of the church, but none of them were as threatening as that which emerged from the priest **Martin Luther**, who famously nailed a list of grievances to the door of his local cathedral in 1517. Luther accused the church of literally selling salvation and forgiveness and he argued that the Bible should be translated into local languages so that people could read it for themselves. Lutheranism and **Protestantism** (those protesting the church) became known for advocating a personal relationship with God, without the interference or reliance on third parties (priests).
5. As nations emerged as distinct political entities with control over defined territories and wealth derived from increased trade, some monarchs began to chafe at the power of the Pope and the Catholic Church. King **Henry VIII** (Tudor) of England was the first to split from the church in 1532 when he was denied permission to divorce his first wife and remarry Anne Boleyn. As the **Protestant Reformation** swept Europe, civil and national wars broke out everywhere between monarchs and peoples who wanted to remain within the Catholic Church and those that wanted to follow Henry VIII's path. By 1700, most of Northern Europe was "Protestant" while most of Southern Europe was "Catholic."
6. All of these changes were taking place in a society that was increasingly commercial. In 1492, Christopher Columbus had stumbled upon the West Indies in his attempt to forge a trading route East to China and India. This precipitated a scramble by European rulers to seize land in the Americas, precipitating the creation of a global trading system based on slave labor and expropriation of land and goods from non-European peoples. Although initially led by Spain and Portugal, the Protestant Netherlands and England under the Tudors (beginning with Henry VIII but accelerating under his daughter, Elizabeth I) eventually dominated **global trade**.
7. As money poured in from the Americas, especially to the ports of Amsterdam and London, large-scale industrial enterprises were constructed to put the money to work, employing workers in large numbers to produce goods that could be sold to other global regions (such as China and India). Thus, nations, capitalism, Protestantism, slavery, and global trade emerged at a similar time in a similar place (15th-16th century Northern Europe). As the need for workers in these large "factories" increased, feudalism slowly passed into **capitalism**. Serfs were no longer tied to the land but moved to where they could find work. English landowners began using their land as sites for factories or as places to raise large bodies of sheep whose wool could be processed in the emerging factories.
8. Historians call all of these changes in the 15th and 16th century the emergence of "**modern society.**" Later changes, such as **the industrial revolution** of the late 17th and early 18th centuries merely exacerbated the trends already in progress. There is currently some debate about whether we have moved beyond modern society to something "post-modern", but we have yet no identifying name for this period. This is important to note, as Marx, Weber, and Durkheim were all seeking to describe what we now refer to as "modern society," which, on a grand scale, may still be what you are living through now.
9. By the late eighteenth century, new political strains began to emerge. Monarchical rule was suited well to feudalism, but it did not seem as suited to this new global capitalism. Capitalists and traders were often not part of the aristocracy and did not feel represented by aristocratic rulers. There were many more people living in towns and cities who felt they should be politically represented. Some colonies, such as those in North America, also felt excluded from **political representation**. Hereditary succession seemed increasingly irrational, particularly in a society in which hard work and merit was leading to possibilities of social mobility. This led to a series of political revolutions (American in 1775, French in 1789) to create new democratic political systems.
10. At the time Marx was writing, these democratic political revolutions had stalled, at least in Europe. France wobbled between monarchy and republic (see more in the *Eighteenth Brumaire* introduction). German princes fought back attempts at instituting a popular vote. And yet, the writing on the wall appeared clear. **Representative democracy** was on the horizon. The world we now inhabit, capitalist and democratic, was the world in which Weber and Durkheim would grow up. Both would live to see the 1918 execution of one of the last ruling aristocratic families, the Romanovs. Today, "noble" families are largely titular, without real power.

Suggested Further Reading

If you would like to read more generally about the development of the "modern world system," I suggest Immanuel Wallerstein's four-volume series on the subject. *The Modern World System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-*

Economy in the Sixteenth Century(1976), *Mercantilism and the Consolidation of the European World-Economy, 1600-1750*(1980), *The Second Era of Great Expansion of the Capitalist World-Economy, 1730-1840s*(1989), *The Modern World-System: Centrist Liberalism Triumphant, 1789-1914*(2011). Other books that will give you a big picture view of world history are Patrick Geary's *The Myth of Nations: The Medieval Origins of Europe*(2002). James C. Scott's *Against the Grain: A Deep History of the Earliest States*(2017), Kenneth Pomerantz' *The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World Economy* (2000), Michael Mann's *The Sources of Social Power* (2012), Chris Wickham's *The Inheritance of Rome: A History of Europe from 400 to 1000* (2009), and David Graeber's *Debt: The First 5,000 Years*(2011).

There are many excellent books about specific aspects of modern European history. The following are a few suggestions: Jonathan Dewald's *Setting the People Free: The Story of Democracy*(2005), Simon Schama's *Citizens: A Chronicle of the French Revolution*(1989). Norbert Elias' *The Court Society*(1983) and *The Civilizing Process*(1978).

If you want to reach out of Europe (and perhaps beyond the knowledge base of the early theorists you are reading here), I suggest Vijay Prashad's *The Darker Nations: A People's History of the Third World*(2007), Janet Abu-Lughod's *Before European Hegemony: The World System AD 1250-1350*(1991), Walter Rodney's *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*(1972), and Andre Gunder Frank's *ReOrient: Global Economy in the Asian Age*(1998).

There are also some very good books on the history of sociology as a discipline. If you are interested in understanding the place of Marx, Weber, and Durkheim, and how we have come to assign them "classical" status, read Peter Baehr's *Founders, Classics, Canons: Modern Disputes over the Origins and Appraisal of Sociology's Heritage*(2002) and Daniel Levine's *Visions of the Sociological Tradition* (1995). For more on our classical theorists, read Raul Fernandez'*Mappers of Society: The Lives, Times, and Legacies of Great Sociologists* (2003). For a nice introduction to the meaning of sociology, with some attention to its historical context, read Norbert Elias' *What is Sociology?* (1978). For a counter-history of sociology that sees its roots in radical activism, read Joe Feagin and Hernan Vera's *Liberation Sociology*(2008). For more on early American sociology, read Charles Page's *Class and American Sociology: From Ward to Ross*(1969) and the early chapters of Stephen Turner's *American Sociology: From Pre-Disciplinary to Post-Normal*(2014).

Timeline of Marx's Life and Work

1818	May 5	Born in Trier, Prussia
1820	November 20	Longtime collaborator, Friedreich Engels, born in Barmen, Prussia
1835		Enrolls in University of Bonn, as a law student
1836		Transfers to college in Berlin; engaged to Jenny von Westphalen
1841		PhD, University of Jena; begins writing articles for local newspaper
1843	June 19	Marries Jenny von Westphalen; they move to Paris
1844		Daughter **Jenny** Caroline born in Paris (May 1st); meets Engels (August 28th); spends winter writing the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*
1845		Expelled from Paris and moves to Brussels; daughter Jenny**Laura**born (September 6th);writes *Theses on Feuerbach*and *The German Ideology*
1847		Participates in first congress of Communist League in London; Son **Edgar**born in Brussels (December 17th)
1848		YEAR OF REVOLUTIONS. *Communist Manifesto* published; arrested in Brussels; works as editor of newspaper
1849		Marxes move to London after spending some time in Cologne; Son Henry Edward Guy ("**Guido**") born (will die within the year)
1851		Daughter Jenny Eveline Frances ("**Franziska**") born (will die next year)
1852		Began writing for *New York Daily Tribune*, as European correspondent
1855		Daughter Jenny Julia **Eleanor** born in London (January 16th); Edgar dies of gastric fever (April 6th)
1857		Child born and dies
1859		Publication of *A Contribution of the Critique of Political Economy*
1864		Became involved with International Workingmen's Association (First International)

1867	September 14	Publication of first volume of *Das Kapital*
1868		**Laura** married Paul Lafargue, French socialist
1871		Publication of *The Civil War in France*, a defense of the Paris Commune
1872		**Jenny** married Charles Longuet, French journalist and activist
1876		Grandson Jean Laurent Frederick "Johnny" Longuet born; eventually becomes a leader of the Socialist Party of France
1879		Grandson Edgar "Wolf" Longuet born, becomes doctor and activist
1881	December 2	Jenny von Westphalen dies after long illness
1883		**Jenny** dies in Paris (January 11th); Marx dies (March 14th)

Timeline of Durkheim's Life and Work

1858	April 15	Born in Epinal, Lorraine, France
1866	September 2	Birth of future wife, Louise Julie Dreyfus, in Paris, France
1875		After graduating from secondary school, moves to Paris to prepare for entry into college
1879		Accepted to prestigious École Normale Supérieure
1883		After receiving state teaching qualification in philosophy, moves to Sens as teacher
1887		Marries Louise Julie Dreyfus' moves to Bourdeaux (professor of 'social science and pedagogy')
1888	September 8	Birth of daughter, Maria Bella
1892		Receives PhD
1892	September 18	Birth of son, André-Armand
1893		Publication of *The Division of Labor* (doctoral dissertation)
1895		Publication of *The Rules of Sociological Method*
1897		Publication of *Suicide*
1898		First issue of *L'Année sociologique*(Durkheim's journal)

1902		Moves to Paris; begins teaching at Sorbonne, Paris
1912		Publication of *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*
1913		Becomes Professor of "Education and Sociology" at Sorbonne
1914		France enters World War I
1916		André killed in battle; Durkheim suffers deep depression
1917	November 15	Dies of complications following stroke, in Paris, France

Timeline of Weber's Life and Work

1864	April 21	Born in Erfurt, Saxony, Prussia
1889		PhD, University of Berlin
1893		Married Marianne Schnitger (a second cousin)
1894		Appointed Professor of Economics, University of Freiburg
1896		Appointed Professor, University of Heidelberg
1897		Death of Max Weber, Sr.
1899		Left work for five years, following depression and insomnia
1903		Formally resigned professorship
1904		Publication of *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*; Visits United States
1907		Inheritance; becomes financially independent
1909		Co-founded the German Sociological Association (served as treasurer)
1916		Publication of *The Religion of China* and *The Religion of India*
1920	June 14	Dies in Munich, Bavaria, Germany (of the flu)

Major Themes

There are a few major themes that come up over and over again during the course of classical sociological theory's development. All three classical theorists were writing at a time when sociology was a new and emerging discipline. This new discipline was called forth by momentous social changes taking place in European (and American) society during this time period. These changes were related to the rise of capitalism, industrialization, and new political representation for the majority of people (or, at least, a desire for such by many). Calls for socialism emerged as a response to recognition of new social divisions. Each of the three

theorists you will read here weighed in on these historical changes, theorizing the contours and dynamics of this new "modern" society.

The first theme that clearly emerges from the theorists is the theme of modern society itself. Each of our theorists has a different name for this new society, one that exemplifies what the theorist thought was distinct and novel about it. For Marx, the new society is a *bourgeois society*, one in which class relations between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat are particularly fraught and stark. Marx calls this modern *mode of production capitalism*. For Durkheim, the new society is a result of increased population and contact between people (through advanced forms of transportation and communication). He calls this modern society an *organic solidarity* society, or sometimes a "segmented" society. Its distinguishing feature is an increased specialization and division of labor, apparent in every aspect of social life. For Weber, modern society is characterized by its hard-nosed rationality, bureaucratic authority structures, and a general dreariness of life. The American sociologists of this time drew inspiration from all three of these visions as well. Veblen, for example, characterized modern society as one of intense "conspicuous consumption," where people jockeyed for position by the houses they bought, clothes they wore, and vacations they took. For Ross, the modern era was one of intense class conflict, brought about by advanced capitalism.

The second theme that emerges is related to the first. Rather than merely describe this emerging society, each of our theorists offered explanations for how it arose in the first place. Thus, classical sociological theory was as much about offering theories of historical change (what, at the time was noted as *social dynamics*) as it was about describing how society works. Weber has a very famous explanation for how capitalism and bureaucracy came to rule in the West, which you will read all about in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. The explanation advanced there is cultural and institutional – things change and develop the way they do because of previous institutional and cultural patterns. Weber's explanation is in contrast to the materialist explanation offered by Marx, who saw history advance through conflicts over economic resources and power. According to Marx, history is a succession of *modes of production*, particular configurations which work for awhile until the class conflict they generate becomes too much to tolerate. In contrast to the idealist and materialist theories of change, Durkheim explained historical change as largely an unintended byproduct of demographic shifts and technological advances. As populations grow more dense, pressure is put on them to adapt in ways that minimize conflict.

The third theme that emerges is how theorists described and explained divisions operating within society. We have already seen that Marx saw class conflict as endemic to just about every society that has ever existed heretofore (an exception being early humankind, prior to the advent of agricultural settlements). For Marx, the conflict between those who own and monopolize profit-generating resources and those who must work for a living was the fundamental driver of historical change. It was also the explanation for much that happened in any given society. Our ideas, culture, law, norms, practices – you name it – were merely epiphenomena resting on the base of material distributions. Weber's ideas in this area could not be further from Marx's. He very clearly dismissed the idea that money, economic power, and material distributions were at the root of all social divisions. For Weber, class was but one axis of stratification, and, in many societies, the least important one. People found other ways to distinguish themselves from each other. One's status could be based on birth (a noble family, a particular racial or ethnic group identity), honor (martial prowess), or profession/occupation. People also stratified themselves politically, by party affiliation. Durkheim, while recognizing the importance of class generally, believed that advanced specialization and division of labor pushed modern society away from class conflict and towards individualization. To the extent that we discriminate against people or favor some people based on skin color, biological sex, gender identity, or social background of their parents, we are preventing the division of labor from functioning properly. In a perfect world, the only social divisions would be those that correctly mirror natural inequalities.

These contrasting beliefs about the relative tractability and source of social divisions have a lot to do with how each classical sociological theorist thought about the politics of his day, particularly the question of socialism. For it must be understood by today's reader that the late nineteenth and early twentieth century was an era where capitalism was fiercely debated, and socialism was offered as a real potential alternative. There had as yet been no Russian Revolution, no rise of Stalin, no fear of a totalitarian state. There wasn't even a welfare state as we have come to understand it. Taxes were low or non-existent, public education was scarce, and there was very little public assistance on offer. Giant corporations went largely unregulated. It wasn't until the publication of Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* in 1904 that the public began clamoring for some regulation and oversight of the food industry. It may be fair to say that a majority of intelligent thinkers during this period thought something should be done to rein in the depredations of capitalism. Marx obviously went the furthest in this regard, co-authoring the *Communist Manifesto which*

called for the immediate overthrow of capitalism and private property. Today's reader might be surprised to see what is actually advocated in the Manifesto – free public education, a federal postal system, and a few other things that we now take for granted. Both Weber and Durkheim also weighed in on the possibilities of socialism and reformation of capitalism, as did many of the American sociologists.

The final and perhaps most important theme for our purposes is that of *sociology itself*, and this is related to what has been said about the political views of the early sociologists. The connection between the aims and goals of this new discipline and political reform is most visible in the work of Durkheim (and French sociology in general). Durkheim believed sociology could be the science of society – like a physician, it could literally diagnose its ills and tell us what we should do to improve its health. Thus, description of how society worked was connected, for Durkheim, with how society *could and* perhaps should be improved. This makes reading Durkheim exciting and at times controversial. In contrast, Weber (and German sociology in general) did not see sociology as an ameliorative science in this way. Instead, sociology was about understanding how individuals made decisions in society and with what consequences, for the purpose of predicting future behavior and actions. The two approaches to sociology could not be more different. Where Durkheim focuses on *social facts*, Weber focuses on *social action*. Marx, writing before the origin of sociology as a term, has little to say in this regard, although we can see his descriptions and analyses made for change in a similar light to Durkheim. The connection of sociology to social reform versus sociology as a predictive science can also be seen in the differences among American sociologists during this era. As sociology was literally being defined into existence during this time, how particular sociologists defined its subject matter and its goals have had lasting effects on the work sociologists do today.

These five themes – describing and naming "modern" society, theorizing historical changes and the rise of this modern society, explaining social divisions, weighing in on the promise (and perils) of the socialist alternative, and proposing parameters for the new emerging field of sociology – recur throughout the readings chosen for this textbook. If you get lost in the reading, return to these five themes to find your way through. Pay attention to the similarities and differences in how each of the theorists frame and develop the theme. In this way, you will find your own path as a sociologist. I wish you a very good journey!

Allison L. Hurst
December 31, 2018, Corvallis, Oregon

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1. Erik Olin Wright, ed. 2005 Approaches to Class Analysis. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pg. 180. ↵

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

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1.1: Biography of Marx by F. Engels (1868)

KARL MARX (1818-1883)

"Philosophers have hitherto only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it." – Karl Marx, Theses on Feuerbach (1845)

NOTE ON SOURCES: The first selection is a short biography written by Marx's close friend and lifetime-collaborator, Frederick Engels. The biography was written for a German newspaper but was not published at the time. The complete original can be found on the Marxist Archives site.[1] The second selection was written by Marx's daughter, Eleanor, and originally published in a German newspaper in 1897 and can also be found on the Marxist Archives site.[2] The third selection describes the Marx household, and was written by a close friend and colleague, Wilhelm Liebknecht.[3] The final selection was taken from Engels' much reprinted speech at Marx's funeral in 1883. The complete speech can be found on line.[4]

Karl Marx was born on May 5, 1818 in Trier, where he received an education in the classics. He studied law at Bonn and later in Berlin, where, however, his preoccupation with philosophy soon turned him away from law. In 1841, after spending five years in the "metropolis of intellectuals," he returned to Bonn to earn his PhD. Instead, he became involve in a radical newspaper venture, which ran afoul of Prussian censorship. He resigned in protest in 1843.

During his criticism of the deliberations of the local government, Marx began focusing on questions of material interest. He found himself confronted with points of view which neither jurisprudence nor philosophy had taken account of. Proceeding from the Hegelian philosophy of law, Marx concluded that it was not the state, which Hegel had described as the "top of the edifice," but "civil society," which Hegel had regarded with disdain, that was the sphere in which a key to the understanding of the process of the historical development of mankind should be looked for.

In the summer of 1843, after marrying Jenny Von Westphalen, the daughter of a government official, Marx moved to Paris, where he devoted himself primarily to studying political economy and the history of the great French Revolution. There he became involved in another radical newspaper and was expelled from France for this in 1845. He moved to Brussels where he continued his political work, writing what would become the Communist Manifesto on behest of workers organized as "The League of the Just."

Expelled once again, this time by the Belgian government under the influence of the panic caused by the 1848 revolution, Marx returned to Paris at the invitation of the French provisional government. The tidal wave of the revolution pushed all scientific pursuits into the background; what mattered now was to become involved in the movement. Marx resurrected his radical newspaper and moved to Cologne, but this was again shut down by the government forcing him to flee to Paris, first, then, London, where he remained the rest of his life.

In London at that time was assembled the entire *fine fleur* of the refugees from all the nations of the continent. Revolutionary committees of every kind were formed. For a while, Marx continued to produce his newspaper in the form of a monthly review but eventually he withdrew into the British Museum and worked through the immense and as yet for the most part unexamined library there for all that it contained on political economy. At the same time, he was a regular contributor to the *New York Tribune*, acting, until the outbreak of the American Civil War, so to speak, as the editor for European politics of this, the leading Anglo-American newspaper.

At last, in 1867, he published the first volume of his masterpiece, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy. It is the political economy of the working class, reduced to its scientific formulation.* This work is concerned not with rabble-rousing phrase-mongering, but with strictly scientific deductions. Whatever one's attitude to socialism, one will at any rate have to acknowledge that in this work it is presented for the first time in a scientific manner. Anyone still wishing to do battle with socialism, will have to deal with Marx.

But there is another point of view from which Marx's book is of interest. It is the first work in which the actual relations existing between capital and labor, in their classical form such as they have reached in England, are described in their entirety and in a clear and graphic fashion. Then there is the history of factory legislation in England which, from its modest beginnings with the first acts of 1802, has now reached the point of limiting working hours in nearly all manufacturing or cottage industries to 60 hours per week for women and young people under the age of 18, and to 39 hours per week for children under 13. From this point of view the book is of the greatest interest for every industrialist.

As one would expect, in addition to his studies Marx is busy with the workers' movement; he is one of the founders of the International Working Men's Association, which has been the center of so much attention recently and has already shown in more than one place in Europe that it is a force to be reckoned with.

On the Relationship between Karl and Jenny

Karl was a young man of seventeen when he became engaged to Jenny. For them, too, the path of true love was not a smooth one. It is easy to understand that Karl's parents opposed the engagement of a young man of his age … The earnestness with which Karl assures his father of his love in spite of certain contradictions is explained by the rather stormy scenes his engagement had caused in the home. My father used to say that at that time he had been a really ferocious Roland. But the question was soon settled and shortly before or after his eighteenth birthday the betrothal was formally recognized. Seven years Karl waited for his beautiful Jenny, but "they seemed but so many days to him, because he loved her so much".

On June 19, 1843 they were wedded. Having played together as children and become engaged as a young man and girl, the couple went hand in hand through the battle of life.

And what a battle! Years of bitter pressing need and, still worse, years of brutal suspicion, infamous calumny and icy indifference. But through all that, in unhappiness and happiness, the two lifelong friends and lovers never faltered, never doubted: they were faithful unto death. And death has not separated them.

His whole life long Marx not only loved his wife, he was in love with her.

The Marx Household

While Jenny gave birth seven times, only three of their children survived to adulthood (daughters Jenny, Eleanor (nicknamed "Tussy"), and Laura). A fourth child, a son named Edgar, made it almost to adolescence.

Several children died; among them Marx's two boys, one, born in London, very early, the other, born in Paris, after a protracted illness. Well I remember the sad weeks of sickness without hope. The death of this boy was a fearful blow to Marx. The boy, named *Moosh* (mouche, fly), really Edgar after an uncle, was very gifted, but ailing from the day of his birth, a genuine, true child of sorrow this boy with the magnificent eyes and the promising head that was, however, much too heavy for the weak body. If poor *Moosh* could have obtained quiet, enduring nursing and a sojourn in the country or near the sea, then, perhaps, his life might have been saved. But in the life of the exile, in the chase from place to place, in the misery of London, it was impossible, even with the most tender love of the parents and care of a mother, to make the tender little plant strong enough for the struggle of existence. *Moosh* died; I shall never forget the scene; the mother, silently weeping, bent over the dead child, Lenchen[5] sobbing beside her, Marx in a terrible excitement vehemently, almost angrily, rejecting all consolation, the two girls clinging to their mother crying quietly, the mother clasping them convulsively as if to hold them and defend them against death that had robbed her of her boy.

And two days later the burial, Lessner, Pfaender, Lochner, Conrad Schramm, the red Wolff and myself went along, I in the carriage with Marx. He sat there dumb, holding his head in his hands. I stroked his forehead: "Mohr,[6] you still have your wife, your girls and us, and we all love you so well!"

"You cannot give me back my boy!" he groaned, and silently we rode on to the graveyard in Tottenham Court Road. When the coffin, singularly large, for during the sickness the formerly very backward child had grown surprisingly, when the coffin was about to be lowered into the grave, Marx was so excited that I stepped to his side fearing he might jump after the coffin.

Thirty years later, when his faithful mate was buried out on Highgate Cemetery, and with her half of his own being, his own life, he would have fallen into the grave had not Engels, who later told me about it, quickly grasped his arm.

Fifteen months later he followed her.

The Lifetime Achievements of Marx

On the 14th of March, at a quarter to three in the afternoon, the greatest living thinker ceased to think. He had been left alone for scarcely two minutes, and when we came back we found him in his armchair, peacefully gone to sleep — but forever.

An immeasurable loss has been sustained both by the militant proletariat of Europe and America, and by historical science, in the death of this man. The gap that has been left by the departure of this mighty spirit will soon enough make itself felt.

Just as Darwin discovered the law of development of organic nature, so Marx discovered the law of development of human history: the simple fact, hitherto concealed by an overgrowth of ideology, that mankind must first of all eat, drink, have shelter and clothing, before it can pursue politics, science, art, religion, etc.; that therefore the production of the immediate material means, and consequently the degree of economic development attained by a given people or during a given epoch, form the foundation upon which the state institutions, the legal conceptions, art, and even the ideas on religion, of the people concerned have been evolved, and in the light of which they must, therefore, be explained, instead of vice versa, as had hitherto been the case.

But that is not all. Marx also discovered the special law of motion governing the present-day capitalist mode of production, and the bourgeois society that this mode of production has created. The discovery of surplus value suddenly threw light on the problem, in trying to solve which all previous investigations, of both bourgeois economists and socialist critics, had been groping in the dark.

Such was the man of science. But this was not even half the man.

For Marx was before all else a revolutionist. His real mission in life was to contribute, in one way or another, to the overthrow of capitalist society and of the state institutions which it had brought into being, to contribute to the liberation of the modern proletariat, which he was the first to make conscious of its own position and its needs, conscious of the conditions of its emancipation. Fighting was his element. And he fought with a passion, a tenacity and a success such as few could rival.

And, consequently, Marx was the best hated man of his time. Governments, both absolutist and republican, deported him from their territories. Bourgeois, whether conservative or ultra-democratic, vied with one another in heaping slanders upon him. All this he brushed aside as though it were a cobweb, ignoring it, answering only when extreme necessity compelled him. And he died beloved, revered and mourned by millions of revolutionary fellow workers — from the mines of Siberia to California, in all parts of Europe and America — and I make bold to say that, though he may have had many opponents, he had hardly one personal enemy.

His name will endure through the ages, and so also will his work.

Questions

1. What is the “materialist theory of history?” According to Marx, what sets historical forces in motion? Where do ideas come from?
2. How did Marx spend his life? What was his occupation?
3. What are the “two important facts” uncovered by Marx, according to Engels? How are these relevant to people who advocate for socialism?
4. Engels says that Marx was “the most hated man” of his time, but also that he died “beloved, revered, and mourned.” Explain this paradox.

Concepts

Historical Materialism (also known as the Materialist theory of history)

Class Struggle

Exploitation

Surplus Value

Labor Power

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1. https://www.marxists.org/archive/mar...x/eng-1869.htm ↵
2. https://www.marxists.org/archive/mar...rx/eleanor.htm ↵
3. https://www.marxists.org/archive/lie.../karl-marx.htm ↵
4. https://www.marxists.org/archive/mar...ath/burial.htm ↵
5. Lenchen was Jenny’s friend and household maidservant. She was with the family her entire life. ↵
6. Mohr was a nickname for Marx; it is the German word for “Moor,” used to describe Marx because if his general swarthiness. ↵

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1.2: Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844

"The worker becomes all the poorer the more wealth she produces."

NOTE ON SOURCE: Years after Marx's death, a series of notebooks were finally transcribed and published, first in the Soviet Union in 1927 and in the US in 1959 (just in time for the turbulent '60's). It is here where Marx discusses most fully the well-known concept of alienation. The selections below are taken from the translation freely available on the Marxist Archives website, with minor modifications and condensation.

Introduction – Why this is important and what to look for

In the 1844 manuscripts, written when still a young man, Marx struggled to articulate what was so problematic about the current system of capitalism. These early passages of Marx demonstrate the fundamental problems of social relations under class rule. Rather than focus on the concept of exploitation, or what was economically unfair about the social relationship between capitalist and worker, Marx critiqued the historical development of hired labor and the ways in which this kind of work dehumanizes those who take part in it. We are fully ourselves when we work, but we have socially arranged our work so that it is alien to us, a hostile power at another's command. Marx uses the word alienation (or estrangement) to describe this dehumanization. Take note of the various aspects of alienation discussed by Marx.

We have proceeded from the premises of political economy. We have accepted its language and its laws. We have shown that the worker sinks to the level of a commodity and becomes indeed the most wretched of commodities; that the wretchedness of the worker is in inverse proportion to the power and magnitude of his production; that the necessary result of competition is the accumulation of capital in a few hands, and that, eventually, the whole of society must fall apart into the two classes – property owners and property-less workers.

Political economy starts with the fact of private property; it does not explain it to us. Now, therefore, *we have to grasp the intrinsic connection between* private property, greed, the separation of labor, capital and landed property; the connection of exchange and competition, of value and the devaluation of man, of monopoly and competition, etc. – the connection between this whole estrangement and the *money* system.

We proceed from an *actual* economic fact.

The worker becomes all the poorer the more wealth he produces, the more his production increases in power and size. The worker becomes an ever-cheaper commodity the more commodities he creates. This fact expresses merely that the object which labor produces – labor's product – confronts it as *something alien*, as a *power independent* of the producer. The product of labor is labor which has been embodied in an object, which has become material: it is the *objectification* of labor. Labor's realization is its objectification. Under these economic conditions this realization of labor appears as *loss of realization* for the workers' objectification as *loss of the object and bondage to it*; appropriation as *estrangement*, as *alienation*

Political economy conceals the estrangement inherent in the nature of labor by not considering the direct *relationship between the* worker(labor) *and production*. It is true that labor produces for the rich wonderful things, but for the worker it produces poverty. It produces mansions, but for the worker, shacks. It produces beauty, but for the worker, deformity. It replaces labor by machines, but it throws one section of the workers back into barbarous types of labor and it turns the other section into a machine. It produces intelligence, but for the worker, stupidity, ignorance.

Until now we have been considering the alienation of the worker only in one of its aspects – her relationship to the products of her labor. But the alienation (also known as estrangement) is manifested not only in the result but in the act of production, within the producing activity, itself.

What, then, constitutes the alienation of labor?

First, the fact that labor is *external* to the worker. In other words, it does not belong to her intrinsic nature. In her work she does not affirm himself but denies herself. She does not feel content but unhappy, does not develop freely her physical and mental energy but instead mortifies her body and ruins her mind. The worker only feels herself outside her work, and in her work feels outside herself. *She feels at home when she is not working, and when she is working, she does not feel at home*. Her labor is therefore not

voluntary, but coerced; it is *forced labor*. It is therefore not the satisfaction of a need; it is merely a *means* to satisfy needs external to it. Finally, it is not her own work, but someone else's. It doesn't really belong to her but to another.

As a result, therefore, a human being (the worker) only feels herself freely active in her animal functions – eating, drinking, reproducing, or at most in her dwelling and in dressing-up, etc.; and in her human functions she no longer feels herself to be anything but an animal. What is animal becomes human and what is human becomes animal.

We have now covered the first two aspects of alienation: first, alienation from the product, and second, alienation from the process. We now have to consider two more.

Humans are a species-being. The life of the species, both in humans and in non-human animals, consists physically in the fact that humans (like other animals) lives on organic nature. Like all animals, humans *live* on nature –nature is our *body*, and we must remain in continuous interchange with it to stay alive. That our physical and spiritual life is linked to nature means simply that nature is linked to itself, for we are a part of nature. In estranging from us (1) nature, and (2) ourselves,

Our own active functions, our life activity, estranged labor estranges the *species* from us. It changes for us the *life of the species* into a means of individual life.

For labor, *life activity, productive life* itself, appears to us merely as a *means* of satisfying a need – the need to maintain physical existence. Yet the productive life is the life of the species. It is life-engendering life. The whole character of a species, its species-character, is contained in the character of its life activity; and free, conscious activity is our species-character. Life itself appears only as a *means to life*. This, too, is an aspect of alienation.

The non-human animal is immediately one with its life activity. It does not distinguish itself from it. It is *its life activity*. We, however, make our life activity itself the object of our will and consciousness. Conscious life activity distinguishes us immediately from all other animal life activity. It is just because of this that we are the human species (that is our "species-being"). Estranged labor reverses the relationship, what makes us human is something that is a mere means to existence rather than our very existence itself.

In creating a *world of objects* by our personal activity, we prove ourselves a conscious species-being. Admittedly animals also produce. They build themselves nests, dwellings, like the bees, beavers, ants, etc. But an animal only produces what it immediately needs for itself or its young. It produces one-sidedly, whilst we produce universally. An animal's product belongs immediately to its physical body, while this is not true for us.

The object of labor is, therefore, the *objectification of our species-life*: for we see ourselves in the world we create. In tearing away from us the object of our production, therefore, estranged labor tears from us our *species-life*, transforms our advantage over other animals into the disadvantage that our inorganic body, nature, is taken from us.

We thus have two more aspects of alienation. The third is alienation from our species-being, that which makes us human. Following from this is the fourth, our alienation from other human beings. The proposition that man's species-nature is estranged from him means that one man is estranged from the other, as each of them is from man's essential nature.

Our alienation is realized and expressed only in the relationship in which we stand to other humans. Hence within the relationship of alienated labor each person views the other in accordance with the standard and the relationship in which she finds herself as a worker.

Let us now see, further, how the concept of estranged, alienated labor must express and present itself in real life. If the product of labor is alien to me, if it confronts me as an alien power, to whom, then, does it belong? To a being *other* than myself. Who is this being? To god(s)? Perhaps back in the day, but not now. Not the gods, not nature, but only man himself can be this alien power over us. Thus, if the product of his labor, his labor objectified, is for him an *alien, hostile*, powerful object independent of him, then his position towards it is such that someone else is master of this object, *someone who is alien, hostile, powerful, and independent of him*. If he treats his own activity as an unfree activity, then he treats it as an activity performed in the service, under the dominion, the coercion, and the yoke of another man.

Through *estranged, alienated labor*, then, the worker produces the relationship to this labor of a man alien to labor and standing outside it. The relationship of the worker to labor creates the relationship to it of the capitalist (or whatever one chooses to call the master of labor). *Private property* is thus the product, the result, the necessary consequence, of *alienated labor*, of the external

relation of the worker to nature and to himself. *Private property* thus results by analysis from the concept of *alienated labor*, i.e., of *alienated man*, of estranged labor, of estranged life, of *estranged* man.

Wages are a direct consequence of estranged labor, and estranged labor is the direct cause of private property. The downfall of the one must, therefore, involve the downfall of the other. From the relationship of estranged labor to private property it follows further that the emancipation of society from private property, etc., from servitude, is expressed in the *political* form of the *emancipation of the workers*; not that *their* emancipation alone is at stake, but because the emancipation of the workers contains universal human emancipation – and it contains this because the whole of human servitude is involved in the relation of the worker to production, and all relations of servitude are but modifications and consequences of this relation.

Questions

1. Think about jobs you have had. Did you feel fully yourself on the job or out of it? Did working satisfy a need, or was it merely a way to get paid? Now think about activities in which you *work* but this is self-directed (playing music in a band, performing a sport, making dinner for a friend). Do you see the difference Marx was drawing here?
2. What makes humans different from other animals? *Do you agree?* How does alienation undercut our species-being?
3. Would it ever be possible to arrange our social relations in a way that labor is not alienated? What would this look like? Try to imagine such an arrangement (this is a helpful exercise as we move forward to reading the *Communist Manifesto*).
4. Marx began this essay by saying that he wanted to uncover the connections between the division of labor, private property, and wealth/poverty. Has he succeeded? Explain.
5. Why is the “emancipation of workers” so important?

Concepts

Alienation (all four aspects)

Species-being

Private Property

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1.3: Marx on Wages

"Wages are the price of labor-power, not labor."

NOTE ON SOURCE: This selection was from a book published in 1900 entitled *The People's Marx.* This book has an interesting history and has never been republished. You may be one of a handful of people on the planet who are reading this. Soon after the publication of *Capital* in 1867, many followers of Marx felt it would be helpful to have an abridged version specifically for workers to read. After his death, his son-in-law, Dr. Aveling, attempted to put together such a work. It was first published in 1883 in French by Gabriel Deville, a French Marxist. The work consisted of about 250 pages of the original 800-page *Capital.* It was then translated into English by Robert Rives La Monte and published in New York in 1900. It is from this source that the selection on *Wages* comes.

Introduction – Why this is important and what to look for

In the preface to The People's Marx, *the translator (La Monte) refers to the first volume of* Capital *as "the Bible of the working class." That appellation is particularly apt for the selection you have here, on wages. According to Marx, thinking about wages as payment like any other commodity fundamentally obscures the social relation between employer and employee. The argument is put forth here quite clearly, and can be read in conjunction with, or as a supplement to, the more complete selections from* Capital.

Chapter 19. The Transformation of the Value or Price of Labor Power into Wages

If we look only on the surface of bourgeois society, the wages of the laborer seem to be the remuneration of labor – so much money paid for so much labor. Labor is then treated as a commodity, the market-price of which rises and falls above or below its value.

But what is this value? Value represents the social labor expended in the production of a commodity. And how is the magnitude of value of a commodity measured? By the quantity of labor that it contains. How then do we determine, for example, the value of twelve hours' labor? By the twelve hours' labor that it contains, which is evidently absurd.

In order to be taken to market, and sold as a commodity, the labor must, at all events, have been in existence beforehand. But if the laborer could endow it with a material existence, separate from and independent of herself, she would sell a commodity and not labor.

That which directly confronts the capitalist on the market is not labor, but the laborer. What she sells is her labor-power. As soon as she begins to exert her labor-power, to labor, as soon as her labor exists, this labor has already ceased to belong to her, and can no longer be sold by her. Labor is the substance and measure of value, but itself has no value. The expression, value of labor, is an inaccurate expression which has its source in the apparent forms of the relations of production.

Having made this error, classical political economy proceeded to inquire how the price of labor was determined. It recognized that in the case of labor, as in the case of every other commodity, the relation between supply and demand explained only the oscillations of the market price above or below a certain mean. As soon as supply and demand balance each other, the changes in the price which they had occasioned cease, but the whole effect of supply and demand also ceases at the same point. If, when they are in equilibrium, the price of labor no longer depends upon their influence, upon what then does it depend? The price of labor, like the price of every other commodity, can only be its value expressed in money, and this value, political economy determined in the last analysis, by the value of the means of subsistence necessary for the support and reproduction of the laborer. Without suspecting it, political economy thus substituted for the ostensible subject of its researches, the value of labor, the value of labor-power, a power which exists only in the person of the laborer, and is distinct from its function, labor, just as a machine is the distance from its operations. But classical political economy remained unconscious of this confusion.

The Wage-Form Conceals the Real Relation between Capital and Labor'

According to all the appearances, indeed, what the capitalist pays is the value of the utility that the laborer gives him, the value of labor. Moreover, the laborer is not paid until she has delivered her labor. Now, in its function as means of payment money only realized subsequently the value or price of the article delivered – in this case, the value or price of the labor performed. Nothing but the experience of practical life brings to light the twofold utility of labor – the property of satisfying a need, which it has in common with all commodities, and the property of creating value which differentiates it from all other commodities and makes it impossible for it, as the value-creating element, to have any value of its own.

Take a day of 8 hours producing a value of $160, half of which is equal to the daily value of labor-power. By confounding the value of the power with the value of its function, with the labor that it performs, we get this formula: 8 hours' labor has a value of $80; and we thus reach the absurd result that labor which creates a value of $160 is worth only $80. But in a capitalist society this is not apparent. There, the value of $80 for the production of which only four hours are requisite, appears as the value of a full day's labor. By receiving a wage of $80 a day, the laborer appears to receive all the value to which her labor entitles her, and it is precisely on this account that the excess of the value of her product over the value of her wage takes the form of a surplus value of $80 created by capital and not by labor.

The wage-form, or direct payment of labor, therefore, extinguishes every trace of the division of the working day into necessary labor and surplus labor – into paid labor and unpaid labor – so that all the labor of the free laborer is deemed to be paid labor. In the *corvée*,[1] the labor of the serve for himself and his compulsory labor for his lord are clearly distinct from each other, being performed in different places. In the system of slavery, even that part of the day in which the slave is only replacing the value of his own means of subsistence, in which, therefore, he really works for himself, seems to be labor for the owner. All his labor wears the appearance of unpaid labor. In slavery, the property relation conceals the labor of the slave for himself. In the wage-system, the money relation conceals the gratuitous labor of the wage-worker for the capitalist.

It is now possible to understand the immense practical importance of this change of form which makes the remuneration of labor-power appear as the wages of labor – the price of labor-power as the price of its function. The apparent form renders the real relation between capital and labor invisible. From it flow all the juridical notions of the wage-laborer and the capitalist, all the mystifications of capitalist production, all the illusions regarding liberty, all the justifications rhetoric of ordinary political economy.

Questions

1. What does it mean to say that wages are the price of labor-power, not labor?
2. Why is it necessary to point out that political economy has confused labor-power with labor? How is Marx's insight here a sociological one? How does the system of "wages" work to conceal the social relationship between capital and labor?
3. Have you ever wondered why, when you go to work, you get paid *after* the completion of the work (sometimes by weeks or even a month)? Can you think of situations where the laborer is paid *in advance*? What are the social differences between these types of labor? What does this say about social relations and power in capitalist society?

Concepts

Wages

Wage-Form

Labor Power

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1. In feudal times, serfs were often expected to work one day a week or one day out of three for the lord. This day was called the corvée. Marx is making a case that things haven't changed much for "free" laborers, just harder to see. ↵

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1.4: Marx on Wage Labor and Capital

"Like a master, at once distinguished and barbarous, Capital drags with it into its grave the corpses of its slaves, whole hecatombs of workers, who perish in its economic crises."

NOTE ON SOURCE: This selection was written by Marx in 1847 as a series of lectures for British workers. It was first published in English in 1891. Much of what is included here would eventually find its way into *Capital* years later, in a much more polished form. The original document can be found on-line in the Marxist Archives.[1]

Introduction – Why this is important and what to look for

As with the previous selection (1c), this piece was written by Marx to workers themselves as an explanation of how wages were determined and valued. He would eventually have much more to say on the matter in his multi-volume masterpiece, Capital. *When reading, think about your own experiences with work and wages. Does this explanation help you understand the social relationship between the worker and the employer?*

Wage Labor and Capital

What are Wages? How are they Determined?

If several workmen were to be asked: "How much wages do you get?", one would reply, "I get $9 an hour," "$50 a day," and so on. They would all agree upon one point: that wages are the amount of money which the capitalist pays for a certain period of work or for a certain amount of work.

Consequently, it appears that the capitalist buys their labor with money, and that for money they sell her their labor. *But this is merely an illusion.* What they actually sell to the capitalist for money is their labor-power. This labor-power the capitalist buys for a day, a week, a month, etc. And after she has bought it, she uses it up by letting the workers work during the stipulated time.

Wages are only a special name for the price of labor-power and are usually called the price of labor; it is the special name for the price of this peculiar commodity, which has no other repository than human flesh and blood.

Consequently, labor-power is a commodity which its possessor, the wage-worker, sells to the capitalist. Why does he sell it? It is in order to live.

But the putting of labor-power into action – i.e., the work – is the active expression of the laborer's own life. And this life activity he sells to another person in order to secure the necessary means of life. His life-activity, therefore, is but a means of securing his own existence. He works that he may keep alive.

Labor-power was not always a commodity (merchandise). Labor was not always wage-labor, i.e., free labor. The slave did not sell her labor-power to the slave-owner, any more than the ox sells his labor to the farmer. The slave, together with her labor-power, was sold to her owner once for all. She is a commodity that can pass from the hand of one owner to that of another. She herself is a commodity, but her labor-power is not her commodity. The serf sells only a portion of his labor-power. It is not he who receives wages from the owner of the land; it is rather the owner of the land who receives a tribute from him. The serf belongs to the soil, and to the lord of the soil he brings its fruit. The free laborer, on the other hand, sells her very self, and that by fractions. She auctions off eight, 10, 12, 15 hours of her life, one day like the next, to the highest bidder, to the owner of raw materials, tools, and the means of life – i.e., to the capitalist. The laborer belongs neither to an owner nor to the soil, but eight, 10, 12, 15 hours of her daily life belong to whomsoever buys them. The worker leaves the capitalist, to whom she has sold herself, as often as she chooses, and the capitalist discharges her as often as he sees fit, as soon as he no longer gets any use, or not the required use, out of her. But the worker, whose only source of income is the sale of her labor-power, cannot leave the whole class of buyers, i.e., the capitalist class, unless she gives up her own existence. She does not belong to this or that capitalist, but to the capitalist class; and it is for her to find her own employer – i.e., to find a buyer in this capitalist class.

By what are wages determined?

Now, the same general laws which regulate the price of commodities in general, naturally regulate wages, or the price of labor-power. Wages will now rise, now fall, according to the relation of supply and demand, according as competition shapes itself between the buyers of labor-power, the capitalists, and the sellers of labor-power, the workers. The fluctuations of wages

correspond to the fluctuation in the price of commodities in general. But within the limits of these fluctuations the price of labor-power will be determined by the cost of production, by the labor-time necessary for production of this commodity: labor-power.

What, then, is the cost of production of labor-power?

It is the cost required for the maintenance of the laborer as a laborer, and for his education and training as a laborer.

Therefore, the shorter the time required for training up to a particular sort of work, the smaller is the cost of production of the worker, the lower is the price of his labor-power, his wages. In those branches of industry in which hardly any period of apprenticeship is necessary, and the mere bodily existence of the worker is sufficient, the cost of his production is limited almost exclusively to the commodities necessary for keeping him in working condition. *The price of his work will therefore be determined by the price of the necessary means of subsistence.*

The Nature and Growth of Capital.

In the process of production, human beings work not only upon nature, but also upon one another. They produce only by working together in a specified manner and reciprocally exchanging their activities. In order to produce, they enter into definite connections and relations to one another, and only within these social connections and relations does their influence upon nature operate – i.e., does production take place.

These social relations between the producers, and the conditions under which they exchange their activities and share in the total act of production, will naturally vary according to the character of the means of production.

The relations of production in their totality constitute what is called the social relations, society, and, moreover, a society at a definite stage of historical development, a society with peculiar, distinctive characteristics. Ancient society, feudal society, bourgeois (or capitalist) society, are such totalities of relations of production, each of which denotes a particular stage of development in the history of mankind.

Capital also is a social relation of production. Capital is not only a sum of material products, it is a sum of commodities, of exchange values, of social magnitudes. Capital remains the same whether we put cotton in the place of wool, rice in the place of wheat, steamships in the place of railroads, provided only that the cotton, the rice, the steamships – the body of capital – have the same exchange value, the same price, as the wool, the wheat, the railroads, in which it was previously embodied. The bodily form of capital may transform itself continually, while capital does not suffer the least alteration.

The existence of a class which possesses nothing but the ability to work is a necessary presupposition of capital. It is only the dominion of past, accumulated, materialized labor over immediate living labor that stamps the accumulated labor with the character of capital. Capital does not consist in the fact that accumulated labor serves living labor as a means for new production. It consists in the fact that living labor serves accumulated labor as the means of preserving and multiplying its exchange value.

Relation of Wage-Labor to Capital.

What is it that takes place in the exchange between the capitalist and the wage-laborer? The laborer receives means of subsistence in exchange for his labor-power; the capitalist receives, in exchange for his means of subsistence, labor, the productive activity of the laborer, the creative force by which the worker not only replaces what he consumes, *but also gives to the accumulated labor a greater value than it previously possessed.* The laborer gets from the capitalist a portion of the existing means of subsistence.

Does a worker in a cotton factory produce only cotton? No. She produces capital. She produces values which serve anew to command her work and to create by means of its new values. Capital can multiply itself only by exchanging itself for labor-power, by calling wage-labor into life. The labor-power of the wage-laborer can exchange itself for capital only by increasing capital, by strengthening that very power whose slave it is. Increase of capital, therefore, is increase of the proletariat, i.e., of the working class.

And so, the bourgeoisie and its economists maintain that the interest of the capitalist and of the laborer is the same. And in fact, so they are! The worker perishes if capital does not keep him busy. Capital perishes if it does not exploit labor-power, which, in order to exploit, it must buy.

But what is growth of productive capital? Growth of the power of accumulated labor over living labor; growth of the rule of the bourgeoisie over the working class. When wage-labor produces the alien wealth dominating it, the power hostile to it, capital, there

flow back to it its means of employment – i.e., its means of subsistence, under the condition that it again become a part of capital, that is become again the lever whereby capital is to be forced into an accelerated expansive movement.

To say that the interests of capital and the interests of the workers are identical, signifies only this: that capital and wage-labor are two sides of one and the same relation. The one conditions the other in the same way that the usurer and the borrower condition each other.

As long as the wage-laborer remains a wage-laborer, his lot is dependent upon capital.

Wages are determined above all by their relations to the gain, the profit, of the capitalist. In other words, wages are a proportionate, relative quantity.

If capital grows, the mass of wage-labor grows, the number of wage-workers increases; in a word, the sway of capital extends over a greater mass of individuals.

What, then, is the general law that determines the rise and fall of wages and profit in their reciprocal relation? They stand in inverse proportion to each other. The share of (profit) increases in the same proportion in which the share of labor (wages) falls, and vice versa. Profit rises in the same degree in which wages fall; it falls in the same degree in which wages rise.

We thus see that the interests of capitals and the interests of wage-labor are diametrically opposed to each other.

If the income of the worker increased with the rapid growth of capital, there is at the same time a widening of the social chasm that divides the worker from the capitalist, and increase in the power of capital over labor, a greater dependence of labor upon capital. To say that "the worker has an interest in the rapid growth of capital", means only this: that the more speedily the worker augments the wealth of the capitalist, the larger will be the crumbs which fall to him, the greater will be the number of workers than can be called into existence, the more can the mass of slaves dependent upon capital be increased.

The more productive capital grows, the more it extends the division of labor and the application of machinery; the more the division of labor and the application of machinery extend, the more does competition extend among the workers, the more do their wages shrink together. Capitalists are forced to compete with each other in order to stay in business. They replace workers with machinery wherever possible. They replace skilled workers with unskilled workers, which are less costly. Capitalists who cannot compete (especially small business owners) become proletarians themselves.

Machinery supplants skilled laborers by unskilled, men by women, adults by children; where newly introduced, it throws workers upon the streets in great masses; and as it becomes more highly developed and more productive it discards them in additional though smaller numbers. The laborer seeks to maintain the total of his wages for a given time by performing more labor, either by working a great number of hours, or by accomplishing more in the same number of hours. Thus, urged on by want, he himself multiplies the disastrous effects of division of labor. The result is: the more he works, the less wages he receives. And for this simple reason: the more he works, the more he competes against his fellow workmen, the more he compels them to compete against him, and to offer themselves on the same wretched conditions as he does; so that, in the last analysis, he competes against himself as a member of the working class.

Capital not only lives upon labor. Like a master, at once distinguished and barbarous, it drags with it into its grave the corpses of its slaves, whole hecatombs of workers, who perish in the crises.

We thus see that if capital grows rapidly, competition among the workers grows with even greater rapidity – i.e., the means of employment and subsistence for the working class decrease in proportion even more rapidly; but, this notwithstanding, the rapid growth of capital is the most favorable condition for wage-labor.

Questions

1. Give examples of both (a) means of production and (b) mode of production. Be sure you know the difference between these two concepts.
2. Why does Marx spend so much time focusing on *production*?
3. Explain what Marx means by saying that "the rapid growth of capital is the most favorable condition for wage labor." How would he respond to hearing someone say that business owners are job creators?
4. What is social relationship between capitalists and workers? Is the economic relationship mutually productive, or is it a zero-sum relationship (one's gain is the other's loss?) Evaluate this position.

5. If you were a worker hearing these lectures in 1847, how would you respond?
6. Over time, what happens to small business owners?
7. Over time, what happens to the relative power of capitalist and worker?

Concepts

Polarization

Concentration of Capital

Surplus Value

Mode of Production

Means of Production

Free Wage Labor

Labor Power

Commodity

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1. https://www.marxists.org/archive/mar...1/prin-com.htm ↵

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1.5: Value, Price and Profit

"Abolition of the wages system!"

NOTE ON SOURCE: This selection was from a speech Marx gave in 1865 to the General International Congress and translated and published by his daughter, Eleanor Aveling, in 1908, from which the following passage has been taken. The entire work is composed a series of short explanatory essays on various aspects of the workings of capitalism. It has never been republished in its entirety.

Introduction – Why this is important and what to look for

In the preface to the 1908 publication, Edward Aveling, Marx's son-in-law, recommends the work as "an epitome of the first volume of Capital,*" written more accessibly for the general reader. He states, "Among many other characteristics of Marx, this paper shows two especially. These are his patient willingness to make the meaning of his ideas plain to the humblest student, and the extraordinary clearness of those ideas" (page 3). You may want to compare the presentation of the discussion of profit, surplus value, and class struggle here, with the presentation in* Capital.

Value and Labor

The first question we have to put is: What is the *value* of a commodity? How is it determined?

At first sight it would seem that the value of a commodity is a thing quite *relative*, and not to be settled without considering one commodity in its relations to all other commodities. In fact, in speaking of the value, the value in exchange of a commodity, we mean the proportional quantities in which it exchanges with all other commodities. But then arises the question: How are the proportions in which commodities exchange with each other regulated?

A commodity has a *value*, because it is a *crystallization of social labor*. The *greatness* of its value, or its *relative* value, depends upon the greater or less amount of that social substance contained in it; that is to say, on the relative mass of labor necessary for its production. The *relative values of commodities* are, therefore, determined by the *respective quantities or amounts of labor, worked up, realized, fixed in them*. The *correlative* qualities of commodities which can be produced in the *same time of labor* are *equal.* Or the value of one commodity is to the value of another commodity as the quantity of labor fixed in the one is to the quantity of labor fixed in another.

It might seem that if the value of a commodity is determined by the *quantity of labor bestowed upon its production*, the lazier the man, or the clumsier a man, the more valuable his commodity, because the greater the time of labor required for finishing the commodity. This, however, would be a sad mistake. You will recollect that I used the word, "*Social* labor," and many points are involved in this qualification of "*Social*." In saying that the value of a commodity is determined by the *quantity of labor* worked up or crystallized in it, we mean *the quantity of labor necessary* for its production in a given state of society, under certain social average conditions of production, with a given social average intensity, and average skill of labor employed.

The Different Parts into which Surplus Value is Decomposed

The *surplus value*, or that part of the total value of the commodity in which the *surplus labor* or *unpaid labor* of the working man is realized, I call *Profit*. The whole of that profit is not pocketed by the employing capitalist. The monopoly of land enables the landlord to take one part of that *surplus value*, under the name of *rent*, whether the land is used for agriculture, buildings or railways, or for any other productive purpose. On the other hand, the very fact that the possession of the *instruments of labor* enables the employing capitalist to produce a *surplus value*, or, what comes to the same, to *appropriate to himself a certain amount of unpaid labor*, enables the owner of the means of labor, which he lends wholly or partly to the employing capitalist – enables, in one word, the money-lending capitalist to claim for himself under the name of *interest* another part of that surplus value, so that there remains to the employing capitalist *as such* only what is called *industrial* or *commercial profit*.

By what laws this division of the total amount of surplus value amongst the three categories of people is regulated is a question quite foreign to our subject. This much, however, results from what has been stated. *Rent, Interest, and Industrial Profit* are only *different names* for different parts of the *surplus value* of the commodity or the *unpaid labor enclosed in it*, and they are *equally derived from this source, and from this source alone*.

It is the employing capitalist who immediately extracts from the laborer this surplus value, whatever part of it he may ultimately be able to keep for himself. Upon this relation, therefore, between the employing capitalist and the wages laborer the whole wages system and the whole present system of production hinge.

Attempts at Raising Wages

In workers' attempts at reducing the working day to its former rational dimensions, or, where they cannot enforce a legal fixation of a normal working day, at checking overwork by a rise of wages, a rise not only in proportion to the surplus time extracted, but in a greater proportion, workers fulfill only a duty to themselves. They only set limits to the tyrannical usurpations of capital. Time is the root of human development. A worker who has no free time to dispose of, whose whole lifetime, apart from the mere physical interruptions by sleep, meals, and so forth, is absorbed by work for the capitalist, is less than a beast of burden. She is a mere machine for producing Foreign Wealth, broken in body and brutalized in mind. Yet the whole history of modern industry shows that capital, if not checked, will recklessly and ruthlessly work to cast down the whole working class to this utmost state of degradation.

The Struggle between Capital and Labor and Its Results

As to *profits*, there exists no law which determines their *minimum*. We cannot say what is the ultimate limit of their decrease. And why cannot we fix that limit? Because, although we can fix the *minimum* of wages, we cannot fix their *maximum*. We can only say that, the limits of the working day being given, the *maximum* of profit corresponds to the *physical minimum of wages;* and that wages being given, the *maximum of profit* corresponds to such a prolongation of the working day as is compatible with the physical forces of the laborer. The maximum of profit is therefore limited by the physical minimum of wages and the physical maximum of the working day. It is evident that between the two limits of this *maximum rate of profit* an immense scale of variations is possible. The fixation of its actual degree is only settled by the continuous struggle between capital and labor, the capitalist constantly tending to reduce wages to their physical minimum, and to extend the working day to its physical maximum, while the worker constantly presses in the opposite direction.

The matter resolves itself into a question of the respective powers of the combatants.

As to the *limitation of the working day*, it has never been settled except by *legislative interference*. Without the workers' continuous pressure from without that interference would never have taken place. But at all events, the result was not to be attained by private settlement between the workers and the capitalists. This very necessity or *general political action* affords the proof that in its merely economic action capital is the stronger side.

These few hints will suffice to show that the very development of modern industry must progressively turn the scale in favor of the capitalist against the worker, and that consequently the general tendency of capitalistic production is not to raise, but to sink the average standard of wages, or to push the *value of labor* more or less to its *minimum limit*. Such being the tendency of *things* in this system, is this saying that the working class ought to renounce their resistance against the encroachments of capital, and abandon their attempts at making the best of the occasional chances for their temporary improvement? If they did, they would be degraded to one level mass of broken wretches past salvation. I think I have shown that their struggles for the standard of wages are incidents inseparable from the whole wages system, than in 99 cases out of 100 their efforts at raising wages are only efforts at maintaining the given value of labor, and that the necessity of debating their price with the capitalist is inherent to their condition of having to sell themselves as commodities. By cowardly giving way in their everyday conflict with capital, they would eventually disqualify themselves for the initiating of any larger movement.

At the same time, and quite apart from the general servitude involved in the wages system, the working class ought not to exaggerate to themselves the ultimate working of these every-day struggles. They ought not to forget that they are fighting with effects, but not with the causes of those effects; that they are retarding the downward movement, but not changing its direction; that they are applying palliatives, not curing the malady. They ought, therefore, not to be exclusively absorbed by these unavoidable guerilla fights incessantly springing up from the ever-ceasing encroachments of capital or changes of the market. They ought to understand that, with all the miseries it imposes upon them, the present system simultaneously engenders the *material conditions* and the *social forms* necessary for an economic reconstruction of society. Instead of the *conservative motto, "A fair day's wages for a fair day's work!* "they ought to inscribe on their banner the *revolutionary* watchword, "*Abolition of the wages system!"*

After this very long and, I fear, tedious exposition which I was obliged to enter into to do some justice to the subject-matter, I shall conclude by proposing the following resolutions: –

Firstly, A general rise in the rate of wages would result in a fall of the general rate of profit, but, broadly speaking not affect the prices of commodities

Secondly, the general tendency of capitalist production is not to raise, but to sink the average standard of wages.

Thirdly, Trades Unions work well as centers of resistance against the encroachments of capital. They fail partially from an injudicious use of their power. They fail generally from limiting themselves to a guerilla war against the effects of the existing system, instead of simultaneously trying to change it, instead of using their organized forces as a lever for the final emancipation of the working class, that is to say, the ultimate abolition of the wages system.

Questions

1. Marx explains the importance of the social relation between employing capitalist and wage laborer. Why is this relationship fundamental to understanding our current society?
2. Why is it necessary for the working class to fight for a living wage? What would Marx say about the idea, taken up in several advanced countries today, that the work week should be limited to four days a week?
3. Why does Marx see *general political action* as necessary? What kinds of actions does he mean? Give contemporary examples.
4. Some people today believe that taking government out of business will produce higher wages and better jobs for all. Why does Marx disagree? Is he persuasive?
5. What is the difference between fighting for a living wage and fighting to abolish the wage system? What does Marx advise the working class to do? Where should it direct is efforts, and why?

Concepts

Commodity

Surplus Value

Rent

Rate of Profit

Class Struggle

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1.6: Capital, part 1

Commodity – Money – Commodity.
C——— M ———C.

NOTE ON SOURCE: The source of the following passages is the first volume of *Das Kapital: Kritik der politischen Ökonomie*, published in Germany in 1867 by Verlag. Although Marx would write two more volumes before his death, neither was published in his lifetime. The first translated publications were in Russia and France (both in 1872), largely under Marx's direction. The first English translation was translated by Samuel Moore and Edward Aveling (the partner of Marx's youngest daughter) and overseen by Engels and published in 1887, four years after Marx's death. It has since been translated into every major language and is even available in *Manga* form. A recommended translation of the entire works is that by Ben Fowkes, available through Penguin Classics.

Introduction – Why this is important and what to look for

Capital*ism somewhat confusingly divided into books (or volumes), parts, and chapters (with both sections and sub-sections). Because so many people read* Capital *around the globe, in so many different languages and forms, it is important to keep the headings consistent across all translations. Book 1 is composed of eight parts and thirty-three chapters and takes as its subject "the Process and Production of Capital." Included here are passages from parts 1 and 3. It is in these books that Marx tries to explain the inner workings of capitalism. Try to connect the description of commodity production with Marx's definition of capital.*

Part 1. Commodities

The wealth of those societies in which the capitalist mode of production prevails, presents itself as "an immense accumulation of commodities." Our investigation must therefore begin with the analysis of a commodity.

That which determines the magnitude of the value of any article is the amount of labor socially necessary, or the labor time socially necessary for its production. As values, all commodities are only definite masses of congealed labor time. A thing can be a use value, without having value. This is the case whenever its utility to man is not due to labor (as in the case of air – we definitely use it, but it doesn't have a value as a commodity). A thing can also be useful, and be the product of human labor, and still not be a commodity. Whoever directly satisfies his wants with the produce of his own labor, creates, indeed, use values, but not commodities.

A commodity appears, at first sight, a very trivial thing, and easily understood. Its analysis shows that it is, in reality, a very odd thing. It is as clear as noon-day, that man, by his industry, changes the forms of the materials furnished by Nature, in such a way as to make them useful to him. The form of wood, for instance, is altered, by making a table out of it. Yet, for all that, the table continues to be that common, every-day thing, wood. But, so soon as it steps forth as a commodity, it is changed into something transcendent.

The equality of all sorts of human labor is expressed objectively by their products all being equally valued; the measure of the expenditure of labor power by the duration of that expenditure, takes the form of the quantity of value of the products of labor; and finally the mutual relations of the producers, within which the social character of their labor affirms itself, take the form of a social relation between the products.

In this way, we can equate a $35 stuffed animal with a $35 pair of sneakers with a $35 bottle of tequila, all of which are quite different and yet have the same apparent value.

A commodity is therefore a mysterious thing, simply because in it the social character of labor appears to people as an objective character stamped upon the product of that labor. A definite social relation between men appears in the fantastic form of a relation between things.

We forget that Hilda sewed the stuffed animal, for which she got paid $7/hour, or that Geraldo bottled the tequila, and instead see only the things themselves, as if they came about magically

This I call the Fetishism which attaches itself to the products of labor, so soon as they are produced as commodities, and which is therefore inseparable from the production of commodities. This Fetishism of commodities has its origin in the peculiar social character of the labor that produces them.

As a general rule, articles of utility become commodities, only because they are products of the labor of private individuals or groups of individuals who carry on their work independently of each other. The sum total of the labor of all these private individuals forms the aggregate labor of society. *Since the producers do not come into social contact with each other until they exchange their products, the specific social character of each producer's labor does not show itself* except in the act of exchange. In other words, the labor of the individual asserts itself as a part of the labor of society, only by means of the relations which the act of exchange establishes directly between the products, and indirectly, through them, between the producers. To the latter, therefore, the relations connecting the labor of one individual with that of the rest appear, not as direct social relations between individuals at work, but as what they really are, material relations between persons and social relation

Part 2. Transformation of Money into Capital

The first chief function of money is to supply commodities with the material for the expression of their values, or to represent their values as magnitudes of the same denomination, qualitatively equal, and quantitatively comparable. It thus serves as a *universal measure of value*. Price is the money-name of the labor realized in a commodity.

Marx proceeds to give some 19th century examples to show the relationship between money and commodities but I am going to update these for you…

Let us now accompany the owner of some commodity, let's follow Geraldo who has bottled his family's recipe for tequila. He sells his bottle for $35 and then he buys his daughter a stuffed animal. He never meets Hilda. He has exchanged his commodity for money, and then exchanged this money for a commodity. We can describe the circulation like this:

Commodity – Money – Commodity.
C——— M ———C.

The result of the whole process is, so far as concerns the objects themselves, C – C, the exchange of one commodity for another, the circulation of materialized social labor. When this result is attained, the process is at an end.

So what is capital?

The circulation of commodities is the starting-point of capital. The production of commodities, their circulation, and that more developed form of their circulation called commerce, these form the historical ground-work from which it rises. The modern history of capital dates from the creation in the 16th century of a world-embracing commerce and a world-embracing market. (*see CAPITAL)*

The simplest form of the circulation of commodities is C-M-C, the transformation of commodities into money, and the change of the money back again into commodities; or selling in order to buy. But alongside of this form we find another specifically different form: M-C-M, the transformation of money into commodities, and the change of commodities back again into money; or buying in order to sell. Money that circulates in the latter manner is thereby transformed into, becomes capital, and is already potentially capital.

Here's an updated example: Mr. Knight buys a ton of sneakers made by workers in Malaysia for $1.2 million. He then sells all those sneakers for $3 million. He has now converted his original money into a commodity for the purpose of acquiring more money. We can see this as M-C-M, and it is the heart of capitalism.

Capitalism requires commodities.

The expansion of value, which is the objective basis or main-spring of the circulation M-C-M, becomes the capitalist's subjective aim, and it is only in so far as the appropriation of ever more and more wealth in the abstract becomes the sole motive of his operations, that he functions as a capitalist. Use-values must therefore never be looked upon as the real aim of the capitalist; neither must the profit on any single transaction. *The restless never-ending process of profit-making alone is what he aims at.* This boundless greed after riches, this passionate chase after exchange-value is common to the capitalist and the miser; but while the miser is merely a capitalist gone mad, the capitalist is a rational miser.

How is it that one can buy a commodity and sell it for more than what one paid for it? What kind of commodity allows that? The change of value that occurs in the case of money intended to be converted into capital, cannot take place in the money itself, since in its function of means of purchase and of payment, it does no more than realize the price of the commodity it buys or pays for; and, as hard cash, it is value petrified, never varying. Just as little can it originate in the second act of circulation, the re-sale of the commodity, which does no more than transform the article from its bodily form back again into its money-form. In order to be able to extract value from the consumption of a commodity, our friend, Moneybags, must be so lucky as to find a commodity, whose use-value possesses the peculiar property of being a source of value, whose actual consumption, therefore, is itself an embodiment of labor, and, consequently, a creation of value. The possessor of money does find on the market such a special commodity in capacity for labor or labor-power. (*see LABOR POWER)*

By labor-power or capacity for labor is to be understood the aggregate of those mental and physical capabilities existing in a human being, which he exercises whenever he produces a use-value of any description

But in order that our owner of money may be able to find labor-power offered for sale as a commodity, various conditions must first be fulfilled. FIRST, labor-power can appear upon the market as a commodity, only if, and so far as, its possessor, the individual whose labor-power it is, offers it for sale, or sells it, as a commodity. The owner of the labor-power should sell it only for a definite period, for if he were to sell it rump and stump, once for all, he would be selling himself, converting himself from a free man into a slave, from an owner of a commodity into a commodity.

SECOND, the laborer instead of being in the position to sell commodities in which his labor is incorporated, must be obliged to offer for sale as a commodity that very labor-power, which exists only in his living self.

Hilda cannot make stuffed animals and sell them herself because she doesn't own the tools (or means of production)

For the conversion of his money into capital, therefore, the owner of money must meet in the market with the free laborer, free in the double sense, that as a free man he can dispose of his labor-power as his own commodity, and that on the other hand he has no other commodity for sale, is short of everything necessary for the realization of his labor-power.

How is it that one person has the means to buy the labor power of another? Why is Mr. Knight the one who hires workers and Hilda is a person who sells her labor power?

This relation has no natural basis, neither is its social basis one that is common to all historical periods. *It is clearly the result of a past historical development*, the product of many economic revolutions, of the extinction of a whole series of older forms of social production.

So, too, the economic categories, already discussed by us, bear the stamp of history. Definite historical conditions are necessary that a product (including labor power) may become a commodity.

How is the value of the commodity labor-power determined? Labor-power exists only as a capacity, or power of the living individual. The value of labor-power is the value of the means of subsistence necessary for the maintenance of the laborer. If the owner of labor-power works to-day, to-morrow she must again be able to repeat the same process in the same conditions as regards health and strength. Her means of subsistence must therefore be sufficient to maintain her in her normal state as a laboring individual. Her natural wants, such as food, clothing, fuel, and housing, vary according to the climatic and other physical conditions of her country. The value must also include reproduction (enough to raise the next generation of workers) and education and training.

Like that of every other commodity, labor-power's value is already fixed before it goes into circulation, since a definite quantity of social labor has been spent upon it; but its use-value consists in the subsequent exercise of its force. The alienation of labor-power and its actual appropriation by the buyer, its employment as a use-value, are separated by an interval of time.

Mr. Knight hires Hilda for $50 per day, regardless of the value of what her labor power produces in that day. Even more, Hilda only gets paid after her working day (or month) is completed.

In all cases, therefore, the use-value of the labor-power is advanced to the capitalist: the laborer allows the buyer to consume it before he receives payment of the price; he everywhere gives credit to the capitalist. The labor-power is sold, although it is only paid for at a later period.

All this happens out in the open, and we are used to seeing the transaction as "free" – Hilda, after all, doesn't have to work for Mr. Knight. But what happens once she agrees to do so?

Mr. Knight, who before was the money-owner, now strides in front as capitalist; Hilda follows as his laborer. The one with an air of importance, smirking, intent on business; the other, timid and holding back, like one who is bringing her own hide to market and has nothing to expect but – a hiding.

Part 3. The Production of Absolute Surplus-Value

The capitalist buys labor-power in order to use it. The purchaser of labor-power consumes it by setting the seller of it to work. What the capitalist sets the laborer to produce, is a particular use-value, a specified article.

Let us now return to our would-be capitalist, Mr. Knight. We left him just after he had purchased, in the open market, all the necessary factors of the labor process; its objective factors, the means of production, as well as its subjective factor, labor-power. With the keen eye of an expert, he has selected the means of production and the kind of labor-power best adapted to his particular trade, in this case, the making of stuffed animals. He then proceeds to consume the commodity, the labor-power that he has just bought, by causing the laborer, the impersonation of that labor-power, to consume the means of production by his labor (that is, Hilda works the raw materials Mr. Knight has also bought, and uses the machines provided by him). Hilda, the worker, works under the control of the capitalist (Mr. Knight) to whom her labor belongs; the capitalist taking good care that the work is done in a proper manner, and that the means of production are used with intelligence, so that there is no unnecessary waste of raw material, and no wear and tear of the implements beyond what is necessarily caused by the work.

Secondly, the product is the property of the capitalist and not that of the laborer, its immediate producer.

If Mr. Knight pays Hilda $50 a day but she produces commodities worth ten times that amount, only Mr. Knight owns that extra value. Hilda might not ever be able to afford to buy the things she has produced.

By turning his money into commodities that serve as the material elements of a new product, and as factors in the labor-process, by incorporating living labor with their dead substance, the capitalist at the same time converts value, *i.e.*, past, materialized, and dead labor into capital, into value big with value, a live monster that is fruitful and multiplies (*see Capital)*

The surplus-value generated in the process of production presents itself as a surplus, as the amount by which the value of the product exceeds the value of its constituent elements.

Try to follow the math here, but remember the crucial point: the capitalist appropriates the difference between the value produced by the worker and the exchange value of what is produced:

The capital C is made up of two components, one, the sum of money c laid out upon the means of production, and the other, the sum of money v expended upon the labor-power; c represents the portion that has become constant capital, and v the portion that has become variable capital. At first then, C = c + v: for example, if $500 is the capital advanced, its components may be such that the $500 = $410 for the cost of the sewing machine + $90 payment of wages to workers. When the process of production is finished, we get a commodity whose value = (c + v) + s, where s is the surplus-value; or taking our former figures, the value of this commodity may be ($400 + $90.) + $90 surplus value. The original capital has now changed from C to C', from $500 to $590. The difference is a surplus-value of $90.

This sum of $90 or s expresses the absolute quantity of surplus-value produced. The relative quantity produced, or the increase percent of the variable capital, is determined by the ratio of the surplus-value to the variable capital, or is expressed by s/v. In our example this ratio is 90/90, which gives an increase of 100%. This relative increase in the value of the variable capital, or the relative magnitude of the surplus-value, I call, "The rate of surplus-value."

During one part of the work day Hilda works to produce the value of her own subsistence (what she will be paid). This might be four hours. In four hours, she has made enough stuffed animals to cover the cost of her wages. But remember she hired herself out for the entire workday. If she worked four more hours, whatever value she produces during that time is what provides surplus value to the capitalist. That is how capital grows.

During the second period of the labor-process, that in which his labor is no longer necessary labor, the workman, it is true, labors, expends labor-power; but his labor, being no longer necessary labor, he creates no value for himself. He creates surplus-value which, for the capitalist, has all the charms of a creation out of nothing. This portion of the working day, I name surplus labor-time, and to the labor expended during that time, I give the name of surplus labor. The essential difference between the various economic forms of society, between, for instance, a society based on slave-labor, and one based on wage-labor, lies only in the mode in which this surplus labor is in each case extracted from the actual producer, the worker.

The rate of surplus-value is therefore an exact expression for the degree of exploitation of labor-power by capital, or of the laborer by the capitalist.

Capital is dead labor, that, vampire-like, only lives by sucking living labor, and lives the more, the more labor it sucks. The time during which the laborer works, is the time during which the capitalist consumes the labor-power he has purchased of him.

Questions

1. Have you heard of "wage theft" or experienced it in a job yourself? Explain why Marx's explanation of how capital grows is merely a larger phenomenon of this practice.
2. How is the capitalist mode of production SIMILAR to and DIFFERENT from previous modes of production (slavery, feudalism) in terms of workers and the appropriation of the value they produce?
3. What separates the capitalist from the worker?
4. What differentiates money from capital?
5. In the past, the working day was set at 12 hours. Workers organized to get the day set at 8 hours a day (by law, if you work more than 8 hours, you get paid overtime). Should we set the working day at 6 hours? What would be the consequences?

Concepts

Commodity Fetishism

Capital

Labor Power

Surplus Value (and rate of)

Exploitation

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1.7: Capital, part 2

"Accumulate, accumulate! That is Moses and the prophets!"

NOTE ON SOURCE: The source of the following passages is the first volume of *Das Kapital: Kritik der politischen Ökonomie*, published in Germany in 1867 by Verlag. Although Marx would write two more volumes before his death, neither was published in his lifetime. The first translated publications were in Russia and France (both in 1872), largely under Marx's direction. The first English translation was translated by Samuel Moore and Edward Aveling (the partner of Marx's youngest daughter) and overseen by Engels and published in 1887, four years after Marx's death. It has since been translated into every major language and is even available in *Manga* form. A recommended translation of the entire works is that by Ben Fowkes, available through Penguin Classics.

Introduction – Why this is important and what to look for

Included here are passages from parts 7 and 8 of the first book of Capital. *In these chapters Marx explains why capitalists must push production ever further and how, historically speaking, the initial funds for capital development were amassed. Rather than merely describing the elements that constitute capitalism and the social relationships that result through its operation, Marx here makes a case for why reform of capitalism is not really an option. See if you can figure out why.*

Part 7. The Accumulation of Capital

The conversion of a sum of money into means of production and labor-power, is the first step taken by the quantum of value that is going to function as capital. This conversion takes place in the market, within the sphere of circulation. The second step, the process of production, is complete so soon as the means of production have been converted into commodities whose value exceeds that of their component parts, and, therefore, contains the capital originally advanced, plus a surplus-value. These commodities must then be thrown into circulation. They must be sold, their value realized in money, this money afresh converted into capital, and so over and over again. This circular movement, in which the same phases are continually gone through in succession, forms the circulation of capital

The capitalist who produces surplus-value – i.e., who extracts unpaid labor directly from the laborers, and fixes it in commodities, is, indeed, the first appropriator, but by no means the ultimate owner, of this surplus-value. She has to share it with capitalists, with landowners, etc., who fulfill other functions in the complex of social production. Surplus-value, therefore, splits up into various parts. Its fragments fall to various categories of persons, and take various forms, independent the one of the other, such as profit, interest, rent, &c.

Whatever the form of the process of production in a society, it must be a continuous process, must continue to go periodically through the same phases. A society can no more cease to produce than it can cease to consume. When viewed, therefore, as a connected whole, and as flowing on with incessant renewal, every social process of production is, at the same time, a process of reproduction.

If we look at capitalists *as a class*, and workers *as a class*, we see that the capitalist profits, not only by what he receives from, but by what she gives to, the laborer. The capital given in exchange for labor-power is converted into necessaries, by the consumption of which the muscles, nerves, bones, and brains of existing workers is maintained. The maintenance and reproduction of the working class is, and must ever be, a necessary condition to the reproduction of capital. But the capitalist may safely leave its fulfillment to the laborer's instincts of self-preservation and of propagation.

The worker consumes (buys) that which is necessary to maintain herself and her family, thereby contributing to the realization of the capitalist's surplus value. When Hilda buys a bottle of tequila, or a pair of sneakers, she is using her wages to keep alive the circulation of capital. The capitalist cannot realize any surplus value if no one buys his commodities.

The Roman slave was held by fetters: the wage laborer is bound to his owner by invisible threads. The appearance of independence is kept up by means of a constant change of employers, and by the legal fiction of an employment contract.

Hitherto we have investigated how surplus-value emanates from capital; we have now to see how capital arises from surplus-value. Employing surplus-value as capital, reconverting it into capital, is called accumulation of capital

Here's an example. An original capital of $10,000 buys materials and hires workers and brings in a surplus-value of $2,000, which is capitalized, or rolled back into production to hire more workers. The new capital of $2,000 brings in a surplus-value of $400, and this, too, is capitalized, converted into a second additional capital, which, in its turn, produces a further surplus-value of $80. And so, the ball rolls on.

The original capital was formed by the advance of $10,000. How did the owner become possessed of it?

Perhaps his grandmother gave him it as a gift? We will return to this a little later on. If you were to set yourself up as a capitalist today, where would you get your original pot of capital?

How the $2,000 originated we know perfectly well. There is not one single atom of its value that does not owe its existence to unpaid labor. The means of production, with which the additional labor-power is incorporated, as well as the necessaries with which the laborers are sustained, are nothing but component parts of the surplus-product, *of the tribute annually exacted from the working class by the capitalist class*. Though the latter with a portion of that tribute purchases the additional labor-power even at its full price, so that equivalent is exchanged for equivalent, yet the transaction is for all that only the old dodge of every conqueror who buys commodities from the conquered with the money he has robbed them of.

In every case the working class creates by the surplus labor of one year the capital destined to employ additional labor in the following year. And this is what is called: creating capital out of capital. The more the capitalist has accumulated, the more is he able to accumulate.

There are two parts of surplus value, what the capitalist consumes [*perhaps he buys himself a personal jet*] and what he capitalizes or puts back into production. Given the mass of surplus-value, then, the larger the one of these parts, the smaller is the other. The ratio of these parts determines the magnitude of the accumulation. The capitalist alone gets to decide. It is his deliberate act. That part of the tribute exacted by him which he accumulates, is said to be saved by him, because he does not eat it, *i.e.*, because he performs the function of a capitalist, and enriches himself.

To accumulate, is to conquer the world of social wealth, to increase the mass of human beings exploited by him, and thus to extend both the direct and the indirect sway of the capitalist.

The capitalist gets rich, not like the miser, in proportion to his personal labor and restricted consumption, but at the same rate as he squeezes out the labor-power of others and enforces on the laborer abstinence from all life's enjoyments.

Accumulate, accumulate! That is Moses and the prophets!

[Next, Marx looks at how this accumulation process exemplifies and affects social relations]

The rate of surplus-value depends, in the first place, on the degree of exploitation of labor-power. But if the laborers could live on air they could not be bought at any price. The zero of their cost is therefore a limit in a mathematical sense, always beyond reach, although we can always approximate more and more nearly to it. The constant tendency of capital is to force the cost of labor back towards this zero.

As capital accumulates, more and more of it is invested in dead labor, machinery and tools, and less of it in living labor (v, variable capital). Workers produce, along with the accumulation of capital, the means by which they are made relatively superfluous, and are turned into a relative surplus population. This is a law of population peculiar to the capitalist mode of production. It forms a disposable industrial reserve army, that belongs to capital quite as absolutely as if the latter had bred it at its own cost. The whole form of the movement of modern industry depends, therefore, upon the constant transformation of a part of the laboring population into unemployed or half-employed hands.

The number of laborers commanded by capital may remain the same, or even fall, while the variable capital increases. This is the case if the individual laborer yields more labor, and therefore his wages increase, and this although the price of labor remains the same or even falls, only more slowly than the mass of labor rises. *Increase of variable capital, in this case, becomes an index of more labor, but not of more laborers employed.* It is the absolute interest of every capitalist to press a given quantity of labor out of a smaller, rather than a greater number of laborers, if the cost is about the same. In the latter case, the outlay of constant capital increases in proportion to the mass of labor set in action; in the former that increase is much smaller. The more extended the scale of production, the stronger this motive. Its force increases with the accumulation of capital.

One category of the relative surplus population, the “stagnant,” forms a part of the active labor army, but with extremely irregular employment. Hence it furnishes to capital an inexhaustible reservoir of disposable labor power. Its conditions of life sink below the average normal level of the working class; this makes it at once the broad basis of special branches of capitalist exploitation. It is characterized by maximum of working-time, and minimum of wages. Another category of the relative surplus population is the unemployed poor.

The greater the social wealth, the functioning capital, the extent and energy of its growth, and, therefore, also the absolute mass of the proletariat and the productiveness of its labor, the greater is the industrial reserve army. The more extensive the industrial reserve army, the greater is official pauperism. *This is the absolute general law of capitalist accumulation*

Part 8. Primitive Accumulation[1]

We have seen how money is changed into capital; how through capital surplus-value is made, and from surplus-value more capital. But the accumulation of capital presupposes surplus-value; surplus-value presupposes capitalistic production; capitalistic production presupposes the pre-existence of considerable masses of capital and of labor power in the hands of producers of commodities. The whole movement, therefore, seems to turn in a vicious circle.

[Here is the story people like to tell:] In times long gone by there were two sorts of people; one, the diligent, intelligent, and, above all, frugal elite; the other, lazy rascals, spending their substance, and more, in riotous living. The former sort accumulated wealth, and the latter sort had at last nothing to sell except their own skins. And from this original sin dates the poverty of the great majority that, despite all its labor, has up to now nothing to sell but itself, and the wealth of the few that increases constantly although they have long ceased to work. *Such insipid childishness is every day preached to us in the defense of property.*

In themselves money and commodities are no more capital than are the means of production and of subsistence. They want transforming into capital. But this transformation itself can only take place under certain circumstances.

The capitalist system presupposes the complete separation of the laborers from all property in the means by which they can realize their labor. As soon as capitalist production is once on its own legs, it not only maintains this separation, but reproduces it on a continually extending scale. The process, therefore, that clears the way for the capitalist system, can be none other than the process which takes away from the laborer the possession of his means of production; a process that transforms, on the one hand, the social means of subsistence and of production into capital, on the other, the immediate producers into wage laborers. The so-called primitive accumulation, therefore, is nothing else than the historical process of divorcing the producer from the means of production. It appears as primitive, because it forms the prehistoric stage of capital and of the mode of production corresponding with it [*see MEANS OF PRODUCTION; PRIMITIVE ACCUMULATION; MODE OF PRODUCTION*]

The economic structure of capitalist society has grown out of the economic structure of feudal society. The dissolution of the latter set free the elements of the former [*see FEUDALISM*]

The immediate producer, the laborer, could only dispose of his own person after he had ceased to be attached to the soil and ceased to be the slave, serf, or bondsman of another. The starting point of the development that gave rise to the wage laborer as well as to the capitalist, was the servitude of the laborer. The advance consisted in a change of form of this servitude, in the transformation of feudal exploitation into capitalist exploitation.

Great masses of people are suddenly and forcibly torn from their means of subsistence, and hurled as free and “unattached” proletarians on the labor-market. The expropriation of the agricultural producer, of the peasant, from the soil, is the basis of the whole process. The history of this expropriation, in different countries, assumes different aspects, and runs through its various phases in different orders of succession, and at different periods. [*We saw it happen in England in the 15th-16th centuries*. *It was a violent and bloody process.]*

If money, according to Augier, “comes into the world with a congenital blood-stain on one cheek,” *capital comes dripping from head to foot, from every pore, with blood and dirt.* The discovery of gold and silver in America, the extirpation, enslavement and entombment in mines of the aboriginal population, the beginning of the conquest and looting of the East Indies, the turning of Africa into a warren for the commercial hunting of black-skins, signalized the rosy dawn of the era of capitalist production. These idyllic proceedings are the chief momenta of primitive accumulation. On their heels treads the commercial war of the European nations, with the globe for a theatre.

First Spain, then Portugal, then Holland, then France, then England rose to the forefront of global trade (and brutal colonialism). Marx did not live to see it, but he might say the US was England's successor. Is there a successor to the US? Or will capitalism cede to the next mode of production, as Marx suggested?

As soon as this process of transformation has sufficiently decomposed the old society from top to bottom, as soon as the laborers are turned into proletarians, their means of labor into capital, as soon as the capitalist mode of production stands on its own feet, then a next phase begins. That which is now to be expropriated is no longer the laborer working for himself, but the capitalist exploiting many laborers. This expropriation is accomplished by the action of the immanent laws of capitalistic production itself, by the centralization of capital. One capitalist always kills many.

Along with the constantly diminishing number of the magnates of capital, who usurp and monopolize all advantages of this process of transformation, grows the mass of misery, oppression, slavery, degradation, exploitation; but with this too grows the revolt of the working class, a class always increasing in numbers, and disciplined, united, organized by the very mechanism of the process of capitalist production itself. The monopoly of capital becomes a fetter upon the mode of production, which has sprung up and flourished along with, and under it. Centralization of the means of production and socialization of labor at last reach a point where they become incompatible with their capitalist integument. This integument is burst asunder. The knell of capitalist private property sounds. The expropriators are expropriated.

Questions

1. What is "saving"? How does this serve to further enrich the capitalist?
2. If there were a magical creature (like the SHMOO), that could provide all the necessities of life for free (food, clothing, building materials, etc.), that reproduced like rabbits easily and quickly on demand, how would the social relations between worker and capitalist be altered? Why might capitalists want to get rid of this magical creature?
3. A powerful weapon of capitalists today is the "capital strike," basically removing capital from production. Use Marx's comments on employment and unemployment to explain this. Consider the term "job-creators).
4. What is the relationship of wealth and poverty, according to Marx?
5. Why will capitalism inevitably fall, according to the highlighted paragraph? (that is, explain "The monopoly of capital becomes a fetter upon the mode of production")

Concepts

Circulation of Capital

Capital Accumulation

Variable Capital

Industrial Reserve Army

Law of Capitalist Accumulation

Means of Production

Mode of Production

Primitive Accumulation

Feudalism

Centralization of Capital

Surplus Value

Exploitation

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1. Here, read primitive as in "prime," or first. Here Marx revisits the question of the origin of the initial $10,000 used as capital. ↵

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1.8: Eighteenth Brumaire

"People make their own history, but they do not make it as they please."

NOTE ON SOURCE: This selection is from an essay by Marx, originally published in a German magazine in New York City in 1852. It was republished and retranslated widely, first in English in 1869 as *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*. Engels undertook a later translation into English in 1885, which translation was published by Progress Publishers of Moscow in 1937. In addition to selections from the essay, this section begins with a short historical description of the social context about which Marx was writing. It is important to note that this essay was a very *timely* one, written almost simultaneously with a fast-changing political landscape.

Introduction to the selection – historical overview

On December 2, 1851, Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte, the democratically elected president of France since the 1848 revolution and nephew to Napoleon Bonaparte, instituted a coup against his own increasingly oppositional government. This government had passed a law prohibiting Bonaparte from running for reelection at the end of his term in office in 1852. As Louis-Napoleon was very popular, the legislature had restricted universal male suffrage in an attempt to see him lose. On December 2nd, Louis-Napoleon's forces arrested the opposition leaders, dissolved the National Assembly, and restored universal male suffrage. Parliamentarians resisted this internal coup. Victor Hugo, the novelist, was one of the liberal leaders of this resistance. The resistance was no match for Louis-Napoleon, who had the military on his side. After much fighting and hundreds of deaths, a new Bonapartist regime was proclaimed. Instead of a Republic, Louis-Napoleon, now calling himself Napoleon III, would rule as Emperor. This period of rule would be known as the "Second Empire" and would last until 1870, when the republic was restored. In the first years after his ascension, the new Napoleon imposed censorship and harsh repressive measures against his opponents, sending many to death or the penal colonies. Others, like Victor Hugo, went into voluntary exile. Over time, the French empire under Napoleon III's rule would become more liberal, even as it remained fiercely nationalistic and extended its colonial rule into Asia, Africa, and even Mexico.

Marx wrote about these events between December 1851 and March 1852, as the coup was happening and being resisted. The title refers to the similarities between this taking of power by Napoleon III and the earlier seizure of power by his uncle, Napoleon I, which occurred on November 9, 1799, knowns as the 18th day of the month of Brumaire in Year VII of the French Republic. Napoleon I's 1799 seizure of power had ushered in the "First Empire." In the Eighteenth Brumaire, Marx satirizes the pretensions of the nephew, giving us the famous phrase, that history repeats itself, "first as tragedy, then as farce."

Important dates to remember as you read the passage:

February 1848: "February Revolution"; overthrow of King Louis-Philippe in France in favor of democratically elected government of the Second Republic

June 1848: "June Days Uprising": rebellion in Paris by workers against increasingly conservative government (bloody but unsuccessful attempt at ending class rule)

December 10, 1848: Louis Napoleon Bonaparte elected President of Republic, largely with support of rural voters

December 2, 1851: internal coup by Bonaparte, creating Second Empire

The Eighteenth Brumaireopening passages

Hegel once remarked that all events and personalities of great importance in world history occur twice, but he forgot to add that the first time they occur as tragedies, and the second as farce.

People make their own history, but they do not make it as they please; they do not make it under self-selected circumstances, but under circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past. The tradition of all dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brains of the living. And just as they seem to be occupied with revolutionizing themselves and things, creating something that did not exist before, precisely in such times of revolutionary crisis they anxiously conjure up the spirits of the past to their service, borrowing from them names, battle slogans, and costumes in order to present this new scene in world history in time-honored disguise and borrowed language. Thus, Luther put on the mask of the Apostle Paul, the Revolution of 1789-1814 draped itself alternately in the guise of the Roman Republic and the Roman Empire, and the Revolution of 1848 knew nothing

better to do than to parody, now 1789, now the revolutionary tradition of 1793-95. In like manner, the beginner who has learned a new language always translates it back into his mother tongue, but he assimilates the spirit of the new language and expresses himself freely in it only when he moves in it without recalling the old and when he forgets his native tongue.

From 1848 to 1851, only the ghost of the old revolution circulated. A whole nation, which thought it had acquired an accelerated power of motion by means of a revolution, suddenly finds itself set back into a defunct epoch, and to remove any doubt about the relapse, the old dates arise again – the old chronology, the old names. The French, so long as they were engaged in revolution, could not get rid of the memory of Napoleon, as the election of December 10, 1848 was proved. They longed to return from the perils of revolution to the fleshpots of Egypt and December 2, 1851, was the answer. Now they have not only a caricature of the old Napoleon, but the old Napoleon himself, caricatured as he would have to be in the middle of the nineteenth century.

The social revolution of the 19th century cannot draw its poetry from the past, but only from the future. It cannot begin with itself before it has stripped off all superstition with regard to the past. Earlier revolutions required recollections of past world history in order to drug themselves against their own content. In order to arrive at its own content, the revolution of the 19th century must let the dead bury their dead. Then the words went beyond the content; now the content goes beyond the words.

The February Revolution was a surprise attack, a seizing of the old society unaware, and the people proclaimed this unexpected stroke a deed of world importance, ushering in a new epoch. On December 2nd the February Revolution is conjured away as a trick of a con artist, and what seems overthrown is no longer the monarchy but the liberal concessions that had been wrung from it through centuries of struggle. Instead of society having conquered a new content for itself, it seems that the state has only returned to its oldest form, to a shamelessly simple rule by the sword and the monk's cowl. Easy come, easy go. Meantime, the interval did not pass unused. During 1848-51 French society, by an abbreviated revolutionary method, caught up with the studies and experiences which in a regular, so to speak, textbook course of development would have preceded the February Revolution, if the latter were to be more than a mere ruffling of the surface. Society seems now to have retreated to behind its starting point; in truth, it has first to create for itself the revolutionary point of departure – the situation, the relations, the conditions under which alone modern revolution becomes serious.

Bourgeois revolutions, like those of the eighteenth century, storm more swiftly from success to success, their dramatic effects outdo each other, men and things seem set in sparkling diamonds– but they are short-lived. On the other hand, proletarian revolutions, like those of the nineteenth century, constantly criticize themselves, constantly interrupt themselves in their own course, return to the apparently accomplished, in order to begin anew; they deride with cruel thoroughness the half-measures, weaknesses, and paltriness of their first attempts, seem to throw down their opponents only so the latter may draw new strength from the earth and rise before them again more gigantic than ever, recoil constantly from the indefinite colossal-ness of their own goals – until a situation is created which makes all turning back impossible, and the conditions themselves call out:

It is not enough to say, as the French do, that their nation was taken unawares. Nations and women are not forgiven the unguarded hour in which the first adventurer who came along could violate them. Such turns of speech do not solve the riddle but only formulate it differently. It remains to be explained how a nation of thirty-six million people can be surprised and delivered without resistance into captivity by three captains of industry.

Let us recapitulate in general outline the phases that the French Revolution went through from February 24, 1848, to December 1851. *The first period* –from February 24, the overthrow of Louis Philippe, to May 4, 1848, the meeting of the Constituent Assembly – the February period proper, may be designated as the prologue of the revolution. Nobody and nothing ventured to lay any claim to the right of existence and of real action. *The second period*, from May 4, 1848, to the end of May 1849, is the period of the constitution, the foundation, of the bourgeois republic. The bourgeois monarchy of Louis Philippe can be followed only by a bourgeois republic; that is to say, whereas a limited section of the bourgeoisie ruled in the name of the king, the whole of the bourgeoisie will now rule in the name of the people. The demands of the Paris proletariat are utopian nonsense, to which an end must be put. To this declaration of the Constituent National Assembly the Paris proletariat replied with the June insurrection, the most colossal event in the history of European civil wars. The bourgeois republic triumphed. On its side stood the aristocracy of finance, the industrial bourgeoisie, the middle class, the petty bourgeois, the army, the lumpenproletariat organized as the Mobile Guard, the intellectual lights, the clergy, and the rural population. On the side of the Paris proletariat stood none but itself. More than three thousand insurgents were butchered after the victory, and fifteen thousand were deported without trial. With this defeat the proletariat passes into the background on the revolutionary stage.

The proletariat attempts to press forward again on every occasion, as soon as the movement appears to make a fresh start, but with ever decreased expenditure of strength and always slighter results. As soon as one of the social strata above it gets into revolutionary ferment, the proletariat enters into an alliance with it and so shares all the defeats that the different parties suffer, one after another. But these subsequent blows become the weaker, the greater the surface of society over which they are distributed. The more important leaders of the proletariat in the Assembly and in the press successively fall victim to the courts, and ever more equivocal figures come to head it. In part it throws itself into doctrinaire experiments, exchange banks and workers' associations, hence into a movement in which it renounces the revolutionizing of the old world by means of the latter's own great, combined resources, and seeks, rather, to achieve its salvation behind society's back, in private fashion, within its limited conditions of existence, and hence necessarily suffers shipwreck. It seems to be unable either to rediscover revolutionary greatness in itself or to win new energy from the connections newly entered into, until all classes with which it contended in June themselves lie prostrate beside it. But at least it succumbs with the honors of the great, world-historic struggle; not only France, but all Europe trembles at the June earthquake, while the ensuing defeats of the upper classes are so cheaply bought that they require barefaced exaggeration by the victorious party to be able to pass for events at all, and become the more ignominious the further the defeated party is removed from the proletarian party.

The defeat of the June insurgents had now prepared, had leveled the ground on which the bourgeois republic could be founded and built, but it had shown at the same time that in Europe the bourgeois republic signifies the unlimited despotism of one class over other classes. During the June days all classes and parties had united in the party of Order against the proletarian class as the party of anarchy, of socialism, of communism. These forces of Order had saved society from the enemies of society. They had given out the watchwords of the old society – Property! Family! Religion! Order! to their army as passwords. Society is saved just as the circle of its rulers contracts, as a more exclusive interest is maintained against a wider one. Every demand of the simplest bourgeois financial reform, of the most ordinary liberalism, of the most formal republicanism, of the shallowest democracy, is simultaneously castigated as an ATTEMPT ON SOCIETY and stigmatized as SOCIALISM!

Part Two

The history of the elected government since the June days is the *history of the domination and the disintegration of the republican faction of the bourgeoisie*. The exclusive rule of the bourgeois republicans lasted only from June 24 to December 10, 1848. The election of December 10th was a *reaction of the peasants*, who had to pay the costs of the February Revolution, against the remaining classes of the nation; a *reaction of the country against the town*. It met with great approval in the army and among the big bourgeoisie, which hailed Bonaparte as a bridge to monarchy. The period from December 20, 1848, until May 1849, comprises the history of the downfall of the bourgeois republicans. After having founded a republic for the bourgeoisie, driven the revolutionary proletariat out of the field, and reduced the democratic petty bourgeoisie to silence for the time being, they are themselves thrust aside by the mass of the bourgeoisie, which justly impounds this republic as *its property*.

Part Three

On May 28, 1849, the Legislative National Assembly met. On December 2, 1851, it was dispersed. This period covers the span of life of the republic.

During the first French Revolution, each group pushed the next further ahead. It is the reverse with the Revolution of 1848. The proletarian party first appears as an appendage of the petty-bourgeois-democratic party. It is betrayed and dropped by the latter in the June days. The democratic party, in its turn, leans on the shoulders of the bourgeois-republican party. The bourgeois republicans no sooner believe themselves well established than they shake off the troublesome comrade and support themselves on the shoulders of the party of Order. The party of Order hunches its shoulders, lets the bourgeois republicans tumble, and throws itself on the shoulders of armed force. It fancies it is still sitting on those shoulders when one fine morning it perceives that the shoulders have transformed themselves into bayonets. Each party kicks from behind at the one driving forward and leans over in front toward the party which presses backward. No wonder that in this ridiculous posture it loses its balance and, having made the inevitable grimaces, collapses with curious gyrations. The revolution thus moves in a descending line.

Legitimists and Orleanists formed the two great factions of the party of Order.[1] Was what held these factions fast to their pretenders and kept them apart from each other nothing but the House of Bourbon and House of Orleans, different shades of royalism? Under the Bourbons, big landed property had governed, with its priests and lackeys; under Orleans, high finance, large-scale industry, large-scale trade, that is, capital, with its retinue of lawyers, professors, and smooth-tongued orators. The Legitimate

Monarchy was merely the political expression of the hereditary rule of the lords of the soil, as the July Monarchy was only the political expression of the usurped rule of the bourgeois parvenus. *What kept the two factions apart, therefore, was not any so-called principles, it was their material conditions of existence, two different kinds of property; it was the old contrast between town and country, the rivalry between capital and landed property*. That at the same time old memories, personal enmities, fears and hopes, prejudices and illusions, sympathies and antipathies, convictions, articles of faith and principles bound them to one or the other royal house, who denies this? Upon the different forms of property, upon the social conditions of existence, rises an entire *superstructure* of distinct and peculiarly formed sentiments, illusions, modes of thought, and views of life. The entire class creates and forms them out of its material foundations and out of the corresponding social relations. The single individual, who derives them through tradition and upbringing, may imagine that they form the real motives and the starting point of his activity. While each faction, Orleanists and Legitimists, sought to make itself and the other believe that it was loyalty to the two royal houses which separated them, facts later proved that it was rather their divided interests which forbade the uniting of the two royal houses. And as in private life one differentiates between what a man thinks and says of himself and what he really is and does, so in historical struggles one must distinguish still more the phrases and fancies of parties from their real organism and their real interests, their conception of themselves from their reality. Orleanists and Legitimists found themselves side by side in the republic, with equal claims. If each side wished to restore its own royal house against the other, that merely signified that each of the two great interests into which the bourgeoisie is split – landed property and capital – sought to restore its own supremacy and the subordination of the other. We speak of two interests of the bourgeoisie, for large landed property has been rendered thoroughly bourgeois by the development of modern society. Thus, the Tories in England long imagined that they were enthusiastic about monarchy, the church, and the beauties of the old English Constitution, until the day of danger wrung from them the confession that they are enthusiastic only about ground rent.

As against the bourgeoisie, a coalition between petty bourgeois and workers had been formed, the so-called Social-Democratic party. The petty bourgeois saw that they were badly rewarded after the June days of 1848, that their material interests were imperiled, and that the democratic guarantees which were to insure the effectuation of these interests were called in question by the counter-revolution. Accordingly, they came closer to the workers. A joint program was drafted, joint election committees were set up and joint candidates put forward. The revolutionary point was broken off and a democratic turn given to the social demands of the proletariat; the purely political form was stripped off the democratic claims of the petty bourgeoisie and their socialist point thrust forward. Thus, arose social-democracy. The peculiar character of social-democracy is epitomized in the fact that democratic-republican institutions are demanded as a means, not of doing away with two extremes, capital and wage labor, but of weakening their antagonism and transforming it into harmony. However different the means proposed for the attainment of this end may be, however much it may be trimmed with more or less revolutionary notions, the content remains the same. This content is the transformation of society in a democratic way, but a transformation within the bounds of the petty bourgeoisie. Only one must not get the narrow-minded notion that the petty bourgeoisie, on principle, wishes to enforce an egoistic class interest. Rather, it believes that the special conditions of its emancipation are the general conditions within whose frame alone modern society can be saved and the class struggle avoided.

Part Four

The law of May 31, 1850 was the *coup d'etat* of the bourgeoisie. All its conquests over the revolution hitherto had only a provisional character. They depended on the hazards of a new general election, and the history of elections since 1848 irrefutably proved that the bourgeoisie's moral sway over the mass of the people was lost in the same measure as its actual domination developed. The bourgeoisie answered by outlawing universal suffrage. The law of May 31st was therefore one of the necessities of the class struggle.

Part Five

As soon as the revolutionary crisis had been weathered and universal suffrage abolished, the struggle between the National Assembly and Bonaparte broke out again.

Part Six

With May 28 1851, the last year of the life of the National Assembly began.

Part Seven

The social republic appeared as a phrase, as a prophecy, on the threshold of the February Revolution. In the June days of 1848, it was drowned in the blood of the Paris proletariat, but it haunts the subsequent acts of the drama like a ghost. The democratic republic announces its appearance. It is dissipated on June 13, 1849, together with its deserting petty bourgeois, but in its flight it redoubles its boastfulness. The parliamentary republic together with the bourgeoisie takes possession of the entire state; it enjoys its existence to the full, but December 2, 1851, buries it to the accompaniment of the anguished cry of the coalesced royalists: —Long live the Republic!

The bourgeoisie apotheosized the sword; the sword rules it. It destroyed the revolutionary press; its own press is destroyed. It placed popular meetings under police surveillance; its salons are placed under police supervision. It imposed a state of siege; a state of siege is imposed upon it. It supplanted the juries by military commissions; its juries are supplanted by military commissions. It subjected public education to the sway of the priests; the priests subject it to their own education. It jailed people without trial, it is being jailed without trial. It suppressed every stirring in society by means of state power; every stirring in its society is suppressed by means of state power. Out of enthusiasm for its money bags it rebelled against its own politicians and literary men; its politicians and literary men are swept aside, but its money bag is being plundered now that its mouth has been gagged and its pen broken.

The *first* French Revolution, with its task of breaking all separate powers in order to create the civil unity of the nation, was bound to develop what the monarchy had begun, centralization, but at the same time the limits, the attributes, and the agents of the governmental power. Napoleon completed this state machinery. The Legitimate Monarchy and the July Monarchy added nothing to it but a greater division of labor, increasing at the same rate as the division of labor inside the bourgeois society created new groups of interests, and therefore new material for the state administration. Every common interest was immediately severed from the society, countered by a higher, general interest, snatched from the activities of society's members themselves and made an object of government activity – from a bridge, a schoolhouse, and the communal property of a village community, to the railroads, the national wealth, and the national University of France. Finally the parliamentary republic, in its struggle against the revolution, found itself compelled to strengthen the means and the centralization of governmental power with repressive measures. ***All revolutions perfected this machine instead of breaking it.*** The parties, which alternately contended for domination, regarded the possession of this huge state structure as the chief spoils of the victor.

But under the absolute monarchy, during the first Revolution, and under Napoleon the bureaucracy was only the means of preparing the class rule of the bourgeoisie. Under the Restoration, under Louis Philippe, under the parliamentary republic, it was the instrument of the ruling class, however much it strove for power of its own. Only under the second Bonaparte does the state seem to have made itself completely independent. The state machinery has so strengthened itself vis-à-vis civil society that the Chief of the Society of December 10 suffices for its head – an adventurer dropped in from abroad, raised on the shoulders of a drunken soldiery which he bought with whisky and sausages and to which he has to keep throwing more sausages. Hence the low-spirited despair, the feeling of monstrous humiliation and degradation that oppresses the breast of France and makes her gasp. She feels dishonored.

And yet the state power is not suspended in the air. Bonaparte represented a class, and the most numerous class of French society at that, the small-holding peasants. Just as the Bourbons were the dynasty of the big landed property and the Orleans the dynasty of money, so the Bonapartes are the dynasty of the peasants, that is, the French masses.

The small-holding peasants form an enormous mass whose members live in similar conditions but without entering into manifold relations with each other. Their mode of production isolates them from one another instead of bringing them into mutual intercourse. The isolation is furthered by France's poor means of communication and the poverty of the peasants. Their field of production, the small holding, permits no division of labor in its cultivation, no application of science, and therefore no multifariousness of development, no diversity of talent, no wealth of social relationships. Each individual peasant family is almost self-sufficient, directly produces most of its consumer needs, and thus acquires its means of life more through an exchange with nature than in intercourse with society. Thus, the great mass of the French nation is formed by the simple addition of homologous magnitudes, *much as potatoes in a sack form a sack of potatoes. Insofar as millions of families live under conditions of existence that separate their mode of life, their interests, and their culture from those of the other classes, and put them in hostile opposition to the latter, they form a class*. Insofar as there is merely a local interconnection among these small-holding peasants, and the identity of their interests forms no community, no national bond, and no political organization among them, they do not constitute a

class. They are therefore incapable of asserting their class interest in their own name, whether through a parliament or a convention. They cannot represent themselves, they must be represented. Their representative must at the same time appear as their master, as an authority over them, an unlimited governmental power which protects them from the other classes and sends them rain and sunshine from above. The political influence of the small-holding peasants, therefore, finds its final expression in the executive power which subordinates society to itself.

But let us not misunderstand. The Bonaparte dynasty represents not the revolutionary, but the conservative peasant; not the peasant who strikes out beyond the condition of his social existence, the small holding, but rather one who wants to consolidate his holding; not the country folk who in alliance with the towns want to overthrow the old order through their own energies, but on the contrary those who, in solid seclusion within this old order, want to see themselves and their small holdings saved and favored by the ghost of the Empire. It represents not the enlightenment but the superstition of the peasant; not his judgment but his prejudice; not his future but his past… The bourgeoisie itself has violently strengthened the imperialism of the peasant class; it has preserved the conditions that form the birthplaces of this species of peasant religion. *The bourgeoisie, in truth, is bound to fear the stupidity of the masses so long as they remain conservative, and the insight of the masses as soon as they become revolutionary.*

Bonaparte would like to appear as the patriarchal benefactor of all classes. But he cannot give to one without taking from another.

Questions

1. The *Eighteenth Brumaire* is one of the only places in all of Marx's writings where he scrutinized and evaluated the class forces at play in real historical social movements. This is a surprising statement, but most of what Marx wrote was as an analysis and explanation of capitalism. It is only in this passage that he comes close to defining class and describing how classes work with or against each other in particular circumstances. When describing the June days revolution, which classes were allied with each other? Which class stood alone? What might explain these class alliances? Continue reading the remainder of this paragraph. What are the pitfalls that Marx names awaiting would-be communist revolutionaries?
2. Is Marx saying that the "party of Order" – all those groups that rally around the flag of order, family, property, and religion – is a con job by elites? How would you answer him? Do you see similar "rallying around the flag" calls to order today? Where is the proletariat in these fights?
3. When explaining the *real* reason behind the two factions within the Party of Order (Legitimists and Orleanists), Marx demonstrate the power of historical materialist analysis. He makes an argument that the principles motivating these factions are mere fig leaves for underlying material (class) interests. What interests does each faction represent? Can you employ this type of materialist analysis to help explain other political factions?
4. In part seven, Marx claims that the power under Napoleon III is greater even than the power that the original (first) French Revolution sought to undo. He makes the statement that all revolutions have perfected this state machinery, rather than bringing it to heel. What do you make of these statements? Does this passage give you a clue as to what Marx would have thought of the Soviet Union, as an experiment in communism?
5. What class does Napoleon III represent?
6. Part seven includes *the only known definition of "class" in all of Marx's writings*. What is this definition? What class does he use to illustrate this definition?
7. Explain the import of the final sentence.

Concepts

Class (and class factions)

Superstructure

Petty Bourgeoisie

Proletariat

Bourgeoisie

Social Democracy

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1. Both Legitimists and Orleanists were believers in monarchy, although they disagreed on which monarch was the legitimate heir (legitimists favored the Bourbon dynasty while Orleanists favored the Orleans dynasty). Marx goes further than most of his

contemporary by looking behind these labels and analyzing what class interests were operating there. ↵

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1.9: Principles of Communism

"Communism is the doctrine of the conditions of the liberation of the proletariat."

NOTE ON SOURCE: This is a short description of the principles of communism written by Engels in 1847 (probably for the workers involved with the League of the Just) and first widely published in 1914 for the German Social Democratic Party.[1]

Introduction – Why this is important and what to look for

It is recommended that you read this passage before tackling the Communist Manifesto. *Engels wrote this short piece as an explanation and description of the aims and goals of communism. To do this well, he also had to describe and explain capitalism, and why it was important to do away with it. Pay attention to the role (and definition) of private property. You might also compare this vision of communism with contemporary expectations of the role of the state in a democracy.*

Principles of Communism

What is Communism? Communism is the doctrine of the conditions of the liberation of the proletariat.

What is the Proletariat? The proletariat is that class in society which lives entirely from the sale of its labor and does not draw profit from any kind of capital; whose weal and woe, whose life and death, whose sole existence depends on the demand for labor – hence, on the changing state of business, on the vagaries of unbridled competition. The proletariat, or the class of proletarians, is, in a word, the working class of the 19th century.

Proletarians, then, have not always existed? *No.* There have always been poor and working classes; and the working class have mostly been poor. But there have not always been workers and poor people living under conditions as they are today; in other words, there have not always been proletarians, any more than there has always been free unbridled competitions.

How did the proletariat originate? The Proletariat originated in the industrial revolution, which took place in England in the last half of the last (18th) century, and which has since then been repeated in all the civilized countries of the world. It has come about that in civilized countries at the present time nearly all kinds of labor are performed in factories – and, in nearly all branches of work, handicrafts and manufacture have been superseded. This process has ruined the old middle class, especially the small handicraftsmen; it has entirely transformed the condition of the workers; and two new classes have been created which are gradually swallowing up all the others. These are:

(i) The class of big capitalists, who, in all civilized countries, are already in almost exclusive possession of all the means of subsistence and of the instruments (machines, factories) and materials necessary for the production of the means of subsistence. This is the bourgeois class, or the bourgeoisie

(ii) The class of the wholly property less, who are obliged to sell their labor to the bourgeoisie in order to get, in exchange, the means of subsistence for their support. This is called the class of proletarians, or the proletariat

What working classes were there before the industrial revolution? The working classes have always, according to the different stages of development of society, lived in different circumstances and had different relations to the owning and ruling classes. In antiquity, the workers were the slaves of the owners, just as they still are in many backward countries and even in the southern part of the United States.[2] In the Middle Ages, they were the serfs of the land-owning nobility, as they still are in Hungary, Poland, and Russia. In the Middle Ages, and indeed right up to the industrial revolution, there were also journeymen in the cities who worked in the service of petty-bourgeois masters. Gradually, as manufacture developed, these journeymen became manufacturing workers who were even then employed by larger capitalists.

In what way do proletarians differ from slaves? The slave is sold once and for all; the proletarian must sell himself daily and hourly… The slave frees himself when he abolishes only the relation of slavery and thereby becomes a proletarian; the proletarian can free himself only by abolishing private property in general.

In what way do proletarians differ from serfs? The serf possesses and uses an instrument of production, a piece of land, in exchange for which he gives up a part of his product or part of the services of his labor. The proletarian works with the instruments of production of another, for the account of this other, in exchange for a part of the product. The serf gives up, the proletarian receives. The serf has an assured existence, the proletarian has not. The serf is outside competition, the proletarian is in it. The serf liberates

himself in one of three ways: either he runs away to the city and there becomes a handicraftsman; or, instead of products and services, he gives money to his lord and thereby becomes a free tenant; or he overthrows his feudal lord and himself becomes a property owner. In short, by one route or another, he gets into the owning class and enters into competition. The proletarian liberates herself by abolishing competition, private property, and all class differences.

What will communism ("this new social order") be like? Above all, it will have to take the control of industry and of all branches of production out of the hands of mutually competing individuals, and instead institute a system in which all these branches of production are operated by society as a whole – that is, for the common account, according to a common plan, and with the participation of all members of society. It will, in other words, abolish competition and replace it with association. The abolition of private property is, doubtless, the shortest and most significant way to characterize the revolution

Was not the abolition of private property possible at an earlier time? No, private property has not always existed.

Will the peaceful abolition of private property be possible? It would be desirable if this could happen, and the communists would certainly be the last to oppose it. But they also see that the development of the proletariat in nearly all civilized countries has been violently suppressed. If the oppressed proletariat is finally driven to revolution, then we communists will defend the interests of the proletarians with deeds as we now defend them with words.

What will be the course of this revolution? Above all, it will establish a democratic constitution, and through this, the direct or indirect dominance of the proletariat. The main measures called for, in order to prevent/abolish private property include:

- Limitation of private property through progressive taxation, heavy inheritance taxes
- Gradual expropriation of landowners, industrialists, railroad magnates
- Organization of labor or employment of proletarians on publicly owned land, in factories and workshops, with competition among the workers being abolished and with the factory owners, in so far as they still exist, being obliged to pay the same high wages as those paid by the state
- An equal obligation on all members of society to work until such time as private property has been completely abolished
- Centralization of money and credit in the hands of the state through a national bank with state capital, and the suppression of all private banks and bankers.
- Education of all children in national establishments at national cost
- Destruction of all unhealthy and poorly-built dwellings in urban districts
- Concentration of all means of transportation in the hands of the nation.

Will it be possible for this revolution to take place in one country alone? No. It is a universal revolution and will, accordingly, have a universal range.

What will be the consequences of the ultimate disappearance of private property? Society will take all forces of production and means of commerce, as well as the exchange and distribution of products, out of the hands of private capitalists and will manage them in accordance with a plan based on the availability of resources and the needs of the whole society. There will be no more crises. The division of society into different, mutually hostile classes will then become unnecessary. Indeed, it will be not only unnecessary but intolerable in the new social order. The existence of classes originated in the division of labor, and the division of labor, as it has been known up to the present, will completely disappear. Education will enable young people quickly to familiarize themselves with the whole system of production and to pass from one branch of production to another in response to the needs of society or their own inclinations. It will, therefore, free them from the one-sided character which the present-day division of labor impresses upon every individual. The general co-operation of all members of society for the purpose of planned exploitation of the forces of production, the expansion of production to the point where it will satisfy the needs of all, the abolition of a situation in which the needs of some are satisfied at the expense of the needs of others, the complete liquidation of classes and their conflicts, the rounded development of the capacities of all members of society through the elimination of the present division of labor, through industrial education, through engaging in varying activities, through the participation by all in the enjoyments produced by all, through the combination of city and country – these are the main consequences of the abolition of private property.

Questions

1. What is the difference Engels is making between "proletariat" and "working class"? Which one is unique to our times? What is the source of this uniqueness?

2. How does Engels' depiction of Communism and the Communist Revolution differ from what you have heard about communism elsewhere (including the history of the Soviet Union, Cuba, and China)? Did anything in the program surprise you?
3. What is the relationship between classes, private property, and the division of labor?
4. Try to imagine a world in which each person could "pass from one branch of production to another in response to the needs of society or their own inclinations." How could this work (not a rhetorical question – try to come up with a plan!)?

Concepts

Private Property

Revolution

Communism

Proletarian

Means of Production

Class Struggle

Division of Labor

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1. The entire document can be found here, https://www.marxists.org/archive/mar...1/prin-com.htm. ↵
2. Note that this passage was written before the Civil War in the United States and the Emancipation Proclamation ended slavery. ↵

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1.10: The Duchess of Sutherland and Slavery

"Le secret des grandes fortunes sans cause apparente est un crime oublié, parce qu'il a été proprement fait"[1]– Balzac

NOTE ON SOURCE: This selection was written by Marx in 1853 and published in *The People's Paper*(no.45, March 12th).

Introduction – Why this is important and what to look for

Marx partially survived on newspaper articles he published on issues ranging from British imperialism to American slavery. This is an example of his biting satire and moral outrage over the hypocrisy of the British aristocracy. It has been included here verbatim from the original publication. Harriet Elizabeth Georgiana Sutherland-Leveson-Gower, Duchess of Sutherland (1806-1868) was a semi-official politician in the British government during this period, and a friend of Queen Victoria. She used her power and social position for various charitable work and led a protest against American slavery. In his article, Marx points out the role the Duchess' family had in the forced emigration of many from Scotland during the "enclosure" period. He thus forces recognition of the nefarious beginning of all great fortunes. The article is also a useful read for historical background on the period of the clan system and its breakup under the advent of private property. It demonstrates how Marx marshalled historical facts to explain the development of capitalism as a social system, and how at odds was this new system with preexisting communities based on kinship and affective ties.

The Duchess of Sutherland and Slavery

During the present momentary slackness in political affairs, the address of the Stafford House Assembly of Ladies to their sisters in America upon the subject of Negro-Slavery, and the "affectionate and Christian address of many thousands of the women of the United States of America to their sisters, the women of England,' upon white slavery, have proved a god-send to the press. Not one of the British papers was ever struck by the circumstance that the Stafford House Assembly took place at the palace under the Presidency of the Duchess of Sutherland, and yet the names of Stafford and Sutherland should have been sufficient to class the philanthropy of the British Aristocracy — a philanthropy which chooses its objects as far distant from home as possible, and rather on that than on this side of the ocean.

The history of the wealth of the Sutherland family is the history of the ruin and of the expropriation of the Scotch-Gaelic population from its native soil. As far back as the 10th century, the Danes had landed in Scotland, conquered the plains of Caithness, and driven back the aborigines into the mountains. Mhoir-Fhear-Chattaibh, as he was called in Gaelic, or the "Great Man of Sutherland", had always found his companions-in-arms ready to defend him at risk of their lives against all his enemies, Danes or Scots, foreigners or natives. After the revolution which drove the Stuarts from Britain, private feuds among the petty chieftains of Scotland became less and less frequent, and the British Kings, in order to keep up at least a semblance of dominion in these remote districts, encouraged the levying of family regiments among the chieftains, a system by which these *lairds* were enabled to combine modern military establishments with the ancient *clan* system in such a manner as to support one by the other.

Now, in order to distinctly appreciate the usurpation subsequently carried out, we must first properly understand what the clan meant. The clan belonged to a form of social existence which, in the scale of historical development, stands a full degree below the feudal state; viz., the *patriarchal* state of society. "Klaen", in Gaelic, means children. Every one of the usages and traditions of the Scottish Gaels reposes upon the supposition that the members of the clan belong to one and the same family. The "great man", the chieftain of the clan, is on the one hand quite as arbitrary, on the other quite as confined in his power, by consanguinity, &c., as every father of a family. To the clan, to the family, belonged the district where it had established itself, exactly as in Russia, the land occupied by a community of peasants belongs, not to the individual peasants, but to the community. Thus, the district was the common property of the family. There could be no more question, under this system, of private property, in the modern sense of the word, than there could be of comparing the social existence of the members of the clan to that of individuals living in the midst of our modern society. The division and subdivision of the land corresponded to the military functions of the single members of the clan. According to their military abilities, the chieftain entrusted to them the several allotments, cancelled or enlarged according to his pleasure the tenures of the individual officers, and these officers again distributed to their vassals and under-vassals every separate plot of land. But the district at large always remained the property of the clan, and, however the claims of individuals might vary, the tenure remained the same; nor were the contributions for the common defense, or the tribute for the Laird, who at once was leader in battle and chief magistrate in peace, ever increased. Upon the whole, every plot of land was cultivated by the

same family, from generation to generation, under fixed imposts. These imposts were insignificant, more a tribute by which the supremacy of the "great man" and of his officers was acknowledged, than a rent of land in a modern sense, or a source of revenue. The officers directly subordinate to the "great man" were called "Taksmen", and the district entrusted to their care, "Tak". Under then were placed inferior officers, at the head of every hamlet, and under these stood the peasantry.

Thus, you see, the clan is nothing but a family organized in a military manner, quite as little defined by laws, just as closely hemmed in by traditions, as any family. But the land is the *property of the family*, in the midst of which differences of rank, in spite of consanguinity, do prevail as well as in all the ancient Asiatic family communities.

The first usurpation took place, after the expulsion of the Stuarts, by the establishment of the family Regiments. From that moment, *pay* became the principal source of revenue of the Great Man, the Mhoir-Fhear-Chattaibh. Entangled in the dissipation of the Court of London, he tried to squeeze as much money as possible out of his officers, and they applied the same system of their inferiors. The ancient tribute was transformed into fixed money contracts. In one respect these contracts constituted a progress, by fixing the traditional imposts; in another respect they were a usurpation, inasmuch as the "great man" now took the position of landlord toward the "taksmen" who again took toward the peasantry that of farmers. And as the "great men" now required money no less than the "taksmen", a production not only for direct consumption but for export and exchange also became necessary; the system of national production had to be changed, the hands superseded by this change had to be got rid of. Population, therefore, decreased. But that it has yet was kept up in a certain manner, and that man, in the 18th century, was not yet openly sacrificed to net-revenue, we see from a passage in Steuart, a Scotch political economist, whose work was published 10 years before Adam Smith's, where it says (Vol.1, Chap.16):

"The rent of these lands is very trifling compared to their extent but compared to the number of mouths which a farm maintains, it will perhaps be found that a plot of land in the highlands of Scotland feeds ten times more people than a farm of the same extent in the richest provinces."

That even in the beginnings of the 19th century the rental imposts were very small, is shown by the work of Mr. Loch (1820), the steward of the Countess of Sutherland, who directed the improvements on her estates. He gives for instance the rental of the Kintradawell estate for 1811, from which it appears that up to then, every family was obliged to pay a yearly impost of a few shillings in money, a few fowls, and some days' work, at the highest.

It was only after 1811 that the ultimate and real usurpation was enacted, the forcible transformation of *clan-property* into the *private property*, in the modern sense, *of the Chief*. The person who stood at the head of this economical revolution was a female Mehemet Ali, who had well digested her Malthus — the Countess of Sutherland, alias Marchioness of Stafford.

Let us first state that the ancestors of the Marchioness of Stafford were the "great men" of the most northern part of Scotland, of very near three-quarters of Sutherlandshire. This country is more extensive than many French Departments or small German Principalities. when the Countess of Sutherland inherited these estates, which she afterward brought to her husband, the Marquis of Stafford, afterward Duke of Sutherland, the population of them was already reduced to 15,000. My lady Countess resolved upon a radical economic reform, and determined upon transforming the whole tract of country into sheep-walks. From 1814 to 1820, these 15,000 inhabitants, about 3,000 families, were systematically expelled and exterminated. All their villages were demolished and burned down, and all their fields converted into pasturage. British soldiers were commanded for this execution and came to blows with the natives. An old woman refusing to quit her hut was burned in the flames of it. Thus, my lady Countess appropriated to herself 794,000 acres of land, which from time immemorial had belonged to the clan. In the exuberance of her generosity she allotted to the expelled natives about 6,000 acres — two acres per family. These 6,000 acres had been lying waste until then and brought no revenue to the proprietors. The Countess was generous enough to sell the acre at two shillings six pence on an average, to the clan-men who for centuries past had shed their blood for her family. The whole of the un-rightfully appropriated clan-land she divided into 29 large sheep farms, each of them inhabited by one single family, mostly English farm-laborers; and in 1821 the 15,000 Gaels had already been superseded by 131,000 sheep.

A portion of the aborigines had been thrown upon the sea-shore and attempted to live by fishing. They became amphibious, and, as an English author says, lived half on land and half on water, and after all did not live upon both.

Sismondi, in his *Etudes Sociales*, observes with regard to this expropriation of the Gaels from Sutherlandshire — an example, which, by-the-by, was imitated by other "great men" of Scotland:

“The large extent of seignorial domains is not a circumstance peculiar to Britain. In the whole Empire of Charlemagne, in the whole Occident, entire provinces were usurped by the warlike chiefs, who had them cultivated for their own account by the vanquished, and sometimes by their own companions-in-arms. During the 9th and 10th centuries the Counties of Maine, Anjou, Poitou were for the Counts of these provinces rather three large estates than principalities. Switzerland, which in so many respects resembles Scotland, was at that time divided among a small number of Seigneurs. If the Counts of Kyburg, of Lenzburg, of Habsburg, of Gruyeres had been protected by British laws, they would have been in the same position as the Earls of Sutherland; some of them would perhaps have had the same taste for improvement as the Marchioness of Stafford, and more than one republic might have disappeared from the Alps in order to make room for flocks of sheep. Not the most despotic monarch in Germany would be allowed to attempt anything of the sort.”

Mr. Loch, in his defense of the Countess of Sutherland (1820), replies to the above as follows:

“Why should there be made an exception to the rule adopted in every other case, just for this particular case? Why should the absolute authority of the landlord over his land be sacrificed to the public interest and to motives which concern the public only?”

And why, then, should the slave-holders in the Southern States of North America sacrifice their private interest to the philanthropic grimaces of her Grace, the Duchess of Sutherland?

The British aristocracy, who have everywhere superseded man by bullocks and sheep, will, in a future not very distant, be superseded, in turn, by these useful animals.

The process of *clearing estates*, which, in Scotland, we have just now described, was carried out in England in the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries. Thomas Morus already complains of it in the beginning of the 16th century. It was performed in Scotland in the beginning of the 19th, and in Ireland it is now in full progress. The noble Viscount Palmerston, too, some years ago cleared of men his property in Ireland, exactly in the manner described above.

If of any property it ever was true that it was *robbery*, it is literally true of the property of the British aristocracy. Robbery of Church property, robbery of commons, fraudulent transformation, accompanied by murder, of feudal and patriarchal property into private property — these are the titles of British aristocrats to their possessions. And what services in this latter process were performed by a servile class of lawyers, you may see from an English lawyer of the last century, Dalrymple, who, in his *History of Feudal Property*, very naively proves that every law or deed concerning property was interpreted by the lawyers, in England, when the middle class rose in wealth in favor of the *middle class*— in Scotland, where the nobility enriched themselves, in favor of the *nobility*— in either case it was interpreted in a sense hostile to the *people*.

The above Turkish reform by the Countess of Sutherland was justifiable, at least, from a Malthusian point of view. Other Scottish noblemen went further. Having superseded human beings by sheep, they superseded sheep by game, and the pasture grounds by forests. At the head of these was the Duke of Atholl.

“After the conquest, the Norman Kings afforested large portions of the soil of England, in much the same way as the landlords here are now doing with the Highlands. (R. Somers, Letters on the Highlands, 1848)

As for a large number of the human beings expelled to make room for the game of the Duke of Atholl, and the sheep of the Countess of Sutherland, where did they fly to, where did they find a home?

In the United States of America.

The enemy of British Wage-Slavery has a right to condemn Negro-Slavery; a Duchess of Sutherland, a Duke of Atholl, a Manchester Cotton-lord — never!

Questions

1. Explain the clan system as a social system. How does it compare with capitalism? With feudalism?
2. How did land in Scotland (and elsewhere) become “private property”? What role did lawyers play here? What is Marx’s opinions on lawyers?
3. What happened to the peasantry who were pushed off the Sutherland property?
4. In the last line, Marx claims that “the enemy of British Wage-Slavery” has a right to condemn slavery, but not the Duchess of Sutherland. What does he mean by this? Who is the enemy of British Wage-Slavery to which he refers?
5. If you were the Duchess of Sutherland, how would you respond to Marx’s attack?

Concepts

Private Property

1. “The secret of all great fortunes that appear from nowhere is a crime, never found out because so well executed.” This quote from Balzac was a favorite of Marx’s. ↵

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1.11: Revolution is Coming

"History is the judge -its executioner, the proletarian."

NOTE ON SOURCE: This selection was published in *The People's Paper* in 1856. It is a speech Marx gave at a banquet on the paper's anniversary. Here is how the speech was introduced in the paper, "On Monday last at the Bell Hotel, Strand, Ernest Jones entertained the compositors of *The People's Paper* and the other gentlemen connected with its office, at a supper, which was joined by a large number of the leading Democrats of England, France and Germany now in London. The banquet commenced at seven, and at nine o'clock the cloth was cleared, when a series of sentiments was given from the chair. The Chairman then proposed the toast: 'The proletarians of Europe', which was responded to by Dr. Marx as follows…"

Introduction – Why this is important and what to look for

This speech is included here for two reasons. One, it shows Marx in a candid moment. He did not intend his impromptu speech to be published. This is the Marx that his colleagues and the many workers that he came in contact with during his life work knew and loved. Two, it demonstrates Marx's hope and prediction that the inequalities attendant upon capitalism would come to an end, sooner rather than later, and that the agent of these changes would be the working class.

Marx's speech on the toast to the proletarians of Europe

The so-called revolutions of 1848 were but poor incidents — small fractures and fissures in the dry crust of European society. However, they denounced the abyss. Beneath the apparently solid surface, they betrayed oceans of liquid matter, only needing expansion to rend into fragments continents of hard rock. Noisily and confusedly they proclaimed the emancipation of the Proletarian, i.e. the secret of the 19th century, and of the revolution of that century.

That social revolution, it is true, was no novelty invented in 1848. Steam, electricity, and the self-acting mule were revolutionists of a rather more dangerous character than even citizens Barbés, Raspail and Blanqui. But, although the atmosphere in which we live, weighs upon everyone with a 20,000 lb. force, do you feel it? No more than European society before 1848 felt the revolutionary atmosphere enveloping and pressing it from all sides. There is one great fact, characteristic of this our 19th century, a fact which no party dares deny.

On the one hand, there have started into life industrial and scientific forces, which no epoch of the former human history had ever suspected. On the other hand, there exist symptoms of decay, far surpassing the horrors recorded of the latter times of the Roman Empire. In our days, everything seems pregnant with its contrary: Machinery, gifted with the wonderful power of shortening and fructifying human labor, we behold starving and overworking it; The newfangled sources of wealth, by some strange weird spell, are turned into sources of want; The victories of art seem bought by the loss of character.

At the same pace that mankind masters nature, man seems to become enslaved to other men or to his own infamy. Even the pure light of science seems unable to shine but on the dark background of ignorance. All our invention and progress seem to result in endowing material forces with intellectual life, and in stultifying human life into a material force.

This antagonism between modern industry and science on the one hand, modern misery and dissolution on the other hand; this antagonism between the productive powers and the social relations of our epoch is a fact, palpable, overwhelming, and not to be controverted. Some parties may wail over it; others may wish to get rid of modern arts, in order to get rid of modern conflicts. Or they may imagine that so signal a progress in industry wants to be completed by as signal a regress in politics. On our part, we do not mistake the shape of the shrewd spirit that continues to mark all these contradictions. We know that to work well the newfangled forces of society, they only want to be mastered by newfangled men — and such are the working men. They are as much the invention of modern time as machinery itself.

In the signs that bewilder the middle class, the aristocracy and the poor prophets of regression, we do recognize our brave friend, Robin Goodfellow (Puck), the old mole that can work in the earth so fast, that worthy pioneer — the Revolution. The English working men are the firstborn sons of modern industry. They will then, certainly, not be the last in aiding the social revolution produced by that industry, a revolution, which means the emancipation of their own class all over the world, which is as universal as capital-rule and wages-slavery. I know the heroic struggles the English working class have gone through since the middle of the last century — struggles less glorious, because they are shrouded in obscurity, and burked [mur*dered by suffocation*] by the middle-

class historian. To revenge the misdeeds of the ruling class, there existed in the middle ages, in Germany, a secret tribunal, called the “Vehmgericht.” If a red cross was seen marked on a house, people knew that its owner was doomed by the “Vehm.” All the houses of Europe are now marked with the mysterious red cross.

History is the judge — its executioner, the proletarian.

Questions

1. Marx often writes of the contradictions of capitalism. We see this here. What has capitalism done well? What negative consequences have arisen?
2. Why does Marx say that workers “are as much the invention of modern time as machinery itself”?
3. This ends rather ominously. Is Marx advocating violence against the bourgeoisie?

Concepts

Class struggle

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1.12: The Communist Manifesto

"Workers of All Countries Unite!"

NOTE ON SOURCE: This selection is from the *Communist Manifesto*, written by Marx and Engels on the eve of the 1848 revolutions, on commission from the Communist League. It was published in February of that year, in German, but published in London. Originally, it was published in pamphlet form, with a dark green cover. Throughout 1848 translations were made and published all over Europe. The first English translation was made in 1850, by Helen Macfarlane, and published in a political magazine, *The Red Republican*. This was the first time that the authors were named. Engels kept up with subsequent publications and translations. The text you have here is from the 1888 translation by Samuel Moore, edited by Engels.

Introduction – Why this is important and what to look for

There is a good argument to be made that if you are to read one thing by Marx, it would be the Communist Manifesto. *Almost all of Marx's ideas about capitalism, revolution, and how history happens can be found here. And it is relatively short and easily accessible. On the other hand, this was written as a polemic, a political call to action, and is missing some of the more sophisticated analyses found in the later volumes of Capital. It also spends a great deal of time, in the third section (which is not included here) describing and criticizing various strands within the movement (e.g., reactionary socialism, utopian socialism). Read the selections below with a special interest on (a) the theory of class struggle; and (b) communist social policies.*

Introduction

A spectre is haunting Europe – the spectre of communism. All the powers of old Europe have entered into a holy alliance to exorcise this spectre.

Where is the party in opposition that has not been decried as communistic by its opponents in power? Where is the opposition that has not hurled back the branding reproach of communism, against the more advanced opposition parties, as well as against its reactionary adversaries?

Two things result from this fact:

1. Communism is already acknowledged by all European powers to be itself a power.
2. It is high time that Communists should openly, in the face of the whole world, publish their views, their aims, their tendencies, and meet this nursery tale of the Spectre of Communism with a manifesto of the party itself.

To this end, Communists of various nationalities have assembled in London and sketched the following manifesto, to be published in the English, French, German, Italian, Flemish and Danish languages.

Bourgeois and Proletarians

The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles.

Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes.

In the earlier epochs of history, we find almost everywhere a complicated arrangement of society into various orders, a manifold gradation of social rank. In ancient Rome we have patricians, knights, plebeians, slaves; in the Middle Ages, feudal lords, vassals, guild-masters, journeymen, apprentices, serfs; in almost all of these classes, again, subordinate gradations.

The modern bourgeois society that has sprouted from the ruins of feudal society has not done away with class antagonisms. It has but established new classes, new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggle in place of the old ones.

Our epoch, the epoch of the bourgeoisie, possesses, however, this distinct feature: it has simplified class antagonisms. Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other – Bourgeoisie and Proletariat.

From the serfs of the Middle Ages sprang the chartered burghers of the earliest towns. From these burgesses the first elements of the bourgeoisie were developed.

The discovery of America, the rounding of the Cape, opened up fresh ground for the rising bourgeoisie. The East-Indian and Chinese markets, the colonization of America, trade with the colonies, the increase in the means of exchange and in commodities generally, gave to commerce, to navigation, to industry, an impulse never before known, and thereby, to the revolutionary element in the tottering feudal society, a rapid development.

The feudal system of industry, in which industrial production was monopolized by closed guilds, now no longer sufficed for the growing wants of the new markets. The manufacturing system took its place. The guild-masters were pushed on one side by the manufacturing middle class; division of labor between the different corporate guilds vanished in the face of division of labor in each single workshop.

Meantime the markets kept ever growing, the demand ever rising. Even manufacturer no longer sufficed. Thereupon, steam and machinery revolutionized industrial production. The place of manufacture was taken by the giant, Modern Industry; the place of the industrial middle class by industrial millionaires, the leaders of the whole industrial armies, the modern bourgeois.

Modern industry has established the world market, for which the discovery of America paved the way. This market has given an immense development to commerce, to navigation, to communication by land. This development has, in its turn, reacted on the extension of industry; and in proportion as industry, commerce, navigation, railways extended, in the same proportion the bourgeoisie developed, increased its capital, and pushed into the background every class handed down from the Middle Ages.

We see, therefore, how the modern bourgeoisie is itself the product of a long course of development, of a series of revolutions in the modes of production and of exchange.

Each step in the development of the bourgeoisie was accompanied by a corresponding political advance of that class. An oppressed class under the sway of the feudal nobility, an armed and self-governing association in the medieval commune: here independent urban republic (as in Italy and Germany); there taxable “third estate” of the monarchy (as in France); afterwards, in the period of manufacturing proper, serving either the semi-feudal or the absolute monarchy as a counterpoise against the nobility, and, in fact, cornerstone of the great monarchies in general, the bourgeoisie has at last, since the establishment of Modern Industry and of the world market, conquered for itself, in the modern representative State, exclusive political sway. The executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie.

The bourgeoisie, historically, has played a most revolutionary part.

The bourgeoisie, wherever it has got the upper hand, has put an end to all feudal, patriarchal, idyllic relations. It has pitilessly torn asunder the motley feudal ties that bound man to his “natural superiors,” and has left remaining no other nexus between man and man than naked self-interest, than callous “cash payment”. It has drowned the most heavenly ecstasies of religious fervour, of chivalrous enthusiasm, of philistine sentimentalism, in the icy water of egotistical calculation. It has resolved personal worth into exchange value, and in place of the numberless indefeasible chartered freedoms, has set up that single, unconscionable freedom – Free Trade. In one word, for exploitation, veiled by religious and political illusions, it has substituted naked, shameless, direct, brutal exploitation.

The bourgeoisie has stripped of its halo every occupation hitherto honoured and looked up to with reverent awe. It has converted the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the man of science, into its paid wage laborers.

The bourgeoisie has torn away from the family its sentimental veil, and has reduced the family relation to a mere money relation.

The bourgeoisie has disclosed how it came to pass that the brutal display of vigour in the Middle Ages, which reactionaries so much admire, found its fitting complement in the most slothful indolence. It has been the first to show what man’s activity can bring about. It has accomplished wonders far surpassing Egyptian pyramids, Roman aqueducts, and Gothic cathedrals; it has conducted expeditions that put in the shade all former Exoduses of nations and crusades.

The bourgeoisie cannot exist without constantly revolutionizing the instruments of production, and thereby the relations of production, and with them the whole relations of society. Conservation of the old modes of production in unaltered form, was, on the contrary, the first condition of existence for all earlier industrial classes. Constant revolutionizing of production, uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions, everlasting uncertainty and agitation distinguish the bourgeois epoch from all earlier ones. All fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled to face with sober senses his real conditions of life, and his relations with his kind.

The need of a constantly expanding market for its products chases the bourgeoisie over the entire surface of the globe. It must nestle everywhere, settle everywhere, establish connections everywhere.

The bourgeoisie has through its exploitation of the world market given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country. To the great chagrin of Reactionists, it has drawn from under the feet of industry the national ground on which it stood. All old-established national industries have been destroyed or are daily being destroyed. They are dislodged by new industries, whose introduction becomes a life and death question for all civilized nations, by industries that no longer work up indigenous raw material, but raw material drawn from the remotest zones; industries whose products are consumed, not only at home, but in every quarter of the globe. In place of the old wants, satisfied by the production of the country, we find new wants, requiring for their satisfaction the products of distant lands and climes. In place of the old local and national seclusion and self-sufficiency, we have intercourse in every direction, universal inter-dependence of nations. And as in material, so also in intellectual production. The intellectual creations of individual nations become common property. National one-sidedness and narrow-mindedness become more and more impossible, and from the numerous national and local literatures, there arises a world literature.

The bourgeoisie, by the rapid improvement of all instruments of production, by the immensely facilitated means of communication, draws all, even the most barbarian, nations into civilization. The cheap prices of commodities are the heavy artillery with which it batters down all Chinese walls, with which it forces the barbarians' intensely obstinate hatred of foreigners to capitulate. It compels all nations, on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production; it compels them to introduce what it calls civilization into their midst, i.e., to become bourgeois themselves. In one word, it creates a world after its own image.

The bourgeoisie has subjected the country to the rule of the towns. It has created enormous cities, has greatly increased the urban population as compared with the rural, and has thus rescued a considerable part of the population from the idiocy of rural life. Just as it has made the country dependent on the towns, so it has made barbarian and semi-barbarian countries dependent on the civilized ones, nations of peasants on nations of bourgeois, the East on the West.

The bourgeoisie keeps more and more doing away with the scattered state of the population, of the means of production, and of property. It has agglomerated population, centralized the means of production, and has concentrated property in a few hands. The necessary consequence of this was political centralization. Independent, or but loosely connected provinces, with separate interests, laws, governments, and systems of taxation, became lumped together into one nation, with one government, one code of laws, one national class-interest, one frontier, and one customs-tariff.

The bourgeoisie, during its rule of scarce one hundred years, has created more massive and more colossal productive forces than have all preceding generations together. Subjection of Nature's forces to man, machinery, application of chemistry to industry and agriculture, steam-navigation, railways, electric telegraphs, clearing of whole continents for cultivation, canalization of rivers, whole populations conjured out of the ground – what earlier century had even a presentiment that such productive forces slumbered in the lap of social labor?

We see then: the means of production and of exchange, on whose foundation the bourgeoisie built itself up, were generated in feudal society. At a certain stage in the development of these means of production and of exchange, the conditions under which feudal society produced and exchanged, the feudal organization of agriculture and manufacturing industry, in one word, the feudal relations of property became no longer compatible with the already developed productive forces; they became so many fetters. They had to be burst asunder; they were burst asunder.

Into their place stepped free competition, accompanied by a social and political constitution adapted in it, and the economic and political sway of the bourgeois class.

A similar movement is going on before our own eyes. Modern bourgeois society, with its relations of production, of exchange and of property, a society that has conjured up such gigantic means of production and of exchange, is like the sorcerer who is no longer able to control the powers of the nether world whom he has called up by his spells. For many a decade past the history of industry and commerce is but the history of the revolt of modern productive forces against modern conditions of production, against the property relations that are the conditions for the existence of the bourgeois and of its rule. It is enough to mention the commercial crises that by their periodical return put the existence of the entire bourgeois society on its trial, each time more threateningly. In these crises, a great part not only of the existing products, but also of the previously created productive forces, are periodically destroyed. In these crises, there breaks out an epidemic that, in all earlier epochs, would have seemed an absurdity – the epidemic

of over-production. Society suddenly finds itself put back into a state of momentary barbarism; it appears as if a famine, a universal war of devastation, had cut off the supply of every means of subsistence; industry and commerce seem to be destroyed; and why? Because there is too much civilization, too much means of subsistence, too much industry, too much commerce. The productive forces at the disposal of society no longer tend to further the development of the conditions of bourgeois property; on the contrary, they have become too powerful for these conditions, by which they are fettered, and so soon as they overcome these fetters, they bring disorder into the whole of bourgeois society, endanger the existence of bourgeois property. The conditions of bourgeois society are too narrow to comprise the wealth created by them. And how does the bourgeoisie get over these crises? On the one hand by enforced destruction of a mass of productive forces; on the other, by the conquest of new markets, and by the more thorough exploitation of the old ones. That is to say, by paving the way for more extensive and more destructive crises, and by diminishing the means whereby crises are prevented.

The weapons with which the bourgeoisie felled feudalism to the ground are now turned against the bourgeoisie itself.

But not only has the bourgeoisie forged the weapons that bring death to itself; it has also called into existence the men who are to wield those weapons – the modern working class – the proletarians.

In proportion as the bourgeoisie, i.e., capital, is developed, in the same proportion is the proletariat, the modern working class, developed – a class of laborers, who live only so long as they find work, and who find work only so long as their labor increases capital. These laborers, who must sell themselves piecemeal, are a commodity, like every other article of commerce, and are consequently exposed to all the vicissitudes of competition, to all the fluctuations of the market.

Owing to the extensive use of machinery, and to the division of labor, the work of the proletarians has lost all individual character, and, consequently, all charm for the workman. He becomes an appendage of the machine, and it is only the simplest, most monotonous, and most easily acquired knack, that is required of him. Hence, the cost of production of a workman is restricted, almost entirely, to the means of subsistence that he requires for maintenance, and for the propagation of his race. But the price of a commodity, and therefore also of labor, is equal to its cost of production. In proportion, therefore, as the repulsiveness of the work increases, the wage decreases. Nay more, in proportion as the use of machinery and division of labor increases, in the same proportion the burden of toil also increases, whether by prolongation of the working hours, by the increase of the work exacted in a given time or by increased speed of machinery, etc.

Modern Industry has converted the little workshop of the patriarchal master into the great factory of the industrial capitalist. Masses of laborers, crowded into the factory, are organized like soldiers. As privates of the industrial army they are placed under the command of a perfect hierarchy of officers and sergeants. Not only are they slaves of the bourgeois class, and of the bourgeois State; they are daily and hourly enslaved by the machine, by the overlooker, and, above all, by the individual bourgeois manufacturer himself. The more openly this despotism proclaims gain to be its end and aim, the pettier, the more hateful and the more embittering it is.

The less the skill and exertion of strength implied in manual labor, in other words, the more modern industry becomes developed, the more is the labor of men superseded by that of women. Differences of age and sex have no longer any distinctive social validity for the working class. All are instruments of labor, more or less expensive to use, according to their age and sex.

No sooner is the exploitation of the laborer by the manufacturer, so far, at an end, that he receives his wages in cash, than he is set upon by the other portions of the bourgeoisie, the landlord, the shopkeeper, the pawnbroker, etc.

The lower strata of the middle class – the small tradespeople, shopkeepers, and retired tradesmen generally, the handicraftsmen and peasants – all these sink gradually into the proletariat, partly because their diminutive capital does not suffice for the scale on which Modern Industry is carried on, and is swamped in the competition with the large capitalists, partly because their specialized skill is rendered worthless by new methods of production. Thus, the proletariat is recruited from all classes of the population.

The proletariat goes through various stages of development. With its birth begins its struggle with the bourgeoisie. At first the contest is carried on by individual laborers, then by the workpeople of a factory, then by the operative of one trade, in one locality, against the individual bourgeois who directly exploits them. They direct their attacks not against the bourgeois conditions of production, but against the instruments of production themselves; they destroy imported wares that compete with their labor, they smash to pieces machinery, they set factories ablaze, they seek to restore by force the vanished status of the workman of the Middle Ages.

At this stage, the laborers still form an incoherent mass scattered over the whole country, and broken up by their mutual competition. If anywhere they unite to form more compact bodies, this is not yet the consequence of their own active union, but of the union of the bourgeoisie, which class, in order to attain its own political ends, is compelled to set the whole proletariat in motion, and is moreover yet, for a time, able to do so. At this stage, therefore, the proletarians do not fight their enemies, but the enemies of their enemies, the remnants of absolute monarchy, the landowners, the non-industrial bourgeois, the petty bourgeois. Thus, the whole historical movement is concentrated in the hands of the bourgeoisie; every victory so obtained is a victory for the bourgeoisie.

But with the development of industry, the proletariat not only increases in number; it becomes concentrated in greater masses, its strength grows, and it feels that strength more. The various interests and conditions of life within the ranks of the proletariat are more and more equalized, in proportion as machinery obliterates all distinctions of labor, and nearly everywhere reduces wages to the same low-level. The growing competition among the bourgeois, and the resulting commercial crises, make the wages of the workers ever more fluctuating. The increasing improvement of machinery, ever more rapidly developing, makes their livelihood more and more precarious; the collisions between individual workmen and individual bourgeois take more and more the character of collisions between two classes. Thereupon, the workers begin to form combinations (Trades' Unions) against the bourgeois; they club together in order to keep up the rate of wages; they found permanent associations in order to make provision beforehand for these occasional revolts. Here and there, the contest breaks out into riots.

Now and then the workers are victorious, but only for a time. The real fruit of their battles lies, not in the immediate result, but in the ever-expanding union of the workers. This union is helped on by the improved means of communication that are created by modern industry, and that place the workers of different localities in contact with one another. It was just this contact that was needed to centralize the numerous local struggles, all of the same character, into one national struggle between classes. But every class struggle is a political struggle. And that union, to attain which the burghers of the Middle Ages, with their miserable highways, required centuries, the modern proletarian, thanks to railways, achieve in a few years.

This organization of the proletarians into a class, and, consequently into a political party, is continually being upset again by the competition between the workers themselves. But it ever rises up again, stronger, firmer, mightier. It compels legislative recognition of particular interests of the workers, by taking advantage of the divisions among the bourgeoisie itself. Thus, the ten-hours' bill in England was carried.

Altogether collisions between the classes of the old society further, in many ways, the course of development of the proletariat. The bourgeoisie finds itself involved in a constant battle. At first with the aristocracy; later on, with those portions of the bourgeoisie itself, whose interests have become antagonistic to the progress of industry; at all time with the bourgeoisie of foreign countries. In all these battles, it sees itself compelled to appeal to the proletariat, to ask for help, and thus, to drag it into the political arena. The bourgeoisie itself, therefore, supplies the proletariat with its own elements of political and general education, in other words, it furnishes the proletariat with weapons for fighting the bourgeoisie.

Further, as we have already seen, entire sections of the ruling class are, by the advance of industry, precipitated into the proletariat, or are at least threatened in their conditions of existence. These also supply the proletariat with fresh elements of enlightenment and progress.

Finally, in times when the class struggle nears the decisive hour, the progress of dissolution going on within the ruling class, in fact within the whole range of old society, assumes such a violent, glaring character, that a small section of the ruling class cuts itself adrift, and joins the revolutionary class, the class that holds the future in its hands. Just as, therefore, at an earlier period, a section of the nobility went over to the bourgeoisie, so now a portion of the bourgeoisie goes over to the proletariat, and in particular, a portion of the bourgeois ideologists, who have raised themselves to the level of comprehending theoretically the historical movement as a whole.

Of all the classes that stand face to face with the bourgeoisie today, the proletariat alone is a really revolutionary class. The other classes decay and finally disappear in the face of Modern Industry; the proletariat is its special and essential product.

The lower middle class, the small manufacturer, the shopkeeper, the artisan, the peasant, all these fight against the bourgeoisie, to save from extinction their existence as fractions of the middle class. They are therefore not revolutionary, but conservative. Nay more, they are reactionary, for they try to roll back the wheel of history. If by chance, they are revolutionary, they are only so in

view of their impending transfer into the proletariat; they thus defend not their present, but their future interests, they desert their own standpoint to place themselves at that of the proletariat.

The “dangerous class”, the *lumpenproletariat*, the social scum, that passively rotting mass thrown off by the lowest layers of the old society, may, here and there, be swept into the movement by a proletarian revolution; its conditions of life, however, prepare it far more for the part of a bribed tool of reactionary intrigue.

In the condition of the proletariat, those of old society at large are already virtually swamped. The proletarian is without property; his relation to his wife and children has no longer anything in common with the bourgeois family relations; modern industry labor, modern subjection to capital, the same in England as in France, in America as in Germany, has stripped him of every trace of national character. Law, morality, religion, are to him so many bourgeois prejudices, behind which lurk in ambush just as many bourgeois interests.

All the preceding classes that got the upper hand sought to fortify their already acquired status by subjecting society at large to their conditions of appropriation. The proletarians cannot become masters of the productive forces of society, except by abolishing their own previous mode of appropriation, and thereby also every other previous mode of appropriation. They have nothing of their own to secure and to fortify; their mission is to destroy all previous securities for, and insurances of, individual property.

All previous historical movements were movements of minorities, or in the interest of minorities. The proletarian movement is the self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority, in the interest of the immense majority. The proletariat, the lowest stratum of our present society, cannot stir, cannot raise itself up, without the whole superincumbent strata of official society being sprung into the air.

Though not in substance, yet in form, the struggle of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie is at first a national struggle. The proletariat of each country must, of course, first of all settle matters with its own bourgeoisie.

In depicting the most general phases of the development of the proletariat, we traced the more or less veiled civil war, raging within existing society, up to the point where that war breaks out into open revolution, and where the violent overthrow of the bourgeoisie lays the foundation for the sway of the proletariat.

Hitherto, every form of society has been based, as we have already seen, on the antagonism of oppressing and oppressed classes. But in order to oppress a class, certain conditions must be assured to it under which it can, at least, continue its slavish existence. The serf, in the period of serfdom, raised himself to membership in the commune, just as the petty bourgeois, under the yoke of the feudal absolutism, managed to develop into a bourgeois. The modern laborer, on the contrary, instead of rising with the process of industry, sinks deeper and deeper below the conditions of existence of his own class. He becomes a pauper, and pauperism develops more rapidly than population and wealth. And here it becomes evident, that the bourgeoisie is unfit any longer to be the ruling class in society, and to impose its conditions of existence upon society as an over-riding law. It is unfit to rule because it is incompetent to assure an existence to its slave within his slavery, because it cannot help letting him sink into such a state, that it has to feed him, instead of being fed by him. Society can no longer live under this bourgeoisie, in other words, its existence is no longer compatible with society.

The essential conditions for the existence and for the sway of the bourgeois class is the formation and augmentation of capital; the condition for capital is wage-labor. Wage-labor rests exclusively on competition between the laborers. The advance of industry, whose involuntary promoter is the bourgeoisie, replaces the isolation of the laborers, due to competition, by the revolutionary combination, due to association. The development of Modern Industry, therefore, cuts from under its feet the very foundation on which the bourgeoisie produces and appropriates products. What the bourgeoisie therefore produces, above all, are its own grave-diggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable.

Part 2: Proletarians and Communists

In what relation do the Communists stand to the proletarians as a whole?

The Communists do not form a separate party opposed to the other working-class parties.

They have no interests separate and apart from those of the proletariat as a whole.

They do not set up any sectarian principles of their own, by which to shape and mold the proletarian movement.

The Communists are distinguished from the other working-class parties by this only:1. In the national struggles of the proletarians of the different countries, they point out and bring to the front the common interests of the entire proletariat, independently of all nationality. 2. In the various stages of development which the struggle of the working class against the bourgeoisie has to pass through, they always and everywhere represent the interests of the movement as a whole.

The Communists, therefore, are on the one hand, practically, the most advanced and resolute section of the working-class parties of every country, that section which pushes forward all others; on the other hand, theoretically, they have over the great mass of the proletariat the advantage of clearly understanding the line of march, the conditions, and the ultimate general results of the proletarian movement.

The immediate aim of the Communists is the same as that of all other proletarian parties: formation of the proletariat into a class, overthrow of the bourgeois supremacy, conquest of political power by the proletariat.

The theoretical conclusions of the Communists are in no way based on ideas or principles that have been invented, or discovered, by this or that would-be universal reformer.

They merely express, in general terms, actual relations springing from an existing class struggle, from a historical movement going on under our very eyes. The abolition of existing property relations is not at all a distinctive feature of communism.

All property relations in the past have continually been subject to historical change consequent upon the change in historical conditions.

The French Revolution, for example, abolished feudal property in favour of bourgeois property.

The distinguishing feature of Communism is not the abolition of property generally, but the abolition of bourgeois property. But modern bourgeois private property is the final and most complete expression of the system of producing and appropriating products, that is based on class antagonisms, on the exploitation of the many by the few.

In this sense, the theory of the Communists may be summed up in the single sentence: Abolition of private property.

We Communists have been reproached with the desire of abolishing the right of personally acquiring property as the fruit of a man's own labor, which property is alleged to be the groundwork of all personal freedom, activity and independence.

Hard-won, self-acquired, self-earned property! Do you mean the property of petty artisan and of the small peasant, a form of property that preceded the bourgeois form? There is no need to abolish that; the development of industry has to a great extent already destroyed it, and is still destroying it daily.

Or do you mean the modern bourgeois private property?

But does wage-labor create any property for the laborer? Not a bit. It creates capital, *i.e.*, that kind of property which exploits wage-labor, and which cannot increase except upon condition of begetting a new supply of wage-labor for fresh exploitation. Property, in its present form, is based on the antagonism of capital and wage labor. Let us examine both sides of this antagonism.

To be a capitalist, is to have not only a purely personal, but a social *status* in production. Capital is a collective product, and only by the united action of many members, nay, in the last resort, only by the united action of all members of society, can it be set in motion.

Capital is therefore not only personal; it is a social power.

When, therefore, capital is converted into common property, into the property of all members of society, personal property is not thereby transformed into social property. It is only the social character of the property that is changed. It loses its class character.

Let us now take wage-labor.

The average price of wage-labor is the minimum wage, *i.e.*, that quantum of the means of subsistence which is absolutely requisite to keep the laborer in bare existence as a laborer. What, therefore, the wage-laborer appropriates by means of his labor, merely suffices to prolong and reproduce a bare existence. We by no means intend to abolish this personal appropriation of the products of labor, an appropriation that is made for the maintenance and reproduction of human life, and that leaves no surplus wherewith to command the labor of others. All that we want to do away with is the miserable character of this appropriation, under which the laborer lives merely to increase capital, and is allowed to live only in so far as the interest of the ruling class requires it.

In bourgeois society, living labor is but a means to increase accumulated labor. In Communist society, accumulated labor is but a means to widen, to enrich, to promote the existence of the laborer.

In bourgeois society, therefore, the past dominates the present; in Communist society, the present dominates the past. In bourgeois society capital is independent and has individuality, while the living person is dependent and has no individuality.

And the abolition of this state of things is called by the bourgeois, abolition of individuality and freedom! And rightly so. The abolition of bourgeois individuality, bourgeois independence, and bourgeois freedom is undoubtedly aimed at.

By freedom is meant, under the present bourgeois conditions of production, free trade, free selling and buying.

But if selling and buying disappears, free selling and buying disappears also. This talk about free selling and buying, and all the other "brave words" of our bourgeois about freedom in general, have a meaning, if any, only in contrast with restricted selling and buying, with the fettered traders of the Middle Ages, but have no meaning when opposed to the Communistic abolition of buying and selling, of the bourgeois conditions of production, and of the bourgeoisie itself.

You are horrified at our intending to do away with private property. But in your existing society, private property is already done away with for nine-tenths of the population; its existence for the few is solely due to its non-existence in the hands of those nine-tenths. You reproach us, therefore, with intending to do away with a form of property, the necessary condition for whose existence is the non-existence of any property for the immense majority of society.

In one word, you reproach us with intending to do away with your property. Precisely so; that is just what we intend.

From the moment when labor can no longer be converted into capital, money, or rent, into a social power capable of being monopolized, *i.e.*, from the moment when individual property can no longer be transformed into bourgeois property, into capital, from that moment, you say, individuality vanishes.

You must, therefore, confess that by "individual" you mean no other person than the bourgeois, than the middle-class owner of property. This person must, indeed, be swept out of the way, and made impossible.

Communism deprives no man of the power to appropriate the products of society; all that it does is to deprive him of the power to subjugate the labor of others by means of such appropriations.

It has been objected that upon the abolition of private property, all work will cease, and universal laziness will overtake us.

According to this, bourgeois society ought long ago to have gone to the dogs through sheer idleness; for those of its members who work, acquire nothing, and those who acquire anything do not work. The whole of this objection is but another expression of the tautology: that there can no longer be any wage-labor when there is no longer any capital.

All objections urged against the Communistic mode of producing and appropriating material products, have, in the same way, been urged against the Communistic mode of producing and appropriating intellectual products. Just as, to the bourgeois, the disappearance of class property is the disappearance of production itself, so the disappearance of class culture is to him identical with the disappearance of all culture.

That culture, the loss of which he laments, is, for the enormous majority, a mere training to act as a machine.

But don't wrangle with us so long as you apply, to our intended abolition of bourgeois property, the standard of your bourgeois notions of freedom, culture, law, &c. Your very ideas are but the outgrowth of the conditions of your bourgeois production and bourgeois property, just as your jurisprudence is but the will of your class made into a law for all, a will whose essential character and direction are determined by the economical conditions of existence of your class.

The selfish misconception that induces you to transform into eternal laws of nature and of reason, the social forms springing from your present mode of production and form of property – historical relations that rise and disappear in the progress of production – this misconception you share with every ruling class that has preceded you. What you see clearly in the case of ancient property, what you admit in the case of feudal property, you are of course forbidden to admit in the case of your own bourgeois form of property.

Abolition of the family! Even the most radical flare up at this infamous proposal of the Communists.

On what foundation is the present family, the bourgeois family, based? On capital, on private gain. In its completely developed form, this family exists only among the bourgeoisie. But this state of things finds its complement in the practical absence of the

family among the proletarians, and in public prostitution.

The bourgeois family will vanish as a matter of course when its complement vanishes, and both will vanish with the vanishing of capital.

Do you charge us with wanting to stop the exploitation of children by their parents? To this crime we plead guilty.

But, you say, we destroy the most hallowed of relations, when we replace home education by social.

And your education! Is not that also social, and determined by the social conditions under which you educate, by the intervention direct or indirect, of society, by means of schools, &c.? The Communists have not invented the intervention of society in education; they do but seek to alter the character of that intervention, and to rescue education from the influence of the ruling class.

The bourgeois clap-trap about the family and education, about the hallowed co-relation of parents and child, becomes all the more disgusting, the more, by the action of Modern Industry, all the family ties among the proletarians are torn asunder, and their children transformed into simple articles of commerce and instruments of labor.

But you Communists would introduce community of women, screams the bourgeoisie in chorus.

The bourgeois sees his wife a mere instrument of production. He hears that the instruments of production are to be exploited in common, and, naturally, can come to no other conclusion that the lot of being common to all will likewise fall to the women.

He has not even a suspicion that the real point aimed at is to do away with the status of women as mere instruments of production.

For the rest, nothing is more ridiculous than the virtuous indignation of our bourgeois at the community of women which, they pretend, is to be openly and officially established by the Communists. The Communists have no need to introduce community of women; it has existed almost from time immemorial.

Our bourgeois, not content with having wives and daughters of their proletarians at their disposal, not to speak of common prostitutes, take the greatest pleasure in seducing each other's wives.

Bourgeois marriage is, in reality, a system of wives in common and thus, at the most, what the Communists might possibly be reproached with is that they desire to introduce, in substitution for a hypocritically concealed, an openly legalized community of women. For the rest, it is self-evident that the abolition of the present system of production must bring with it the abolition of the community of women springing from that system, *i.e.*, of prostitution both public and private.

The Communists are further reproached with desiring to abolish countries and nationality.

The working men have no country. We cannot take from them what they have not got. Since the proletariat must first of all acquire political supremacy, must rise to be the leading class of the nation, must constitute itself *the* nation, it is so far, itself national, though not in the bourgeois sense of the word.

National differences and antagonism between peoples are daily more and more vanishing, owing to the development of the bourgeoisie, to freedom of commerce, to the world market, to uniformity in the mode of production and in the conditions of life corresponding thereto.

The supremacy of the proletariat will cause them to vanish still faster. United action, of the leading civilized countries at least, is one of the first conditions for the emancipation of the proletariat.

In proportion as the exploitation of one individual by another will also be put an end to, the exploitation of one nation by another will also be put an end to. In proportion as the antagonism between classes within the nation vanishes, the hostility of one nation to another will come to an end.

The charges against Communism made from a religious, a philosophical and, generally, from an ideological standpoint, are not deserving of serious examination.

Does it require deep intuition to comprehend that man's ideas, views, and conception, in one word, man's consciousness, changes with every change in the conditions of his material existence, in his social relations and in his social life?

What else does the history of ideas prove, than that intellectual production changes its character in proportion as material production is changed? The ruling ideas of each age have ever been the ideas of its ruling class.

When people speak of the ideas that revolutionize society, they do but express that fact that within the old society the elements of a new one have been created, and that the dissolution of the old ideas keeps even pace with the dissolution of the old conditions of existence.

When the ancient world was in its last throes, the ancient religions were overcome by Christianity. When Christian ideas succumbed in the 18th century to rationalist ideas, feudal society fought its death battle with the then revolutionary bourgeoisie. The ideas of religious liberty and freedom of conscience merely gave expression to the sway of free competition within the domain of knowledge.

“Undoubtedly,” it will be said, “religious, moral, philosophical, and juridical ideas have been modified in the course of historical development. But religion, morality, philosophy, political science, and law, constantly survived this change.”

“There are, besides, eternal truths, such as Freedom, Justice, etc., that are common to all states of society. But Communism abolishes eternal truths, it abolishes all religion, and all morality, instead of constituting them on a new basis; it therefore acts in contradiction to all past historical experience.”

What does this accusation reduce itself to? The history of all past society has consisted in the development of class antagonisms, antagonisms that assumed different forms at different epochs.

But whatever form they may have taken, one fact is common to all past ages, *viz.*, the exploitation of one part of society by the other. No wonder, then, that the social consciousness of past ages, despite all the multiplicity and variety it displays, moves within certain common forms, or general ideas, which cannot completely vanish except with the total disappearance of class antagonisms.

The Communist revolution is the most radical rupture with traditional property relations; no wonder that its development involved the most radical rupture with traditional ideas.

But let us have done with the bourgeois objections to Communism.

We have seen above, that the first step in the revolution by the working class is to raise the proletariat to the position of ruling class to win the battle of democracy.

The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest, by degree, all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralize all instruments of production in the hands of the State, *i.e.*, of the proletariat organized as the ruling class; and to increase the total productive forces as rapidly as possible.

Of course, in the beginning, this cannot be effected except by means of despotic inroads on the rights of property, and on the conditions of bourgeois production; by means of measures, therefore, which appear economically insufficient and untenable, but which, in the course of the movement, outstrip themselves, necessitate further inroads upon the old social order, and are unavoidable as a means of entirely revolutionizing the mode of production.

These measures will, of course, be different in different countries.

Nevertheless, in most advanced countries, the following will be pretty generally applicable.

1. Abolition of property in land and application of all rents of land to public purposes.
2. A heavy progressive or graduated income tax.
3. Abolition of all rights of inheritance.
4. Confiscation of the property of all emigrants and rebels.
5. Centralization of credit in the hands of the state, by means of a national bank with State capital and an exclusive monopoly.
6. Centralization of the means of communication and transport in the hands of the State.
7. Extension of factories and instruments of production owned by the State; the bringing into cultivation of waste-lands, and the improvement of the soil generally in accordance with a common plan.
8. Equal liability of all to work. Establishment of industrial armies, especially for agriculture.
9. Combination of agriculture with manufacturing industries; gradual abolition of all the distinction between town and country by a more equable distribution of the populace over the country.
10. Free education for all children in public schools. Abolition of children’s factory labor in its present form. Combination of education with industrial production, &c, &c.

When, in the course of development, class distinctions have disappeared, and all production has been concentrated in the hands of a vast association of the whole nation, the public power will lose its political character. Political power, properly so-called, is merely the organized power of one class for oppressing another. If the proletariat during its contest with the bourgeoisie is compelled, by the force of circumstances, to organize itself as a class, if, by means of a revolution, it makes itself the ruling class, and, as such, sweeps away by force the old conditions of production, then it will, along with these conditions, have swept away the conditions for the existence of class antagonisms and of classes generally, and will thereby have abolished its own supremacy as a class.

In place of the old bourgeois society, with its classes and class antagonisms, we shall have an association, in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all.

Questions

1. What is the specter haunting all of Europe? What do Marx and Engels mean by this? How do they respond to attacks on Communism and Communists?
2. What do Communists want? Draw a diagram comparing Capitalist and Communist society. How would education differ between the two? The family? Work?
3. What is the role of the State envisioned here? [*hint: there are two answers, depending on the stage of communism*]
4. If you were a worker in 1848, what would you have made of this document? If you were a capitalist? A liberal-minded professional?
5. It has now been more than 150 years since *The Communist Manifesto* was written. The world has witnessed a few topplings of capitalism in favor of communism, but many people find these less successful than what was envisioned here. Furthermore, capitalism is still going strong in the US, France, Germany, and the UK – all places where the Communist revolution was expected to take place. What, if anything, did Marx and Engels get wrong?

Concepts

Bourgeoisie

Proletariat

Lumpenproletariat

Class Struggle

Means of Production

Mode of Production

Capitalism

Communism

Revolution

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1.13: Concepts/Dictionary

Concepts from Marx

Use the following pages to create your own mini-dictionary, with page/line numbers for easy reference. You may want to save this as a separate document for more detailed note-taking and commentary.

Concept	Page/Line Numbers	Definition/Notes
Alienation (all four aspects)		
Bourgeoisie		

Capital		

Capital Accumulation		
Capitalism		

Centralization of Capital		
Circulation of Capital		

Expanded Notes

Use the following space to organize your notes on the concepts (what connections?). Try creating a diagram!

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

2: Durkheim

2.1: Biography of Durkheim
2.2: Rules of Method (1895)
2.3: Division of Labor, Introduction
2.4: Division of Labor, Book 1
2.5: Division of Labor, Book 2
2.6: Division of Labor, Book 3
2.7: Le Suicide (1897) - Introduction/Book 2
2.8: Education and Sociology (1922)
2.9: Elementary Forms of Religious Life (1912)
2.10: EXTRA- Review of Année Sociologique (1898) article
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2.1: Biography of Durkheim

EMILE DURKHEIM (1858-1917)

"Si vous voulex mûrir votre pensée, attachez-vous àl'étude scrupuleuse d'un grand maître; démontez un système dans ses rouages les plus secrets"[1]– Emile Durkheim

"Patience, Effort, Confidence" – Durkheim's motto[2]

NOTE ON SOURCES: The most comprehensive biography of Durkheim, by Marcel Fournier, was published as recently as 2012. Until this publication, there were many books on Durkheim's contributions to sociology, but comparatively little was known about his personal and family life. In addition to Fournier, the following recommended sources were used for compiling this biography, listed in order from oldest to most recent: Gehlke, Emile Durkheim's Contributions to Sociological Theory (1915), Alpert, *Emile Durkheim and His Sociology*(1939); Nisbet, *Emile Durkheim*(1965); Bierstedt, *Emile Durkheim*(1966); Lukes, *Emile Durkheim, His Life and Work*(1972); Giddens, *Durkheim*(1978), Parkin, *Durkheim*(1992); Jones, *The Development of Durkheim's Social Realism*(1999); Stedman Jones, *Durkheim Reconsidered*(2001); Allen, *Durkheim: A Critical Introduction*(2017).

Overview

David Emile Durkheim was born in Epinal, France on April 15, 1858. Unlike Marx, whose youth was spent during the tumultuous first half of the nineteenth century, by the time Durkheim was a young man France was experiencing one of its longest governments, the Third Republic (1870-1940). He would spend his entire life living and working in France. Intelligent and productive, Durkheim would do much to create and institutionalize the new discipline of sociology in France.

Social Background/Family

Durkheim's mother, Melanie, was the daughter of a horse merchant.[3] His father Moise, was a regional Chief Rabbi. Moise's father and grandfather before him had been rabbis as well. As a young boy, it was assumed that Emile would also one day be a rabbi, but it was not to be. After going to college, Durkheim broke with religion altogether. Nevertheless, he always remained part of the Jewish community. In 1887, he married a young embroiderer named Louise Julie Dreyfus, the daughter of a director of a foundry, and together they had two children, Marie Bella (born 1888) and Andre-Armand (born 1892). It is said that Louise was well-educated and helped Emile with his work. Where Emile was austere, Louise was light-hearted. By all accounts, they had a happy marriage. Andre would die in 1915, from an injury sustained in battle in Bulgaria. When waiting to hear news of his son, on the battlefront, he wrote to a close friend, "The image of this exhausted child, alone at the side of a road in the midst of night and fog … that seizes me by the throat."[4] It is said that the death of his son precipitated Emile Durkheim's decline and early death, following a stroke (at age 59).

Ten Things We Know about Durkheim as a Person

1. He was an outstanding student.
2. He was very close to his family and community. He worried about his family's finances when his father became ill while he was in college.
3. He was a good debater.
4. He was very well-known by all kinds of intelligent people, especially in circles of philosophy and psychology.
5. He strongly supported the republican cause (against resumption of the monarchy) and admired the reforms of the Third Republic.
6. He was a very good administrator and organizer and provided assistance to friends and supporters.
7. He was a mesmerizing lecturer and was even accused of having too much control over the minds of his young students.
8. He often worked too hard, sometimes even into illness.
9. He stood up for the underdog.
10. He was devoted to the science of sociology.

Durkheim's Career

Durkheim earned degrees from his local college in 1874 and 1875 (when he was only 17). At that age, he wanted to be a college professor, and the only way to do this was to attend the École Normale Superieure, in Paris. By all accounts, life in Paris was very

difficult for him, as he did not have a lot of money and he did not feel at home. It took him two years before he passed entrance exams necessary to attend the prestigious institution. Once there, he considered much of what he was forced to study "sheer poppycock.'[5] Although never perhaps shaking the feeling of being an impostor, he was admitted to the highest intellectual circles. He participated in debates. He became friends with philosophers, historians, and psychologists (a new and exciting field at the time). After graduating in 1883 he took a teaching post in Bourdeaux, where he lived, with his growing family, until 1902. In 1892 he briefly returned to Paris where he earned his PhD (for *The Division of Labor*). In 1902, he moved to Paris permanently to teach at the Sorbonne, where he continued until his death in 1917. He did much to create the field of sociology in France, largely by overseeing the sociology journal, *L'Année Sociologique*, and by helping advance the career of young sociologists. He was also an advisory editor on the first US sociology journal, *The American Journal of Sociology*.

Durkheim's Politics

Durkheim lived and worked during the Third Republic, a relatively stable period in France that was, in theory, committed to parliamentary democracy (as opposed to constitutional monarchy or socialism). We could say the Third Republic was a compromise government, and that its stability could perhaps be attributed to its moderation. Durkheim was actively involved with supporting the Third Republic and saw sociology as the science that could lead to better policy-making. He was also an outspoken critic of antisemitism[6] and much in sympathy with socialism. Durkheim once told a close friend "with a moving simplicity how, at a certain moment of his spiritual life, he had had to admit to himself that he was a socialist.[7] " During World War I, he was active in supporting France and even wrote a series of short articles decrying the "German mind" for its tendency to militarism and overreach.

Durkheim's Mission

"Our science came into being only yesterday. It must not be forgotten, especially in view of the favorable reception that sociology is given now, that, properly speaking, Europe did not have as many as ten sociologists fifteen years ago" – Durkheim (1900)

Durkheim wanted sociology recognized as an important discipline, distinct from political economy, psychology, history, or philosophy. He devoted his career to making this happen. He saw sociology as a *science* that could have practical effects (e.g., better policies).[8] It was not armchair philosophizing. It was also a *moral* science, whose results could advance society, taking the role that religion and other dying traditions had played in the past. *"It would be no distortion to view Durkheim's entire sociological career as an intransigent and relentless battle fought on two major fronts: against the dark, unfathomable forces of mysticism and despair, on the one hand, and against the unsubstantial ethereal forces of the dilettantic cult of superficiality on the other" (Alpert 1939: 18).*

Reports by Friends and Colleagues

Durkheim was "deeply opposed to all war whether of classes or of nations; he desired change only for the benefit of society as a whole and not that of any one of its parts, even if that latter had numbers and force. He regarded political revolutions and parliamentary developments as superficial, costly and more theatrical than serious. He therefore always resisted the idea of submitting himself to a party" – Marcel Mauss (1928)[9]

"His adversaries, his enemies, not taking sufficient account of his personal disinteredness, considered him, and sometimes treated him, as ambitious and as an intriguer. What an error of judgement! His ends were noble and went beyond personal rewards, and I believe that all the steps he took, when they related to getting people jobs – advancing some, and thwarting and excluding others – had the single objective of the interest of science and the community" – Bourgin (1938)[10]

First-Hand Character Descriptions[11]

"Durkheim has a very serious and somewhat cold appearance. He is conscientious, hard-working, well-informed and very clever… M. Durkheim is, in short, one of the most serious of our young professors of philosophy" (1885)

"M. Durkheim, tall, thin and fair, is already bald…His voice at the start was feeble and subdued, but gradually, under the pressure of the ideas he was expressing, it rose and grew animated and warm, until it seemed capable of filling a vast vessel" (1892)

"He received me in his study, which was vast and simple, lacking any adornment or evidence of artistic preoccupations. His long, thin body was enveloped by a large dressing-gown, a cassock of flannel, which concealed his bony and muscular frame, the fragile support for this thought. The face emerged, pale and ascetic, with its high forehead bare, a short beard, a thick moustache…One felt

oneself before the judgment and already under the authority of a man who was devoted, entirely devoted, to his task, to his mission, and who, by admitting you to his side, along with his colleagues, delegated to you a part of the responsibilities he had assumed" – (approx. 1903)

Questions

1. Although admittedly partial to socialism, Durkheim's contribution to politics were very different from Marx's. Where Marx sought to educate the working class so that it might revolt, Durkheim turned to sociology for policy recommendations for the existing state. What might explain these different approaches? How might the historical context have affected the choices and strategies made by these two great thinkers?

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1. "If you would like to educate your mind, attach yourself to the scrupulous study of a great master; take a system apart and uncover its secret mechanisms." According to Alpert, Durkheim said this to a friend, explaining that this was how he himself had learned to be a good thinker (Alpert 1939: 26). ↵
2. This motto was developed for a series of pamphlets for the French during World War I, but we could also see it as a motto that guided his own work and life. ↵
3. Interestingly, Melanie's great-grandmother was a woman named Francoise Marx, born in 1758 in Lixheim, Lorraine, France less than 100 miles from Trier, where Karl Marx was born a half-century later. It may be that the two families (Durkheim and Marx) share a common ancestor. ↵
4. Letter to Davy, reprinted in Lukes 1972: 555. ↵
5. He was eager to learn useful things and did not appreciate heaving to learn Latin. He was also said to be "disgusted by the sophisticated and shallow sarcasm" of many of his fellow students; "he hated all affectations. Profoundly serious, he hated flightiness" (Albert 1939: 21-22). ↵
6. See the Dreyfus Affair, a national scandal in which a Jewish captain in the French army was falsely accused and convicted of passing military secrets to the Germans. Many intellectuals at the time, led by the writer Zola, accused the government of antisemitism. Whether one supported the government or Dreyfus said a great deal about one's political position and beliefs during the years the controversy raged (roughly 1894 to 1906). ↵
7. The friend was Bourgin, the quote was reprinted from Lukes 1972: 321. Durkheim's socialism was "abstract, intellectual, evolutionary, reformist, optimistic, inspired by large ideals of cooperation and organization with an overriding respect for social science" (Lukes 1972: 329). ↵
8. "There was a hardly a social problem of the day for which Durkheim did not offer constructive suggestions." These included the reorganization of the educational system, the training of politicians, the separation of church and state, divorce and marriage, suicide, the regulation of economic life, social equality, political reform, and pacifism. (Albert 1939: 58) ↵
9. In Lukes 1972: 322. ↵
10. In Lukes 1972: 377. ↵
11. Each of the following can be found in the biography by Lukes (1972). Appended to each account is the year of its observation. ↵

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2.2: Rules of Method (1895)

"Social facts are something more than the actions of individuals." – Durkheim

NOTE ON SOURCE: These passages are from Durkheim's *Les Règles de la Méthode Sociologique*, published in 1895 in Paris by Alcan Press. This book was first translated as *The Rules of Sociological Method* in 1938 by Solovay and Mueller (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), republished in 1950 by the Free Press (Glencoe, Illinois). The preferred translation today is by Lukes/Halls, published in 1982 by the Free Press (Glencoe, Illinois). The first section here is a synthesis of the Introduction and Chapter 1: What is a Social Fact? The second section covers points raised in the second and third chapters.

Introduction – Why this is important and what to look for

In this book, Durkheim sets out to establish sociology as a research discipline. In the section you have before you, he introduces readers to sociology and its methods. In particular, he describes the proper subject matter of sociology as "social facts," The method presented here, analyzing social facts, is what distinguishes sociology from other pre-existing disciplines such as history and philosophy and sets it apart from other newly emerging disciplines of the day, such as psychology.

Part 1: The Rules of Sociological Method (introduction)

Introduction

Until recently, sociologists have little cared to explain and define the method they use to study social facts. This shouldn't surprise us. So far, sociologists such as Spencer, Mill, and Comte, don't go much farther than talking about societies very generally. We still don't have a method for doing sociology. I have been fortunate to have the time to think about this subject and to come up with a method that I think will prove useful. Some of these were used and discussed in my previous book, *The Division of Social Labor*, but here I make them a bit more explicit. In this way, you, the reader, can see the way we are going in this new field of sociology.

What is a Social Fact?

Before getting to the method, we need to know what facts are "social." This is an important question, because we need to know what is unique about the subject matter of sociology. We all drink, sleep, eat, and think, and perhaps society has an interest in making sure we do these things in a regular manner. But are these really social facts? Or are they simply things individuals do? How is sociology different from, say, biology and psychology, both of which are also interested in these things?

In reality, there is in every society a certain group of things which are different from what the natural sciences study.

When I do my duty as a brother, as a wife, or as a citizen, when I fulfill my obligations, pay my debts, take the actions expected of me by law and custom, I am acting in ways outside of my own creation. I might want to take care of my children, but this isn't all up to me. I have specific duties that I in no way created all by myself. In a way, I inherited them, through being a member of society. You could say I was socialized into them.

The system of signs and words that I use to communicate my thoughts to others, the form of currency I use to pay my debts, the credit card or bank check I use, the practices I follow in my chosen profession – all these things and many more function independently of my use of them.

Here we have the actions, the thoughts and the beliefs which uniquely exist outside each individual's own consciousness, and so provide a worthy subject for the study of sociology. Not only are these types of conduct outside the thoughts of the individual person, but they have a certain coercive power. If I try to resist it, I notice this quite readily.

Here then are an order of facts which present a special character: They consist in ways of acting, thinking, and feeling that are external to the individual person, and endowed with a power of coercion.

These social facts are the proper subject matter for sociologists.

To confirm these, let's take a look at the way we raise our children. It is quite obvious that all education has consisted of a continual effort to impose on the child manners of seeing, sensing, and acting that they would not otherwise have acquired. From the very first hours of her birth, we force her to eat, drink and sleep at regular times, and we train her to be neat, calm, and obedient. Later,

we socialize her to be considerate of others, teach her to respect our customs, and prepare her for work. The goal of education is thus all about socializing each member of society to be proper members of that society.

So, we should not define a social fact as something that is universal – while everyone eats and drinks those things are still not social facts. What makes something a social fact is the collective aspect of the beliefs, tendencies and practices of a group.

Collective habits don't exist only in the actions of individuals, but rather express themselves over and over in a form passed on by word of mouth from person to person, by education, or by the written word. Such is the origin and nature of laws, morals, aphorisms and popular sayings…all of these are still social facts and true even when someone is not following them!

Social facts are something more than the actions of individuals.

Let's take the examples of marriage or suicide. These are things that are done by individuals and they can appear quite private in nature. But we also know that certain groups get married at different rates, and that the suicide rate is higher at one point in history than other, and that it varies by age of person as well. Statistical measures allow us a way to isolate the collective aspect from the individual case, by comparing rates across groups and times. If we look at the averages, we get a certain state of the collective soul.

Sociology is the study of social facts. A social fact can be recognized by the coercive power it exercises (or is capable of exercising) on individuals. We can recognize this coercive power by the existence of sanctions – what happens when someone doesn't follow the rule, practice, or custom? Note that this includes whole ways of being, not just ways of acting. Everything we do and are that is not biologically determined can be considered a social fact.

A social fact is every way of being and acting, fixed or not, capable of exercising an external constraint on the individual; in other words, it is that which is general in the whole society, independent from individual manifestations.

Part 2

Chapter 2: Rules for the Observation of Social Facts

Section 1. Treat Social Facts as Things

The first rule, and the most fundamental, is to consider social facts as things.

People inevitably think about what is going on in their environment. They form concepts about such things as marriage, the state, the relationships between parents and children. The problem is that we can mistake these concepts for the things themselves. Thus, two people can argue about the definition of marriage without actually examining marriage in reality. Sociologists have to do better than talk about the concepts – they have to study the actual existing social facts. This is what it means to treat social facts as things, with their own reality, and not as concepts in our minds only.

Such it is that reflection occurs before science, while science makes use of this reflection in a methodical manner.

The goal of the rest of this book is to describe what that methodical manner is. Up until now, sociology has really only dealt with concepts, not with the things themselves. Anyone who looks at society teleologically, for example, trying to discover how progress evolves, takes things quite backwardly. This is what Comte tried to do. How can one look at a perfect future society when it doesn't yet exist? How can one be scientific about that? Or consider those concerned with ethics. Here, one is discussing ideas (what is good? What is just?) but not things in reality.

Putting all that aside, I have to reiterate that social phenomena are actual things and they should be treated as things when we study them. *Social facts as things are the unique subject matter of sociological study. They are our data.*

To treat phenomena as things, as data, is the point of departure for the science of sociology.

We can't study the idea people have of what is valuable, but we can study the values they establish. We can't grasp the concept of goodness or rightness in the abstract, but we can examine the rules put in place for governing good or right behavior. We can't study the concept of wealth itself, but we can look at the details of how our economy is organized.

We must consider social phenomena in themselves, not the ideas people have of them; we must study them objectively, from the outside, for it is that quality that presents itself to us as sociologists.

How do we do this? If we want to study law, we can look at the codes. If we want to understand daily life, we can look at all the recorded facts and figures about our attitudes and behaviors. We can see and evaluate fashion through costume, "taste" in works of

art. Compared to psychology, the data we study as sociologists might be more difficult to analyze because of their complexity, but they are much easier to get hold of.

Section 2. Guidelines for Sociologists

The fundamental rule for sociologists is to treat social things as things, but there are several corollary rules and guidelines for how to do that.

First, systematically rid yourself of all preconceived ideas.

You are a human being yourself and hold ideas and prejudices about the world. When you are a sociologist, however, you have to be objective, neutral about the facts you are studying. Really, that is the essence of the scientific method.

Second, operationalize your data in advance and then examine all cases that fit your definition.

For example, we group together all those acts which produce a certain social reaction, punishment, and call them crimes. We don't pick and choose what is or is not a crime based on what we personally think should be one. By doing this we assure ourselves that we are grounded in reality.

Third, consider social facts from a point distinct from their individual manifestations.

Section 3. Rules on the distinction between Normal and Pathological

We must be careful to distinguish between observing things that are as they ought to be and observing things that are not as they ought to be – what I am calling "normal" and "pathological" phenomena. Some people say that it is not the place of science to say whether something is as it ought to be or otherwise. There is no "good and evil" in science. But if science cannot help us in selecting the best goals to pursue, how it can it help us arrive at the goal?

Here is my solution to the problem. Just as with individual people, societies can be healthy, or they can be sick. Sociology can help us distinguish the two. We can't say what is healthy for any one individual, of course, but we can find out what is healthy for society as a whole. Health, we can say, is that which is most adaptive to the particular environment and sickness is that which upsets that adaptation. Or, health is that state in which our chances of survival (as a society) are greatest. We do not mean the health of any one particular individual.

Two examples: old age is not a sickness, because it is a normal stage of the species. Menstruation is not a sickness, because it is a normal activity of women. The absence of either of these two normal phenomena would not mark "health," but rather sickness!

How are we to recognize sickness then? We should look for some notable external sign (again, treating social facts as things). Those facts which appear common among a society (or a group thereof, such as women), we shall call normal, and the rest we can call pathological. Just as the physiologist looks at the average organism, so too does the sociologist. Furthermore, a social fact is normal in a given group in relation to particular context (temporal and spatial).

Why is the normal considered healthy? It would be surprising if the most widespread phenomena were not beneficial, at least at the aggregate level. Why else would they exist and persist for so long? The greater frequency of normal phenomena can be taken as proof of their health. During times of transition, however, what is normal is often hard to pin down. So, it is also important to take the following steps: (1) find a widespread social fact; (2) trace back the conditions of the past, the environmental context, which gave birth to this fact; and (3) investigate whether the environmental context has shifted. If the conditions that gave rise to it are still the same, and it is general, we can consider it normal. *If not, it may be maladapted to the present circumstances and in need of change.*

The Example of Crime. It would seem that crime would be pathological. Who would doubt that? But let us use our method and examine the question more closely. Crime is observed everywhere, in every society. It would indeed be hard to find a social fact that is more general. It is thus normal, and must be doing something for society, else it would not be normal for so long and in so many different places. It is normal because it is absolutely impossible for a society to exist without it. Crime offends our individual and collective notions about what is right. To have no crime means that every single person would agree what those notions are (which seems impossible, given that we are individuals). It would also mean that nothing would ever change, because no one would be doing anything against the collective will. To have no crime means we would have no originality, no thinking against the

herd, and we must have some of this because nothing is good at all times without limits. Sometimes, too, crimes of today prepare the way for moralities of the future.

Looked at this way, the criminal must be seen a playing a normal role in society. We can follow the crime rate and be alarmed if it gets too high, or even if it gets too low – because something is out of balance then, and we may be stifling individuals too much. It may be that we are viewing punishment all wrong. If crime is not a sickness, then we can't "cure" it through punishment. We have to look elsewhere.

No longer should we desperately pursue an end which we might never grasp, but rather should we work diligently to keep things going and to recalibrate when necessary, and to recover our health when things change. The leader should not push us violently toward an ideal only she might hold, but be more like a doctor, who checks in on our health, and seeks to cure our illnesses when they are discovered.

Questions

1. How is sociology different from philosophy? From history? From psychology?
2. What are the three rules for doing sociology Durkheim presents in part 2? Do we still employ these rules? Why might they be helpful rules for conducting research today?
3. How do Durkheim's guidelines help us when studying a contested topic such as "marriage" today? Why might defining marriage for purposes of study be a helpful first step for the researcher?
4. What does Durkheim mean when he says that crime is "normal"?Does this help you understand what "normality" means for Durkheim? Is the distinction between normality and pathology a helpful one?

Definitional Concepts

Social Fact

Normal vs. Pathological

Sociology

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2.3: Division of Labor, Introduction

"Every society is a moral society."

NOTE ON SOURCE: This and the following two passages come from Durkheim's dissertation, completed in 1893, and first published in 1902 as De la Division du Travaile Sociale. The first English translation was done by George Simpson in 1933, but this version was found to have several shortcomings. A more approved translation was made in 1984 by W. D. Halls, edited by Lewis A. Coser. This translation was republished with some improvement by Steven Lukes in 1997. This is the recommended version if you would like to read more of the text than what is included here.

Introduction – Why this is important and what to look for

The Division of Labor in Society *was Durkheim's first major work, completed in fulfillment of the requirements for earning his doctorate. It is therefore young Durkheim. There are some antiquated ideas here, and some out of date or inaccurate empirical observations. Yet it remains a masterpiece and is probably the best example of Durkheim's methodical and clear style of writing and presentation. The work itself is divided into three "books," of equal length. In the original, a lengthy preface is included along with a detailed table of contents (as in Suicide). As the preface is not included in the more recent editions, it is included here, along with the extended table of contents and a summary of Book 1. If you get lost in the three books, return here, to this introduction, to help orient you to the point and design of the work.*

Preface

This book is above all an effort to treat the facts of moral life according to the methods of positive science. To clarify, however, we do not agree with those moralists who deduce their doctrines from propositions of the natural sciences (e.g., Social Darwinism from biology). They may call their ethics scientific but that is not what we mean by the term. We are not trying to derive ethics from science, but rather to establish a science of ethics – something quite different. Moral facts are phenomena like any other. They consist of rules of action which we recognize by certain distinct characteristics. So, it must then be possible to observe them, describe them, classify them, and look for laws that explain them.

But as we set out to study reality, it does not follow that we must renounce attempts to make it better. We would estimate our research hardly worthy of its time if it were only of speculative interest. If we separate out the philosophical issues from the practical issues it is not to ignore the former but to be better able to resolve them, after our investigation is complete. We will see that science can help us adjust ourselves to attain the ideals to which we aspire.

Some might object that a method of observation lacks rules with which to judge or evaluate what is observed. But such rules emerge from the facts themselves. Thus, we argue that there is a state of moral health which science alone can determine with competence. As we never quite attain this state of moral health, it is an ideal we seek. Furthermore, the conditions of that state of moral health are themselves always changing, as societies are always changing. Science allows us to determine the moral health in relation to these changes. We can foresee changes; we can compare normal types with those that are abnormal; and we can seek to correct contradictions.

If science foresees, it does not command, so much is true. However, as science tells us alone what is necessary for living, then assuming we want to live, the laws science establishes are in reality imperative rules of conduct. Even on such a question as to whether we ought to wish to live, we think science is not mute.

This work originated in questions about the relationship between individuals and social solidarity. Why is it that the individual, while become more freely autonomous, depends more and more on society? How can we be at one time more individualized and more socialized? Indeed, these two movements, while they appear in contradiction, develop in parallel. This is the problem that we are posing here. It seemed to us that what resolves this apparent contradiction is a transformation of social solidarity as a result of the constant development of an increasing division of labor. This is how we have come to study the division of labor in society.

Table of Contents

Book One. The Function of the Division of Labor

Chapter One. The Method for Determining this Function.

1. the meaning of the word *function*

2. the function of the division of labor is not to produce civilization; cases where the function is to bring forth groups which would not exist without it; from which we derive the hypothesis that the division of labor is the principal source of the cohesion of later civilizations
3. to verify this initial hypothesis, we must compare the social solidarity based on the division of labor with other types of solidarity and classify these types; we can do this by comparing legal systems and rules; there are as many types of legal systems and rules as there are forms of solidarity; distinguish between repressive sanction systems and restitutive sanction systems

Chapter Two. Mechanical Solidarity through Likeness.

1. The link of social solidarity to which repressive law corresponds is the one whose break constitutes a crime. The essential characteristics of crime, those found wherever crime occurs, are the following: (1) a crime offends sentiments found among all normal individuals in any given society; (2) those sentiments are strong; (3) those sentiments are defined. A crime is thus an act which offends strong and defined states of the collective conscience.
2. Verification of this definition (if it is correct, it should account for all the characteristics of punishment). What are those characteristics of punishment? (1) punishment is a passionate reaction, of graduated intensity; (2) this passion reaction comes from society; (3) this reaction is enforced through the intermediary of a constituted body
3. These characteristics can now be deduced from our definition of crime: (1) every strongly offended sentiment mechanically determines a passionate reaction (which reaction helps to maintain the sentiment); (2) the collective character of these sentiments explains the social character of the reaction (why it is useful for it to be social); (3) the intensity and defined nature of these sentiments explain the formation of the organization which enforces this reaction
4. The rules sanctioned by penal law express the most essential social similarities; in consequence, they correspond to the social solidarity which comes from resemblance and varies with it. We can measure the part this (mechanical) solidarity plays in general social integration according to the fraction of the complete legal system and rules which penal law represents

Chapter 3. Organic Solidarity due to the Division of Labor

1. The nature of the restitutive sanction implies (1) that the corresponding rules are foreign to the collective conscience; (2) that the relations they determine only link the individual to society indirectly
2. Negative relations, linking things to persons and not persons to persons, are typical here. Since the solidarity that the legal system and rules express is negative, it has no independent existence but is merely a prolongation or residue of positive forms of social solidarity
3. Positive or cooperative relations come from the division of labor, which are governed by a defined legal system and set of rules which we can call cooperative law (analogous here to the nervous system)
4. Thus, we find in conclusion two kinds of positive solidarity: one which comes from similarity (mechanical solidarity) and the other which comes from the division of labor (organic solidarity). The first varies in inverse ratio and the second in direct ratio with individualized personalities

Chapter 4. Further Proof of the Preceding

If we are right, we ought to see more repressive law than cooperative law when there is more social similarity and less division of labor and we ought to see more cooperative law than repressive law when there is a greater division of labor and less social similarity. This is actually what we do see!

1. The more primitive societies are, the more resemblance there is among individuals, both physically and mentally. The division of labor, originally non-existent, begins to develop
2. Originally, all law has a repressive character (examples of Hebrew law, Hindu Law, the development of cooperative law in Rome). Today, the primitive relationship is reversed. Note that this has nothing to do with a low state of morals in primitive societies (all societies are equally moral)

Chapter 5. Progressive Preponderance of Organic Solidarity: Its Consequences

1. The actual preponderance of cooperative law over repressive law demonstrates that the social links which come from the division of labor are more numerous than those which come from social similarities. As this preponderance grows as we

approach more complex societies, it is not accidental but dependent upon the nature of these societies. These links are both more numerous and stronger
2. The links that come from similarities loosen as social evolution advances. Mechanical solidarity relies on three conditions: (1) the relative extent of the collective conscience and of the individual conscience: (2) intensity; and (3) the degree of determination of the states composing the collective conscience
3. [*Extension*]
4. [*Example from Criminology*]
5. Further Proof: the particularly strong states of the collective conscience have a religious character, but religion disappears along with social evolution, as do proverbs and other such common sayings. Organic solidarity becomes preponderant

Chapter 6. Progressive Preponderance continued

1. Social structures correspond to these two types of solidarity. Segmental types correspond to mechanical solidarity
2. Organized types correspond to organic solidarity. There is antagonism between these two types as the second develops proportionally at the cost of the first (which, though it shrinks, never quite vanishes)
3. [Analogy with animal kingdom]
4. [Do not confuse this with Spencer's Social Darwinism[1]]

Chapter 7. Organic Solidarity and Contractual Solidarity

1. Social harmony depends upon cooperation and the division of labor in industrial societies; Contractual relations may grow but this does not mean, as Spencer suggests, that contractual exchange can be the only existing link between people
2. Contractual relations, almost absent in simple societies, multiply greatly in advanced societies but still, Spencer fails to see that non-contractual relations also greatly multiply; numerous examples
3. Administrative law takes on greater importance in advanced societies
4. Summary of Book 1:

The following propositions summarize the first part of our work:

Social life comes from a double source, the similarity of consciences and the division of social labor. The individual is socialized in the first case because, without having her own individuality, she becomes part of the same collective group as that she resembles. The individual is socialized in the second case because, while having a separate personality and specific personal activity which distinguishes her from others, she depends on them to the same extent she differs from them.

The similarities of consciences produces a legal system and set of rules which imposes uniform beliefs and practices through the threat of repressive measures.

The division of labor produces a legal system and set of rules which determine the nature and the social relations of divided functions, violation of which brings in only restitutive measures.

Each legal system (repressive and restitutive) is accompanied by a body of purely moral rules. Where penal law predominates, common morality is quite extensive (that is to say, public opinion is quite strong in many areas). Where restitutive law predominates, there is instead an occupational morality for each job or profession. There are usages and customs that are localized to particular jobs and job sites but these are rarely repressive or harshly enforced.

Nonetheless, the rules of occupational morality are just as imperative as any other. They force individuals to act in view of ends not strictly their own, to make concessions, to consent to compromises, to take into account interests higher than their own. In contrast to what Spencer suggested, even where society relies most completely on the division of labor the members are united by ties which extend deeper and far beyond the short moments they come into contact with each other through exchange. Each of the jobs they do is fixed and dependent upon others, thus forming a solidaristic system. Because we fill some particular function we are involved in a web of obligations from which we have no right to free ourselves. And above all is the State. Our contacts with the State multiply as do the occasions when it is entrusted with the duty of reminding us of the sentiment of common solidarity.

Thus, we see that altruism is not destined to become a mere ornament to social life, as Spencer wishes, but will instead always be its fundamental basis. How could we do without it? We cannot live together without making mutual sacrifices, without tying ourselves to one another with strong and lasting bonds. *Every society is a moral society*. In a way, this is even more rather than less true in organized societies. Because the individual is not sufficient unto herself, it is from society that she receives what she needs,

and it is for society that she works. Thus, is formed a strong attachment to the society to which she belongs. She comes accustomed to regarding herself as party of a whole. On the other side of the equation, society begins to regards its members not as things to control but as cooperators whom it cannot neglect and whom it owes duties. It is thus not only societies that share a collective conscience that are moral. In reality, cooperation also has its intrinsic morality.

But this intrinsic morality is not the same in nature as the collective conscience. That is strong only if the individual is not. Made up of rules which are practiced by all, it receives from this uniform practice and obedience an authority almost super-human, which puts it beyond discussion. In contrast, the cooperative society is stronger as the individual is stronger. There is always room for personal initiative. It is we ourselves who choose our professions. We may have to follow rules once we do so, but it is an initial act of the will that sets us down our individual paths.

There are, then, two great currents of social life to which two types of structure correspond. The one has its origin in social similarities. Little by little, the second type grows up within this type and eventually overtakes its, covers it over, without every completely eliminating it.

We shall find the causes of this relation of inverse variation in the following book.

Book 2. Causes and Conditions

Chapter 1. The Progress of the Division of Labor and of Happiness

1. According to many, the individual's desire for happiness pushes him to specialize. But if this were the case, we would long ago have stopped specializing, as the moderate existence is much more favorable to happiness than one of constant striving. Other problems with this supposition
2. Our striving has actually produced more suffering and unhappiness than commonly known to exist in more simple societies held together by the collective conscience. Note, for example, the increase in suicide in modern societies
3. Nor can it be that the desire to escape boredom pushes us forward. It is impossible for humanity to have imposed upon itself so much trouble only to be able to vary its pleasures a little

Chapter 2. The Causes

1. We must look for the causes elsewhere, by studying the variations between the two types. We find that the progress of the division of labor is in direct ration to the moral or dynamic density of society. This so because intra-social relations are multiplied
2. Our view contrasts with Spencer, who argues that the increase of social volume merely accelerates the division of labor but does not cause it
3. The growth of volume and density mechanically determines the progress of the division of labor by intensifying the struggle for existence
4. The division of labor is produced only in organized societies. It is an error to find the division of labor and social cooperation fundamental facts of human life

Chapter 3. Secondary Factors – Progressive Indeterminacy of the Common Conscience and Its Causes

The division of labor can progress only if individual variation increases and this can happen only if the collective conscience recedes. What are the causes of this recession?

1. As the social environment extends, the collective conscience must also extend and thus becomes increasingly abstract (e.g., transcendence of the idea of God; more rational law). This abstract indeterminacy leaves a larger space for individual variation
2. The authority of the tradition is weakened when individuals are detached from the environment of their birth and the influence of their elders
3. As the segmented type of society loses hold over the individual, it also loses control of divergent tendencies
4. From this perspective, social organs can no longer play the role of a unindividuated segment

Chapter 4. Secondary Factors – Heredity

Heredity poses an obstacle to the progress of the division of labor but it has become a lesser factor over time

1. Heredity loses its power because modes of activity that do not rely on hereditary transmission become much more important than any that do

2. Heredity also grows more indeterminate, as instinct grows weaker and individual differences develop

Chapter 5. Consequences of the Preceding

1. As function becomes more independent from the person doing the function, the division of labor has a supple and flexible character. This suppleness is a great strength
2. A more mechanistic theory of the division of labor (e.g., Spencer's), implies that civilization is the product of necessary causes, and not an end which itself influences activity
3. The growth of volume and of density in changing societies changes individuals; we become freer from our bodies and thus our mental lives develop. Individual personalities emerge from the collective personality. Society explains the individual

Book 3. Abnormal Forms

Chapter 1. The Anomic Division of Labor

Abnormal forms exist when the division of labor does not produce solidarity. Why we need to study these forms:

1. Abnormal cases in economic life; industrial crises and the antagonism between labor and capital
2. Should the state step in to regulate the details of economic life to prevent such antagonisms?
3. Necessity of regulation and why the division of labor sometimes fails to produce solidarity in its absence

Anomie arises when the organs are not in sufficient contact or sufficiently prolonged contact of the normal state. When the division of labor is normal, it does not confine any person to a task without giving her a glimpse of anything outside the task.

Chapter 2. The Forced Division of Labor

1. Class War comes from individuals not being in harmony with their functions, as the functions have been imposed on them by force. Meaning of force here includes any type of inequality in the external conditions of life
2. Reasons why progress towards equality is necessary

True individual liberty does not consist in suppressing regulation but rather is a result of good regulation, as equality is not ours by nature. Achieving justice is a task for organized societies, as it is only in this condition that they can be maintained.

Chapter 3. Another Abnormal Form

There is another case in which the division of labor fails to produce solidarity because the functional activity of the worker is insufficient.

Conclusion

1. The rule that orders us to be like each other (to follow the collective conscience) aims to assure social solidarity (integration and cohesion), but so to does the rule that orders us to specialize. Both are moral rules. Morality is but the totality of conditions of social solidarity.
2. The division of labor does not weaken the individual personality; in fact, individualization progresses under the influence of the same causes which produce the division of labor. The only way for us to realize human brotherhood and sisterhood is through the progression of the division of labor.
3. However, the division of labor gives rise to solidarity only if it is just. Economists are mistaken. We need more justice, not less.

Questions

1. What does it mean to say that science can predict but science does not command? Does Durkheim agree with this statement? What is the role of sociology?
2. What is the question underlying this book? Why did Durkheim write a book about the division of labor?
3. What does the tripartite division of the book tell you about Durkheim's approach? Compare this to the division of *Suicide*. What useful direction for conducting sociological research is provided by these divisions?

Concepts

Anomic Division of Labor

Collective Conscience

Division of Labor

Forced Division of Labor

Mechanical Solidarity (and MS Societies)

Morality

Organic Solidarity (and OS Societies)

Solidarity

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1. Herbert Spencer was a well-known and influential philosopher and social theorist of the nineteenth century. He essentially took Darwin's idea of biological evolution and natural selection and sought to apply them to social groups. According to Spencer, history proceeded along lines of "survival of the fittest." For these reasons, any attempts at social reform or amelioration were misguided, as they prevented the natural and optimal path of development. Durkheim often spoke against this idea, as he thought it muddled two very distinct strands (the biological and the social) in a problematic way. ↵

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2.4: Division of Labor, Book 1

"History shows that as one type progresses, the other type fades away."

NOTE ON SOURCE: This passage comes from Durkheim's dissertation, completed in 1893, and first published in 1902 as De la Division du Travaile Sociale. The first English translation was done by George Simpson in 1933, but this version was found to have several shortcomings. A more approved translation was made in 1984 by W. D. Halls, edited by Lewis A. Coser. This translation was republished with some improvement by Steven Lukes in 1997. This is the recommended version if you would like to read more of the text than what is included here.

Introduction – Why this is important and what to look for

The Division of Labor in Society *was divided into three books, as the previous selection demonstrated. The first book examines the function of the division of labor and introduces the distinction between societies held together by Mechanical Solidarity and those held together by Organic Solidarity. The passages below describe those differences. Pay close attention to all the ways in which these two types of society differ.*

Chapter 3. Organic Solidarity due to the Division of Labor

Part 4. Conclusion

We recognize two kinds of positive solidarity, solidarity which produces integration. The first kind *directly* binds the individual to society while the second binds the individual *indirectly*, through reliance on the other people who collectively make up society.

Society is not seen in the same aspect in the two cases. In the first, what we call society is more or less composed of the beliefs and values held in common by all people. In contrast, the second case is composed of a system of different and unique functions which are united through interdependence.

In the first case, society is strong if the ideas and common tendencies are greater quantitatively and qualitatively than those ideas and habits held by individuals. This kind of solidarity can grow only at the expense of individual personality. In each of us there are two consciences, one common to our group and the other which is personal to us and distinct and that makes us an individual. Solidarity through likeness is at its greatest when the collective conscience takes over our entire consciousness, [*when what we think is what society thinks*]. But at that moment we have no personality. Our personalities can only emerge if the community to which we belong has less control of us. These are two opposing forces. If we want to think and act for ourselves, we cannot also be strongly inclined to think and act as everyone else. So, when this form of solidarity acts on us forcefully, our personality vanishes; we are no longer ourselves but the collective life.

The social molecules which cohere together in this way can act together only if they have no actions of their own; they are molecules of inorganic bodies. For that reason we propose to call this type of solidarity *mechanical*. This doesn't mean it is produced by mechanical or artificial means, but only as an analogy to the cohesion uniting an inanimate body, as opposed to elements of a living body. The individual conscience is dependent upon the collective conscience and follows all its movements, without a life of its own, so to speak. In societies where this type of solidarity is strong, the individual does not really appear. Personal rights are generally not recognized.

It is utterly different when we consider the solidarity which is produced by the division of labor. While the first type implied that individuals resemble each other, this type presumes they are differentiated. While the first type is possible only so much as the individual personality is subsumed by the collective personality, the second type is possible only if each individual person has a sphere of action unique to him or her, and so an individual personality. It is necessary for the collective conscience to recede to allow the individual conscience to operate freely. The more it does so, the stronger the cohesion which results [as each becomes reliant on every other member fulfilling his or her unique sphere of action]. Each one depends more on society as labor is divided, and each person's activity becomes more specialized.

Chapter 4. Further Proof the Preceding

Part 1. [Likeness in Mechanical Solidarity Societies]

The more societies are primitive, the more alike are its members.

Chapter 5. Progressive Preponderance of Organic Solidarity; Its Consequences

Part 2. [Three Conditions of Mechanical Solidarity]

Not only does mechanical solidarity bind people together less strongly over time, but we find it slackens as we progress socially.

Indeed, the strength of social links through likeness vary with respect to the following three conditions:

First, the relative proportion of collective and individual conscience. The links are stronger the more the first overshadows the second.

Second, the average intensity of the states of the collective conscience.

Third, The distinctiveness of these states. That is, the more specifically defined are the collective beliefs and practices, the less room there is for individualization. The more general and abstract are the rules, however, the more individual reflection plays a role. Centrifugal tendencies multiply at the cost of social cohesion.

Strong and defined states of the common conscious are the roots of penal law. However, the number of such laws is less today than before, and diminish progressively as societies approach our modern type.

[Durkheim discusses the relative proportion of what he calls "repressive" laws, violation of which offends the collective conscience, and "restitutive" laws, violation of which is less shocking and more personally related to the parties at hand (think broken contracts). He argues that, as societies advance, the proportional amount of repressive law diminishes as that of restitutive law increases. This is, indeed, a key part of Book 1, and is used to support his argument about changes from mechanical solidarity to organic solidarity over time. As anthropologists of law have criticized the empirical facts Durkheim used, limited as they were to what was available to him in the 19th century, you will not find more of this discussion in this reader, but you should know that Durkheim is using evidence, albeit imperfect, to build this theory, rather than engaging in "armchair philosophizing."]

Chapter 6. Progressive Preponderance of Organic Solidarity, continued

Part 1. Segmental Type

So we can say it is a historical law that mechanical solidarity, which at first stood alone, progressively loses ground and that, over time, little by little, organic solidarity predominates.

If we were to try to imagine an ideal type of society held together exclusively by likeness, we would have to conceive it as one wholly homogeneous, one in which none of its human members are distinguishable from one another; there would be no real organization to speak of. It would be a social protoplasm, a blob, a horde, if you will.

It is true we have yet to find any society that operates completely in this way. [*We do find some glimmers of it, among some Native American tribes, for example. We can designate hordes which form elements in more extensive groups as clans.]*

We can call these societies *segmented* as they are formed by the repetition of like aggregations in them, like the rings of an earthworm. The term clan expresses the mixed nature of these segmented groups. The clan is a family because its members are kin to one another. These familial affinities are for the most part what keeps the group united. But these are not families the way we understand families, because kinship need not be by blood. The clan in fact contains a great many strangers. It can comprise several thousand persons. And it is the basic political unity as well, with the clan-heads the only social authorities.

The main point, however, is that the clan, just as the horde, of which it is but an extension, has no other solidarity than that derived from likeness. For segmented organization to be possible, the segments must resemble one another; otherwise, they would not be united.

In these societies, religion pervades all of social life. This is so because social life itself is almost exclusively composed of common beliefs and practices. Where the collective personality is the only one in existence, property also must be collective, so we find an early form of communism operating in these societies.

There is, then, a social structure of a specific kind which corresponds with mechanical solidarity. What characterizes it is a system of segments homogeneous and similar to each other.

Part 2. Organized Type

Quite another thing is the structure of societies where organic solidarity is preponderant.

They are constituted by a system of different organs, each of which has a special role, and which are themselves formed of differentiated parts. Social elements are not heaped together linearly as the rings of an earthworm, nor are they entwined with one another, but rather they are coordinated and subordinated to one another around a central organ which regulates the rest of the organism. Others may depend on this central organ, but the central organ depends on the others as well. [*It is thus unlike a head of a clan, who embodies the collective conscience and to whom all others owe absolute obedience*]. There is nothing superhuman or timeless about this central organ. There are only differences in degree between this organ and the others.

This social type rests on such different principles as that of the segmented type that it can develop only so much as it erases the segmented type. In organized societies, individuals are not grouped based on lineage or bloodline, but according to the particular nature of the social activity they engage in. Their natural context is not that of birth [*blood, race, etc.*] but of occupation. It is no longer real or fictitious kinship which marks the place of each, but the function which he or she fulfills.

No doubt, when this new organization began to appear, it tried to use the existing organization and to assimilate it. So, functions were often allocated based on original divisions of birth. In a way, classes (and castes in particular) probably have their origin thusly. But this mixed arrangement cannot last for long, because there is a fundamental contradiction between the two. It is only a very basic division of labor which can adapt to preexisting social divisions in this way. The division of labor can only grow by freeing itself from this confining framework. As soon as it passes a certain stage of development, there is no longer any relation between the hereditarily fixed properties of segments and the new skills and aptitudes called forth by the growth of functions needed in society. The social material must combine in new ways to organize itself upon these different foundations. The old structure, so far as it persists, is opposed to these new combinations. Which is why it must disappear.

Thus the history shows that as one type progresses, the other type fades away.

Just as we could not say there was any known wholly segmented society, we also observe that there is as yet no wholly organized society. We do see, however, that organic solidarity is progressing, and becoming more preponderant.

Our future investigations will show that our current occupational organization is not everything it should be, as abnormal causes have prevented it from attaining the degree of development which our social order now demands. [*More on that in Book 3*]

Questions

1. If thinking for ourselves and thinking for the community are mutually opposed, as Durkheim suggests, where do YOU lie on this continuum? If you had been born in, say, 1300CE, do you think your answer would have been different? What about 1300BCE? Why?
2. Durkheim has been claimed as an early anthropologist, and much of his theory developed in *The Division of Labor*is based on observational and historical data about “primitive” peoples, including Native Americans, Aboriginal Australians, and early Jewish peoples. Much of this is inaccurate and/or biased by Eurocentric thinking. In Chapter 6, Durkheim draws copiously from early anthropological thinking to describe how “segmented” societies (the horde, the clan) operate. Given the problems with the data used, is his theory still valid? Explain your answer. For those of you who are familiar with the world of *Star Trek*, it might be helpful for you to think of the “horde” as The Borg.
3. When Durkheim talks about “the central organ” that “regulates” the other members, to what is he referring? If you are asked to describe Durkheim’s theory of the state in modern society, would this passage help?
4. It may be hard for us, who develop in what Durkheim would call organized societies, to recognize the pull of “birth” to which he refers in part 2 of Chapter 6. You may want to consider what it might be like to live in a society in which all that mattered was who your ancestors were. Can you think of historical examples when this might have been the case? Compare Durkheim’s “birth vs. occupation” to Weber’s “status vs. class.”

Concepts

Segmented Society

Collective Conscience

Organized Society

Mechanical Solidarity (and MS Societies)

Organic Solidarity (and OS Societies)

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2.5: Division of Labor, Book 2

"Animals and plants thrive when they differ. People are the same."

NOTE ON SOURCE: This passage comes from Durkheim's dissertation, completed in 1893, and first published in 1902 as De la Division du Travaile Sociale. The first English translation was done by George Simpson in 1933, but this version was found to have several shortcomings. A more approved translation was made in 1984 by W. D. Halls, edited by Lewis A. Coser. This translation was republished with some improvement by Steven Lukes in 1997. This is the recommended version if you would like to read more of the text than what is included here.

Introduction – Why this is important and what to look for

The Division of Labor in Society *was divided into three books. The second book examines the causes and conditions of the division of labor in society. As you read, think about the implications of Durkheim's explanation for the shift from societies held together by a collective conscience and societies held together by the division of labor. What is the future likely to hold? Should we worry about a decline in shared values and beliefs? What would Durkheim think about the value of and commitment to diversity?*

Chapter 2. The Causes

What causes the progress of the division of labor? [*It is not a quest for happiness (see Chapter 1, not included here)]*

Part 1. Moral/Dynamic Density

It is in certain variation of the social context that we must search for that which explains the progress of the division of labor. The results of Book 1 allows us to immediately see what those variations are.

We have already seen how the organized structure and the division of labor developed as the segmented structure faded away. So, it is either that this fading away is the cause of the development of the division of labor, or that the development of the division of labor is the cause of the fading away. We know that the latter option won't work because segmentation is an obstacle to the division of labor, and it must have weakened at least partially in order for the division of labor to arise. Once the division of labor appears, it can contribute to the fading away of the segmental structure, but we only see it once the fading away has already begun.

But the fading of the segmented structure can have this consequence for only one reason. Its waning allows individuals who were previously separated to come into more contact with others. Social life, instead of being concentrated in like pods, becomes generalized. Social relations multiply. The division of labor develops when there are more individual people sufficiently in contact with each other to act and react upon one another. We can call this relation and the active exchange resulting from it dynamic or *moral density*. Thus, the progress of the division of labor is in direct ratio to the moral or dynamic density of society.

This relationship can only produce this effect if the real distance between individuals is itself diminished in some way. Moral density cannot grow unless material density grows at the same time. We can use material density as a measure of moral density.

The progressive condensation of societies in the course of historical development is produced in three ways:

1. Where early groups of people were spread out over large areas relative to their small population, population is concentrated among advanced peoples. Dispersion over a large area was necessary for the work of nomads, hunters, and shepherds. In contrast, agriculture requires a settled life, and presupposes a certain restriction of society in spatial terms, although there remain stretches of land between families. As cities developed, condensation was even greater. From their origins, European societies have seen a continuous growth in their density.
2. Thus, the formation and development of cities is key. Cities always result from the need of individuals to be in close contact with others. It is here that the social mass can contract more strongly than anywhere else. New recruits arrive by immigration. As long as social organization is segmented, cities cannot truly exist. There are no cities in early-stage societies.[1]
3. Finally, communication and transportation are made easier and faster. By decreasing the gaps separating segments of society, new forms of communication and transportation increase the density of society.

If condensation of society produces more division of labor, it is because it multiplies intra-social relations. These relations will be even more frequent if the number of population rises. In other words, if there are both more individuals who are at the same time

more intimately in contact with each other, the effect is stronger. Both social volume (the number of people) and social density (the concentration of people) increase the division of labor.

We offer the following proposition: *The division of labor varies in direct ratio with the volume and density of societies; if the division of labor progresses in a continuous way in the course of social development, it is because societies generally get denser and more populous*.

Part 3. Intensification of the struggle for existence

If labor becomes every more divided as societies become denser and more populous, it is not because there are more varied external circumstances, but because the struggle for existence is more ardent.

Darwin rightly observed that the struggle between two creatures is as active as they are similar. Having the same needs and the same objects, they are rivals. So long as there are enough resources for both, they can live side by side, but when resources become insufficient for them both, war breaks out. It is very different if the two creatures are of different species or variations. Since they do not eat the same things or live the same kind of life, they do not disturb each other. The chances of conflict diminish. Animals and plants thrive when they differ.

People are the same. In the same town, different jobs can co-exist. They each pursue different objects: the soldier seeks glory, the priest moral authority, the politician power, the person of business wealth, the scholar academic fame. Each can attain her end without preventing the others from attaining theirs. The optometrist does not struggle with the psychiatrist, nor the shoemaker with the hatter, nor the bricklayer with the cabinetmaker, nor the physicist with the chemist. Since they each perform different services, they can all perform then in parallel.

The closer the functions, however, the more contact and the more exposed to conflict. Just as with animals that seek the same food, they inevitably seek to limit each other's development. The judge may never be in competition with the person of business, but the brewer and the vintner, the poet and the musician, do try to supplant each other. And for those with exactly the same function? They can succeed only to the detriment of others.

That said, it is easy now to understand how all concentration of the social mass, especially when accompanied by an increase in population, necessarily advances the division of labor.

[*Specialization occurs as a cure of side-by-side conflicts]*

The division of labor is a result of the struggle for existence, but it is a relaxed end to it. Because of the division of labor, would-be opponents are not forced to fight to death, but can instead exist beside each other. In addition, as it develops it provides the means of maintenance and survival to a greater number of people who, in more homogeneous societies, would be condemned to extinction. [*So, it is that in modern societies those that may be weak physically can still find a good position using their brain. Everyone has talents unique to them that can be put to use. No one need to be condemned as wholly useless*]

Economists regard the division of labor differently than what we have discussed here. For them, it is essentially about increasing production. But we have seen that greater productivity is only a necessary consequence of the underlying phenomenon. If we specialize it is not in order to produce more but to allow us to live under new conditions of existence [*denser and more populous societies*].

Chapter 5. Consequences

Part 1. Suppleness of the Division of Labor

Our previous discussion now permits us to better understand the way in which the division of labor functions in society.

The division of social labor is different from the division of physiological labor in one key way. In the organism, each cell has its defined role, and it cannot change it. In societies, however, even where the forms of organization are most rigid, individuals can move about with a certain freedom. As work is divided more, this suppleness and freedom become greater. A person can raise himself from the humblest beginning to the most important occupations. Even more frequently, a worker leaves his job for another one close by. Today a scholar can pass from one discipline to another, from chemistry to biology, or from psychology to sociology. [*Things move even faster in business, where new tastes displace old ones, and workers must constantly be ready to serve different employments.*]

Now contrast the biological organism. If the function of each cell is fixed, it is because it is imposed by birth. Each cell is imprisoned, if you will, in a system of hereditary customs which cannot be overcome. The structure predetermines the cell's life. It is not the same in society. Origins do not determine the outcomes of individuals; her innate characteristics do not predestine her to one role only, making her incapable of any other. From heredity she receives only a general disposition, one quite supple and able to take on many different forms.

Part 2. The Development of Civilization

In determining the principal cause of the progress of the division of labor, we have at the same stroke determined the essential factor of what we call civilization.

Civilization is itself the necessary consequences of the changes which are produced in the volume and density of societies. If science, art, and economic activity develop, it is out of necessity, because there is no other way to live in the new conditions people find themselves in. From the time that the number of individuals begins to increase, people can maintain themselves only by greater specialization, working harder, and increasing the intensity of their abilities. From all this general stimulation there naturally results a much higher degree of culture. From this point of view, civilization is not an end to which people strive, not something foreseen and desired in advance, but merely the effect of a cause, the result of a given state of population concentration. It is not the pole to which historic development is moving us in order to seek happiness or improvement. We move towards it because we must move towards it, and what determines the speed of our march is the amount of pressure we exercise upon each other, according to our number.

This does not mean that civilization is useless, but only that it is not its uses that make it progress. It develops because it cannot help but develop. We see even more clearly now how wrong it is to make civilization the function of the division of labor when in fact it is only the consequence of it. Civilization cannot explain the existence or the progress of the division of labor since it has no intrinsic value in itself, but only has a reason for existing insofar as the division of labor is itself found necessary.

Still, while being a mere effect of necessary causes, civilization can become an end, an object of desire, even an ideal. A mechanistic conception of society [*as advanced here*] does not preclude ideals. … There is and there will always be, between the extreme points at which we find ourselves and the end towards which we are tending, a free field open to our efforts.

Part 3. The Development of Individual Personality

At the same time that societies are transformed, individuals are transformed by changes in population concentration.

Above all, they are more free of the control of the physiological organism. Where a non-human animal is almost completely under the influence of its physical environment, people are dependent on social causes.

Questions

1. What does Durkheim us as a measure of moral density?
2. You should have learned by now that "correlation is not causation." Does Durkheim make this error in Part 1 of Chapter 2?
3. Can you think of a situation where there might be *more people* but *fewer contacts* so that the segmented structure does not, in fact, break down and give way to the division of labor? What about a situation of *fewer people* but *greater contacts*?
4. Why does the division of labor generally advance in societies?
5. Do animals, plants, and people thrive through difference? Consider the implications here. How would Durkheim likely weigh in on current immigration debates?
6. How does increasing specialization bring more freedom? Is individual freedom something useful for modern society? Do you find it odd to discuss freedom in terms of usefulness?
7. What is the cause of civilization? How is this similar to the argument about freedom? [*it may help to first define what exactly Durkheim means by the term civilization*]
8. Although you may be interested in reading the entire "part 3" of the fifth chapter, see if you can fill in Durkheim's argument without doing so! Why is it that personality develops as moral and dynamic density increases? What consequences follow from human animals' greater influence of social, rather than physiological, forces?

Concepts

Moral/Dynamic Density

1. This is but one example of the outdated anthropology of the day. We now know that there were in fact extensive cities far earlier than was known by Durkheim. Whether the existence of these cities undercuts his theory is another question. ↵

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2.6: Division of Labor, Book 3

"Just as ancient people need a common faith to unite them, so we need justice."

NOTE ON SOURCE: This passage comes from Durkheim's dissertation, completed in 1893, and first published in 1902 as De la Division du Travaile Sociale. The first English translation was done by George Simpson in 1933, but this version was found to have several shortcomings. A more approved translation was made in 1984 by W. D. Halls, edited by Lewis A. Coser. This translation was republished with some improvement by Steven Lukes in 1997. This is the recommended version if you would like to read more of the text than what is included here.

Introduction – Why this is important and what to look for

The Division of Labor in Society *was divided into three books. The third book looks at what happens when the division of labor is not functioning properly. As you read, think about how often the division of labor is unhealthy or "abnormal" and how often the division of labor is actually in its normal, solidarity-producing state. You might also want to compare what you read here with Marx's critique of capitalism.*

Chapter 1. The Anomic Division of Labor

Until now we have studied the division of labor as a normal phenomenon, but, like all social facts (and biological facts as well), there are pathological forms we must analyze. If, normally, the division of labor produces social solidarity, sometimes it does the opposite. We must find out what makes it deviate from its natural direction. Otherwise, we are in danger of assuming the division of labor is the cause of these un-solidaristic conflicts. In addition, studying these deviating forms will allow us to determine the conditions of existence of the normal state a little better. When we understand the circumstances in which the division of labor ceases to produce solidarity, we may better know what is necessary for it do so. Here, as always, understanding pathology is a valuable aid of study.

We will explore three types of the exceptional pathological state, not because there are no others, but because these three are the most prevalent and the most serious.

Section 1. Examples of solidarity breaking down

[*The first case happens during industrial or commercial crises, which we can see as breaks in organic solidarity. Certain social functions are not adjusted to one another. The second case has as its example the conflict between capital and labor. As organizations grow, it is more difficult for all the parts to be effectively encompassed. We will see in the next chapter that there are also other reasons for the breakdown of solidarity between capital and labor but certainly a lack of regulation and connections is a primary cause. We know this because small-scale industry still tends to more harmonious. We can see yet another example in academia. Where scholars used to be part of a whole enterprise, they are so specialized now that they are sometimes in conflict with each other.]*

Section 2. Seriousness of the problem

What makes these facts serious is that they have at times been considered natural effects of increasing specialization. It is said that the individual becomes so isolated in her activity that she cannot appreciate the work of her fellows. As a result, increasing the division of labor will only lead to a breakdown of society.

If this were true, the division of labor would, by its very nature, work to dissolve rather than bind society.

Section 3. Examples of Lack of Regulation leading to Conflict; Explaining Anomie

We know that wherever organic solidarity is observed, we encounter at the same time an adequately developed regulatory system which determines the mutual relations of functions. For organic solidarity to exist, it is not sufficient that there is a system of organs dependent upon each other, but also that the way in which they come together be predetermined in some manner. Otherwise, new calibrations would constantly be necessary to create an equilibrium, as one part treats another part as adversary rather than supplementary assistance. One could hardly expect solidarity if mutual obligations had to be freshly fought over in each particular instance of specialization.

If the division of labor does not produce solidarity in such cases [*examples omitted*], it is because the relations of the organs are not regulated. Rather, they are in a state of *anomie*.

But where does this state of *anomie* come from?

We can begin by saying that the state of *anomie* is impossible wherever organs are sufficiently in contact or sufficiently prolonged such that a body of rules spontaneously emerges to establish relations between social functions.

A function can be shared between two or more parts of an organism only if these parts are more or less contiguous. Once labor is divided, thereby creating more interdependent functions, the distance separating organs lessens.

But a set of exceptional circumstances, as in the case we have been discussing, can work differently. Take the case of trade. As the organized type develops, markets merge, eventually embracing the whole of society. Borders break down. The result is that each industry produces for consumers *over the whole surface of the planet*. In this circumstance, mere contact is no longer sufficient to generate regulation. Production appears limitless, and it becomes wild and unregulated. From this come recurrent economic crises.

As the market extends beyond the vision of any one producer (or consumer), great industries appear and, with them, new relations between employers and employees. Machines replace people; manufacturing replaces craftsmanship. The worker is regimented, separated from her family during the day. Unlike the worker of the middle ages, which often roomed with or near their employer, workers now live very far from their employers. These are all relatively new conditions of industrial life and demand a new organization. The problem is, as these changes have occurred so rapidly, the potential conflicts of interest have yet to be equilibrated.

Looking at things this way permits us to rebut one of the great charges made against the division of labor. It has been said that the division of labor degrades the worker by making him a mere machine. Every day he repeats the same movements with monotonous regularity, without taking any personal interest in them, and without understanding them. He is no longer a living cell of a living organism but merely an inert piece of machinery, a mere set of hands put to work in the same direction and in the same way.

As a remedy for this state of things it has sometimes been proposed that workers be given a general education, above and beyond any technical training for work. But let us suppose that we can relieve some of these bad effects attributed to the division of labor in this way, that is not a means of *preventing* those bad effects. The division is not going to change simply because workers are better educated. Without a doubt it is good for the worker to be interested in art, literature, etc. but none of this is going to change the fact that she is being treated like a machine at work all day long! Such a remedy would merely make specialization intolerable and therefore impossible.

[*What then is the solution?*] In order for the division of labor to develop without having disastrous consequences on us, it is sufficient for it to be wholly itself, for nothing external to temper it. Normally, the role of each special function does *not* hem us in our individual siloes, but rather keeps us in constant relations with all the neighboring functions, keeping us aware to other needs and changes. The division of labor presumes that we do not lose sight of our collaborators, and that we act upon them and react upon them. We are not mere machines that repeat movements without knowing their meaning, but rather are we conscious that our movements tend, in some way, towards some ultimate goal, which we may or may not have a clear picture of in our minds. We feel that we are serving something. As special and uniform (or monotonous or tedious) as our activity may be, it is that of an intelligent being, for it has a direction and we know that.

Chapter 2. The Forced[1] Division of Labor

Section 1. Class War follows from pathological state

However, it is not enough that there be rules, for sometimes the rules themselves cause trouble. This is what happens in the struggle between classes. While the institution of classes and castes are themselves strictly regulated organizations within the division of labor, this strict regulation itself is a source of disharmony. The lower classes are no longer satisfied with the role given to them by custom or law and they wish for positions that are closed to them. Further, they seek to throw over or dispossess those exercising those functions! In such a way do internal civil wars arise as a result of the way in which labor is distributed.

We see nothing like this in the biological organism. No cell or organ seeks to take on a role different from the one it is filling. The reasons for this is that each anatomic element mechanically does its job. Its constitution and its place in the organism determines what that job is; its function results from its essential nature. It is very different in societies. There is a great distance between the

hereditary dispositions of the individual members and the jobs they fill. One's birth does not imply one's vocation. But on the other hand, this also means that there are many reasons individuals can end up in jobs to which they do not actually fit. Although we are not predestined to some particular position from birth, we do have tastes and abilities which limit our choice. For the division of labor to produce solidarity is not enough that each has her particular task but also that the task be appropriate to her tastes and abilities.

In this second pathological form, this condition is not met. If a system of class or caste sometimes produces sharp pains instead of solidarity it is because the distribution of jobs on which it rests does not accord with the distribution of natural talents. Constraint alone, more or less violent and more or less direct, links people to their functions. When this happens, only an imperfect and troubled solidarity is possible.

Class war is not a necessary consequence of the division of labor. Conflict between classes happens only under particular circumstances, when it is an effect of a social constraint upon the choice's individuals make in their selection of jobs. It is very different when class systems arise spontaneously out of the freely chosen initiative of individuals. When this happens there is harmony between individual natures and social functions. Ideally, the only factor determining the manner in which work is divided is the diversity of capacities. Selection is made entirely through aptitude, since there is no other viable reason for selection.

The forced division of labor is thus our second pathological form. Force or social constraint in this case does not mean every kind of regulation, as we have already seen that the division of labor must be regulated in order for it to produce solidarity. Constraint only begins when regulation no longer corresponds to the true nature of things, when it is validated through force.

We could say, conversely, that the division of labor produces solidarity only if it is spontaneous. By that we mean the absence of everything that can even indirectly hinder the free development of the individual's innate abilities. There can be no obstacle, of any kind, preventing a person from occupying a place in the social framework which is compatible with their abilities. *In a word, labor is divided spontaneously only when society is constituted in such a way that social inequalities exactly express natural inequalities.* For that to happen, natural inequalities must be neither enhanced nor lowered by some external influence. Perfect spontaneity is a consequence of absolute equality in the external conditions of the conflict. It consists not in a state of anarchy which would allow people to satisfy all their good or bad tendencies, but in an organization in which each social value would be judged by its true worth. Some might object that, even under these conditions, there are winners and losers, and that the latter will not accept defeat except when forced to do so. But this is not really the same thing at all. [*Lack of constraint does not mean perfect equality of outcome]; constraint occurs when conflict itself is made impossible by refusing to admit the right of combat between the parties*.]

It is also true that this perfect spontaneity exists in no society anywhere. Even in places where there remains little vestige of past castes and legal restrictions against mobility, hereditary transmission of wealth is enough to make the external conditions very unequal, for such gives advantages to some beyond their personal worth. Even today there are jobs and positions that are closed or very hard to enter for those who are without money.

[*Nevertheless, we are tending towards a society in which birth plays less of a role in outcome.*] Society is compelled to reduce these disparities as much as possible by assisting in various ways those who find themselves at an unnatural disadvantage, aiding them in overcoming those disadvantages. We feel obligated to leave free space for all merits and we regard as unjust any inferiority of position which is not personally merited. It is a widely held belief today that equality among citizens is increasing and that it is just that this is so.

Section 2. Reasons why progress towards equality is necessary

Equality is necessary not only to bring each person together with his or her function but also to link functions to one another.

Conclusion

Section 3. The necessity of justice

It is false to believe that all regulation is the product of constraint, because liberty itself is the product of regulation. Liberty is not antagonistic to social action but is itself a result of social action. It is not an inherent property of the state of nature. To the contrary, it is conquest of society over nature! Naturally, humans are unequal in physical force; naturally they are placed under external conditions that advantage some and disadvantage others. But liberty, liberty is the subordination of external forces to social forces,

for it's only in these conditions that social forces can freely develop. This is the reverse of the natural order. We can escape nature only by creating another world where we dominate nature. That world is society.

The task of the most advanced societies is a work of justice. Just as the ideal of less advanced societies was to create or maintain an intense common life, one in which the individual was completely absorbed, so our ideal is to make social relations always more equitable, so that we assure the free development of all our socially useful forces. Because the segmental type is disappearing as the organized type of society develops, because organic solidarity is slowly substituted for that which arises through mere likeness, it is absolutely necessary that external conditions become equal. The harmony of functions and of our very existence as a society is at stake. Just as ancient people need a common faith to unite them, so we need justice.

Chapter 3. Another Abnormal Form

[*In this last section, Durkheim proposes a third abnormal form, but he fails to give it a name. He argues that for the division of labor to produce solidarity each task must be meaningful to the overall enterprise. Jobs that appear pointless, petty, or disconnected from the rest of life will not provide satisfaction to those doing them. We can read this abnormal form as a critique of both bureaucracy and deskilling, as jobs that are "beneath" one's abilities do not produce solidarity. Interestingly, Durkheim quotes Marx here.]*

Questions

1. Why is it valuable to study pathological forms of the division of labor? How does Durkheim's approach differ from what Marx had to say about the division of labor?
2. Is education the answer for the anomic division of labor? Explain Durkheim's argument here.
3. Think of a job you have had in the past. What didn't you like about it? Would thinking about the overall goal/end of the larger enterprise provide more satisfaction to you? Consider military service here.
4. What does Durkheim mean when he argues that people should be in the jobs to which they are naturally fit? Can you think of any examples? What natural talents are unevenly distributed in the population? To what extent are even "natural" talents affected by social forces or social evaluation?
5. What are some ways that we currently attempt to ensure a spontaneous division of labor, one in which "social inequalities express natural inequalities"? Think of laws, policies, customs. What would be needed to ensure this were entirely true? Would it be possible to achieve this state?
6. Imagine Marx and Durkheim discussing the causes and solutions of class conflict. What would they say to each other? Where would they agree? Where would they disagree? Whose side would you take?
7. What does Durkheim mean when he says modern societies need justice in order to survive? Of what does this justice consist?

Concepts

Anomic Division of Labor

Forced Division of Labor

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1. Durkheim uses the word "contrainte" here, which might be more productively translated as "constrained" rather than "forced." However, generations of English-speaking students know this as the 'forced division of labor" so we are retaining that usage here. If you get confused about what is meant by forced, however, think about substituting the word constrained, which is more about being socially compelled or restricted by custom than physical enforcement. ↵

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2.7: Le Suicide (1897) - Introduction/Book 2

"One can only explain what can be compared."

NOTE ON SOURCE: This passage is from Durkheim's*Le Suicide: Etude de Sociologie*, published in 1897 in Paris by Alcan Press. It was first translated as *Suicide: A Study in Sociology* in 1951 by Spaulding and Simpson and published by the Free Press. This is generally the translation used in most reprinted editions. A second translation was made in 2007 by Robin Buss for Penguin Publishing. This translation is recommended if you want to read the entire work.

Introduction – Why this is important and what to look for

When reading an important but difficult work like Suicide, *it is often useful to spend the most time reading the introduction. Here, Durkheim, always very organized, sets forth the problem and the methods he will use to address the problem. As always with Durkheim, he first sets out a definition of any key concepts – here, "suicide." Before reading the Introduction passage, you may want to contemplate for yourself what a useful definition of this term would be. After the introduction, we move to some key passages in Book 2, where Durkheim sets forth both the method and results of his study of suicide. This book is crucial for understanding Durkheim's overall theory on society and its collective problems.*

Introduction

One hears the word suicide used many times in the course of conversation, so one could believe that everyone knows what it means and that defining it would be unnecessary. But in reality, the usual words used, like the concepts they express, are always ambiguous and the researcher who uses the everyday language without further elaboration exposes herself to grave confusion. Not only is the understanding of the term so vaguely defined that it changes from one circumstance to another, but it also results in categories of very different things being called the same thing or else things that are quite the same being called by different names. One can only explain what can be compared. A scientific investigation can only be successful if it deals with comparable facts. The more comparable facts, the likelier the success of analysis. The scientist cannot use the groups of facts as categorized in everyday speech, however. She must construct the groups that she wishes to study, in order to ensure the homogeneity and specificity of what she is comparing.

Our first task then is to determine the order of things we propose to study under the name of 'Suicide." …

We arrive at our first formula: "Suicide is any death which results directly or indirectly from an act (negative or positive) of the victim himself."

But this definition is incomplete. [*What about the confused man who jumps out of a window, thinking it is level with the ground?*] Should we say that suicide is only an act resulting in death when the victim has that result in mind? [*But how can we ever get into another's mind this way and know if he or she intended to die?*] Intention is a thing too intimate to be grasped by an outsider…how many times have we ourselves mistaken the motives of our own acts! For example, when we explain what we do in terms of generous intentions or elevated considerations when we are really inspirited by petty jealousies or blind habit.

[*After much more back and forth, we are led to the following:]*

Suicide is any death which results directly or indirectly from a positive or negative act by the victim and which the victim should know will produce such a result.

But is the thing we have so defined of interest to the sociologist? Because suicide is an act of the individual that affects the individual as such, it appears to depend exclusively on individual factors and to be more psychological than sociological.

We can, in fact, look at this from a different perspective. Instead of seeing particular events, isolated from one another, each suicide the result of its own individual factors, we can consider all the suicides committed in a given society over a given period of time. By doing so, we actually arrive at something that constitutes a new fact – not simply a sum of many parts, but a wholly new social fact to be observed and analyzed.

Each society, at each moment of its history, has a particular aptitude towards suicide. We can measure the relative intensity of this aptitude by figuring the total number of voluntary deaths in the population of every age and sex. We call the resulting figure the *rate of mortality-suicide* for that particular society.

Our intention is not to provide a complete inventory of all the possible conditions that can give rise to particular suicides, but to investigate what lies behind the *social rate of suicide*. There are surely many individual conditions that are not general enough to affect the social rate. These individual conditions may lead this or that isolated individual to commit suicide regardless of whether the society has a strong or weak tendency towards suicide. Those conditions concern the psychologist, not the sociologist. What the sociologist investigates are those causes which work not on isolated individuals, but on the group. Of all possible causes of suicide, only those which have an effect on the whole of society are of interest to us. The suicide rate is the product of these factors, which is why we must consider them.

That is the aim of the present work, which consists of three parts.

FIRST, the phenomenon we are trying to explain must result from extra-social causes, generally speaking, or specifically social ones. In the first section we ask what is the influence of the former, and see that it is almost nothing, or very little.

SECOND, we determine the nature of the social causes, the way they produce their effects, and the relationship with the individual states that accompany the different kinds of suicide.

THIRD, we will be able to state with more clarity of what consists the social element of suicide, that is to say, the collective tendency of which we have spoken, how it is connected to other social facts and the means by which it is possible to act upon it.

Book TWO: Social Causes and Social Types

Chapter 1: Method of Determining Them

We have established that there exists for each social group a specific tendency towards suicide that is explained by neither the physiological makeup of individuals nor the physical environment.[1] After eliminating these extra-social factors, we see that the rate of suicide must depend upon social causes and itself exist as a collective phenomenon. This collective tendency toward suicide is what we now must study.

To this end, leaving aside the individual as individual, with her motives and her ideas, we will ask what it is about different social walks of life (religious, family, political, professional) that cause the rate of suicide to vary. It is only after doing this, coming back to individuals, that we can discover how these general causes are individualized to produce murderous results.

Chapter 2. Egotistical Suicide

Let us first observe in what way the different religious faiths affect suicide.

[*Durkheim sets forth some statistics showing that the rate of suicide is relatively low in Catholic countries (Spain, Portugal, Italy) and high in Protestant countries (Prussia, Saxony, Denmark). The rate of suicide among Jewish communities is even lower – only half that of Protestant communities.]*

Having established the facts, how are we to explain them?

[*Although some might point out the prohibition against suicide as a reason for the lower suicide rate among Catholics, this does not really explain things. Why? Because Protestants also forbid suicide and the prohibition is the least important among Jews, who have the lowest rate*]

If Protestantism favors the development of suicide, it is not because it views it more tolerably than Catholicism. If the two religions both prohibit suicide, then their unequal effect on suicide must lie somewhere else, in one of the more general characteristics that differentiate the two. The only essential difference between these two religions is that Protestantism admits much more free inquiry than Catholicism….We are now reaching our first conclusion, that the greater tendency towards suicide among Protestants must be related to the spirit of free inquiry that animates this religion. But free inquiry itself is the result of a previous cause.

[*But why is this so? Why does Protestantism allow for free inquiry? For this we need to attend to the history of Protestantism. Free inquiry flows from the context of schisms – free inquiry is permitted in order to permit schisms to develop more freely. Protestantism gives a greater place to individual thought (free inquiry) because it involves fewer common beliefs and practices – that is the nature of Protestantism itself.*]

The more ways there are to act and think that are marked as religious and thus removed from free inquiry, the more the very idea of God will be present in every aspect of life and thus make individual wills converge toward a single end. On the other hand, the greater the religious group abandons judgment on particulars, the more it will be absent in the lives of its members, and the less

cohesion and vitality it will retain. We have thus arrived at the conclusion that the greater rate of suicide among Protestants is due to its being less strongly integrated than the Catholic church.

[*In a similar fashion, because of anti-Semitism and long histories of hostility, Jewish communities have had to sustain unusually strong feelings of solidarity to survive. This has resulted in a lower than average rate of suicide. They are "protected" from suicide because they are obliged to live more firmly side by side]*

Two important conclusions have emerged from this chapter.

ONE, we see why, generally speaking, suicide increases along with scientific knowledge. It is not that science is causing more suicide – it is in itself innocent and nothing is more unjust than this accusation. Rather, these two facts (more suicide and scientific progress) are the result of a single general state. People search for science and people kill themselves at greater rates because religion has lost its cohesion. It is not that science undermines religion but rather that, because religion is falling apart, our thirst for knowledge is awakened. Science is not sought as a way to destroy accepted ideas, but because those ideas are no longer accepted. Far from being the source of the problem, science is the only remedy we now have. Once established beliefs have been cleared away by time, they cannot be reestablished artificially. It is only reflection that can guide our lives. Once the social instinct is deadened, intelligence is the only guide we can depend upon to refashion our moral conscience. However perilous the enterprise, we cannot hesitate, because we have no other choice. Let those who look on the collapse of old beliefs with anxiety and sadness stop blaming science of an evil it has not caused, for it is science, on the contrary, which can provide our only cure! Do not treat science like the enemy! Science is the only weapon we have to permit us to struggle against the dissolution which itself has produced science. It is not by gagging science that one can restore authority to disappearing traditions: we will only render ourselves impotent to replace them.

TWO, we can see why, generally speaking, religion has a prophylactic effect on suicide. This is not, as sometimes said, because it prohibits suicide. Protestants believe in God and in the immortality of the soul no less than do Catholics. It is not the special nature of religions concepts that explains the beneficial influence of religion. If religion protects one against the desire to commit suicide, is it is not because it preaches respect for the person but because religion is a community. It is because the Protestant community does not have the same degree of consistency as the others that it cannot moderate suicide as well.

Chapter 3. Egotistical Suicide, continued

But if religion protects against suicide because and to the extent that it is a society, it is probable that other social groups produce the same effect. We can therefore examine the family and political groups from this point of view. [*Omitted Examples: (1) suicide rate lower among married men than unmarried men; (2) suicide rate lower during times of political upheaval, when people unite against a common foe, for example.*]

We have now established the three propositions:

Suicide varies with the degree of integration of religious society

Suicide varies with the degree of integration of domestic society

Suicide varies with the degree of integration of political society

This similarity in our three propositions shows that, while these different communities have a moderating effect on suicide, it is not because of characteristics peculiar to them but for some reason common to them all. There must be a single property shared by all these group, albeit in different degrees. And the only quality that satisfies this condition is that they are all strongly integrated social groups. So, we arrive at this general conclusion: *Suicide varies inversely with the degree of integration of the social groups to which the individual belongs*. The more the groups to which a person belong are weakened, the less the person depends upon them and the more she depends upon herself. She recognizes no other rules of conduct than those based on her own individual interests. If we call this state in which the individual affirms himself more than the social self and depends upon the former more than latter, "egoism," then we might call the type of suicide that results from excessive individualization "egoistic suicide."

Chapter 4. Altruistic Suicide

[*In this chapter, Durkheim discusses a form of suicide not met with much in modern society. In this form, suicide occurs as a matter of strong social obligation, as the widow who throws herself on the funeral pyre of her dead husband. Durkheim uses this form primarily as a contrast to egoistic suicide.*]

Chapter 5. Anomic Suicide

Society is not only an object that attracts to it the feelings and actions of people, but also a force that directs them. There is a relationship between the operation of this regulatory action and the social rate of suicide.

First, it is in that economic crises aggravate the suicide rate. [*Interestingly, both increases in prosperity and economic crises that lead to poverty have the same result.]* It is because they are critical, disturbances in the collective order, that we see more suicide. Whenever serious rearrangements take place in society, whether due to sudden growth or unanticipated disaster, people are more inclined to kill themselves. Why? A few preliminary considerations are necessary before we can properly address this question.

Nobody can be happy or alive, really, unless their needs are adjusted to their means. That is, if they demand more than they can be provided with, or desire something that is unavailable to them, they will be constantly frustrated and unable to function without suffering. Any action that cannot be done without suffering tends not to be repeated. Thus, unsatisfied aptitudes atrophy, including the general appetite for life.

In non-human animals, the balance between needs and means occurs somewhat spontaneously, because it depends on material conditions alone. Their reflective abilities are so low that they cannot imagine any ends except those dependent on physical nature. They do not want more than what they can achieve.

But the same is not true for non-human animals, most of whose needs are not dependent on the body alone. There seems never an end to the amount of well-being, comfort, and luxury that a human being can legitimately seek. There is nothing in our make-up that marks a limit to our desires. Our sensibility is a bottomless pit that nothing can fill.

If this is the case, that our desires can only be a source of torment for us. Unlimited desires, by definition, do not satisfy.

For things to be otherwise, it is necessary that passions should be limited. It is only in this way that they can be in line with our actual abilities and so satisfied. But since there is nothing in the individual person that can limit desires, this limitation must come from some other sources: a regulatory force for non-physical desires, a moral force. Only society can play this moderating role, because it is the only moral power above it accepted by the individual. Society alone has the necessary authority to state the law and to set the point beyond which the passions may not go.

So, at every historical moment, there is a vague feeling in the moral conscience of societies of the relative worth of each job, what is owed to each person for the work they do [e.g., *financial analyst, ditch digger, politician, minister*]. The different jobs are, in a way, hierarchized in public opinion and a certain level of well-being is attributed to each according to the place it occupies in this hierarchy. For example, in the common view there is a certain standard of living that is regarded as the upper limit of which a day laborer can reasonably aspire to, and also a lower limit below which it is considered he should not be allowed to fall, absent some serious failure in his duties.

Everyone has a vague idea, in their particular sphere, of the limit towards which their ambition may reach, and does not aspire beyond that limit. A goal and a limit are thus set for desires. There is nothing rigid or absolute about this, of course. There is a lot of wiggle room within those set limits. In general, each person is in harmony with her condition and wants only what she can legitimately wish for as the normal reward for her activity. The balance of her happiness is stable because it is defined.

However, if we did not consider the way jobs were allocated in the first place as fair, none of this would work. The worker is not in harmony with her social position if she is not convinced that this position is the one that she deserves! If she considers that she deserves another, then the one that she has cannot possibly satisfy her (even if the standard of living for that job is reasonably set).

There is no society that has ever existed that has not a set of rules settling the way in which different social conditions (*e.g., laborer or owner? ditch-digger or financial analyst?*) are open to individuals, although these rules have varied across time and place. In the past, birth was the almost exclusive principle of social classification, while today we accept inherited wealth and merit up to a point, but not “birth” alone.

Today, some have argued that we are approaching a situation where each person can enter life with the same resources, and the struggle between competitors happens on conditions of perfect equality, and thus no one can consider the results unfair. Everyone should feel spontaneously that things are as they should be. There is no doubt that as we approach such an ideal of equality, there will be less social constraint needed, but it is only a matter of degree because there will always be some things, such as natural

gifts, that are inherited. So, we will always need a moral discipline to make those whom nature has least favored accept the more lowly position that they owe to the chance of their birth.

Yet even this regime can only work if it is considered fair by the people subjected to it. When it is no longer maintained except by custom and by force, peace and harmony cannot exist. A spirit of anxiety and discontent lurks beneath the surface, and appetites which cannot be satisfied break out. This is what happened in Rome and Ancient Greece and recently in our day when aristocratic prejudices started to lose their old ascendancy. But such states of disruption are exceptional and only take place when society is in crisis. Normally, the collective order seems fair by the great majority of its subjects.

When we say that authority is necessary, we do not mean violence is the only means it can be established. People should follow authority out of respect and not fear. It is not true that human activity can be freed from all restraints. There is nothing in the world that can enjoy such a state of things, since each creature on the planet exists in relation to all others. Its nature depends not only on itself but on other creatures. It is only a matter of degree the difference between a mineral and a thinking subject. What is peculiar to human creatures is that the restraint we find ourselves in is not physical but moral, which is to say, social. We receive our laws not from a material environment which is brutally imposed on us, but from a conscience which is greater than our own. Because the greater and best part of our life goes beyond the body, we escape from the yoke of the body, but bow beneath that of society.

[*And now to our question…]* However, when society is disturbed, either by a painful crisis or by a fortunate but too-sudden transformation, it cannot exercise this constraining function; as a result, we see a rise in the suicide rate.

If *anomie* [*the state of unregulation]* were to occur only in occasional bursts and in the form of acute crises, it might from time to time vary the social rate of suicide, but it would not be a regular constant factor. However, there is one area of social life in which we find a chronic state of anomie… the world of trade and industry.

For more than a century, economic progress has consisted primarily in deregulating industry. Until modern times, a whole system of moral powers was in place to discipline industrial relations (religion, custom, government power).

Now, the state of crisis and anomie is constant – the new normal, one could say. From top to bottom, desires and wants are aroused that cannot be satisfied. The real seems worthless beside what is seen as possible by fevered imaginations. One thirsts for novelty. These circumstances are so well established that society has got used to them. People constantly say that it is part of human nature to be constantly discontented, to keep wanting more, pressing forward, to some indeterminate goal. The doctrine of progress no matter what and as fast as possible has become our article of faith.

Industrial and commercial professions are among the most suicide-prone of all professions, much more so than agriculture, for example.

Anomie is therefore a regular and specific factor in suicide in our modern societies. This form of suicide depends not on the way in which people are attached to society but on the way in which it controls them (or fails to do so). Egotistical suicide happens when people no longer see any sense in living; altruistic suicide from the fact that this sense appears to them to be situated beyond life itself; and the third kind, anomic suicide, from their activity being disrupted and from their suffering as a result.

Anomic suicide is not unrelated to egotistical suicide. Both occur when society is not sufficiently present for individuals. But whereas in egotistical suicide society is lacking in collective activity, leaving it deprived of object and meaning, in anomic suicide society is absent as a brake to control individual passions. Though the two are related, they are interdependent. These two kinds of suicide do not recruit their victims from the same social contexts: the first recruits from the world of thinking people; the second from the industrial and commercial field.

Economic anomie is not the only kind of anomie that can produce suicide, however. A few other non-economic cases include: widowhood, divorce. Marriage appears to favor the wife in respect of suicide to the extent that divorce is more common (with fewer suicides when less common). We here reach a conclusion that is at odds with some commonly held beliefs about marriage. It is thought that marriage benefits the wife, protecting her from sexual attacks of men in general. Monogamy is often presented as a sacrifice that men make to their polygamous instincts in order to raise and improve the condition of woman through marriage. In reality, whatever the historical causes that made men decide to impose this restriction on himself, it is the man who most benefits from it. The freedom which he has given up could only be a source of torment for him. Women are a different matter. One can say that, by submitting herself to the same regime, she is the one who truly makes the sacrifice.

[In a footnote here, Durkheim proposes a fourth form of suicide that would result from "an excess of regulation" and gives as an example the historical case of slaves and the modern example of married women without children. Otherwise, he notes, we do not see many cases of it and gives it the name, "fatalistic suicide."]

Questions for Contemplation and Discussion

1. Why is it important to define your concepts before engaging in research? How would you have defined suicide before reading this passage? Do you agree with Durkheim's definition? What, if anything, is not included in the definition?
2. To critics who say that suicide is a psychological problem, rather than a sociological phenomenon, how does Durkheim respond? Why is the suicide rate of importance to the sociologist?
3. What is Durkheim's explanation for the lower suicide rates among Catholics and Jews than Protestants? Is his answer related to religious aspects of these communities, or something else (or can we separate the two)?
4. What does Durkheim think of science? What is its relationship to the rate of suicide? What role does it/ should it play in modern society? Ask some friends and colleagues what they think the "upper limit" and "lower limit" of a day laborer's standard of living should be. How much agreement did you find in their answers? What about a CEO?
5. Under what historical circumstances do we expect to find instances of egotistical suicide? How does this connect to Durkheim's theory of modern society? What is the relationship with the division of labor?
6. In the 1970s, the average CEO earned 35 times more than the average worker at his or her company. Now, the CEO: worker pay ratio in the US has ballooned to 333 to 1. Does this seem a fair allocation of reward? What might be the consequences of this change, according to Durkheim?
7. What is the key to happiness?
8. What does it mean to say that social positions were open or closed by "birth" as a social classifier? Can you provide examples? How does this compare with what Weber had to say about *Stände*?
9. Durkheim's lengthy digression on marriage has been much abbreviated here, leaving but his main point, and an observation which flies in the face of much of what was written at the time about marriage's protective function for women. What is his observation and how does it undercut 19thcentury views on marriage? What implications for the social policy of divorce follow?

Concepts

Suicide (and three (or 4) forms)

Social suicide rate

Anomie

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1. Read the original text if you would like to see how this was established. ↵

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2.8: Education and Sociology (1922)

"Liberty is the daughter of Authority."

NOTE ON SOURCE: This passage is from Durkheim's *ducation et Sociologie*, published posthumously in 1922 in Paris by Alcan Press. It was first translated as *Education and Sociology* in 1956 by Sherwood T. Fox and published by the Free Press, with a foreword by Talcott Parsons. There have been no other translations since then. The passages you have here are all taken from the first essay in the work. There are four essays in the original.

Introduction – Why this is important and what to look for

This work, originally pulled from a series of lectures Durkheim gave in the early twentieth century, is not widely known today, although it certainly made a major impact on the work of Pierre Bourdieu, an important contemporary theorist whose work you will encounter time and again. Pay attention to the socializing role of education, and its overall role in creating and maintaining solidarity across generations.

The Nature and Role of Education

Part 1: Different Definitions of Education (a critical examination)

[*Durkheim begins this work by examining various definitions of education. He criticizes all of these for assuming a perfect ideal "education" when each society has its own system of education which accords with its particular needs and understandings.]*

Every society, considered at a particular moment in its development, has an educational system which it imposes upon its people with an irresistible general force. It is in vain to believe that we can raise our children exactly how we want. There are customs to which we must conform; if we deviate too much from these, they will avenge themselves on our children. Once adults, they will not be able to live in harmony with their peers. It doesn't matter whether they were raised with ideas too old-fashioned or ahead of their times; in either case, they are not part of *their times* and therefore they are outside the norm.

It is not we, as individuals, who have created the customs and ideas of the education of our times. They are the product of our common life and they express its needs. In large part, they are the work of preceding generations. All of our human past has contributed to making the ensemble of maxims which guide our education today; all our history has left traces of the history of the people which have preceded us. It is as the most evolved organisms carry within them the echo of their biological evolution. When one studies the history of the manner in which educational systems were formed, one realizes they depend upon the development of religion, political organization, scientific progress, and the state of the industrial arts, etc. If we look at education without examining these historic causes, we do not really understand what is going on. How can one single person pretend to know and reconstruct what is not the result of individual thought? He is not faced with a blank slate but with existing realities which he cannot change or destroy by his individual will. He can act only to the extent that he understands; that he knows the nature and conditions on which systems such as education depend. He can only arrive at this knowledge by study, through observation, like a physicist who observes inanimate matter or the biologist who observes living matter.

Part 2. Defining Education

To define education, we must first consider all the educational systems that have ever existed and see what they have in common. These common characteristics will then form the definition we seek.

We have already seen two elements. For there to be an educational system, there must be a generation of adults and a generation of young people, and an action of the former on the latter. We now have to define that action.

In one sense, one could say that there are as many different educational systems as there are different social groups in society. Even today, do we not see education vary by social class or place? The education in the city is not the same as education in the country; that of the wealthy not the same as that of the worker. Is this destined to disappear, though? It is evident that the education of our children should not depend upon the chance of where they were born, or to which parents. But even if we think this is the case, and all children should have an equal education, occupational specialization would still produce different kinds of education. Each profession constitutes its own milieu and requires particular skills and special knowledge, in which certain customs and certain ways of seeing the world prevail. Because each child must be prepared for a job, at a certain age education cannot be the same for everyone. That is why we see in all advanced societies today, which tend to become more diverse, more specialization, and this

specialization becomes more advanced every day. This diversity may not rest on inequality of birth as before, but it remains nevertheless. To find an absolutely homogenous and egalitarian education one must go back to prehistoric times when there was no differentiation between people.

But, whatever may be the importance of these specialized educations, they are not the entire education. One could say that all such systems everywhere rest on a common base. There is not a people anywhere that doesn't share a certain number of ideas and practical sentiments which they must impart to their children, regardless of class or place or social group.

Each society sets up a certain ideal of being human, of what its people should be, from an intellectual and physical and moral point of view. This idea is, to some degree, the same for all people. It is this ideal which is the central point of its educational system. Thus, education's function is to stir up among its children (1) a certain number of physical and mental states which the society considers should not be absent in any of its members; and, at the same time, (2) certain physical and mental states which the particular social group to which the child belongs (class, family, profession) considers necessary to find among its members. So, it is society, both as a whole and each social group within it, that determines the ideal to be realized by education. Society can exist only if there is a sufficient amount of homogeneity amongst its members: education perpetuates and reinforces this homogeneity by fixing in the character of the child the essential similarities which the collective life demands. But, on the other hand, full cooperation would not be possible without a certain amount of diversity; education assures the persistence of this diversity by itself being diverse and specialized. Education is thus the means by which society prepares for its existence through its children.

We have arrived at the following definition: *Education is the influence exercised by its adult generations on those not yet ripe for social life. It has as its object the awakening and development among each child certain number of physical, intellectual, and moral states which are demanded of her by the political society in which she finds herself and the special groups for which she is particularly destined.*

Part 3. Consequences of the preceding definition: the social character of education

Following from our definition, education consists in a methodical socialization of the young. Among each of us, one can say, there exists two beings which are inseparable but distinct. One is made up of all the mental states which apply only to ourselves and the events of our personal life; this is our individual being. The other is a system of ideas, sentiments, and habits which express not our own personality, but that of the group or groups of which we form a part; these are religious beliefs, moral beliefs and practices, national traditions, professional traditions, collective opinions of all kinds. Together they form the social being. To create this being in each of us is the goal of education.

Putting aside the vague and uncertain tendencies attributable to heredity, the infant, when she enters life, brings only her individual being. Society finds in each new generation a blank slate upon which it must build itself anew. Society creates a new social being from each individual person.

This recreating force is the special privilege of human education. Anything else is what animals receive when trained by their parents. This training may develop certain instincts, but it does not initiate an entirely new life. Among human beings, the sort of aptitudes necessary for social life cannot be transmitted through heredity. It is only though education that these aptitudes are transmitted across generations.

[*Let us take the case of science*.] People do not have an instinctive appetite for science. They only desire science to the extent that their experience has shown them its importance. We never would have discovered the ways of science if we stuck to our individual lives, because we would not have needed it. As Rousseau has said, sensation, experience and instinct alone would be necessary to satisfy the basic wants and needs of human animals. If people have come to have other needs than these very simple ones, they are not rooted in their individual lives, but their social ones, or else they would not have searched for science through arduous and laborious efforts. We have the thirst for science because society has awakened it in us, and it has done so out of a real need. We have come to need science because social life has become much too complex and complicated to operate without the cooperation of reflective thought, without, indeed "science." But, at our beginnings, when social organization was quite simple and not at all diverse, when everything was pretty much the same, simple traditions sufficed, working in a way similar to the instincts of animals. In those times, thoughts and free inquiry are not only useless but actually dangerous, for they threaten tradition. That is why they are forbidden.

We are now able to answer a question raised by the preceding discussion. As we have shown society fashioning us, individually, according to its own needs, it could seem that we are submitting to a tyrant! But in reality, we are ourselves desirous of this submission, for the new social being built up in each of us collectively through education represents the best of us. We are who we are only because we live in society.

Morality itself results from collective life. It is society that draws us out of ourselves, that makes us consider interests other than our own, that teaches us to control our passions and our instincts, to make law, to keep ourselves in check, to go without, to make sacrifices, to subordinate our personal goals to higher ends. This is how we have gained the power to control ourselves and our inclinations, which is one of the things that make us distinctly human, and which is developed more and more as we become more fully human, rather than merely animal.

Science is the product of collective life as well. It rests upon a vast cooperation of all scientists, not just at the same time, but across time as well, stretching back generations. Before the establishment of the sciences we had religion doing the same job. Both science and religion are social institutions.

Or a final example – language. When we learn a language we also learn an entire system of ideas, neatly classified, and we inherit from all previous generations this system with its classifications. Even more. Without language we could not have general ideas at all. Language has allowed us to raise ourselves above pure sensations. And it is obvious that language is a social thing.

So, we can see from these examples what we would be reduced to if society did not exist. We would be mere animals. If we are more than that it is not through our personal efforts but because we regularly cooperate with each other, and the products of this cooperation are available to us across generations. What an animal learns during his or her lifetime ends there. But for us, the results of our experiences are preserved almost entirely and in great detail, thanks to books, monuments, tools, and all the other instruments with which one generation transmits its culture to the next generation. The soil of nature is covered with a rich topsoil that continues to grow. Instead of dying with each generation, human wisdom accumulates without limit. This accumulation is possible only with and through society. For, in order for the work of one generation to be preserved and passed down to the next, there must be a moral personality which lasts beyond the passing generations and binds them together; *this moral personality is society!*

Part 4. The role of the state in the matter of education

The rights of the family are opposed to the rights of the state with respect to education. It is said that the child belongs first of all to her parents, and it is their responsibility to oversee her moral and intellectual development. In this sense, education is essentially private. If one looks at it this way, then one tends to reduce to a minimum any state intervention. The state should, in this view, serve as a supplement to, or substitute for, families. If they are unable to oversee things, the state can then and only then intervene. In this view, we can also make a case for the state stepping into help parents, by providing schools of various sorts that parents can choose to send their children to. Any action beyond this is out-of-bounds.

But if education has a collective function, if its object is to adapt the child to the social context in which she is to live, this view of the disinterested bystander state makes little sense. How could society not play a part here? It is then up to the state to remind teachers of the ideas and beliefs that must be instilled in the child to adjust her to the social context in which she must live. If the state were not always there to guarantee that education be exercised in a social way, education would break down into an incoherent babble of conflicting fragments. One could not contradict more completely the basic end of all education. Education must ensure a sufficient community of ideas and beliefs, without which any society is impossible. To do that, it is necessary that education not be abandoned to the arbitrariness of private individuals.

Since education is an essentially social function, the state cannot be disinterested in it. Everything that pertains to education must be submitted to the state's influence. That is not to say that the state should monopolize all instruction. A certain margin should be left for individual initiative, because individuals innovate more readily than the state. But from the fact that it is in the public interest for the state to allow private schools to exist alongside public schools, it does not follow that the state must remain aloof from what is going on in them. The education given in those private schools must remain under state control. Only teachers certified by the state should be able to teach, in any school. There is no school which can claim the right to give an antisocial education.

We are not all in agreement on every point. The state cannot and should not establish the community of ideas and beliefs, but rather should maintain and consecrate those that exist. In spite of all of our differences of opinion, there are presently, at the basis of our civilization, a certain number of principles we all share (or at least that no one defies openly). These are: respect for reason, science, and ideas and beliefs supporting democratic morality. The role of the state is to outline these essential principles, to have them taught in schools, to make sure that no child is ignorant of them, and that everywhere they should be spoken of with respect.

Part 5. The power of education and the means of its influence

We have determined the goal of education, and we must now determine how and to what extent it is possible to achieve this end. This question has always been controversial. The solution often depends on how much one ascribes to nature or nurture. Education does not make a person out of nothing but rather is applied to predispositions that it finds already made. These predispositions are very strong and very difficult to destroy or transform. But, fortunately one of the characteristics of human beings is that our innate predispositions are very general and very vague. To say that innate characteristics are for the most part very general is to say that they are very malleable, very flexible, and they can take on quite different forms. There is a considerable distance between the vague potentialities which constitute us at our birth and the well-defined character that we must become in order to play a useful role in society. It is this distance that education has to make us travel. A vast field is thus open to its influence.

But by what means can education exert this influence? [*the sense of duty towards the moral authority of the teacher*]

Liberty and authority have sometimes been opposed, as if these two factors contradicted and limited each other. But this is a false opposition. In reality these two terms imply each other, rather than exclude each other. Liberty is the daughter of authority. For to be free is not to do as one pleases but rather to be master of oneself, to know how to act reasonably and to do one's duty. It is exactly to endow the child with this self-mastery that the teacher's authority should be employed. The authority of the teacher is only one aspect of the authority of duty and reason. The child should be trained to recognize it in the speech of the educator and to submit to it; it is only on this condition that she will later know how to find it again in her own conscience and to defer to it herself.

Questions for Contemplation and Discussion

1. Durkheim begins this book on education and sociology by defining education. Why is this an important first step? What is Durkheim's definition of education?
2. Explain the individual and plural function of education.
3. What is the "ideal human" of *your* society? Did your education inculcate physical, intellectual and moral states which prepared you to embody this ideal?
4. What are some particular physical, intellectual and moral states that your college education is inculcating in you to prepare you for your chosen career?
5. What does Durkheim think about the opposition between the individual and society? Does society tyrannize the individual? Is it possible to live "free" outside of society?
6. When Durkheim claims that society is a "moral personality," what does he mean?
7. What would Durkheim say about the movement to provide vouchers to parents to send their children to the schools of their choice? What if the effect was to diminish public education in favor of a multitude of private schools (some teaching the theory of evolution while others teach against the theory of evolution, for example)?
8. Where does Durkheim come down on the nature/nurture debate? What role does education play here?
9. Do you agree that "liberty is the daughter of authority"? Explain and defend Durkheim's argument, and then counter it.

Concepts

Education

Society

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2.9: Elementary Forms of Religious Life (1912)

"Religious representation of the world are collective representat ions that express collective realities."

NOTE ON SOURCE: This passage is from Durkheim's *Les Formes Elementaires de la Vie Religieuse: le systeme totemique en Australia*, published in 1912 in Paris by Alcan Press. It was first translated as *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* in 1915 by Joseph War Swain and published by the Free Press. It was retranslated in 1995 by Fields. The section here is a short form of the introductory chapter, entitled "The Object of the Research." It corresponds with pages 3-21 in the Carol Cosman translation published by Oxford in 2008 (recommended version).

Introduction – Why this is important and what to look for

Although Durkheim's 1912 book may appear to be about religion, it is actually much more than that. As the introduction to the book makes clear, Durkheim is interested in the very deepest elements of human mentality and society. When reading this introduction, pay attention to the claims Durkheim makes about the origins of human thought and the connections to his conception of people as inherently social beings. Durkheim is really seeking to present an entire new (sociological!) theory of knowledge, one that is rooted in people as social beings. He asks us to explore why we developed the categories of thought we did – e.g., what value was there in designating a "left" side versus a "right" side? or, in designating an eight-hour work session once every rotation of the sun, but only in five out of seven rotations? The Elementary Forms *is an attempt to contribute to what Durkheim saw as a new science, understanding society itself.*

The Elementary Forms of Religious Life (Introduction)

Part 1: The Sociological Study of Religion

In this book, we propose to study, the most primitive and the most simple religion known to us, to analyze and explain it. What makes a religious system simple? In the first place, it is found in societies whose social organization is simple. In the second place, we can study it without having to refer to anything borrowed from an earlier religion.

We shall try to describe all the elements of this system with the exactitude and fidelity of an anthropologist or a historian. But that is not all. Sociology sets for itself problems other than those faced by the anthropologist or historian. Like all positive science, our real object is us, us as we live now. We don't study old religions to discover its bizarre attributes, but because we think studying it will allow us to say something, to reveal something important, about the enduring aspects of our religious nature.

That proposition, that we study old religions to discover something about who we are today, will likely raise objections among some of you, for various reasons. Some might say we are using these older religions as a weapon against religion itself. One could argue that current religions, such as Christianity, rest on the same kinds of superstitions that these earlier religions appear to do. But that is not what we are saying here. To the sociologist, any human institution cannot survive for long if it is based on error or lies. The most barbarous or bizarre rituals, the strangest myths, respond to some human need, some aspect of life, individual or social. The reasons given by the believer to justify these myths and practices may be erroneous, but there are reasons for their existence. It is the job of science to discover these reasons.

After all, there are no false religions. All are true in their own fashion. All are responses, in different manners, to the human condition.

[Durkheim next discusses his choice of studying religion by studying the simplest religion possible. In this case, this will be the totemic religion followed by the aboriginal peoples of Australia. In Durkheim's time, several anthropologists had been doing fieldwork in Australia and had published rich descriptions of the practices and beliefs of these people. Although we now know that some of these descriptions were biased and deeply flawed, Durkheim takes great care to sift through the evidence to find reliable data. In the introduction, he defends his choice of object of study,]

There are several reasons to study religion in its simplest form. First, we can understand religions today only by following how religions developed over time. Whenever we wish to understand a human thing at a period in time, such as a religious belief, a moral regulation, a legal precepts, an aesthetic technique, an economic regime – we must start at the beginning, when it was most simple. It is very difficult to figure out what is fundamental in complex systems. There are simply too many variables! When

studying religion, it is hard to see what is in common to them all when we take as our object of study modern religions, because they are so different, so complex, and often include elements that were historically contingent.

It is very different when we look at inferior[1] societies. Because these societies show less individualization and more overall homogeneity, there are fewer variations to contend with. The group exhibits a level of intellectual and moral uniformity rare in modern society. Everything is common to everyone. People do the same things, in a particular manner, over and over again. Thus, "primitive" civilizations are our best cases for finding what is common to all, because they are simple. Not only do primitive religions allow us to separate out the constituent elements of religion, but they also help us explain it. Because the facts are simpler, the connections between the facts are more obvious. Like the physicist, who simplifies the laws of phenomena she studies by getting rid of secondary phenomena, we take as our object of study early simple religions.

Part 2. Theories of Knowledge

But our study is not only of interest as a study of religion. All religions convey ideas and phenomena that are more than merely religious. These ideas can furnish us with ways of understanding problems that we have so far only debated philosophically.

For a long time, we have known that the first systems people devised to represent the world and themselves arose from their religion. There is no religion which is not at the same time both a cosmology and a speculation about divinity. If philosophy and science in general developed out of religious thinking, it is because religion itself began as a way of knowing and thinking about the world.

[*Durkheim goes on to argue that religion has contributed to the formation of the way we think and the very categories we use to think about the world. What Aristotle called our "categories of understanding" – concepts of time, space, number, cause – all had their origins in early religion: This, indeed, is why Durkheim is interested in religion and why he wrote this book.]*

The general conclusion of this book which you are reading is that religion is a thing eminently social. Religious representations of the world are collective representations that express collective realities.

For example, we can only think of time by thinking of the ways we measure it and each of those measurements – minutes, hours, weeks, years – correspond to social arrangements. They are borrowed from social life. A calendar expresses the rhythm of collective activity at the same time that it functions to ensure its regularity. A similar thing is true of space. In order to arrange things spatially, we have to set some above, some below, some beneath, some above, some on the left, some on the right, etc. – all of these divisions arise out of social divisions. [*In Durkheim's words, these distinctions (up, down, left, right) come from different emotional values that people attribute to various spatial regions. In other words, the category of space is relational, and arises out of the relations within society. Different societies attribute different values to the arrangements and relations.*]

Thus, social organization has been the model of spatial organization, which is like a tracing of the former. There is no distinction between left and right in human nature – the distinction is in reality the product of religious (collective) representations.

[Here Durkheim is weighing in on an area of philosophical debate. Some have held that "categories of understanding" such as time and space are logically prior to our own experiences. They come ready-made to us, from who knows where. They are a priori. *Others hold that there are no such categories of understanding that exist outside of our experience. Individuals experience the world and come up with ways of describing it, and this is where our notions of time and space come from. Durkheim thinks both sides are missing something. Durkheim agrees with the latter group that categories of understanding emerge from experience, but he disagrees that they are the result of the experience of individuals. Categories originate in the social world. We would not have a sense of time or space if we were not social beings.]*

If, as we believe, these categories are essentially collective representations, they translate relations of the collective. They depend on the way this collective is constituted and organized, on its morphology, and its religious, moral, and economic institutions. Between these two types of representations is all the distance that separates the individual from the social, and you can no more derive the second from the first than society from the individual, the whole from a part, or the complex from the simple. Society is in reality its own thing. It has its own characteristics which are not found, or not found in the same form, in the entire rest of the universe.

Collective representations are the product of an immense cooperation that extends across time and space – an accumulation of generations of experience and knowledge. Each of us is an individual, yes, with our own private sensations and thoughts. But each of us is also part of society. Because we participate in society, we naturally go beyond our individual selves when we think and

when we act. Categories (of time, space, etc.) allow us to do this. In order to work, society needs some minimal level of logical conformity. We cannot easily slip out of these ways of understanding the world. They exert a pressure on us, a kind of moral necessity.

Questions for Contemplation and Discussion

1. Do you agree with Durkheim's suggestion that it is easier to study something in its simplest form? Is there such a thing as a "simple" religion? What does Durkheim mean by this?
2. What can we say about Durkheim's *method* for sociology?
3. Do you see a connection between our (human) social organization and our (individual) categories of thought? What is this connection, according to Durkheim?

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1. Durkheim uses the word inférieure, which can mean "inferior" but also "lower," in the sense of simpler, less complicated, and having come before. One can take issue with how Durkheim and others of his era characterized the non-European world, but one should also acknowledge how this characterization fits with his overall theory of the increasing division of labor (see Passages 2c-f). ↵

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2.10: EXTRA- Review of Année Sociologique (1898) article

NOTE ON SOURCE: This is taken from a review of one of the very first articles Durkheim published in his new sociology journal, *L'Ann é e Sociologique* . This anonymous review was published in English in the journal *Folklore* (volume 9, issues 3), in September of 1898.

Introduction – Why this is important and what to look for

In the academic journal, L'Année Sociologique, *Durkheim helped build the discipline of sociology by bringing together articles from different areas and disciplines that all in some way embraced a sociological perspective. This review is included here as a bonus reading because (1) it shows the early influence of Durkheim outside of France; (2) it covers a topic that was of interest to anthropologists, thereby demonstrating the disciplinary reach of Durkheim; and (3) it deals with a subject, the incest taboo, that is of interest to sociological examinations of the family, another institution that Durkheim spent much time analyzing.*

REVIEW of

L'ANNÉE SOCIOLOGIQUE, published under the direction of DURKHEIM, Professor of Sociology, University of Bourdieu. 1898.

DURKHEIM, with the collaboration of a number of scientific colleagues, has commenced the publication of an annual, of which this is the pioneer, with the object not merely of presenting from year to year a picture of the condition of literature properly called sociological, but of supplying a periodical account of the researches made in the special sciences in which sociology finds its materials, such as historical jurisprudence, various branches of folklore (including the history of religions), moral statistics, criminal anthropology, economics. Each department is supervised by a specialist; and the articles comprised in the volume are of two kinds. The larger part of the volume in critical analyses of books and scientific papers publish Midsummer, 1896, to Midsummer, I897. These are preceded by original matter, in the case of the volume before us by two articles, one by M. Durkheim himself on the prohibition of incest and its origin.

Durkheim's paper is of the greatest interest for students of folklore, especially at this moment, when the universal distribution of totemism is so strongly contested, when the origins of exogamy are under discussion, and the early forms of the family and the meaning of the clan-system are being so keenly examined. He derives the prohibition of sexual relations between near kindred from the clan-system, and finds its basis in totemism, which he assumes to be universal. Defining the clan as a group of individuals who consider themselves all akin one to another, but who recognize that kinship solely from the fact that they are the bearers of the same totem, he lays it down that we know of no clan which does not answer to this definition, and is not exogamous, and that all societies have themselves passed through this organization, or are sprung from others which have. Since incest consists in a sexual union between relatives of a prohibited degree it follows that exogamy is a prohibition of incest. But exogamy alone will not prevent the union of persons who are in fact near akin. In Australia this is effected by the combination of the class-system with the clan-system. Contrary to Morgan, M. Durkheim argues that the rise of the class-system is subsequent to the development of the clan. He assumes that each clan had its territory, and contends that the class name really indicates in word the clan of the person and the territory where he was born, that is to say, his paternity. It is difficult to explain the details without occupying more space than is at our disposal. It must suffice to say that the theory is an ingenious one, and if correct it solves a formidable difficulty. At the same time, it seems to raise others which require careful consideration. The author declares that the clan is uterine, but that there is no evidence (if we understand him aright) of any other family arrangement than that which subsists generally at present, namely, that the wife and children dwell with the husband (not he with them) and under his power. But if so, then there could be no clan-territory; and, in fact, M. Durkheim's hypothesis as to the rise of class-system is hardly conceivable, or at all events hardly probable, except as the concomitant of a change from a condition where the husband visited, or dwelt with, his wife among her to the present arrangement, whereby he takes her to dwell with him.

So far, however, we are not brought face to face with any explanation of exogamy as a rule, nor of the horror which the idea of incest inspires in all communities. But the way has been cleared. After an excellent criticism of rival theories, the author points out that exogamy is simply a particular instance of a religious institution found at the base of all primitive religions (and, indeed, in a sense, of all religions), the taboo. He points out that women are, in savage opinion, invested with a special religious character which holds the masculine population at a distance, not merely in what concerns sexual matters, but in all the details of life. This

interdiction is, of course, emphasized at certain periods; and M. Durkheim connects it with the horror with which blood, and especially the blood of the totem and totem-clan, is regarded. He contends that this horror was at first confined, so far as women were concerned, to those of clan, and resulted in exogamy, and that in course of time, when, as the consequence of exogamy, women of various clans became intermixed in residence, the horror and the taboo were extended to them all; but, because this was only a secondary effect, it was not complete, and the total separation of the sexes only extended to those of the same clan.

The importance of this theory will be seen at a glance. It offers a simple explanation of the recoil which all nations have experienced from what they regard as incest, while it is not open to the objections urged, and urged successfully, against the rival theories of Spencer, Maclennan, and Westermarck. At present, however, it is merely a theory; it depends upon the universality of totemism, and moreover demands careful examination in connection with rites of marriage and other customs. M. Durkheim does not concern himself with these. He goes on to argue that exogamy, thus originated, has evolved with the family. Beginning with the uterine clan, when paternity, having long been admitted as a fact, obtained legal recognition, and legal relationships were transferred from the mother's side exclusively to the father's, these sexual interdictions followed them. When totemism disappeared, and with it the clan-system, exogamy attached itself to the new types of the family which began to be constituted and which rested on other bases. It was accommodated to them, extending on the one hand to relations never contemplated by the unilateral clan-system, and on the other hand, becoming more circumscribed as the wider clan-relationships ceased to be recognized. Family life is dominated by the idea of duty. The domestic affections of parent and child, brother and sister, are tinged with respect incompatible with conjugal relationship. The very existence of the family rests on exogamy, understanding that term in a wide sense. Sexual relations, as we conceive them, are based upon pleasure, upon mutual attraction. They do not become permanent, the family, properly speaking, does not come into existence until the arrival of children. Sexual relations being thus founded in spontaneity, they are opposed radically to the ties of kinship. But this implies that they must first of all have been rejected from the moral atmosphere in which the family has its being. Not that there is anything in them which necessitated this broad separation: it must have been imposed upon them from without. In other words, the moral incompatibility, in the name of which we today prohibit incest, is itself a consequence of this prohibition, which therefore must be due to some other cause. This cause is the totality of beliefs and rites of which exogamy was the outcome — totemism. Once the prejudices relative to blood had led men to forbid all union between kindred, the sexual instinct obliged them to seek satisfaction outside the kindred group, and hence it speedily differentiated from the kin-sentiment. Two spheres were thus opened to human activity and sensibility. The one — the clan, the family — was and remained the theatre of duty, morality. The other, the external, was that of passion, which only took-on a moral character in the measure in which it affected domestic interests. In the meantime, and in consequence of its initial freedom from the idea of duty, it has enriched humanity with emotions and ideas that but for exogamy could never have existed. To it the imagination owes many of the developments of art and poetry, and many of the aspirations which we count among the most precious inheritances of civilization.

We have not presumed to criticize this very stimulating essay; considerations of time and space have limited us to a bare outline of its main thesis. It should be read and studied, together with the analysis and criticisms, by the same author later in the volume, of the recent works of Professor Kohler, Herr Grosse, and others. The criticisms of the former we can only accept with reserve, for we believe there is more to be said on behalf of an early prevalence of group-marriage than M. Durkheim admits. In any case, however, he has effected a masterly presentment of his view, and it deserves respectful consideration.

For anthropologists the whole volume is full of interest. We wish well to the new venture; and we gladly hail the rise of a French critical and constructive school of enquirers into savage custom.

Questions for Contemplation and Discussion

1. What do you understand of Durkheim's reception by those outside of France? How is he characterized here? What is he known for?
2. What is sociological about Durkheim's approach to understanding the incest taboo?

Concepts

Taboo

Totemism

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2.11: EXTRA- Review of Suicide by Havelock Ellis

NOTE ON SOURCE: This is taken from a contemporary review of *Suicide* , by the well-known and controversial sexuality studies scholar, Havelock Ellis. It was published in the journal *Mind* (volume 7, issue 26) in April of 1898.

Introduction – Why this is important and what to look for

Ellis' review is worthwhile to read because it demonstrates how Durkheim's sociological analysis was critically received by his contemporaries. Analyzing suicide as a social fact was quite a novel proposition, and Ellis is not wholly convinced of its value, as this review makes clear.

REVIEW

There is room for a new study of suicide. Morselli's book, which must still be regarded as the most comprehensive and on the whole the most scientific manual on the subject, is now nearly twenty years old, and is not only out of date but disfigured by many hasty generalizations-which more recent writers have shown to be unfounded. It can scarcely be said, however, that Professor Durkheim has replaced Morselli's manual. Although, with the assistance of the French Minister of Justice and old pupils of his own, he has prepared new maps and summarized the unpublished data of 26,000 suicides, the Bordeaux professor has for the most part been content to argue on old data, and has not brought his statistics up to date, even when the official publications of various countries would easily have enabled him to do so. Moreover, it can scarcely be said that the author takes any special interest in his subject except in so far as it expresses tendencies in the social organism, and consequently various aspects of suicide are passed over lightly or altogether ignored.

It is fairly clear, however, that Prof. Durkheim himself would not wish his book to be regarded as a complete manual of the subject. By calling it "a sociological study" he admits the bias which affects it throughout. The book is, indeed, not so much a study of suicide as a study of sociological method and, more especially, an illustration of the author's philosophy of society.

In the Preface this special object of the book is frankly set forth, and it may be briefly recapitulated for those who are not acquainted with the author's previous works. Sociology, he asserts, must be made something more than a mere form of literary philosophy; it must interrogate the auxiliary studies of history, ethnography and statistics; it must ascertain laws. The special value of the study of suicide is that it enables us easily to ascertain such laws, and so to demonstrate better than by mere argument the possibility of sociology. It enables us, he thinks, to establish a certain number of propositions concerning marriage, widowhood, the family, religion, etc., which teach what the ordinary theories of moralists are unable to teach; it even gives us some indications concerning "the causes of the general discomfort from which European societies are at present suffering, and concerning the remedies which may mitigate them." Further, it is not only the value of sociology in general, but more especially the value of Professor Durkheim's sociology, which this study is to affirm. And for Professor Durkheim society is strictly an organism; "the individual is dominated by a moral reality which goes beyond him: the collective reality." Thus, he regards sociology as dealing with "realities as definite and as resistant as those the psychologist or the biologist deals with." As he elsewhere (p. 350) states it, "individuals by uniting form a psychic being of a new species, and which consequently possesses its own manner of thinking and feeling." That statement is the essence of Professor Durkheim's sociological doctrine.

The volume consists of an introduction, in which suicide is defined and its relationship to sociology explained, and of three books. Book I deals critically with the alleged extra-social factors of suicide, i.e., with psychopathic conditions, heredity, cosmic influences and imitation. Chapter 2 deals with the question of race and heredity as a, factor of suicide. The author here subjects to severe criticism the arguments of Morselli, Wagner and Oettingen that every race has its own suicide-rate, and gives reasons in support of his own contention that if, for instance, the Germans commit suicide oftener than other peoples, the reason is to be found not in race but in civilization.

Having thus attempted to put aside, or minimize, the extra-social factors of suicide, in Book 2 Professor Durkheim proceeds to discuss the social causes and the sociological types of suicide. The three main sociological types of suicide he terms egoistic, altruistic and anomic.

By egoistic suicide is meant that particular type of suicide which is the result of extreme individualism, and the chapters devoted to it are mainly a discussion of the influence of religion, education, the family, etc., in which it is shown that all the facts indicate that every loosening of social or domestic bonds increases the tendency to suicide. On the whole the author concludes that suicide varies in inverse ratio with the degree of integration of religious, domestic and political society.

Altruistic suicide-a type chiefly prevalent in primitive societies, and of which the suttee may be taken as an example-is more briefly treated. It is the characteristic of altruistic suicide to be, regarded not as a right but as a duty, and its significance at the present day is small.

A more important form of suicide is that which the author terms *anomic*, by which he means the suicides produced by any sudden social shock or disturbance, such as that due to economic disasters. Men commit egoistic suicide because they see no further reason for living, altruistic suicide because the reason for living seems to them to lie outside life itself, anomic suicide because they are suffering from a disturbance of their activity.

Then the author turns to another form of suicide with which he had already dealt to some extent under the head of egoistic suicide (thus revealing a weakness in his classification)-domestic suicides. He here deals with the suicides due to divorce, and further develops in detail the remarkable and interesting point already brought out, that marriage is a greater protection to men than to women. Where divorce does not exist, or where it has only lately been established, women contribute in larger proportion to the suicides of the married than to those of the celibate; the more prevalent divorce becomes, the more favorable marriage is for women. The development of divorce involves an improvement in the moral situation of women, and it is the divorced man who is more exposed to suicide:

> "We thus reach a conclusion far removed from the current idea regarding the part played by marriage. It is regarded as an institution established for the benefit of the wife, in order to protect her weakness against masculine caprices. In reality, whatever may have been the historic causes which led man to impose this restriction on himself, it is he who has profited by it. The liberty which he has thus renounced could only have been a source of torment to him. Woman had not the same reasons for abandoning it, and in this respect, we may say that, in submitting to the same rule, it is she who has made a sacrifice" (p. 311).

In Book 3, the author gathers together his arguments, further expounds his general conception of society as a group of collective tendencies with an existence of its own as real as the cosmic forces, discusses the relation of suicide to criminality, and presents the practical consequences of his study. Professor Durkheim has no important suggestion to make in aid of the prevention of suicide; he relies mainly on his favorite panacea of co-operative associations of workers, professional groups or corporations developed on a new basis and made a definite and recognized organ of daily life. On the whole this is a work which every subsequent writer on suicide must seriously reckon with, while at the same time it confirms Professor Durkheim's position as an original and systematic investigator into social problems.

Questions for Contemplation and Discussion

1. According to Ellis, what is Durkheim's conception of society?
2. In the final paragraph, Ellis claims that Durkheim doesn't provide any "important suggestions" to aid in preventing suicide, other than his "favorite panacea." What is this favorite panacea? How would this prevent suicide?
3. What can we learn about the reception of Durkheim's ideas at the time of his writing?

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2.12: Concepts/Dictionary

Concepts from Durkheim

Use the following pages to create your own mini-dictionary, with page/line numbers for easy reference. You may want to save this as a separate document for more detailed note-taking and commentary.

Concept	Page/Line Numbers	Definition/Notes
Anomic Division of Labor		
Anomic		
Collective Conscience		
Division of Labor		
Education		
Forced Division of Labor		
Mechanical Solidarity (and MS Societies)		

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

3: Weber

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3.5: The Development of Commerce
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3.7: The Evolution of the Capitalistic Spirit
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3.9: Bureaucracy
3.10: CSP
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3.1: Biography of Weber

MAX WEBER (1864-1920)

"Die bange Nacht is nun herum
wir reiten still, wir reiten stumm
wir reiten ins Verderben" – Herwegh, Reiterlied[1]

NOTE ON SOURCES: We are fortunate to have a comprehensive biography of Max Weber written by his wife, Marianne, first published six years after his death, in 1926. For decades, this was the primary source of information about Weber's life. Recently, however, our knowledge in this area has been greatly supplemented by Joachim Radkau's Max Weber: A Biography, published in English in 2009. Radkau's sympathetic portrait nevertheless includes several less flattering details of Weber's personality and character, not included in his wife's biography. For more on Weber's intellectual development, and less about his personal life, read Fritz Ringer's Max Weber: An Intellectual Biography, published in 2004.

Overview

Max, full name Maximilian Karl Emil, Weber was born in Erfurt, a bustling commercial city in what is now central Germany, on April 21, 1864. Weber spent his life in a rapidly industrializing and increasing militaristic Germany, living through the devastations of the first World War, and witnessing the rise of fascism during the early years of the Weimar Republic. Like many writers and thinkers of his day, he was interested in how this new industrial society came to be. His most famous work, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, was a partial answer to that question. Weber would also come to create a particular approach to sociological inquiry, more focused on interpretation and less focused on policy proposals than Durkheim's.

Social Background/Family

Weber was the first of eight children, born to a wealthy statesman (Max Weber, Sr.) and his somewhat devout wife Helene (Fallenstein). The Webers had been a prosperous family for many generations, making their money in the linen trade. Max grew up in bourgeois comfort, in a home devoted to politics and intellectual pursuits. In fact, Weber's younger brother, Alfred, would also become a sociologist.

Education and Training

In 1882, Max earned his high school diploma and, according to his wife's biography, "also helped his friends to cheat their way through." His teachers, she claimed expressed some doubts about his moral maturity, finding him a troublesome if intelligent student. At age 18, he enrolled at the University of Heidelberg, where he followed in his father's footsteps by studying law. He also took up fencing at his father's fraternity house. By all accounts he led an active social life in college, visiting other bourgeois families, drinking, fencing, and even dueling (from which he suffered a distinctive scar on his face for the rest of his life). Marianne tells us he had no talent for saving money and would often ask for increases to his allowance.

In his second year, he took time off to serve in the military, but found military life difficult. Despite becoming a squad leader, he complained in a letter home that "the military existence is gradually getting too stupid and loathsome, especially since in recent weeks it has left no room whatsoever for anything else." He liked the military much more after entering into officer's training, and he left the following year with admiration of the "machine" and a greater sense of patriotism.

He returned to university and eventually earned a law degree in 1889, with a dissertation on the history of trading companies in the Middle Ages. For seven years he lived in the family home, studying further and teaching classes when he could. He did not leave home until his marriage in 1893, to his cousin Marianne Schnitger. During this time, Marianne tells us, he felt oppressed by his father, who ran his house with strong authority, requiring obedience of his children and his wife, who suffered a great deal. Max, she says, "was reserved and never asked relieved himself by a frank discussion of the problems. He repressed everything." He urgently wanted to leave.

When his cousin came to visit, moving from the country to the city, they quickly became attached. Here is how Marianne tells the story of their engagement:

> The seriousness of their relationship was lightened by their sparkling humor and impish banter. The engagement was still supposed to be kept secret, but as Weber remarked, "Every jackass here gives me a meaningful look and asks me whether something has happened to me. I would never have thought I was beaming so."

Career

In 1894, the newly married couple moved to Freiburg, where Weber was appointed Professor of Economics. In 1896, they moved to the Heidelberg, where Weber continued as an Economics Professor. He spent his time researching and writing on economics and legal history. Max and Marianne had no children. Instead, they maintained a vibrant social circle of intellectuals.

In 1897, Max's father died. Max and his father had quarreled two months before, particularly about his father's treatment of his mother, and every biographer points out that the death hit Max very hard. He became depressed and suffered insomnia. Eventually, he had to leave teaching altogether to spend some time in recovery. He made one brief foray back into teaching in 1902 but left again in 1903 and would not return to an official posting until 1919, one year before his death. During that time, he wrote much that would be published after his death, on matters sociological and political.

He spent much of 1904 touring the United States, notes and letters of which letters have recently been published.[2] Given the importance of Benjamin Franklin to his own understanding of the development of the spirit of capitalism, visiting the United States was an important chapter in his life. Weber took many notes on what he witnessed there. When visiting upstate New York, he observed,

> My trip to Buffalo yesterday was very pleasant, even though all the walking around along lengthy streets was fairly strenuous. Despite the magnificent buildings, the shopping streets as a whole look no more inviting than those in New York: Everything is obscured with a black sooty haze, windows are sometimes dirty- in short, new and yet already falling into disrepair, somewhat like our own suburbs., By contrast, the residential district is the world of elegance, nothing but tree-lined green streets with charming wood-frame houses that look as if someone had just taken them out of the toy box and placed them on the velvety green lawn. They are the only completely new and original architecture that I've seen here so far, and aesthetically far more satisfying than the imposing stone palaces in New York (September 9th).

In contrast to this pleasant scene, Weber was struck by the dirty sootiness of Chicago, the fifth largest city in the world at the time,

> Chicago is one of the most unbelievable cities. In the city among the skyscrapers, the condition of the streets is utterly hair-raising. Soft coal is burned there. When the hot dry wind off the wastelands to the southwest blows through the streets, and especially when the dark yellow sunsets, the city looks fantastic…. Everything is mist and think haze, and the whole lake is covered by a purple pall of smoke…It is an endless human desert….[In the stockyards], for as far as one can see from the Armour firm's clock tower there is nothing but herds of cattle, lowing, bleating, endless filth. But on the horizon, all around – for the city continues for miles and miles until it melts into the multitude of the suburbs – there are churches and chapels, grain elevators, smoking chimneys, and houses of every size (September 19th).

In 1907, he received an inheritance that allowed him to put off paid employment. He and Marianne lived well and continued to host intellectual parties and discussions. They experimented (disastrously says Radkau) with an open marriage. In 1909 Weber helped found the German Sociological Association, serving as its first treasurer. In 1912, he tried to organize a leftist political party, but was ultimately unsuccessful. When World War I began, in 1914, Weber volunteered and was appointed as a reserve officer. Weber would eventually become a strong critic of Germany's nationalist expansionism and called for the expansion of suffrage. He was one of the advisers to the committee that drafted the Weimar Constitution. He unsuccessfully ran for a seat in parliament. It was at this time that he returned to the university, where he gave a famous lecture criticizing opportunistic politicians. The lectures from his last year of life were written down and have circulated as important Weberian texts for years. At the time of his death, he was working on what he considered his masterwork, *Economy and Society*. Marianne would continue the work and publish it as Max's own in 1922. Marianne continued to work his notes and half-finished manuscripts into books and publish them for the next several years.

His Work

In the early years, Weber wrote mostly on legal history and economics. He was very productive during this time and published his dissertation on trading companies in the middle ages in 1889, a book on Roman agrarian history in 1891, a book on farm labor in

Eastern Germany in 1892, a book on the stock exchange in 1894, and a book on the state and economic policy in 1895. After his father's death, it was several years before he could work again. He wrote *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, first published as an essay in 1904. This work marks his turn to more sociological writing. Although he continued to write and lecture in these later years, almost everything was left unfinished at his death. Marianne Weber did much to compile and publish this later work, including his famous *Economy and Society* (1922) and *General Economic History* (1924). The English-speaking world knows Weber primarily through translation, and most of these translations were completed in the 1940s and 1950s, many by Talcott Parsons, the great mid-century American sociologist working out of Harvard University.

Questions

1. How does Weber's background and career compare to that of Durkheim, his near contemporary? To Marx?
2. Weber was a keen observer. How is this evidence in the brief extracts from his 1904 visit to the United States?

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1. This is a song Weber was known to sing near the end of his life, during the tumultuous Weimar years. It can be translated as, "The anxious night is over now; we are riding quietly, we are riding silently, we are riding to perdition." (Marianne Weber, Max Weber, Wiley and Sons (1975 translation)). ↵
2. See Scaff's Max Weber in America (2011). ↵

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3.2: Methodological Foundations of Sociology (1921)

"To explain, we must first understand."

NOTE ON SOURCE: This passage is from the posthumous 1921 collection of essays, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, first translated into English by Talcott Parsons in 1947 as *The Theory of Social and Economic Organizations*. It was later translated by Eric Mathews and published, along with other pieces on sociological method, as "The Nature of Social Action" in Runciman's *Weber: Selections in Translation*(1978). The passage here is a loose translation of the original German, condensed for easier reading. A more exact and complete translation can be found in Runciman.

Introduction – Why this is important and what to look for

Weber belonged to the generation, along with Durkheim, that championed and defined the new discipline of sociology. It is thus useful to compare Weber's definitions of sociology with Durkheim's. Although they share a general interest in understanding and analyzing "society,", the way they set up doing so is quite different. For Weber, an empathetic understanding of the meanings human actors bring to their interactions with one another was key, as the following passage explains.

Methodological Foundations of Sociology (in 11 Points)

Sociology, in the sense we adopt here, is a science that interprets the meaning of social action and through that interpretation clarifies the causal procedures and effects of those actions. Actions here are those acts, whether active, refraining from action, or allowing actions to take place, when and only when done with subjective intent. They are "social" actions when they involve the subjective intentions relative to another person's actions and when that social relation orients the action.

Point 1. Meanings are Empirically Situated

The meaning may either refer to the meaning of a particular individual on a particular occasion or as an average meaning in a given set of cases or even a typical meaning attributed in the abstract (e.g., "capitalists replace workers with machinery with the intention of increasing profits"). It *does not* signify that the intended meaning is true or correct. Herein lies the difference between the empirical sciences of sociology (and history) and disciplines such as jurisprudence, logic, ethics, or aesthetics that seek the "correct" rule or meaning from their objects of study.

Point 2. We cannot always find the intentions of the actors; the line between intentional and reactive behavior is blurred

There is not a sharp line between meaningful action and reactive action, actions for which actors do not intend a meaning. A great deal of interesting and important behavior for the sociologist to study, especially when we talk about traditional actions, lies between intentional and reactive action. In some cases, such as mystical experiences, we cannot hope to understand the meanings of the action because the actors do not understand the actions themselves. It is often necessary to separate out those aspects which can be understood from those elements which cannot.

Point 3. The goal of interpretation is to generate evidence about the world, and we can do this both rationally and empathetically

The goal of all our interpretations is to find evidence. This evidence can take a rational or an empathetic form. Rational evidence is obtained in the case of actions in which the intended meanings can be intellectually understood wholly and clearly. Empathetic evidence is obtained when actions and their attendant feelings and lived experience are completely relived in the sociological imagination. For the first, every interpretation of a rationally directed purposive action, is quite clearly evidence.

we can say with some assurance that introduction of machinery operates to increase the profits of capitalists.

But even of the second, we can learn almost as much about the world from this empathetic understanding. For example, we can try to relive empathetically actions of extreme religious devotion, even as they go against our own beliefs. We can gain some understanding of the intended meanings through empathy, allowing for the influence of various emotions (anxiety, anger, ambition, envy, jealousy, love, pride, lust, etc.) on the course of the action and the means used to perform the action. It is even possible to

understand many irrational and emotional actions as deviations from pure types of action that would happen if everything proceeded in a rationally purposive way.

For example, capitalists in a panic when the stock market crashes may sell their machinery even though such may reduce their profits in the long run.

Point 4. Meaningless actions are still important insofar they impact social actions

Operations and actions which are meaningless must still be taken into account if they cause or are caused by, promote or place obstacles in the way of, social actions. Even inanimate objects, such as machines, can have meanings related to their use by humans in social interactions. The flooding of a river may be a natural occurrence, but the way humans respond (for example, by moving away from areas likely to flood) is an important object of sociological study. Or take the way we deal with death, and entire cycle of life, from infancy to old age. In all cases, the sociologists; task is to interpret the meanings humans give to their actions and by doing so to understand the actions themselves.

Point 5. Sociological understanding is explanatory

Understanding can mean two things. In the first, direct understanding, we comprehend the meaning an actor gives. For example, we understand an outburst of anger, seeing evidence of it in a red face or exclamation. We can directly understand the action of aiming a gun. But understanding can be more than direct; it can be explanatory. We understand something aiming a gun not merely directly but also more deeply in terms of motive, if we know other facts about why the person is aiming the gun. If he has been ordered to do so in battle, for example, that is a rational motive; on the other hand, if he is aiming at someone out of fear, this is an irrational motive. To understand sociologically means to grasp the complex of meanings surrounding the specific observed action.

Point 6. Sociological understanding is hypothetical

The goal of every interpretation is the creation of evident facts about the world.

For example, in times of panic, capitalists often take actions that harm their profitability in the long run; in normal times, however, they seek to increase profits, and one way they may do this is by replacing workers with machinery.

But all of our interpretations are *hypotheses* about the world. We cannot know for sure if our interpretation is correct. As with all hypotheses, it is crucial to have some way of checking our interpretation. The best way to do this would be by experiment, using the scientific method. Statistical methods can give some approximate results, but only in cases that are measurable in which numerical relationships are possible to establish. Apart from these methods, then, the best option is to compare as many events as possible, keeping as many things similar as possible and investigating one particular point, motive or cause.

Point 7. Motives of actions are crucial to sociological interpretation because they are related to causality

A motive is a set of meanings which prompts the actor to act in a certain way (either from her perspective, or the sociological observer's perspective). To give a correct causal interpretation of a particular act is to see the action and the motive for the action as related to each other in a way whose meaning can be understood. Sociological laws only exist where statistical generalization fit our interpretation of the intended meaning of a social action. Sociology proceeds by constructing models of intelligible action which apply to real-world situations. Note the difference between meaningless and meaningful (hence, sociological) statistics. Death rates, or the output of machinery are examples of the former. Crime rates and occupational distributions are examples of the latter.

Point 8. Meaningless actions are not unimportant, but they are not sociological facts

Certain facts of life, *such as birth and death or the flooding of a river*, do not count as sociological because they lack the meaningfulness derived from motives described above. This does not mean they are less important, however. But they do operate in an area distinct from that of meaningful social action. They are conditions of action, or obstacles to action, or promoters of action, but not social actions themselves.

Point 9. Individuals, and individuals alone, are the intelligible performers of meaningful actions

Action for our purposes must refer only to the behavior of one or more individuals. Other disciplines may refer to states or whole societies as individual cases and actors, but from the standpoint of sociological understanding of the meaning of actions we must see these systems as the outcomes of interactions between individuals. For the sociologist, individual human beings are the only intelligible performers of meaningful actions. When a sociologist does speak of something like "the state" or "the family" or any other collectivity, she means a structured outcome of the social actions of individuals, either in actual reality or ideally constructed.

This way of proceeding is quite different from the "organic sociology" proposed by others. In this view, the sociologist is like a natural scientist who examines individuals as so many cells in the body of society. The methods of sociology we present here are quite different. The sociologist does not work like a biologist, who observes organisms at the cellular level. A biologist may observe cells and make inferences about the way they operate in functional terms (*e.g. the spleen filters blood)*, but the biologist cannot interpret the action of the cells involved in the spleen. In contrast, the sociologist can understand the behavior of the individuals involved in a way that simply cannot be done by natural scientists. This interpretation comes with a cost, however. Our interpretations of the social actions of individuals are by nature more hypothetical and partial than those of direct observation of action/function. But this is exactly what sets sociology apart from the natural sciences.

Point 10. Sociology is distinct from psychology

Sociological laws are but theories generated by interpretative sociology. They are observationally verified statements of the likelihood of an expectation of a certain outcome from a particular social action. Sociological laws are most intelligible when the outcome results from a rational pursuit of a clear goal and when the means-end context is clear.

e.g., *capitalists are constantly seeking to replace workers with machinery to enable higher profits.*

Psychology would add nothing to our sociological interpretation here. When a capitalist deliberates in a rational way whether his profits would increase by replacing workers with machinery, thinking rationally in terms of likely consequences of this action, and comes to the conclusion that, yes, he thinks he will make more money this way, then there is nothing that 'psychology' will add to our understanding. Now, when the sociologist attempts to explain *irrational* elements in action (e.g., the panicked capitalist who sells off his machinery during an economic crisis), she can learn a thing or two from psychology, based on its keener understanding of such irrational elements.

Point 11. Sociology is distinct from the discipline of history

The sociologist seeks to formulate general statements about what happens. This is in contrast with historians, who seek to provide a causal analysis of a specific historic event.

We sociologists may study the rise of capitalism to learn more about how cultural beliefs affect the adoption of new practices, whereas a historian is interested in knowing about these particular *early adopters of capitalism.*

There are pros and cons to this approach. As with any generalizing science, the abstract nature of the concepts of sociology means that there is relatively less content here than in historical analyses. In return, sociology offers greater conceptual clarity. Sociology abstracts from reality. She does this often by creating "ideal types", stripped of their historical particularities.

Questions for Contemplation and Discussion

1. How does Weber's method for doing sociology (social action) differ from Durkheim's emphasis on social facts?
2. In point six, how would you go about devising an experiment using the scientific method to test the interpretation that capitalists' behavior becomes more irrational during times of stock market volatility? Why is it nearly impossible for sociologists to conduct such experiments? Given the difficulties of using experiments, how would you arrange a comparative case study of capitalist actions during panics?
3. In point seven, what makes crime rates sociological, where death rates are "meaningless statistics'?
4. In point nine, compare and contrast "organic sociology" with Weber's interpretative sociology
5. Explain how sociology is distinct from psychology and history. Durkheim, too, compared sociology with these disciplines. How do the distinctions drawn by Weber and Durkheim compare?

Concepts

Sociology

Social Action

Ideal Type

Verstehen

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3.3: PESOC, part 1

The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, Part 1

"Time is money." – Benjamin Franklin

NOTE ON SOURCE: These passages are from Weber's most known and influential work, first published in German in 1905 as *Die protestantische Ethik und der Geist des Kapitalismus*. It was first translated into English by the sociologist Talcott Parsons and published in 1930 as *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* by Allen and Unwin. Parsons' translation was reprinted in 1958 by Scribner's. This translation is probably the one most English-speaking sociologists have read. In 2002, Penguin published a new translation by Baehr and Wells, a translation that offered a *shell as hard as steel* in place of Parsons' well-known *Iron Cage*. Although this translations is more literal, your selection below uses the more widely-known phrasing of Parsons. Otherwise, readers will find much that is different from Parsons translation, which tends to be somewhat creative at times.

Introduction – Why this is important and what to look for

In this book, Weber offers a culturalist (or idealist) interpretation of history, counter to the historical materialist approach taken by Marx. In an ingenious argument, he demonstrates how particular beliefs (in this case, beliefs associated with some strains of the Protestant religion) led to particular kinds of conduct (the "work ethic" and disposition to save and invest rather than spend) which eventually helped produce capitalism as we know it today. This is not a book about *religion, but rather a book that uses religion and religious ideas as an example of how change happens, through a chain of unintended consequences. It is also a book about people as* agents, *bearing culture and ideas with them into new settings and circumstances. The entire book is less than 100 pages (not including footnotes). What you have here is a much-abridged form of the first of two parts.*

Part 1: The Problem

Chapter 1. Religious Belief and Social Layering

A look at the occupational statistics quickly shows us that many business owners and capitalists are Protestant rather than Catholic. This is also true for more higher skilled workers in industry. While it is true that this may be for historical reasons, as more industries developed in regions in Europe that were Protestant, that merely begs the question. We could ask, why was it that areas that saw industrial development were also the same areas in which Protestantism took hold?

Once we look at details of the Protestant reformation movement, we also note that it was not every variant of Protestantism that seemed to have a connection to habits and practices conducive to industrial development. Calvinism, for example, seems to be more strongly correlated with these habits and practices.

Weber refers to these habits and practices as "the spirit of capitalism." We could consider these the essential qualities that arose out of particular beliefs (more on this below) and that supported the growth of industry. In particular, in order to have a system dependent upon investment for future gain, you needed to have people willing to save and invest, rather than spend and consume. This is really what defines the spirit of capitalism, for Weber.

This spirit of hard work, of progress, or whatever else we want to call it, which we are linking to Protestantism and its particular beliefs, should not be understood as a joy of living or desire for progress. These early Calvinists had little interest in either. If we are going to trace back the cause, we have to look more deeply, at the religious beliefs themselves, and see what it was that induced these early industrialists to work hard and invest their capital.

Chapter 2. The "Spirit" of Capitalism

"Time is money." That is the spirit of capitalism. We hear it in the aphorisms of Benjamin Franklin. It is very different from the case of Jacob Fugger, the early wealthy industrialist of Germany, who, when asked why he didn't retire, as he had enough money and then some, replied that he could always make even more. In the case of Fugger, working to make more money was about enrichment; in the case of Franklin, it is a moral duty. This is what we mean by "spirit of capitalism." Or, to be clear, modern capitalism, which exists in America and Europe. Capitalism has existed elsewhere, in China, India, Babylon, and at other times, in Rome and in the Middle Ages, but never with this moral maxim to work hard for the sake of working hard.

This has nothing at all do with enjoyment or wanting to be able to buy things with the money you make. The highest good of this Protestant work ethic is to earn more and more money. One works to make more money, not to enjoy it. Acquisition of money becomes the ultimate purpose of life.

How did this come to be? Where did this compulsion come from? Weber goes back to the example of Benjamin Franklin, whose strict Calvinist father drummed into him the idea that hard work was virtuous, not for the making of money, but for itself. Thus, the seeking of gain was, at least at the start, connected to certain religious ideas.

A way of life suited to the development of capitalism had to begin somewhere, not just for one person alone but for a community of people. This origin is what needs explaining. The fact that in America, New England developed more industry than the South even though the South was settled by would-be capitalists and New England by religious persons is the opposite of what materialist thinkers propose.

that ideas follow circumstances rather than circumstances following ideas.

The origin and history of ideas is much more complex than those who theorize that a "superstructure" is built on a pre-existing material base. In reality, the spirit of capitalism had to fight its way to acceptance against great hostility.

For years, in the places which would see the birth of Protestant ideas, greed and acquisitiveness were frowned upon. That a compulsion to make and amass money could be good, that it could be moral, *was unheard of. So, what we need to understand is how activity that could scarcely be tolerated could turn into a "calling" or moral duty in the sense used by Benjamin Franklin. What was the background of ideas underlying activities directed toward making profit as an ethical obligation? Whence the notion that the entrepreneur is moral not in spite of his money-making but because of it? For that, we have to go deep into the Protestant mindset*.

Chapter 3. Understanding Luther's Conception of Beruf (Calling)

A note on the German word "*Beruf*." *Der Beruf* means "job, profession, or occupation, but in a way that is difficult to translate into English. The verb from which it is derived, *berufen*, literally means to be summoned, appointed or called, which is why it so frequently translated as "calling" in English. In the German, however, it does not carry the same religious connotation as "calling" does in English. Perhaps a better translation would be "vocation" (which also carries with it a meaning of being called and can be read either with a religious or non-religious meaning, depending on context). The translation here will sometimes use any one of these terms, as appropriate.

In the German word *beruf* but even more in the English "calling" there can be a religious sense, a suggestion of a task set by God. In neither the Catholic nor Classical culture do we find a similar sense, a sense which is common to all Protestant peoples. Like the word itself the idea is new and comes out of the Protestant reformation, from German translations that were made during this period. The concept of the calling was what was used to differentiate Protestants from Catholics. Rather than monastic ascetism, the way to live acceptably to God was by fulfilling one's worldly obligations. This was the notion of the calling or vocation. In contrast, Luther saw withdrawing from the world, in monastic isolation, as a selfish turning away from one's obligations. God summons everyone to his or her appointed task. Every vocation has the same worth in the sight of God. This meant that as a consequence of the Protestant Reformation was, the moral emphasis on worldly labor and the religious approval of such increased.

Weber examines Paradise Lost, *by Milton, and finds an accord between the tenor of the poem and the Puritan's attention to work in the world. Weber disagrees that we can trace this to "national" character. More often than not, pinning something on national character is just another way of saying one doesn't know why there are these differences. In any case, Puritans like Milton were vastly different from Royalist Catholics, so the difference can not lie in Milton's Englishness*

Religious influence played the largest part in creating the differences of which we are aware today. Since that is the case, we start our investigation of the relationship between the Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism in those religious differences, in the works of Calvin, Calvinism, and the other Puritan denominations. For these groups, the soul's salvation was the center of their life and work. Their ethics and practices were all based on that alone and were the consequences of purely religious motives. And so, we must also admit that the cultural consequences of the Protestant Reformation were actually unforeseen and unintended by those early Reformers.

This study is a contribution to the understanding of the way in which ideas become effective forces in history. We will try to clarify the part religious forces played in forming our specifically worldly modern culture. At the same time, we are not saying that the spirit of capitalism could *only* have arisen as a result of the Reformation. Instead, we want to know whether and to what extent religious forces have taken part in the growth and expansion of that spirit over the world. What concrete aspects of our current

capitalistic culture can be traced back to these religious ideas? We will look for correlations between particular religious beliefs and the practical ethics that follow from these beliefs. We will try to clarify the means and direction in which religious movements and ideas have influenced the development of material culture.

Questions

1. What is the importance here of Ben Franklin's aphorism, "time is money"? What does Ben Franklin represent for Max Weber?
2. Explain how Weber's approach to explaining the development of capitalism differs from Marx and the materialist explanation?
3. Why do *you* think Puritans developed a strong work ethic? Do you think this work ethic is specific to Protestants? Why/why not?
4. What is the connection between the Protestant Work Ethic and "greed"? What does the example of Jakob Fugger tell us?
5. Diagram Weber's argument for the development of today's capitalism and its material culture.

Concepts

Protestant Ethic

Spirit of Capitalism

Beruf(Calling; Vocation)

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3.4: PESOC, part 2

The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, Part 2

"Am I one of the Elect?"

NOTE ON SOURCE: These passages are from Weber's most known and influential work, first published in German in 1905 as *Die protestantische Ethik und der Geist des Kapitalismus*. It was first translated into English by the sociologist Talcott Parsons and published in 1930 as *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* by Allen and Unwin. Parsons' translation was reprinted in 1958 by Scribner's. This translation is probably the one most English-speaking sociologists have read. In 2002, Penguin published a new translation by Baehr and Wells, a translation that offered a *shell as hard as steel* in place of Parsons' well-known *Iron Cage*. Although this translation is more literal, your selection below uses the more widely-known phrasing of Parsons. Otherwise, readers will find much that is different from Parsons translation, which tends to be somewhat creative at times.

Introduction – Why this is important and what to look for

In part two of The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, *Weber traces the particular religious ideas that he argued gave way to the practices and behaviors he called the spirit, or essence, of capitalism (hard work, saving rather than spending, sobriety). He then goes forward, tracing the often unintended and unwanted consequences of the spread of these beliefs and practices, especially once the underlying religious beliefs fell away. This leads him to one of the gloomiest forecasts for modern society by any of the classical theorists.*

Part 2: The Vocational Ethic of the Ascetic Branches of Protestantism

Chapter 4. The Religious Foundations of Worldly Ascetism

A note on the word "ascetic" (*asketisch*in German). The word has come to mean living rigorously in self-denial, without luxuries or comfort. In the Middle Ages in Europe, there were a fair number of priests and monks who practiced ascetism as a way of living righteously, so the term carries a religious connotation. We can trace the word back to its Greek origin, ἀσκειν, which meant to train or practice, and came to signify monks in training. It was really during the period of the English Civil War, when Protestants fought Catholics, that ascetism came to mean austerity and sobriety, notable in dress (the unruffled simple black of the Puritan) and behavior.

Weber begins this chapter by setting forth a short description of four principal strands of Protestantism that embraced an ascetic form, what can be considered "Puritan.". These were (1) Calvinism; (2) Pietism; (3) Methodism; (4) those associated with various Baptist sects. The part of the chapter that focuses on Calvinism is included below. When discussing all those Protestants who followed the doctrine of predestination, Weber will refer to Puritans and Puritanism.

The greatest political and cultural struggles of the sixteenth and seventeeth centuries fought in the highly developed regions of Northern Europe (the Netherlands, England, France), were over Calvinism. Then, as now, its most characteristic belief was the doctrine of predestination. To understand this, let us turn to the Westminster Confession of 1647 (*in which early Calvinists described their faith)*. Here are the relevant passages:

> Chapter IX (of Free Will), Number 3: Man, by his fall into a state of sin, hath wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation: so as, a natural man, being altogether averse from that good, and dead in sin, is not able, by his own strength, to convert himself, or to prepare himself thereunto.
>
> Chapter III (of God's Eternal Decree), Number 3; By the decree of God, for the manifestation of His glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others fore-ordained to everlasting death.
>
> Number 5: Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to His eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of His will, hath chosen, in Christ, unto everlasting glory, out of His mere free grace and love, without any foresight of faith or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions, or causes moving Him thereunto: and all to the praise of His glorious grace.

Number 7: The rest of mankind God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of His own will, whereby He extendeth or withholdeth mercy, as He pleaseth, for the glory of His sovereign power over His creatures, to pass by; and to ordain them to dishonour and wrath, for their sin, to the praise of His glorious justice.

Chapter X (of Effectual Calling), Number 1: All those whom God hath predestinated unto life, and those only, He is pleased in His appointed and accepted time effectually to call, by His Word and Spirit, out of that state of sin and death, in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ; enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God; taking away their heart of stone, and giving unto them a heart of flesh; renewing their wills, and by His almighty power determining them to that which is good, and effectually drawing them to Jesus Christ: yet so, as they come most freely, being made willing by His grace.

Chapter V (of Providence), Number 6: As for those wicked and ungodly men whom God, as a righteous Judge, for former sins doth blind and harden, from them He not only withholdeth His grace, whereby they might have been enlightened in their understandings, and wrought upon in their hearts; but sometimes also withdraweth the gifts which they had, and exposeth them to such objects as their corruption makes occasions of sin; and, withal, gives them over to their own lusts, the temptations of the world, and the power of Satan: whereby it comes to pass that they harden themselves, even under those means which God useth for the softening of others.

We can briefly tell the story of how the doctrine originated and how it fit into Calvinist theology. While for Luther the doctrine's significance decreased over time, for Calvin, it increased. It derives from the logical necessity of his thought. The interest of it lies in God, not in human beings; God does not exist for people, but people for the sake of God. Everything other than God, including the meaning of our individual lives and destinies, is shrouded in a mystery that would be both impossible and presumptuous to discern. We only know that some are saved, most are damned. To think that human merit, deservingness or undeservingess, plays in part in determining our fate would be to think God's decrees, which have been settled for eternity, are subject to change by human influence. This is an impossible belief.

In its emotional inhumanity this belief must have instilled a feeling of extreme loneliness in the individual who accepted it. No one could help her. No priest…No Church…No God, for even Jesus Christ had died only for the elect. This is what set Protestants apart from Catholics – the complete elimination of salvation through the Church and its sacraments. You were really all alone.

As all religions develop, they turn away from magic. Here we see this development coming to its logical conclusion. Puritans even rejected all signs of religious ceremony, burying their dead with neither song nor ritual, so that no superstitious belief should creep in. Not only was there no magical way of attaining God's grace, making you one of the Elect, but there was *no* way at all. It was out of your hands entirely. This helps explain the totally negative view of anything that would give pleasure or solace, as such was of no use to salvation and could promote illusions or superstition.

The world exists to serve God, to promote God's glory, and for nothing else. That means that the Elect were in the world only to increase God's glory by fulfilling His commandments. Everything done by a good Christian was for God and God alone, including his or her vocation, another way of saying what he or she was called to do to increase God's glory on earth.

Now, sooner or later, the question must arise to every person following this doctrine, "Am I one of the elect?" And more, "how can I find out?" Calvin apparently was never bothered by these questions, but he was an unusually confident man. For everyone else, the questions were important ones. Two different sets of pastoral advice arose to help parishioners. First, people were told it was an absolute duty to consider one's self as one of the elect, and to regard any doubts or anxiety as tricks of the devil. In contrast to the first, and perhaps more helpful, it was recommended that people work hard in their calling as a way of boosting their assuredness of being one of the elect. Work and work alone dispels doubt and gives the certainty of grace.

We can now ask further by what fruits the Calvinist could identify having been saved, and the answer would be fruits of labor which serves to increase the glory of God. In practice this means that God helps those who help themselves. The Calvinist creates his own salvation, or at least, the conviction of his own salvation. The God of Calvinism demanded a lifetime of good works, rather than single good acts scattered here and there. This meant that Calvinists were subjected to a consistent and constant method of work/life. Only a life guided by constant thought, constant planning, constant adhesion to one's vocation, could pull the Elect out of the state of nature into the state of grace. Active self-control was the most important practical ideal of Puritanism.

Like ascetics before him, the puritan tried to act rationally at all times, suppressing all emotions. The goal of this ascetism was to lead an alert, intelligent life and to reject all spontaneous, impulsive enjoyment. But the Puritan ascetic was different from the medieval ascetics in that the Puritan did not live outside of the world but very much within it. Medieval monks were driven farther away from everyday life through their ascetism. In contrast, by founding its ethic in the doctrine of predestination, the Puritans created their form of a spiritual aristocracy not outside the world but within it, as the predestined elected saints of God within the world. The consciousness of divine grace was often accompanied by an attitude of sin toward one's neighbor, of hatred and contempt for her as an enemy of God bearing the signs of eternal damnation….

Chapter 5. Ascetism and the Spirit of Capitalism

Weber begins this chapter by referring to the work of Richard Baxter, a Puritan leader and renowned minister of the 17th century, whose books on Puritan ethics were widely read and followed. He uses Baxter's writings on wealth to examine the Puritan relationship to wealth and the development of capitalism.

In Baxter, wealth is a great danger and temptation. But the real objection is to its enjoyment and the consequent temptation to idleness and pleasure. Above all, wealth can be a distraction from the pursuit of a righteous life. It is really only because having wealth can make us *relax* that it is objectionable. Remember, only activity that serves to increase the glory of God, through one's called-to occupation, is sanctioned. Leisure and enjoyment are proscribed.

Wasting time is above all the deadliest of sins. Losing time through socializing, idle talk, even sleeping more than is necessary is worthy of moral condemnation. Life is too short to do anything other than making sure of one's election. Every hour lost is lost to work for the glory of God. Sexual intercourse is permitted, within marriage, only as the means to "be fruitful and multiply."

Unwillingness to work is a sign that one is damned. God has called each and every person to a particular task or profession. These are not equal tasks in terms of reward or skill. Classification into social positions and occupations is a direct result of God's will. It is a religious duty to persevere in one's assigned lot. The world must be accepted as it is. As an added benefit, the specialization of occupations, the increased division of labor, makes possible a quantitative and qualitative improvement in production, which thus magnifies God's glory.

It isn't enough just to work hard, however. God demands that one work methodically and purposely in his or her calling.

Wealth is ethically bad only as a temptation to idleness and enjoyment. Unlike earlier (medieval) ethicists, Puritans saw nothing wrong with wealth in itself. In fact, as a performance of duty in a calling amassing wealth is not only morally permissible, but morally desirable. To wish to be poor was the same as wishing to be unhealthy. Seeing profit-making as a sign of God's providence had the effect of justifying the activities of businessmen, a relatively novel phenomenon in the world.

In many ways, then, the Puritan idea of vocation and the emphasis placed on worldly ascetism was bound to directly influence the development of a capitalist way of life. The Puritan's ascetism was directed against the spontaneous enjoyment of life. For example, sport was accepted if it served a rational purpose (improving physical efficiency through recreation), but prohibited if conducted for enjoyment, pride, or gambling. Anything appearing to be superstitious – Christmas festivities, the May Pole, even some religious art – was banned. The theatre was morally suspect. So was idle talk, vain ostentation, personal decorations, especially in clothing. Interestingly, that tendency towards uniformity, which today aids in the capitalistic standardization of production, had its roots in this rejection of all idolatry of the body.

When we combine this limitation of consumption with the moral approbation of acquisitive profit-making behavior, the inevitable result should be obvious: capital accumulation through an ascetic compulsion to invest (save). The Puritan outlook favored the development of rational bourgeois economic life. It helped birth modern economic man.

Now, the Puritan's ideals also tended to give way, over time, under extreme pressure from the temptations of wealth. They were not unaware of this tendency. Here is John Wesley, the founder of the great revival of Methodism,

> I fear, wherever riches have increased, (exceeding few are the exceptions,) the essence of religion, the mind that was in Christ, has decreased in the same proportion. Therefore, do I not see how it is possible, in the nature of things, for any revival of true religion to continue long. For religion must necessarily produce both industry and frugality; and these cannot but produce riches. But as riches increase, so will pride, anger, and love of the world in all its branches. How, then, is it possible that Methodism, that is, the religion of the heart, though it flourishes now as a green bay-tree, should continue in this state? For the Methodists in every place grow diligent and frugal; consequently, they increase in goods.

> Hence, they proportionably increase in pride, in anger, in the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, and the pride of life. So, although the form of religion remains, the spirit is swiftly vanishing away. Is there no way to prevent this? this continual declension of pure religion? We ought not to forbid people to be diligent and frugal: We must exhort all Christians to gain all they can, and to save all they can; that is, in effect, to grow rich!

Wesley here expresses what we have been trying to point out.

A specifically bourgeois economic ethic had grown up. The bourgeois businessman, so long as he remained within the law and conducted his life and business correctly, could amass as much money as possible and feel that he was but following his duty. The power of religious ascetism also provided him with sober, conscientious, and unusually hard-working employees, who also saw their vocation as a calling from God. Last but not least, he had the comforting assurance that the unequal distribution of goods in the world was God's divine will.

Thus was born one of the fundamental elements of the spirit of modern capitalism – systematic rational conduct in one's vocation. But with the withering away of the religious ideal we are left with the product, not the impetus. Where the Puritan wanted to work in a calling, we are forced to do so. By turning their ascetic impulses into the world, Puritans helped create the modern economic order, with its machine production which today determines all of our lives, even those who are not directly concerned with business. Perhaps it will continue to do so until the last ton of fossilized coal is burnt. Baxter had though that care for external goods should lie lightly on our shoulders, like a cloak that could be cast aside at will. Today that cloak is wrapped around us like an iron cage.

We are far now from the world of the Puritans. In the US, which is the most highly developed capitalist region today, the pursuit of wealth is stripped of all religious or ethical meaning, and is practiced almost as a sport. No one knows what the future will bring – if new prophets will arise, or old ideas will have a resurgence, or if the machine will keep fast. But we can say of these, our "Last Humans," that they are now "specialists without spirit, sensualists without heart."

Well, that brings us to judgements and values that are perhaps not appropriate here. Here we have merely attempted to trace and describe the influence of the worldly ascetism of the Protestants. It is also necessary to see what in turn influenced this-worldly ascetism, to examine the totality of the social conditions of its birth, even the economic. It hasn't been my aim to substitute simplistic one-sided materialist explanations for the development of capitalism with simplistic one-sided culturalist explanations, but only to show that each is equally possible.

Questions

1. What is the difference between Puritan ascetism (sometimes referred to as "worldly ascetism") and the ascetism of medieval monks?
2. Weber makes an interesting and somewhat complicated case that the doctrine of predestination had some unintended consequences in terms of Puritan belief and behavior. Are you persuaded? How would you respond to the "inhumane" doctrine (that only a few are saved and there was no way to tell or change God's mind)?
3. What is the same (and what is different) between the early bourgeois produced by ascetic Protestantism and today's "businessman"?
4. What effect did Protestantism have on *workers*?
5. At the end of *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Weber says he has tried to show that either a materialist or a cultural explanation for the development of capitalist is possible. How could we combine the insights of Marx and Weber into a more complete story of capitalism's development (or could we)?
6. Assess Weber's evaluation capitalism, as it is currently operating.

Concepts

Worldly Ascetism

Doctrine of Predestination

Beruf (Calling; Vocation)

Iron Cage

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3.5: The Development of Commerce

"The prime mover in the separation of household and business accounting, and hence in the development of the early capitalistic institutions, was the need for credit."

NOTE ON SOURCE: This passage is from *Wirtschaftsgeschicte*, a collection of Weber's lecture notes, first published after his death in 1923. The first English translation (*General Economic History*) was made in 1927, by Frank Knight, an American professor of political economy. It is known as the source of Weber's institutionalist theory of capitalism. The selection below is direct from the Knight translation.

Introduction – Why this is important and what to look for

This selection is from Part III of the General Economic History, "Commerce and Exchange in the Pre-Capitalist Age." It is a good example of Weber's institutionalist approach. Unlike Durkheim, who evaluated the causes and consequences of existing social institutions, Weber seeks to explain historical and institutional change as the product of several small advances which, taken collectively, provide the possibility of new institutions (such as capitalism). This section has been shortened considerably to focus on these several small advances, with much of the specific historical detail omitted.

Chapter 14: Points of Departure in the Development of Commerce

In the beginnings commerce is an affair between ethnic groups; it does not take place between members of the same tribe or of the same community but is in the oldest social communities an external phenomenon, being directed only toward foreign tribes. It may, however, begin as a consequence of specialization in production between groups. In this case there is either tribal trade of producers or peddling trade in products of a foreign tribe. In any case the oldest commerce is an exchange relation between alien tribes.

The trade of a tribe in its own products may appear in various forms. It usually develops to begin with as an auxiliary occupation of peasants and persons engaged in house industry, and in general as a seasonal occupation.

Here you might think of the example of the farmer who whittles dolls out of wood during the winter and then trades these dolls for extra rations from other farmers later in the year. The point for Weber is that these products are add-ons to the community's main occupation (farming), not the principal enterprise.

Out of this stage grow peddling and huckstering as an independent occupation; tribal communities develop which soon engage in commerce exclusively.

Chapter 15. Technical Requisites for the Transportation of Goods

For the existence of commerce as an independent occupation, specific technological conditions are prerequisite. In the first place there must be regular and reasonably reliable transport opportunities. One must, to be sure, think of these in the most primitive possible terms through long ages. Not only in the Assyrian and Babylonian times were inflated goat skins use for the diagonal crossing of rivers, but even in the Mohammedan period, skin-bag boats long dominated the river traffic.

On land the trader had recourse far into the middle ages to primitive transport media. The first was his own back, on which he carried his goods down to the 13th century; then pack animals or a two-wheeled cart drawn by one or at the most two horses, the merchant being restricted to commercial routes as roads in our sense are not to be thought of. Only in the east and in the interior of Africa does caravan trade with slaves as porters appear to occur fairly early.

Traffic by sea had to make use of equally primitive means of transportation. In antiquity, and likewise in the early middle ages, the boat propelled by oars was the rule.

Chapter 16. Forms of Organization of Transportation and Commerce

The turnover of medieval commerce as measured by modern standards was extremely small. It was carried on by mere small dealers who worked with trifling quantities. The total trade between England and the Hanseatic League in the 14th century, at the time of its highest development, came to less than $4,000 dollars.

On account of the danger from pirates, a single ship was not in a position to determine independently its time of sailing. Ships formed themselves into caravans and were either conveyed by armed vessels or were themselves armed. The average duration of a voyage of a marine caravan in the Mediterranean varied from a half-year to a year. In Genoa only one caravan a year went east to Asia, in Venice two. The voyage in caravans resulted in an extremely slow turnover of the capital.

In the middle ages feudal lords were interested in the maintenance of commercial routes in order to make money. They cared for the roads by putting their peasants to work to maintain them and collected tolls on their use. There was no agreement among the lords establishing a rational layout of the roads; each located the road in a way to make sure of recouping its cost in duties and tolls.

In consequence, the volume of land trade in the middle ages was much smaller even than that of trade by sea.

The second great requirement of commerce was legal protection. The merchant was an alien (foreigner) and would not have the same legal opportunities as a member of the nation or tribe, and therefore required special legal arrangements.

A great step in progress happened was the organization of a large number of merchants in a *hanse*. This was ordinarily a guild of foreign merchants carrying on trade in a distant city, who organized for mutual protection. It goes without saying that the organization presupposed a permit from the ruler of the city.

Finally, it became necessary to establish fixed times for trading: the buyer and seller must be able to find one another. This requirement was met by fixed markets and gave rise to the market concessions. Markets were everywhere established for the foreign traders by concession from the princes – in Egypt, India, and European antiquity, and in the middle ages. The object of such a concession was on the one hand the provision for the needs of the authority granting the concession, and on the other, the promotion of fiscal aims: the prince wished to profit by the trade in the market.

Out of this original relation between the merchants visiting the market and the authority granting the concession, evolved still other institutions. The merchants needed large quarters for having their goods tested, weighed and stored.

A professional trading class of the towns developed in the following way. The resident merchant is to begin with an itinerant trader. He travels periodically in order to market products at a distance or to secure products from a distance and is a peddler who has acquired a fixed residence. The next stage is that in which he has the traveling done for him, either by an employee or servant or by a partner. The third stage is formed by the system of factories.[1] Finally, the resident trader becomes completely fixed in his location and deals with distant regions by correspondence only. This condition did not become possible until the late middle ages because there was not sufficient inter-territorial legal security.

The resident traders as a class had to contend against other groups. One series of such struggles were external, such as the struggle to maintain the monopoly of the urban market. The resident trader also contended with the merchants settled in the country, on the land. The second great object of contention in the merchant class was in regard to internal equality of opportunity. One of the members protected by the group must not have better chances than another, and this applied especially to retailing. This purpose was served by the prohibition of pre-sale or ‘forestalling’ and the right of sharing. The first of these rules prohibited dealers from selling goods before they had been brought into the town. On the other hand, if one merchant had bought more goods than another, the right sharing became operative; it specified that any member of the association could demand that a part of the goods in question be given up to him on payment of their actual cost.

Finally, the resident merchant class was in conflict with the consumer’s interests and was divided internally according as it was interested in the local market or in distant trade. The consumers wished as far as possible to buy at first hand from the foreign traders, while the interest of the great majority of the local merchants was opposed. So began the splitting off of a wholesale trading interest and an opposition of interest within the mercantile group, while the interests of the retailer and the consumer began to draw together.

Chapter 17. Forms of Commercial Enterprise

Rational commerce is the field in which quantitative reckoning first appeared, to become dominant finally over the whole extent of economic life. The necessity of exact calculation first arose wherever business was done by companies. In the beginning commerce was concerned with a turnover so slow and a profit so large that exact computation was not necessary. Goods were bought at a price that was fixed traditionally, and the trader could confine his efforts to getting as much as he could in sale. When trade was carried on by groups it was necessary to proceed to exact bookkeeping in order to render and accounting.

The technical means of computation were crude, down almost to the beginning of the modern period. Our system of characters, with values depending on their position, was an invention of the Hindus, from whom the Arabs took it over and was perhaps brought to Europe by the Jews. But not until the time of the crusades was it really known generally enough to serve as a method of computation; yet without this system, rational planning was impossible. All peoples who used a literal system of notation like that of antiquity and of the Chinese, had to have in addition some mechanical aid to computation. In antiquity and down to the late middle ages, the counting frame or *abacus* served this purpose. As the column system made its way into Europe it was at first viewed as a disreputable means of securing an immoral advantage in competition, since it worked in favor of the competitors of the virtuous merchant who disdained its use. Consequently, it was first sought to exclude it by prohibition. Down to the 15th and 16th century, the position system of notation struggled for official recognition.

It is true that there was bookkeeping in antiquity, in the banking business. The entries, however, were documentary in character; they were not designed as an instrument of control in connection with income. Genuine bookkeeping first arose in medieval Italy, and as late as the 16th century, a German clerk traveled to Venice to secure instruction in the art.

Bookkeeping grew up on the basis of the trading company. The family is everywhere the oldest unit supporting a continuous trading activity, in China and Babylonia, in India, and in the early middle ages. The son of a trading family was the confidential clerk and later the partner of the father. So, through generations one and the same family functioned as capitalists and lenders, as did the house of Igibi in Babylonia in the 6th century B.C.

The first form of group organization was occasional in character, the *commenda*. The continual participation in such ventures might gradually lead to a permanent enterprise. Permanent industrial enterprise developed with the spread of the *commenda* organization. Accountability penetrated into the family circle due to business connections outside of the family. Indeed, the prime mover in the separation of household and business accounting, and hence in the development of the early capitalistic institutions, was the need for credit. As long as dealing were in cash only, business remained a family affair. But as soon as transactions were suspended over a long interval, the question of guaranteeing credit intruded. To provide this guarantee, various means were used. The first was to make all members of a trading family liable for losses. This joint responsibility grew out of traditional criminal liability: in the case of high treason the house of the guilty person was razed and his family destroyed as suspect. Eventually, however, the most effective means for securing credit, and the method that outlived all others, was separation of the property of the trading company from the private wealth of its associates. This separation is found at the beginning of the 14th century in Florence. The step was unavoidable because more and more non-family members belonged to trading units. Out of the property of the firm evolved the concept of capital.

Chapter 21. Interests in the Pre-Capitalistic Period

In the beginnings interest is a phenomenon either of international or feudal law. Within a tribal village, or clan community, there is neither interest nor lending, since transfers of value in consideration for a payment are unknown. Where outside resources are used in economic life it is done under the form of neighborly help, such as house building.

The prohibition in the Torah against taking interest or usury against a brother rests partly on military and partly on religious grounds. The prohibition of interest taking from a brother is also characteristic of early Islam and Brahminism. Interest everywhere arises in the field of lending to foreigners outside the tribe or that of loans between classes. In this connection the contrast between creditor and debtor was originally always a contrast between a town-dwelling patriciate and rural peasants; it was so in China, India, and Rome, and so it is in the Old Testament as well.

The occasion for breaking through the prohibition against interest was provided by the loan of concrete property. In northern Europe the prohibition against usury was broken up by Protestantism, although not immediately.

Questions for Contemplation and Discussion

1. Look up the standard dictionary meaning of “commerce.” What is the etymological root of this word? How does Weber’s explanation for its historical origin accord with this original meaning?
2. This section can be read as a long list of requirements for trade, as we understand it, to be possible. Many of these prerequisites, such as roads, we take for granted now. Write down the complete list of items mentioned by Weber here. Do any surprise you? Can you think of any advances *since the time of this writing*(1923) that have helped advance commerce?

3. Weber's historical description of the rise of trade demonstrates that there has not been much "free" about this activity. What legal and political institutions supported the rise of commerce?
4. Why would the consumer want to buy directly from foreign traders, rather than the local merchant? (*Chapter 16*) Do you see similar struggles today? Which faction of the trading class is served by current economic policies?
5. What is the position system of notation? Why was this at first prohibited? What was so revolutionary/threatening about this system? Note that Weber claims this as one of the primary perquisites for the development of capitalism in PESOC.
6. This section ends with a short description of the traditional prohibitions against charging interest and a statement that these prohibitions were relaxed under Protestantism. For much more on why this was so, read PESOC. Consider the viability of currently existing capitalism had the prohibition never been lifted.

Concepts

Rational Commerce

Bookkeeping

Interest

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1. Be careful here! Factories were originally places in which factors, representatives of the seller, were located. Only later did the term come to be associated with places of manufacturing. ↵

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3.6: The Rational State

"The state in the sense of the rational state has existed only in the western world."

NOTE ON SOURCE: This passage is from *Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, a collection of Weber's lecture notes, first published after his death in 1923. The first English translation (*General Economic History*) was made in 1927, by Frank Knight, an American professor of political economy. It is known as the source of Weber's institutionalist theory of capitalism. The selection below is direct from the Knight translation.

Introduction – Why this is important and what to look for

This selection is from Part 4, "The Origin of Modern Capitalism" and follows closely the 29th chapter, entitled "the Rational State." It is here that Weber articulates the political foundations of modern capitalism. Read this in conjunction with the following section, "Evolution of the Capitalist Spirit," which focuses on the cultural foundations of modern capitalism. This section is also a useful introduction to Weber's theory of politics and the state.

The Rational State

A. The State Itself; Law and Officialdom

The state in the sense of the rational state has existed only in the western world. Under the old regime in China, a thin stratum of so-called officials, the mandarins, existed above the unbroken power of the clans and commercial and industrial guilds. The mandarin is primarily a humanistically educated scholar in the possession of an administrative position but not in the least trained for administration; he knows no jurisprudence but is a fine writer, can make verses, knows the age-old literature of the Chinese and can interpret it. In the way of political service, no importance is attached to him. Such an official performs no administrative work himself; administration lies rather in the hands of petty officials. A state with such officials is something different from the Western rational state.

In reality, everything is based on the magical theory that the virtue of the empress and the merits of the officials, meaning their perfection in literary culture, keeps things in order in normal times. In essence, things are left to take care of themselves. The officials do not rule but only interfere in the event of disturbances or untoward happenings.

Very different is the rational state in which alone modern capitalism can flourish. Its basis is an expert officialdom and rational law.

The rational law of the modern Western state, on the basis of which the trained official renders his decisions, arose on its formal side, though not as to its content, out of Roman law. The latter was to begin with a product of the Roman city-state, which never witnessed the dominion of democracy and its justice in the same form as the Greek city. Under Justinian, the Byzantine bureaucracy brought order and system into this rational law, in consequence of the natural interest of the official in a law which could be systematic and fixed and hence easier to learn.

With the fall of the Roman empire in the west, law came into the hands of the Italian notaries. These, and secondarily the universities, revived Roman law. The notaries adhered to the old contractual forms of the Roman empire and reinterpreted them according to the needs of the time. At the same time a systematic legal doctrine was developed in the universities. The essential feature in the development was the rationalization of procedure. The magnificent administrative organization of the church required fixed forms for its disciplinary ends in relation to the laity and for its own internal discipline. The businessman could not permit commercial claims to be decided by a competition in reciting formulas.[1] This two-fold rationalization of procedure from the profane and the spiritual sides spread over the western world.

Although some see the revival of the Roman law as the basis for the downfall of the peasant class and the development of capitalism, all the characteristic institutions of modern capitalism have other origins than Roman law. The stock certificate comes from medieval law. The bill of exchange comes from Arabic, Italian, German and English law. The commercial company is a medieval product. So also the mortgage, and the deed of trust, as well as the power of attorney. None of these go back to the Romans.

The reception of the Roman law was crucial only in the sense that it created formal juristic thinking. In its structure every legal system is based either on formal-legalistic or on substantive-material principles. By the latter are to be understood utilitarian and

economic considerations. In every theocracy and every absolutism justice is materially directed as by contrast in every bureaucracy it is formal-legalistic.

Formalistic law is calculable. In China it may happen that a man who has sold a house to another may later come to him and ask to be taken in because in the meantime he has been impoverished. If the purchaser refused to heed the ancient Chinese command to help a brother, the spirits will be disturbed; hence the impoverished seller comes into the house as a renter who pays no rent. Capitalism cannot operate on the basis of a law so constituted. What it requires is law which can be counted upon, like a machine; ritualistic-religious and magical considerations must be excluded.

The creation of such a body of law was achieved through the alliance between the modern state and the jurists for the purpose of making good its claims to power. In contrast to other areas of the world, the west had at its disposal a formally organized legal system, the product of Roman culture, and officials trained in this law were superior to all others as technical administrators. From the standpoint of economic history this fact is significant in that the alliance between the state and formal jurisprudence was indirectly favorable to capitalism.

B. The Economic Policy of the Rational State

For the state to have an economic policy worthy of the name, one which is continuous and consistent, is an institution of exclusively modern origin. The first system which it brought forth is mercantilism.

C. Mercantilism

The essence of mercantilism consists in carrying the point of view of capitalistic industry into politics: the state is handled as if it consisted exclusively of capitalistic entrepreneurs. External economic policy rests on the principle of taking every advantage of the opponent, importing at the lowest price and selling much higher. The purpose is to strengthen the hand of the government in its external relations. Hence mercantilism signifies the development of the state as a political power, which is to be done directly by increasing the taxpaying power of the population.

England is distinctively the original home of Mercantilism. The first traces of the application of mercantilistic principles are to be found there in the year 1381. In England it finally disappeared when free trade was established, an achievement of Puritan dissenters in league with industrial interests.

Questions for Contemplation and Discussion

1. What does Weber mean when he denotes a state as “rational” or law as “rational”? Consider this rationality as an institutional element that arose over time and triggered new developments as well. What is the connection between rationality and capitalism?
2. Why do absolutists states depend upon substantive-material legal principles? Can you think of a modern example?
3. Who were the agents in the construction of our modern legal system? How does Weber explain the motivation for this development? What are the connections between the legal system, the state, and capitalism?

Concepts

Rational (Western) State

Rational-Formalistic Law

Mercantilism

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1. A reference to the ancient German legal trial, in which the losing party was the person who mispronounced or misrecited a standard formula. This is similar to the medieval witch trials in which innocence was found by sinking when thrown in a river, or other “judgments by God” through trials of ordeal. ↵

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3.7: The Evolution of the Capitalistic Spirit

"The factors which produced capitalism is the rational permanent enterprise, rational accounting, rational technology, and rational law, but again not these alone. Necessary complementary factors were the rational spirit, the rationalization of the conduct of life, in general, and a rationalistic economic ethic."

NOTE ON SOURCE: This passage is from *Wirtschaftsgeschicte*, a collection of Weber's lecture notes, first published after his death in 1923. The first English translation (*General Economic History*) was made in 1927, by Frank Knight, an American professor of political economy. It is known as the source of Weber's institutionalist theory of capitalism. The selection below is direct from the Knight translation.

Introduction – Why this is important and what to look for

This selection is the chapter following the previous "The Rational State" in the General Economic History. *It discusses many of the same events and circumstances found in* PESOC, *but from a somewhat different angle. Pay close attention to the effects of the protestant ethic on the workforce and profitability, a topic little discussed in his more famous work.*

The Evolution of the Capitalistic Spirit

It is a widespread error that the increase of population is to be included as a really crucial agent in the evolution of western capitalism.[1] In opposition to this view, Karl Marx made the assertion that every economic epoch has its own law of population, and although this proposition is untenable in so general a form, it is justified in the present case. The growth of population in the west made most rapid progress from the beginning of the 18th century to the end of the 19th. In the same period China experience da population growth of at least equal extent – from 60 or 70 million of 400 million; this corresponds approximately with the increase in the west. In spite of this fact, capitalism went backward in China and not forward. The growth of population in Europe did indeed favor the development of capitalism, to the extent that in a small population the system would have been unable to secure the necessary labor force, but in itself it never called forth that development;

Nor can the inflow of precious metals be regarded, as Sombart suggests, as the primary cause of the appearance of capitalism. Neither the growth of population nor the importation of precious metal called forth western capitalism. The external conditions for the development of capitalism are rather, first, geographical in character. In China and India, the enormous costs of transportation, connected with the decisively inland commerce of the regions, necessarily formed serious obstructions for the classes who were in a position to make profits through trade, while in the west the position of the Mediterranean as an island sea, and abundant interconnections through the rivers, favored the opposite development of international commerce. But this factor in its turn must not be overestimated.

Military requirements were also favorable, though not as such but because of the special nature of the particular needs of the western armies. Favorable also was the luxury demand, though again, not in itself. In the last resort the factors which produced capitalism is the rational permanent enterprise, rational accounting, rational technology, and rational law, but again not these alone. Necessary complementary factors were the rational spirit, the rationalization of the conduct of life, in general, and a rationalistic economic ethic.

Traditional obstructions are not overcome by the economic impulse alone. The notion that our rationalistic and capitalistic age is characterized by a stronger economic interest than other periods is childish; the moving spirits of modern capitalism are not possessed of a stronger economic impulse than, for example, an oriental trader. The unchaining of the economic interest merely as such has produced only irrational results; such men as Cortez and Pizarro, who were perhaps its strongest embodiment, were far from having an idea of a rationalistic economic life. If the economic impulse in itself is universal, it is an interesting question as to the relations under which it becomes rationalized and rationally tempered in such fashion as to produce rational institutions of the character of capitalistic enterprise.

Weber next discusses several of the issues raised in PESOC *regarding ethical judgments on worldly success, ascetism, and the specific character of Protestant doctrine and how its allowance for worldly success differentiated it from previous religions. We come back to the text at the conclusion of this discussion*

It is true that the acquisition of wealth, attributed to piety, led to a dilemma, in all respects similar to that into which the medieval monasteries constantly fell; the religious guild led to wealth, wealth to a fall from grace, and this again to the necessity of

reconstitution. Calvinism sought to avoid this difficulty through the idea that man was only an administrator of what God had given him; it condemned enjoyment yet permitted no flight from the world but rather regarded working together, with its rational discipline, as the religious task of the individual. Out of this system of thought came our word 'calling,' which is known only to the languages influenced by the Protestant translations of the Bible. It expresses the value placed upon rational activity carried on according to the rational capitalistic principle, as the fulfillment of a God-given task.

This development of the concept of the calling quickly gave to the modern entrepreneur a fabulously clear conscience, – and also industrious workers; he gave to his employees as the wage of their ascetic devotion to the calling and of cooperation in his ruthless exploitation of them through capitalism the prospect of eternal salvation, which in an age when ecclesiastical discipline took control of the whole of life to an extent inconceivable to us now, represented a reality quite different from any it has today. The Catholic and Lutheran churches also recognized and practiced ecclesiastical discipline. But in the Protestant ascetic communities, admission to the Lord's Supper was condition on ethical fitness, which again was identified with business honor, while into the content of one's faith no one inquired. Such a powerful, unconsciously refined organization for the production of capitalistic individuals has never existed in any other church or religion, and in comparison, what the Renaissance did for capitalism shrinks into insignificance. Its practitioners occupied themselves with technical problems and were experimenters of the first rank. From art and mining experimentation was taken over into science.

The world-view of the Renaissance determined the policy of rulers in a large measure, but it did not transform the soul of man as did the innovations of the Reformation. Almost all the great scientific discoveries of the 16th and even the beginning of the 17th century were made against the background of Catholicism. Copernicus was a Catholic, for example. Scientific progress and Protestantism must not at all be unquestionably identified. The Catholic church has indeed occasionally obstructed scientific progress; but the ascetic sects of Protestantism have also been disposed to have nothing to do with science, except in a situation where material requirements of everyday life were involved. On the other hand, it is its specific contribution to have placed science in the service of technology and economics.

The religious root of modern economic humanity is dead; today the concept of the calling is a *caput mortuum*[2] in the world. Ascetic religiosity has been displaced by a pessimistic though by no means ascetic view of the world, such as that portrayed in Mandeville's *Fable of the Bees*, which teaches that private vices may under certain conditions be for the good of the public. With the complete disappearance of all the remains of the original enormous religious pathos of the sects, the optimism of the Enlightenment which believed in the harmony of interests, appeared as the heir of Protestant ascetism in the field of economic ideas; it guided the hands of the princes, statesmen, and writers of the later 18th and early 19th century. Economic ethics arose against the background of the ascetic idea, but now it has been stripped of its religious import. It was possible for the working class to accept its lot as long as the promise of eternal happiness could be held out to it. When this consolation fell away it was inevitable that those strains and stresses should appear in economic society which since then have grown so rapidly. This point had been reached at the end of the early period of capitalism, at the beginning of the age of iron, in the 19th century.

Questions for Contemplation and Discussion

1. Identify ALL of the factors that Weber concedes played a role in the rise of western capitalism. How would you characterize or classify these many factors? Which is the most important, according to Weber, and why? Are any necessary and sufficient in and of themselves?
2. What were the consequences of adopting the concept of the calling? Were these consequences *intended*?
3. What are the "stresses and strains" to which Weber refers in the final paragraph? As Weber began this section with a reference to Karl Marx, it might be useful to consider the two together. What similarities can be found in their descriptions of capitalism? What are the significant differences (of focus, tone, evaluation, prognosis) between them?

Concepts

Spirit of Capitalism

Rational-Formalistic Law

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1. Could Weber be referring to Durkheim's thesis in *The Division of Labor*? ↵
2. Literally, Latin for "deadhead," but had a meaning at the time Weber wrote of worthless leftovers. ↵

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3.8: Politics as a Vocation

"Not summer's bloom lies ahead of us, but rather a polar night of icy darkness and hardness."

NOTE ON SOURCE: This passage is from a 1918 lecture Weber gave at Munich University at the request of the student union, first published in 1919 as *Politic als Beruf*. It was included in a posthumous collection of political writings in 1921. The first English translation was made by Hans Gerth and C. Wright Mills in 1946. The section you have here owes much to their translation, with some modifications for contemporary readers, and heavily abbreviated. The entire Gerth and Mills translation can be found in their collection, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, published by Oxford University Press.

Introduction – Why this is important and what to look for

Weber's speech has mostly been recalled for its definition of the state and its reference to the three forms of legitimation of authority. This is worth paying attention to, but there is much more here as well, including some harsh words about American party politics and a plea not to lose hope in the face of increasingly reactionary and venal politics. It is important here to recognize the date of the lecture, coming at the end of World War I, the events of the Spartacist Rebellion in Germany, and the early days of fascism.

Lecture

This lecture, which I give at your request, will necessarily disappoint you in a number of ways. You will naturally expect me to take a position on actual problems of the day but instead, I will be addressing the more general question of what politics as a vocation means and what it *can* mean.

What do we understand by politics? The concept is extremely broad and comprises any kind of *independent* leadership in action. We wish to understand by politics only the leadership, or the influencing of the leadership, of a *political* association, of a *state*.

But what is a state? Sociologically, the state cannot be defined in terms of its ends. Ultimately, one can define the modern state sociologically only in terms of the specific means peculiar to it, as to every political association, namely, the use of physical force.

'Every state is founded on force,' said Trotsky. That is indeed right. If no social institutions existed which knew the use of violence, then the concept of' state would be eliminated, and a condition would emerge that could be designated as anarchy, in the specific sense of this word. Of course, force is certainly not the normal or the only means of the state, but *force is a means specific to the state*. We have to say that today a state is a human community that (successfully) claims the *monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force* within a given territory. Note that 'territory' is one of the characteristics of the state. Specifically, at the present time, the right to use physical force is ascribed to other institutions or to individuals only to the extent to which the state permits it. The state is considered the sole source of the right to use violence.

Like the political institutions historically preceding it, the state is a relation of men dominating men, a relation supported by means of legitimate (i.e. considered to be legitimate) violence. If the state is to exist, the dominated must obey the authority claimed by the powers that be. When and why do men obey? Upon what inner justifications and upon what external means does this domination rest?

To begin with, in principle, there are three inner justifications, hence basic *legitimations* of domination.

First, the authority of the past, 'traditional' domination exercised by the patriarch and the patrimonial prince.

Second, there is the authority of the extraordinary and personal *gift of grace*(charisma), the absolutely personal devotion and personal confidence in revelation, heroism, or other qualities of individual leadership. This is 'charismatic' domination, as exercised by the prophet or, in the field of politics, by the elected warlord, the great demagogue, or the political party leader.

Finally, there is domination by virtue of legality, by virtue of the belief in the validity of law and functional competence based on rationally created *rules*. In this case, obedience is expected in discharging statutory obligations. This is domination as exercised by the modern servant of the state.

In asking for the legitimation of this obedience, one meets with these three pure *types*– traditional, charismatic, and legal.

These conceptions of legitimacy and their inner justifications are of very great significance for the structure of domination. To be sure, the pure types are rarely found in reality. And we are not going to deal with all three here. Today we are interested in the

second type – domination by virtue of the devotion of those who obey the purely personal *charisma* of the so-called leader.

Devotion to the *charisma* of the prophet, or the leader in battle, or to great demagogue, means that the leader is personally recognized as the innerly-called leader of men. Men do not obey him by virtue of tradition or statute, but *because they believe in him.* If he is more than a narrow and vain upstart of the moment, the leader lives for his cause. The devotion of his disciples and his followers is oriented to his person.

Charismatic leadership has emerged in all places and in all times. *Political* leadership in the form of the free 'demagogue' who grew from the soil of the city-state is of great concern to us; for like the city-state itself, the demagogue is peculiar to the West and especially to Mediterranean culture. Furthermore, political leadership in the form of the parliamentary 'party leader' has grown on the soil of the constitutional state, which is also indigenous only to the West.

How do the politically dominant powers manage to maintain their domination? The question pertains to any kind of domination, hence also to political domination in all its forms, traditional as well as legal and charismatic.

Organized domination, which calls for continuous administration, requires that people be conditioned to obey those who claim to be the bearers of legitimate power. Organized domination also requires the control of those material goods which in a given case are necessary for the use of physical violence. Thus, organized domination requires control of the personal executive staff and the material implements of administration.

First, the loyalty of the staff. The administrative staff is bound by obedience to the powerholder and not alone by the concept of legitimacy, of which we have just spoken. There are two other means, both of which appeal to personal interests: material reward and social honor. The salaries of modern civil servants and the honor of knights, to give but two examples, comprise their respective wages. The fear of losing them is the final and decisive basis for solidarity between the executive staff and the power-holder. There is honor and booty for the followers in war; for the demagogue's following, there are 'spoils' (that is, exploitation of the dominated through the monopolization of office), and there are politically determined profits and premiums of vanity. All of these rewards are also derived from the domination exercised by a charismatic leader.

Second, the material implements of administration. To maintain a territory by force, certain material goods are required, just as with an economic organization. All states may be classified according to whether they rest on the principle that the staff of men themselves own the administrative means, or whether the staff is separated from these means of administration. This distinction holds in the same sense in which today we say that the salaried employee and the proletarian in the capitalistic enterprise are separated from the material means of production.

These political associations in which the material means of administration are autonomously controlled, wholly or partly, by the dependent administrative staff may be called associations organized in '*estates*.' However, everywhere, reaching back to the earliest political formations, we also find the lord himself directing the administration. He seeks to take the administration into his own hands by having men personally dependent upon him: slaves, household officials, attendants, personal favorites. He seeks to create an army which is dependent upon him personally because it is equipped and provisioned out of his granaries and armories. In the association of estates, the lord rules with the aid of an autonomous aristocracy and hence shares his domination with it; the lord who personally administers is supported either by members of his household or by plebeians. These are completely chained to him and are not backed up by any competing power of their own. All forms of patriarchal and patrimonial domination, despotism, and bureaucratic states belong to this latter type. The bureaucratic state order is especially important; in its most rational development, it is precisely characteristic of the modern state.

Everywhere the development of the modern state is initiated through the action of a single monarch, who expropriates the power of those who in their own right possess the means of administration, warfare, and financial organization. The whole process is a complete parallel to the development of the capitalist enterprise through gradual expropriation of the independent producers. In the end, the modern state controls the total means of political organization, which actually come together under a single head.

During this process of political expropriation, which has occurred with varying success in all countries on earth, professional politicians in another sense have emerged. They arose first in the service of a prince. They have been men and women who, unlike the charismatic leader, have not wished to be in control themselves, but who have entered the *service* of political leaders. In the struggle of expropriation, they placed themselves at the leader's disposal and by managing the leader's politics they earned a living.

In politics as in business, politics may be one's avocation or one's vocation. One may engage in politics, and hence seek to influence the distribution of power within and between political structures, as an occasional politician. We are all occasional politicians when we vote, for example.

In contrast, there are two ways of making politics one's vocation: Either one lives *for* politics or one lives *off* politics. By no means is this contrast an exclusive one. She who lives *for* politics makes politics her life, in an internal sense. Either she enjoys the naked possession of the power she exerts, or she nourishes her inner balance and self feeling by the consciousness that her life has *meaning* in the service of a cause. She who strives to make politics a permanent *source of income* lives *off* politics as a vocation, whereas she who does not do this lives *for* politics. In a private property system, in order for a person to live *for* politics but not *off* politics, she must be economically independent of the income that politics would bring to her. She must be wealthy.

The leadership of a state or of a party by people who live exclusively *for* politics and not *off* politics means necessarily a plutocratic recruitment of the leading political strata. To be sure, this does not mean that such plutocratic leadership will not also seek to live *off* politics, and hence that the dominant stratum will not usually exploit their political nomination in their own economic interest. All that is unquestionable, naturally. There has never been such a stratum that has not somehow lived *off* politics. Only this is meant: that the professional politician need not seek remuneration directly for his political work, whereas every politician without means must absolutely claim this. On the other hand, we do not mean to say that the property-less politician will pursue private economic advantages through politics, exclusively, or even predominantly. A nonplutocratic recruitment of interested politicians, of leadership and following, is geared to the precondition that regular and reliable income will accrue to those who manage politics.

Either politics can be conducted honorifically and then, as one usually says, by independent, that is, by wealthy, people, especially those who live off investments only and do no other work *or* political leadership is made accessible to property-less people who must then be paid.

The development of politics into an organization which demanded training in the struggle for power, and in the methods of this struggle as developed by modern party policies, determined the separation of public officials into two categories, which, however, are by no means rigidly but nevertheless distinctly separated. These categories are "administrative" officials on the one hand, and "political" officials on the other. The "political" officials can be recognized by the fact that they can be transferred any time at will, that they can be dismissed, or at least temporarily withdrawn. The political element consists, above all, in maintaining the existing power relations. The second kind, the genuine administrative official, will not engage in politics. *Sine ira et studio*, 'without scorn and bias,' she shall administer her office. Hence, she shall not do precisely what the politician, the leader as well as his following, must always and necessarily do, namely, *fight*.

To take a stand, to be passionate –*ira et stadium* (*with scorn and bias*)-is the politician's element, and above all the element of the political *leader*. His conduct is subject to quite a different, indeed, exactly the opposite, principle of responsibility from that of the civil servant. The honor of the civil servant is vested in her ability to execute conscientiously the order of the superior authorities, exactly as if the order agreed with her own conviction. This holds even if the order appears wrong to her and if, despite the civil servant's remonstrances, the authority insists on the order. Without this moral discipline and self-denial, in the highest sense, the whole apparatus would fall to pieces. The honor of the political leader, of the leading statesman, however, lies precisely in an exclusive *personal* responsibility for what he does, a responsibility he cannot and must not reject or transfer. It is in the nature of officials of high moral standing to be poor politicians, and above all, in the political sense of the word, to be irresponsible politicians. In this sense, they are politicians of low moral standing, such as we unfortunately have had again and again in leading positions.

Since the time of the constitutional state, and definitely since democracy has been established, the *demagogue* has been the typical political leader in the West. Like Athenian demagogues of yesterday, from which we get the name, demagogues make use of oratory, to a tremendous extent, if one considers the election speeches a modern candidate has to deliver. Naturally every politician of consequence has needed influence over the press and hence has needed relations with the press.

Now, on to parties…

The most modern forms of party organizations are the children of democracy, of mass franchise, of the necessity to woo and organize the masses, and develop the utmost unity of direction and the strictest discipline. Professional politicians *outside* the parliaments take the organization in hand. They do so either as party entrepreneurs (the American "boss"), or as officials with a fixed salary. Formally, a far-going democratization takes place. The parliamentary party no longer creates the authoritative

programs, and the local notables no longer decide the selection of candidates. Rather assemblies of the organized party members select the candidates and delegate members to the assemblies of a higher order. Possibly there are several such conventions leading up to the national convention of the party. Naturally power actually rests in the hands of those who, within the organization, handle the work *continuously*. Otherwise, power rests in the hands of those on whom the organization in its processes depends financially or personally. It is decisive that this whole apparatus of people, characteristically called a 'machine' in AngloSaxon countries or rather those who direct the machine, keep the members of the parliament in check. They are in a position to impose their will to a rather far reaching extent, and that is of special significance for the selection of the party leader. The person whom the machine follows now becomes the leader.

The party members, following above all the party official and party entrepreneur, naturally expect personal compensation from the victory of their leader – that is, offices or other advantages. They expect that the demagogic effect of the leader's *personality* during the election will increase votes and mandates and thereby power, and, thereby, as far as possible, will extend opportunities to their followers to find the compensation for which they hope. Ideally, one of their mainsprings is the satisfaction of working with loyal personal devotion for a leader, and not merely for an abstract program of a party consisting of mediocrities. In this respect, the 'charismatic' element of all leadership is at work in the party system.

Such machinery requires a considerable personnel. In England there are about 2,000 persons who live directly off party politics. To be sure, those who are active in politics purely as job seekers or as interested persons are far more numerous, especially in local politics.

Now then, what has been the effect of this whole system? Nowadays the members of Parliament, with the exception of the few cabinet members (and a few insurgents), are normally nothing better than welldisciplined yes-men mobilized behind a strong leader. How does the selection of these strong leaders take place? At the present time, often purely emotional means are used. One may call the existing state of affairs a "dictatorship resting on the exploitation of mass emotionally."

What does this spoils system, the turning over of federal offices to the following of the victorious candidate, mean for the party formations of today? It means that quite unprincipled parties oppose one another; they are purely organizations of job hunters drafting their changing platforms according to the chances of votegrabbing, changing their colors to a degree which, despite all analogies, is not yet to be found elsewhere. The parties are simply and absolutely fashioned for the election campaign that is most important for office patronage: the fight for the presidency and for the governorships of the separate states. Platforms and candidates are selected at the national conventions of the parties. In the primaries the delegates are already elected in the name of the candidate for the nation's leadership.

In America, the spoils system, supported in this fashion, has been technically possible because American culture with its youth could afford purely dilettante management. With 300,000 to 400,000 such party men who have no qualifications to their credit other than the fact of having performed good services for their party, this state of affairs could not exist without enormous evils. A corruption and wastefulness second to none could be tolerated only by a country with as yet unlimited economic opportunities.

Now then, the boss is the figure who appears in the picture of this system of the plebiscitarian party machine. Who is the boss? He is a political capitalist entrepreneur who on his own account and at his own risk provides votes. He may have established his first relations as a lawyer or a saloonkeeper or as a proprietor of similar establishments, or perhaps as a creditor. From here he spins his threads out until he is able to control a certain number of votes.

The boss is indispensable to the organization of the party and the organization is centralized in his hands. He substantially provides the financial means. How does he get them? Well, partly by the contributions of the members, and especially by taxing the salaries of those officials who came into office through him and his party. Furthermore, there are bribes and tips. He who wishes to trespass with impunity one of the many laws needs the boss's connivance and must pay for it; or else he will get into trouble. But this alone is not enough to accumulate the necessary capital for political enterprises. The boss is indispensable as the direct recipient of the money of great financial magnates, who would not entrust their money for election purposes to a paid party official, or to anyone else giving public account of his affairs. The boss, with his judicious discretion in financial matters, is the natural man for those capitalist circles who finance the election. The typical boss is an absolutely sober man. He does not seek social honor; He seeks power alone, power as a source of money, but also power for power's sake. In contrast to the English leader, the American boss works in the dark. He is not heard speaking in public; he suggests to the speakers what they must say in expedient fashion. He himself, however, keeps silent.

The boss has no firm political principles; he is completely unprincipled in attitude and asks merely: What will capture votes? Frequently he is a rather poorly educated man. But as a rule, he leads an inoffensive and correct private life. In his political morals, however, he naturally adjusts to the average ethical standards of political conduct. Thus, there exists a strong capitalist party machine, strictly and thoroughly organized from top to bottom, and supported by political clubs of extraordinary stability. These clubs, such as Tammany Hall, are like Knight orders. They seek profits solely through political control, especially of the municipal government, which is the most important object of booty. This structure of party life was made possible by the high degree of democracy in the United States. As the US gets older, however, the basis for this system is gradually dying out. America can no longer be governed only by dilettantes. Scarcely fifteen years ago, when American workers were asked why they allowed themselves to be governed by politicians whom they admitted they despised, the answer was: "We prefer having people in office whom we can spit upon, rather than a caste of officials who spit upon us, as is the case with you." This was the old point of view of so-called American democracy.

Today one cannot yet see in any way how the management of politics as a vocation, or profession, will shape itself. Even less can one see along what avenue opportunities are opening to which political talents can be put for satisfactory political tasks.

The career of politics grants a feeling of power. The knowledge of influencing people, of participating in power over them, and above all, the feeling of holding in one's hands a nerve fiber of historically important events can elevate the professional politician above everyday routine even when he or she is placed in formally modest positions. But now the question for them is: Through what qualities can we hope to do justice to this power (however narrowly circumscribed it may be in the individual case)? How can we hope to do justice to the responsibility that power imposes upon us? With this we enter the field of ethical questions, for that is where the problem belongs: What kind of person must one be who is to be allowed to put their hand on the wheel of history?

One can say that three preeminent qualities are decisive for the politician: passion, a feeling of responsibility, and a sense of proportion.

Surely, politics is made with the head, but it is certainly not made with the head alone. In this the proponents of an ethic of ultimate ends are right. It is immensely moving when a person is aware of a responsibility for the consequences of her conduct and really feels such responsibility with heart and soul. She then acts by following an ethic of responsibility and somewhere she reaches the point where she says: "Here I stand; I can do no other." That is something genuinely human and moving. And every one of us who is not spiritually dead must realize the possibility of finding herself at some time in that position. In so far as this is true, an ethic of ultimate ends and an ethic of responsibility are not absolute contrasts but rather supplements, which only in unison constitute a genuine person a person who can follow politics as a vocation, a calling, a noble profession.

Now then, ladies and gentlemen, let us debate this matter once more ten years from now. Unfortunately, for a whole series of reasons, I fear that by then the period of reaction will have long since broken over us. It is very probable that little of what many of you, and (I candidly confess) I too, have wished and hoped for will be fulfilled; little, perhaps not exactly nothing, but what to us at least seems little. This will not crush me, but surely it is an inner burden to realize it. Then, I wish I could see what has become of those of you who now feel yourselves to be genuinely politicians of principle and who share in the intoxication signified by this revolution. It would be nice if matters turned out in such a way that Shakespeare's Sonnet 102 should hold true:

Our love was new, and then but in the spring,

When I was wont to greet it with my lays;

As Philomel in summer's front doth sing,

And stops her pipe in growth of riper days.

But such is not the case. Not summer's bloom lies ahead of us, but rather a polar night of icy darkness and hardness, no matter which group may triumph externally now. Where there is nothing, not only the Kaiser but also the proletarian has lost his rights. When this night shall have slowly receded, who of those for whom spring apparently has bloomed so luxuriously will be alive? And what will have become of all of you by then? Will you be bitter? Utilitarian? Will you simply and dully accept world and occupation? In every case, I shall draw the conclusion that they have not measured up to their own doings. They have not measured up to the world as it really is in its everyday routine. Objectively and actually, they have not experienced the vocation for politics in its deepest meaning, which they thought they had. They would have done better in simply cultivating plain brotherliness in personal relations. And for the rest: they should have gone soberly about their daily work.

Politics is a strong and slow boring of hard boards. It takes both passion and perspective. Certainly, all historical experience confirms the truth that man would not have attained the possible unless time and again he had reached out for the impossible. But to do that a person must be a leader, and not only a leader but a hero as well, in a very sober sense of the word. And even those who are neither leaders nor heroes must arm themselves with that steadfastness of heart which can brave even the crumbling of all hopes. This is necessary right now, or else we will not be able to attain even that which is possible today. Only they have been called to politics who are sure that they shall not crumble when the world appears too stupid or too base for what they want to offer. Only they who in the face of all this can say 'In spite of all!' has the true calling for politics.

Questions for Contemplation and Discussion

1. What are the three forms of authority? On what do they differ?
2. In what way is power centralized in the modern state?
3. Should politicians be paid for their service?
4. What is the difference between political and administrative officials? What are their separate duties? Do you see examples of this in the current administration?
5. Weber paints a quite unflattering portrait of party politics and the spoils system. Is his description (still) accurate?
6. Weber provides a great number of details about the "party boss," a common figure at the time of his writing, especially in American politics. *We can understand this section as a portrait of an "ideal-typical" boss, in line with Weber's sociological method*. What institutions allowed for such a type of political entrepreneur to flourish?
7. What does it mean to engage in politics as a calling (vocation, profession)? How is this different from the kind of politics engaged in by the "boss"?
8. What does Weber mean by saying that politics is "a strong and slow boring of hard boards?" What is his advice to us in the final paragraph? Is this timely?

Concepts

Power

The State

Legitimation

Charisma

Bureaucracy

Parties and Party Politics

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3.9: Bureaucracy

"Bureaucracy is a giant mechanism operated by pygmies." – Balzac

NOTE ON SOURCE: This passage is from *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, a collection of Weber's writings on economy and society, first published after his death in 1921. Parts were translated into English and published as *The Theory of Social and Economic Organizations* in 1947 by Talcott Parsons. In 1968 a complete English translation was made by Roth and Wittich, under the title *Economy and Society*. This translation has been reprinted and is the primary source in English today. Parts of the work also found themselves into Runciman's *Weber: Selected Passages*, published in 1978.

Introduction – Why this is important and what to look for

This selection is a short piece, in outline form, defining and describing the characteristics of bureaucracy, one of the three legitimating forms of authority. For more on legitimation, read Politics as a Vocation. *Think about the institutional connections between bureaucratic authority and rational-formal law, and how both work together to support rational Western capitalism.*

Part 3, Chapter 6, Section 7. Bureaucracy

Characteristics of Bureaucracy

MODERN officialdom functions in the following manner:

I. Fixed and official jurisdictional areas generally ordered by rules (laws or administrative regulations).

1. The regular activities required for the purposes of the bureaucratically governed structure are distributed in a fixed way as official duties.
2. The authority to give the commands required for the discharge of these duties is distributed in a stable way and is strictly delimited by rules concerning the coercive means, physical, symbolic, or otherwise, which may be placed at the disposal of officials.
3. Methodical provision is made for the regular and continuous fulfillment of these duties and for the execution of the corresponding rights; only persons who have the generally regulated qualifications to serve are employed.

In public and lawful government these three elements constitute 'bureaucratic authority.' In private economic domination, they constitute bureaucratic 'management.' Bureaucracy, thus understood, is fully developed in political and ecclesiastical communities only in the modern state, and, in the private economy, only in the most advanced institutions of capitalism. Permanent and public office authority, with fixed jurisdiction, is not the historical rule but rather the exception. This is so even in large political structures such as those of the ancient Orient, the Germanic and Mongolian empires of conquest, or of many feudal structures of state. In all these cases, the ruler executes the most important measures through personal trustees, companions, or court-servants. Their commissions and authority are not precisely delimited and are temporarily called into being for each case.

II. The principles of office hierarchy and of levels of graded authority mean a firmly ordered system of super- and subordination in which there is a supervision of the lower offices by the higher ones. Such a system offers the governed the possibility of appealing the decision of a lower office to its higher authority, in a definitely regulated manner. With the full development of the bureaucratic type, the office hierarchy is monocratically organized. The principle of hierarchical office authority is found in all bureaucratic structures: in state and ecclesiastical structures as well as in large party organizations and private enterprises. It does not matter for the character of bureaucracy whether its authority is called 'private' or 'public.'

When the principle of jurisdictional 'competency' is fully carried through, hierarchical subordination–at least in public office–does not mean that the 'higher' authority is simply authorized to take over the business of the 'lower.' Indeed, the opposite is the rule. Once established and having fulfilled its task, an office tends to continue in existence and be held by another incumbent.

III. The management of the modern office is based upon written documents ('files' or 'records'), which are preserved in their original or draft form. There is, therefore, a staff of subaltern officials and scribes of all sorts. The body of officials actively engaged in a 'public' office, along with the respective apparatus of material implements and the files, make up a 'bureau.' In private enterprise, 'the bureau' is often called 'the office.'

In principle, the modern organization of the civil service separates the bureau from the private residence of the official, and, in general, bureaucracy segregates official activity as something distinct from the sphere of private life. Public money and equipment are divorced from the private property of the official. This condition is everywhere the product of a long development. Nowadays, it is found in public as well as in private enterprises; in the latter, the principle extends even to the leading entrepreneur. In principle, the executive office is separated from the household, business from private correspondence, and business assets from private fortunes. The more consistently the modern type of business management has been carried through the more are these separations the case. The beginnings of this process are to be found as early as the Middle Ages.

It is the peculiarity of the modern entrepreneur that she conducts herself as the 'first official' of her enterprise, in the very same way in which the ruler of a specifically modern bureaucratic state spoke of herself as 'the first servant' of the state. The idea that the bureau activities of the state are intrinsically different in character from the management of private economic offices is a continental European notion and, by way of contrast, is totally foreign to the American way.

IV. Office management, at least all specialized office management– and such management is distinctly modern–usually presupposes thorough and expert training. This increasingly holds for the modern executive and employee of private enterprises, in the same manner as it holds for the state official.

V. When the office is fully developed, official activity demands the full working capacity of the official, irrespective of the fact that his obligatory time in the bureau may be firmly delimited. In the normal case, this is only the product of a long development, in the public as well as in the private office. Formerly, in all cases, the normal state of affairs was reversed: official business was discharged as a secondary activity.

VI. The management of the office follows general rules, more or less stable, more or less exhaustive, which can be learned. Knowledge of these rules represents a special technical learning which the officials possess. It involves jurisprudence, or administrative or business management.

The reduction of modern office management to rules is deeply embedded in its very nature. The theory of modern public administration, for instance, assumes that the authority to order certain matters by decree–which has been legally granted to public authorities–does not entitle the bureau to regulate the matter by commands given for each case, but only to regulate the matter abstractly. This stands in extreme contrast to the regulation of all relationships through individual privileges and bestowals of favor, which is absolutely dominant in patrimonialism, at least in so far as such relationships are not fixed by sacred tradition.

Questions for Contemplation and Discussion

1. Look up the etymology of bureaucracy. What are its roots? Synonyms? Make a short list of modern bureaucracies and compare their elements to those described by Weber.
2. Come up with a shorthand definition of the three elements that constitute bureaucratic authority. Try to do this creatively, as a three-word motto, for example.
3. What is the difference between bureaucratic authority and bureaucratic management? Having read about legitimating forms of authority in *Politics as a Vocation*, why do you think Weber makes this distinction here?
4. In point V, Weber makes the point that, historically, the official's duties were "secondary" while now official activity demands the "full working capacity" of the official. What does he mean here? Who were officials in the time when their official work was secondary? Who are they now? (you might want to read along the discussion in *Politics as a Vocation*).
5. What is professional training for the modern official? How is this different from other officials (those found in traditional or charismatic authority structures, for example? Or private household enterprise during the Middle Ages?)

Concepts

Bureaucracy

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3.10: CSP

The Distribution of Power: Classes, Status, Groups,[1] and Parties

" Every order affects the distribution of power."

NOTE ON SOURCE: This passage is from the posthumous 1921 collection of essays, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, first translated into English by Talcott Parsons in 1947 as *The Theory of Social and Economic Organizations*. It was later translated by Eric Mathews and published as "Classes, Status Groups, and Parties" in Runciman's *Weber: Selections in Translation*(1978). It was completely retranslated by students under the direction of Tony Waters and Dagmar Waters, and published in 2010 as "The Distribution of Power within the Community: Classes, *Stände*, Parties," *Journal of Classical Sociology*10(2): 137-152. The passage here is a loose translation of the original German, condensed for easier reading. For a more exact and complete translation, also updated for today's reader, see Waters and Waters (2010).

Introduction – Why this is important and what to look for

Identifying the social divisions that operate in any given society is an essential task for the sociologist. Before we can do that, however, we must have an agreed-upon sense of the basis of those social divisions. This passage sets out Weber's description of the various ways in which social groups set themselves against other social groups. Classes, status groups, and parties are various ways in which divisions between social groups can operate, at least in the sense of power over and power between. Unlike Marx, who saw class as the ultimate expression of social division and power, Weber saw class as but one possible manifestation, operating primarily in the economic sphere, while status groups operate in the social sphere, and parties operate in the political sphere. Weber's tripartite understanding of basic social divisions has proven helpful to many social researchers who attempt to map and understand how people group themselves and with what consequences. Pay careful attention to the historic links he draws between class and capitalism, as well as the way in which status groups dominated power relations in pre-capitalist communities.

NOTE: Weber uses the terms Gemeinschaft *and* Gesellschaft *as special terms to denote different kinds of historical communities. These terms were very popular at the time of this writing and every reader would have understood the reference. In many ways,* Gemeinschaften *are similar to Durkheim's mechanical solidarity societies while* Gesellschaften *are similar to Durkheim's organic solidarity societies.*

Introduction on Power

Every order affects the distribution of power. In general, by power we mean the chance of a person or group of persons to enforce their will on others, even against resistance. Power need not be for money but may be desirable for its own sake. In some cases, it is desired for social recognition or honor. The legal order can guarantee power and honor, but it is not normally the primary source of either. It is an additional factor that enhances the opportunity to possess power or a good reputation. The distribution of power within a community we may call the social order. The social order is not the same thing as the economic order, although it is highly determined by the economic order and in turns effects it.

The Distribution of Power within a *Gemeinschaft* Community: Classes, Status Groups, and Parties

Classes

Classes, strictly speaking, are not common in *Gemeinschaft* communities. A class exists only when all three of the following conditions are met: (1) when a large number of people have a specific causal component of their life chances in common; (2) when this causal component is exclusively related to economic interests in the possession of goods and the opportunities of income; and (3) when this operates under the condition of a commodity or labor market. When specific life chances are created by the manner in which material property is distributed among a large enough group of people meeting competitively in the market for exchange, we can talk of classes. Property and lack of property are the basic categories of all class situations. We can refine this further into what kinds of property are used for generating income and exchange. Here are some examples:

- Ownership of residential houses, factories, stores, agriculturally productive land
- Ownership of mines, of domestic animals, of people (slaves)
- Disposition of the mobile tools of production or acquired capital goods

- Ownership of products of one's own labor or "marketable" skills

Owners are differentiated from each other by the type of property owned (e.g., slave-owners are distinct from factory-owning capitalists or pensioners living off of stock dividends). Property-less workers are also starkly differentiated from each other, according to the kinds of services they offer and whether they are temporary wage workers or salaried employees. In all cases, though, the concept of class is organized around the chances in the market that determine the common conditions of an individual's fate.

Stände (Status Groups)

The existence of *Stände* hinders the realization of the naked market principle that is the essence of class. The great shift from *Stände* to classes has been going on in the past up to the present (early 19th century). *Stände*, in contrast to classes are normally communally based *Gemeinschaften*. However, they are often of an amorphous sort. In contrast to 'class situations,' which are purely determined by the economy, *Stände* result from a typical integral part of life, in which a person's fate depends on a specific positive or negative social assessment of honor. This assessment of honor is tied to the common characteristics of a stereotypical member of the particular *Stand*. To complicate things further, such honor may also be tied to a class situation, to the amount and kind of property held in the economy. It is common that the differences between classes and *Stände* can be combined in numerous ways (e.g., a slave-owning member of the aristocracy, a property-less citizen). However, property as such does not always generate prestige in terms of increased honor within the *Stand*.

In today's modern democracy, an explicitly ordered privilege of single individuals according to their *Stände* does not exist, although it does happen that families who belong to the same income bracket dance with each other. It is possible for both people with property and people without property to belong to the same *Stand*, of course.

The honor of the *Stand* is predominantly expressed through a specific lifestyle and is imposed on anyone who wants to belong to that social circle. Linked with this lifestyle are restrictions on social intercourse with other *Stände*, unless those interactions deal with economic or commercial purposes. People marry within their *Stand*, strict endogamy operates in *Stände*.

When the most extreme consequences of stratification are reached, the *Stand* evolves into a closed caste. Rituals develop guaranteeing *Stände*-related distinctions. This is achieved by restricting any physical contact of members of higher castes with members of lower castes, thereby protecting the purity of the higher caste. As a result, the *Stände*-related stratifications can lead to the development of castes where the underlying differentiations are held to be ethnic or racial. The Jews are the most impressive historic example of this. The caste structure transforms the horizontal unconnected coexistence of ethnically segregated communities into a vertical system of hierarchical stratification. Where ethnic coexistence permits any ethnic group to value its personal honor as the highest, caste stratification acknowledges higher honor among privileged castes and *Stände*

From a practical point of view, stratification by *Stände* goes hand in hand with monopolization of both symbolic and material goods and opportunities. Besides the specific honor of *Stand*, which always bases itself upon distance and exclusiveness, there are all sorts of specific monopolies, such as the right to wear special costumes or east special dishes denied to others, or even the privilege of carrying arms.

Typically, the privileged *Stände* avoid common physical labor. This disqualification is even beginning in democratic America, despite older contrary traditions which esteemed physical labor highly. In addition, every rational economic pursuit, particularly "mercantile activity" is often considered to disqualify a person from being a member of the most privileged *Stände*. Even artistic work, if done for money, is considered degrading, and especially so when connected with hard physical exertion and effort, such as the case of a sculptor working in a dusty smock.

Stände are thus quite distinct from classes! The market knows no ''honor' or 'prestige' but the reverse is true for the *Stand*. Stratification and privileges in terms of honor and of lifestyles are inherent to each *Stand* and as such are threatened by market forces. Mere economic acquisition and naked economic power bear a stigma from their origin for *Stände*. Why is this? All groups interested in the *Stände* orders react with fierceness against the pretentions of purely economic acquisitions because it undercuts the basis of honor and prestige. Otherwise, the wealthiest person would be the most honorable of them all! The privileged *Stände* groups never accept the newly arrived, the *nouvueau riche*, not unreservedly, even if he has adapted his lifestyle to theirs. The privileged *Stände* will only accept their descendants – those raised from birth in the proper conventions, and who have never compromised their honor by participating in economic labor.

Accordingly and predictably, the *Stände* stratification restrains the free development of the market. First, the development of the market is hindered by the goods which the privileged *Stände* monopolize, thereby taking them, if you will, out of free circulation. This can be done by law or convention, as with the case of inherited estates. There is thus no actual free market competition in a *Stände* stratification system. But secondly, is the conflictual relationship between *Stände* and the economic order. The notion of honor peculiar to the *Stand* abhors the commercial activity, the bargaining, which is essential to the market.

Thus, to summarize:

- Classes are stratified according to relations to production and acquisition of goods.
- *Stände* are stratified according to the principles of their consumption of goods as represented by specific lifestyles.

We might also say that each occupation is a *Stand*, where and when each has its own specific lifestyle, established by the occupation (e.g., knights, professors, priests). Classes and *Stände* are different but at the same time they blend and certainly often overlap.

So only a general statement can be made about when we are more likely to see *Stände* or Classes emerge as the predominant structuring force. A relatively stable base for the acquisition and distribution of goods is necessary for *Stände* stratification to be favored. Destabilization by technical and economic change and upheaval can threaten *Stand* stratification by pushing the class situation into the foreground. Eras and countries in which the naked class situation is of predominant significance are normally the periods of technological and economic transformations. In contrast, every slowing down of an economic shifting process in a short time leads to the awakening of the *Stand* culture, with the result that social 'honor' is reestablished.

Parties

The genuine home of classes is within the economic order and the genuine home of *Stände* is within the social order (the sphere of the distribution of prestige and honor). Parties, however, are primarily at home within the sphere of power.

Party actions are directed towards attaining social power, which means they are directed towards influencing collective action. Parties can only develop within communities organized along *Gesellschaft* principles, societies that some kind of rational order and an apparatus of persons available read to enforce that rational order. That is because parties direct collective action towards particular goals or ends. The goal of the party is to influence this apparatus of persons or become this apparatus of person.

Parties can represent interests determined by class situations or *Stände* situations and recruit followers accordingly, but they are conceptually distinct from those classes and *Stände*.

Parties can have brief or long-lasting structures. Their means of attaining power can be quite diverse, ranging from naked violence of any kind, to campaigning for votes, to elaborate tactics of obstruction within parliamentary bodies. In order to truly understand parties, we need to understand and discuss the structures of social domination.

Questions for Contemplation and Discussion

1. Is Weber's "similar life chances" definition of class very different from Marx's notion of class? Explain your answer.
2. Can you think of a different term for STÄNDE (other than status group)?
3. Weber makes a claim that privileged *Stände* do not engage in physical labor. Read Veblen here and compare.
4. Do *Stände* or Classes predominate in today's society? How do you know?

Concepts

Power

Social Order

Class and Class situation

Stände and *Stände* situation

Party

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1. The word Weber uses here is STÄNDE and there are no exact English equivalents. It has most often been translated as "status," but this is not quite right. As Waters and Waters (2010) note, the German word for status is, well, status. Weber did not use this

word. Instead, he used a word that has an equivalent to way the French use “estate,” to mean a social group with hereditary ties, linked to rights and responsibilities in a given community. Here, we sometimes retain the German word and sometime use “status group” as the least bad approximation for the contemporary reader. Note that Stand is the singular form.

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3.11: Concepts/Dictionary

Concepts from Weber

Use the following pages to create your own mini-dictionary, with page/line numbers for easy reference. You may want to save this as a separate document for more detailed note-taking and commentary.

Concept	Page/Line Numbers	Definition/Notes
Authority		
Beruf		
Bookkeeping		
Charisma		
Class		
Class Situation		
Doctrine of Predestination		

Rational Western State		
Rational Commerce		
Rational-Formalistic Law		
Social Action		
Social Order		

Sociology		
Spirit of Capitalism		
Stände		
Stände Situation		
State		
Verstehen		
(Worldly) Ascetism		

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

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Thumbnail: W. E. B. Du Bois, with beard and mustache, around 50 years old. (Public Domain; Cornelius Marion Battey via Wikipedia)

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4.1: Biography of Early American Sociologists

NOTE ON SOURCES: The following sources were used for biographical information on the early American sociologists. All are recommended for further reading: Heinz Maus, A Short History of Sociology (1962); Charles Hunt Page, Class and American Sociology: From Ward to Ross (1969), Timothy Raison and Paul Barker, The Founding Fathers of Social Science (1963); Stephen Turner, American Sociology: From Pre-Disciplinary to Post-Normal (2014); Ronald Fernandez, Mappers of Society: The Lives, Times and Legacies of Great Sociologists (2003)

Although the United States did not produce classical theorists on the same level as Marx, Weber, and Durkheim, it would be wrong to think that there were no theoretical advances taking place there in this period. The early American sociologists were aware of what was going on in Europe. In fact, the first US sociology journal, the *American Journal of Sociology*, had Durkheim on its editorial board. In contrast to European sociology, however, it is true that American sociology tended to be less theoretical, more pragmatic, and more closely tied in with public policy research. The several Americans included in this section were known for developing ideas and concepts as well as "doing" sociology. There are a few things that stand out and should be noted. From the beginning, there was a tension between those who espoused a Spencerian Social Darwinist approach to the social world and those who would use sociology to formulate plans and solutions to social problems. This tension may be rooted in the newness of the United States, its unique history as a colony and destination of mass migration (voluntary and forced). Several writers noted the importance of understanding and ameliorating racial problems, for example. Others sought to explain and prevent the hardening of class lines in a nation that was by definition anti-aristocratic, and more generally the problems and promises of a democratic society. Finally, American sociologists were a diverse group, as the following biographies attest.

William Graham Sumner (1840-1910)

Sumner is known as one of the "four founders" of American sociology (along with Small, Giddings, and Ward). Sumner was born October 30, 1840 in Paterson, New Jersey. His father was not wealthy and was known to engage in prospecting during Sumner's youth. Sumner himself worked as a clerk before graduating from Yale College in 1863. He dodged the draft for the American Civil War and instead traveled to Europe, where he studied at several universities, eventually hearing about sociology through Herbert Spencer while at Oxford University. Sumner had two careers: the first, begun in 1867, was an ordained minister. The second, was as first Professor of Sociology in the US, at Yale. In 1871 he married Jeannie Whittemore Elliott. They had three sons, two of whom survived to adulthood. As a sociologist, Sumner was greatly influenced by the social Darwinism of Spencer and was an outspoken advocate of *laissez-faire* policies. He served as the second president of the American Sociological Association (1908-1909), succeeding Ward, whose approach to sociology was diametrically opposed to that of Sumner. His major sociological publications include *Social Static: The Conditions Essential to Human Happiness*(1851), the multi-volume *System of Synthetic Philosophy*(1862-1892), and *The Study of Sociology*(1873).

Lester Frank Ward (1841-1913)

Ward is known as one of the "four founders" of American sociology (along with Giddings, Sumner, and Small). Ward was born June 18, 1841 in Joliet, Illinois. His father was a poor farmer and his mother the daughter of a clergyman. His father eventually owned and operated a sawmill outside Chicago. At age 17, Lester moved to Pennsylvania to work for his older brother, making wagon wheels. Eventually, he earned enough money to put himself through college. While there he met and married his wife, Lizzie Vought. Leaving college, he joined the Union Army and fought in the frontlines of the Civil War, where he suffered injuries. At the end of the war he moved to DC to edit a liberal-minded newspaper. Lizzie soon died in childbirth. A few years later, in 1869, he earned his college degree from George Washington University, followed quickly by a law degree (1871) and a master's degree (1873), and a second marriage, to Rosamund Simons. For several years Ward worked for the US Government as a geologist and paleontologist, but his attention eventually turned toward society. In 1883 he published a massive 1,200-page book entitled *Dynamic Sociology: Or, Applied Social Science Based on Statistical Sociology and the Less Complex Sciences.* Here he articulated a vision of sociology that was reformist and geared towards benefiting human society. In contrast to his contemporaries, Spencer and Sumner, Ward criticized the *laissez-faire* policies of his day as pernicious and unjust. In contrast, he advocated a strong welfare state, equal rights for women, and the abolition of white supremacy. In 1906 he became chair of sociology at Brown University.

Albion Woodbury Small (1854-1926)

Small is known as one of the "four founders" of American sociology (along with Giddings, Sumner, and Ward). He was born May 11, 1854 in Buckfield, Maine. Trained first as a minister like his father before him, he later studied history, economics and politics in Germany (Universities of Leipzig and Berlin), where he met and married his wife, Valeria von Massow, daughter of a German general, in 1881. They had one daughter, Lina. Completing his studies in Germany, he returned stateside to study history at Johns Hopkins University. He earned his PhD in 1889 with a dissertation on *The Beginnings of American Nationality*. He taught and became the president of Colby College (Maine) before founding the first Department of Sociology at the University of Chicago in 1892. There are a lot of firsts about Small. He wrote the first textbook in sociology (in 1894) and founded the first sociology journal, *American Journal of Sociology*(in 1895). He was the fourth president of the American Sociological Association. His major works include his first textbook *An Introduction to the Study of Society* (1894), *General Sociology*(1905), *The Meaning of the Social Sciences*(1910), and *Between Eras: From Capitalism to Democracy*(1913).

Giddings, Franklin Henry (1855-1931)

Giddings is known as one of the "four founders" of American sociology (along with Small, Sumner, and Ward). The son of a prominent Connecticut minister, he studied civil engineering at Union College in 1873 but did not graduate. He became a newspaper editor and school teacher. In 1876 he married Elizabeth Patience Hawes. They would have three children. He went back to college and earned his degree in 1888, after which he took a position at Bryn Mawr, becoming a full professor of political economy in 1892. In 1894, he became a full professor of sociology at Columbia University – this was the first such position in the United States. A dedicated researcher, Giddings was instrumental in creating a research-oriented American sociology. He wrote two early sociology textbooks – *Inductive Sociology* (1901) and *The Scientific Study of Human Society* (1924). He served as the third president of the American Sociological Society (1910-1911). Other works by Giddings include: *The Theory of Sociology* (1894), *The Theory of Socialization* (1897), *Elements of Sociology* (1898), and *Descriptive and Historical Sociology* (1906).

Thorstein Veblen (1857-1929)

Veblen was born July 30, 1857 in Cato, Washington, to Norwegian immigrants. His father was a carpenter by trade but when the family moved to Milwaukee in 1847, they turned to farming. Prosperous, the Veblens were able to send their twelve children to college. His sister, Emily, was the first daughter of Norwegian-American parents who earned a college degree. His oldest brother, Andrew, became a professor of physics. Thorstein attended nearby Carleton College, where he studied both economics and philosophy and became involved with Ellen Rolfe, the niece of the college president. After graduating in 1880, he moved East, where he began taking advanced courses in philosophy at Johns Hopkins University. Lacking funds to continue there, he transferred to Yale University on a scholarship, and obtained a PhD in 1884, with a degree in philosophy and social studies. Unable to find employment, which may have had something to do with either being irreligious or Norwegian, he moved back to the family farm for several years, where he married Ellen Rolfe in 1888. In 1891 he took up economics at Cornell University and then moved to the University of Chicago, where he was offered a teaching position. He began writing and publishing in earnest soon after, publishing *The Theory of the Leisure Class* in 1899, *The Theory of Business Enterprise* in 1904, and *The Instinct of Workmanship and the State of the Industrial Arts* in 1914. In 1911 he divorced Ellen and in 1914 married Ann Bradley Bevans, a former student. He had no children. In 1917 he moved to DC to work with a group on the peace talks following World War I. In 1919 he helped form the New School for Social Research in New York City. He continued to publish books critical of capitalism (*The Higher Learning in America*(1918), *The Vested Interests and the Common Man*(1919), and *Absentee Ownership and Business Enterprise*(1923)) until his retirement to California. He died in Menlo Park on August 3, 1929. He is known for many things – originating the term "conspicuous consumption," developing institutional economics, and being a consistent and sharp critic of capitalism and capitalists.

Gilman, Charlotte Perkins (1860-1935)

Gilman was born July 3, 1860 in Hartford, Connecticut. On her father's side, she was related to the novelist Harriet Beecher Stowe and the suffragist Isabella Beecher Hooker. She attended the Rhode Island School of Design in 1878 and became a painter. In 1884, she married a fellow-artist, Charles Walter Stetson. Suffering from post-partum depression after the birth of her daughter the following year, she wrote the novel she is most remembered for, *The Yellow Wallpaper*. The marriage was not a happy one and Gillman divorced in 1894. She became very active in feminist and social reform organizations on the West Coast. She remarried,

her cousin Houghton Gilman, in 1900. In 1932, Gilman was diagnosed with incurable breast cancer. She opted to commit suicide in 1935. Gilman is perhaps most known for her novels, particularly *The Yellow Wallpaper*, and poetry, but she was the author of numerous articles (two published in the *American Journal of Sociology)* and several non-fiction books, including *Women and Economics*(1898), *Concerning Children*(1900), *The Man-Made World or, Our Androcentric Culture*(1911), and *Social Ethics*(1914).

Jane Addams (1860-1935)

Addams was born on September 6, 1860 in Cedarville, Illinois, the youngest of eight children. Her father was a wealthy farmer and capitalist, owning several mills, farms, and factories, as well as serving as the local bank's president. He was active in the Republican Party and a friend of Abraham Lincoln. Addams was afforded ample opportunities, unusual for women of her day but perhaps not so unusual for women of her class. She went to college close to home and, after the death of her father, moved to Pennsylvania to take up a medical education. Suffering from depression and a bad back, she decided to help the poor directly rather than continue her medical training. Eventually, after much traveling and reading, she founded Hull House in Chicago in 1889. Hull House was a settlement house, a sort of cross between social service agency and community arts center, and included a public kitchen, a music school, a library, an employment bureau, and a gym, among other things. Social reformers came from all over to observe its activities, and Addams was flooded with invitations to speak about the Settlement House movement. Addams never married but had at least two serious romantic relationships with women. The first of these, Ellen Starr, helped found Hull House. The second, Mary Rozel Smith, with whom she lived, helped support Hull House financially. They remained together until Mary's death in 1934. Although never holding a sociology position, she was closely connected with the new sociology department at the University of Chicago, whose activities were aligned with methods developed by Addams (e.g., local ethnography in service of social reform). In the late 1980s, a resurgence of interest in Addams led to recognition that she was one of the "key founders" of the discipline in America. Her published works include descriptions of the Hull House project, *The Subjective Value of a Social Settlement (1892)* and *Twenty Years at Hull-House*(1910), polemics against harmful practices, *Child Labor*(1905), and more general sociological books such as *Democracy and Social Ethics*(1902).

Robert Ezra Park (1864-1944)

Park was born February 14, 1864 in Harveyville, Pennsylvania, but grew up in Red Wing, Minnesota. After graduating from the University of Michigan in 1887, he worked as a journalist, focusing on issues of social concern, particularly race and urban issues all over the US (Detroit, Denver, NYC, Chicago, and Minneapolis). He married Clara Cahill, the daughter of a wealthy Michigan family, in 1894[1]. They had four children. In 1899, he went back to school, to study philosophy under William James at Harvard. Park next studied philosophy and sociology in Berlin under Georg Simmel, writing a dissertation on Crowds and the Public. He followed his studies with a position as a professor of philosophy at Harvard but left the prestigious post to do field research with Booker T. Washington at the Tuskegee Institute. After completing this research, he took a position as a professor of sociology at the University of Chicago, a natural fit for a man of his temperament and interests in race relations and urban sociology. After teaching in Chicago for several years, he ended his career at Fisk University, where he remained until his death in 1944. Park's major publications during his life include *The Man Farther Down* (1912; with Booker T. Washington), *Introduction to the Science of Sociology* (1921; with fellow Chicago sociologist Ernest Burgess), *The City: Suggestions for the Study of Human Nature in the Urban Environment* (1925), *The University and the Community of Races* (1932),*Race Relations and the Race Problem* (1939). Several more publications followed his death, collections of articles and lecture during his lifetime.

Charles Horton Cooley (1864-1929)

Cooley was born August 17, 1864 in Ann Arbor, Michigan. His father was a Michigan Supreme Court judge and dean of the University of Michigan Law School. Cooley was said to be a shy child, and suffered from his father's overbearing nature. Although he began college (UM) at the young age of sixteen, it took him seven years to finish his studies, earning a degree in mechanical engineering. In 1890 he married Elsie Jones, an educated woman and daughter of a professor of medicine at UM. They had three children and lived a very close domestic life in Ann Arbor. He returned to UM for a master's degree in political economics and a PhD in economics, which he earned in 1894. Interested in analyzing social problems, he began teaching sociology the following year. One of the first sociological books he published was entitled *Nature versus Nurture in the Making of Social Careers*(1896). His output was prodigious thereafter, and included *The Process of Social Change* (1902), *Human Nature and the Social Order* (1902), Social*Organization* (1909), *Social Process* (1918), *Life and the Student* (1927), and *Sociological Theory and Research*

(1930). He is most famous for developing the concept of the "looking glass self," and the idea that one's self-identity is socially constructed. In this, he is the grandfather of symbolic interaction theory.

Edward Alsworth Ross (1866-1951)

Ross was born December 12, 1866 in Virden, Illinois, the son of a farmer. He graduated from Coe College and served as an instructor at a local business school for two years before undertaking graduate study in Germany. In 1891 he received a PhD from Johns Hopkins University in political economy. He served as professor at Indiana University from 1891-1892, Cornell from 1892-1892, and Stanford from 1893 to 1900. In 1892 he married Rosamund Simons, the niece of Lester Frank Ward. He was famously fired from Stanford because of his radical political views on the railroad industry, which bothered Stanford's widow. This case became one of the first "academic freedom" controversies in the US. After his firing he taught at the University of Nebraska for a few years, before eventually settling in at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he served as Professor of Sociology until his retirement in 1937. Ross served as the fifth President of the American Sociological Society (1914-1915). From 1940 to 1950 he served as chairperson of the American Civil Liberties Union. His major publications include *Social Control: A Survey of the Foundations of Order* (1901), *Foundations of Sociology* (1905), *Changing America: Studies in Contemporary Society* (1912), *What is America?* (1919), and *The Russian Bolshevik Revolution* (1921).

W.E.B. Du Bois (1868-1963)

William Edward Burghardt Du Bois was born February 23, 1868 in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, a relatively integrated community for the time. His family had been part of the free African-American population for several generations, and his parents were small landowners. Du Bois attended the local integrated (mostly white) high school before attending the historically black Fisk University. It was here that he first discovered Southern racism and the Jim Crow system. After Fisk, Du Bois attended Harvard, studying under the famous American philosopher, William James. He gave a commencement oration on Jefferson Davis. After studying in Berlin and teaching a course at a small college in Ohio, he earned a PhD from Harvard in 1895, the first African-American to do so. He also married one of his students from Ohio, Nina Gomer. They had two children, a son who died young and a daughter, Yolande, who became a high school teacher and wife of the famous poet Countee Cullen. The following year he published his dissertation, *The Suppression of the African Slave-Trade to the United States of America, 1638-1870*, and was hired to conduct a sociological study of Philadelphia's Black community by the University of Pennsylvania. In 1897 he was hired as professor of history and economics at Atlanta University. From here began Du Bois' remarkable publication record, including *The Philadelphia Negro* (1897), *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), *Darkwater: Voices from within the Veil* (1920), and *Black reconstruction* (1935). He also became deeply active in political movements, both in the US and abroad. He helped organize the first Pan-African Conference in Paris in 1919, edited the political journal *The Crisis*, and became active in the Communist Party. After the death of his first wife, he married Shirley Graham, an author and activist. Du Bois was a life-long proponent of peace and supporter of decolonization efforts around the world, eventually moving to and dying in the newly independent nation of Ghana.

Charles Abram Ellwood (1873-1946)

Ellwood may more properly be considered the "second generation" of American sociologists. He was largely seen as a successor to Ward in approach, fighting against "objectivism" in social sciences, bringing a more social psychological perspective to his work, and gearing his research toward the amelioration of social problems. We don't actually know much about his beginnings or personal life. Ellwood was born on January 20, 1873 in New York. He graduated from Cornell University in 1896 (where he studied under Ross), but also studied at the University of Chicago (where he studied under Small) and Berlin. He first became a professor of sociology in 1900 at the University of Missouri and later moved to Duke University. He served as the fourteenth president of the American Sociological Association, where his presidential speech was a stirring rebuke to *Intolerance* (1924). His major works include *Public Relief and Private Charity* (1903), *Sociology and Modern Social Problems* (1910), *Sociology in its Psychological Aspects* (1912), and *The Social Problem: A Constructive Analysis* (1917), *Cultural Evolution* (1927), and *Methods in Sociology* (1933).

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1. For more on "the curious marriage" between Park, a man who mocked wealthy philanthropic "club-women" and Clara Cahill, the epitome of such a club-woman, I recommended Mary Jo Deegan's 2006 article, "The Human Drama Behind the Study of People as Potato Bugs" in The Journal of Classical Sociology. ↵

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4.2: Comparison of Spencer and Ward by Barnes (1919)

"They start from the assumption that a collective rather than a purely individualistic struggle for existence has from the beginning of human history been indispensable for the survival and progress of society."

NOTE ON SOURCE: These passages are from two articles published in 1919 by Harry Elmer Barnes. The articles were entitled, "Two Representative Contributions of Sociology to Political Theory: The Doctrines of William Graham Sumner and Lester Frank Ward" and were published in the *American Journal of Sociology* (volume 24, number 1) in July 1919.

Introduction – Why this is important and what to look for

Passages from the lengthy articles are included here as an introduction to the contrasting founders of American sociology. The writer, Barnes, was a professor of history at Columbia University, and, in his later years, lost credibility for his denial of the Holocaust. These passages will serve as an introduction to the reception of Sumner's work, and its contrast to Ward. American sociology, and American social thought generally, was torn between a laissez-faire evolutionary approach (typified by Sumner) and a progressive social reform approach (typified by Ward). Although Ward's approach (perhaps) won out historically, it is important to recognize just how much influence and respect Sumner's approach had at the time.

Introduction: The Sociological View of the State

In this period of rapid social change, cataclysmic transformations of governments, and multiplicity of proposals for new and improved forms of political organization, it is particularly desirable that one should be able to secure orientation by getting back of superficial externals to the fundamental basis of the origin, nature, functions, and justification of political institutions. The complete futility of a purely metaphysical or legalistic interpretation of political institutions is generally agreed upon by all progressive students. Realizing that man in political life, as in other phases of human activity, is guided primarily by his mental mechanism, emotional and rational, enterprising writers and students have made promising beginnings in a psychological reconstruction of political theory. Others, holding that man's material interests have greatly influenced his emotional and intellectual reactions and activities, have endeavored with no little success to show the relation of economic life to the nature and functioning of the state.

Then there is a school of writers, calling themselves, since the time of Comte, sociologists, who believe that the most significant fact about our life and conduct is that we do not act in isolation but in association with our fellows, in other words that in every phase of human activity our group life is the most fundamental element to be considered. They start from the assumption that a collective rather than a purely individualistic struggle for existence has from the beginning of human history been indispensable for the survival and progress of society, and they further assume the necessity and existence of the state as a most powerful and vital organ in this process of social development. From this point of view the state appears not as some metaphysical "ethical being" or as a purely legalistic entity emitting "commands of a determinate superior," but as a purely natural product of social evolution, more or less distinctly correlated in its development with the stages of group progress with which its growth is associated. Viewed in this sense it must be agreed that political institutions cannot be properly understood or profitably studied except in their relation to their broader foundations in the social or group life of mankind, and the only sound criterion for estimating the value and relative excellence of the state is its adaptability to the function of promoting the progress and basic interests of the group at any given time. To mention but a few of the more notable examples, Spencer, Giddings, Durkheim, Cooley, Ellwood, Giddings, Sumner, and Ward.

The late Professor Sumner stands out as the great American exponent of the *laissez-faire* doctrine so inseparably associated with the name of Herbert Spencer. Professor Ward represents, on the other hand, the most advanced views yet taken by an avowed sociologist in the advocacy of a comprehensive program of social reform through the medium of legislation.

Part 1. Sumner; General Characteristics of His Sociological Thought

Among the sociologists of America there is little doubt that the late Professor William Graham Sumner, of Yale, was the most vigorous and striking personally. Probably the most inspiring and popular teacher that Yale University or American social science has produced, Sumner's direct contact with thousands of students was, without doubt, more important for the development of sociology in the United States than his own published works upon the subject, or the published works of many another American sociologists. Consequently, in even a brief introduction to his contributions to sociology, an attempt to interpret his personality and

methods, as revealed in his writings and in written and oral estimates from former students at Yale, is more essential than it would be in the case of any other American sociologist.

In spite of the fact that Sumner frequently emphasizes the necessity for an objective point of view in social science and decries any attempt upon the part of a sociologist to moralize, it is impossible for a reader to emerge from a protracted examination of Sumner's economic, political, and sociological writings without becoming convinced that Sumner was primarily a preacher in the true sense of that term. Trained originally for the ministry and serving for a short time as an ordained curate of the Episcopal Church, Sumner tells his readers that he left the ministry because he wanted to be able to turn his attention to political, economic, and social questions rather than to the preparation of sermons on theological subjects. It is hard to escape the conviction that he employed his professorial career in these more fertile fields in developing an intellectual ministry which has been unexcelled for its success, influence, and inspiration by that of any other American teacher. Sumner was as subtle in his preaching as Jefferson was in his political epistolography, for he continually disclaimed any attempt to do more than set forth concrete facts in a candid manner. Yet his Social Classes is, above all, an exhortation to independent thought and action, self-reliance, and individual initiative, and the element of the preacher is not entirely absent even in *Folkways*. If one adds to this initial zeal the influence of a commanding personality, a wide learning, a splendid, of not entirely accurate dogmatism, and a mastery of incisive English which makes his essays models of terse 19th century critical prose, it is not difficult to understand Sumner's reputation as a teacher or his dominating influence at Yale.

Sumner's writings are intensely dogmatic, and he was an uncompromising foe of all the unscientific sentimentality which has permeated so many of the pseudosociological writings and movements of the last quarter of a century. His basic message to his students and readers in this respect has been concisely epitomized by one of his students as "Don't be a damn fool!"' Sumner's dogmatism, however, was not entirely logical or consistent. For example, he stated that he did not believe in either metaphysics or psychology and that he had always tried to prevent sociology from being infected by them. Nevertheless, he continually indulged in a rather crude type of metaphysics of his own, and his *Folkways* is unquestionably the most important objective treatment of a very essential portion of social psychology which has ever been written.

While it may be true that Sumner was always primarily a sociologist in method and point of view, there can be no doubt that he built up his academic and literary reputation in the fields of economics and political science as an exceedingly vigorous advocate of "hard money," free trade, and *laissez-faire*. Again, while Sumner may claim a priority of practically a decade over any other American teacher in introducing a serious course in sociology into the university curriculum, he never published a systematic exposition of sociology, and his great monograph, *Folkways*, did not appear until three years before his death.

On the whole it was probably fortunate that Sumner specialized in the descriptive and ethnographic, rather than the theoretical, phase of sociology, as his power of that sustained and logical abstract thinking, such as has characterized Professor Giddings' work, was very modest.

It seems that, tentatively at least, Sumner's position in American sociology may be summarized as follows: He was the first teacher of sociology in the country from the standpoint both of time and ability; his *Folkways* is one of the richest treatments of a special branch of sociology that has yet appeared; his sociological writings were primarily concrete and descriptive rather than abstract and theoretical; his views regarding social initiative or "collective telesis" to adopt Ward's terminology, were exceedingly biased and archaic, being almost a *reductio ad absurdum* of the *laissez-faire* individualistic position.

A primary conception in Sumner's sociological theory was the assumption that social as well as organic evolution is almost entirely an automatic spontaneous process which cannot be extensively altered by social effort.

Part 2. Ward; General Characteristics of His Sociological System

Among all American writers there can be no doubt that Lester F. Ward has produced the most pretentious and comprehensive system of sociology. Mr. Ward was also the earliest important American sociologist. His *Dynamic Sociology*, which many critics consider his magnum opus, appeared in 1883, about midway between the publication of the first and last volumes of Spencer's *Principles of Sociology*. In addition to many articles in periodicals, Ward's sociological system was embodied in six considerable volumes. Whatever may be the estimate of the future regarding the place of Ward in the history of sociology, it is certain that no other writer has approached the subject with a body of scientific knowledge which at all approximated that possessed by Ward. Herbert Spencer's *Synthetic Philosophy* undoubtedly displays more profound reasoning powers and a greater talent for the logical

marshaling of evidence, but his scientific knowledge was not at all comparable to that possessed by Ward. Ward's formal scientific career was passed as a government expert in paleobotany, to which he made contributions only second in importance to his work in sociology. Ward's predilection for introducing his botanical terminology into his sociology often gives the latter as strange, technical, and repulsive a tone as is to be found in the writings of the extreme "Organicists." Some of his scientific terms, however, such as "sympodial development," "synergy," "creative synthesis," "gynaecocracy," and "social telesis," are rather felicitous and have been quite generally absorbed into conventional sociological thought and expression.

As to the subject-matter of sociology, Ward says: "My thesis is that the subject-matter of sociology is human achievement. It is not what men are but what they do. It is not the structure but the function." As nearly all of the earlier sociologists had been concerned almost wholly with an analysis of social structure, Ward's point of approach was novel and epoch-making in its significance. The divisions of sociology are two-pure and applied. Pure sociology is theoretical and seeks to establish the principles of the science. Applied sociology is practical and points out the applications of the science. Specifically, it "deals with the artificial means of accelerating the spontaneous processes of nature."

Ward divides the body of his sociological system accordingly into genesis and telesis. The former treats of the origin and spontaneous development of social structures and functions and the latter of the conscious improvement of society,

In conclusion, one may safely say that Ward's outstanding contributions to sociology were his grasp of the relations between cosmic and social evolution, and his doctrine of the superiority of the conscious over the unconscious control of the social process. In neither of these respects has he been approached by any other sociologist. Of these two cardinal contributions the latter is by far the more important, for the obvious reason that the former is at best but picturesque and eloquent guesswork, and must always be so until the range of human knowledge is greatly extended. The latter, however, is perhaps the most important single contribution of sociology to human thought, and Ward's significance must rest chiefly upon the fact that his presentation of this conception has been the most powerful that sociology has yet produced.

Professor Giddings has summed up this aspect of Ward's system with characteristic clarity:

> Throughout all Ward's work there runs one dominating and organizing thought. Human society, as we who live now know it, is not the passive product of unconscious forces. It lies within the domain of cosmic law, but so does the mind of man: and this mind of man has knowingly, artfully, adapted and re-adapted its social environment, and with reflective intelligence has begun to shape it into an instrument wherewith to fulfill man's will. With forecasting wisdom man will perfect it, until it shall be at once adequate and adaptable to all its uses. This he will do not by creative impulse evolving in a void, but by constructive intelligence shaping the substantial stuff of verified scientific knowledge. Wherefore, scientific knowledge must be made the possession of mankind. Education must not merely train the mind. It must also equip and store, with knowledge.

This great thought Dr. Ward apprehended, expressed, explained, illuminated, drove home to the mind of all who read his pages, as no other writer, ancient or modern, has ever done. It is his enduring and cogent contribution to sociology.

Questions for Contemplation and Discussion

1. What is the primary divergence between the sociological and public policy approaches of Sumner and Ward? How would you characterize the other American sociologists (e.g., Addams, Giddings, Cooley)? What about Weber and Durkheim (who were developing their ideas at the same time)?
2. What does Barnes mean when he says it was "probably fortunate" that Sumner stuck to description and ethnography?
3. What does it mean to say that evolution is "spontaneous"? What would Sumner have thought of Addams' position on the activity of the labor movement?
4. Which brand of sociology is most attractive to you? Why?

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4.3: Thorstein Veblen, on Labor(1898)

"Early humans were members of a group which depended for its survival on the industrial efficiency of its members and on their singleness of purpose in making use of the material means at hand."

NOTE ON SOURCE: This passage is from an article entitled "The Instinct of Workmanship and the Irksomeness of Labor," published in the *American Journal of Sociology* in September 1898, pages 187-201. It has been abbreviated for publication here.

Introduction – Why this is important and what to look for

Veblen tries to understand how it is that we could have a collective aversion to work when, as a species, we have always had a very strong "instinct for workmanship." He then contrasts sportsmanship (fighting) with workmanship, locating the denigration of work in the development of a "predatory culture." As you read this passage and follow Veblen's argument, think about how it compares with Marx's description of the rise of capitalism and Weber's explanation of the difference between class and status societies.

The Instinct of Workmanship[1] and the Irksomeness of Labor

It is one of the commonplaces of the revived economic theory that work is irksome. Many a discussion proceeds on this axiom that, so far as regards economic matters, people desire above all things to get the goods produced by labor and to avoid the labor by which the goods are produced. In a general way the common-sense opinion is well in accord with current theory on this head. According to the common-sense ideal, the economic beatitude lies in an unrestrained consumption of goods, without work; whereas the perfect economic affliction is unremunerated labor. We instinctively revolt at effort that goes to supply the means of life.

No one will accept the proposition when stated in this bald fashion, but even as it stands it is scarcely an overstatement of what is implied in the writings of eminent economists.

Yet, for all the apparent absurdity of the thing, there is the fact. With more or less sincerity, people currently avow an aversion to useful effort. The avowal does not cover all effort, but only such as is of some use; it is, more particularly, such effort as is vulgarly recognized to be useful labor. Less repugnance is expressed as regards effort which brings gain without giving a product that is of human use, as, for example, the effort that goes into war, politics, or other employments of a similar nature. And there is commonly no avowed aversion to sports or other similar employments that yield neither a pecuniary gain nor a useful product.

Like other animals, humans are agents that act in response to stimuli afforded by the environment in which they live. Like other species, we are creatures of habit and propensity. But in a higher degree than other species, we mentally digest the content of the habits under whose guidance we act and appreciate the trend of these habits and propensities. We are in an eminent sense an intelligent agent. By selective necessity we are endowed with a proclivity for purposeful action. We are possessed of a discriminating sense of purpose, by force of which all futility of life or of action is distasteful to us. This is a generic feature of human nature. It is not a trait that occurs sporadically in a few individuals.

Our great advantage over other species in the struggle for survival has been our superior facility in turning the forces of the environment to account. It is to our proclivity for turning the material means of life to account that we owe our positions as masters of creation. It is not a proclivity of effort, but to achievement – to the compassing of an end. Our primacy is in the last resort an industrial or economic primacy. In our economic life we are agents, not sponges; we are agents seeking in every act the accomplishment of some concrete, objective, impersonal end.

All this seems to contradict what has just been said of the conventional aversion to labor. But the contradiction is not so sheer in fact as it appears to be at first sight. Its solution lies in the fact that the aversion to labor is in great part a conventional aversion only. In the intervals of sober reflection, when not harassed by the strain of overwork, our common sense speaks unequivocally under the guidance of the *instinct of workmanship*. We like to see others spend their lives to some purpose, and we like to reflect that our own life is of some use. All of us have this quasi-aesthetic sense of economic or industrial merit, and to this sense of economic merit futility and inefficiency are distasteful. In its positive expression it is an impulse or instinct of workmanship; negatively it expresses itself in a deprecation of waste.

This instinct of workmanship apparently stands in sheer conflict with conventional antipathy to useful effort. The two are found together in full discord in the common run of people; but whenever a deliberate judgment is passed on conduct or one vents, the former asserts its primacy in a pervasive way which suggests that it is altogether the more generic, more abiding trait of human nature. There can scarcely be a serious question of precedence between the two. The former is a human trait necessary to the survival of the species; the latter is a habit of thought possible only in a species which has distanced all competitors, and then it prevails only by sufferance and within limits set by the former. The question between them is, Is the aversion to labor a derivative of the instinct of workmanship? And, how has it arisen and gained consistence in spite of its being at variance with that instinct?

Until recently there has been something of a consensus among those who have written on early culture, to the effect that, human beings, as they first emerged upon the properly human plane, were of a contentious disposition, inclined to isolate their own interests and purposes from those of their fellows, and with a penchant for feuds and brawls. Even today it is held that men are inclined to fight, not to work. This view would make the proclivity to purposeful action an impulse to sportsmanship rather than to workmanship.

There is much to be said for this view. If humans were by derivation a race not of workers but of sportsmen, then there is no need of explaining the conventional aversion to work. Work is unsportsmanlike and therefore distasteful, and perplexity then arises in explaining how we have in any degree become reconciled to any but a predatory life. The history of mankind, as conventionally written, has been a narrative of predatory exploits, and this history is not commonly felt to be one-sided or misinformed. And a sportsmanlike inclination to warfare is also to be found in nearly all modern communities. Similarly, the sense of honor, so-called, whether it is individual or national honor, is also an expression of sportsmanship. The prevalence of notions of honor may, therefore, be taken as evidence going in the same direction.

Yet there is a considerable body of evidence, both from cultural history and from the present-day phenomena of human life, which traverses this conventionally accepted view that makes man generically a sportsman. Obscurely but persistently, throughout the history of human culture, the great body of people have almost everywhere, in their everyday life, been at work to turn things to human use. The proximate aim of all industrial improvement has been the better performance of some workmanlike task. It will not do to say that the work accomplished is entirely due to compulsion under a predatory regime, for the most striking advances in this respect have been wrought where the coercive force of a sportsmanlike exploitation has been least.

The same view is borne out by the expressions of common sense. As has already been remarked, whenever they dispassionately take thought and pass a judgment on the value of human conduct, the common run of people approve workmanship rather than sportsmanship. At the best, they take an apologetic attitude toward the latter. Predatory exploit, simply as such, is not felt to carry its own legitimation. What meets unreserved approval is such conduct as furthers human life on the whole, rather than such as furthers the invidious or predatory interest of one as against another.

The archaic turn of mind that inclines people to commend workmanlike serviceability is the outcome of long and consistent habituation to a course of life of such a character as is reflected by this inclination.

Our life is activity; and as we act, so we think and feel. This is necessarily so, since it is we, the agent, that does the thinking and feeling. Like other species, we are a creature of habits and propensities. We are social animals and the selective process whereby we have acquired the spiritual makeup of a social animal has at the same time made us substantially a peaceful animal. We may have wandered far from the ancient position of peacefulness, but even now the traces of a peaceful trend in our everyday habits of thought and feeling are plain enough. The sight of blood and the presence of death, even of the blood or death of the lower animals, commonly strike inexperienced persons with a sickening revulsion. In the common run of cases, the habit of complacency with slaughter comes only as the result of discipline. In this respect we differ from the beasts of prey. In our unarmed frame and in the slight degree to which our muscular force is specialized for fighting, as well as in our instinctive aversion to hostile contact with ferocious beasts, we are to be classed with those animals that owe their survival to an aptitude for avoiding direct conflict with their competitors, rather than those which survive by virtue of overcoming and eating their rivals.

We are the weakest and most defenseless of all living things, and, according to the Law of the Jungle, it is our part to take advice and contrive to turn diverse things to account in ways that are incomprehensible to the rest. Without tools we are not a dangerous animal, as animals go. And we did not become a formidable animal until we had made some considerable advance in the contrivance of implements for combat. In the days before tools had been brought into effective use – that is to say, during by far the greater part of the period of human evolution – we could not be primarily agents of destruction or disturbers of the peace. We were

of a peaceable and retiring disposition by force of circumstances. Tools and implements, in the early days, must have served chiefly to shape facts and objects for human use, rather than for inflicting damage and discomfort. Industry would have to develop far before it became possible for one group of men to live at the cost of another.

By selection and by training, our life, before a predatory life became possible, would act to develop and to conserve in us an instinct for workmanship. The adaptation to the environment which the situation enforced was of an industrial kind: it required us to acquire facility in shaping things and situations for human use. This does not mean the shaping of things by the individual to her own individual use simply; for archaic humans were necessarily members of a group, and during this early stage, when industrial efficiency was still inconsiderable, no group could have survived except on the basis of a *sense of solidarity* strong enough to throw self-interest into the background. Self-interest, as an accepted guide of action, is possible only as the concomitant of a predatory life, and a predatory life is possible only after the use of tools has developed so far as to leave a large surplus of product over what is required for the sustenance of the producers. Subsistence by predation implies something substantial to prey upon.

Early humans were members of a group which depended for its survival on the industrial efficiency of its members and on their singleness of purpose in making use of the material means at hand. Some competition between groups for the possession of the fruits of the earth and for advantageous locations there would be even at a relatively early stage, but much hostile contact between groups there could not be; not enough to shape the dominant habits of thought.

What we can do easily is what we do habitually, and this decides what we can think and know easily. We feel at home in the range of ideas which is familiar through our everyday line of action. A habitual line of action constitutes a habitual line of thought and gives the point of view from which facts and events are apprehended and reduced to a body of knowledge. A process or method of life, once understood, assimilated in thought, works into the scheme of life and becomes a norm of conduct, simply because the thinking, knowing agent is also the acting agent. What is apprehended with facility and is consistent with the process of life and knowledge is thereby apprehended as right and good.

Under the canon of conduct imposed by the instinct of workmanship, efficiency, serviceability, commends itself, and inefficiency or futility is odious. We contemplate our own conduct and that of our neighbors, and pass judgment of complacency or of dispraise. The degree of effectiveness with which we live up to the accepted standard of efficiency in great measure determines our contentment with ourselves and our situation.

Sensitiveness to rebuke or approval is a matter of selective necessity under the circumstances of associated life. Without it no group of persons could carry on a collective life in a material environment that requires shaping to our ends.

Under the guidance of this taste for good work, we are compared with one another and with the accepted ideas of efficiency and are rated and graded by the common sense of our fellows according to conventional schemes of merit and demerit. The visible achievement of one of us is, therefore, compared with that of another, and the award of esteem comes habitually to rest on an invidious comparison of persons instead of on the immediate bearing of the given line of conduct upon the approved end of action. The ground of esteem in this way shifts from a direct appreciation of the expediency of the conduct to a comparison of the abilities of different agents. Instead of a valuation of serviceability, there is a gauging of capability on the ground of visible success. It becomes the proximate end of effort to put forth evidence of power, rather than to achieve an impersonal end for its own sake, simply as an item of human use.

Over time, aggression and predatory behavior creep in, as a way of marking success…

With the increasing density of population that follows from a heightened industrial efficiency, the group passes, by force of circumstances, from the archaic condition of poverty-stricken peace to a stage of predatory life. When a group emerges into this predatory phase of its development, the employments which most occupy men's attention are employments that involve exploit. The most serious concern of the group, and at the same time the direction in which the most spectacular effect may be achieved by the individual, is conflict with men and beasts. The assertion of a strong hand, successful aggression, usually of a destructive character, becomes the accepted basis of repute. The dominant life interest of the group throws its strong light upon this creditable employment of force and sagacity, and the other, obscurer ways of serving the group's life fall into the background. The guiding animus of the group becomes a militant one, and men's actions are judged from the standpoint of the fighting man.

As the predatory culture reaches a fuller development, there comes a distinction between employments. Prowess comes near being recognized as the sole virtue. Other employments, in which people are occupied with tamely shaping inert materials to human use,

become unworthy and end with becoming debasing. The tame employments, those that involve no obvious destruction of life and no spectacular coercion of refractory antagonists, fall into disrepute and are relegated to those members of the community who are defective in predatory capacity; those who are lacking in massiveness, agility, or ferocity. Therefore, the able-bodied barbarian of the predatory culture, who is at all mindful of his good name, severely leaves all uneventful drudgery to the women and children of the group. He puts in his time in the manly arts of war and devotes his talents to devising ways and means of disturbing the peace. That way lies honor.

In the barbarian scheme of life, the peaceable, industrial employments are women's work. They imply defective force, incapacity for aggression or devastation, and are therefore not of good report. In this way industrial occupations fall under a polite odium and are apprehended to be substantially ignoble. They are unsportsmanlike. Labor carries a taint, and all contamination from vulgar employments must be shunned by self-respecting men.

Where the predatory culture had developed in full consistence, the common-sense apprehension that labor is ignoble has developed into the further refinement that labor is wrong. In the further cultural development, when some wealth has been accumulated and the members of the community fall into a servile class on the one hand and a leisure class on the other, the tradition that labor is ignoble gains an added significance. It is not only a mark of inferior force, but it is also a perquisite of the poor. *This is the situation today*.

There is no remedy for this kind of irksomeness, short of a subversion of that cultural structure on which our canons of decency rest. Appeal may of course be made to taste and conscience to set aside the conventional aversion to labor; such an appeal is made from time to time by well-meaning persons, and some fitful results have been achieved in that way. But the commonplace, common-sense person is bound by the deliverances of common-sense decorum on this head – the heritage of an unbroken cultural line of descent that runs back to the beginning.

Questions for Contemplation and Discussion

1. Is work irksome to us? Compare and contrast your answer with that provided by Veblen.
2. Many of the first sociological theorists made comparisons between human animals and non-human animals. What sets us apart as a species, according to Veblen? How does this compare to what Marx thought set humans apart? What other comparisons can be made here between Veblen and Marx? Do you think Veblen had read Marx? Explain.
3. What is the "instinct of workmanship"? Why has Veblen chosen the word "instinct" to define this phenomenon?
4. Veblen was known primarily as an economist, and economics is the only social science he mentions in this article. What makes him a sociologist? Find passages and assertions in support.
5. In this article, Veblen asserts a sociology of knowledge, of how we come to think as we do, about the things we do. According to him, what is the source of our knowledge? What is the relationship between our thoughts, beliefs, values and the context (social and environmental) in which we live? Further, what is the source of our ethical values and social norms?
6. Veblen also puts forth a theory about how the gendered division of labor emerged, and with what consequences for relations between the sexes. What does he say? How does this compare with Durkheim?
7. What are the social and cultural consequences of seeing manual labor as inferior to exploitation? Does Veblen offer any solutions here?

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1. A note on gender-neutral language here. In most cases, where Veblen uses "man" to denote all humans, I have changed the text to reflect this (most of the time, adopting "we" and "us" instead of the generic "men"). However, in cases where it is obvious that women were not encompassed by the word, such as "sportsmanship", the original term has been retained. In the case of workmanship, the original has sometimes been retained (as here, in the title), and at times changed to a more generic work, labor, or craft, as more appropriate to the intended meaning. ↵

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4.4: Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Women and Economics (1898)

"When the mother of the race is free, we shall have a better world."

NOTE ON SOURCE: This passage is from Gilman's book, *Women and Economics: A Study of the Relation between Men and Women as a Factor in Social Evolution*, published in 1898 . Included here are excerpts from the first and last chapters.

Introduction – Why this is important and what to look for

Charlotte Perkins Gilman is known for her critical views on the economic dependence of women. Her position was an unusual one at the time, linked as it was to a conception of the influence of social forces on what seemed like individual situations (e.g., marriage). Rather than argue that women should have the vote, Gilman argued that the gendered division of labor produced warped human beings (male and female). It is impossible to read her without also recognizing that she wrote within a current of eugenicist thinking, common to the period. Late nineteenth-century Reform Darwinism sought racial improvements through improved social arrangements and, at its most pernicious, better breeding (e.g., mate selection). In the passages included here Gilman uses "race" to mean both "the human race" and, sometimes, to hint at racial distinctions among humans. When reading, it may be useful to keep this mind, and to consider the historical connections between sociology, progressive reform, and evolutionary theory. Gender pronoun uses and references to "man" or "woman" have been retained as Gilman wrote them, as we can expect they were consciously intended.

Preface

This book is written to offer a simple and natural explanation of one of the most common and most perplexing problems of human life – a problem which presents itself to almost every individual for practical solution, and which demands the most serious attention of the moralist, the physician, and the sociologist.

To show how some of the worst evils under which we suffer, evils long supposed to be inherent and ineradicable in our natures, are but the result of certain arbitrary conditions of our own adoption, and how, by removing those conditions, we may remove the evils resultant…. It is hoped that the theory advanced will prove sufficiently suggestive to give rise to such further study and discussion as shall prove its error or establish its truth.

Chapter I.

Since we have learned to study the development of human life as we study the evolution of species throughout the animal kingdom, some peculiar phenomena which have puzzled the philosopher and moralist for so long, begin to show themselves in a new light. We begin to see that, so far from being inscrutable problems, these sorrows and perplexities of our lives are but the natural results of natural causes, and, that, as soon as we ascertain the causes, we can do much to remove them.

In spite of the power of the individual will to struggle against conditions, to resist them for a while, and sometimes to overcome them, it remains true that the human creature is affected by his environment, as is every other living thing.

Without touching yet upon the influence of social factors, treating the human being merely as an individual animal, we see that we are modified most by our economic conditions, as is every other animal. The sheep, the cow, the deer, differ in their adaptation to the weather, their locomotive ability, their means of defense; but they agree in main characteristics, because of their common method of nutrition.

The human animal is no exception to this rule. Climate affects us, weather affects us, enemies affect us; but most of all we are affected, like every other living creature, by what we do for a living.

In view of these facts, attention is now called to a certain marked and peculiar economic condition affecting humans, and unparalleled in the organic world. We are the only animal species in which the female depends on the male for food, the only animal species in which the sex-relations is also an economic relation. With us an entire sex lives in a relation of economic dependence upon the other sex, and the economic relation is combined with the sex-relation. The economic status of the human female is relative to the sex-relation.

It is commonly assumed that this condition also obtains among other animals, but such is not the case.

In the human species the condition is permanent and general, though there are exceptions, and the present century is witnessing the beginnings of a great change in this respect.

In studying the economic position of the sexes collectively, the difference is most marked. As a social animal, the economic status of man rests on the combined and exchanged services of vast numbers of progressively specialized individuals. The economic progress of the race, its maintenance at any period, its continued advanced, involve the collective activities of all the trades, crafts, arts, manufactures, inventions, discoveries, and all the civil and military institutions that go to maintain them. The economic status of any race at any time, with its involved effect on all the constituent individuals, depends on their world-wide labors and their free exchange. Economic progress, however, is almost exclusively masculine. Such economic processes as women have been allowed to exercise are of the earliest and most primitive kind. Were men to perform no economic services save such as are still performed by women, our racial status in economics would be reduced to most painful limitations.

To take from any community its male workers would paralyze it economically to a far greater degree than to remove its female workers. Men can cook, clean, and sew as well as women; but the making and managing of the great engines of modern industry, the threading of earth and sea in our vast systems of transportation, the handling of our elaborate machinery of trade, commerce, government – these things could not be done so well by women in their present degree of economic development.

This is not owing to lack of the essential human faculties necessary to such achievements, nor to any inherent disability of sex, but to the present condition of women, forbidding the development of this degree of economic ability. The male human being is thousands of years in advance of the female in economic status. Speaking collectively, men produce and distribute wealth; and women receive it at their heads.

The economic status of the human race in any nation, at any time, is governed mainly by the activities of the male: the female obtains her share in the racial advances only through him.

Women consume economic good. What economic product do they give in exchange for what they consume? In what way does she earn from her husband the food, clothing, and shelter she receives at his hands? By house service, it will be instantly replied. Although not producers of wealth, women serve in the final processes of preparation and distribution. Their labor in the household has a genuine economic value.

For a certain percentage of persons to serve other persons, in order that the ones so served may produce more, is a contribution not to be overlooked. The labor of women in the house, certainly, enables men to produce more wealth than they otherwise could; and in this way women are economic factors in society. But so are horses. The labor of horses enables men to produce more wealth than they otherwise could. The horse is an economic factor in society. But the horse is not economically independent, nor is the woman.

The labor which the wife performs in the household is given as part of her functional duty, not as employment. To take this ground and hold it honestly, wives, as earners through domestic service, are entitled to the wages of cooks, housemaids, nursemaids, seamstresses, or housekeepers, and to no more. This would of course reduce the spending money of the wives of the rich, and put it out of the power of the poor man to ‘support’ a wife at all. Nowhere on earth would there be “a rich woman” by these means. Even the highest class of private housekeeper, useful as her services are, does not accumulate a fortune.

But the salient fact in this discussion is that, whatever the economic value of the domestic industry of women is, they do not get it. The women who do the most work get the least money, and the women who have the most money do the least work.

Without going into either the ethics or the necessities of the case, we have reached so much common ground: the female of the human species is supported by the male. Whereas, in other species of animals, male and female alike graze and browse, hunt and kill, climb, swim, dig, run, and fly for their livings, in our species the female does not seek her own living in the specific activities of our race, but is fed by the male.

Now to the alleged necessity. Because of her maternal duties, the human female is said to be unable to get her own living. As the maternal duties of other females do not unfit them for getting their own living and also the livings of their young, it would seem that the human maternal duties require the segregation of the entire energies of the mother to the service of the child during her entire adult life, or so large a proportion of them that not enough remains to devote to the individual interests of the mother.

Such a condition, did it exist, would of course excuse and justify the pitiful development of the human female, and her support by the male. Is this the condition of human motherhood? Does the human mother, by her motherhood, thereby lose control of brain and body, lose power and skill and desire for any other work? Do we see before us the human race, with all its females segregated entirely to the uses of motherhood, consecrated, set apart, specially developed, spending every power of their nature on the service of their children?

We do not. We see the human mother worked far harder than a mare, laboring her life long in the service, not of her children only, but of men: husbands, brothers, fathers, whatever male relative she has; for mother and sister also; for the church a little, if she is allowed; for society, if she is able; for charity and education and reform, – working in many ways that are not the ways of motherhood.

In spite of her supposed segregation to maternal duties, the human female, the world over, works at extra-maternal duties for hours enough to provide her with an independent living, and then is denied independence on the ground that motherhood prevents her working!

The working power of the mother has always been a prominent factor in human life. She is the worker *par excellence*, but her work is not such as to affect her economic status. Her living, all that she gets – food, clothing, ornaments, amusements, luxuries – these bear no relation to her power to produce wealth, to her services in the house, or to her motherhood. These things bear relation only to the man she marries, the man she depends on, – to how much he has and how much he is willing to give her. The female of the human species is economically dependent on the male. He is her food supply.

Chapter 15.

The relation of the sexes, in whatever form, has always been observed to affect strongly the moral nature of mankind.

What we call the moral sense is an intellectual recognition of the relative importance of certain acts and their consequences.

No human distinction is more absolutely and exclusively social than the moral sense. Ethics is a social science. There is no ethics for the individual. Taken by himself, man is but an animal; and his conduct bears relation only to the needs of the animal – self-preservation and reproduction. Every virtue, and the power to see and strive for it, is a social quality. The highest virtues are those wherein we serve the most people, and their development in us keeps pace with the development of society. It is the social relation which calls for our virtues, and which maintains them.

Every social relation has its ethics; and the general needs of society, as a whole, are the basis of ethics. In every age and race this may be studied, and a clear connection established always between the virtues and vices of a given people and their local conditions. The principal governing condition in the development of ethics is the economic environment.

In the hunting and fighting period the best hunter and fighter was the best man, praised and honored by his tribe. To be patient and self-controlled was an economic necessity to the hunter: to bear pain and arduous exertion easily was a necessity to the fighter. Therefore, the savage, by precept and example, cultivated these virtues.

In the long agricultural and military periods we see the same things. In the peasant the virtues of industry and patience were extolled: it takes industry and patience to raise corn. In the soldier the virtues of courage and obedience were extolled, and in every one the virtue of faith was the prime requisite of the existing religion. Slowly the industrial era dawned and grew. With this change in economic conditions has changed the scale of virtues.

Physical courage has sunk; obedience, patience, faith, and the rest do not stand as they did. We praise and value today, as always, the virtues whereby we live. Every animal develops the virtues of his conditions; our human distinction is that we add the power of conscious perception and personal volition to the action of natural force.

All our virtues can be traced and accounted for. The great main stem of them all, what we call “love,” is merely the first condition of social existence. It is cohesion, working among us as the constituent particles of society. Without some attraction to hold us together, we should not be able to hold together; and this attraction, as perceived by our consciousness, we call love. The virtue of obedience consists in the surrender of the individual will, so often necessary to the common good; and it stands highest in military organization, wherein great numbers of men must act together against their personal interests, even to the sacrifice of life, in the service of community.

As we have grown into fuller social life, we have slowly and experimentally, painfully and expensively, discovered what kind of man was the best social factor. The type of satisfactory member of society today is a man self-controlled, kind, gentle, strong, wise, brave, courteous, cheerful, true. In the Middle Ages, strong, brave, and true would have satisfied the demands of the time. We now require for our common good a larger rage of qualities, a more elaborate moral organization. All this is a simple, evolutionary process.

But the moral development of humanity is a most tempestuous and contradictory field of study. [*Some virtues, like accuracy and punctuality, have been developed to suit our business activities while others remain to be developed.*]

Our condition may be described as consisting of a tenacious survival of qualities which we ought, on every ground of social good, to have long since outgrown; and an incessant struggle between these rudimentary survivals and the normal growth. We have felt within ourselves the pull of diverse tendencies [*and, needing an explanation for this, we made up "the devil", or located the trouble in "woman-kind."]*

[*Because of this, women were not allowed to develop the moral qualities to advance, confined instead to the "functional activities of her sex."*]

In keeping her on this primitive basis of economic life, we have kept half humanity tied to the starting-post, while the other half ran. We have trained and bred one kind of qualities into one-half the species, and another kind into the other half. And then we wonder at the contradictions of human nature! For instance, we have done all we could, in addition to natural forces, to make men brave. We have done all we could, in addition to natural forces, to make women cowards. And, since every human creature is born of two parents, it is not surprising that we are a little mixed.

We have trained in men the large qualities of social usefulness which the pressure of their economic conditions was also developing. We have trained in women, by the same means, the small qualities of personal usefulness which the pressure of their economic conditions was also developing.

By dividing the economic conditions of women and men, we have divided their psychic development, and built into the constitution of the race the irreconcilable elements of these diverse characters.

The largest and most radical effect of restoring women to economic independence will be in its result in clarifying and harmonizing the human soul.

It is not alone upon woman, and, through her, upon the race, that the ill-effects may be observed. Man, as master, has suffered from his position also. The lust for power and conquest, natural to the male of any species, has been fostered in him to an enormous degree by this cheap and easy lordship. His dominance is not that of one chosen as best fitted to rule or one of ruling by successful competition, but is a sovereignty based on the accident of sex, and holding over such helpless and inferior dependents as could not question or oppose. When man's place was maintained by brute force, it made him more brutal; when his place was maintained by purchase, by the power of economic necessity, then he grew into the merciless use of such power as distinguishes him today.

Another giant evil engendered by this relation is what we call selfishness. Social life tends to reduce this feeling, but the sexual-economic relation fosters and develops it. To have a whole human creature consecrated to his direct personal service, to pleasing and satisfying him in every way possible – this has kept man selfish. Pride, cruelty, and selfishness are the vices of the master. No wonder that we are all somewhat slow to rise to the full powers of democracy, to feel full social honor and social duty, while every soul of us is reared in this stronghold of ancient and outgrown emotions – the economically related family.

When the mother of the race is free, we shall have a better world, by the easy right of birth and by the calm, slow, friendly forces of social evolution.

Questions for Contemplation and Discussion

1. Gilman declares that great changes regarding the economic subordination of women were taking place. How different are the state of things today? What explains these great changes? Do you think they are permanent?
2. What does Gilman mean when she says, "The male human being is thousands of years in advance of the female in economic status"? How is this different today?
3. Many later feminists have made the argument that women's labor in the household is as productive as men's, but that it has gone uncompensated (see Marilyn Waring's *If Women Counted*, for an example). What would Gilman say to this argument?

4. Some have argued that economic inequality is fair since/when based on the amount and quality of work an individual engages in. How does Gilman's argument about women's work and women's economic dependence undercut this argument? Explain how Gilman's perspective here is a deeply *sociological* one.
5. Where do our morals come from, according to Gilman? How does she compare here with Marx and Engels? With Durkheim? With Veblen?
6. Gilman often writes in the evolutionary vernacular of the day. How is this evolutionary perspective linked to her argument against the economic dependence of women? Is the argument satisfactory? How would a person today respond?

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4.5: Du Bois on The Study of Social Problems (1898)

"The problem of the 20thcentury is the problem of the color line."[1]

NOTE ON SOURCE: This selection was published as an article in *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* in 1898, as " The Study of the Negro Problems." The article has been severely shortened to focus on issues related to sociology and how best to study controversial social problems sociologically.

Introduction to the selection

In this article, published to an audience of (white) scholars, Du Bois both surveys the current state of scholarship in the area of African American research (woefully inadequate) and makes a passionate plea for systematic and scientific research in this area. Choosing his words carefully, the article is organized in such a way to lull his readers into what at first appears a rather standard "literature review" and historical presentation, but which becomes, in the second half of the article (most of which is reproduced here), a strong statement about the necessity of a commitment to truth-seeking in research. Acknowledging that (white) people of his day had very strong opinions on the subject of "the African American problem," DuBois demonstrates the importance of science for providing real facts about the world from which eventual solutions can be fashioned.

The Study of Social Problems

The present period in the development of sociological study is a trying one; it is the period of observation, research and comparisons – work always wearisome, often aimless, without well-settled principles and guiding lines, and subject ever to the pertinent criticism: What, after all, has been accomplished?

Being in a period of observation and comparison, we must confess to ourselves that the sociologists of few nations have so good an opportunity of observing the growth and evolution of society as those of the United States. The rapid rise of a young country, the vast social changes, the wonderful economic development, the bold political experiments, and the contact of varying moral standards – all these make for American students' crucial tests of social action, microcosmic reproductions of long centuries of world history, and rapid – even violent – repetitions of great social problems. Here is a field for the sociologist – a field rich, but little worked, and full of great possibilities.

In our field, however, there does not seem to have been awakened as yet a fitting realization of the opportunities for scientific inquiry. This is the group of social phenomena arising from the presence in this land of eight million persons of African descent.

It is my purpose here to discuss certain considerations concerning the study of the social problems affecting African Americans.[2]

Development of the Problems

A social problem is the failure of an organized social group to realize its group ideals, through the inability to adapt a certain desired line of action to given conditions of life. If, for instance, a government founded on universal manhood suffrage has a portion of its population so ignorant as to be unable to vote intelligently, such ignorance becomes a menacing social problem. The impossibility of economic and social development in a community where a large percent of the population refuses to abide by the social rules of order, makes a problem of crime and lawlessness. Prostitution becomes a social problem when the demands of home life conflict with marriage customs.

Thus, a social problem is ever a relation between conditions and action, and as conditions and actions vary and change from group to group from time to time and from place to place, so social problems change, develop and grow.

In the latter part of the 17th and early in the 18th centuries, the central and all-absorbing economic need of America was the creation of a proper labor supply to develop American wealth. This question had been answered in the West Indies by enslaving Indians and Africans. In the colonies of the mainland it was answered by the importation of people from Africa and indentured servants from Europe. Immediately then there arose the question of the legal status of these slaves and servants; and dozens of enactments, from Massachusetts to Georgia, were made "for the proper regulation of slaves and servants." Such statutes sought to solve problems of labor and not of race or color. Two circumstances, however, soon began to differentiate in the problem of labor, problems which concerned slaves for life from those which concerned servants for limited periods; and these circumstances were

the economic superiority of the slave system, and the fact that the slaves were neither of the same race, language nor religion as the servants and their masters. In laboring classes thus widely separated there naturally arose a difference in legal and social standing. Colonial statutes soon ceased to embrace the regulations applying to slaves and servants in one chapter, and laws were passed for servants on the one hand and for Black slaves on the other.

As slave labor, under the peculiar conditions of colonial life, increased in value and efficiency, the importations of Africans increased, while those of indentured servants decreased; this gave rise to new social problems. Between 1750 and 1800 an increasing number of laws began to form a peculiar and systematic slave code based on a distinct idea of social caste. Even as this slave code was developing, new social conditions changed the aspect of the problems. The laws hitherto had been made to fit a class distinguished by its condition more than by its race or color. There arose now, however, a class of English-speaking African Americans, members of Christian churches; there sprang from illicit intercourse and considerable intermarriage with indentured servants, a number of persons of mixed race; there was also created by emancipation and the birth of Black sons of White women a new class of free African Americans: all these developments led to a distinct beginning of group life among people of African descent. Repeated attempts at organized insurrection were made; wholesale running away was resorted to; and a class of Black landholders and voters arose. Such social movements brought the colonists face to face with new and serious problems; which they sought at first to settle in curious ways, denying the rite of baptism, establishing the legal presumption that all people of African and mixed-race descent were slaves, and finally changing the Slave Code into a Black Code, replacing a caste of condition by a caste of race, harshly stopping sexual intercourse, and seeking to prevent further complications by restricting and even suppressing the slave trade.

Du Bois continues here to discuss problems that developed during slavery and the following Jim Crow era.

The Present Problems

All social growth means a succession of social problems – they constitute growth, they denote that laborious and often baffling adjustment of action and condition which is the essence of progress, and while a particular fact or circumstance may serve in one country as a rallying point of many intricate questions of adjustment, the absence of that particular fact would not mean the absence of all social problems. Questions of labor, caste, ignorance, and race were bound to arise in America; they were simply complicated here and intensified thereby the presence of the African American.

Let us inquire somewhat more carefully into the form under which the African American problems present themselves today after 275 years of evolution. Their existence is plainly manifested by the fact that a definitely segregated mass of eight millions of Americans do not wholly share the national life of the people; are not an integral part of the social body.

If an African American discusses the question, he is apt to discuss simply the problem of race prejudice; if a Southern white man writes on the subject, he is apt to discuss problems of ignorance, crime and social degradation. We should seek to know and measure carefully all the forces and conditions that go to make up these different problems, to trace the historical development of these conditions, and discover as far as possible the probable trend of further development. Without doubt this would be difficult work, and it can with much truth be objected that we cannot ascertain, by the method of sociological research known to us, all such facts thoroughly and accurately. To this objection it is only necessary to answer that however difficult it may be to know all about African Americans, it is certain that we can know vastly more than we do, and that we can have our knowledge in a more systematic and intelligible form. As things are, our opinions upon the African American are more matters of faith than knowledge. Every schoolboy is ready to discuss the matter, and there are few men that have not settled convictions. Such a situation is dangerous. Whenever any nation allows impulse, whim or hasty conjecture to usurp the place of conscious, normative, intelligent action, it is in grave danger. The sole aim of any society is to settle its problems in accordance with its highest ideals, and the only rational method of accomplishing this is to study those problems in the light of the best scientific research.

The Work Already Accomplished

It may be said that it is not altogether correct to assert that few attempts have been made to study these problems or to put the nation in possession of a body of truth in accordance with which it might act intelligently… and yet a careful survey of the field seems but to emphasize the fact that the work done bears but small proportion to the work still to be done.[3]

Moreover the studies made hitherto can as a whole be justly criticized in three particulars: (1) they have not been based on a thorough knowledge of details; (2) they have been unsystematical; (3) they have been uncritical.

In few subjects have historians been more content to go on indefinitely repeating current traditions and uninvestigated facts. In the hasty endeavor to cover a broad subject when the details were unknown, much superficial work has been current, like that, for instance, of a newspaper reporter who spent “the odd intervals of leisure” for “nearly 18 months” in the District of Columbia, and forthwith published a study of 80,000 African Americans, with observations on their institutions and development.

Again, the work done has been lamentably unsystematic and fragmentary. Scientific work must be subdivided, but conclusions which affect the whole subject must be based on a study of the whole. One cannot study the African American in freedom and come to general conclusions about his destiny without knowing his history in slavery. A vast set of problems having a common center must, too, be studied according to some general plan, if the work of different students is to be compared or to go toward building a unified body of knowledge.

Most unfortunate of all, however, is the fact that so much work done on the African American question is notoriously uncritical; uncritical from lack of discrimination in the selection and weighing of evidence; uncritical in choosing the proper point of view from which to study these problems, and, finally, uncritical from the distinct bias in the minds of so many writers. One student declares that African Americans are advancing in knowledge and ability; that they are working, establishing homes, and going into business, and that the problem will soon be one of the past. Another student of equal learning declares that the African American is degenerating – sinking into crime and social immorality, receiving little help from education, still in the main a menial servant, and destined in a short time to settle the problem by dying out entirely. Such and many other contradictory conclusions arise from the uncritical use of material. A visitor to a great African American school in the South catches the inspiration of youth, studies the work of graduates, and imbibes the hopes of teachers and immediately infers from the situation of a few hundred the general condition of a population numbering twice that of Holland. A college graduate sees the slums of a Southern city, looks at the plantation field hands, and has some experience with African American servants, and from the laziness, crime and disease which he finds, draws conclusions as to eight millions of people, stretched from Maine to Texas and from Florida to Washington. We continually judge the whole from the part we are familiar with: we continually assume the material we have at hand to be typical; we reverently receive a column of figures without asking who collected them, how they were arranged, how far they are valid, and what chances of error they contain; we receive the testimony of men without asking whether they were trained or ignorant, careful or careless, truthful or given to exaggeration, and, above all, whether they are giving facts or opinions. It is so easy for a man who has already formed his conclusions to receive any and all testimony in their favor without carefully weighing and testing it, that we sometimes find in serious scientific studies very curious proof of broad conclusions. To cite an extreme case, in a recently published study of the African American, a part of the argument as to the physical condition of these millions is made to rest on the measurement of fifteen Black boys in a New York reformatory.

The widespread habit of studying the African American from one point of view only, that of his influence on the white inhabitants, is also responsible for much uncritical work. The slaves are generally treated as one inert changeless mass, and most studies of slavery apparently have no conception of a social evolution and development among them. The slave code of a state is given, the progress of anti-slavery sentiment, the economic results of the system and the general influence of man on master are studied, but of the slave herself, of her group life and social institutions, of remaining traces of her African tribal life, of her amusements, her conversion to Christianity, her acquiring of the English tongue – in fine, of her whole reaction against her environment, of all this we hear little or nothing, and would apparently be expected to believe that the African American arose from the dead in 1863.

The most baneful cause of uncritical study of the African American is the manifest and far-reaching bias of writers. Americans are born in many cases with deep, fierce convictions on the African American question, and in other cases imbibe them from their environment. When such people come to write on the subject, without technical training, without breadth of view, and in some cases without a deep sense of the sanctity of scientific truth, their testimony, however interesting as opinion, must of necessity be worthless as science.

A Program of Future Study

If we admit the deep importance of the African American problems, the necessity of studying them, and certain shortcomings in work done up to this time, it would seem to be the clear duty of the American people, in the interests of scientific knowledge and social reform, to begin a broad and systematic study of the history and condition of African Americans.

The scope of any social study is first of all limited by the general attitude of public opinion toward truth and truth-seeking. If in regard to any social problem there is for any reason a persistent refusal on the part of the people to allow the truth to be known,

then manifestly that problem cannot be studied. Even today there are certain phases of this question which we cannot hope to be allowed to study dispassionately and thoroughly. For instance, it is extremely doubtful if any satisfactory study of Black crime and lynching can be made for a generation or more, in the present condition of the public mind, which renders it almost impossible to get at the facts and real conditions. On the other hand, public opinion has in the last decade become sufficiently liberal to open a broad field of investigation to students, and here lies the chance for effective work.

The right to enter this field undisturbed and untrammeled will depend largely on the attitude of science itself. Students must be careful to insist that science as such – be it physics, chemistry, psychology, or sociology – has but one simple aim: the discovery of truth. Its results lie open for the use of all people – merchants, physicians, academics, and philanthropists, but the aim of science itself is simple truth. Any attempt to give it a double aim, to make social reform the immediate instead of the mediate object of a search for truth, will inevitably tend to defeat both objects. The frequent alliance of sociological research with various panaceas and particular schemes of reform, has resulted in closely connecting social investigation with a good deal of groundless assumption and humbug in the popular mind. There will be at first some difficulty in bringing the Southern people, both Black and White, to conceive of an earnest, careful study of the African American problem which has not back of it some scheme of race amalgamation, political jobbery, or deportation to Africa. The new study of the African American must avoid such misapprehensions from the outset, by insisting that historical and statistical research has but one object, the ascertainment of the facts as to the social forces and conditions of one-eighth of the inhabitants of the land. Only by such rigid adherence to the true object of the scholar, can politicians and philanthropists of all shades of belief be put into possession of a reliable body of truth which may guide their efforts to the best and largest success.

Finally. the necessity must again be emphasized of keeping clearly before students the object of all science, amid the turmoil and intense feelings that clouds the discussion of a burning social question. We live in a day when in spite of the brilliant accomplishments of a remarkable century, there is current much flippant criticism of scientific work; when the truth-seeker is too often pictured as devoid of human sympathy, and careless of human ideals. We are still prone in spite of all our culture to sneer at the heroism of the laboratory while we cheer the swagger of the street broil. At such a time true lovers of humanity can only hold higher the pure ideals of science, and continue to insist that if we would solve a problem, we must study it, and that there is but one coward on earth, and that is the coward that dare not know.

Questions

1. How does Du Bois define “social problems”?
2. Remember that Du Bois is writing for an almost exclusively white audience. How might this have affected his presentation of “the problem”? What is it that Du Bois is suggesting sociology do? Considering the critique of existing research included here, can you describe what *good* research in this area would look like? What is wrong with the (white) newspaper reporter in DC’s study? With the study of fifteen reformatory boys?
3. Du Bois’ article raises issues of standpoint epistemology – how our social locations affect what we see (and what we study). What examples can you find in the text? How do sociologists today overcome problems associated with standpoint bias?
4. What is the difference between opinion and science? How is this related to the definition of sociology that emerges in these early texts (here, Durkheim, Veblen, Giddings)?
5. Du Bois laments the impossibility of studying “crime and lynching” at the time of this article’s publication, due to the impassioned prejudice of the public mind. Are there similar topics today which would be difficult if not impossible to study, given the state of public opinion? What should a sociologist do in these cases? What does this say about the relationship between politics (and the political context) and science? Is it possible to have science in a totalitarian regime, for example?
6. What is the aim of science? Why does Du Bois caution against aiming for social reform?

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1. This famous line is the epitaph from The Souls of Black Folk (1903). ↵
2. Du Bois used the term “Negro” throughout as the correct historical term to denote those of African descent. Because he explicitly calls attention, in the beginning of the article, to the African ancestry of this group, I have chosen to replace all uses of the archaic negro term with the more currently approved African American. When Du Bois uses negro as an adjective, denoting color of skin, I use Black. ↵
3. Indeed, despite the plea of Du Bois here, and the importance of addressing issues of race in American society, it was not until 1981 that the ASA section on “Racial and Ethnic Minorities” was established. In 1997, the section on “Race, Gender, and Class” was established, taking a more intersectional approach to the study of these problems. ↵

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4.6: Jane Addams, “Trade Unions and Public Duty” (1899)

“The habitual use of ‘the people;” as a phrase practically equivalent to the ‘working classes’ is a constant admission of the fact that the proletariat is not, properly speaking, a ‘class’ at all, but the body of society itself.” –Comte[1]

NOTE ON SOURCE: This passage is from an article published by Addams in the *American Journal of Sociology* in January 1899 (volume 4, number 4, pp, 448-462). It has been abbreviated for publication here, but all original pronoun usage has been retained.

Introduction – Why this is important and what to look for

While Jane Addams never held a position as a sociologist, she was hugely influential on sociological thought, particularly among those who held that a primary goal of the science was to inform public policy and promote social reform. The fact that she had articles published in the major American sociological journal of the day is testament to this influence. When this article was published there was no federal law regulating or prohibiting child labor. It was not uncommon for children as young as eight to be put to work in factories and mines. Trade unions were the primary organizations pushing for restrictions and prohibitions in this area.

Trades Unions

In this paper I have assumed that the general organization of trades unions and their ultimate purposes are understood, and also that we recognize that the public has a duty toward the weak and defenseless members of the community. With these assumptions granted, two propositions are really amazing: first, that we have turned over to those men who work with their hands the fulfillment of certain obligations which we must acknowledge belong to all of us, such as protecting little children from premature labor, and obtaining shorter hours for the overworked; and, second, that while the trades unions, more than any other body, have secured orderly legislation for the defense of the feeblest, they are persistently misunderstood and harshly criticized by many people who are themselves working for the same ends.

The first proposition may be illustrated by various instances in which measures introduced by trades unions have first been opposed by the public, and later have been considered praise-worthy and valuable, when the public as a whole has undertaken to establish and enforce them.

For years trades unions have endeavored to secure laws regulating the occupations in which children may be allowed to work, the hours of labor permitted in those occupations, and the minimum age below which children may not be employed. Workingmen have accepted women into their trades unions, as an inevitable development of industrial conditions, but they resent the entrance of children into their trades, not only because children bring down wages, for women do that as well, but because children are injured by premature labor. The regulation of child labor is one of the few points in which society as a whole has made common cause with the voluntary efforts of trades unions, but the movement was initiated and is still largely carried forward by them. It is quite possible to understand the reasons for this.

We may imagine a row of people seated in a moving street car, into which darts a boy of eight, calling out the details of the last murder in the hope of selling an evening newspaper. A comfortable-looking man buys a paper from him, with no sense of moral shock; he may even be a trifle complacent that he has helped along the little fellow who is making his way in the world. The philanthropic lady sitting next to him may perhaps reflect that it is a pity that such a bright boy is not in school. She may make up her mind in a moment of compunction to redouble her efforts for various newsboys’ missions and homes, that this poor child may have better teaching and perhaps a chance of manual training. She probably is convinced that he alone, by his unaided efforts, is supporting a widowed mother, and her heart is moved to do all she can for him. Let us imagine that next to her sits a workingman trained in trades-union methods. He will probably view with indignation the spectacle of a heedless child jumping on moving cars at the risk of his limbs, shouting out facts and reports that should be unknown to him for many years, and he may wonder for the hundredth time why it is that society allows this utter waste of its immature members. He knows that the boy’s natural development is arrested, and that the abnormal activity of his body and mind uses up the force which should go into growth. He is forced to these conclusions because he has seen many a man enter the factory at eighteen and twenty so worn out by premature work that he is laid on the shelf within ten or fifteen years. He knows very well that he can do nothing in the way of ameliorating the lot of this

particular boy; that his only possible chance is to agitate for proper child-labor laws in order to regulate, and, if possible, prohibit, street vending by children, so that the child of the poorest may have his school time secured to him, and may have at least his short chance for growth.

These three people sitting in the street car are all honest and upright and recognize a certain duty toward the forlorn children of the community. The self-made man is encouraging one boy's own efforts. The philanthropic lady is helping on a few boys. The workingman alone is obliged to include all the boys of his class. Workingmen, in their feebleness in all but numbers, have been forced to the state to secure protection for themselves and for their children. They cannot all rise out of their class, as the occasionally successful man has done; some of them must be left to do the work in the factories and mines, and they have no money to spend in ameliorating philanthropy.

In order to secure help from the state they have been obliged to agitate, and to make a moral appeal to the community as a whole - that most successful appeal which has ever distinguished great popular movements, but which we seem to distrust, and do not ordinarily use so often as the appeals to self-interest, national tradition, or class prejudice. Almost all the labor legislation which has been secured in this country to protect the workman against the harshest conditions of industry has been secured through the efforts of trades unions, the training in which naturally leads men to appeal to the state, and to use those tools which democracy affords.

Child-labor laws once enacted and enforced are a matter of pride to the entire community, and they even come to be regarded as a register of the community's humanity and enlightenment. To consider the second proposition: For many years I have been impressed with the noble purposes of trades unions, and the desirability of the ends which they seek; and at the same time I have been amazed at the harshness with which their failures are judged by the public, and the undue stress which is laid upon the violence and disorder which sometimes accompany their efforts. How far is this violence and the consequent condemnation of the public the result of ignoble purposes on the part of the trades unions, and how far is it the result of the partial effort and failure which we thrust upon them, when the trades unions alone are obliged to do what the community as a whole should undertake?

Scenes of disorder and violence are enacted because trades unions are not equipped to accomplish what they are undertaking. The state alone could accomplish it without disorder. The public shirks its duty, and then holds a grievance toward the men who undertake the performance of that duty. It blames the union men for the disaster which arises from the fact that the movement is a partial one

It is easy to misjudge from the outside act. The man who reads the newspapers and has no other acquaintance with labor organizations than the record of their outside and often unofficial acts, is almost sure to be confused in regard to their ultimate objects. It is also difficult for the victorious side to see fairly. There is no doubt that the employer, the man who represents vested interests, often routs and defeats labor organizations, drives them from the field with an honest misunderstanding of what they are trying to do, and of the principles which they represent. He is flushed with triumph and imagines a victory which he has never achieved. We may consider half a dozen measures which trades unions have urged and concerning which the community has often been stirred by indignation, and find that, when the public undertakes to enforce identical, or similar, measures, they are regarded with great complacency. The disapproval may be merely the result of the fact that the trades unions alone are doing that which belongs to the entire public.

We hear from time to time of a strike in which men are prevented from taking the places of the strikers, and in the ensuing struggle are beaten and injured. We call the whole affair brutal and unjustifiable, and our sympathies are aroused for the men whom the strikers drive away from the chance to work. We make no sincere effort to find out what principle it is that justifies the strikers to themselves in their action. It is hardly possible that large bodies of men, all over the country, should repeat this course of action, over and over again, without an underlying motive which seems right to them, even if they are mistaken. An attempt to take a scholarly and fair view of life is bound to find out what this motive is. To condemn without a hearing, to correct without an understanding, has always been the mark of the narrow and uneducated person. It is not difficult to see the significance of a fine action; the test of our insight comes in interpreting aright an action such as this.

Let us put ourselves in the position of the striking men who have fallen upon workmen who have taken their places. The strikers have for years belonged to an organization devoted to securing better wages and a higher standard of living, not only for themselves, but for all the men in that trade. To this end they have steadily contributed from their wages. They have given their time to the study of trade conditions, and enthusiastic and unceasing service to bettering those conditions in the only way that seems to them possible. They have thus worked, not only for themselves and their children, but for all their class. Every gain they

have made, every advance they have secured, has been shared with the very men who now, when these gains are at stake, range themselves on the other side. They honestly believe, whether they are right or wrong, that their position is exactly the same which a nation, in time of war, takes toward a traitor who has deserted his country's camp for that of the enemy.

We condemn the boycott and say that the trades unions are bigoted in their allegiance to each other, and harsh to those outside their membership. Within a few years, circles of women in several great cities have formed themselves into a "consumers' league," because they have become uncomfortable concerning the conditions under which clothing is manufactured and sold. The members of these little circles, because of a stirring of conscience in regard to social wrongs, exert themselves to buy goods only from houses which conform to a certain required standard of sanitation, wages, and hours of work. They are willing to submit to a certain inconvenience and to a possible loss of opportunity for "bargains." They naturally regard themselves as an advance guard, and if given to self-congratulation would perhaps claim that they were recognizing a social duty which the community as a whole ignores.

The members of these consumers' leagues are beginning to hold conventions to discuss the propriety of a label which shall mean that those houses to which it is given provide seats for their saleswomen, summer vacations, and so on. All this is a valuable effort in the right direction, but it has already been initiated and sustained for many years by trades unions. So early as I885, in New York a blue label was put upon cigars made by union men, and loyal trade-unionists were supposed to smoke no others. The label claimed to guarantee not only the payment of union wages, but fair conditions of manufacture. Many a workingman has spent his Saturday evening going from one store to another, until he found a hat with the trade-union label in its lining. He might, possibly, have bought cheaper and better-looking hats elsewhere, and it would have been easy to urge the smallness of the purchase as an excuse from the search. In short, the advanced woman is only now reaching the point held by the trade-unionist for years. The consumers' league carefully avoids the boycott, as does, indeed, the trade- unionist when he purchases only labeled goods. He is again using the method in his organization that the nation has long used when it prohibits by high tariff the importation of certain goods in order that home products may be purchased, which have been manufactured under better conditions. Who cannot recall the political speech urging high tariff for the protection of the American workingmen, in their wages and standard of living? It is singularly like the argument used by the workingman when he urges the boycott, or the more peaceful method of purchasing labeled goods made by union workmen who have been paid union wages. Here, again, as in the case of industrial warfare, I do not wish to commit myself to the ethics involved, but merely to point the analogy, and call attention to the fact that the public is apt to consider the government righteous and the trades unions unjustifiable.

For years trades unions in every country have steadily bent their efforts toward securing a shorter working day. In many unions these persistent efforts have been crowned with success, but many others are still making the attempt to secure the eight-hour day and have before them a long and troublous undertaking. Here, again, trades unions are trying to do for themselves what the government should secure for all its citizens.

The well-to-do portions of the community are prone to think of politics as something off by itself. They may conscientiously recognize a political duty as part of good citizenship, but political effort is not the natural expression of their moral striving. A contempt for law is almost certain to follow, when we lose our habit of turning toward it for moral support. There is little doubt that appeals through corporation attorneys are often made to legislative bodies solely with the view of protecting vested interests and property rights. In their preoccupation there is no time to consider morals or the rights of the community as a whole. This non-moral attitude, as well as the immoral one of open corruption of legislators, does much toward destroying the foundations of democratic government.

The body of trades-unionists in America are becoming discouraged from the fact that moral appeal and open agitation do not have fair play, because the "interests of capital" are not confined to these, but have methods of securing legislation which are perforce denied to the workingmen. The confidence of workingmen in the courts has been shaken by the fact that the judges have so often been trained as corporation attorneys, and it is a common assertion which may often be heard in workingmen's meetings that the militia and United States troops are almost invariably used to protect the interests of the employer in times of strike.

Any sense of division and suspicion is fatal in a democratic form of government, for although each side may seem to secure most for itself, when consulting only its own interests, the final test must be the good of the community as a whole.

One might almost generalize that the trades-union movement, as such, secures its lower objects best where there is a well-defined class feeling among the proletarians of its country, but that it accomplishes its highest objects in proportion as it is able to break

into all classes and seize upon legislative enactment. A man who is born into his father's trade, and who has no hope of ever entering into another, as under the caste system of India or the guilds of Germany, is naturally most easily appealed to by the interests within his trade-life. A workingman in America who may become a carpenter only as a stepping-stone toward becoming a contractor and capitalist, as any ambitious scholar may teach a country school until she shall be fitted for a college professorship, does not respond so easily to measures intended to benefit the carpenter's trade as he does to measures intended to benefit society as a whole, and it is quite as important that the appeal should be made to him in his capacity of citizen as that it should be large enough to include men outside his class.

That all its citizens may be responsible is then, perhaps, the final reason why it should be the mission of the state to regulate the conditions of industry. The only danger in the movement, as at present conducted, lies in the fact that it is a partial movement, and antagonizes those whom it does not include. It may certainly be regarded as the duty of the whole to readjust the social machinery in such a way that the issue shall be a higher type of character, and that there shall be a moral continuity to society answering to its industrial development. This is the attempt of factory legislation. It is concerned in the maintenance of a certain standard of life, and would exercise such social control over the conditions of industry as to prevent the lowering of that standard. After all, society as society is interested in this, and there is no more obligation upon workingmen to maintain a standard of living than there is upon the rest of us. It is well, sometimes, to remind ourselves that, after all, the mass of mankind work with their hands.

Is it too much to hope that in time other citizens, as well as trade-unionists, may be educated to ask themselves: "Does our industrial machinery, or does it not, make for the greatest amount and the highest quality of character?" And that when it is answered, as it must be at the present moment, that the state does not concern itself with the character of the producer, but only with the commercial aspects of the product, is it again too optimistic to predict that those other citizens will feel a certain sense of shame and recognize the fact that the trades unions have undertaken a duty which the public has ignored?

Questions for Contemplation and Discussion

1. Addams has a particular style of writing that is different from other theorists included in this volume. Note that she sometimes writes in the first person. Why do you think this is so? What other peculiarities of style and usage do you find here, and how do these relate to her message and work?
2. Why does Addams think workers are the main agitators for reform by the state? It is common around Labor Day to see posters and signs that list all the advances brought about by the labor movement (e.g., the weekend, overtime pay, 8-hour work day, minimum wage, paid vacation, sick days, safety standards, child labor laws, health benefits, retirement security, unemployment compensation). What would Addams say about this if she were alive today?

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1. This quote graced the original Addams article. ↵

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4.7: Edward A. Ross on Social Control (1900)

"The wall between classes is least passable when it runs along the abyss that divides race from race, or people from people."

NOTE ON SOURCE: This passage is from an article published as "Class Control" in the *American Journal of Sociology* in 1900 (volume 6, number 3, pages 381-395). This was actually the second of a two-part series. Although the overall focus of the series was on social control generally, the passage below focuses on class control as an important and problematic specific form. It has been reproduced here with only minor modifications.

Introduction – Why this is important and what to look for

In this article, Ross sharply critiques what he calls "class control," and seeks to explain how this comes to be, how it is maintained, and how it can be contested. It may be useful to reconsider the writings of Marx while reading this selection. Pay special attention to how Ross, writing as he does in the U.S., with its intractable racial tensions, includes race relations in his discussion of class control.

Social Control

Inhibiting impulses radiate not only from the social mass, but also from certain centers of extraordinary prestige and influence. Control under these circumstances is still social. But when the chief center of such inhibition is a class living at the expense of the rest of the community, we no longer have social control in the true sense, but class control. This may be defined as the exercise of power by a parasitic class in its own interest.

There are various devices by means of which a body of persons may sink their fangs into their fellows and subsist upon them. Slavery, or the immediate and absolute disposal over the labor force of another, is the primary form of the parasitic relation. By modifying this into serfdom the parasitic class, without in the least abating its power of securing nourishment from others, places itself in a position more convenient to it and less irritating to the exploited. When the absolute state comes into being, that direct absorption of nutriment by the parasite from the host, which characterizes feudalism, falls a little into the background. For example, the French state, as it existed under the old regime, was a vast coercing apparatus that collected goods from the producers by means of taxation and redistributed them among the favored parasites by means of royal patronage. Finally, the institution of property is so shaped as to permit a slanting exploitation under which a class is able to live in idleness by monopolizing land or other indispensable natural means of production.

These successive modulations of parasitism obey the principle of economy. To economize coercion, to economize supervision, to economize direction – these are the motives which led masters to substitute for the coarse and direct kinds of exploitation refined and slanting kinds of exploitation. During this transition a great many personal rights come to be recognized by the exploiters. The slave has no rights at all as against his master. The serf directs his own labor and looks out for his own keep but is bound to the glebe. The subject of the absolute state is free to labor and to move about, to own and to sell as he pleases, but he must meet the heavy demands of the tax-gatherer. In the legal state the exploited is conceded as many personal freedoms as the exploiter, but she must scrupulously respect the rights conferred by ownership.

In this expansion of rights there is a gradual escape of the person from the grasp of the parasite. More and more she becomes master of herself and of the fruits of her toil after she has rendered certain fixed dues to the master. The tremendous stimulus that such enfranchisement gives to the energy and capacity of the producers invariably causes a considerable accumulation of wealth in the hands of the non-parasites which veils the parasitic relation from incurious eyes.

Besides these changes in form which make it less harsh and palpable, social parasitism is further softened and attenuated by changes in the personnel of the exploiting and the exploited classes. The wall between these classes is least passable when it runs along the abyss that divides race from race, or people from people. The parasitic relation, pure and simple, is founded on unlikeness and transmitted by heredity. Those of noble blood have a perpetual claim to gratuitous support. Those who are base-born are under a perpetual obligation to render dues.

Now the grimness of this situation is mitigated as soon as members of the superior class are liable to forfeit their places on the dais, while certain of the inferior may for signal merit be promoted to seats among the privileged. The heaving and strain of the wretches crammed in the hold of a slaver is less if, now and then, a few of the most redoubtable are let up on deck. Likewise the admitting of

a few brave, talented, or successful commoners into the charmed circle above has a wonderful effect in calming the rage and envy of the exploited, and thereby protracting the life of the parasitic system. In the absolute monarchy the yielding to capable commoners of a fair proportion of the rich posts and sinecures in state, army, and church is recognized as an excellent means of prolonging the hold of the nobles upon the remainder. The short-sightedness of the French parasite orders on this point was one cause of their premature downfall; while, by timely and ample concessions to the new industrial elite, their brethren in England have, so far, saved their estates and their monopoly of the best offices.

The ennobling of new fortunes, the opening of careers to talent, the equalizing of opportunities, the dissolving of the hereditary classes through one another, and the increase of the social capillarity that facilitates the free ascent or descent of men in the social scale according to their personal fitness are the successive steps by which a society of parasites and hosts passes over into a hierarchy of classes graded according to success in a fair competition.

No people will toil and sweat to keep a class in idleness and luxury unless cajoled or compelled to do so. The parasitic class is, therefore, always a ruling class, and utilizes as many as it can of the means of control. But it is not by the means used that we can best distinguish this class control from social control. If we would know the real tenor of a control, we should scrutinize the laws, obligations, and exceptions which it upholds. In other words, it is by studying the constitution of the society that we learn if there is a parasitic relation and discover who are the parasites and who are the hosts. It is what men obey, rather than why they obey, that betrays the presence of class exploitation.

For instance, those pressures which reach the individual through the suggestion and opinion of those close about him cannot well be turned to account by the parasitic class. The immediate influences to which the slave, serf, or peasant is exposed come from his afflicted fellows, from those who share his lowly station and lot, and who, like himself, are under the harrow.

Their encouragement, indeed, will often fortify him in defiance and resistance of his spoilers.

Likewise, it is impracticable for the ruling class to manage their subjects by skillfully molding the personal ideals and valuations that reign in the social deeps. These are likely to shape themselves among the oppressed people quite independently of the will of the master. Indeed, she may count herself lucky if they do not antagonize her purposes in every way.

As unlikeness of interests, education, and mode of life forbids exploiters and exploited to share intimately a common life, there is between them little of the give-and-take that readily establishes itself among true associates. The leeches as a class cannot apply to the bled as a class any of those delicate pressures on the spirit, those volatile, suasive forms of psychic coercion, which bear upon the individual so long as she is among comrades and equals. It is safe, then, to lay it down as a rule that only those inhibitive impulses which flow from a central determinate source can be controlled by a predaceous class.

Thus, suggestion and public opinion are hardly come-at-able by an organization of seigneurs, because they do not flow out from a central source. They distill upon one from all sides. It is easy to poison a well; but to poison the dew – that is quite another thing!

While, on the other hand, the checks and stimuli connected with religion, art, personality, and personal ideals do flow out from central sources, they cannot be reached for another reason. Because they emanate from the great man, the prophet, or the spiritual elite, their source is not determinate. They spring up, now here, now there. It is now this little knot of enthusiasts, and now that, which radiates these impulses. Vainly does the crafty, ruling class seek to control them and get them to do its work. It gains possession of the spring, but the spring forthwith dries up or turns bitter. It suborns the prophet, and his inspiration leaves him. It seduces the hero, and his followers miss the old charm in him and fall away. It wins over the singer, and lo! her voice rings cracked and false. It takes the ministers of religion into its pay, and behold! the people leave the appointed sanctuaries and hang on the burning words of some wild-eyed fanatic from the hills – a Shepherd of Tekoa, for instance, or a Piers Ploughman.

It is chiefly, then, upon such engines of control as the supple hand can easily reach and manipulate that a ruling class must rely. Its best tools will be law, belief in the supernatural, instruction, custom, ceremony, and illusion. These are the agents that, from the nature of the case, we should expect the ruling class to employ.

But what are the facts? The props of parasitic rule, as history has revealed them over and over again, are force, superstition, fraud, pomp, and prescription. At first glance there appears to be a discrepancy here, but in a moment it is clear that these are simply degenerate forms of certain familiar supports of social order.

What is force but the coarse, physical compulsion of law, without law's guarantees for the moderate and scrupulous exercise of this compulsion? What is superstition but a kind of belief in supernatural sanctions which in no wise springs up from the natural

longing to see the iniquities of this world righted by the just decrees of the next? Fraud is one form of illusion. Pomp is ceremony, intended to impress, not the individual entering upon new responsibilities, but the envious, presuming populace. Prescription is that sanctity of custom which attaches to the social edifice within which we have been reared.

These favorite instruments of the parasitic orders resemble the corresponding instruments in the service of society, and yet they have a ring and temper of their own. Both use force; but the force that society applies is felt by all concerned to be less arbitrary, less “brute,” than the force a class uses against its victims. Both teach religion; but genuine social religion is the cult of fellowship, while the religion an upper class provides for a lower is the cult of obedience.

Each of the well-marked classes that incline to parasitism has its favorite and characteristic means of control. Soldiers rely on physical force, and hence the rule of the military caste is characterized by brutality. Priests naturally avail themselves of superstition and fraud, and so their domination is marked by hypocrisy and craft. Nobles, after they have lost their military virtues and become chiefly ornamental, impress with pomp and show, and hence their rule is marked by pride and, since only riches can keep up external splendor, by rapacity.

All control is consecrated by age, and becomes prescriptive. Hence every ruling class becomes in time exceedingly conservative. But no single class is long allowed to sit alone in the seats of the mighty. Unless it shares with them its privileges and advantages, other power-holders in society will combine for its overthrow. So there is a natural tendency for all power-holders to get together, sink their differences, and organize one great exploiting trust.

As Europe emerged from the Dark Ages various social parasites appeared, one after the other -lords of the soil, the princes, the papacy, the financiers. By playing off one parasitic interest against another, the free townsmen and the peasants shook off, for a time, their tormentors. But the princes and the rich townsmen, joining forces, ruined the lesser nobles and reduced the rest to loyal courtiers. By nationalizing the church, or by seizing ecclesiastical property and patronage, the princes then deprived the papacy of much of its power of preying upon the rest of society, and compelled that close alliance of throne and altar which was so helpful to the growth of monarchy.

In France, before the Revolution, all the chief means of spoliation, the ownership of the soil, taxation, spiritual prerogatives, and finance contributed to feed a monstrous wen which was fastened by all ligaments that can attach a parasitic growth, and which drew to itself most of the juices in the social body.

A predatory minority, then, presents itself at first as a governing class that by its toils, cares, and risks contrives to draw to itself the surplus goods of the governed. But, at a later stage of development, enjoyment and control are no longer vested in the same persons. The anatomy of a parasitic organization now shows at the center certain idle enjoyers surrounded by a great number of unproductive laborers who share in their spoil, and who in return busy themselves, as retainers, mercenaries, police, priests, teachers, or publicists, in intimidating, cajoling, or beguiling the exploited majority. It is at this stage of parasitism that the contrivances for holding down the exploited are the most varied and interesting.

The art of employing the organized collective might in the systematic keeping of order appears to have been developed by a ruling class rather than by the undifferentiated social whole. Common observation shows us that, in the nature of the case, a union that has for its purpose the mutual defense of the claims of each member against outsiders is easier to form and maintain than a union for the mutual guarantee of the claims of each member against the aggressions of his fellow-members. Owing to the clash of interests in the bosom of each adherent, the instituting of the latter union is by far the more difficult feat of joinery.

Now, in a society composed of a predaceous class and a subject mass, that is to say, of spoilers and spoiled, the coercive power develops readily out of a kind of mutual-defense (and offense!) association among the spoilers. In a simple society, on the other hand, it presupposes something like a mutual guarantee association, and is, therefore, not likely to arise at so early a point in social development. This conjecture is confirmed by the growing mass of evidence which goes to show that the historical state has, in almost every instance, taken its origin in the violent superposition of one people upon another. Begun in aggression and perfected in exploitation, the state, even now when it is more and more directed by the common will, is not easy to keep from slipping back into the rut it wore for itself during the centuries it was the engine of a parasitic class. The means whereby the minority can physically overpower and hold down the majority are many and well understood. They arm, train, and organize themselves as did the Spartans. Like the Normans they build themselves strongholds and castles. They girdle themselves with mercenaries as the princes of the old regime surrounded themselves with Swiss. They sow the seeds of enmity among their victims after the manner of the Hapsburgs in dealing with their subject peoples. They deprive them of weapons as the Spartans did the helots. Like the West

India planters they prevent them from meeting, seeing, or communicating with one another. They keep them ignorant, following the policy of the southern slave-owners. They cut off their natural leaders as did the Roman masters. They break their spirit with overwork. They terrorize them with cruelties. They keep them under constant surveillance, as in classic times the slaves on Sicilian estates were chained by day and penned underground by night. By such policies it has been found practicable for a parasitic band to hold down many times their number.

But this technique of coercion calls into being a counter-technique of freedom. In England, for instance, where the intruding Normans had brought the instruments of rule to a rare perfection, the industrial classes, long before they were able to master and use government for their own ends, had learned to safeguard themselves by hedging it with certain checks. With their acquired rights they built a rampart against the formidable engine in the hands of their spoilers. The right to bind law upon the sovereign, the right to forbid a standing army in time of peace, the right of citizens to assemble, to petition, to keep and bear arms, to be secure from unreasonable searches and seizures, to suffer only on trial and conviction, to be tried by their peers, and to be exempt from cruel or unusual punishments, availed to strip the class state of its most dreaded powers, and have justly come to be looked upon as the attributes of a free people. In this way force has become law and might have been transmuted into right.

It is scarcely necessary to point out that fraud, although used freely by every exploiting class, is a favorite instrument of the class that aspires to the mastery of the mind.

Over against fraud and superstition has been elaborated a technique of enlightenment. Freedom of meeting, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, the inviolability of the mails, the autonomy of institutions of learning, the liberty of investigation, the freedom of teaching, the free public university, the free open library-not without good cause have these come to be prized by democratic peoples.

Once the material foundations of its rule have crumbled an aristocratic class inevitably comes to attach great importance to pomp and circumstance. Pageantry, which is originally the swollen crimson crest of lordly pride, becomes an obligation and a solemnity when the nobility is no longer a match for the commonalty in physical contest. As the lords lose their power over the bodies of their subjects it is the more necessary to consider the impression on their minds. Accordingly, the exterior of upper-class life comes in time to be regulated with an eye to the effect on the lower orders. Outwardly the mode of life of the rulers must be as far as possible differentiated from that of the ruled, in order that the former may be looked upon as beings apart. But the splendor with which nobles surround their actions, both public and private, is costly, and hence leads to that insatiable rapacity which characterizes over-ripe aristocracies, and which so often leads them to ruin.

Simplicity, on the other hand, comes in as class rule disappears. In the democratic era the need of solemn ostentation passes away, and the wealthy employ their riches in keeping up a manner of life very different from that of the great in the aristocratic era. Moreover, government is conducted with less of state, and the ceremony that is still retained for public occasions is religious and ethical in character rather than spectacular.

Finally, a ruling class profits by prescription. For the secret of the stability of an oppressive social system is not always in the weapons or even in the prestige of the class that sits aloft. Whatever be the relations it fixes between master and slave, lord and serf, priest and flock, prince and subject, the system by its very existence utters an imperious suggestion which few can resist.

Those who have the sunny rooms in the social edifice have, therefore, a powerful ally in the suggestion of Things-as-they-are. With the aid of a -little narcotizing teaching and preaching, the denizens of the cellar may be brought to find their lot proper and right, to look upon escape as an outrage upon the rights of other classes, and to spurn with moral indignation the agitator who would stir them to protest. Great is the magic of precedent, and like the rebellious helots who cowered at the sight of their masters' whips, those who are used to dragging the social chariot will meekly open their calloused mouths whenever the bit is offered them.

This is why the social arrangements of new countries become the revolutionary models for old societies. The colonist, no longer in the overawing presence of an ancient system, reverts to first principles. Squaring his institutions with his native sense of justice and fitness he frames a social system that becomes a wonder and a terror to the usurping classes among older peoples.

When their minds have been depolarized the desires of the exploited people fly up like a released spring and the social classes jar angrily together. The social system is seen in its nakedness, and, unless enough physical force is found to uphold it, it is sure to be modified.

In order not to mistake social control for class control it is necessary to distinguish between a parasitic society and a society that is truly competitive. In respect to economic friction and the contrasts of worldly condition, a competitive society may present much the same appearance as a society composed of exploiters and exploited. Yet there is between them one great difference, a difference which has everything to do with the volume and kind of control that will be needed to preserve social order.

In a really competitive society the hopelessly poor and wretched are, to a large extent, the weak and incompetent who have accumulated at the lower end of the social scale because they or their parents have failed to meet the tests of the competitive system. In a society cleft by parasitism, on the other hand, the poor are poor because they are held under the harrow, and not because they are less capable and energetic than the classes that prey upon them.

Now, a class of beaten people, a proletariat from which the industrially fittest have escaped or are escaping, has neither the will nor the strength to strain against the social system with the vigor of a resentful proletariat held down and exploited by means of artificial social arrangements. However sharply it may differentiate, however rude the clash of conflicting interests, a competitive society will still require no such elaborate apparatus of control as a parasitic society, with perhaps no greater contrasts of economic condition, will find it necessary to maintain. Moreover, its control will not exhibit the traits of class control, but will show the sincerity, spontaneity, and elasticity that mark the control that is truly social.

Questions for Contemplation and Discussion

1. How would you characterize Ross' style? Does he remind you of any of our classical theorists? In what ways? Do you see why he may have gotten into trouble at Stanford, an institution created by a member of what Ross would call "the parasitic class"?[1]
2. Explain the meaning of "parasitic class" and "ruling class" and the connections between the two.
3. What are "the best tools" of control at the hand of the ruling class?
4. Compare Ross' theories with those of Marx. What is similar? What is different? Marx has been hugely more influential than Ross – why might that be?
5. What is Ross' theory of the state? How does this compare to Weber's theory? Marx's?
6. Read the last sections very carefully. What is the difference between a parasitic and a competitive society? How would you characterize our own? How might Marx respond to this theoretical dichotomy?

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1. Leland Stanford, the founder of the University, has been referred to as a "railroad tycoon." It may interest you to read more about his life and the early years of Stanford University. ↵

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4.8: Charles A. Ellwood on Revolution (1905)

"A society whose habits become inflexible for any reason is liable to disaster."

NOTE ON SOURCE: This passage is from an article published as "A Psychological Theory of Revolutions" in the *American Journal of Sociology* in 1905 (volume 11, number 1, pages 49-59). The selection here is quite faithful to the original text, with minimal abbreviation.

Introduction – Why this is important and what to look for

In this article, Ellwood uses a general sociological approach to investigate a particular social phenomenon, the largescale socio-political revolution. By doing so, he advances American sociology by demonstrating its applicability to phenomena that had previously been evaluated more philosophically. This is also an excellent example of what American sociology would develop to be in the twentieth century: specialized analyses within the field, rather than overall systemic theory.

Revolutions

Among the phenomena of social evolution there are none more striking to the student of history and sociology than those commonly called revolutions. I do not use the word in a loose sense to designate any sudden political or social change from *coups d'etat*or "palace revolutions" to reversions in fashions and industrial changes due to great inventions; but I refer to those convulsive movements in the history of societies in which the form of government, or, it may be, the type of the industrial and social order, is suddenly transformed. Such movements always imply a shifting of the center of social control from one class to another, and inwardly are often marked by a change in the psychical basis of social control; that is, a change in the leading ideas, beliefs, and sentiments upon which the social order rests. Outwardly such movements are characterized by bloody struggles between the privileged and the unprivileged classes, which not infrequently issue in social confusion and anarchy. Revolutions in this sense are best typified in modern history, perhaps, by the Puritan Revolution in England and by the French Revolution. Less typical, but still in some sense revolutions, were our War for Independence and our Civil War.

The objective explanations of revolutions which have usually been offered by historians and economists (that is, explanations in terms of economic, governmental, and other factors largely external) have been far from satisfactory, inasmuch as they have lacked that universal element which is the essential of all true science. These explanations have, to be sure, pointed out true causes operating in particular revolutions, but they have failed to reveal the universal mechanism through which all revolutions must take place. In the mind of the sociologist, therefore, there has arisen the further question: Is there any explanation of revolutions in general? What is their significance in the social life-process? Have they any universal form or method of development, and is that method capable of scientific formulation?

To have even asked these questions a score of years ago would probably have called forth a storm of ridicule. But such has been the progress of science that today many, if not most, social investigators would admit the possibility of finding universal forms in social occurrences, and so in revolutions. If a digression may be permitted, I would say that this change of attitude on the part of scientific students of society is due largely to the progress of the science of psychology. The new functional psychology has proposed to interpret all mental life in terms of habit and adaptation; and the new psychological sociology, which is building itself up on the basis of the new psychology, proposes to do the same thing for the social life. Thus the possibility of finding universal forms for social occurrences on the subjective side, if not on the side of objective, environmental factors, is today more widely accepted than ever before.

The reasons for the failure of the objective method of explaining social events are, indeed, now quite obvious. It is now seen that nearly all social occurrences are in the nature of responses to external stimuli. But these responses are not related, psychology tells us, to their stimuli as effects are to causes, as sociologists have so often assumed. The same response or similar responses may be called forth by very different stimuli, since the stimulus is only the opportunity for the discharge of energy. Consequently, any explanation of social occurrences in terms of external causes or stimuli is in a sense foredoomed to failure, since such an explanation will fall short of that universality which science demands. Hence the demands for a subjective or psychological explanation of social phenomena, a demand which is being met today by the new psychological sociology.

It is in accordance with this demand that I venture to offer a psychological theory of revolutions. It is not claimed that this theory of revolutions is anything absolutely new; foreshadowing of it are to be found in many historical and sociological writers.

The essence of the theory is this: that revolutions are disturbances in the social order due to the sudden breakdown of social habits under conditions which make difficult the reconstruction of those habits, that is, the formation of a new social order. In other words, revolutions arise through certain interferences or disturbances in the normal process of the readjustment of social habits.

The merit which is claimed for this theory is that it is in harmony with the new psychology and attempts to explain revolutions in terms of habit and adaptation. Habit and adaptation have their social consequences, not less than their individual mental consequences. The institutions and customs of society are but social expressions of habit, while the normal changes in the social order may be looked upon as social adaptations. Habit and adaptation are, therefore, fundamental categories for the interpretation of the social life-process not less than of the individual life-process; and the theory of revolutions here presented attempts to bring their phenomena within these categories.

Normally social habits are continually changing; old habits are gradually replaced by new ones as the life-conditions change. Normally the breakdown of a social habit is so gradual that by the time the old habit disappears a new habit has been constructed to take its place. Thus the process of social change, of continuous readjustment in society, goes on under normal conditions without shock or disturbance; new habits, or institutions, adapted to the new life-conditions replace the old habits and institutions which are no longer adapted. This transition from one habit to another is effected under ordinary conditions in society by such peaceful means as public criticism, discussion, the formation of a public opinion, and the selection of individuals to carry out the line of action socially determined upon. But where these normal means of effecting readjustments in the social life are lacking, social habits and institutions become relatively fixed and immobile, and a conservative organization of society results.

Now, societies, like individuals, are in danger when their habits for any reason become inflexible. In the world of life, with its constant change and ceaseless struggle, only those organisms can survive which maintain a high degree of flexibility or adaptability. It is even so in the world of societies. As Professor Ward says: “When a society makes for itself a procrustean bed, it is simply preparing the way for its own destruction by the on-moving agencies of social dynamics.”

It is evident, then, that *a society whose habits become inflexible for any reason is liable to disaster*. That disaster may come in two forms: it may come in the form of conquest or subjugation by a foreign foe; or it may come in the form of internal disruption or revolution, when the conditions of life have sufficiently changed to make old habits and institutions no longer workable. It is with this latter case that we are concerned. The conditions under which social habits become inflexible, hard and fast, are many, and I shall attempt no specific enumeration of them. In a general way they have already been indicated by saying that the mechanism by which the transition from one social habit to another is effected – namely, public criticism, free discussion, public opinion- has been destroyed. This has occurred most frequently no doubt, under despotic forms of government; and hence the connection in popular thought between tyranny and revolution. Not only absolute monarchies, but aristocracies and oligarchies also, have frequently created types of social organization which were relatively inflexible. Such governments, however, are only one of many conditions favorable to social immobility. Authoritative religions which have glorified a past and put under ban all progress have also had much to do with creating social inflexibility. Again, the mental character of a people has much to do with the adaptability and progressiveness of the social groups which it forms, and some writers would make this the chief factor. Finally, it is well-known that in societies without any of the impediments of despotic government, public sentiment, prejudice, fanaticism, and class interest can and do suppress free thought and free speech and produce a relatively inflexible type of society. Whatever the cause of their immobility, societies with inflexible habits and institutions are bound to have trouble. The conditions of social life rapidly change, and opposing forces accumulate until, sooner or later, the old habit is overwhelmed.

Under these conditions the breakdown of the old habit is sharp and sudden; and the society, being unused to the process of readjustment, and largely lacking the machinery therefore, is unable for a greater or less length of time to reconstruct its habits. There ensues, in consequence, a period of confusion and uncertainty in which competing interests in the society strive for the mastery. If the breakdown under these conditions be that of a habit which affects the whole social life-process, and especially the system of social control, we have a revolution. It is consequent upon such a breakdown of social habit, then, that the phenomena of revolutions arise. But before considering some of these phenomena in detail, let us note somewhat more concretely how the old habits and institutions are overthrown. Of course, the opposing forces must embody themselves in a party of opposition or revolt. This party is composed, on the whole, of those individuals whom the changed conditions of social life most affect, those on whom the old social habits set least easily. The psychology of the revolt of large numbers of men to an established social order is, at

bottom, a simple matter. It is simply a case of the breakdown of a social habit at its weakest point, that is, among those individuals with whom the habit is least workable, or, in other words, whose interest lies in another direction. From these the attitude of revolt spreads by imitation, first among those to whom the old social habits are ill-adapted, and finally among all who are susceptible to the influence of suggestion. Thus the party of opposition grows until it comes to embody all of the influences and interests which make the old habits and institutions ill-adapted or even unworkable.

If these forces continue to grow, it is evident that there is possible to the ruling classes only two alternatives: either they must make concessions, that is, attempt themselves the readjustment of institutions; or they must face actual conflict with the party of opposition. As a matter of fact, historically the former alternative has much more often been chosen, thus open conflict avoided, and so-called “peaceful revolutions” effected. If, however, no concessions are made by the ruling classes, or only such as are insufficient to bring about the readjustments demanded by the life-conditions; if, in other words, the relative inflexibility of the social order is maintained, then the antagonism. between the old social habits and the new life-conditions can be resolved only by open conflict between the ruling classes and the party of revolt. And when this conflict results in the success of the party of revolt, we call it a “revolution.” Thus, the old social order is overthrown, violently, suddenly, and sometimes almost completely.

Now in the transition from one habit to another in the individual there is frequently to be observed a period of confusion and uncertainty; and this confusion is intensified if the breakdown of the old habit has been sudden or violent. We should expect, therefore, an analogous confusion in society upon the breakdown of social habits; and this is exactly what we find. The so-called anarchy of revolutionary periods is not due simply to the absence of efficient governmental machinery, but to the general breakdown of the social The anarchy is, of course, proportionate to the violence and completeness with which the old habits and institutions are overthrown.

Again, in such periods of confusion in the individual consequent upon the entire breakdown of a habit, we observe a tendency to atavism or reversion in his activities; that is, the simpler and more animal activities tend to come to expression. This tendency not only manifests itself in revolutions but is of course greatly intensified by the struggle between the classes; for fighting, as one of the simplest and most primitive activities of people greatly stimulates all the lower centers of action. Hence the reversionary character of many revolutionary periods. They appear to us, and truly are, epochs in which the brute and the savage in us reassert themselves and dominate many phases of the social life. The methods of acting, of attaining ends, in revolutions are, indeed, often characteristic of much lower stages of culture. These methods, as a rule, are unreflective, extremely direct and crude.

Thus resort to brute force is constant, and when attempts are made at psychical control, it is usually through appeal to the lower emotions, especially fear. Hence the terrorism which is sometimes a feature of revolutions, and which conspicuously marked the French Revolution. Here another striking phenomenon of revolutionary epochs must be noted; and that is the part played at such times by mobs and other crowds. It is evident that in the confusion and excitement of revolutionary times the most favorable conditions exist for the formation of crowds and the doing of their work. There is an absence, on the one hand, of those controlling habits, ideas, and sentiments which secure order in a population; and, on the other hand, there is the reversion to the unreflective type of mental activities. Under such conditions crowds are easily formed, and a suggestion suffices to, incite them to the most extreme deeds.

Thus much of the bloodiest work of revolutions is done by crowds. But it is a mistake to think that true revolutions can be initiated by mobs, or carried through by a series of them. Revolutions simply afford opportunities for mobs to manifest themselves to a much greater degree than they can in normal social life.

The duration of the period of confusion, anarchy, and mob rule in a revolution is dependent upon a number of factors. If the party of revolt is united upon a program, and if the population generally has not lost its power of readjustment, the period of confusion may be so short as to, be practically negligible.

Under such circumstances the reconstruction of new social habits and institutions goes on rapidly under the guidance of the revolutionary party. As an illustration of this particular type of revolution with a happy outcome we may take our War of Independence. In this case the relative unity of the revolutionary party, the incompleteness of the destruction of the old social order, the vigorous power of readjustment in a relatively free population, all favored the speedy reconstruction of social institutions.

Unfortunately, this speedy reconstruction of social habits is not the outcome of all revolutions. Too often the revolutionary party is unified in nothing except its opposition to the old regime. It can find no principal or interest upon which a new social order can be

reconstructed. Moreover, through a long period of social immobility the population seems often to have lost in great degree its power of re-adaptation. Indeed, in rare cases, peoples seem to have lost all power of making stable readjustments for themselves.

Under any or all of these conditions it is evident that the period of confusion, anarchy, and mob-rule in a revolution must continue for a relatively long time. During this time frequent attempts may be made at the reconstruction of the social order without success. These attempts are continued until some adequate stimulus is found, either in an ideal principle or in the personality of some hero, to reconstruct the social habits of the population. Or, if no basis for the reconstruction of the social order can be found, revolution may become chronic; and the period of relative anarchy and mob-rule may last for years, only to be ended perhaps by the subjugation and government of the population by an external power.

A more usual outcome, however, to the chronic revolutionary condition is the “dictatorship.” How this can arise from the conditions in revolutionary times is not difficult to understand. The labors of ethnologists have shown us that democracy in some shape is the natural and primitive form of government among all races of mankind; that despotism has arisen everywhere through social stresses and strains, usually those accompanying prolonged war, when a strong centralized system of social control becomes necessary, if the group is to survive.

Now, in that internal war which we call a revolution, if it is prolonged, it is evident that we have all the conditions favorable to the rise of despotism. When the party of revolt are unable to agree among themselves, and can offer to the population no adequate stimulus for the reconstruction of the social order, nothing is more natural than that that stimulus should be found in the personality of some hero; for social organization is primitively based upon sentiments of personal attachment and loyalty far more than upon abstract principles of social justice and expediency. The personality of a military hero affords, then, the most natural stimulus around which a new social order can, so to speak, crystallize itself, when other means of reconstructing social institutions have failed, and when continued social danger demands a strong centralized social control. The dictatorship, in other words, does not arise because some superior man hypnotizes his social group by his brilliant exploits, but because such a man is “selected” by his society to reconstruct the social order. Caesar, Cromwell, and Napoleon, these typical dictators of revolutionary eras, would probably have had their places filled by other, though perhaps inferior, men, had they themselves never existed.

Here may be briefly explained, finally, the reaction which frequently follows revolutions. No revolution is, of course, complete; it is never more than a partial destruction of old habits and institutions. Now new habits, psychology tells us, have to be erected on the basis of old habits. What remains of the old social habits after a revolution must serve, therefore, as the foundation for the new institutions, since no other foundation is possible. After repeated attempts at reconstruction of the social order which have failed, it is the easiest thing to copy the old institutions, and this is often the only successful means of restoring social stability. Hence the reversion to pre-revolutionary conditions. But, in the nature of things, such a reaction is usually only temporary. The population has learned that the social order can be changed, and at some later time is quite sure to attempt it again.

If the theory of revolutions here outlined is in any degree correct, it is evident that they are regular phenomena conforming to the laws of the mental life. It is possible, therefore, to predict their occurrence in the sense that the conditions favorable to their development can be stated. This has already been done in the discussion of our theory, but it may be worth our while to consider these conditions more critically, in order to see how far social prevision is possible in this matter and in social science in general.

It is evident that, according to our theory, revolution is impossible in a perfectly flexible and adaptable type of social organization. On the other hand, revolution is inevitable, barring foreign conquest, in those types of social and political organization which do not change with changing life-conditions. Thus, from a purely theoretical point of view everything seems clear.

But when we apply these principles to concrete societies, we experience difficulties. It is, easy to predict, in the case of extremely inflexible societies like China and Russia, that revolution, is, sooner or later, inevitable, unless conditions greatly change. Even in this easiest instance, however, our foresight is qualified by a great “if.” But we cannot say with even as much assurance that our democratic societies are free from the danger of revolution. They may have the forms of freedom without the substance. Our own American society, for example, may be relatively inflexible in certain matters which are of vital importance to the life of our group. A tyrannical public sentiment or class interest may induce even in a democracy such an inflexibility or stagnation in institutions that only a revolution can sweep away the obstructing social structure. This is what actually occurred in the case of slavery in our country, which institution required a war of essentially revolutionary character for its overthrow. This can happen again in the future; for example, in the relations of the capitalistic and wage-earning classes.

Whenever, in fact, an institution or a condition of society is set above public criticism, and freedom of discussion and thought is suppressed concerning it, we have a condition of social inflexibility and a loss of the power of adaptation which may breed revolution. Thus the most that can be said in the way of predicting revolutions must be in very general terms. All that we can say is that some societies are more liable to revolutions than others, while no society can safely be judged to be entirely free from the danger of revolution. In other words, no one can say where revolutions will occur, and much less when. But this negative conclusion regarding the predictability of revolutions is not valueless. If the social sciences cannot foretell social events, they nevertheless can so define the conditions under which they occur that social development can be controlled.

Thus, it is of value to society to know the general conditions under which revolutions occur; for such knowledge points out the way by which revolutions can be avoided. Surely it cannot be valueless for a society to know that by encouraging intelligent public criticism, free discussion, and free thought about social conditions and institutions, by keeping itself adaptable, flexible, alert for betterment, it is pursuing the surest way to avoid future disaster. *Social science, if it cannot foretell the future, can nevertheless indicate the way of social health and security*.

The important practical truth, then, brought out by this study of revolutions, is that which has been so well expressed by Professor Ward when he says of societies: Only the labile is truly stable, just as in the domain of living things only the plastic is enduring. For lability is not an exact synonym of instability but embodies besides the idea of flexibility and susceptibility to change without destruction or loss. It is that quality in institutions which enables them to change and still persist, which converts their equilibrium into a moving equilibrium, and which makes possible their adaptation to both internal and external modification, to changes in both individual character and the environment.

Questions for Contemplation and Discussion

1. What is the phenomenon that Ellwood is attempting to explain? How does he define and operationalize the concept of revolution? How does this compare with Marx's theory of revolution?
2. What is sociological about Ellwood's theory of revolutions? Why does he refer to it as psychological? How does it differ from historical analyses? What makes it a sociological theory?
3. Compare Ellwood's description of the rise of dictatorship to Weber's theory of charismatic authority.
4. Ellwood claims that his theory can help us predict the outbreak of revolutions. Note the date of the article and his predictions as to future revolutions. Was he correct? Use his factors to measure the health of your own society today. What is the likelihood of imminent revolution?
5. What value does sociology hold, according to Ellwood?

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4.9: Charles Horton Cooley, “Social Consciousness” (1907)

“Self and society go together, as phases of a common whole.”

NOTE ON SOURCE: This passage is from an article published by Charles Horton Cooley in 1907. The entire article is entitled “was published in the *American Journal of Sociology* in March 1907 (volume 12, number 5, pp, 675-694). It has been abbreviated for publication here.

Introduction – Why this is important and what to look for

Cooley is well-known as the originator of the concept of the “looking glass self,” the idea that our notions of our individual selves are actually formed by observing how others perceive and respond to us. In this article, Cooley describes the existence of the “social mind.” When reading, think about how Cooley connects this with the issue of social reform. Compare him to Durkheim in both respects.

Social Mind in General

Mind is an organic whole made up of co-operating individualities, in somewhat the same way that the music of an orchestra is made up of divergent but related sounds. No one would think it necessary or reasonable to divide the music into two kinds— that made by the whole and that of particular instruments; and no more are there two› kinds of mind—the social mind and the individual mind. When we study the social mind, we merely fix our attention on larger aspects and relations, rather than on the narrower ones of ordinary psychology.

The unity of the social mind consists, not in agreement, but in organization, in the fact of reciprocal influence or causation among its parts, by virtue of which everything that takes place in it is connected with everything else, and so is an outcome of the whole. Whether, like the orchestra, it gives forth harmony may be a matter of dispute, but that its sound, pleasing or otherwise, is the expression of a vital cooperation, cannot well be denied.

Social and Individual Aspects of Consciousness

In the social mind we may distinguish – very roughly, of course, – conscious and unconscious relations. The unconscious relations are those of which we are not aware; which, in one way or another escape our notice. A great part of the influences at work upon us are of this character. Our language, our mechanical arts, our government and other institutions, we derive chiefly from people to whom we are but indirectly and unconsciously related. And although the growth of social consciousness is perhaps the greatest fact of history, it has still but a narrow and fallible grasp of human life. Social consciousness, or awareness of society, is inseparable from self-consciousness, because we can hardly think of ourselves excepting with reference to a social group of some sort, nor of the group except with reference to ourselves. The two things go together, and what we are really aware of is a, more or less complex personal or social whole, of which now the particular, now the general aspect is emphasized.

The “I”-consciousness does not explicitly appear until a child is about two years old, and, when it does appear, it comes in inseparable conjunction with the consciousness of other persons and of those relations which make up a social group. It is, in fact, simply one phase of a body of personal thought which is self-consciousness in one aspect and social consciousness in another.

Self and society go together. as phases of a common whole. I am aware of the social groups in which I live as immediately and authentically as I am aware of myself; and Descartes might have said “you think” or “we think,” on as good grounds as he said *“I think therefore I am”*.

But it may be said this very consciousness that you are considering is, after all, located in a particular person, and so are all similar consciousness, so that what we see, if we take an objective view of the matter, is merely an aggregate of individualities, however social those individualities may be. Common-sense, most people think, assures us that the separate person is the primary fact of life.

If so, it is because common-sense has been trained by custom to look at one aspect of things and not another. Common-sense, moderately informed, assures us that the individual has her being only as a part of a whole. What does not come by heredity comes by communication and intercourse; and the more closely we look, the more apparent it is that separateness is an illusion of the eye,

and community the inner truth. “Social organism”— using the term in no technical sense, but merely to mean a vital unity in human life—is a fact as obvious to enlightened common- sense as individuality.

There is, then, no mystery about social consciousness. The view that there is something recondite about it, and that it must be dug for with metaphysics and drawn forth from the depths of speculation, springs from a failure to grasp adequately the social nature of all higher consciousness. What we need in this connection is only a better seeing and understanding of rather ordinary and familiar facts.

Social Will

Social will differs from public opinion only in implying a more continuous and efficient organization. It is merely public opinion become an effective guide to social development.

It is quite plain that the development of the past has been mostly blind and without human intention. Any page of history shows that men have been unable to foresee, much less to control, the larger movements of life. Statesmen have lived in the present, having no purpose beyond the aggrandizement of their own country, their order, or their family. Such partial exceptions as the American Constitution are confined to recent times and excite a special wonder. Will has been alive only in details, in the smaller courses of life, while the larger structure and movement has been subconscious, erratic, and wasteful. The very idea of progress, of orderly development on a great scale, is of recent origin and diffusion.

At the present day, also, social phenomena of a large sort are for the most part not willed at all, but are the unforeseen result of diverse and partial endeavors. It is seldom that any large plan of social action is intelligently drawn up and followed out. Each interest works along in a somewhat blind and selfish manner, grasping, fighting, and groping. As regards general ends most of the energy is wasted; and yet a sort of advance takes place, more like the surging of a throng than the orderly movement of troops. Who can pretend that the American people, for example, are guided by any clear and rational plan in their economic, social, and religious development? They have glimpses and impulses, but hardly a will, except on a few matters of near and urgent interest.

In the same way, the ills that afflict society are seldom will by any one or any group but are the products of acts of will having other objects: they are done, as someone has said, rather with the elbows than with the fists. There is surprisingly little ill-intent, and the more one looms into wrong-doing, the less she finds of that vivid *chiaroscuro* of conscious goodness and badness her childish teaching has led her to expect.

Take, for instance, a conspicuous evil like the sweating system in the garment trades of New York and London. Here are people, largely women and children, forced to work twelve, fourteen, sometimes sixteen, hours a day, in the midst of dirt, bad air, and contagion, suffering the destruction of home life and decent nurture; and all for a wage insufficient to buy the bare necessities of life. But if you look for sin dark enough to cast such a shadow, you will scarcely find it. The “sweater” or immediate employer, to whom we first turn, is commonly himself a workman, not much raised above the rest and making but little profit on his transactions. Beyond him is the large dealer, usually a well-intentioned man, quite willing that things should be better, if they can be made so without too much trouble or pecuniary loss to himself. He is only dosing what others do and what, in his view, the conditions of trade require. And so on; the closer one gets to the facts, the more evident it is that nowhere is the indubitable wickedness our feelings have pictured. It is quite the same with political corruption and the venal alliance between wealth and party management. The men and women who control wealthy interests are probably no worse intentioned than the rest of us; they only do what they think they are forced to do in order to hold their own. And so with the politician: he or she finds that others are selling their power, and easily comes to think of it as a matter of course. In truth, the consciously, flagrantly wicked person is, and perhaps always has been, for the most part, a fiction of denunciation.

Thus it is not bad will, but lack of will, that is mainly the cause of evil things; they exist outside the sphere of choice. We lack rational self-direction and suffer not so much from our sins as from our blindness, weakness, and confusion.

It is true, then, as socialists tell us, that the need of society is rational organization, a more effectual social will. But we shall not agree with the narrowness of this or of any other sect as to the kind of organization that is to be sought. The true will of society is not concentrated in the government or any other single agent but works itself out through many instruments. It would simplify matters, no doubt, if a single, definite, and coercive institution, like the socialist state, could embrace and execute all right purposes; but I doubt whether life can be organized in that way.

The real ground for expecting a more rational existence and growth is in the increasing efficiency of the intellectual and moral process as a whole, not, peculiarly, in the greater activity of government.

In every province of life, a multiform social knowledge is arising and, mingling with the moral impulse, is forming a system of rational ideals which, through leadership and emulation, gradually work their way into practice.

The striving of our democracy toward clearer consciousness is too evident to escape any observer. Compare, for example, the place now taken in our universities by history, economics, political science, sociology, statistics, and the like, with the attention given them, say, in 1823, when, in fact, some of these studies had no place at all. Or consider the multiplication, since the same date, of government bureaus—federal, state, and local—whose main function is to collect, arrange, and disseminate social knowledge. It is not too much to say that governments are becoming, more and more, vast laboratories of social science. Consider also the number of books and periodicals seriously devoted to these subjects. No doubt much of this work is feverish and shallow, but this is incidental to all rapid change. There is, on the whole, nothing more certain or more hopeful than the advance in the larger self-knowledge of mankind.

Questions for Contemplation and Discussion

1. Compare Cooley's notion of the social mind to Durkheim's notion of the collective conscience.
2. What is Cooley's point about the sweating system? Who is to blame?
3. How is it that "ethical organization" will advance society? Do you agree? What is the role of social science in this endeavor?
4. What is it about socialism that Cooley is in agreement with? In disagreement?

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4.10: Lester Ward, “Social Classes” (1908)

“If all could have adequate opportunities, there would be no member of society incapable of performing some useful service.”

NOTE ON SOURCE: This passage is from an article published by Lester F. Ward, one of the first American sociologists. The entire article is entitled “Social Classes in the Light of Modern Sociological Theory” and was published in the *American Journal of Sociology* in March 1908 (volume 13, number 5, pp, 617-627). It has been abbreviated for publication here.

Introduction – Why this is important and what to look for

In contrast to his famed contemporary, Sumner, Ward thought sociology could be used to formulate progressive social policies. In this passage, Ward first lays out current sociological thinking on the origins of class and class conflict. In the full article, much of what Ward writes is in rejection of eugenicist ideas of race and class common in his day. What is included here is his analysis of inequalities, their social (versus biological) origin, and consequences thereof.

Social Classes and Inequalities

Many questions supposed to have been definitively settled have been revived and brought into new prominence under the searchlight of modern sociological theory. One of the time-worn social problems of this order is that of the origin and nature of social classes.

I need not here go again over the ground already several times traveled, to show that, as a matter of fact, every time that the lower classes have been brought under conditions where they could manifest their natural and inherent equality with the upper classes they have done so in such a manner as to leave no doubt with regard to that equality. I shall therefore leave that aspect of the case and pass to the consideration of another quite different aspect upon which very little has ever been said.

I refer now to the admitted natural inequalities of men. This is observed on every hand by all, and so ingrained is the idea that the lower classes of society are such by reason of these natural inequalities that there has never been any attempt to analyze the subject with a view to ascertaining whether this is really true or not. Whenever the abolition of social classes is hinted at it is pronounced utopian, and the common and supposed final answer is that if we were to suppose them once really done away with, on account of the natural inequalities of people, they would almost immediately be restored, and every person would find their level. This usually closes the argument, and I have yet to see any attempt to answer it. And yet this is really such a superficial view that it falls to pieces upon the simplest inspection. It receives its death-blow the moment we recognize the obvious fact that all these natural inequalities are to be found in all classes and within every class, and that no degree of intellectual deficiency is ever sufficient to cause its possessor to be removed to a lower social class. The weakest minds occur in the highest classes, and Lord Dundrearys are by no means rare. This does not make them any the less lords. We might well wish that social classes were based on some such rational grounds as this theory assumes. Unfortunately, such is not the case, and not only are weak minds found in the higher classes, but, what is perhaps worse, strong minds are found in the lower, where they have no chance to work to any purpose.

As Professor Huxley said of the exceptional, “no one can say where they will crop up; like their opposites, the fools and knaves, they appear sometimes in the palace and sometimes in the hovel.”

But this, while it completely overthrows the prevalent view that social classes are based on natural inequalities, is far from being the last word on that subject. We have seen that social classes are wholly due to artificial conditions, and that the inequalities which they manifest are all artificial inequalities. These have the effect to produce social cleavage or social stratification. They place one person over another regardless of her worth and generate the whole series of inconsistencies and misfits with which society is afflicted.

Now natural inequalities also have a powerful effect on society. It is not the opposite of that produced by artificial inequalities. It is entirely different. As we have seen, they have no tendency to produce social classes, but they permeate every class alike. Moreover, their effect, instead of being injurious, is highly beneficial. Natural inequalities rarely tend to make one person superior or inferior to another. They simply make us different from one another. This is highly desirable. Of course, there are brilliant minds and there are feeble minds. An excess of the latter quality relegates its victim to the class of social dependents. It becomes a pathological

condition. Society cares for these wards, to whatever class they may belong. With them we have nothing to do. But the principal inequalities belong to normal minds. They simply represent mental differences. No two minds are exactly alike. Mind is capable of almost infinite variation. There may be a thousand varieties no one of which can be called inferior to another. Apparent inferiority is usually due to some peculiarity. Very few minds are perfectly balanced. Some faculties are developed at the expense of others. No normal and sane mind can be deficient in all its faculties. The faculty called "common-sense," the one which makes its possessor appear normal and sane, may be poorly developed, while some other mental power may be greatly in excess. There is a kind of intellectual compensation by which all are equal but in very different ways. Many great geniuses, as all know, have been deficient in the commoner qualities. There is probably no one who does not have some strong side if it could be known. Many no doubt fail during their whole lives to find expression for the chief powers that they possess. *If all could have adequate opportunities there would be no member of society incapable of performing some useful service.*

Now it is these very inequalities, however extreme, that cause the efficiency of the human race. The actions of people are a reflex of their mental characteristics. Where these differ so widely the acts of their possessors will correspondingly differ. Instead of all doing the same thing they will do a thousand different things. The natural and necessary effect of this is to give breadth to human activity. Every subject will be looked at from all conceivable points of view, and no aspect will be overlooked or neglected. It is due to this multiplicity of view-points, growing out of natural inequalities in our minds, that civilization and culture have moved forward along so many lines and swept the whole field of possible achievement.

While therefore the effect of artificial inequalities may be said to be *vertical*, in producing social stratification and creating social classes with all their baleful consequences, that of natural inequalities may be called *horizontal*, spreading out in all directions and compassing the whole earth.

It follows that the great end of all social arrangements should be to discourage artificial inequalities and to encourage natural ones. It would be a great gain if the former could be abolished altogether, and could this be done, as we have seen, natural inequalities would have no tendency to re-establish them. We should have but one social class, or rather, we should have no social classes. All would stand on an equal footing and be enabled to put forth all their energies.

In the present state of society, even in the most advanced nations where the obliteration of class lines has already gone so far, about 80% of the population belong to what we still call the lower classes. These, although they possess natural inequalities as clearly marked as are those of the upper classes, are practically debarred from their exercise to any useful purpose. Statistical investigations, as I have shown, prove that, notwithstanding their superior numbers, they furnish less than 10% of the agents of civilization, and that relatively to population they furnish less than 1%. Their influence in the progress of the world is therefore practically nil, although their capacities are the same as those of the higher classes to whom, notwithstanding their small numbers, nearly all progress is due. This is entirely the result of the social stratification caused by artificial inequalities. The abolition of social classes, could it be accomplished, would therefore increase the efficiency of mankind at least one hundredfold.

It is no part of the purpose of this address to propose any method of social reform. Its aim is solely to put in a clear light the true nature of social classes, their historical and ethnic origin, and their wholly artificial character. It is hoped thereby to remove them from the list of superficial studies which start from no sound premises and lead to no safe conclusion, and to bring them fairly within the purview of scientific sociology.

Questions for Contemplation and Discussion

1. What is the difference between artificial and natural inequalities? To which belongs class?
2. Compare Ward to Durkheim, particularly Durkheim's discussion of pathological forms of the division of labor. Are they in agreement? Explain.
3. Many of the writers of this era came down on one side or another on the issue of socialism as a preferred (and inevitable) form of social and political arrangement. Where does Ward stand? How do you know? How does he connect his vision of sociology with this stance?

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4.11: Franklin H. Giddings on Theory and Public Policy (1911)

"To censure is easy, and in the power of every man, but the true counsellor should point out conduct which the present exigence demands" – Demosthenes[1]

NOTE ON SOURCE: This passage is from Giddings' Presidential Address to the American Sociological Society in 1910, the full title of which is "The Relation of Social Theory to Public Policy." The speech has been shortened in part.

Introduction – Why this is important and what to look for

As one of the founders of American sociology, Giddings' reformist approach to social problems historically important. In this speech, Giddings tackles the increasing insecurity and bellicosity of international relations. In discussing the advance of sociology, Giddings makes mention of two of the "founders" of sociology – Comte and Spencer.[2] He also brings into the discussion a psychological dimension – of human imitation, of collective passion, and the rage of the crowd. This has some similarities to Durkheim's notion of collective effervescence, but in many regards is quite different. Think this through as you read the selection.

Theory and Public Policy

It is an interesting circumstance that the makers of social theory in all generations have aimed to be true counselors in the sense contemplated by the Athenian orator. Like other men, they have reacted to the greater exigencies of their day. With fellow-citizens they have played their part in the collective struggle for existence and advantage. By one sort of thinking or another, their theories have been derived, at least in part, from observations or reflections upon large issues of public policy, and upon public policy they have left an impression by no means insignificant.

If their counsel has been not always wise, not always salutary, imperfect knowledge, more than any defect of patriotism, has been at fault. Until social theory became sociology, it was highly *a priori* and speculative. A conclusion much desired for fortifying a policy predetermined more often than not was the actual base of intellectual operations. Knowing what he ought to prove for the glory and safety of the state, the pragmatic political philosopher discovered adequate premises there, for as unerringly as any soothsayer to Cyrus or Alexander found the right flock of birds to deliver a prognosis of promise for expeditions then afoot.

It would be rash to assume that speculative methods have forever faded with the nobler intellects that used them "into the infinite azure of the past." In an age which is witnessing, in supposedly educated circles, a revival of every cult of magic and demonism known among men from Gadara to Salem, we cannot feel sure that any absurdity or obsession may not again mask under the austere name of "science." But for the time being, social theory of the speculative sort is discredited. The very name "sociology" was invented and is used to lay stress upon inductive method. To find the facts first, to sort and array them with a fine discrimination, to observe differences, resemblances, and dimensions closely, to generalize with caution, and only then to ask what suggestions, if any, the approximations to truth so obtained offer us for guidance in private and in public conduct, is now the only reputable procedure among students of social, as of physical, phenomena.

Of the founders of sociology it may be said that in a preeminent degree their interest in practical affairs was deep and continuous and directed upon the weightier matters of the law. Comte wrote *The Positive Philosophy* in part that he might fashion *The Positive Polity*. Spencer never lost sight of his initial purpose to formulate the principles of justice.

We cannot doubt that these men, like their forerunners, were tempted to lay philosophical foundations in the good old manner, for preconceived political systems. That they never dallied with the temptation need not be claimed. But to whatever extent they yielded to it, they impaired the value of their total achievement. Their abiding fame rests upon so much of their accumulation and classification of facts as was unprejudiced and so much of their generalization as was inductive in quality.

To recall these origins of inductive social theory is to realize that the work remembered was not only ground-clearing and ground-breaking; it was also superlatively constructive. Spencer's sociological theories were formulated as a part of his evolutionist conception of the world. That conception has become an integral part of the mental equipment of every educated man. Those writers who would convince us that Spencer is forgotten are of all philosophers most miserable. They must either avoid the post-Spencerian problems or think about them in terms of Spencerian ideas.

It is a fair presumption that work of such enduring influence upon theory has not yet spent its practical power in suggestion. It is reasonable to think that, were we now to re-examine it, we might find it still an unexhausted fund of wisdom, as of correlated knowledge. It may afford us guidance today, not less than it did yesterday, for a rational criticism of public policy. To that possibility, it may be well to give attention. The problems of public policy do not become simpler with advancing civilization. To speak for the moment of our own nation, the questions that vex us are of bewildering variety and complexity: questions of territorial expansion and of rule over alien peoples; questions arising out of race conflict within our older continental domain; questions of the restriction of immigration, of the centralization or the distribution of administrative authority, of the concentration or the diffusion of economic power. Well may the skeptic ask if any science of human relations, however wide its generalizations, can offer even presumptive answers to questions so far-reaching and so diverse. Yet every citizen, whether he be instructed or ignorant, is expected to help answer them.

Before we admit that the objection is fatal, let us remember that an overshadowing question has still to be named, and that when one question overshadows all others the relative values of the others are determined. That question is the world-old query—older than science, older than any record of history—the question, “Is it War or Peace?”

After ten thousand years of so-called progress, is reason still so ineffective against instinct that only minor issues can be removed from fields of battle to arenas of intellectual conflict? Must sovereignty—the ultimate social control—forever prove and declare itself in government by slaughter, or may international relations also be brought under government by discussion? By this “previous question” of world-politics every question of domestic politics is qualified. With war a possibility, the restriction of immigration is one problem; with war made impossible it would become an entirely different problem. A further democratizing of the social order, which might be safe if world-peace were assured, may be fraught with peril if the greater nations are again to challenge one another’s right to live. It is not an accident that international socialism is unalterably opposed to militarism under every guise and pretense.

These considerations might be dismissed as academic if it were certain that war must indefinitely continue. Happily, that is not the fact. The antagonism of nearly ten millions of socialistic voters is formidable. The best professional and business intellects of the world are ranging themselves on the side of peace. Funds with which to wage aggressive attack upon eradicable causes of war have been provided. A larger number of men, also sincere and able, reject every defense of war as invalid, but are incredulous when ways and means of disarmament are proposed.

It is precisely upon these two interpellations, namely, the desirability of world-peace and its possibility, that the verdict of sociology may rightly be demanded and should carry weight.

As all students of Spencer know, his most important sociological generalizations pertain to the characteristic differences between what he calls the militant and the industrial types of society. His theory of social causation is stated mainly in terms of war-habit and peace-habit. Mr. Spencer looked upon war as the most monstrous of social ills, as the most formidable obstacle to the complete evolution of man. His faith was in the improvability of man, the final and superlative product of cosmic evolution. He saw that improvement involves adaptation to conditions on which life depends, and ever nicer adjustments of differing interests. He believed that improvement consists in an expanding sympathy of man for man, a continuing differentiation of powers, a better and always better co-ordination of life-activities and there with an ever-deepening joy of living. It has proceeded through a social process. In this process war has played a great and recurring part. In breaking down the barriers that separated primitive men, in bringing savage camps together into tribes, in hammering tribes together intonations, war was inevitable and it was useful. Nevertheless, war achieves results through frightful cost and waste. It is incompatible with those more delicate processes of evolution which we associate, or should associate, with high civilization. This is a point of such fundamental importance, and the Spencerian demonstration of it is so complete and so irrefutable, that we may well linger for a moment to note wherein the demonstration consists.

Evolution is simple or compound.

Simple evolution is swift, direct and business-like. Compound evolution is slow, tortuous, uncertain, halting, and unbusiness-like to the last degree.

All this is but a way of saying that growth, and the art which simulates growth, are not manufacture. Nature knows nothing of standardization. Within some given range of variation she creates types, that is to say, resemblances, but no two individuals are precisely alike. But growth, with its possibilities of correlated difference, of diversity in unity, requires freedom and takes time. It

can be hastened, but only with some sacrifice of results. Some strength of fiber, some delicacy of adaptation, is missed. Hastened evolution is crude evolution. Massiveness of parts and brutality of power may be attained, but not completeness of life.

Now of all ways of hastening social evolution, war is the most obvious, the most effective, the most absolutely businesslike. A well-organized and well-drilled army is the best example of standardization that we know. Conquest and a rigorous military rule over conquered foes are the quickest way to integrate and standardize vast populations. The product is a militaristic empire. It is massive and imposing. It brings together the materials from which civilization may be evolved, but it is not itself an example of compound evolution. The notion that war can perfect the internal adaptations of national life, the finer adjustments of sectional, racial, or class interests, has no historical justification.

Can it be said that the attempt of our southern brethren to solve by war, or of the federal government to solve by the essentially militaristic policies of reconstruction, the terrible problem of race interests were successful?

This, then, is the evolutionist's case against war. It can hasten social integration, but in the measure that it succeeds, it prevents or postpones those finer and endlessly varied adaptations which require freedom and time, and upon which completeness of life depends. War has rudely assembled the factors of civilization, but the possible recurrence of war menaces civilization from this time forth.

Can war then be outlawed and generally prevented?

I suppose that there is substantial agreement among economists and historians that the prevailing causes of war have been hunger and greed. These conditions create tension and provoke contention. They do not, however, inevitably produce war. The sociologist may go far with economist and historian in recognizing economic causes in history, but he may not lose sight of other factors, which it is peculiarly the province of his own science to analyze and evaluate. These factors are psychological, and without their co-operation war does not begin. The passions of men must be consolidated. Consuming hatred or fierce exaltation must merge individual wills in the collective fury of the psychologic crowd.

Even then war does not follow if the fury merely bursts. An explosion may make hell writ small, and war is hell writ large, but their resemblance ends. An explosion in the open does no work, and war is systematic work. To make war, the public fury must so far be controlled that it can discharge itself only through the mechanism of a military organization, in a series of regulated explosions, directed upon a definite object, until its infernal task is done.

Failure to remember this incontrovertible fact has had unfortunate consequences for historical theory and for political ethics. How does the control of public wrath arise? In what does it consist? Through what agents or agencies does it direct this fearful power, dissipating it in peace, or aggregating it for war?

Now habits are acquired, we say, by doing things or thinking things many times over. That is true, but it is not all. The repetitions that make up habit are imitations; they are copies of models or examples. Many of our elemental and most useful habits are imitations of parents; but plainly, if we imitated parents only, there would be no national traits, and, in the strict sense of the word, no nations. There would be only some millions of families, each abiding by its own mental and moral law. National habits, and therefore national traits and character, are copies of those relatively conspicuous models that are widely imitated, irrespective of kinship; imitated locally at first, perhaps, but at length throughout a population.

If so much be granted, a further and profoundly significant truth is granted by implication. Conspicuous or dynamic men who become models to thousands or millions of their fellows, are true social causes, and centers of social control. As they think, the multitude thinks; as they do, the multitude does, and for the most part unconsciously, every man believing that he thinks or acts spontaneously, and because it is his nature to think or to act so, and not otherwise.

Is not the conclusion obvious? Men in positions of authority, whether, as they believe, by divine right, or, as others think, by human choice, are necessarily conspicuous. Often, they are men of power, and whether they would have it so or not, their decisions become to some extent the popular decision, and their voice becomes in part the people's voice. Without dictation or argument, and solely because their choice is spontaneously copied, and their course of action is uncritically followed by multitudes that swear the choice was theirs, these men control, and controlling direct, the public complaisance and the public wrath. In the final throwing of the dice of fate, they are causes of peace and war.

From this sober conclusion of inductive science, I confess I see no escape. That it is in harmony with an unsophisticated moral prejudice is not, I wish to believe, a reason for distrusting it. The conscience of civilized mankind has never yet admitted that

deliberately declared war has been irresponsibly begun. Rather has it held, that great men in all ages, as molders of opinion and ministers of state, have been moral agents, rightly to be branded with infamy when, for their own aggrandizement or glory, they have drawn the sword.

One rule of policy then, it would seem, may fairly be derived from sociological theory for the discouragement of war. It is right and expedient to teach that exceptional men, and especially all emperors and presidents and ministers of state, are not puppets of the *Zeitgeist*, but, in a scientific sense of the word, are true social causes, and, as such, are morally responsible for the maintenance of peace.

Beyond policies to restrain the makers of war, are there policies which might render the making of war more difficult?

The conditions preventive or inhibitive of war have been three, namely: isolation, the inclusion of minor states within confederations or imperial systems, and the so-called balance of power.

In the past mere inaccessibility of territory has assured the relatively peaceful development of many peoples, among whom some have made priceless contributions to civilization. There are no inaccessible nations now. Political integration has continually widened the areas within which domestic peace prevails, and the work is so far done that no important lands or peoples remain to be appropriated. Further integration will be redistributive only. There remains the balance of power, as the one important objective condition upon which the maintenance of peace will largely depend.

I am using the term in a general or descriptive, not a technical or diplomatic, sense. I mean by it political forces in approximate equilibrium throughout the world. In this sense the balance of power is a sociological phenomenon of peculiar interest, for two reasons.

First, it is interesting because of its nature or composition. It is a distribution of forces roughly in accordance with what the mathematician calls “chance occurrence.” If as many as a thousand shots are fired at a target, those that miss the bulls-eye are distributed about it with curious regularity. Of those that miss it by three inches, about as many will hit above as below, about as many to the left as to the right. Of those that miss it by six inches, about as many will hit right as left, about as many below as above. In like manner a balance of power is a symmetrical distribution of forces about a central point. An international balance of power exists when, with reference to any interest or question upon which states may differ, as many strong powers range themselves on one side as on the other, and the weak ones are symmetrically distributed with reference to the strong ones.

Government by discussion depends upon a balance of power and necessarily proceeds from it. It is a social expansion of the reasoning processes of the individual mind.

Reasoning begins when instinct fails or is inhibited. So long as we can confidently act, we do not argue, but when we face conditions abounding in uncertainty or when we are confronted by alternative possibilities, we first hesitate, then feel our way, then guess, and at length venture to reason. Reasoning, accordingly, is that action of the mind to which we resort when the possibilities before us and about us are distributed substantially according to the law of chance occurrence, or, as the mathematician would say, in accordance with “the normal curve” of random frequency. The moment the curve is obviously skewed, we decide. If it is obviously skewed from the beginning, by bias, or interest, by prejudice, authority, or coercion, our reasoning is futile or imperfect. So, in the state, if any interest or coalition of interests is dominant and can act promptly, it rules by absolutist methods. Whether it is benevolent or cruel, it wastes neither time nor resources upon government by discussion. But if interests are innumerable, and so distributed as to offset one another, and if no great bias or over-weighting anywhere appears, government by discussion inevitably arises. The interests can get together only if they talk. So, too, in international relations. If in coming years these shall be adjusted by reason instead of by force, by arbitration instead of by war, it will be because a true balance of power has been attained. If any one power or coalition of powers shall be able to dictate, it will also rule, and the appeal to reason will be vain.

By what policies can an equilibrium of international power be established? I shall only name those that the foregoing considerations suggest, and not attempt to describe or to analyze them. They must of course be policies that will tend both to differentiate interests and to disintegrate coalitions of power that create an overwhelming preponderance of strength. The great superiorities that now preclude effective government by discussion throughout the world are, (1) technical proficiency based on scientific knowledge, and (2) concentrated economic power. If we sincerely wish for peace, we must be willing to see a vast equalizing of industrial efficiency between the East and the West. We must also welcome every change that tends to bring about a fairer apportionment of natural resources among nations and within them, and a more equal distribution of wealth. If these

conditions can be met, there will be a Parliament of Man. If they cannot be met, a nominal government by discussion will he but a tournament of words.

Questions for Contemplation and Discussion

1. What is the difference between social theory and *sociology*, according to Giddings? Why is the latter a historical advance for public policy?
2. Giddings mentions several social problems of his day. Have these social problems been cured? What advances of knowledge have taken place in each of these areas? If you were to create a list of the five most important social problems today, how would this list compare to Giddings' list?
3. Giddings uses Spencerian concepts of social evolution to evaluate war. What are the problems of war, looked at this way?
4. What does sociology add to our understanding of the causes of war, different from what is proposed by economists or historians?
5. What three conditions have been advanced for limiting war? Which is most persuasive to Giddings, and why? To you?
6. In the discussion of balance of power, note Giddings' statistically-minded analogy of central tendency.

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1. This quote from the Athenian orator graced the original article. ↵
2. The speech actually includes a third, Bagehot, all references to which have been removed for sake of parsimony. ↵

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4.12: Small on the Sociological Point of View (1920)

"To live well we need to understand the circumstances that surround our attempts to live."

NOTE ON SOURCE: This passage is from an article entitled "The Sociologists' Point of View," published in the *American Journal of Sociology* in 1897, pages 145-171. It has been abbreviated for publication here.

Introduction – Why this is important and what to look for

It is fitting to end this section with this passage, as it sums up what is unique and important about sociology in the US during this period. Albion Small was one of the first professors of sociology in the United States. Similar to Durkheim in France, he took it upon himself to champion this new discipline. Although he does not have the same intellectual depth as Durkheim, and does not articulate any novel theoretical ideas, his piece on the sociologists' point of view is an important historical statement defining sociology in the US context. Pay attention to the links Small makes between progressive politics, social reform, and the science of sociology.

The Sociologists' Point of View

The fact which has begotten sociology is a dawning social consciousness. As in no previous age of the world's history men are with one voice inquiring "What are the facts and the forces that make or mar social life?" Sociology is not, like many of the systems of thought that have attracted men before, the amusement of recluse philosophers. Sociology is a frank attempt to assist in supplying a real popular demand. It springs from the people's thought, not alone from the lucubrations of closet speculators. At the same time sociology attempts to inform and control the very popular thought by which it has been inspired. The concrete popular demand is for specifics Sociology is devoted to showing that specifics, if they could be invented, would not long satisfy the demand, and it is further bent on showing that something may presently be had better than specifics.

Practical men of all sorts and conditions are beginning to inquire whether social conditions may not, to a thus far unsuspected degree, be like our food, our clothes, and our shelter—something to be thought out, and planned, and systematically constructed. More men than ever before are at least dimly aware that it is needful to give deliberate thought to social arrangements, instead of allowing society to happen into shape. This more general perception is spurring the sociologists to perfect their methods. Popular unrest and scientific curiosity are together asking the question "What are the inside facts about human society?" The first division of the work which the sociologists are undertaking is the task of making clear to the different kinds of people who are trying to solve social problems what division and organization of labor is necessary in order to progress as fast as possible in answering this general question, with all the minor questions which it involves and implies.

This paper is addressed, not to specialists, but to the many thoughtful students of social questions who are anxious to know whether there is some best way of thinking about social relations. Nor is it my purpose to glorify sociology and sociologists. Only a very small fraction of the people who are doing the work which is necessary before searching questions about society can be answered are now or are likely to be called sociologists. The sociologists are one class among many workers in a common field. The whole field, not a narrow portion of it claimed by particular specialists, interests members of society in general. Yet in some respects the sociologists have more in common with the non-professional many than have any other group of technical students of society. The point of view of the sociologists is that of the social person of every sort, rather than that of the specialist. For this reason it is worthwhile to explain with the least possible technicality, not what the sociologists claim as their peculiar province or mission, but rather the point of view which the sociologists think everybody should occupy who ventures to hold or to seek opinions about any kind of social relations.

The starting point of the sociologists, then, is frank belief that the best of us are as yet comparatively ignorant about the inside facts of society, and that thoroughgoing study of society is necessary. The majority of the people in the world have yet to be convinced that study of society is important. I might discuss those scholars who more or less directly contend that all necessary study of society is sufficiently provided for. I am just now more concerned with those unscholarly persons who either tacitly or expressly set themselves against the necessity of any study of society at all.

“Why need we study society?”

The first answer to this inept question would seem to be on the face of the fact that nature is one factor and society another with which every human being has to deal. If it is profitable to study nature, it surely is to study society. Society is simply all the people together in any part of the world which may be thought of by itself. “Society” is our town. It is the United States. It is the group of civilized nations with which Americans have intercourse. It is again the whole human family. If we do not use the word in the remote sense that places “society” beyond the range of ordinary interest, it seems that the word means only something so very commonplace that study of it is rather beneath what we suppose to be our dignity. We have “society,” like the poor, always wish us. It is perfectly familiar. Why study it?

People have asked the same question about all familiar things when it was first proposed to study them, and build up scientific knowledge about them. People had breathed air, for example, thousands of years before it occurred to anybody to study air. When scholars began to talk about studying air ordinary people laughed at them. “The idea of studying air! Why not study something worthwhile? Everybody knows all about air.” It proved, however, that nobody really knew much of anything precisely about air. People did not so much as know that air is heavy, that it is elastic, that it is a mixture of gases, etc. People said the same thing when scholars talked of studying water, either physically or chemically. They said the same thing about the beginnings of the study of plant and animal life—biology. President G. Stanley Hall is fond of recalling the farmer to whom some students of biology had applied for help to find frogs for study. “What is there to study about frogs? I know all about frogs myself. I’ve got a whole pond full of them down there.” So our very familiarity with society has kept us from stopping to think about society in a way to make us understand society.

From the sociologists’ point of view, then, we need to study society because it is the surrounding, the “environment,” as the biologists say, in which all of us live and move and have our being. It is stupid and costly to let our thoughts about society be vague or wrong or partial. To live well we need to understand the circumstances that surround our attempts to live. The sociologists propose systematic study of society in order to develop the power and the habit of seeing society, and seeing into society, and seeing through and around society, for the sake of power to see beyond society as it exists today and into social conditions that may be desirable and possible tomorrow.

Most people never see what they see. A parlor game sometimes called “Observation” makes amusement out of this fact. A score or more of small objects are scattered upon a tray, and the players are instructed to file by the table and notice the objects. Then, upon pain of forfeit for each omission, the players are called upon to write a list of the articles on the tray. The results always illustrate the fact that we seldom see all that we see. This is notoriously true of social relations. Only a few exceptional people have seen, for example, that a part of our own life is lived by people miles away, whose names we have never heard. Because certain men in Montana or the Argentine or Australia have raised a particular breed of sheep, we are able to wear some parts of the clothing at this moment on our bodies. Those distant people have been dressing us for years, while we have given scarce a thought to their existence. Who puts fork and spoon in our mouth at today’s dinner? Not our hand alone. Some men have been raising wheat in Dakota, and potatoes in Michigan; others have been boiling salt in New York, others picking coffee in Java, and drying tea in Japan, and gathering spices in the isles of the sea; and porters have carried on their backs, and loaded on drays, and sails have strained, and boilers have steamed, and officials have inspected, and merchants have sworn, and traders have broken bulk, and factory hands have labored – all in the course of setting our table. If the family next door to some of us in the city should move away or die, nothing worth noticing might be subtracted from our life. If those thousands of people in distant parts of our own land or beyond seas should stop living and working, great sections of our own life would cease. This is merely a specification under the well-known and ill-known formula, “None of us liveth to himself.” *The monster known to theory as “ the individual” does not exist except in theorists’ speculations.* The man who thinks himself an independent individual has put an optical illusion in place of himself. We human beings are what we are because we are parts of society. What society is decides what we are and what we may be.

There are still further reasons for the study of society. Sooner or later thoughtful people discover that society is a collection of problems; people have to tackle these problems. Improvement of life means solution of these problems. In order to render any intelligent assistance in solving these problems we must study society sufficiently to make the problems real to our own mind.

These social problems, as proposed by complainers, and agitators, and “reformers,” and seers of every sort, prove upon inspection to be larger or smaller parts of certain greater problems like these: What are we human beings actually living for? What are we trying to bring about, on the whole, as the outcome of living? Are we making the best use of our resources to reach these ends that

we have in view? What is the best that we might live for, if we took a little wiser look into the situation, and calculated the possibilities of life a little more broadly and deeply? We cannot dissolve this social partnership if we would. How may we make it closer, and better adapted to secure these better results? All the questions about wealth, labor, monopolies, trusts, forms of government, administrative policies, class relationships; all questions of justice and morality between people, are parts and details and variations of the great problem of knowing society as the real fact, the largest, most meaning reality that we touch in actual life.

One of the reasons why we have to put up with social disturbance in the place of social progress today, why we have such strifes of tongues and opinions instead of instruction fit to improve life, is another version of the answer to our question, viz., we are so anxious to solve social problems that we have no time to study society. The consequence is that their solutions do not solve. Worse than this, their agitations create more problems. The shortest way to reachability to solve social problems is not to try to solve them at all for a long time, but to learn how to state them. To most of those who share the feverishness of our day to extemporize social solutions this program seems to demand waste of too much valuable time. On the contrary, those who are intelligently following this program, by studying partially understood factors in society instead of trying to cipher out social problems whose terms cannot yet be definitely expressed, are making haste slowly, to be sure, but they are making haste.

The sociologist naturally differs in judgment from those people who claim superior merit as humanitarians and moralists or refusing to acquire the necessary knowledge about society, who prefer instead to scourge the air with exhortations to reform institutions they do not understand. Specific doctrines and policies about “living issues” are by no means the only nor the surest reliance for improving the world. The sociologist would be the last person to approve the policy of folding the hands and waiting until we are omniscient before trying to help ourselves. As public-spirited citizens sociologists would cooperate with all other good citizens in doing the best things in sight to make life more satisfactory. However, in the long run the kind of intelligence which can bring about wise adjustments to new conditions is more serviceable and reliable than mere zeal for expedients, for these may serve at best only a temporary purpose. The student of society ought to have enough decision of character to commit herself both in thought and action on such subjects as the tariff, the currency, internal taxation, public policy towards monopolies, and the demands of the numberless “interests” that seek legislative help. The wise student of society will at the same time, even in his most sanguine moods, steady herself with the reflection that the best of her beliefs and programs about current “issues” are of subordinate importance after all. It makes relatively little difference what we think about specific cases. They may be exceptional and temporary. Our views about them may become obsolete at any moment through change of circumstances. It makes a great deal of difference whether we are intelligent about abiding relationships. Very much depends upon our general outlook upon society; upon our spirit about life, upon insight into permanent elements of human character and conditions. Our personal equation in these respects will make us forces for evil or good, for progress or regress, in spite of changed circumstances.

To illustrate the sociologists’ view of the ways in which we must learn to study society, in order to get what we can discover into truthful shape, let us imagine that we are for the first time confronting the question, what are the inside facts of society?

Let us suppose that this question had never been asked before. Suppose that we had meanwhile acquired all the ideas of logic, and of science, and of the laws of scientific evidence which we now possess. How would we go to work to discover the inside facts of society?

We would say to ourselves, the thing that we want to understand is this immemorial complex of cooperating people in which we find ourselves forming a part during our passing day. The fact that greets our eyes is that people fill the world; they crowd upon each other; they express in outward action their inward thought. This expression of thought brings things to pass. It makes and remakes the mold of institutions within which individual careers are pursued. It modifies people. It transforms all the human elements in the world. This human action and reaction is, on the one hand, never the same in two successive years. On the other hand, it is all one endless, incessant, indivisible process from beginning to end. The people on the stage of action never change all together and at once. They relieve each other in relays or shifts. There is total substitution of actors after a while, but by such means that unbroken continuity of action is preserved. It is all one long, mixed, mysterious commingling process. To our first view it is simply continuance. We can not find its beginning; we cannot find its end. People have lived together and rubbed against each other, and so have produced all our ways of life, such as they are.

Can we grasp all this in a single view that will help us hold it before the mind’s eye for inspection? Yes, we can sum it up in one word—association or society—always meaning by it *human* association or society. That word gives us a unified object of thought. *It does not explain anything that we want to know, but it presents the thing to be explained as a single concept*. The implications of this concept are to be discovered, and we have only put the stupendously complex question in more convenient shape when we

have reduced it to the easy form. What are the facts about association or society? The term society stands for all the people whose presence within the world-making process, at any time, earlier or later, has in any degree affected the process. Society, then, means the total of effective human beings working in their various ways within the bounds of time and space which our human career has occupied. It is reasonable to assume that this time and space-filling reality—society –has exhibited some regularities and irregularities capable of formulation in general propositions. It is probable that human associations, closely scrutinized, will demonstrate qualities of the human factors concerned. It is likely that there are general principles of action and effect illustrated in all this mass and variety of association. It is to be assumed that if our minds could take in all that has occurred among people -'we should have a systematized body of knowledge about the operative forces wherever people are in association. It is probable that this body of knowledge would serve to make us more intelligent in the future than we have been in the past about social conduct. Let us, therefore, set ourselves to know this reality, society. Surely by such knowledge alone may we wisely order our lives.

We should find that all persons are associated persons. This discovery brings with it two results: first, to know the individual we shall have to follow him out of himself into his correlations with others; second, to know the correlations which are constituted by associations of people we must know their elements, as these are located in the make-up of the individuals who produce the associations. That is, while we may distinguish the phases of knowledge needed by the standpoint—whether individual or collective—from which we begin a particular research, the knowledges always run into each other, and find themselves, at last, either as like parts of larger wholes, or as respectively less and more inclusive portions of the same whole. For instance, if we are studying the life of a town, we may deal in turn with its physiography, natural and artificial; its industries; its government; its educational, charitable, artistic, social, or devotional institutions. Each of these portions of the whole called "the town" is meaningless or deceptive if held separate from the other parts. Then there may be more minute analysis of each of these segments or systems within the town, as, for example, the school system, the things so discovered being subordinate parts in one of the many large divisions of the group.

In pursuing this way of approach to the inside facts of society we should presently find ourselves asking in turn all the questions which the biologist asks about life in general, and which the physiologist and the physical anthropologist ask about human life in particular. We should also find ourselves asking all the questions which the psychologist asks about the mental facts of individual action. In other words, we should encounter the need of developing the same sciences of individual life which have already started into existence without any help from sociology.

We should discover that there are facts or realities which do not in like fashion come to light merely in individuals. They have their incorporation in symbols or institutions by which we are controlled. Such realities are language, literature, religions, philosophies, sciences, arts, legal, economic, and governmental systems.

It has no doubt appeared in the foregoing that two general questions about the facts of society are inextricably involved with each other, viz.: first, how did social arrangements come to be as they are? Second, how does it come about that social arrangements stay as they are? The latter question seems to assume what is not true, but there is a phase of reality corresponding with the assumption. The former question sums up all the inquiries that belong to history in the broadest sense, as Herbert Spencer has outlined the business of history. Dr. Lester F. Ward has supplied a better phrase, when he groups all these facts and interpretations under the head "social genesis." The latter question sets in motion all the investigations which the sociologist would group under the general title of "social statics." Professor Ward has also clearly shown that the general truths formulated by genetic and statical interpretation of social facts may be grouped together under the term "social mechanics." Each of these groups of inquiries casts light on the other, and it is probable that progress toward final results will be by means of parallel advances toward settlement of the two sorts of questions.

What inferences should be drawn from this survey of social study, as the field would present itself to a naive mind equipped with right methodological principles, and unspoiled by conventions and prejudice? In the first place, the inference that pretentious generalizations about laws of social progress or social order must be regarded with grave suspicion, until the facts of human experience have been much more thoroughly canvassed than they are likely to be for generations to come. In the second place, that in preparation either for practical judgments upon immediate social conditions, or for larger philosophical generalizations of more typical conditions, it is worthwhile to acquire breadth and poise of judgment by the largest possible familiarity with what is known about social cause and effect in the past, and about reciprocal social influences in the present. In the third place, there is no likelihood that anybody will reach any central fact from which by deduction we can answer in detail, from general to special, the questions involved in the inquiry, What are the inside facts of society? There is accordingly no short cut or royal road to a

comprehensive sociology. The sociological problem is in the first stage a collection of minor problems, either historical or contemporary. The people who will make permanent contributions to the development of social philosophy are those who will have patience to select distinct problems, and work upon them until the last available evidence is collected, and the results are in shape to be organized into the whole body of social explanation. There is no special kind of fact which deserves to be called sociological *par excellence* in distinction from historical, or ethnological, or economic, or political, or demographic facts.

It is not true that problems of sociology fall within the province of other sciences. Sociology attempts to do what the more special sciences of society have very properly refused to do, viz., it confronts real conditions, while the other sciences deal with abstractions. But while abstraction is a necessary step to knowledge, it is not the final step. So soon as economist, political scientist, moralist, statistician, demographer, or sanitarian undertakes to explain, or in any way to deal with a whole social condition as it is encountered in reality — for instance, the relation of a school, a saloon, a trust, a political boss to the whole plexus of social relations—he steps out of his special province to tread a different soil, talk a different language, use different tools, and work at different tasks from those of his specialty, and then his abstraction will lead to perversion unless it is harmonized with other abstractions. This harmonizing, or synthesizing, or integrating process has not yet been sufficiently provided for in social science. In other words, the sociologist maintains that specialism is partialism unless it is organized into realism. The sociologist demands, therefore, that the light of all special social knowledge shall be thrown upon the actual activities of living people.

The sociologists are contending for a program, a perspective, and a method. They ask for correlation and cooperation of sciences, not for liberty to substitute a new science. The valid methodology of all the independent social sciences, organized from the point of view here outlined, and reinforced by the study of every actual concrete condition that contains any exhibit of permanent social forms and forces, must constitute that method. In conformity with this method each of the older divisions of research into facts about society not only retains its importance but greatly increases its importance. In isolation, sciences, or divisions of knowledge, or groups of investigations and conclusions, are meaningless. Organized so that each complements the rest they become eloquent. The point of view of the sociologists focalizes all possible researches about social facts into a composite picture of the whole reality.

In sociology, as in all the physical sciences, there are scholars who think that learning loses caste if it lends itself to any human use. These worthies should be humored as patiently as may be, and not taken too seriously. They do not materially weaken the general truth that present sociology frankly proposes the improvement of society as its final purpose. It would not require much argument to show that this purpose must evidently encounter distinct problems after all questions of fact have been answered. The great service and merit of the sociologists thus far has been in contending for correlation and integration of knowledge, and in pointing out that time will be saved in the end by making sure of our evidence. This is, however, a matter of method. After all available knowledge of society shall have been set in order the real task of the sociologists will begin. In addition to the genetic and the static interpretation of ascertained facts, there is another division of inquiry hinted at above, which had hardly been entered until certain sociologists began to explore it. Of all the facts with which social science has to do the most significant and potential are the facts about the feelings and judgments that actuate living men. Stripped of all conventionality, and reduced to most simple expression, the most practical question for students of society today is: What do living people think good for themselves, and what justification is there in the nature of things for these judgments? The power that stops or enforces all other social influence is the judgment that living men have accepted about what is desirable. What-ever may have been the prevalent form of moral philosophy, effective moral standards have always been the algebraic sum of concrete judgments about the things convenient for the persons judging. Not only this, but the nature of moral mechanics is such that when action is necessary no other test of what is good for men is possible. No effort for human improvement is rational which aims to effect improvement in human action of a sort not recognizable as good by the persons concerned. In so far, then, as we regard human conditions as dependent upon the volitions of the persons within these conditions, we are forced back to the judgments of those persons respecting desirable conditions, as the standing ground of social influence—the starting point, the foundation, the fulcrum of progress. The necessary working basis of social improvement today is accordingly the body of judgments lodged in the minds of living men about the things that are essentially desirable. If it should be found that men today believe some things desirable which are demonstrably impossible, an obvious task of social education must be to chase from the popular mind all speculations after these impossibilities. If the things judged desirable are demonstrably self-contradictory, then a social and a sociological problem is to discover means of proving this incompatibility. If, however, the things deemed desirable are not opposed to known human uses, and are not prohibited by the facts of human conditions, the desire for them must be regarded as a veracious self-expression. It then becomes a social and a sociological task to interpret the desires so expressed, to find appropriate objects for them, and to correlate those objects into a

coherent system of social aims. This, in brief, is the problem of social teleology. No one has yet fully stated the problems to be solved in this division of social inquiry. They are the key to all constructive thinking about human improvement. There can be no very stable theories of social action until there are convincing standards of social aim.

Questions for Contemplation and Discussion

1. The progressive era was one in which *planning* was eagerly applauded. In contrast to *laissez-faire* approaches which counseled letting things take their natural course, progressives advocated taking active steps to reform social problems and to advance social progress. What is the role of sociology to this enterprise, according to Small? How does this compare to Durkheim's version of sociology (published at the same time)?
2. Small asserts that the "individual" is but an abstract concept, and does not exist in reality) what does he mean? Does this sound familiar to you? Have you heard something similar from another theorist we've read this term?
3. It is often said that American sociology is *pragmatic* or geared toward practical ends. How can theory be pragmatic? Use Small to explain.

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