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The Science of Society
An Introduction to Sociology

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Chapter 1

The Field of Sociology

No man in his senses would dream of trying to mend a motor-car without knowing anything about its machinery, and the way the different parts fit in with each other; yet there are plenty of people who set out to mend society without a knowledge of its mechanism and construction. And just as society is a much more complicated thing than a car, so is a car a much more complicated thing than an iron plate, which we ask the reader to imagine lying before him. It is not quite flat and we want him to tell us how to flatten it.

"You see that this wrought-iron plate is not quite flat: it sticks up a little here towards the left—'Cockles' as we say. How shall we flatten it? Obviously, you reply, by hitting down on the part that is prominent. Well, here is a hammer, and I give the plate a blow as you advise. Harder you say. Still no effect. Another stroke? Well, there is one, and another and another. The prominence remains, you see: the evil is as great as ever—greater indeed. But this is not all. Look at the warp which the plate has got near the opposite edge. Where it was flat before it is now curved. A pretty bungle we have made of it. Instead of curing the original defect, we have produced a second. Had we asked an artisan practised in planishing, as it is called, he would have told us that no good was to be done, but only mischief, by hitting down on the projected part. He would have taught us how to give variously directed and specially adjusted blows with a hammer elsewhere: so attacking the

evil not by direct but by indirect actions. The required process is less simple than you thought. Even a sheet of metal is not to be successfully dealt with after those common-sense methods in which you have so much confidence. What then shall we say about a society? 'Do you think I am easier to be played on than a pipe?' asks Hamlet. Is humanity more readily straightened than an iron plate?"

Herbert Spencer, from whose writings this illustration is taken, used it against the increasing intervention of the State in social matters to which as a staunch individualist he was bitterly opposed. We use it for another purpose altogether. We wish to emphasize our claim that a knowledge of society or sociology is as necessary to the planning of society as a knowledge of planishing is to the straightening of an iron plate. Planning, it goes without saying, is a much more difficult matter than planishing.

For planning presupposes an understanding of the structure of society and of the intimate inter-relations that exist between social life and material techniques. Thus the construction of a network of railways is more than a technical or engineering matter. It requires a clear perception of the purposes for which the construction is planned and it demands an examination of the effects it will have on the people, on their habits, customs and institutions. The inability to see that in order to realize any social purpose a sociological approach of this nature is imperative, lies behind many of the difficulties of our times such as unemployment, the revolt against democracy, mechanized and commercialized leisure, and the blind resentment felt towards science because it has not brought about the beneficial effects it was expected to bring. But could it be otherwise with the different institutions of society at cross-purposes and with the meticulous attention that is given to technology while sociology itself is ignored?

But even apart from the planning of society, a knowledge of sociology is indispensable to the student who wants to understand the world he lives in and the problems of population, poverty, crime, divorce, etc., he is everywhere facing. By learning what the most authoritative investigators have discovered about them, he will learn to formulate possible reforms and solutions. And what is more important, he will get a training in something which is more difficult to acquire—a scientific approach to all questions concerning himself and his religion, customs, morals and institutions. He will learn to be objective, critical and dispassionate. He will learn to eliminate prejudice, emotion and wishful thinking that distort his views and nullify his solutions. His aim, he will realize, must be first of all to understand man without either praising or blaming him. That must come later.

Sociology seeks to study man and his institutions as dispassionately as biology studies the animal and his habitats. And this objective approach is no less a science than the objective examination of beetles or tadpoles. "If," an American thinker wrote many years ago, "researches into the habits of beetles and tadpoles and their localities and conditions of existence are entitled to the dignified appellation of sciences, certainly similar researches into the nature, the wants, the adaptations, and, so to speak, into the true or requisite moral and social habitat of the spiritual animal called Man, must be, if conducted according to the rigid methods of scientific induction from observed facts, equally entitled to that distinction."[1]

The scientific study of human affairs, it is the firm conviction of the sociologist, will ultimately provide a body of knowledge and principles that will enable him to control the conditions of social life and improve them. That is why he is eager to know everything there is to know about human

[1] S. P. Andrews: *The Science of Society*, 2nd edition, 1853, p. vi.

societies and about the interactions and the inter-relations of the individuals composing them. His eager curiosity not only derives from his motto, "Homo sum: humani nihil a me alienum puto," but from his belief that knowledge is power not only in the realm of nature but in the realm of mankind.

We may say therefore that the first task of the sociologist is to determine the nature and character of human societies and of social institutions. Concretely, this means that he attempts to discover the origin of man and of society; the origins and functions of social institutions; the customs and rules of conduct by means of which societies are regulated and maintained; the nature and cohesion of social life; and finally, the kind of groups that man has formed throughout his history and the variety of the experiments in living that he has devised.

A society, not unlike the car in the opening paragraph, can be analysed into its constituent parts, such as religion, science, language, morals, familial, political, economic and educational institutions, etc., and the question arises how these different elements fit in and correspond with each other at any particular time. Thus the second task of the sociologist is to investigate the nature of the interdependence of the structures and functions in social life, that is, the nature of the social *consensus*. He inquires, for instance, into the relationship between the structure of the family and the economic organization of society; between forms of government and the distribution of wealth; between slavery and technology; between social mobility and morality; between religion and capitalism, and so on. The continuous interaction between the individuals that make up society and the different elements of society tends to bring about an integration and a balance—an equilibrium—a knowledge of which is necessary if we are to understand the mechanism and construction of society.

This aspect of sociology—the study of the mutually interrelated parts of society—is known as Social Statics and is distinguished from Social Dynamics, which attempts to disentangle the laws of sequence and change governing society, to find how one state of society is followed by another. In Social Statics the sociologist is primarily interested in the interconnection of parts which make possible the smooth running of society (as of the car). In Social Dynamics he turns his attention to its motion, speed and the mechanism of change. For societies, institutions and civilizations arise, flourish and decay. (Nothing remains fixed and static and the only permanence belongs to change itself.) And yet certain continuities can be discerned in the stream of change itself. Herein lies the third task of the sociologist. It is to establish empirical generalizations or laws of change and growth in social life, and if possible, to interpret them in the light of more ultimate laws.

The large measure of agreement among modern sociologists as to their field of study and their tasks is seen in the various definitions of sociology that have been proposed. The differences that exist are essentially differences of emphasis and the schools of Simmel, Vierkandt, and Max Weber aim at distinguishing sociology more clearly from the other social sciences. To mention a few definitions: "The subject matter of sociology is the interaction of human minds" (L. T. Hobhouse). "Sociology is the study of human interactions and inter-relations, their conditions and consequences" (M. Ginsberg). "Sociology is the study of human relations . . . it is the science of the origin, development, structure and functions of social groups" (C. Ellwood). "It is the science of collective behaviour" (R. E. Park and E. W. Burgess). "It is the science of society or of social phenomena" (Ward). "It is the study of evolution in its most complex form" (Spencer).

"Sociology," writes MacIver, "seeks to discover the principles of cohesion and of order within the social structure, the ways in which it roots and grows within an environment, the moving equilibrium of changing structure and changing environment, the main trends of the incessant change, the forces which determine its direction at any time, the harmonies and conflicts, the adjustments and maladjustments within the structure as they are revealed in the light of human desires, and thus the practical application of means to ends in the creative activities of social man."

The place of sociology as an independent science in its own right has been criticized on three grounds, each of which turns out to be misconceived. Before we proceed, it is necessary to say something about them.

The first is that sociology is merely an assemblage of miscellaneous studies having a social content. But the answer is simple. If the miscellaneous studies sociology is supposed to comprise have not been considered or treated by the other social sciences, sociology is certainly performing a useful function in sailing uncharted seas. It is impossible to deny that sociology has produced a great deal of valuable information about social institutions such as the family, property, church and State; about social classes and national and racial groups; about population movements and migration; about changes in social habits, customs and fashions; and about poverty, crime and suicide. None of these topics is adequately treated elsewhere.

The second criticism is of a more fundamental nature. It maintains that there is no special field for sociology since its subject-matter has been parcelled-out to a number of specialisms such as economics, politics, psychology, anthropology, history, jurisprudence, religion, etc. This criticism is not quite justified as far as the above-mentioned topics are concerned. But even if it were, the existence of such

separate specialisms does not preclude the existence of a more general science whose task it would be to relate their separate conclusions and deal with the more general conditions of social life. Indeed it makes it desirable and necessary. The existence of botany, physiology, bio-chemistry, etc., has not nullified the utility of biology, which studies the nature and conditions of living matter in general. In the same way the work of the separate social sciences does not preclude the existence of sociology, which studies the nature and conditions of social life as a whole. The social specialisms are so numerous and detailed to-day that the need for a general science—and 'general' does not mean 'superficial'—is increasingly urgent. Science is at a critical stage of its development when often the specialists in separate branches of the same field—say proto-history or archaeology—cannot understand each other's language.

The third criticism is really a variation of the second. Sociology, it says, borrows from the other sciences. It is a labour-saving device for knowing everything without learning anything. But this criticism ignores the essential nature of science, which can only grow by borrowing. Biology develops by utilizing the conclusions of its specialisms, and so does sociology. But in borrowing they return far more by enriching the specialisms with concepts and ideas which make the accumulations of facts meaningful. The departmentalization of knowledge is only made for our convenience. There are no water-tight compartments in science or reality.

We may therefore sum up this discussion by saying that most sociologists are agreed that sociology deals with the more general principles underlying all social phenomena. Regarding the controversy whether sociology is a mere co-ordination of the separate sciences, or whether it is itself a particular science dealing with all social relations not considered under other social sciences, the words of Professor

Bosanquet are apposite. He speaks of " that false antithesis that sociology was either a number of sciences which had no central science as their connection, or a single science which was not part of a number of sciences."[1]

The reason why sociology is so much more dependent than any other science on the development of the other sciences lies in its magnitude and complexity. Its field of study—the totality of human relations—is so vast that no single person could cultivate it by himself. He must draw assistance from other individuals. For instance, to understand a particular society, sociology must know something of its people and their innate and acquired characters, its geographical environment, social institutions, language, aesthetics, religion, morals, law, its economic structure and class differentiation, and finally its relations to other peoples and its interaction with the rest of the world. To do this satisfactorily sociology must inevitably co-operate with a number of other specialisms. Such co-operation is necessarily involved in the attempt to understand social life as a whole. Sociology is thus a synoptic science in that it studies a complex thing in its totality. It does not merely analyse or dissect a thing into its parts and then synthesize or build up the parts together as a whole. It attempts to get a ' vue d'ensemble.'

This implies that sociology studies the whole from the parts and the parts from the whole. A moment's thought will show that it is impossible to isolate any particular social problem from the totality of social life. To discover the rôle of race in the evolution of culture, the sociologist must utilize the investigations of genetics, physical anthropology, psychology, archaeology, history, etc. To discuss intelligently the falling birth-rate he must take into account urbanization, industrialization, the position of women, educa-

[1] B. Bosanquet: *Sociological Papers*, Vol. I, 1905, p. 206.

tion, the standard of living, the influence of medical discoveries such as contraception, etc. To understand the political system of a country he must know its history, its familial, educational, military and religious institutions and how they interact. And likewise the specialist must take into account the investigations of the sociologist. The eugenist, for instance, can only improve the biological quality of a population if he is acquainted with their social structure and organization. Marriage, industrialization, war, etc., have different selective effects according to the type of society in which they operate.

Much of the sterility of present-day economic thought may be attributed to the fact that it seems to move in its own universe of discourse with a complete disregard of social life as a whole. This peculiar position may be highly interesting from a speculative point of view but has serious dangers when a practical aim is in view. Thus, when economics is called upon to deal with unemployment or poverty, or with more specific problems, such as the trade-cycle or inflation, it finds that it cannot go far ahead without co-operating with social psychology, history, political science, law and many other disciplines.

Sociology is necessary to applied economics in providing the specific data and the particular conditions of space and time into which the economic generalizations may be fitted. Moreover, it provides economics with a dynamic conception of the social process as a whole and with alternative systems which function differently—a manorial system, a liberal economy, capitalism, socialism. But no less important is sociology for 'pure' economic theory. Here its function is to unravel the presuppositions and postulates upon which the theory is based. Modern theory "picks out imaginable constellations of data and deduces therefrom movements and states of rest under varying hypotheses. Any

such constellation implies a set of sociological premises."[1] The 'objective equilibrium' of present-day economists rests on political, psychological and technical assumptions which postulate an enclosed economic world wherein fluctuations are small and short and which is uninfluenced by the other parts of the system or by the evolution of the system as a whole.

In the same way sociology can learn much from economics. It can learn not only the techniques involved in economic analysis but also the important rôle which economic forces play in every aspect of social life—in religion, politics, the urge to power, etc.

Our argument for the necessity of a synoptic social science is again confirmed if it is remembered that specialists have a habit of seeing everything in terms of their own specialism. The political scientist is apt to identify the State with society. The economist is likely to interpret everything in terms of economic motives. The biologist sees all human history in terms of race. The historian of morals or religion assigns a decisive rôle to religion or morals. But all such interpretations are bound to be one-sided, as we shall show later. Sociology must guard against partial interpretations. It seeks to inter-relate the results of all the specialisms and give a view of society as a whole, not in terms of one process, activity or principle. And in this task sociology is not merely a collection of particular social sciences but their co-ordinator and systematizer.

This conception of sociology, whereby the conclusions of the social sciences are re-examined in the light of other social facts and whereby the special disciplines are brought into conjunction with each other, is not based upon a mechanical procedure. It does not, for instance, identify biological laws

[1] See A. Löwe: *Economics and Sociology*, 1935, for a valuable discussion of this point.

with social laws; it keeps them separate but at the same time studies them in their mutual interactions. The sociologist recognizes that at a higher level biological facts change their character. Man is undoubtedly a biological animal but he is also something more.

In the sociology of Hobhouse and Durkheim this conception is paramount. To Hobhouse "General sociology is neither a separate science complete, nor is it a mere synthesis of the social sciences consisting in a mechanical juxtaposition of their results. It is rather a vitalizing principle that runs through all investigation, stimulating inquiry, correlating results, exhibiting the life of the whole in the parts and returning from a study of the parts to a fuller comprehension of the whole."[1]

Durkheim's view is similar. "Sociology," he declares, "is and can only be the corpus of the social sciences. . . . This rapprochement [of the social sciences] under a common rubric constitutes not merely a verbal operation, but implies and indicates a radical change in the method and organization of these sciences."[2]

The procedure of bringing the conclusions of the social sciences into relation with each other and with the totality of society is thus forced on the sociologist by the very nature of his subject-matter and of social reality. Society is one, and each of the social sciences investigates a certain aspect or fragment of it. But to be useful instruments, both for theoretical understanding and practical manipulation, the social sciences cannot remain isolated but must be brought together. And this is what sociology does.

[1] L. T. Hobhouse in *The Sociological Review*, Vol. I, p. 8.
[2] E. Durkheim: *Sociological Papers*, 1905, p. 258.

Chapter 2

Society, its Groups and Institutions

THROUGHOUT his whole life man is a member of a society and of numerous groups such as the family, the State, a political party, a religious sect, a social club and others. Indeed, man cannot be conceived outside of some society ; for the very qualities which make him a human being, such as language, morals, culture, are themselves social products. That is why solitary confinement for a long period is psychologically and culturally damaging to an individual, and that is why the isolated cases of feral man that exist show him to be no more than an animal in human shape. What we call human nature is only acquired through association in social groups. Personality itself is a product of social relations. The way in which a person eats, makes love, fights are not his own individual inventions but are parts of a social heritage. Fundamentally, " the Colonel's Lady an' Judy O'Grady are sisters under their skins," but their different status, rank, education and behaviour have been determined by society.

The persistence, continuity and unity of society have always been of profound interest to social thinkers. Some, like Plato, Hobbes, Rousseau and Spencer, have regarded society as a social organism, a view we shall soon examine. Others, like Hegel, Durkheim, Bosanquet and MacDougall, have thought of society in terms of a general will or a social mind above and distinct from the wills and minds of its members. But where, we may ask, is the location of this mind, wherein is it embodied? This mystical view of society lends itself as easily as does the theory of the social organism to the glorification of the State and Society and to the

complete subjection of the individual to the Great Leviathan.

The antithesis between the individual and society is a false antithesis. Society is no more than its individuals intrinsically connected with each other and constituting a social whole through their interactions with each other and with their material environment and the culture and traditions they have evolved. Whatever the reasons for collective living it is a basic fact. Whether it is derived from impulses which centre in family life or from wider social impulses, whether it arose in response to economic necessity or as a form of protection against wild beasts, or whether, as is more likely, it began in various ways and assumed various forms according to different conditions, nowhere is man found apart from a group. Everywhere we find men associated together for the satisfaction of their primary needs and inventing and employing tools for this purpose. The simplest societies that we know consist of a group of families (24–80 individuals) united by numerous ties of intermarriage, and living together on a common tract of land, or separating for a time in case of a shortage of food. But these groups are not isolated social units. They are connected to, and have contacts with, numerous other groups. Their incorporation into larger societies consisting of millions of individuals, on account of economic changes, war, free consent and many other factors, is the outstanding feature of human history.

In this summary exposition we find the main reasons not only for collective living in societies but also for their continuity and persistence. Language and tradition cement the social framework together, and the successive generations become bound to each other by a common social inheritance and social institutions which the individual can modify but to a slight extent. This is so because every new generation displaces the preceding one gradually and the new members—the children who are born—constitute a numerically

small proportion of society. They are moulded into those forms which their elders deem desirable. Leaders, heroes and prophets, symbols and collective representations, common purposes and conscious aims, specialized governmental and administrative agencies, become powerful unifying factors. And finally, society is integrated by a thousand connecting and connective institutions, each of which on the surface seems to run its own course, but in reality is dependent for its smooth running on the totality of social relationships. The system of transport in a country will depend on the division of labour, the amount of commerce, the financial system, political security, etc. In the same way each individual is caught up in a network of relationships that subtly tie him to and make him dependent on the larger body of which he is but a unit. "Individuals, and even entire peoples, little imagine that in following their own interest, and often in struggling with one another, they pursue each in their own way, as a conducting filament, the design of nature, to them unknown, and co-operate in an evolution of which, even if they had an idea of it, would signify little for them." Stripped of its mystical implications this passage from Kant's *Ideas for a Universal History* expresses a profound truth.

The unity of society must not, however, be exaggerated. There is conflict as well as co-operation. Many factors are involved, such as suggestion, imitation, sympathy, the appeal to collective sentiments and the inhibition of conflicting tendencies. In developed societies, the degree of unity will largely depend on the degree in which conscious aims are pursued by particular associations, and on the efforts of the different parts of society to arrive at a mutual adjustment. The same analysis applies to the State, whose unity, in so far as there exist sharp economic antagonisms and class divisions, is far from enduring. We can only tell how far it embodies

a common will when we scrutinize its system of rights, the formation of public opinion, its administration of law, its government and other institutions. Different groups exhibit different degrees of unity—compare the unity of a football crowd, a political party, a social class or a nation. It is one of the problems of sociology to discover why different societies exhibit different degrees of unity and cohesion, what kind of societies are formed under different conditions, and why customs, traditions and codes of conduct vary from one society to another.

We have been speaking of different social groupings such as society, the State, the nation, etc. We must now see if we can attach precise meanings to them, for nothing is more common in everyday speech than their confusion, and the first task of a science is to use its terms clearly and unmistakably. We shall then discuss institutions, and finally see what we mean by the frequently used terms 'culture' and 'civilization.'

'Society' we shall use in the widest sense to include every kind and degree of relationship entered into by men, whether these relations be organized or unorganized, direct or indirect, conscious or unconscious, co-operative or antagonistic. It includes the whole tissue of human relations and is without a boundary or assignable limits. Of amorphous structure itself, it gives rise to numerous, specific, overlapping and interconnected societies, but is not exhausted by them. They are only islands on the unceasing ocean of human relations. "The social principle in man is of such an expansive nature that it cannot be confined within the circuit of a family, of friends, of a neighbourhood : it spreads into wider systems, and draws men into larger communities and commonwealths ; since it is in these only that the more sublime powers of nature attain the highest improvement and perfection of which they are capable."[1]

[1] Article "Society" in *The Encyclopædia Britannica*, 1st edition, 1771.

Society in this generic sense must be distinguished from *a* society or social group, which is a definite collection of individuals which possesses a certain permanency (as distinguished from a temporary crowd), and whose members have definable relations to each other. A society thus has a history of its own, and a recognizable structure which marks it off from other societies. The individuals constituting a society will know their rights and duties, and insofar as the division of labour is more than rudimentary, will co-operate in making a living. Their relations to each other will thus be characterized by reciprocity and interdependency.

Every society consists of numerous inter-connected groups —that is, of collections of individuals in regular contact or communication, each possessing a certain structure. But not all collections of individuals are groups: they may lack a recognizable structure, in which case they may be conveniently designated as quasi-groups. If, however, these individuals have certain interests in common they may in time form groups. Thus a social class without being a group itself usually generates groups such as a political party. Other quasi-groups are the sets of people having common interests such as sport, social reform, etc., which show a tendency to organize themselves into groups proper.

The most important species of societies are communities and associations. A community is a society that possesses a distinct geographical location and a common way of life. It is thus structurally more definite than a society. A community may be large or small and it may vary in size from a hamlet or village to a great country; it may also be part of a larger community. Generally, the community will have special organs for the enforcement of the common way of life and of the definite rules of behaviour that determine the relations between members. Such organs, although characteristic of the highly developed community, are not essential to it.

An association is in essence a sub-society—that is, a group of people, united for the achievement of a special aim or purpose. A trade union whose function is to protect the interests of its members is an association. So is a political party or a learned society. Associations may be classified in many ways according to territorial size, number of members, conditions of admission, etc. They range in character from an insignificant local literary or recreational club to powerful and omnicompetent states towering in force and authority above all other associations.

Societies differ a great deal in social differentiation and in the number and diversity of associations. The penchant of the United States for founding associations struck de Tocqueville a century ago. He writes: "They have not only commercial and manufacturing companies in which they take part, but associations of a thousand other kinds—religious, moral, serious, futile, general or restricted, enormous or diminutive. Americans make associations to give entertainments, to found seminaries, to build universities, to construct churches, to diffuse books, to send missionaries to the antipodes; they found in this manner, hospitals, prisons and schools."[1] Associational life with its indirect and impersonal relationships is a marked feature of modern civilization and is connected with the transition from the mechanical to the organic society, the replacement of kinship ties by those of the division of labour, the substitution of the principle of status by that of contract.

The State must not be confused with society or the community, for it comprises but a fraction of the common life. Moreover it may be superimposed on a community by conquest and be alien to it. But where it has grown up organically, its main sphere of action lies in fashioning con-

[1] Alexis de Tocqueville: *Democracy in America*, English translation, ed. 1863, Vol. II, p. 129.

formity to externals only. It can forbid people to speak in criticism of it but it cannot forbid people thinking. It can compel obedience, but the obedience will only last as long as the State satisfies the needs and desires of its members. If it does not do so, sooner or later the people will revolt. The State may be overthrown, but society as such will not therefore cease to exist.

Again, the State must not be confused with the nation. The latter indicates a unity of culture, a common language and literature, a sense of history and of its triumphs and tribulations, a desire for political determination and love for its own land. Not all nations have a State—e.g., the Jews, who live within the boundaries of many states. On the other hand there are States—e.g., Yugoslavia to-day—which consist of many diverse national groups. The identification of State and nation has in practice always meant the ill-treatment of minorities. Unfortunately the uni-national form of the State is triumphant, whilst the multi-national State, rarely given a fair trial, is receding into the background.

Social groups may be classified in many ways according to permanency, size, type of organization, kind of social relationships on which they rest and so forth. A useful distinction is that between the In-Group and the Out-Group or the "We" group and the "They" group. The In-Group consists of all those persons of which we ourselves are members and whose typical social relations are those of familiarity and friendliness, sympathy and co-operation. The Out-Group consists of all those who do not "belong" to our group; they are outsiders, strangers and enemies whom we avoid or ridicule. They, of course, are naturally inferior, while we belong to the chosen people or the superior race. Ethnocentrism is essentially a product of group differences and conflicts, and is not confined to white peoples only. The Hottentots call themselves "First of Man-

kind," "Real Men" and "Men of Men." According to the Eskimos white men are children of an Eskimo girl who got lost and married a dog. The widespread belief of the white peoples in their moral, cultural and biological superiority over the coloured peoples is essentially rooted in their economic and political superiority.

Another division is that between primary and secondary groups. The primary group, such as the family, the spontaneous play-group or the old-fashioned neighbourhood, is one in which contacts are personal and direct, intimate and enduring. The behaviour of the individual is here mainly determined by immediate expressions of group approval and disapproval. In the secondary group, such as nations or communities or associations, relations are impersonal and indirect, transitory and non-intimate. Such groups are more consciously organized than primary groups and behaviour inside them is controlled by law and public opinion. In the city especially, a rapid dissolution of traditional forms of behaviour and thought is noticeable, and the individual's behaviour, no longer rooted in the family or farm, becomes atomistic and fluctuating and his life tends to be associational rather than communal.

If social groups are arranged in order of increasing size and decreasing intimacy, they fall into four general classes (Cooley). The first will consist of intimate pair-groups such as mother and child, husband and wife. The second will consist of primary groups, the third of quasi-primary groups such as boy-scout troops and luncheon clubs, which are limited in some degree by special purposes and by the fact of organization. The fourth class will comprise the secondary groups which may be further subdivided into culturally organized groups, such as social classes, nations, communities and associations, and groups not basically organized by culture, such as age-groups, sexes and races

(biological groups) and crowds, mobs and publics (casual groups).

In order that the relationships of individuals in the association or in the community should function smoothly and lead to collective action, customary ways of acting and getting along together grow up. These ways we call institutions, which may be defined as clusters of accepted usages governing the relations between individuals and groups. They are generated and sustained by the whole complex of social relationships, and when these change they change too. Institutions govern not only important but also unimportant aspects of life. They may regulate property, or the sexual relationships of individuals, or refer to such trivial matters as on which side of the road traffic should go. Together with customs, i.e., ancient and standardized ways of behaving—legal rules enforced by the State, conventional rules of behaviour and moral rules sanctioned by society (and in early stages associated with religion), they constitute the most important forms of social regulation and give the social structure permanence and stability. Because institutions furnish methods of procedure and create expectations of uniformity in behaviour, they tend to ossify and make the established order sacrosanct. Thus institutions frequently do not change when they have outlived their utility and violent upheavals may be required to uproot them.

The most important institutions are the economic, the governmental, the educational, the religious, the recreational and the familial, and in the next chapter we shall consider in greater detail the State, property and the family. All institutions have some characteristics in common which have been analysed into four main 'type parts.'[1] The first consists of certain attitudes and behaviour-patterns; if we take the family as our example of an institution, these are: love,

[1] F. Stuart Chapin: *Contemporary American Institutions*, 1935.

affection, loyalty, parental respect. The second part consists of symbolic culture-traits: the marriage-ring, heirloom, coat of arms. The third part comprises utilitarian culture-traits or material objects such as furniture and personal property. And the fourth part refers to the oral or written specifications: the will, the marriage-licence and a genealogy. If we take the State as our example the behaviour-patterns would be devotion, loyalty, respect, fear, domination and subordination; the symbolic culture-traits would be flag, seal, emblem, national anthem, army, navy and air-force. The material culture-objects would be public buildings, military equipment, etc. And the oral or written characteristics would be treaties, a constitution, laws, ordinances, etc.

The reason why association and institution are frequently used as interchangeable terms is because they often refer to the same thing, the one in its abstract, the other in its concrete aspect. Thus the family is an association if we think of it as the union of a man and a woman entered into for the purpose of satisfying their sexual and parental impulses; it is an institution if we think of it as the customary way of satisfying these impulses, whether it be monogamy or polyandry or any other way. The State is an association regarded as a group united for the purpose of defence, common rules, etc. It is a set of institutions regarded as the system of rules and ways of governing: monarchy, representative government, the party system.

The institutions are an important part of our social heritage. We are born, so to speak, with them and in turn we transmit them to our children. And this is the essential difference between animals and human beings. The animals transmit ways of behaving to their progeny (inborn ways of reacting to their environment) mainly by means of physical heredity. Human beings on the other hand mainly transmit ways of behaving to their children mainly by means of social

heredity. Everything which man hands down to his children by teaching them—everything which the children learn and absorb from their group—constitutes their social heritage or their culture. Created and transmitted by society itself, it consists of all the prescribed forms of human relations, all the beliefs, arts and sciences, all the customs and traditions, ways of living and behaving.

We may define culture with Tylor as "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society."[1] Or with Clark Wissler as "the round of life in its entire sweep."[2] Culture thus comprises not only the immaterial products of man such as language, music, poetry and all the products of human thought, but also his material products such as the telephone, the automobile, machinery, etc.

'Civilization' is often used in two meanings. In the first it refers to all the attainments characteristic of life in the organized city or State: in this sense we speak of the early civilizations. In the second meaning 'civilization' becomes synonymous with 'culture' and refers to all of man's achievements that distinguish him from the animals. Goldenweiser uses the word 'civilization' in this sense in his well-known introduction to anthropology entitled *Early Civilization.* It is preferable not to make these terms identical and to mean by civilization the latest stage of culture, i.e., not only the totality of culture but also the degree of advancement of a people's life, and their control over the environment.

A still more restricted meaning is given to 'civilization' by some writers who use it to refer to the external achievements of man, material and intellectual, while 'culture' is reserved for the internal achievements, social and political institutions

[1] E. B. Tylor: *Primitive Culture,* 1874, Vol. I, p. 1.
[2] Clark Wissler: *Man and Culture,* 1923, p. 1.

and works of art, poetry and drama—achievements, so to speak, of the spirit (*Kultur*). This distinction lead to some interesting speculations, such as that civilization is common but culture is not, or that of Spengler[1] that civilization is the decadent phase of culture, when it becomes effete, mechanical and repetitive. But in this sense the term 'culture' loses all scientific value and becomes a mysterious force totally independent of the material and intellectual processes of life. Can we really separate the external from the internal achievements? Are not the spiritual products and the social and political institutions bound up with the material and intellectual achievements of man? The attempt to separate them leads to narrow and reactionary conceptions. The Germans during the war (and at the present time) represented other peoples as having *Zivilisation* (material and technical achievements) but no *Kultur*. Against the idea of civilization as something that belongs to mankind as a whole since the breaking-up of tribal society, they put forward the narrow and nationalistic conception of *Kultur*. They of course had the highest *Kultur*; that of France they regarded as decadent, that of Russia as primitive.

The conception of progress embodies one feature of civilization to which we made reference, the power of transforming nature and controlling it. The idea of progress is a comparative newcomer in human thought. It is closely bound up with the development of modern science, with the growth of rationalism, with the struggle for religious and political liberty, and with the rapid economic and commercial transformation since the Industrial Revolution. This idea is thus intimately associated with the rise of modern capitalism, because, for the first time in history, the possibility arose that man might become master over that nature which

[1] O. Spengler: *Decline of the West*, English translation, 2 vols, 1928.

had so long tyrannized over him. By inventing machines to do his bidding and to satisfy all his requirements, man would be enabled to develop his higher potentialities and escape the deadening drudgery of perpetual labour.

In Bodin, Bacon and Descartes, the idea of progress found eloquent expression. Fontenelle admitted intellectual progress but was sceptical as regards moral progress. It was the Abbé de St. Pierre who gave it unlimited and universal character and extended it to morals, man and society, knowledge and science. The French encyclopaedists, realizing the revolutionary significance of the idea, enthusiastically adopted it, and used it with deadly effect against the social and political evils of their time. Through Godwin and Shelley the idea was incorporated into philosophical anarchism, and through Fourier, St. Simon and Robert Owen into Utopian socialism. Comte made it a regulative principle in sociology, and indeed it is pivotal in his writings, where progress meant the triumph of a scientific and positivistic over a theological and metaphysical outlook.[1] Marx transformed the idea and showed that the control of nature, which was its pith and essence, and which was a reality for the few, could be made a reality for the many. History, he added, sets humanity only such tasks as it can achieve.

Man's control over nature, or at any rate the possibility of controlling nature, is a common element in all these varied notions of progress; for it is evident that without this material basis, the other desirable goals of life, whatever they may be, cannot be attained. That such control has increased since the beginning of history, and that especially significant are the material achievements of the last few centuries, can hardly be doubted. It is possible to trace a continuous development in technique from the crude pottery and iron of primitive times to the steam-engine, trains and aeroplanes,

[1] J. B. Bury: *The Idea of Progress*, 1920.

television, surgery and wireless of to-day. A like development probably holds of language, writing, printing and many other activities of human life, with the possible exception of some of the arts and some products of creative imagination, such as sculpture, painting, literature and oratory, where consistent and continuous advance would be more difficult to determine. As regards control over nature, and if no more than that is claimed, an unanswerable case can be made out for progress.

But progress would seem to involve two other things. It must be dependent on the efforts and volitions of men and not made into a mechanical and automatic process. And it must conform to the ethical standards man sets himself: it must be asked how far material progress conforms to these standards. The problem of ethical valuation arises because progress is a question of ethics, of what people think there ought to be instead of what is. Adam Ferguson in his introduction to his *Principles of Moral and Political Science* rightly points out that " in respect to what men have actually done or exhibited, human nature is a subject of history and physical science. Considered in respect to the different natures of good and evil, of which men are susceptible, the same nature is a subject of discipline and moral science."[1] And it cannot be denied that what people will consider good and right at any time will influence the course of social events, much in the same way as social events influence people's ethical conceptions. In so far as an actual trend is in accordance with given ethical criteria, such a process will be progressive in the fullest sense of the word. In all great social movements practical idealism is not only possible but necessary.

[1] A. Ferguson: *Principles of Moral and Political Science*, 2 vols, 1792.

Chapter 3

Property, the State and the Family

In this chapter we propose to discuss three of our most important social institutions, property, the State and the family. If for the sake of convenience we treat them separately, the reader must bear in mind their interlocking character, their interdependence both of structure and function and their continuous interaction. He should try to work out in detail correlations among them. How did the development of property influence the development of the State and of social classes? How did the State affect the functions of the family? To what extent is the position of woman in society dependent on property relationships? Dr. Johnson said: "Consider of what importance to society the chastity of woman is. Upon it all property in the world depends." We are told that "the long, slow changes which turned the princes of feudalism into princes of commerce made the social changes which evolved the old maid. If unmarried women had always been economically independent, we should never have had old maids, for wealth would have commanded respect which would have protected unmarried women from the odium which begets the caricature."[1]

In order to live property is essential. Its acquisition is a dominating force in the life of individuals and leaves an impress on every phase of their activities. The main task confronting every society is the satisfaction of its physical needs, and to the successful achievement of this task a society will

[1] R. R. Utter and G. B. Needham: *Pamela's Daughters*, 1937, p. 221.

subordinate everything else ; that is why the history of the family, Church and State is so often the history of property. Wars will be waged to obtain it and States will be organized to control it. But it is not so much the acquisition of property itself as its acquisition in order to satisfy other needs that makes it so fundamentally important. For property is not only the relation between a person and an object. As a social institution it governs the relations between people, so that those who have property wield power over those who have it not.

The essential element in the institution of property is that it " denotes in every style of society, the largest power of exclusive use of exclusive control over things (and sometimes, unfortunately, over persons) which the law accords or which custom in that state of society recognizes."[1] Such exclusive control may be vested in the community, in which case property is common, so that all the individuals within that community have rights to it either in access to it or in the sharing of it. Or it may be vested in a small group such as a private corporation or a public corporation, in which case property is collective. And finally, it may be vested in an individual, in which case we get private property. The dominating feature of most present-day societies is the private ownership of almost all forms of property and especially of the means of production.

Even if it be difficult to fit into the framework of primitive society our categories of communism and private property, it is clear that the corporate claims of the group over the individuals in all questions affecting the livelihood of the group stand out. " Compared with the extreme individualism of the Western European, the amount of co-operation shown by primitive peoples is remarkable. A savage rarely

[1] J. S. Mill : ' The Difficulties of Socialism,' *Fortnightly Review*, April, 1879.

seems to work for personal gain alone but for some group to which he is bound by mutual duties, relationship, membership of a clan or society or some other social bond. This sense of correlated responsibility is undoubtedly of value to the community in the struggle for existence, and is often strengthened by tribal law as well as by public opinion."[1] Things therefore that have vital importance for the group, such as the land, the main food supply, hunting and fishing, are of paramount interest to it and are generally owned or regulated by it. Individual property in personal belongings is recognized but such possessions are for use not power. Indeed in simple societies, private property for power has no scope, and in fact we find that the distribution of wealth is equitable within the family and clan. A comparative study of the data on this subject by the authors of *The Material Culture and Social Institutions of the Simpler Peoples*[2] shows that, on the whole, communal ownership by the tribe or clan predominates among hunting peoples and among the early agricultural and pastoral peoples.

In the higher stages of agriculture and pasture, communal property declines. In the pastoral stage a fortunate individual may accumulate flocks and herds while others are impoverished through drought or pest. He will thus gain power over them. Among agricultural peoples private property is partly a natural and inevitable outgrowth of communal land or family ownership, which yielded in different ways to qualified forms of private ownership, often temporary, and subject to control by the group. But war, conquest and class differentiation were more important factors. The victorious chief assumes control of the property and the vanquished population become slaves or serfs. In this case, it is not so much that private property grows as that

[1] *Notes and Queries on Anthropology*, 5th ed., 1929, p. 169.
[2] L. T. Hobhouse, H. Ginsberg and G. C. Wheeler, 1915.

communal property diminishes. The retention of the communal principle is seen in the periodical redistribution of land and in such forms of ownership as the Russian Mir, the Javanese Dessa and the German Mark.

With the increasing class structure of society in the early civilizations private ownership increases, though partly still in association with the communal principle and partly by dependence on the monarch and the nobility. Here we trace the roots of the feudal tenure of land and of feudalism, which persisted until the sixteenth century when, according to Marx, "world-trade and world markets inaugurate . . . the modern biography of capital."

For the transformation of landed property into movable capital and its accumulation for the purpose of begetting still more capital the student must turn to the works of the economic historians. But something must be said of the present capitalist system, by which is meant an economic system under which the ownership of the means of production, such as factories, mines and fields, is in the hands of individuals or groups of individuals and they are worked by those who do not own them for the profit of those who do. In such a system the principle of private property is supreme although the vast majority have little or no property. They have only their labour-power to sell and often not that—i.e. when they are unemployed. The relations between those who own property and those who do not were clearly brought out by James Nasmyth, the famous engineer, in his evidence before the committee to inquire into trades unions. He objected to them because they interfered with the employer's right to employ whatever person he wanted and thus put restrictions on the "Free Trade in Ability." He argued that it was good for industry that there should be large numbers of workers seeking employment because the price of labour is thus lowered. When asked what he supposed

became of the unemployed and their families he replied : " I do not know : I can only leave it to the action of those natural laws which govern society." As we shall see later, every social system creates its own eternal laws and appeals to them for justification.

The definition of capitalism we have just given indicates two of its essential features, i.e., private property and production for profit. But these by themselves would not sufficiently distinguish capitalism from other economic systems. We should have to add as other essentials the extensive scale of its operations, and especially the fact that the workers are formally or legally free to sell their labour power. They are ' free,' Marx shows, in a double sense. They do not form " part and parcel of the means of production, as in the case of slaves, bondsmen, etc., nor do the means of production belong to them as in the case of peasant proprietors ; they are therefore free from, unencumbered by, any means of production of their own."

Bearing these points in mind we can see the limitations of some of the definitions of capitalism that have been proposed. This is the Webbs' which is typical of many : " the particular stage in the development of industry and legal institutions, in which the bulk of the workers find themselves divorced from the ownership of the instruments of production, in such a way as to pass into the position of wage-earners, whose subsistence, security, and personal freedom seem dependent on the will of a relatively small proportion of the nation ; namely, those who own, and through their legal ownership control, the organization of the land, the machinery and the labour force of the community, and do so with the object of making for themselves individual and private gains."[1]

[1] Sidney and Beatrice Webb : *The Decay of Capitalist Civilization*, 1923, p. 2.

To J. A. Hobson, capitalism is "the organization of business upon a large scale by an employer or a company of employers possessing an accumulated stock of wealth wherewith to acquire raw materials and tools, and hire labour, so as to produce an increased quantity of wealth which shall constitute profit."[1] Sombart in his analysis of capitalism stresses the predominance of the unrestricted profit motive with its individualistic and competitive psychology, and the cleavage between the owners of the instruments of production and the propertyless workers.[2] Henri Sée draws attention to the fact that wealth other than land is now the basis for securing an income, and that modern capitalism is a synthesis of commercial, industrial and financial capitalism.[3] Hobhouse defines capitalism as "the employment in the production of goods for sale of those who have not the means of production by some who have or can command this means."[4]

It must not be imagined that capitalism has remained unchanged since its establishment with the growth of commerce and industry. Its anatomy at different periods has been brilliantly dissected by Marx, who attempts to show that the capitalist order of society has itself created the elements of a new economic order, since, resting as it does on the socialization of production it must transform itself into social property. His follower Lenin stressed the unequal economic and political development of capitalism especially in a period of imperialism, the elimination of some countries by others from the world-market, periodical re-divisions by the great powers of the already partitioned world through war, the weakening of world capitalism, and the possibility of the victory of socialism in some countries.

If by the State we mean a set of differentiated and co-

[1] J. A. Hobson: *The Evolution of Modern Capitalism*, 1926, p. 1.
[2] W. Sombart: *Der Moderne Kapitalismus*, 3 vols, 1916–1927.
[3] H. Sée: *Modern Capitalism: Its Origin and Evolution*, 1928.
[4] L. T. Hobhouse: *Social Development*, 1924, p. 290.

ordinated institutions of government which declare and execute law, maintain order and armed forces for defence, then the simpler peoples have no State although they have their own rough and ready ways of administering justice and providing for their defence. Among the higher agricultural and pastoral peoples, however, such institutions are seen in their infancy and these develop with the general expansion of society. In the early civilizations and in association with war and private property we meet with highly organized and powerful societies with extensive social differentiation, where force is essentially the prop maintaining the governing minority. Characteristic of the Eastern civilizations are the theocratic city-states whose monarch is the absolute representative of God. This close association between the State and religion has persisted throughout history and finds its classical expression in the Divine Right of kings: "L'état c'est moi." Their roots, according to Spencer, are to be found in the fear of the living which is the root of political control, and in the fear of the dead which becomes the root of religious control. With the rise of huge Empires still based on force and coercion, some cities were able to obtain a measure of independence and self-government. Here, as in the Greek city states, the principles of citizenship, consent of the governed, and the idea of the common good find partial recognition, at any rate as far as the free and propertied citizens are concerned. Their foundation remains slavery and exploitation.

It is a mistake to derive the State from the joint or patriarchal family, the 'patria potestas' as Sir Henry Maine did, or as the inevitable consequence of human gregariousness or man's political nature. It is to be derived from the circle of intermarrying families which make up, as we saw in the previous chapter, the simplest societies. The expansion of communities from clan, tribe and city-state into modern nation-states was the result of many factors, such as war,

migration, private property, law, population, division of labour, all mutually influencing each other.

It has been customary to speak of the origin of the State. It would be more correct to say that at particular historical times and as the resultants of many factors, states have arisen out of communities or societies. But if their histories and origins are different their basis is similar. States have arisen and persisted because communities require organization and because a source of ultimate power to compel obedience is necessary. They are organized for defence and aggression, for the maintenance of law and order, and for the control and consolidation of property and territory. And since a community organized, is better equipped in the struggle with other groups than a community unorganized, the paraphernalia of the State became widespread and characteristic of the higher civilizations. At this stage the State becomes "a particular portion of mankind viewed as an organized unit."[1]

The functions exercised by the State differ from age to age and in accordance with the requirements of historical conditions. They may range from bare preservation of internal order and external defence, to the comprehensive scrutiny of every aspect of social life as in totalitarian States. To determine the functions of the State *a priori*, as was done by the *laissez-faire* theorists, is therefore futile. Their efforts to circumscribe the activities of the State represented the desires of a triumphant middle-class that wanted no interference in business. Now, on the other hand, especially in times of depression, business is only too willing that the State should take over additional functions and set it on its feet again.

The State—that abstraction when thus considered—is best understood in terms of government, of those who are respon-

[1] J. W. Burgess: *Political Science and Comparative Constitutional Law*, 1890–91, Vol. I, p. 51.

sible for the organization of the community or in terms of the party in power. The word *Lo Stato* dates from the Italian Renaissance and originally meant the rulers and the party they represent. Where this organization expresses the general and widespread needs of the community the government will be representative of the population within its territory. But where a certain minority or a class is dominant within the State, the government will be representative of that class. And that is why to Marxists the present-day State "is a machinery of oppression by the ruling class of another class, the Proletariat." They bring forward as a striking example the Feudal State, in which the exploiting character of the ruling groups is nakedly revealed. They assert that under capitalism the State is no more than "the executive committee of the capitalist class." They wish to change that committee by force if necessary. "Constitutional questions," said Lassalle, "are not legal questions but questions of power."

The State can therefore be usefully regarded as a grouping of powerful interests, conflicting with each other and struggling for supremacy and utilizing the government as an agency by which and through which temporary adjustments are achieved. Sometimes revolutions occur and the whole structure, if not the nature of the State, is radically altered. In Russia in 1917 and in Germany in 1933 new governments representing new dominant groups came into power and clearly revealed what the State is and the processes that led to its political capture and economic utilization.

To say that some form of organization is necessary to the community and that likewise a source of ultimate authority is necessary, does not mean that any particular form of the State is to be accepted. In anarchist thought the State and its present-day essence, its reserve of force and compulsion, find no place. The Marxists are of the opinion that

with the abolition of capitalism the State will wither away and disappear, and that under communism the rule of men over other men will be replaced by the rule of men over things. The State, they say, will be an organ not of exploitation but of administration. "The perfect society has no government but only an administration, no laws but only obligations, no punishments but means of correction," said Weitling.[1]

Such a sociological and evolutionary interpretation of the State makes impossible its excessive mystification or glorification. For this, two major errors are responsible. The first is the confusion between the State and Society; and the second is the confusion between the State as it is and the State as it ought to be.

In a previous chapter we pointed out that the State may be overthrown or displaced by another form of organization but society remains. Regarded as the union of human beings, the State is an association existing for the performance of specific functions. If these functions are not satisfactorily fulfilled the people may revolt and overthrow it. Even if we agree with Burke that "the State ought not to be considered as nothing more than a partnership agreement in a trade of pepper and coffee, calico or tobacco, or some such other low concern, to be taken up for a little temporary interest and to be dissolved by the fancy of the parties," it does not therefore follow that the State is "a partnership in all science, a partnership in all art, a partnership in every virtue and all perfection." It is true that the present-day State does guarantee the conditions under which art and science can be pursued, and that it is by far the most important association in society, but that does not make it a partnership in every virtue—not even the totalitarian State which has taken every aspect of life

[1] W. Weitling: *Garantien der Harmonie und Frieheit*, Zweite Auflage, 1845.

under its aegis. Again, the State is an historical and changing phenomenon. There is no reason to believe that the present-nation State, for instance, is permanent, or that the absolute sovereignty with which it is now endowed will remain its attribute for ever.

The other and closely related error is prevalent among idealist philosophers and political theorists such as Rousseau, Hegel, Bosanquet, and other exponents of the metaphysical theory of the State. The State, instead of being considered as what it is now, is transformed into a self-conscious ethical entity, a self-knowing and actualizing personality that can do no wrong, to use Hegel's words. The State becomes an end in itself, over-riding the rights of its citizens and transcending the morality of the individual. Freedom consists in slavishly obeying the State—a view which leads to the absorption of the individual in a general will and one which is being uniformly enforced by totalitarian states.

In one totalitarian State (Germany) there has recently arisen another dangerous conception, which, ignoring the fact that the Germans are a hopeless mixture of diverse racial elements, makes the State synonymous with Race or *Volk*. The test of political allegiance has been replaced by the test of blood, and the purpose of the State has become "the maintenance of physically and spiritually homogeneous living beings" (*Mein Kampf*), whatever that may mean. Since the State finds its highest embodiment in the National Socialist Party—indeed, the Party and the State are one and inseparable, as spirit and body—the political consequences of this conception are evident. If for one reason or another any group incurs the antagonism of the Party it can be conveniently removed either on the ground that the individuals do not conduce to physical homogeneity (the Jews) or to spiritual homogeneity (Communists). But the most dangerous consequence is that the German State automatically becomes the

guardian over all Germanic peoples (or who may be so regarded) in adjacent territories. Any attempt to translate this theoretical guardianship into action would undoubtedly open up grave political issues and perhaps lead to war.

The family may be defined as a group consisting of two or more parents and their children. This definition is advisable because there are great variations in the number of parties entering into the marriage union. Although it is a universal structure in a sense, no particular form is primary or inevitable. Like all other institutions, it is a social product subject to change and modification.

In response to varied conditions different forms of the family have arisen. There is no evidence that monogamy (the union of one man and one woman) was the most primitive form of marriage, and in early societies, polygyny (the union of one man and a number of women) was generally the rule, although in practice only the more powerful could keep and maintain many wives. Polyandry (the union of a number of men and one woman) is rare and so is group-marriage (the union of a number of men and a number of women).

The prevalent belief in an original state of sexual promiscuity has little support now among the well-known anthropologists. That even the simplest group would leave sexual relations unregulated is hardly conceivable; for sex, besides being a cohesive and unifying force, is at the same time a disruptive and explosive force which requires a certain control and regulation. The popularity of promiscuity as the initial phase in human development is partly due to the evolutionary school of thinkers who conceived of evolution as passing through a regular sequence of stages in the following order: promiscuity, group-marriage, polyandry, polygyny and monogamy. Since evolution must be from lower to higher and since they were convinced that monogamy was ethically the most perfect form, promiscuity was postulated as the

beginning stage. We cannot enter here into the sociological reasons why monogamy triumphed over all other forms. Whether it is destined to be the ultimate form only the future can tell.

In part this evolutionary belief is a natural reaction to the patriarchal theory that interpreted society in terms of an original combination of isolated, self-supporting and hostile family units: the patriarchs who wielded authority within the family units, joined together in a social contract, and gave up their power to the chief patriarch, their king and sovereign. Thus there arose the pattern of patriarchal rule and authority, the pattern of hierarchy and subordination to a father earthly or divine.

For this theory, just as for the theory of sexual promiscuity, there is not much to be said. The fact, however, that it fitted in so well with biblical history and Victorian times, gave it an undue importance in social thought, and led to its utilization in support of the social order. Anthropologists made painstaking attempts to derive the family—a social institution—from a biological source, namely, the alleged monogamous habits of certain animal species. Monogamy thus came to be regarded as the basic form of marriage, whose destruction, it was said, would destroy society itself. Political theorists derived civil society and the State from a union of separate families, an original social contract. Sociologists argued that the family was the primal unit of social organization, and that all other social institutions—education, religion, division of labour, male authority—were inherent in it. And finally, the principle of authority, which gave the male head of the family absolute power over his wife and children, was made the setting and precedent for all other forms of personal ownership. It was used to justify the subjection of women, private property and slavery.

A recent reconstruction of early society by Briffault[1] makes the centre of the family not the father but the mother with her children and her daughter's children. The structure of the family is loose but its cohesion is greater. Descent is in the female line because paternity is uncertain and even unknown and sexual associations are matrilocal, i.e., the man lives in the woman's home. Property is communally owned and there is no occasion therefore for man's domination. This came later when war and private property had developed. Whatever the truth in this reconstruction, Briffault's main thesis, that the part played by woman in primitive times, in agriculture, industry, religion, the arts, etc., was predominant, is possibly correct. That the growth of private property had revolutionary consequences for social life is becoming increasingly recognized. Goldenweiser declares that "the androcentric trend of property, and property prerogatives has played an important part in history. Everywhere and always, it has reflected as well as enhanced that systematic disenfranchisement of woman, which constitutes one of the least pleasing aspects of human civilization."[2]

The modern family, which is still essentially patriarchal in character, has been shorn of much of its power. The State is now a super-parent which has arrogated to itself much of the patriarch's authority. Fundamental economic changes and especially the Industrial Revolution have deprived the family of its functions of production. It is now a unit of consumption mainly. New occupations were opened up to women and they became economically independent of their husbands. Periods of prolonged unemployment impaired the authority of the wage-earner, especially if his children brought into the home as much money as he did. The increase of wealth affected the old moral standards.

[1] R. Briffault: *The Mothers*, 1927.
[2] A. Goldenweiser: *Early Civilization*, 1923, p. 260.

Children, as they became more independent, postponed marriage or lived away from home. Urbanization led to a wide dissemination of sexual and contraceptive knowledge. Religion was weakened and with it paternal authority.

These profound changes have not only affected the economic functions of the family but also its educational and religious functions—that is, in so far as the State and the Church have taken them over. But although the character of the family has changed it still remains a powerful social institution. " It is our parents that first cure us of our natural wildness, and break in us the spirit of Independency we are all born with. It is to them that we owe the first Rudiments of our Submission; and to the Honour and Deference which children pay to Parents, all societies are obliged for the Principle of human obedience," writes Mandeville.[1] The family plays an important rôle in regulating sexual relationships and providing for the affectional needs of its members; it makes possible the prolonged care which children require; it makes possible the transmission of a cultural heritage; and finally, it remains, in our societies especially, a powerful agent for social and economic differentiation, since children generally enter the social class to which their parents belong and inherit the property and the other cultural advantages of their own family.

These last two functions, the transmission of property and of special cultural patterns, are especially important in stratified societies. In such societies the family is often the instrument for mediating the cultural and social beliefs of a dominant class, and of sustaining and continuing those patterns of obedience and authority regarded as essential to the maintenance of class superiority. The children are taught to be good and obedient in their situation. People are encouraged to marry early and have many children, for one who has

[1] B. Mandeville: *Fable of the Bees.* Ed. F. B. Kaye, 1924, Vol. II, p. 280.

given hostages to fortune is less liable to become a dangerous revolutionary. In Europe until recent times only the marriages of the propertied classes were really important; proletarians did not so much marry as proliferate. The sanctity of the family stressed by State, Church and School did not prevent husband and wife being separated from their children and from one another in the workhouse. Thus pauperism or the absence of property suspended family ties.

This property basis of the family has been the target of numerous socialist criticism because it has perverted the family and love, subjugated woman, and increased prostitution. To Robert Owen, the family, property and religion were the satanic devices which enslave mankind. The *Communist Manifesto* declares that " the bourgeois clap-trap about the family and education, about the hallowed co-relation of parent and child, becomes all the more disgusting, the more by the action of modern industry, all family ties among the proletarians are torn asunder, and their children transformed into simple articles of commerce and instruments of labour."

The socialist criticism of the family, whether justified or not, shows us how impossible it is to divorce the family from the totality of social life or from its historical context. Whether the family be " a school of despotism," as J. S. Mill called it, or a school of freedom and socialization will depend very much on other social institutions. In present-day society Briffault believes that " the emotional intensity of affection in the members of an individualistic society is the release of painfully inhibited reactions, an eagerly desired liberation from the strain of self-defence, watchfulness and mistrustful antagonism which social life among 'strangers' imposes."[1] It is not improbable that these attitudes so

[1] R. Briffault: " Family Sentiment," in the *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, Heft 3, 1933, p. 375.

hostile to the development of higher social feelings would be modified and changed in another social system. When we discuss the psychological attributes of family life we must keep in mind the nature of the family not in the abstract, but in a specific historical setting.

This point must be stressed if we are to understand the connection between the family and population. It is because Malthus ignored it that he elaborated a law of population which he thought to be valid for all times. But each historical epoch has its own law of population. Thus Malthus began with certain principles such as the fecundity of man, and the niggardliness of nature, and a constant sexual passion between the sexes, which he assumed to be permanent and inevitable consequences of human nature. But it is no longer possible to believe with Malthus that "the passion between the sexes has appeared in every age to be so nearly the same that it may always be considered, in algebraic language, as a given quantity." In fact it is anything but constant or a given quantity. It is influenced by numerous social factors such as urbanization, contraception, religious beliefs, woman's emancipation, etc. Again, the logic of economic development destroyed the logic of Malthus and transformed his niggardliness of nature and the fecundity of man, into the fecundity of nature and the niggardliness of man. Malthus's theory might apply to a primitive tribe overpopulated as a result of a shortage of food due to a famine or a drought. But it could not apply to an industrialized society where overpopulation was due to the means of subsistence growing faster than population—that is, to overproduction. The pressure of population appears to be upon the means of employment, not upon the means of subsistence. A large population is not necessarily a redundant population.

The Malthusian theory of population was eagerly accepted not so much because of the truths it enunciated but because

of the interests it defended. It absolved the ruling oligarchy of all responsibility for the misery of the lower classes, restive and discontented from the effects of war and unemployment. It maintained that the poor "are themselves the cause of their own poverty," and that it was futile to blame employers, wages or the State for their misery and discontent. It demonstrated the impossibility of any alternative to the existing economic system, since under socialism the unchecked growth of population would soon reduce everybody to misery and starvation. This theory harmonized so well with the interests of the *status quo* that it soon became an eternal law of nature justifying the ways of providence to man.

The conclusion that must be drawn from this brief discussion of the patriarchal theory and Malthus's theory of population, is that ideas and theories do not grow up in a void. To understand an idea we must know the circumstances which hasten and give rise to its birth, the social group or class that propagates it and the special function or rôle it plays in the unceasing struggle that goes on between competing interests in the social arena. Considered in this light, both the Malthusian theory and the present agitation against the menace of depopulation take on a new sociological significance.

Chapter 4

The Class Structure of Society

"THE histories of mankind which we possess are in general only of the higher classes." This wise observation of Malthus has wider implications than he imagined. It is not merely a question of criticizing history conceived in terms of dynasties and 'heroes,' or of insisting that a history of hunger is still to be written. It is primarily a question of the Class Struggle, of determining the significance of the higher classes—and of the lower classes—in the historical arena. For the theory of the class struggle is more than a statement of the fact that contemporary societies are divided into hostile social classes struggling with each other for supremacy. It is essentially an historical theory, an attempt to explain the development of society and the means that brought it about. "The thread of the class struggle runs through the whole history of mankind ever since the introduction of private property and the subsequent clash between individual and class interests."[1] This conception would appear to be the central one in communist thought.

The class structure of society is characteristic of all societies save some primitive ones among whom no difference of status exists beyond those connected with age or sex. With the growing power of private property—an historical process that can be clearly reconstructed as regards the first means of production—with war and conquest, the homogeneous character of these early societies is destroyed. A rudimentary equality gives place to social differentiation and to differ-

[1] *The Communist Manifesto*, 1848.

ences in rank, authority and power. The land which in most cases had belonged to the community becomes the exclusive property of hereditary chiefs and nobles. "Force," says Spencer, "in one form or another is the sole cause adequate to make members of a society yield their joint claim to the area they inhabit. Such a force may be that of an external or that of an internal aggressor."[1] At a later stage and with further economic advance their monopoly of land and labour is strengthened. There is now not only individual differentiation but social stratification: society becomes split up into different social classes. At one end of the scale we have a king and a hereditary nobility and at the other end we find the rest of the population—slaves, serfs, semi-free and peasants—dependent on the former for their means of livelihood.

Concurrently with the growth of private property in things inanimate there is an extension of property in things animate: in slaves. Both private property and slavery increase at each economic grade as we go from the hunting groups—the most primitive groups—to the highly developed agricultural and pastoral peoples. At the same times there is also an increase in the nobility—that is, an upper rank possessed of greater privileges than the mass of the people. In the early civilizations social stratification becomes more extensive and slavery a fully developed social institution. The structure of society is like a pyramid: in Imperial Rome, for instance, the patricians and senators, and a class of knights consisting of officials, minor landowners and the intellectual élite are at the top. Then come the wealthy city merchants and the petty shopkeepers, skilled artisans and minor officials. And finally come the vast majority of the population, the plebeians—the free labourers, whose turbulence had to be placated by free food and entertainment—and the slaves,

[1] H. Spencer: *Principles of Sociology*, Vol. II, p. 546.

who were set to work in mines and on public works under conditions often worse than death.

Sociologically, it is interesting to examine the mechanisms by which the institution of slavery once firmly established is justified, for the same mechanisms which seek to perpetuate the present class-structure operate to-day. The master class develops theories which justify its rôle on the ground of its superior race, religion or wisdom. At the same time the slaves are habituated to their status and are inculcated with habits, sentiments and beliefs appropriate to their status, so that they begin to believe that they are inferior and could not govern themselves even if they were free. They exhibit deference and servility as if these were innate qualities of character. Only seventy years ago, slavery was defended in the U.S.A. because it is "wise, just and beneficent, ordained by nature and is a necessity of both races." We are told that "a state of human servitude or slavery is compatible with divine justice, with perfect righteousness of God's laws as surely as the necessity of hard labour in order to gain bread for the man, or the suffering of woman in childbirth and the subjection of the wife to her husband are compatible with righteousness."[1] Since in a Class state, law, religion, education tend to be expressions of the dominant class—the dominant ideas of society are invariably the ideas of a dominant class—these defensive ideas gain the character of natural and immutable beliefs.

The growth of the productive forces of society and the growing territorial character of society did away with slavery. In comparison with the free labourer the slave was less economical, his greater cost of supervision making him an unprofitable productive agent. Moreover, the Roman

[1] R., H. O.: *The Governing Race: a book for the time and all times*, Washington, 1860. See also the pro- and anti-Abolitionist literature on slavery.

Empire reduced the supply of slaves by restricting dealings in them within the limits of the empire, and the Romans were obliged to have recourse to " the milder but more tedious method of propagation."[1] But the decline of slavery by no means meant a system of ' personal freedom ' ; what followed was the régime of serfdom, the roots of which may be seen in the Roman Colonate whose Coloni were probably foreign captives and immigrants settled upon the soil, or free tenants who had lapsed into a semi-servile condition through the insecurity of the times and through self-commendation. Serfdom flourished and increased in the period of insecurity following the fall of the Roman Empire, and here again serfs were recruited in part from the ranks of the slaves and in part from free men who through conquest or economic causes had lost their freedom. They became the chattels of their lord or master, in return for his protection. The serf was tied to the land, but if he could not leave it, neither could he be sold apart from it. He even required his lord's consent to marriage and had to pay for this consent. It is on such a basis that Feudalism rested. All the land belonged to the King, who divided it among his Barons to rule over and defend. For this they paid tribute to him and in return received tribute from their retainers or vassals. The Barons in turn divided their baronies among the lesser nobility and they among the freeman, each of whom paid tribute to his superior. The serf paid no tribute to the King but only to his liege lord.

These social distinctions hardened in time into the system of Estates (German *Stände*) whose social position in the hierarchy of society is regulated and defined by law or custom. The sovereign and the nobility are at the apex of society, and next to them and closely allied with them are the clergy.

[1] E. Gibbon : *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, The Modern Library Edition, 1937, Vol I, p. 35.

Below them come the merchants, then handworkers and peasants. Each stratum has its duties and rights clearly defined, but the higher classes possess special prerogatives and political and financial privileges. Until recent times English law was not altogether free from such caste distinctions, (e.g., benefit of the clergy). "When it is remembered, further, that the whole administration of petty justice and of the preliminary process in graver crimes was in the hands of the landed gentry, upon whose estates the labouring classes, rendered landless by economic changes, were fixed . . . when it is further borne in mind that the same justices had the power of fixing wages, and that the whole of the working classes in the country were always upon or over the verge of pauperism and dependent upon the support of the poor law, the control of which was substantially in the same hands, it will be recognized that the nominal freedom of the English labourer down to the beginning of the reform period was a blessing very much disguised, and that the reality compared unfavourably with the lighter forms of serfdom."[1]

The caste system in India or Japan have an economic origin similar to that of the feudal system. It differs from the system of estates in that the social classes are much more rigid and fixed. While in the former system there was a possibility of rising to a higher class in spite of the fact that birth determined one's position in life (individuals were often ennobled by the king or rose to high office in the Church), this possibility was much less in the caste system. Again, in the caste system property differences are not as important as occupation, lineage, ritual and ceremonial distinctions. Its main characteristics is that membership and occupation are determined by birth, that inter-marriage is prohibited and that the castes are kept isolated by a routine governing the minutiae of everyday life. The greatest sin is to 'lose caste'

[1] L. T. Hobhouse: *Morals in Evolution*, 1923, pp. 309–10.

and a person who does so is ostracized from the community. In India the system was probably introduced by the conquering white peoples, and the word *varna* stands both for colour and caste.

As in slavery, mechanisms and defensive beliefs arise to keep the castes in their place. According to Brahman theology, Brahma created three different men: first, the Brahman, emanated from his head, possessed all knowledge and wisdom, and is king of the earth; the second, the Kshatriya, came from Brahma's arms and his duty was to fight, make the laws, execute them and preserve the system of castes. The third, the Vaisya, sprang from Brahma's feet and he was to be the artisan and tiller of the soil. As for the Sudra or the slave, he, "although emancipated by his master, is not released from servitude; since that is innate in him who can set him free?" In Japan the Samurai, the ruling class, were supposed to be above mundane things and to concern themselves with unsubstantial things such as honour, justice and ceremony. In Europe, the ideas of honour and chivalry come to be the exclusive possession of the 'gentleman' at this stage. The Gentleman is the highest category and below him stand the Citizen, Yeoman, Artificer and Labourer. The gentleman must follow only certain occupations and a prescribed education, exercises and recreation.[1] Until the time of Queen Victoria in England almost all occupations except the Army, the Navy, Church and Bar were regarded as below the dignity of a well-born gentleman. In addition, devices such as uniforms, obeisances and titles emphasize social stratification. In old Japan, the dress of the different social classes was regulated to the smallest detail, and in Europe, as soon as the spread of wealth made it possible for the lower classes to imitate their superiors, sumptuary

[1] Ruth Kelso: *Doctrine of the English Gentleman in the Sixteenth Century*, University of Illinois, Studies in Language and Literature, 1929.

legislation was enacted regulating the clothing, ornaments and carriages that were permitted to the different ranks.[1]

In the same way as the social order based on slavery gave way to a social order based on the feudal tenure of land, this in turn gave way to a system based on the private ownership of capital. The social estates were transformed into social classes. As with slavery and feudalism, profound economic changes were the roots of capitalist society. The feudal mode of production became insufficient for the growing wants of the new markets which geographical discoveries had opened up; the production of wealth was much greater than was required to satisfy the current needs of its owners and in consequence savings accumulated; the townships, which had been so important in commuting the feudal services of their citizens for an annual tribute, became cities wherein a new manufacturing class grew up which was pushing aside the guilds and the guild masters and becoming increasingly restive at the restrictions with which the crown and the aristocratic landlords surrounded them. Puritanism in response to all these changes was creating the psychological climate in which profit-making could thrive; inventions became numerous; markets were able and willing to buy the products of industry; and finally a landless proletariat which owned nothing but its labour had been created by the abolition of the old agricultural system and by the private appropriation of millions of acres of land. Such public theft conforms to Goethe's summing up of the origin of much private property in recent times:

Teacher. Where did your father get his fortune?
Pupil. From my grandfather.
Teacher. And where did he get it?
Pupil. From my great-grandfather.

[1] See J. M. Vincent: *Costume and Conduct in the Laws of Basel, Berne and Zurich, 1370–1800, 1935.*

Teacher. And where did your great-grandfather get it?
Pupil. He stole it.

The essential cleavage in this new social order was that between the new middle class—the bourgeoisie which owned all the means of production—and a wage-earning class which was nominally free but neither owned nor was attached to the means of production. The dominant class is no longer that of the aristocracy of birth but the aristocracy of factory and finance. In its ascent to economic power it won political power. It joined with the monarch to fight the feudal lords; it fought the guild system of production which handicapped it with numerous legal barriers; it fought the landlord with the help of the proletariat; and in the French Revolution it was this Third Estate that arrayed itself against clergy, nobility and sovereign, won possession of the whole state machinery and utilized it for its own ends.

In its ascent to power this revolutionary class—revolutionary until it was victorious—created an ideology more in harmony with its historical rôle. It vindicated the rights of private property and derived it from personal effort and exertion. It made both God and King into constitutional and limited sovereigns and originated commercial patriotism and bureaucratic centralization. Property, it argued, was the nurse of virtue and without it no incentive would exist for the performance of work. It based philosophy and ethics on empiricism and made morality into a purely personal matter. In religion it stressed personal salvation and made a sharp distinction between the sacred and profane. Indeed it isolated and abstracted every aspect of human life from every other, as if to conform to the minute division of labour and specialization it had brought about.

But its own virtues, those of sobriety and moderation, lasted no longer than its puritan ethos. In time it came to exhibit those features which characterize all societies that show

great differences in wealth and leisure among the social classes. 'Conspicuous waste' and 'conspicuous leisure' were manifested in an increasing degree, and definite pecuniary canons of taste arose for all the cultural products of society.

Like feudalism and slavery, capitalism too developed a system of defensive beliefs to justify the superiority of the ruling classes and separation devices were established to keep the lower, i.e., the poorer, classes in subjection. They are taught to be meek and humble, obedient and industrious, for which purpose every institution and especially the Church, the State and the family are important. Since the dominant class controls the government and most of the other agencies of opinion, it sees that proper attitudes are engendered. It is argued that the ruling class is the bulwark against revolution, atheism and the breakdown of society; that without it, arts and the sciences would stagnate, that culture is its special creation. Religion ordains the state of society and—

The rich man in his castle, the poor man at his gate,
God made them high or lowly and ordered their estate.

Science is often used for the same purpose and it is argued "that what is true of the master races in relation to inferior races, is equally true of individuals in each community. The middle and upper classes are, in the main, sprung from ancestors with better physique, courage and morale."[1]

At the same time poverty is justified. It is said that it is a punishment for sin; that it is a creator of character; that it is a spur to achievement; that it is due to laziness; that it is a desirable state for the growth of morality; that it is nature's mechanism for weeding out the inferior elements. And both as consequences and causes of social stratification,

[1] Professor W. Ridgeway. *Report of the British Association*, 1908, .845.

differences of language, dress, education, behaviour and manners of social intercourse become increasingly marked. The history of literature mirrors these differences, for literature reflects, and is itself also a product of, the outside world of society. Words like 'villain' and 'boor' originally referred to countrymen and not necessarily to rude or wicked persons.

Because it is difficult in modern society to distinguish the classes sharply from each other, it does not mean that they do not exist. On the basis of certain objective criteria such as income (amount and source), degree of personal independence in work, its security, and the opportunities it gives for the exercise of authority, it is possible to demarcate the social classes. We find that in present-day society the vast mass are wage-earners or on the fringe of poverty. These we may call the Proletariat. Then there is a small upper class, consisting of the capitalists, large landowners, rentiers, high officials and the higher professional men. In between, there is a heterogeneous middle class ranging from small entrepreneurs, small shareholders and rentiers, and small professional men to small shopkeepers and traders who seem to become more proletarianized as their security and independence is threatened by the chain-stores and huge combines. Marx believed that the smaller middle classes would disintegrate and that society would split more and more into two great camps, the Bourgeoisie who own the means of production and the Proletariat who own nothing but their labour-power. This prediction has, to a great extent, been verified by the objective changes that have occurred in the economic structure of society. He perhaps exaggerated the speed of the subjective changes that are necessary to produce class consciousness—the recognition by a class of their similar interests and the necessity of safeguarding them from attack. The smaller middle classes in

danger of disappearance have neither developed a special class consciousness nor have they seen that their interests lie with the Proletariat. Shop assistants still treasure their white collar, and civil servants their conception of prestige. With chronic unemployment, the danger has arisen of a cleavage developing in the class cohesion of the employed and unemployed, and in some countries political parties have not been slow to take advantage of this cleavage.

Sociologists who deny the existence of social classes do so on three grounds. The first is that " there is no longer any recognizable upper class "[1] and that the standardization of habits, dress and manners introduced to a large extent by the cinema, the teashop, the chain-store, ready-made tailoring and birth control, has done away with the social stratification characteristic of earlier societies. This argument, it is said in reply, ignores the reality of economic dependence and confuses the shadow with the substance. Education, speech, acquirement of skill, occupation—all these significant criteria of class grouping themselves rest on an economic basis. The view that one cannot distinguish an upper class is itself open to doubts. The second ground is that in present-day society community of interest is stronger than class or sectional interests. The counter argument is: this may be so at various times and on certain occasions, but one must not, therefore conclude that community of interest is the same as identity of interest. All the social classes have a common interest in fighting a disease or a plague but this does not abrogate the class war. The third ground is that in the present economic system it is easy to rise from one group into another—in other words, that the social ladder is so extensive, and mobility on it so great, that it is fallacious to

[1] A. M. Carr-Saunders and D. Caradog Jones: *A Survey of the Social Structure of England and Wales*, 1927, p. 71. In the 1937 edition, the authors seem to have modified their position on the question of social classes.

speak of social classes. Any individual, it is said, provided he has the gifts, can rise to the highest position in society. This claim, which is frequently repeated, merits close attention.

It is true that modern social classes have not the rigidity of castes, but neither is it very easy to change one's class. The possibility of rising from one class to another, and the extent of the social ladder, differs from one country to another and from age to age. It appears that this ladder was much easier to climb in the early stages of capitalistic development in this country, and in the United States until fairly recently. But even if many individuals did find it possible to attain to high office, become millionaires, executives and cabinet ministers, this fact did not alter the fundamental class structure of society. Professor Ginsberg, who made a valuable study of the problem of social mobility in this country, writes that "it may be seriously questioned whether there is any such close correlation between social status and ability . . . barriers to movement remain, and the higher ranks of society are still largely self recruited. The higher professions are still mostly closed to the children of the poor, and there is some evidence which suggests that there is a tendency for the leaders of big business to be derived increasingly from the well-to-do classes."[1] He adds that although there is some evidence tending to show an increase in recent times of mobility from the working classes to the professional and employer class, the ladder lifts relatively only a small number and that there is very little downward movement. These conclusions are supported by other studies that stress the wide discrepancy that still exists between ability and opportunity.[2]

We may sum up by saying that social stratification is

[1] M. Ginsberg: *Sociology*, 1934, p. 171.
[2] R. H. Tawney: *Equality*, 1931, and J. L. Gray: *The Nation's ntelligence*, 1936.

essentially economic in origin and nature and that it has characterized in different degrees all social groups since primitive times. In present-day society the amount and source of income seem to be the most important criteria demarcating groups. Externally, these groups exhibit certain class coefficients, such as differences in speech and accent, in dress, education, leisure and manners. Internally or psychologically they manifest a certain cohesion and consciousness and certain attitudes to members of the other groups, attitudes of superiority to those below them and attitudes of inferiority to those above them. These attitudes are very complex and range from the condescending affability of the nobleman addressing a labourer to the aggressiveness, fear and lack of confidence of the newly rich. Within a social class the members will be, more or less, on terms of equality and familiarity.

To many sociologists the hierarchical structure of society presents itself as the most pressing of all present-day problems. It contains within itself all other problems. It involves not only great differences in health, upbringing, education and self-development among the individuals of a community but ultimately the possibility of violence and social revolution. They say that this problem is being fought out—with what results it is impossible to say—in many parts of the world and before our own eyes. Certainly Shelley's ideal of a classless society, whether it is feasible or not, is still far away:

The loathsome mask has fallen, the man remains
Sceptreless, free, uncircumscribed, but man
Equal, unclassed, tribeless, and nationless;
Exempt from awe, worship, degree, the king
Over himself.

Chapter 5

Biological Sociology

WHEN the competitive processes underlying early capitalistic economy were taken over by biology and crystallized in the concepts of ' natural selection ' and ' survival of the fittest,' it became a general practice among many sociologists to interpret social phenomena and to defend existing social institutions in terms of these concepts. The economic system of ruthless competition as the most satisfactory for ensuring the survival of the richest, found its analogue in a system of " nature red in tooth and claw " as the wisest for ensuring the survival of the fittest. Thus war found a biological justification in its alleged selective value. " Nature," proclaimed Sir Arthur Keith, " keeps her orchard healthy by pruning; war is her pruning hook." The richest and the fittest were often used interchangeably. It was forgotten that the survivors of a war are not warriors but war-profiteers.

Arguments drawn from biology were also used to defend the necessity and social utility of individual competition in industry. They were brought forward to prove that certain races were superior to others and that class distinctions were inevitable and permanent. On the same grounds it was argued, that social evolution is but a form of biological evolution and that therefore the interference of man in introducing social legislation for the poor and weak was biologically harmful. Herbert Spencer, for instance, objected to the Poor Law on the ground that it put a premium on the survival of the unfit. The poor were attacked for having more children than the rich on the assumption that the latter

were the biologically superior elements in the population.

These and many other arguments were especially plausible when it was habitual to compare human society with an animal organism. It was thus perfectly easy to equate sociological processes with biological processes, and the nature of society with the nature of an organism. It was said that since the animal consists of a collection of cells, society too consists of a collection of individuals each having a position and function in the body politic comparable to the place and function of the cell in the body. The most ingenious arguments were advanced in support of this parallelism. The telegraph wires in a society were likened to the nerve fibres of an animal, and money was made the equivalent of blood discs in the blood stream. Spencer, in whose sociology the social organism played a great part, makes the strange assertion that "our Houses of Parliament discharge in the social economy functions which are in sundry respects comparable to those discharged by the cerebral masses in a vertebrate animal." He also drew the perfectly logical conclusion that "the classes engaged in laborious occupation are less susceptible, intellectually and emotionally, than the rest; and especially less so than the classes of the highest mental culture."[1]

It is not difficult to dismiss these contentions. Individuals in a society are not as fixed in their location and function as the cells in the body; they are more mobile. Again, while the parts of society are interchangeable this is not possible with the organs of the body. But more important of all, there is no evidence that society possesses a collective consciousness or will or mind in any way analogous to the consciousness, will or mind of the individual organism.

Nor is there any reason to believe that societies, like individual organisms, must sooner or later die. "In

[1] H. Spencer: *The Social Organism*, Essays, Vol. I, p. 302.

Societies of whatever kind, there seems no such necessary or essential Tendency to Dissolution. The human body is naturally mortal ; the political only so by accident. . . . there appears nothing in the internal construction of any State, that tends inevitably to Dissolution analogous to those Causes in the human Frame, which leads to certain Death."[1]

This conception of the social organism has had a harmful influence on sociology since it diverted attention from the more fruitful lines of inquiry which had insisted that social phenomena should be explained in terms of social and not biological or physical facts. But its practical consequences were even more harmful. It led to an emphasis on *laissez-faire* and to a policy of non-interference in social evils. And it was also easy on the basis of the social organism to justify State sovereignty and omnicompetence, the corporate totalitarian State and every kind of social absolutism. Its re-emergence in Fascist thought is highly significant, as is also the glorification of race and the view that it is the main determinant in human progress. This view has so many practical implications to-day that it will be worth while to examine it in some detail.

The influence of race on social development should be a matter for scientific investigation, but unfortunately the question has become complicated by the intrusion of passion and by political considerations. The word 'race' came into use in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when the struggle for markets and colonies began on a vast scale. The exploitation of the natives was justified by the argument that the white races were superior to the coloured races and that their mission was to civilize them. That " the white men in our Colonies are frequently the true savages and require to be taught and Christianized quite as much as the

[1] John Brown : *An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times*, 7th edition, 1758, p. 107.

natives" was overlooked.[1] With the struggle of the white races among themselves which imperialism brought in its train, theories developed claiming that a certain branch—the Nordics—were the finest representatives of Homo Sapiens.

But what is meant by race? We speak of the English race, the German race, the Caucasian race, even of the human race. Can a word that is used so indiscriminately be a scientific term? The first step therefore is to define it.

Scientifically, 'race' denotes a group of individuals who have in common certain physical and hereditary traits which marks them off from other groups. "A Race is composed of one or more interbreeding groups of individuals and their descendants possessing in common a number of innate characteristics which distinguish them from other groups. The innate characteristics mentioned are held to be such as usually apply to a generality of individuals studied, and not to pathological characters or features (such as red hair) which characterize only a relatively small percentage in a population. In the present state of our knowledge we are dependent on characters recognised as physical for the purpose of differentiating races, though innate psychological characters may later be found to differentiate them."[2] The limitation to physical traits is necessary because we can easily observe and measure them and that is not possible with mental traits. When it is said that a certain race is taciturn, volatile or cruel we cannot be sure that this is anything more than a subjective and superficial generalization.

Even when physical traits alone are taken into account, such as shape of head, stature, colour of skin, form of hair, nasal form, etc., they by no means provide clear-cut criteria of race. And the larger the number of these traits that

[1] A. R. Wallace in How to Civilize Savages: *Studies, Scientific and Social*, 1900, Vol. II.

[2] *Race and Culture*, printed for the Royal Anthropological Institute and the Institute of Sociology, Le Play House Press, 1936, p. 3.

we adopt, the fewer will be the individuals possessing them. Thus it is easy to get a large number of tall individuals. But the number of those who are tall and have fair hair and blue eyes and a long head will be smaller. It will be smaller still if we include in the classification additional race-criteria. Here is the reason why anthropologists themselves differ as to the number of races that can be distinguished. Sergi finds three genera, eleven species and forty-one varieties. Deniker finds six great divisions, thirteen minor divisions and twenty-nine races proper. A simple classification is the fourfold division into Caucasian, Mongol, Negro, Australian, with the Caucasian divided into three groups, the Nordic, the Alpine and the Mediterranean.

Different classifications are obtainable according to the criteria used. In the above classification, as in most others, only external characters such as skin-colour, form of hair, and skeletal features such as stature and the cranial index are taken into account. But we may also attempt to classify races on the basis of their physiological differences, serological, metabolic, and liability to disease; or on the basis of psychological differences as revealed by numerous tests and experiments. These differences may be further classified in four other respects. Firstly, we may ask whether heredity or environment is more important with regard to any character. Secondly, we may attempt to determine how far the differences between racial groups are absolute or how far they overlap. Thirdly, we may attempt to discover the genetical basis of the differences. And finally we may examine the selective value and biological advantage of the various characters in which races differ.[1] When "as the result of an infinitely laborious process of

[1] See the valuable discussion by J. B. S. Haldane: *Anthropology and Human Biology* in the Report of the International Anthropological Congress, 1934, pp. 53–64.

specialized research, anthropology manages to provide us with some dependable coefficient of ethnic likeness, then, and perhaps only then, will it be possible to separate out the intermixed effects of race and habit, phylogeny and ontogeny, the hereditary and acquired factors."[1]

The simple classification of races into Caucasian, Mongol, Negro and Australian, does not mean that we can actually pigeon-hole all the individuals of a particular and actually existent group and say they are all Nordics. The Germans, for instance, like to make out that they are Nordics—that they are tall, long-headed, with fair hair and blue eyes. But in fact only a small proportion are Nordics. It is difficult to find a large group all of whose members would agree in the possession of all the given racial traits, because there has been a great deal of intermixture from very early times. Race is thus essentially an abstraction as far as existing groups are concerned. The question is still further complicated by the fact that in such racial mixtures each trait is inherited separately, and not necessarily in combination with the traits originally associated with it. It is because of such shuffling and reshuffling of racial traits that " Nordic souls may often be combined with un-Nordic bodies and a decidedly un-Nordic soul may lurk in a perfectly good Nordic body." This interpretation of race (by a German anthropologist) was inevitable if we bear in mind the composition of the German people and the physical traits of the German leaders. For the same reason we are told " that a tall, blue-eyed, dolichocephalic Frenchman really possesses less of the so-called Nordic factors than a short, dark-eyed round-head."

The relation of race to mentality is another problem we must take up, since in common talk some races are regarded as clever and others as dull. But if a Nordic soul can lurk

[1] R. R. Marett : *The Growth and Tendency of Anthropological Studies* in the Report of the International Anthropological Congress, 1934, p. 45.

in an un-Nordic body there is no reason why high intelligence should not lurk behind a black skin. Even if we knew what were the mental characteristics of these races there need not be any necessary connection between them and the physical characters. The mere fact, therefore, that a negro has a black skin or woolly hair does not *ipso facto* make him mentally inferior to the white man.

This conclusion is re-enforced by the investigations that have been made into the relation between mentality and physical traits. Pearson, for example, showed that there is no correlation between intelligence and hair- and eye-colour. Again, mental tests on members of different racial groups did not reveal significant differences and showed a good deal of over-lapping. The differences, such as they were, are more easily explained by differences in social environment, status, language, habits of thought and action, all of which influence the test results. Garth and Klineberg, who have gone into this question thoroughly, agree that racial differences in intelligence have not been proved as yet.[1]

About differences in temperament we know very little: hardly any experimental data exist and the observations that we possess seem to be no more than subjective impressions. We are told that the Mongolians (forty per cent of the world's population) are reserved, sullen, apathetic and reckless gamblers. Ripley thought the Alpines to be patient, submissive and peaceful. Peake, who wrote thirty years later, thought they were impatient, destructive and revolutionary. The Bolshevik revolution had occurred in the meantime. Again the fact that nations have mental pictures of each other, that we speak of John Bull, Uncle Sam, etc., does not mean that these pictures have scientific value or that they derive from racial differences. The Germans, who claim

[1] T. R. Garth: *Race Psychology*, 1931, and O. Klineberg: *Race Differences*, 1936.

that their own *Wanderlust* is the spirit of adventure, regard the *Wanderlust* of the Jews as destructive nomadism. English perfidy when adopted by the Germans becomes *Realpolitik.* Indeed there is nothing more amusing to read than the literature on national character, into which we cannot go now. Whatever validity attaches to its generalizations they become meaningless if divorced from a specific period, or if they are transformed into eternal categories. That cultural and not racial factors are predominant is very likely when we consider how rapidly the character of a people can change —take the England of Elizabeth and of Cromwell, or Japan before and after Westernization.

To the fantastic claims of the 'racialists,' such as Gobineau and Chamberlain, there can be no better answer than that of Hilaire Belloc who sums up just as 'scientifically' as they do, the main differences between Nordics, Alpines and Mediterraneans.

Behold, my child, the Nordic Man,
And be as like him as you can,
His legs are long, his mind is slow,
His hair is light and made of tow.

And next him is the Alpine race,
Oh what a broad and brutal face,
His hair is dark, his skin is yellow,
He is a most unpleasant fellow.

And then the lowest race of all,
Mediterranean we call,
His hair is crisp and even curls
And he is saucy with the girls.

The most fundamental problem and one with practical bearing is the connection between race and culture. Is it true that only certain groups are capable of creating and

maintaining culture and civilization? What we have already said makes this very unlikely. More conclusive is the following evidence.

Firstly, wide variations in culture exist among groups having, for instance, a similar head-form, and at the same time wide variations in head-form exist among groups having a similar culture. Thus not only Nordics have long heads, but also Negroes, primitive Australians, Portuguese and Papuans. Therefore to take the dolichocephalic head as the index of superior culture is palpably absurd. It also ignores the fact that Kant, Laplace, Voltaire and Plato, to mention but a few, were broad-headed. If we take skin-colour as our index we find that both white and coloured skins are found among the most primitive as well as among the most advanced peoples.

Secondly, whilst similar cultures have been borrowed by peoples of unrelated stock, as the Western civilization by Oriental peoples, various branches of the same stock may at one time have dissimilar cultures. The Chinese are a highly cultured people but their kinsmen on the Amur River are primitive and illiterate. At the present time some peasant populations of Europe live in conditions not unlike those of savage groups.

Thirdly, neither political nor cultural supremacy has remained the exclusive property of one racial group. Different stocks have carried the torch of civilization. Again, the same racial group may occupy a different cultural position at different times. The Teutonic groups were savages when the Jews and Romans were highly civilized societies. The argument that different levels in culture are due to race is illogical because we cannot argue from attainment to potentiality. Would the Romans have thought it possible for the barbaric tribes to develop a great culture? Is this not possible of Negroes in the course of time?

Finally, there is nothing to support the arguments of Gobineau and his followers that civilization declines when the superior race mingles its blood with that of an inferior race. Such an explanation of the decline of Rome ignores the researches of historians, who are agreed that economic and sociological factors were decisive. But then again, who are the inferior races? In fact a good case can be made out in favour of race-mixture, since at all times—even in Palæolithic and Neolithic times there was a good deal of it—periods of great human activity and the flourishing of culture have been associated with such mixture. What remains to be determined is the specific rôle of the biological factor in this connection. Culture-contact is in itself stimulating even if unaccompanied by race-mixture.

A few concluding remarks are not out of place about the Nordic claim to cultural creativeness and superiority. In the first place, it is impossible to say who were the founders of civilization: they are lost in the mists of antiquity. In the second place, the Greek and Roman civilizations, which are attributed to the Nordics, were hopelessly mixed: in classical Greece the fair and dark types lived side by side. Thirdly, a far better case can be made out for the Mediterranean races as the founders of civilization than for the Nordics, since the early advances in culture were made by dark, not fair types. And finally, as far as modern Germany is in question, the greatest developments took place in the south, where the non-Nordics are the majority. A great number of German thinkers were broad-headed: Schopenhauer, Goethe, Bach, Beethoven and Schiller. It is no accident that racial myths are always invoked in times of social and economic stress and that often the race struggle is made the substitute for the more fundamental class struggle.

It should be noted that 'racial prejudice,' which looms so large in the modern world, may have nothing to do with

race as such. It may indeed be exhibited by members of a group to others inside it: e.g., the Sephardic Jews showed a strong antipathy to the Ashkenazic Jews and forbade intermarriage with them. After the American Civil War the lighter-coloured Negroes of status and property formed a Blue Vein Circle to keep out their black but poorer compatriots. In the Southern States the Negroes are not admitted to the Universities but the Japanese are. Again, in South America there is much prejudice against the Chinese but little against the Japanese; the former are numerous and uncouth, the latter are few and cultured.

These variations in racial attitudes, and especially the variations in the 'colour question' in ancient, mediaeval and modern times, indicate that psychological, economic, and cultural factors are involved similar to those we find in the manifestations of the In-Group against the Out-Group. Ethnocentrism easily seizes upon distinguishable physical characters such as colour or shape of nose because of their high visibility and their segregating value when antagonism and conflict characterize the relations between groups. In spite of Vacher de Lapouge's contention that "millions will cut each other's throat because of one or two degrees of more or less cephalic index" racial similarity has not prevented the Dane and the German, or the German and the English, being bitter foes at various times. On the other hand, groups of a different racial composition may be very friendly with each other. When Jean Finot advocated an Anglo-French rapprochement mocking voices were raised to show the impossibility of an entente between two races so different and presumably antagonistic. Racial problems are essential cultural and national problems with only a remote connection with the biological factor of face.

Biological arguments often turn out to be no more than rationalizations made in order to justify a certain course of

action, or else the uncritical application of biological categories to social phenomena. Thus if we examine the term 'the struggle for existence,' on which the biology of war rests, we find, firstly, that it is not used in the way Darwin used it. With him the struggle for existence is primarily a process of adaptation to nature which may or may not involve struggle and elimination. Furthermore, it is a struggle of individual against individual and not of group against group, which is the essence of war. Again, to maintain that the struggle for existence is the only regulative principle in social life, as Bernhardi and other militarists did, is to ignore mutual aid, co-operation and sympathy, principles which are no less important. And even if it be admitted that such struggle has brought in its train certain social benefits—habits of order, discipline, efficiency—and the enlargement of the sphere of political organization, it does not necessarily follow that such benefits will accrue from future struggles as they did in the past. Kingsley in his *Water Babies* makes the shrewd observation that if by the laws of circumstance, selection and competition, beasts can turn into men, by the same laws, men can turn into beasts. When Treitschke claims that the biological struggle of war "creates moral qualities of unlimited power, and human progress has come above all from the great wars of history," he does not face the possible reply that all these great qualities can also be obtained in other ways which will not bring about the waste and suffering of war. They may be obtained by fighting not men but disease and by the organization of society for the conquest not of men but of the environment.

A similar confusion surrounds the conception of 'natural selection.' By implication the biologists of war regard the cessation of war as an unnatural state. But in so far as war may be abolished by the application of human intelligence it is no less natural than the existence of war itself. The

'survival of the fittest' is another ambiguous term. When it is said that war results in the survival of the fittest, it may be asked, fittest for what? Is it the fittest in physique, intelligence or morality that is meant? Here another difficulty arises in that qualities such as bravery or strength may be less important for survival in war than cowardice or a poor physique. He who runs away may live to fight another day. It does not necessarily follow that the characters essential for survival are those that meet with general social approval. The cunning and self-centred individual might be more suitably equipped to survive a war than the sincere and altruistic individual who has the welfare of the community at heart. It must also be noted that the conception of the survival of the fittest, originally applied to the struggle among individuals, is transferred to the struggle among social groups, and it is argued that the victorious group is always biologically superior (whatever that may mean) than the vanquished group. But since conquest is a function of social organization, weapons, military technique, etc., it cannot therefore be due to biological superiority alone. The Japanese, for instance, might defeat the Chinese but this would not prove the biological superiority of the Japanese. Nor does the possession of certain biological advantages lead to war, since war, as the armed conflict of large groups, is only possible in a fairly advanced stage of social development. And finally, in order that war should be biologically selective it ought to involve the complete extermination of the enemy group, as may have been the case in Paleolithic times. But complete extermination of the enemy is infrequent and generally the vanquished group is incorporated by the victors.

Into the question whether modern war has eugenic or dysgenic effects we cannot enter here, but something must be said of the class bias that often pervades scientific thought

on this matter. Thus the officer class is regarded as genetically superior to private soldiers and the wealthy to the poor. Conscription is justified on the grounds that it would raise the biological level of the race and lead to a higher birth-rate. The declining population is deplored and it is said that had there been more children per family not so many families would have been left childless as a result of war's ravages.

This class bias was especially pronounced in a recent article on the selective value of aerial warfare. Such warfare, it was argued, would exert a beneficent influence on the human race since, in the first place, the regions most heavily bombed from the air will be industrial areas inhabited by the poor and therefore biologically inferior elements. In the second place, heavy bombardment will result in criminals and revolutionaries, whose aim is pillage and disorder, leaving their lairs. They will thus suffer heavy losses. And finally, bombardment will eliminate those who cannot stand the strain and anxiety of air attacks. The mental hospitals will become full but the race as a whole will benefit. Aerogenics,[1] as this new science has been ironically dubbed because it united aviation and eugenics, is eugenics in the air—totally divorced from the earth and scientific objectivity. It may provide the ideological justification for bombing from the air but it is not science.

A biological interpretation of history ignores the fundamental differences between social change and biological change. It ignores the fact that vast and important changes have occurred without corresponding changes of much significance in the innate mental and physical equipment of men—e.g., the Renaissance, the Bolshevik Revolution. It ignores the conclusions we arrived at above, that advances in civilization seem to be totally unrelated to any specific racial groupings, and that where mixture and inter-marriage

[1] *The Eugenics Review*, January 1937, pp. 335–36.

have taken place, the cultural contacts of the different races have been seemingly more significant than the biological contacts. It fails to see that the transmission of culture, tradition, law, custom and technique to another generation, or even to another people, is a form of the inheritance of acquired characters—a mechanism of which we have no satisfactory evidence in biological change. It also fails to see that while biological change is slow and non-cumulative, social change is rapid and cumulative. Witness the effects of inventions on social life. These are much more numerous and striking than their analogues in biology, viz. mutations. The former can often be explained as a result of co-operation and imitation, but at the present time mutations cannot be explained in this way. The outstanding feature of social life is the cumulative nature of social tradition and the fact that one generation stands on the shoulders of the next.

The fact that we cannot equate social change with biological change does not mean that we must pay no attention to biological factors and biological processes. Man is also a biological animal even if he is something more. The sociologist is therefore eager to know the extent to which individuals differ in physical, mental and moral qualities, in length of life, and in the different numbers of children they contribute to the next generation. He is eager to know what selective forces are operating in society and to what extent tuberculosis and infant mortality, for instance, are eliminating the weaker individuals. He studies the rôle of heredity and variation in the composition of social groups, and attempts to discover whether there are mental and physical differences between races, nations, social classes and other groups and how they affect society and social institutions generally. He asks himself to what extent crime, poverty and prostitution are due to the biological qualities. And finally, the sociologist studies the effect of institutions, by

way of social selection, upon the biological constitution of society. He asks if celibacy, for instance, or war has a dysgenic influence on the population. But in all these studies he stresses the fact that " the human being is at once the terminal problem of biology and the initial factor of Sociology " and that " the last word of biology is the first of Sociology."

Chapter 6

Environment, Human Nature and History

THE social scientist must adapt the methods of science to the material he is dealing with. If it is unwise to divorce society from nature and assume that it is something mysterious to which the ordinary methods of science do not apply, it is also unwise to assume that nature and society are identical, and that social phenomena can be explained in terms of inorganic and biological laws. Social facts seem to be of a reality *sui generis*, for the elucidation of which a science of society is necessary. They cannot be interpreted in terms of biological factors we saw in the last chapter. What the sociologist does is to study these biological factors in their mutual interaction with other factors, psychological, environmental and purely sociological. In other words, in order to obtain a complete account of a social event we should know the nature of human nature, the laws governing the interaction of men with one another, with their environment and with the culture and institutions they have devised. In this chapter we shall discuss some of these factors and their relationship to social science. But it is only for the sake of convenience that we isolate them.

Under environment we include climate, configuration, the flora and fauna of a region, etc. (Earlier thinkers like Montesquieu and Buckle exaggerated the influence of environment on social evolution, but we know now that environmental conditions are more in the nature of limiting conditions than initiating causal factors, that they set problems before man which he must solve if he is to survive.) The

attitude that singles out climate, for instance, as the determining factor in the social structure of a people singles out this one factor to the exclusion of others far more important, such as modes of production, wealth in minerals, the educational and political systems. It is evident that profound changes in civilization have occurred without corresponding climatic changes and that conversely the same climate can support a number of different cultures.

The physical environment has changed little throughout human history; the seas are where they were and the mountains stand where they stood; but social change has been rapid and enormous. Its influence is not unvarying, and it is being constantly modified. Inventions and trade-routes have altered its significance and the aeroplane is bridging natural barriers and making every part of the earth accessible to man. Its rôle was much greater in the past than it is now. We are dealing, it is clear, not with a constant factor but with one which has a different value at different times.

The environmental conditions act indirectly in that they do not create new institutions but encourage some and hinder others. They may, for instance, favour or hinder cultural contacts between peoples and provide the background for war and conquest or peaceful penetration. (Sociologically they are important in so far they influence internal security and the means of communication.) England's favoured position until recently facilitated internal development and at the same time culture-borrowing. Finally, through their influence upon physique, disease and immunity, they have influenced the distribution of mankind over the earth and the adaptability of the races to different regions. The ravages of malaria and disease on social progress in the ancient civilizations are even now the subject of enquiry.

The influence of the environment, we said, was much greater in the past than it is now. There is some evidence

to show that social development began in those regions that were neither too rich nor too poor in nature's gifts.

At the present time its importance lies in the indirect effects it has on the political and economic relationships of countries, in the way it limits the production of essential commodities to different areas. The United States, for instance, is the largest consumer of rubber and yet it is dependent on other areas for its supply. The world struggle among the great powers for economic and military supremacy gives certain commodities such as rubber, oil, cotton, tin, etc., an exceptional importance.

In order to disentangle the interactions of men with one another and with their environment, the sociologist draws upon psychology and social psychology for knowledge of the structure of the human mind; of the nature of instinct, emotion, sentiment, reason; of the ways in which these mature, operate and interact; their rôle in social life and, conversely, the effects of social life upon the mentality of the individual.

The precise line dividing the psychological from the social is, of course, difficult to draw. (All psychology is in part social, since we do not know of man apart from his fellow-men: human nature is essentially social nature. On the other hand, all social phenomena are in part psychological, since they rest upon the desires, emotions and aspirations of men.) To understand any social product such as custom, language, science or religion, we must know the laws governing the interactions of minds.

What distinguishes the psychologist from the sociologist is that each has a different approach and attitude to the same subject-matter. The psychologist is primarily interested in mental processes but uses social data for the light they throw on these processes at work. The sociologist is primarily interested in social phenomena but studies mental processes

for the light they throw on the nature and development of the social phenomena.

Of special value to the sociologist are the investigations of the social psychologist who studies the mental elements which affect the formation of social groups. He has now available a mass of information relating to the psychological conditions of social life and to the psychology of such groupings as races, nations, social classes and occupations. He is getting a deeper insight into the social ties that bind men into societies and into those inhibiting factors that lead to antagonism and strife. A great deal of work has been done on the instincts and emotions, the rôle of suggestion, sympathy and imitation in social life, the psychological differences between individuals and between men and women, and the behaviour of mobs, crowds and other social aggregates. Psycho-analysis especially has made outstanding contributions to our understanding of the unknown recesses of the human mind, and Freud has revolutionized psychology as Darwin in his day revolutionized biology. He and his followers have contributed materially to our understanding of normal and abnormal behaviour and of art, religion, sex and primitive mentality by bringing to light the unconscious mechanisms of human conduct. But much of their work is still speculative and definitely one-sided.

The reason for this one-sidedness lies in their tendency to interpret the psychological basis of society in terms of one principle, such as sex, and to ignore social factors and the cultural environment. Many sociologists have been guilty of the same error. Thus Tarde singled out imitation as the fundamental social principle; Gumplowicz the principle of conflict; Durkheim that of the division of labour; and Giddings the consciousness of kind. And this simplification runs right through the development of psychological thought. At first it was usual to regard man as purely a rational being

who always equated his good with his pleasure and therefore always strove to obtain the maximum of pleasure. Later, in reaction, man was regarded simply as a bundle of instincts and reason as their humble servant always alert to satisfy their demands for gratification. "Take away these instinctive dispositions," writes McDougall, "with their powerful impulses and the organism would become incapable of activity of any kind; it would lie inert and motionless like a wonderful clockwork whose mainspring had been removed or a steam engine whose fires had been drawn. These impulses are the mental forces that maintain and shape all the life of individuals and societies and in them we are confronted with the central mystery of life and mind and will."[1] A tendency became noticeable to interpret all behaviour in terms of instincts which were postulated *ad hoc* for that purpose. Was it religion—there must be a religious instinct. Was it war—there must be a pugnacious instinct. Was it leadership—there must be instincts to lead and to follow. It is, however, clear that instincts do not explain anything unless we can show how a particular instinct matures and what specific stimuli and specific conditions must be present for it always to lead to specific forms of behaviour. The psycho-analysts too are guilty of a similar error in singling out biological drives as explanations of complicated cultural phenomena.

The same error reappears in the psychologists' attempts to reduce the ties that bind individuals into social groups to a single source, such as parental feeling, the gregarious instinct, imitation or sympathy. We may speak of a basic need that individuals have for each other, but this need is extremely complex, being a subtle mixture of gentleness and tenderness, assertiveness and aggressiveness. People need each other not only for mutual gratification and stimulation, not only to satisfy their tender feelings, but also in order to exercise their

[1] W. McDougall: *An Introduction to Social Psychology*, 1926, pp. 45–46.

self-assertion and their aggressive impulses. Their most egoistic tendencies, such as vanity and self-love, only take on meaning because they are manifested in society and before other individuals. Vanity is meaningless if you are all alone on an island. It is only in society that an individual can succeed in his most selfish aims, for he requires the protection and organization of society to ensure his success. And it is only in society that self-love will take on a thousand forms, for " it is an abyss too deep ever to be sounded, and too dark ever to be seen through ; there it sits undiscovered, even from the nicest and most penetrating Eye and runs a thousand wild Mazes undiscerned. Nay, it is sometimes concealed from its own self and conceives and cherishes, and brings up a World of Inclinations and Affections, without so much as being sensible when they are born and how they are bred. And some of these Conceptions are so monstrous that even when they come to the Birth, it either does not know them or it cannot be prevailed upon to own them."[1]

But this self-love is at the same time fused with a genuine desire to love unselfishly others and to sacrifice oneself for others. Thus love and hate, in a wider sense than they are used by Freud seem to be the twin roots of society. This conception is clear in Kant's " unsocial sociableness of man " and in Schopenhauer's comparison of human society to the porcupines who herd together to save themselves from being frozen, but move away as soon as they feel the quills of their neighbours in their skin. Society is the happy means of ensuring warmth with the minimum of hurt.

Such an interpretation of social life is, of course, in general terms only. A description of the abstract and genetic processes of the mind can only have a limited application to a specific society or a specific culture. The psychology which regarded

[1] La Rochefoucauld : *Moral Maxims and Reflections*, with an Introduction and Notes by G. H. Powell, 3rd ed., 1924, p. 27.

man as a rational being was pre-eminently suited to a period of economic liberalism and *laissez-faire*. Even Kant's and Schopenhauer's conceptions of society cannot be altogether divorced from the period they lived in. And this is because every period believes that its own feelings and behaviour are the normal expression of human nature. But human nature, or rather human behaviour, will differ from people to people and from culture to culture, and will change as the social relations between the members of society change. Similar actions such as sexual intercourse, jealousy, conjugal infidelity, hospitality and puberty will mean different things in different cultures.[1] This assumption of an unchanging and biologically determined human nature is, as we pointed out before, the weakness of much of Freudian thought. In neglecting the cultural and social factors involved, psychoanalytical explanations of war or of dictatorship, however useful and suggestive, are limited. The attempt, for instance, to explain dictatorships in terms of a revival of the parent-child situation ; of a process of identification by which the ordinary citizen, unable to exercise authority himself identifies himself with the dictator ; and of a satisfaction of the sadistic and masochistic impulses by the existence of concentration camps, ignores social and historical factors and does not tell us why dictatorships arose at one particular time and not at another. Karen Horney argues convincingly that the conception of a neurotic personality itself is meaningless if divorced from the context of a special culture.[2]

What sociology requires at the present time is more experimental and concrete psychological studies of social groups living in a specific period and under the specific conditions of its material environment, property-relationships and the whole complex of other conditions. A study of this kind of

[1] Ruth Benedict : *Patterns of Culture*, 1934.
[2] Karen Horney : *The Neurotic Personality of our Time*, 1937.

Polish unemployed described their psychological characteristics and the changes that occurred in their outlook on religion, morals, politics, etc., after prolonged unemployment.. The most important psychological consequences were (*a*) an especially depressing feeling of humiliation and of being superfluous, (*b*) an increased sensitivity, (*c*) an aggressiveness marked by a peculiar inertia, and (*d*) a notable shift in class consciousness.[1]

That current of sociological thought, known as *Wissensoziologie* or the sociology of knowledge, which seeks to discover the relationship between any social structure and its mentality and intellectual productions is also producing valuable psychological analyses. In our society, for instance, an analysis of the incentives to work must recognize that " in the higher strata of society where, unlike in the lower, the bare necessaries of life are already met, the working incentives no longer centre round the primary instinct of self-preservation but round other more sublimated motives the specific characteristics of which vary with profession and social standing. The aims which the functionary strives to satisfy are, on the average, quite different from those of the entrepreneur ; those of the artisan again different from those of the peasant and soldier. Once the minimum needs of subsistence are met, the attraction of additional material consumption as the motivation towards an additional expenditure of effort often recedes behind the sublimated incentive based on the idea of ' honour,' a social attribute lent *inter alia* to the status of the civil servant and, for a time also, to the liberal professions."[2] These incentives to work and the degree of competitiveness differ not only from class to class but from society to society. Professor Faris who studied the Bantus attributes the absence

[1] P. Lazarsfeld and P. Zawakski : " The Psychological Consequences of Unemployment," *Journal of Social Psychology*, May 1935.

[2] K. Mannheim : *The Place of Sociology*, in the Report on the Conference on the Social Sciences, 1935.

of insanity among them to the harmony between individual and group interests, the lack of competition and therefore of feelings of resentment and exploitation.[1]

"What Biography is to Anthropology, History is to Sociology," said Spencer.[2] He also pointed out that sociology stands related to history much as a vast building stands related to a heap of stones. He envisaged sociology as a generalizing science and criticized historians who look upon history as the chronicle of great men, wars and battles, dynastic successions and the like. History, he argued, should become descriptive sociology.

Broadly, this view is accepted by most modern sociologists and historians. In general, the historian concentrates on events in so far as they are unique and individual and on those special forces which influenced their origin and development, and it is from this angle that he investigates events such as the rise of Christianity, the Reformation, or the French Revolution. The sociologist, on the other hand, endeavours to discover those traits and relationships which are common to special forms of social phenomena, and he is not so interested in a phenomenon or relationship which is unique or singular in space or time. His task is to find generalizations and correlations. He will attempt to discover the economic basis in the examples given. He will be interested not in the uniqueness of one revolution but in the number of revolutions that have swept human history, and he will want to find the class-structure of their societies. The generalizations the sociologist will be interested in may be classified as follows:[3] First, empirical associations or correlations such as the relation between poverty and health,

[1] E. Faris: *Culture, Personality among the Forest Bantu*, Publications of the American Sociological Society, May 1934.

[2] H. Spencer: *Study of Sociology*, p. 57.

[3] M. Ginsberg: *Causality in the Social Sciences*, Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, 1935.

business cycles and criminality, urbanization and criminality, and so on. Such correlations do not necessarily imply causal connexion and they frequently require historical and comparative studies going beyond the examination of the immediate factors. Secondly, generalizations indicating the conditions under which certain institutions arise—e.g., the growth of cities. Thirdly, generalizations asserting that changes in a given institution are regularly associated with changes in other institutions—e.g., that economic development brings about the consolidation of government and the growth of slavery in primitive societies. Fourthly, generalizations regarding rhythmical recurrences or stages in social evolution. Fifthly, generalizations describing the main trends in evolution —e.g., Durkheim's transition of society from the mechanical to the organic, or Marx's transition from capitalism to socialism.

These generalizations, however broad, remain concrete and specific in character. They are historical generalizations and not eternal laws of nature. Society although a part of nature is also in opposition to it: it changes and transforms it. Society must be considered in process of its historical development and sociological generalizations must be taken as specific and as differing qualitatively from the laws of biology and the inorganic world. Here the historical materialism of Marx, which we shall discuss in the final chapter, finds a common meeting-ground with sociology.

At this point we must mention a view that denies the possibility of scientific generalization both in history and sociology. History, it is argued, is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury signifying nothing. Such a view, however, does not preclude scientific investigation—indeed it demands enquiry. There is a similar view that history can only be explained in terms of an inscrutable or divine providence. But this view does not lie within the scope of

science. Even as recently as 1882 Bancroft saw in the triumph of those who favoured the Union under the Constitution as the " movement of the Divine Power which gives unity to the Universe."[1] It is fairly recently, too, that such phenomena as marriages, births, suicides, etc., were withdrawn from the care of providence and taken over for scientific study by the sociologist. We are told that " a shudder ran through men when they first read in the pages of Buckle, one of the followers of Comte, that the rise and fall in the price of wheat was directly correlated with the marriage-rate, and that the number of suicides, illegitimate births and lost parcels was relatively constant."[2] It need not be added that mystical interpretations of history in terms of an *élan vital* or a life-force are likewise unscientific.

There is also a view that history can only be explained in terms of the great man, the Hero, the dictator. But the great man himself is historically conditioned: his abilities and opportunities derive directly from his social heritage. He is not so much the arbiter of events as the product of sociological forces. That he has an important rôle and that at critical times he is responsible for far-reaching decisions cannot be denied. But even at such critical moments the great man is acted upon by numerous forces whose operation can be studied and their evolution traced.

The argument is also frequently advanced that since human beings possess ' free will ' sociology and history cannot be sciences and all life is a matter of chance. The element of chance it is impossible to deny, but in spite of this it is possible to discover certain generalities and regularities in the rates of marriage or suicide; for although individual action may be willed, the products of such action are often unwilled. During

[1] G. Bancroft: *The History of the Constitution of the United States*, Vol. II, 1882, p. 284.
[2] R. M. MacIver: *Elements of Social Science*, 1921, p. 13.

a period of financial uncertainty, each individual may wish to preserve his own money by withdrawing it from the bank, and thereby unwillingly heighten the panic. Moreover, certain events which occur do not appear to be unrelated to a preceding chain of circumstances, and we can study the events leading up to the Industrial Revolution or the World War. Such broad tendencies and movements can be studied and discovered in spite of the indeterminateness of the will. If it is then argued that these laws, physical and social, that we have discovered limit human freedom, the only answer we can make is that the knowledge of such laws increases and not limits our freedom. By obeying the laws of health, for instance, we do not lessen our freedom, we increase it.

Chapter 7

Methods and Techniques of Social Study

Sociology is not an easy subject to study. In the first place, our passions and wishes, conscious and unconscious, too readily enter in the observation, selection and classification of facts, which are the first steps in all science. We see what we want to see and turn a blind eye to things we dislike.

In the second place, some social matters are so near to us, they are so firmly established as pieces of mental furniture, that we rarely question them. It is for this reason that people follow the religion and customs of the group they have been born into. When these beliefs or customs are questioned our air of impartiality and objectivity quickly leaves us. Should we have easier divorce? Was the family or sexual promiscuity the origin of early society? It is seldom that questions such as these are discussed with that detachment we observe in dealing with the habits of tadpoles or beetles to which we referred in the first chapter.

The sociologist must therefore train himself in attitudes of scientific objectivity, which simply means that he must observe and interpret social facts regardless of his own interests and desires. He must as far as possible get rid of all religious, racial, national and class bias. He must make allowance for them in his own thinking and in that of other people.

In the third place, sociology is a difficult subject because of the complexity of social life itself. The data are numerous, unwieldy and unreliable. It is impossible to gather all the facts, but even if we did, facts do not interpret them-

selves. The mere amassing of catalogues of facts is no more productive of a science of sociology than the collection of book-catalogues of a library. We must interpret them ourselves and we must select only such facts as we think are relevant to our problem. But what facts are relevant? If we are discussing the falling birth-rate, for instance, how shall we find the relevant facts and the operative causes?

This brings us to the problem of social causation and social change. Social change is manifestly complex, because a change in one department of life will bring about other changes in other departments and all at different and varying rates. Thus a change in the technique of production will bring about changes not only in the industrial sphere but also in politics, in the balance of political power, in the relations between the social classes, in the family, art and literature. Again, "such a simple occurrence as the discovery of gold brings multitudinous results—an inrush of people, growth of towns, new social arrangements, gambling hells, demoralization, besides much wider effects—new businesses, new lines of traffic, and the changes presently caused throughout the world in the relative value of gold and goods."[1]

Thus one change will produce other changes and these still others, so that social change may be compared to a stone thrown into water producing ever-widening ripples. This comparison, of course, simplifies the complexity for, whereas in the water we see the starting point and the ripples linked to each other, we do not always see them in social change; nor do we always know which came first. Cause and effect are inextricably interwoven and the effect of one cause in a process of change becomes itself a cause in further change. In the social sphere the cause may be the effect and the effect the cause. Thus, if it is said that low wages cause poverty it can be said, too, that poverty causes low wages. If it is

[1] H. Spencer, "Party Government" in *Facts and Comments*, p. 97.

said that the lack of technical development was due in part to slavery, it can also be argued that slavery itself was due in part to lack of technical development.

Herein lies the difference between the physical and the social sciences. In the former it is more or less easy to isolate the factors in a problem and to spot the cause and the effect; in the latter quite the reverse. And it is for this reason foolish to expect that the methods of social science should conform exactly to the methods of the abstract sciences. The demand that they should do so is the result of the supremacy of the physical sciences and "the habit of observing natural things and natural processes in their isolation, detached from the whole vast interconnection of things; and therefore not in their motion but in their repose; not as essentially changing but as fixed constants; not in their life but in their death."[1] It is also foolish to expect always measurement and the quantitative analysis of phenomena. Indeed they are not essential to sociology and a good deal of sociological information is not quantitative—as, for instance, the theory of evolution or the diffusion of culture. The student of sociology must not forget that in the final analysis he is dealing with men and women reacting with their wants and desires to the material conditions of life. Their wants and desires cannot be added up but they will be the motive forces behind vast social changes. In the intricate connectedness of social life, human beings are both causes and effects.

The picture of social causation that the student should have must not be a mechanical one—of cause and effect mechanically following each other in a straight line. He must try to get a picture wherein cause and effect are reciprocal and circular, act and re-act on one another, and wherein the effect may be qualitatively different from the

[1] F. Engels: *Herr Eugen Dühring's Revolution in Science*, English Translation, pp. 27–8.

cause. And invariably he will find that in any problem he is necessarily driven to a consideration of the totality of social life. What is the cause of the falling birth-rate? Education, position of women, inventions, city life, etc. —all these he will have to take into account and a host of other numerous and interdependent factors.

Sociology, Sorokin rightly points out, "does not postulate any one-sided and simplified homo-economicus or homo-politicus. It deals with men and their relationships in all their real complexity. Homo-sociologus is a composite homo who in part is homo-economicus, in part homo-politicus, in part homo-religiosus, in part homo-aestheticus, and so on. . . . The data of each of these special sciences are insufficient to disentangle the real nature of man, his behaviour, and relationships, and the movement of social phenomena because they are dependent on so many other conditions not studied by each of these sciences. This makes necessary an intercorrelation of the factors studied by each of these sciences, which leads to the intercorrelation of various forces, conditions and factors operating in man's nature, behaviour, and relationships and through those to social phenomena generally."[1]

A few words are not out of place about the data the sociologist has at his disposal. There are, firstly, the studies of primitive people and their institutions. Secondly, there are the historical records of the different civilizations. And thirdly, there are numerous studies of contemporary social conditions, census and statistical reports on almost every phase of social life. The analysis of vital statistics, which began as early as the sixteenth century, was of great value to sociology, for it revealed regularities in social phenomena such as births, deaths and marriages. These regularities were also found

[1] P. A. Sorokin and C. C. Zimmerman: *Principles of Rural-Urban Sociology*, 1919, p. 5.

to apply to the moral nature of man in regard to crime, suicide and accidents, and in the thought of Quetelet, a Belgian statistician, and in that of Buckle, the English philosopher, these regularities provided the basis for elaborate speculations concerning man and society.

In American sociology, statistics have played an important rôle. On the basis of statistical studies, it has been found possible to divide a city into fairly definitely marked areas where a number of phenomena such as crime, divorce, poverty, suicide, insanity and juvenile delinquency are found to be correlated. The correlations indicate that the phenomena are either related to each other, or have a common cause. These ecological studies, as they have been called, are valuable contributions to our understanding of society. They attempt to apply human geography, plant and animal ecology and demography to every aspect of social life and to translate these into quantitative and physical indexes. To the human ecologist space and numbers are paramount interests. He regards the human community in the same way as a plant community and therefore stresses such processes as symbiosis and competition, propagation and adaptation, which are common to all of them.

The sociologist has also established certain techniques for the collection of data and here we shall confine our attention to a few of these—the social survey, social case-analysis and the questionnaire.

A social survey is the collecting of data concerning the living and working conditions of people in a given area in order to assist the formulation of practical social measures. The facts are collected and on their basis some scheme devised. One of the best-known surveys is that of Charles Booth entitled *Life and Labour of the People in London* (1889–1903). These seventeen volumes are an immense storehouse of social and economic facts and show among

other things " the numerical relation which poverty, misery and depravity bear to regular earnings and comparative comfort, and describe the general conditions under which each class lives." The picture of social conditions thus obtained is not only of value for the social legislation, but it also provides an index by which changes can be measured. And indeed, *The New Survey of London Life and Labour* recently completed gains in interest because it can be compared with the previous survey. Both surveys provide a valuable account of the social changes that have occurred in London in the last fifty years.

Another important recent survey is *The Social Survey of Merseyside* (3 vols., 1934). Using an index of overcrowding which is much more precise than that employed by the Registrar-General, it showed that 10.8 per cent of the families in the whole Merseyside area were overcrowded. Sixteen per cent of the families fell below the poverty line—and this by a datum-line that was by no means generous. It showed that in 1932, 140,000 were unemployed out of a total of 578,000. It also includes a comprehensive analysis of the population and of working-class expenditure, and a survey of the localization of industry, occupational mobility between generations from one social class to another and from one occupation to another, infant mortality, differential fertility, local government, leisure-time activity and the services of church, school and social agencies. For social conditions in America there are now available a collection of reports entitled *Recent Social Trends* written by a committee of experts appointed by President Hoover. A fascinating account of a typical American town is *Middletown* and its continuation *Middletown in Transition* recently published.[1]

A criticism of the London and Merseyside surveys can only be a criticism of their limitations. The emphasis of a survey

[1] R. S. and H. M. Lynd, New York, 1929 and 1937.

is on proximate causes and it does not seek to discover the root causes of the evil it exposes, nor are the other social classes of a community studied. The survey is mainly a fact-finding study.

Social case-analysis attempts to penetrate social problems more deeply than social surveys. Here the investigator gets closer to the people he is studying. He interviews them (the interview is indispensable to the psychiatrist and social worker), he collects life-histories—that is, a full account of the person's experiences given by the person himself—and also letters, in which a person is much more likely to say what he thinks. The researcher uses all this data to get an insight into his problem. Thomas and Znaniecki in their well-known work, *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America* (Boston, 1918), show the application of this technique at a high level. Even if the autobiographical documents cannot always be accepted at their face value, they afford an understanding of the personality and its social environment.

The questionnaire is a list of questions which a number of people are asked to answer. In order that the results may be of some value, the questions must be worded very carefully, they must not be numerous, and must not be of too personal a nature. But in spite of its drawbacks, the questionnaire has proved very useful, even in regard to the more intimate aspects of social life. Outstanding among them are R. L. Dickinson and L. Beam : *A Thousand Marriages : a medical study of sex adjustment*, 1931, and K. B. Davis : *Factors in the Sex Life of* 2,200 *Women*, 1929.

Strictly speaking, there are no specific sociological methods of research. Observation, classification, experiment and inference are as essential here as in all other sciences. Although experiment in the laboratory is frequently denied to the sociologist, he utilizes the experiments that take place (not, it is true, under controlled conditions) in the laboratory

of the world—experiments in racial crossings, in education, in forms of government, etc. To control the conditions the sociologist frequently employs what is called the comparative method, about which something must be said.

We have seen that one of the tasks of the sociologist is to ascertain the relations and interactions between different aspects of factors of social life. Suppose we believe with Spencer that there is always a close relationship between militarism and a certain type of social organization, despotic, corporative and hierarchical. To see if this correlation is valid we take a number of different societies, all characterized by militancy, at different times and see if they exhibit that specific type of social organization. In essence this method compares, analyses and sifts the relevant from the irrelevant, by varying the circumstances when examining the phenomenon. In the above example, Spencer drew his data from different parts of the world and from different periods of history—Russia, Dahomey, Sparta and the lost empire of the Incas. The characteristic common to them all was militarism. Race could not be the cause of the fundamental similarity in social organization because all these peoples were of different races. Nor could climate, habitat, customs and habits, in which they all differed widely. The comparative method thus gives us a number of photographs of social elements taken instantaneously by a number of cameras at a given time.

This method was used by Tylor to bring out which elements in social life are functionally related. He showed that the practice of mother-in-law avoidance found frequently among primitive peoples, is correlated among them with the practice of matrilocal residence—that is, the custom of the husband going to live with his wife's people.[1] Hobhouse,

[1] E. B. Tylor: "On a Method of Investigating the Development of Institutions," *Journal of Anthropology*, 1889.

Ginsberg and Wheeler used this method to obtain a series of valuable correlations among the institutions of the simpler peoples and they also applied it to find out what changes in any one institution are functionally correlated with changes in other institutions. They found, to give one example, that the rise of the nobility and the development of serfdom is correlated with the growth of the economic system.[1]

The student must not imagine that the application of this method is easy. The reason for this is that the unit of comparison may mean different things at different times. Thus in Spencer's example, the assumption is made that militarism is a simple entity. Again, suppose we wished to find out if there is a correlation between the form of the family and economic organization, we might use capitalism as a definite unit without making allowance for the fact that capitalism is not the same thing at different levels of development. The second difficulty is the danger of detaching an institution or an element of behaviour from its total context, which alone give it meaning. Thus illegitimacy means different things to different peoples. It is more or less tolerated in Eastern and Central Europe, where an illegitimate birth will subsequently lead to marriage. Again, adultery as a ground for divorce is differently regarded by different peoples. Northern Europe prefers easy divorce rather than tolerate adultery. Southern Europe, on the other hand, prefers secret adultery to easy divorce.

Not dissimilar to the comparative method is the typological method so skilfully used by Max Weber. The type is constructed by concentrating upon certain essential features and combining them with others, with which they are not necessarily always associated. It is not a picture of the real but it helps us to understand the real; nor is it the average

[1] L. T. Hobhouse, M. Ginsberg and G. C. Wheeler: *The Material Culture and Social Institutions of the Simpler Peoples*, 1915.

or the most frequent representative. Thus we may take for example Weber's own analysis of the town-economy. To determine its essential characteristics it was necessary to classify and compare different types of towns. It was found that the main features were not size, or the dominance of industry over agriculture, but the groupings of large numbers of people who were connected with each other in a variety of ways from which were lacking personal acquaintanceship and mutual recognition. In other words, the social ties were not of a primary nature such as are found in a community or in a neighbourhood, but of a secondary and impersonal nature. Weber then made a comparative and historical study of towns, tracing their development and differentiation from previous social structures, and their relationship to other aspects and phases of social life. He then contrasted the main types of towns, determined their historical development and evaluated the factors entering into their development.

In a similar manner Weber studied the relationship between modern capitalism and Protestantism. From a study of the different forms of capitalism he deduced the typically ideal characteristics of modern capitalism. It differed radically from ancient and mediaeval forms in possessing certain psychological attributes, such as rationalism, utilitarianism, initiative, inventiveness, etc. But how did these attributes arise and how was the psychology and conduct of people transformed from a mediaeval to a modern pattern? Weber shows that modern Western capitalism has its origin in the Protestant religion with its special ethics and its special rules of conduct. This conclusion he confirms by making an analysis of the teachings of Luther, Calvin and others, and showing that the spirit of Protestantism in its practical everyday ethics is identical with the spirit of modern capitalism. Protestantism is rational; it sets a great value on vocation and worldly calling; it dignifies labour and encour-

ages money-making, and so on. The whole argument is supported by a wealth of empirical data showing that the most capitalistic countries are protestant in religion and that the protestant population in Germany is better off than the Catholic elements.[1]

In order to generalize and discover sociological correlations, the multitudinous varieties of peoples and societies must be classified into different orders. The sociologist, therefore, attempts to construct a social morphology similar to that of botany and biology, and he arranges societies and institutions in genera and species exhibiting structural affinities. Here again, the comparative method has been widely applied. Durkheim, for instance, classified societies into two main types, the segmentary and the organic. The first type is mechanical or repetitive in nature and each part is simply the repetition of another part. The second type are societies in which the parts are mutually related and complementarily functional. He shows how the undifferentiated horde generally gives way to the village type of society bound together more by the principle of territorial contiguity than by that of kinship. But with increasing division of labour both geographic and functional, the principle of kinship disappears and with it the segmentary basis of society. Instead we get organic societies composed of occupational groups which are functionally interdependent and closely knit together.

Although a social morphology need not assume evolution or development, the evolutionary hypothesis may be suggested or applied. In any case, the temporal order of development must be studied independently by reference to chronological facts supplied by history and archaeology. If, for example, we have obtained a complete classification of the different forms

[1] M. Weber: *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans., Talcott Parsons, 1930.

of family, polygynous, polyandrous, monogamous, etc., we can then by means of historical evidence see how far their actual development in time corresponds to the classificatory order. But both processes must be kept distinct. Even if evolution is shown to apply, it need not necessarily be unilinear, with a fixed and unvarying number of stages. It was this assumption that made early ethnologists accept an inevitable development in the forms of the family from absolute promiscuity to what they considered the highest forms, i.e., monogamy. L. H. Morgan, the greatest of all names in anthropology, is partly responsible for this although he himself insisted that the social and cultural history of a people can be explained only in the light of historical relations and contacts and not by any universal scheme of evolution.

The task of sociology is not only to disentangle the complexity of social causation and discover social uniformities and laws, but also to predict and control the course of events. This task is, of course, still in its infancy. Nevertheless, " Sociology, like all other natural sciences, aims at prediction and control based on an investigation of the nature of man and society, and nature means here, as elsewhere in science, just those aspects of life that are determined and predicted."[1]

[1] R. E. Park and E. W. Burgess : *Introduction to the Science of Sociology*, 1921, p. 339.

Chapter 8

The Development of Sociology

THE view we have stressed throughout this book, that sociology is a comprehensive and synoptic science in that it studies society as a whole and not merely one aspect of it as do the other social sciences, is confirmed when we consider its history and development. We must now ask ourselves what were the factors responsible for its birth and the main currents of thought that contributed to this new and youngest of the sciences.

Looked at from one angle, sociology is not a new subject. From time immemorial man and society have been discussed by people even as M. Jourdain spoke prose without knowing it. In Greek thought some of the fundamental problems of sociology find an early formulation, and Plato's *Republic* is in essence an analysis of the city community in all its aspects. The distinction between State and society is implicit in Hobbes and Machiavelli, who clearly mirror the social changes of Europe in their time, the fierce struggles between Church and State and the emergence of the present States system. Machiavelli stands out because he wrote of "what men do and not what they ought to do." Thinkers such as Ibn-Khaldoun and Vico rebelled against the intellectual monopoly of the Church and clearly show a non-theological attitude to all matters concerning society. Both observe, correlate and explain facts without having recourse to God or a divine purpose as did the early thinkers. The elimination of theological dogmas was a pre-condition for the emergence of sociology.

What is new in sociology is the objective and scientific treatment of it and the conception that began to shape itself in men's minds of the social problem in a larger sense. They became intensely interested in everything that concerns man on earth and not man in heaven. They eagerly discussed the rise and fall of empires, the stages in social evolution, poverty and the wealth of nations and the growth of population. It is only during the last one hundred and fifty years that there makes itself felt a conscious recognition of social development and the possibility of mankind guiding and controlling it.

But many currents of thought and many profound changes in the structure of society were necessary before the recognition of social development could become conscious and before the new attitude towards society which culminated in sociology could arise. We have already referred to the contribution of political thinkers. Another important contribution was made by the philosophers of history, who attempted to find a meaning in the flow of human events and discover the guiding principles in social change. Their outstanding representatives are well-known and include Montesquieu, Turgot, Condorcet, Voltaire and Diderot in France, Lessing, Herder, Kant and Hegel in Germany, and Hume, Adam Smith, Millar and Ferguson in this country. What marks all of them, in spite of the many differences they show, is their agreement on the continuity between the order of nature and that of human society and their insistence on the necessity of investigating the nature and foundations of social life.

The way for all these thinkers had been paved as early as the seventeenth century by the great pioneers of the mathematical and physical sciences such as Copernicus, Galileo, Kepler and Newton. If the universe is governed by regular and unalterable laws, might not this also be true of man?

There was, of course, the difficulty that man was regarded as unique and apart from the rest of animate creation. But this difficulty was overcome by the growth of biology, and at the hands of Linnaeus, Buffon, Cuvier and Lamarck man's place in the realm of nature was definitely established.

To this intellectual ferment must be added the definite establishment of the separate social sciences which had escaped from the tutelage of ethics, philosophy and theology. Economics, anthropology, jurisprudence and psychology sought to study different aspects of social life and began to utilize the impartial collection of social and statistical data as well as the results of the objective study of man's physical and climatic environment which were already at hand. An intellectual need was felt for bringing into one perspective the accumulated knowledge, physical, biological and social—especially in the social sciences. Their emancipation from theology and their definite establishment were undoubtedly necessary. But once they were achieved it even became more necessary, with the growing complexity and interconnectedness of society, to bring them back into the totality of social life.

These intellectual currents must not be isolated from the actual social changes that were taking place and leading to the increased power of man over his material environment. At their culmination stands the Industrial Revolution, the most important series of events in man's history. Traditional feudal society and the traditional relations between men broke down and attention was drawn to social conditions and the terrible poverty of the masses. Politically it found expression in two great movements: the French Revolution and Socialism. The French Revolution saw the concrete triumph of the Third Estate, the bourgeoisie, and the formal triumph of those revolutionary battering rams 'equality,' 'liberty,' 'fraternity' and 'the rights of man.' In socialism,

the first murmurings of the Fourth Estate, the proletariat, are heard.

It was in this atmosphere that sociology was born. From the theoretical point of view, it arose as an attempt to unify the knowledge of the different social sciences and to get a *vue d'ensemble* of society which had become imperative owing to the increasing inter-connectedness of social life. From the practical point of view, it arose as a criticism of all the partial schemes, nostrums and panaceas of social regeneration that were urged upon society as certain cures for all its ills. The schemes of Babeuf, St.-Simon, Fourier and Robert Owen are possibly more important for the light they throw on the actual conditions of social life than as blueprints for a new social order.

In Auguste Comte, the founder of sociology, the theoretical and practical aspects find clear expression and a brief examination of his thought is illuminating. Comte considered himself to be in succession to a line of thinkers beginning with Thales and Pythagoras and continuing with Bacon, Descartes and Hume. He invented the word sociology to designate this new "science of human association." By its hybrid character (the Latin *socius* means associate or companion, the Greek *logos* means science) he wanted to draw attention to the two-fold nature, at once material and spiritual, of human society and its derivation from the civilizations of Greece and Rome. Comte himself did not so much constitute sociology as institute it. But his naming of the science is an important event. The human mind, said De Tocqueville, invents ideas more easily than words.

It is impossible to do more than give some of the more important contributions of Comte to sociology. In the first place, he clearly showed the synoptic nature of sociology. The process of analysis and synthesis, he pointed out, consists in the dissection of a thing into its parts and then building

them up together as a whole; the synoptic process, however, consists of seeing a complex thing in its totality, of getting a *vue d'ensemble*. In the second place, he drew a useful distinction between Social Statics and Social Dynamics. The first is the study of the mutually inter-related parts of society which fit together and form the consensus, and of the conditions of existence of any social state; the second is the study of the laws of sequence and change and social evolution, how one state changes into the following, and how one stage of society is followed by another. In the third place, his conception of knowledge as passing through three stages in its development—the theological, the metaphysical, and lastly the positive (scientific)—is useful and valid to some extent. Philosophy has only recently based itself on science and given up its fruitless theological and metaphysical conceptions. And finally, his conception of a hierarchy of the sciences according to their decreasing generality and increasing complexity has much to recommend it. It is evident that if we classify the sciences, beginning with mathematics and going on to astronomy, physics, chemistry, biology (psychology) and ending with sociology, we find this conception borne out. Sociology is the most complex of the sciences and its conclusions least general; the conclusions of the other sciences are only the starting-points of sociology.

So much for the theoretical aspect of Comte's sociology. But there was also a practical side to it. He wanted to criticize the validity of the conflicting ideas that sprang up to regenerate society, and to preserve whatever he could of the social order. The French Revolution had profoundly disturbed him both by its violence and its threat to the established order. He sought to establish the principles of an "ordered progress" and his sociological formula became "neither restoration nor revolution." He became a con-

servative and in his later years turned his energies to the founding of a religion of humanity which was nothing more than a form of Catholicism minus God. Moreover, his sociology was essentially a theory of society in which action had no part. What is the use, critics ask, of understanding society without changing it?

These social implications of Comte's sociology and their utilization by the dominant social thought of the time to buttress a decaying social order naturally made sociology suspect in the eyes of more radical and revolutionary thinkers. The circumstance, too, that most of the sociologists following Comte were academic and conservative minded increased this suspicion. Under the guise of scientific objectivity and detachment, their sociology was frequently a rationalization for their prejudices and especially a weapon for fighting socialism. Even the neutral standpoint that might be expected to characterize sociologists who have not made up their minds on a particular social issue or who are waiting upon further information and research, is rarely met with. In the struggles between capitalists and socialists, feminists and anti-feminists, nationalists and internationalists, imperialists and anti-imperialists, they have generally been found on the side of the *status quo*.

If in a sense, therefore, sociology must be regarded as an intellectual reaction to the socialist movement, it has at the same time been tremendously stimulated by its challenge. Significantly enough, both words, 'sociology' and 'socialism,' arose about the same time and were often used interchangeably as referring to the science of society or social science.[1] Comte himself was a pupil of St.-Simon, one of the greatest

[1] In Mary Hennel's *An Outline of the Various Social Systems*, 1844, Owen's teachings are given as the elements of the Science of Society. J. M. Bailey in his *Preliminary Discourse on the Objects, Pleasures and Advantages of the Science of Society*, 1840, makes socialism and the science of society synonymous terms. See also the works of T. R. Edmond and H. Travis.

of socialist thinkers, but had been antagonized by his master's revolutionary views. The challenge of socialist criticism of society imposed upon sociology the task of clarifying its basic ideas, of testing its scientific objectivity and impartiality, and, finally, of analysing the relationship between the science and the practice of society. It cannot be said that the latter problem has yet been solved.

A distinction must here be made between socialist theory and the socialist movement. The former is itself a kind of sociology. As far as the socialist movement is concerned, sociology is, of course, not committed to any specific proposals for changing society. It is satisfied if it can understand society without changing it, although it can also be said that to understand it is to change it. As the science of human relations, sociology is deeply interested in all forms of society whether capitalistic, anarchistic or communistic, and it studies the reasons for the transition from one state of society to another. It also undertakes an examination of the presuppositions underlying the numerous theories for reorganizing society, among which are to be included the many forms of socialism that have been proposed. Indeed it was partly in response to those partial and Utopian schemes of a hundred years ago that a need for sociology began to be felt. Even a socialist society will not dispense with the need of studying society and its problems objectively.

Although sociology is not committed to any specific proposals for re-organizing society, this does not mean that the individual sociologist cannot accept socialism. Some of the definitions that have been given of socialism apply equally well to applied sociology. Take for instance Bebel's: "science applied with clear consciousness and full knowledge to every sphere of human activity"; or the definition given by Marx: "the substitution of the conscious development of humanity for the unconscious development." But the

sociologist may also subscribe to the narrower definitions which emphasize the organization and conduct by society of all industries, and its appropriation of all forms of capital. He might agree with Engels that "with the seizing of the means of production by society, the production of commodities is done away with, and simultaneously the mastery of the product over the producer. Anarchy in social organization is replaced by systematic definite organization. The struggle for individual existence disappears. . . . The whole sphere of the conditions which environ man, now come under the dominion and control of man. . . "

The importance of socialist thought and especially of 'scientific socialism' as it is called, as a contribution to the founding of sociology lies in the fact that it was the most thoroughgoing criticism of society. The criticism of society is the first step in sociology. The second step is the realization that the object of criticism is society itself, i.e., social relations, and not human nature. It is no accident that in periods of rapid social change and crisis sociology develops most rapidly. J. S. Mill shows this clearly in his *Logic* when he treats of sociology. He writes: "The concluding Book is an attempt to contribute towards the solution of a question which the decay of old opinions and the agitation that disturbs European society to its inmost depths, renders as important in the present day to the practical interests of human life, as it must at all times be to the completeness of our speculative knowledge, viz. Whether moral and social phenomena are really exceptions to the general certainty and uniformity of the course of nature, and how far the methods, by which so many of the laws of the physical world have been numbered among truths irrevocably acquired and universally assented to, can be made instrumental to the formation of a similar body of received doctrine in moral and political science."[1]

[1] J. S. Mill: *A System of Logic*. In the Preface to the First Edition, 1843.

A few words must be devoted to Marxism, or rather to one aspect of it, namely, historical materialism and its bearings on sociology. According to the materialist conception of history "production, and with production the exchange of its products, is the basis of every social order; that in every society which has appeared in history the distribution of the products, and with it the division of society into classes or estates, is determined by what is produced, and how the product is exchanged."[1] This conception has proved very fruitful in sociology, which regards it as one of its most valuable hypotheses, but only as an hypothesis. It is not necessarily wedded to this one-sided interpretation of social life as is Marxism.

It should be noted that both Marx and Engels put this conception in a much more cautious manner than some of their followers. They write: "Political, juridical, philosophical, religious, literary, artistic, etc., development is based upon economic development. But all these react upon one another and also upon the economic base. It is not that the economic position is the *cause and alone* active while everything else has a passive effect. There is, rather, interaction on the basis of the economic necessity which *ultimately* always asserts itself." Such economic necessity is however mediated through men who are capable of making and changing history.[2]

Whether or not sociology and Marxism can agree on the meaning of an economic necessity which ultimately asserts itself or that the economic basis of society determines the superstructure of morals, religion, ethics, art, etc., both are agreed on the necessity of investigating the correlations between specific economic forms and their specific ideologies,

[1] F. Engels' *Herr Eugen Dühring's Revolution in Science*, English edition, 1934, p. 300.

[2] *Correspondence of Marx and Engels*, English edition, 1934, p. 517.

and of discovering to what extent a change in the one department of life determines change in the other departments. This is in essence the synoptic and sociological view and it is characteristic of Marx in all his investigations. He urged the importance of discovering, for instance, the relation of the different State forms to the different economic structures of society. He emphasized as no other sociologist did, the fact that sociological laws are specific laws (e.g., Malthus's Law of Population) and not eternal laws of nature. He saw that to understand any one link in the chain of social causation we must examine the whole chain, and that the chain in turn will throw light on the separate links. He always saw society as a whole but always in its specific and historical character.

Marx himself had a very poor opinion of Comte and his "positivist rot." He writes: "as a Party-man I have a thoroughly hostile attitude towards Comte's philosophy, while as a scientific man I have a very poor opinion of it." Yet in his attempt to create a social science as a whole he was imbued with the same aim as Comte. Mehring,[1] his most authoritative biographer, states that "Marx intended to issue the results of his economic studies in a special brochure to be followed by a number of further independent brochures on the critique of law, morality, politics, etc., then a special work on the connection of the whole and the relation of the individual parts, and finally a critique of the speculative study of the material." Is not this the aim every sociologist sets himself?

Adam Smith and John Stuart Mill are, like Marx, known primarily as economists, but they too felt the need of relating their special economic studies to the totality of society. Indeed this is inevitable if one conscientiously follows the links of a special investigation and sees where they lead to. Mill

[1] F. Mehring: *Karl Marx*, 1936, p. 504.

was led from economics to psychology or Ethology—the science of human character, as he called it. He realized that without such knowledge it was impossible to secure a firm foundation for the social sciences. A. Bain in his personal recollections of Mill,[1] writes that "his failure with Ethology fatally interfered with the larger project which I have no doubt he entertained, of executing a work on Sociology as a whole."

Adam Smith took for his province the entire field of knowledge. He lectured to the University on natural theology, ethics, jurisprudence, and political economy. The last two subjects he regarded as forming a single body of doctrine and in the *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759) he promises to give "an account of the general principles of law and government, and of the different revolutions they have undergone in the different ages and periods of society, not only in what concerns justice, but in what concerns police, revenue, arms and whatever else is the subject of law."

Commenting on this statement, Ingram,[2] in his history of economic thought, points out how little it was Smith's habit to separate except provisionally, the economic phenomena of society from all the rest. It contains, he goes on to say, "an anticipation, wonderful for his period, of general Sociology, both statical and dynamical, an anticipation which becomes still more remarkable when we learn from his literary executors that he had formed the plan of a connected history of the liberal sciences and elegant arts which must have added to the branches of social study already enumerated a view of the intellectual progress of society."

In this short account we cannot refer to the impressive advances of sociology in recent times and to those great sociologists whose conceptions have so profoundly influenced

[1] A Bain: *John Stuart Mill*, 1882, p. 78.
[2] J. K. Ingram: *A History of Political Economy*, 1914, p. 89.

the climate of our thought. Some of them we have mentioned in this chapter. Of others no doubt the reader has heard—of Veblen, the critic of the leisure class and of conspicuous waste; of Robert Owen, the father of English socialism; of Max Weber, whose work on Protestantism and the capitalist spirit is justly famous; of Durkheim, who more than anybody else shaped French sociology; and of Pareto, who has been regarded as the precursor of Fascism.

In this country the sociological aperçus of such men as Adam Smith, Ferguson, Millar and Dunbar were systematically developed by Buckle, Herbert Spencer, J. M. Robertson and L. T. Hobhouse. But their work never obtained the recognition it merited. In English universities sociology was not a subject of study, although on the continent and in the U.S.A. every university of importance provided chairs for it. To-day only the University of London teaches sociology; Oxford and Cambridge still look askance at the subject. There has, however, been a general tendency for English thinkers to become much more sociologically minded, and often under the heading of other subjects much of what is in fact sociology is being taught. These welcome developments are partly due to the activities of the Institute of Sociology which developed from the Sociological Society, founded in 1903 "to promote investigation and to advance education in the social sciences in their various aspects and applications." James Bryce (Lord Bryce) was the first president of the Society and Victor Branford the Hon. Secretary. The Council included among others H. G. Wells, Patrick Geddes, G. P. Gooch, A. C. Haddon, L. T. Hobhouse, J. A. Hobson, Benjamin Kidd, J. M. Robertson, Alexander Shand, Graham Wallas and E. Westermarck. Among other presidents were the late Lord Balfour and Sir Francis Younghusband. Since its incorporation in 1932 the presidents of the Institute have been in succession Dr.

R. R. Marett, Dr. Ernest Barker, and Dr. G. P. Gooch. Professor A. M. Carr-Saunders, Professor Morris Ginsberg, Professor Karl Mannheim, and Dr. C. H. Desch are now members of Council. The late Victor Branford and his wife left the residue of their property to the Institute as an endowment. In addition to organizing discussion meetings, at which in the past practically all the leading social students in Great Britain have given papers, the Institute publishes the *Sociological Review*, now edited by a Board consisting of A. M. Carr-Saunders, Alexander Farquharson and Morris Ginsberg.

The attitude of the universities towards Sociology partly derives from the time of Herbert Spencer, whose teaching was regarded as naturalistic and materialistic, a dangerous solvent to ancient beliefs and religion. Moreover, Spencer was not a university man and held no academic position. Only late in life did the universities offer him recognition, honours and degrees, which by that time meant nothing to him. The effect upon the development of sociology in this country was unfortunate. It is of interest to note that Spencer urged the establishment of sociology as a subject of study as early as 1880. He writes: " I had an interview with Lord Derby for the purpose of enlisting his sympathies in favour of a professorship of Sociology which I want to get established at Liverpool. . . . It seems, however, he has settled that it is to have a chair for Natural History so that my hope that he would at my instigation establish a chair of Sociology is balked." Only a quarter of a century later was such a chair established, and its first holder was that very distinguished teacher, L. T. Hobhouse.

There are, however, more fundamental reasons why sociology is so poorly established in this country. Sociology is essentially the product of rapid change and crisis. But this country is the country of gradual change and stability, of

reform and evolution rather than of crisis and revolution. This advantage meant that at no time were the foundations of our national life closely scrutinized. The approach to social problems was piece-meal, haphazard and unsystematic. We excelled in philanthropy and social service but were backward in the planning of our national resources. More timorous than the U.S.A. in planning, we share with it the simple belief that if only we accumulate blindly a sufficient number of facts, the facts will interpret themselves and absolve us from all responsibility for acting upon them. This naïve empiricism and the absence of a sociological approach have meant that social problems are either never co-ordinated or are tackled by the separate social sciences which have no constructive principles for their integration and solution.

This approach will, it is to be hoped, give way to a more comprehensive one, in the face of the rapidity of social change, the numerous and complicated problems of present-day society, and the urgent need for planning. More than ever is it being recognized that there must be systematic co-operation between the many, diverse and interlacing, but as yet separate and unconnected, branches of scientific social investigation. And this demand is not a mere academic argument. It arises directly from the nature of society. The social sciences can only study or manipulate one aspect of it; to be effective they must be brought together. It is no exaggeration to say that the backwardness of social theory, which cannot utilize satisfactorily the tremendous advances of modern science as well as the contradictions and disharmonies of practical life, are the result of the neglect of the sociological approach, of a failure to see social life as a whole.

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