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[M.-P. WALSH]

SOCIETAS LITURGICA

Societas Liturgica came into existence by the initiative of Wiebe Vos, a pastor of the Netherlands Reformed Church. In 1962 he had founded *Studia liturgica*, ''an international ecumenical quarterly for liturgical research and renewal.'' In 1965 he convened a conference of 25 liturgists from Europe and North America at the Protestant community of Grandchamp, in Neuchâtel, Switzerland. With J. J. von Allmen in the chair, the conference discussed Christian initiation and resolved to found a Societas Liturgica, ''an association for the promotion of ecumenical dialogue on worship, based on solid research, with the perspective of renewal and unity.'' As an ecumenical society, membership is open to all Christians who are engaged in teaching and doing research in liturgical and related studies, as well as those who make significant contributions to the liturgical life of their churches.

The foundation meeting of Societas Liturgica took place at Driebergen, Holland, from the 26th to the 29th of June, 1967. That meeting studied Vatican II's Constitution on the Liturgy and recent work on worship by the World Council of Churches' Faith and Order. Thereafter the Societas has held congresses at two-yearly intervals. The papers delivered at these congresses have been published in English in its journal *Studia Liturgica*.

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[G. WAINWRIGHT]

SOCIETY

A union of individuals, particularly of human beings, among whom a specific type of order or organization exists, although not all are agreed on its formal constitutive. This article first analyzes the nature of society from the viewpoint of Catholic social philosophy and then outlines theories of society that are proposed in the science of sociology.

Philosophical Analysis

Society may be defined as the permanent union of men who are united by modes of behavior that are demanded by some common end, value, or interest. Analyzed semantically, the term denotes a union of one kind or another. Its notion differs from that of community in that community is a form of society in which men are

more intimately bound by specific ends and natural forces. Society itself is not possible, however, unless based upon some common moral and legal understanding with social laws and controls to sustain it; hence some characteristics of the community are found also in society.

Nature. Guided by experience, and thus by the findings of the social sciences, the social philosopher regards it as empirically established that man can attain the full development of his nature only in association with others. Human nature therefore constitutes the ontological ground for society; it manifests this through its biological, psychological, and teleological tendencies. Biologically, man's nature is ordered to marriage and the family. Psychologically, the impulse to be a member of a social group and to be appreciated as such is characteristically human. Teleologically, man seeks both happiness and conformity with the NATURAL LAW; both of these, in turn, urge him to establish an order of social life guaranteeing freedom and common utility as conditions for the achievement of a fully human existence. In consequence, viewed ontologically, human nature needs social supplementation for its integration; again, since different potentialities are found in individual humans, human nature is capable of bringing about such supplementation. Hence man is by nature a social animal (ζῷον πολιτικόν for AR-ISTOTLE; *ens sociale* for St. THOMAS AQUINAS).

Since this is the design of the Creator, it is in human nature itself that one can recognize the will of the Creator with regard to the fundamental ordering of society. The fact that one can philosophically ascertain the will of the Creator in ''the nature of things'' needs emphasizing in contemporary Catholic social philosophy; while until recently there was a lack of contact with the empirical social sciences, there is currently a precipitous tendency to theologize concerning Christian social theory. It must be emphasized, too, that Catholic social doctrine does not depend simply upon ethical postulates; rather, its ethical principles are ontologically grounded in the natural law.

Unity of Society. Because MAN is a composite of body and soul, and hence a PERSON who is responsible for his own conduct, the society he forms is, unlike other unities, unified by an intrinsic principle, the self-binding will of its members. In this specific sense, society is a unity resulting from an actualized moral order (*unitas ordinis*). Nevertheless, society rests also on an extrinsic formative principle that adds to the note of order one of organization. The reason for this is not only that the self-binding will of its members is to some extent defective, but also that the concrete demands of society's intrinsic end are not fully recognizable by all of its members, and, furthermore, that the lasting realization of the social end

from one generation to another can be secured only by organizational means, such as legal and administrative institutions.

Function of Society. The function of society is to actualize its inherent end, the common good, viz, the conditions that make a fully human existence possible for all of its members. Because the individual depends on others to bring about the end of society (principle of solidarity), the individual good is part of the common good.

Only when the common good has been established as an ontological criterion can the true functions of society be ascertained. For this reason, in line with the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas, the present exposition of society focuses on the idea of ends (*ordo finium*) rather than on the idea of value found in modern social theory. When the idea of ends implicit in human nature is given equal prominence with that of value, three problems that beset the philosophical and ethical theory of value become more amenable to solution. First, the connection of value with objective being becomes more readily apparent, for in modern theory the recognition of value is made a matter of feeling or of mere a priori insight. Second, the obligatory character of moral values in the personal and social sphere can be shown more easily; this follows from their being related to inherent tendencies in human nature (*inclinationes naturales,* in *Summa theologiae* 1a2ae, 94.2), whose intrinsic ends indicate the will of the Creator. Third, in this way the standards for defining the order of values and the scale of values in the life of both the individual and the community can be established. Apart from these considerations, moreover, an ontologically founded teleological order makes it apparent that man, as a member of the community, has to achieve ends or realize values on his own responsibility (principle of SUBSIDIARITY) as far as this is possible.

Instead of ends and values, one may speak of interests (e.g., general or public interests, group interests, individual interests); even in this terminology, however, the ontological idea of ends is indispensable for an objective evaluation of subjective claims based on interests.

Reality of Society. The common good is a reality over and above the good that individuals can achieve separately; consequently, in realizing the common good, society emerges as a reality of a special kind. Predicamentally this reality cannot be defined simply in terms of the disjunction between SUBSTANCE and ACCIDENT (*see* CATEGORIES OF BEING). Society is not a substance, but neither is it a mere ontological accident. The interpretation of the good of the individual as part of the common good of society, which had far-reaching implications for Aquinas, has been concretized by those social scientists who give equal importance to nurture and na-

ture in forming the fully human existence of the individual as a person. They see in nurture the culture or the civilization of the society by which the individual's psychic, mental, moral, and religious predispositions are largely formed. In view of their analysis, the category of RELATION is not sufficient to describe the being of society, for it would suggest that society is a structure consisting in relations between fully developed persons, whereas man reaches the fullness of his human existence only through social interaction. This is especially true during adolescence, but it is true too in later life; as Aquinas also taught, only the completely matured person is morally permitted to leave society and to live in solitude. Society's ontological nature is also obscured when it is reduced to an ''I-Thou'' relationship or to a ''we'' relationship or to a ''dialogue'' form of human existence, even though such attempts contain elements of truth and may serve to illustrate man's social nature and responsibility. In Aquinas's thought, the relation *ad alium singulariter* is given due consideration, but emphasis is laid on the relation *ad alium in communi,* i.e., on the community as such (*Summa theologiae* 2a2ae, 58.5). Other attempts are deficient in accounting for the supra-individual reality of society as this is actualized in the process of realizing the common good. It is, however, equally certain that the existence of society does depend upon the existence of man who ontologically is a substance. As a person he is also a supersocial being with supersocial ends; it is here that his rights to freedom, which are not to be violated by society, are grounded.

Structure. Since the ends to be realized through social cooperation are many, society necessarily has a pluralistic structure. This pluralism is of two kinds. The first is derived directly from the social nature of man in which are rooted not only such vital structures as the family and the state, but also the territorial as well as the vocational community and the ethnic-cultural group. Because they are based directly upon human nature as such, they are found everywhere in mankind and its history in one form or another. The second kind of social pluralism is based indirectly on human nature, namely, on common purposes open to man's free CHOICE. This kind of pluralism intensifies in proportion to the growth of population and to the development of civilization. It results from the articulation and particularization of both material and mental ends and values, whose pursuit results in an increasing variety of associations and in a growing measure of socialization, i.e., closer interdependence among men. The pluralism existing in the modern democratic society derives its peculiar character from its causes; these lie in the mechanism of decision-making in the parliamentary process and in the striving for influence on government and parliament by pressure groups.

From what has been said about the structure of society, a further important characteristic emerges, namely, that it is always historically patterned. Only the fundamentals of social order are implicit in human nature; more cannot be found in such nature even for the family community, still less for larger elements of society and for the state. In their concrete aspects, the forms of society change as human nature changes, which, though invariable in its essence, is otherwise mutable (*Summa theologiae* 2a2ae, 57.2 ad 1).

Social Process. It follows from the fact that common ends are constitutive of society that a power of direction must be vested in some AUTHORITY. To the extent that social ends are ontologically implicit in human nature, authority is itself ontologically grounded; otherwise, it is established by the agreement of wills of those who freely unite themselves for the pursuit of a common goal. Authority is necessary not only because the realization of common ends by a self-determining group requires coordination, but also because a governing power must determine concrete objectives pertaining to the common good as well as methods to attain them. The mode of exercising authority and the extent of its competence depend very largely on the form of society in which it operates. It is practically confined to a rule of custom in the case of the homogeneous ethnic community living as a national minority, whereas it is comprehensive in the case of a heterogeneous society such as a large territorial state, for this must rely to a great extent on organizational means.

Capacity for Action. Only the person is capable of having responsibility and of acting accordingly. Society as a whole is responsible for actualizing its own ends, and it carries out this responsibility through various organs (e.g., states conclude treaties and trade unions make contracts). Society, therefore, is a person; but because its bond of unity consists in a common responsibility, it is called a moral person, to distinguish it from the physical person of individual man. It is also called a juridical person because it possesses natural rights by reason of its responsibilities and is capable of legally relevant action. In consequence, society is a person not merely in a metaphorical sense but by strict ANALOGY.

In a similar manner, society may be called an organism; in fact, one is accustomed to speak of the body politic, its members, and its organs. The organic theory of society lays stress on a community of responsibility to attain common intrinsic ends, whereas the mechanistic theory sees society either as a harmony of self-balancing interests (individualism) or as a unity to be organized for extrinsic ends by a ruling group (collectivism). Aquinas refers to the Church as a person (*Summa theologiae* 2a2ae, 83.16 ad 3) and a body (*ibid.* 3a, 8.4).

Types. A major consideration of social philosophers is the relation between a society and its members; these latter may be individuals or they may be smaller societies. Hence, the first classification is that of the all-embracing society, such as the STATE or the organized society of nations. Particular societies are referred to as intermediate structures because they serve as social units between the individual and the all-embracing society through their particular ends, responsibilities, and rights. Another division is that into necessary communities, relatively necessary communities, and free associations. Necessary communities, examples of which are the family and the state, are indispensable to human existence and are based directly on human nature; they also impose indisputable moral obligations. Relatively necessary societies also are based directly on human nature, but they are structures with limited functions, such as ethnic groups. Free associations (e.g. the literary club and the stock company) are based on human nature only indirectly; they have their origin in the free choice of their members and are limited to serving man in various spheres of culture.

All of the foregoing social units belong to the natural sphere, as distinct from the supernatural. The Church, by reason of its divine mandate for salvation and its life of grace, forms the MYSTICAL BODY OF CHRIST, a supernatural society. A society that affords all the requisites for the full development of human nature is called a perfect society: examples are the state in the natural order and the Church in the supernatural order. Imperfect societies are the smaller societies; these are capable of performing their functions only as members of a perfect society. The free society, in which the state fully recognizes human rights, particularly that of free public opinion, is to be differentiated from the totalitarian society, in which the government assumes unlimited dominance over the individual. The free society is an open society to the extent that it allows COMMUNICATION with individuals and associations outside its domain in an unhampered way. A closed society excludes such communication. In a different sense, one speaks of a closed society when a traditional social morality (H. Bergson) or *Ethosform* (M. Scheler) prevails to unite its members in an intimate spiritual bond. Finally, the juridical society may be differentiated from the amicable society. The first rests upon legal provisions (e.g. a municipality or a business corporation), whereas the second rests upon a good-will agreement on the part of the members (e.g. a sports club or charitable organization).

Narrower Sense. Society is sometimes used in a narrower sense to designate relative autonomies as compared to the more absolute autonomy of the state. The distinction is of crucial importance for social philosophy and social ethics. In the narrower sense, society is composed of individuals and smaller social units with their own particular ends and responsibilities; the state, on the other hand, has an all-embracing end and effects the basic ordering of social functions in the over-all society. This is the common understanding in English social theory, in contrast to Hegel's theory in which society is absorbed by the state (cf. E. Barker, *Political Thought in England 1848–1914* [Oxford 1942] 66).

F. Tönnies (1855–1936) uses the word ''society'' in a still narrower sense as designating only associations based on free choice and generally with material purposes, to distinguish these from the community as a biological-spiritual unit, especially the family, the ethnic group, and the nationality. As an example of the first, he would cite the modern market society that is formed by commercial exchange in balancing supply and demand. Influenced by Tönnies as well as by Marx, not a few regard the state itself as a purely functional social entity. There is an element of truth in Tönnies's distinction, easily recognized in present pluralistic democracies. Yet in light of the principles of social philosophy pointed out above, the state is much more than an arbitrary structure; it is grounded in the social nature of man and can subsist as a political society only if it is rooted in consent with respect to common values. This has been the thought of political theorists from Cicero, Augustine, Aquinas, and Edmund BURKE down to the rise of individualism. One who sets society altogether apart from community, as does Tönnies, overlooks the fact that society in any form must rest on a sharing of values, particularly those values that man finds revealed in his nature as morally binding for life in society.

Other philosophical theories. In the latter part of the Middle Ages, NOMINALISM set the stage for the undermining of the ontological and metaphysical concept of society. It held that only individual things are real, hence also only individual human beings; for the nominalist, therefore, society could exist only in mind as an idea, not as a reality. The so-called fictive theory of society is believed to be traceable to Pope INNOCENT IV, who, referring to social grouping, used the expression *fingatur una persona;* what he meant by this, however, was only that society is a *res incorporalis,* for he was concerned with establishing the difference between a juridical and a physical person.

Under the influence of nominalism, the doctrine developed that society depends exclusively on the will of the people, giving rise to the theory of the SOCIAL CONTRACT. According to T. HOBBES (*De Cive,* 1642; *Leviathan,* 1651), the natural state of man is a struggle of each individual against the other. Fear and self-preservation

lead to the social contract, by which men establish an order that guarantees a limited amount of freedom for all. J. J. ROUSSEAU (*Contrat social,* 1762), advocated the opposite theory, namely, that man in his natural state lived in freedom and equality, both of which were destroyed by the introduction of property, to be followed by strife and war. Order was established by means of the social contract, and thus by the will of the people, with the result that each man obeys himself, having cooperated in establishing law and authority.

According to G. W. F. HEGEL (*Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts,* 1821), society is ''the realization of the substantial will'' expressing ''the objective spirit,'' the moral consciousness made effective in group life; participating in this spirit, individual man attains fully human existence, but this is only an ''accidental'' being. In K. MARX's theory of dialectical materialism (*Zur Kritik der politischen Ökonomie,* 1859), society is patterned on the ''mode of production of material life''; hence every advanced precommunist society must be a class society, if only because of the ''social power'' inherent in the private ownership of production.

In spite of manifest discrepancies, some element of truth is to be found in all these theories. They are not so much concerned with society, however, as they are with the justification of the state and its authority; yet all of them presuppose that association is necessary for man and even essential to his nature. This is the basic problem in social philosophy; it still calls for analysis and explanation. Moreover, since these theories take as their starting point an inadequate notion of the person, they reach false conclusions, such as those on which individualism and collectivism are based, and continue to have detrimental consequences in the development of modern society. The element of truth to be found in the social contract theory is that society and its order rest upon the individuals' responsibility to comply with the demands of human nature and thus upon a union of wills (or upon what Aquinas, following Cicero and Augustine, calls a *iuris consensus, Summa theologiae* 1a2ae, 105.2). The basic mistake of any social contract theory is the notion of absolute sovereignty, which Hobbes situated in monarchy and Rousseau in the people. Hegel was right in emphasizing that society requires a spiritual basis of unity and that only by participating in it can man achieve a fully human existence; this is akin to the scholastic doctrine that the individual good is but a part of the common good. However, Hegel left too little room for the individual, particularly when the supersocial and superpolitical ends of the human person are to be considered. For Marx, social (and consequently the individual) human consciousness are formed wholly by the material world with its technical and economic means of production; moreover, he too

finds no room for the individual's own being and responsibility as a person, having disavowed the ''dualism of spirit and matter.'' On the other hand, there is an element of truth in his theory of society, particularly in its emphasis on political economy as the most important socially uniting bond; the latter's relative importance as an integrating factor was acknowledged by Aquinas as well.

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[J. MESSNER]

Sociological Theories

The effects of nominalistic and individualistic theories of society upon social institutions were already evident when the modern science of sociology was first proposed and named by Auguste COMTE (1798–1857). His work and that of other early sociologists was in part a reaction against the dissolution of traditional groupings in the course of the FRENCH REVOLUTION. There remained, so it seemed, no intermediary groups between the individual and the STATE, and this condition heightened the importance of a distinction between society and the state that had not been made explicit up to that time. Sociology was conceived as a means for the discovery of laws of societal structure and change through the application of which a new social solidarity could be attained. Since ontological and metaphysical concepts of society had been abandoned, the search for such laws could be undertaken only with the method of ''positive science.'' As the field developed, the original POSITIVISM became the object of a critique from within as well as from without, but the inductive study of society remained the distinctive task of sociology. Thus, although sociologists are aware that assumptions about the nature and reality of society affect the models, methods, and techniques that they employ, these assumptions are not their primary concern. Their attention is given to the observable fact of society.

Definition. The sociologist begins with the observation that individuals interact with reference to pluralities or collectivities of various types. Among these are some that are broadly inclusive and are called societies (assuming that they can be distinguished empirically from other

types). Some definitions identify a society in this macroscopic sense as a plurality possessing a common CULTURE, while others refer to a common territory or a common government. In general, these definitions are deficient because they do not distinguish sufficiently between society, culture complex, community, and nation. Marion J. Levy has attempted a conceptually precise and empirically relevant definition of society as ''a system of action in operation that (1) involves a plurality of interacting individuals of a given species (or group of species) whose actions are primarily oriented to the system concerned and who are recruited at least in part by the sexual reproduction of members of the plurality involved, (2) is at least in theory self-sufficient for the actions of this plurality, and (3) is capable of existing longer than the life-span of an individual of the type (or types) involved'' (*Structure of Society* [Princeton, N.J. 1952] 113). In a human society, the ''given species'' is *Homo sapiens* and the system itself consists in the patterned, organized regularities observable in the interaction of men who are primarily oriented to the system and influenced by it.

In theory, animals may form societies according to this definition, but this does not imply that the anthill or elephant herd is of the same type or order as human society. Human interaction is empirically distinct. It involves symbols and meanings that have both subjective and cultural dimensions. It produces a specifically different kind of plurality with its own internal problems of order and its own dynamism of development (deriving ultimately from human rationality and freedom).

A society is not simply the sum of discrete interactions. Rather, its members or parts are organized in such a way that an emergent whole is maintained and develops, remains static, or disintegrates. ''American society,'' for example, has meaning with reference to its past development, its present state, and its prospects for the future. Although the whole is the product of interaction, it is nonetheless a system of patterned relationships and institutions that influence behavior, even so-called unstructured or deviant behavior.

The members of a society vary as to the extent and the exclusiveness to which their actions are oriented to this system. Citizenship, which constitutes membership in the state, is not the basic criterion for membership in a society. A member is one whose actions are oriented more toward the major institutions of one society, especially the institutions that define its goals, than toward those of another. Most often contemporary societies and nation-states are coextensive, but they need not be.

The restriction that a society's members must be recruited at least in part through sexual reproduction excludes such pluralities as the ASSOCIATION or

collectivities that are prisons and religious communities. It implies further that a society must be composed of members of both sexes and must provide institutional regulation of sexual relations.

The norm of self-sufficiency requires that a society be capable of supplying ''from within'' all the adaptive and integrative institutions needed for its existence and operation. This excludes such partial systems as the family or the church that need the help of other institutions if they are to function. (The Catholic Church is a perfect society in the theological and canonical, not the sociological, meaning of the word.) Self-sufficiency in this context does not imply that a society must not import goods or services, but only that it must have the necessary structures to obtain what it needs.

Moreover, a society must be capable of existing beyond the life-span of its individual members. In effect this means that some provision has to be made for the effective socialization of the young. The society must possess the structural facilities—through its families, religious institutions, social classes, schools, etc.—to transmit the beliefs, values, and norms required for the survival of its institutions.

Theories and models. Although sociologists have relatively little difficulty in isolating a society from other types of social pluralities, they have not reached consensus on the analysis of its structure and functions. Is society simply a more complex organization of microsystems such as interactional encounters? Or is it a macrosystem in its own right with emergent structures and processes unique to its own level? If society is a whole made up of parts, how are these parts put together and how do they work? Is this whole an on-going process, a BECOMING, or a BEING? In attempting to answer these questions, sociologists have proposed various models or general images, often developed through analogy, about the kinds of units, the patterns of their relations, and the type of whole that is society. The literature is replete with models inspired by physics, biology, psychology, and even mathematics. Thus there are atomistic, organic, evolutionary, conflict, equilibrium, and statistical models. The extent to which any one of these models exhausts the sociological reality of society is still debatable since each seems to present some aspect of that reality. A completely adequate model that is more than an eclectic juxtaposition is still to be developed.

Comte. In some ways Comte prefigured most of the currently available approaches to the study of society. Although he never defined the term, he equated it with the whole of the human species. He considered the species to be one organism to be studied in itself, since a whole is better known than its parts. In practice, he tempered

this extreme macroorientation by stressing the reciprocal influence between individuals, families, and pluralities of lesser scope than total humanity. He insisted that the family is the basic unit of society and gives birth to feelings of solidarity among men but that in turn ''wise men,'' men with ideas, are needed to unite families together into tribes and nations. Although he postulated a basic antagonism between forces of innovation and conservatism, he viewed society as an order based on a universal consensus, the foundation of unity as well as of the division of labor. In another perspective, however, that which he called social dynamics, he referred to society as primarily a process of growth from a militaristic through a legalistic to an industrial stage of organization. Unfortunately, Comte never integrated his static and his evolutionary models, nor did he fully incorporate the functions of ideas and of conflict into his organic model. Each of his approaches seems to have had a ''life of its own'' prefiguring one of the competing theories to follow, just as his concern with these several approaches prefigured the more eclectic or synthesizing theories of contemporary sociologists.

Spencer. Perhaps Herbert SPENCER (1820–1903) was the most extreme among the early sociologists in his use of the organic-evolutionary model. He defined society as a superorganism progressing inevitably from homogeneity to heterogeneity, and he conceived it as an entity formed of permanently arranged units analogous to the arrangement of the parts of a biological organism having its own sustaining, distributive, and regulating organs or institutions. As a society grows its units become more differentiated. The result is an increase of structure as well as of mass. The process is similar to the growth of an organism even though the basic parts of society (individuals) are discrete and do not form a concrete whole. Spencer's macromodel assumes, in spite of some denial on his part, that societal laws are merely special cases of biological laws.

Durkheim. Such extreme forms of bio-organicism have long since disappeared from sociology, but more moderate models have persisted, to a great extent because of the influence of Émile DURKHEIM (1855–1917). While he retained Spencer's macrosociological approach, he stripped it of all biologism. In his theory the social fact of solidarity is the essential characteristic of society, but solidarity is conceived as an emergent reality arising from the association of individuals and not reducible to the mere sum of their actions. Society has a consciousness (*conscience collective*) that creates a system of values and norms binding upon the individual. The resultant solidarity has in one sense a life of its own; it progresses from a mechanical to an organic form as the collective consciousness becomes less imperative and the division

of labor increases because of rising population density and effective communication. But even in a society characterized by organic solidarity, individual actions are only incidents within the large-scale social process in which society exists.

Tönnies. This undiluted macroorientation seems to postulate a substantial reality for society, a position that Ferdinand Tönnies (1855–1936) found unacceptable. Although conceiving society as a type of collective person, he defined it as a product of single persons, the will of one affecting another and vice-versa, with a collective will developing from this interaction. His theory suggests the possibility of microanalysis within a macrosociological framework. In fact, his societal types, *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft,* are explained in terms of human willing. The first is a union of persons relating to each other through a natural, unconditional volition, such as the love of a mother for her child, while the second is a plurality of individuals interacting as a consequence of ''rational will,'' a sort of calculating volition whereby appropriate means are chosen for specific ends. In general, Tönnies saw society as changing from a *Gemeinschaft* to a *Gesellschaft* much in the same way that Durkheim saw mechanical solidarity being replaced by organic solidarity.

Simmel. Georg Simmel (1858–1918) retained the microanalytical approach but rejected the organic overtones. He defined society as a function and a process manifest in the relationships and interactions of men. He was not a reductionist, however, at least in the strict meaning of the term, since in his system individual interaction, while remaining discrete, is synthesized into the unity of society as each element (the content) is related to the others through forms (in the Kantian sense). Simmel posited the existence of society in the consciousness of its members, but the individual is not the group and therefore must become ''generalized'' by a postulated call or vocation. This helps to explain why quantitative growth can lead to qualitative changes in society, but Simmel did not discuss the process, perhaps because of his failure to attack the problem of macroanalysis.

Marx. Most of these theorists, in spite of their different views, were preoccupied mainly with the problem of unity or order. Karl Marx (1818–83) preferred a conflict-evolutionary model in his analysis of society. He defined it as a dialectical process of warring classes wherein economic factors determine the structure and development. The nature of this determinism has been the subject of much controversy, even among so-called orthodox interpreters, but the notion of conflict remains central to Marxian thought. Each stage of society is held to contain within itself the seeds of its own destruction and to prepare the next state until the final end of evolution, a class-

less order, is attained. Others before Marx noted the fact of conflict, but Marx postulated that the process itself and its resolution are the very core of society.

Sumner. This notion of conflict was taken up by William Graham Sumner (1840–1910) but recast in the framework of social Darwinism and Spencerian organicism. Sumner maintained that the basic law of society is the law of evolution that receives its impetus from the struggles for existence. Society is basically a system of forces arising primarily from the pressure of population and economic growth and generating through trial and error specific folkways (or ways of doing things). In his early thought Sumner believed that these customs could be modified by man to a very limited extent only, but later he seemed to allow man a larger role in the structuring of society.

Small. Sumner's idea was further developed by Albion W. Small (1854–1926), who defined societal conflict in terms of man's interests and society as the product of individual efforts to fulfill interests, resulting in a continuous process of conflict constantly resolving itself into cooperation. Like the organic model before it, the conflict model of society was slowly transformed into a more psychological conception, but one in which both conflict and order assumed prominence.

Ward. It was Lester F. Ward (1841–1913) who projected man into the evolutionary process. He conceived of society in terms of a psychological-evolutionary model. Attributing spontaneous evolution (genesis) to blind forces, he believed the process was bifurcated with the appearance of mind. Thus he defined ''social forces'' as psychic forces or feelings and assigned a crucial role to man's purposive actions (telesis). Recognizing that social forces could give rise to conflict, he held them to be checked by ''synergy,'' the basic principle behind evolution, and molded into structures and society. In this way, Ward retained the notion of conflict but subordinated it to equilibrium.

Trend Toward Psychological Models. With the decline of the evolutionary school, the psychological model became more microoriented. In the thought of Gabriel Tarde (1843–1904) the fundamental elements of society are belief and desire and the basic processes are imitation or repetition, opposition, and adaptation. For him society could not be studied as such. Gustave Le Bon (1841–1931) accepted this proposition but attempted to reconcile it with Durkheim's stress on the collectivity, an effort at integration that influenced the work of James Baldwin (1861–1934) and George Mead (1863–1931) and found its sociological expression in the theories of Charles Horton Cooley (1864–1929) and William I. Thomas (1863–1947).

Cooley defined both society and individual as ''simply collective and distributive aspects of the same thing'' (*Human Nature and the Social Order* [New York 1902] 2). The basic social fact, he maintained, resides in the imagination each person has of the other. He conceded, however, that social reality is not simply the product of agreement between individuals but the result of organization. Unfortunately, he never explained what he meant by organization. While sharing Cooley's basic orientation, Thomas was somewhat more specific. He postulated attitudes and values as the elements of society, but among the latter he included social norms that coalesce into institutions and social organization. This marked the beginning of a return to macroanalysis by theorists using psychological models.

Weber. This trend is pronounced in Max WEBER (1864–1920). Even though he believed the individual and his actions to be the basic units of study, he carried forward his analysis to all levels of social life. While Cooley reduced society to a socio-psychic complex, Weber postulated a continuum of social categories ranging from the individual actor to society. He saw the social relationship in which actors take account of and are oriented to each other as capable of patterning in different ways and of forming different pluralities, including society. His concern, however, focused on the subjective meaning of action; it is ''meaning'' that becomes patterned and expected in certain situations, so that in spite of the macrosociological scope of his historical studies, Weber remained strongly nominalistic and conceived of society mainly as a category of human interaction. This did not preclude his analyzing the evolution of social structures as the result of tension between the principles of traditionalism, rationality, and charisma, or his seeing a general trend of increasing rationality in the development of societies.

Pareto. With the renewed concern for macroanalysis it was inevitable that the organic model should return to favor. In a sense the equilibrium paradigm of Vilfredo Pareto (1848–1923) represented an attempt to incorporate elements of most previous approaches without reducing society to any one type of phenomenon. Pareto's notion of equilibrium was taken from physics and mechanics but he rejected the outright physicalism of a Henry Carey (1793–1879), who saw man as a molecule of society and society as a variation of the law of molecular gravitation. In spite of his terminology Pareto was more a moderate organicist than a mechanist. He conceived of society as a system whose form and state of equilibrium are determined by the elements acting upon it, which elements in turn are influenced by society. This type of system analysis implies both micro- and macrosociological orientations. Reciprocal causality is operative.

If some change is introduced and affects the form of society, a reaction occurs tending to restore the form to its original state. Pareto, however, does not rule out all change of the system since the ''sentiment'' of resistance (an innate human tendency manifested in interests, knowledge, ''residues,'' and ''derivations'') may not be operating for some reason. In fact, since there are two principal types of elites in a society, a governing and nongoverning elite, they can and do succeed each other and thus give birth to conservative and progressive phases. Thus Pareto's theory incorporates an element of change, but change of society is explained in terms of change within society.

Variant Tendencies. In effect Pareto achieved a partial synthesis of previous models. Although most contemporary sociologists follow his lead, a few remain committed to the early models. Leopold von Wiese (b. 1876), for example, is basically microoriented. For him all plurality patterns, including societies, are nothing more and nothing less than neuropsychic patterns. Georges Gurvitch (b. 1894), on the other hand, insists that societies cannot be adequately analyzed unless the collective mind that operates through individual minds is recognized as the immediate social reality. George Lundberg (b. 1895) reduces society to physical phenomena, a field of force wherein individuals are attracted or repulsed as particles of an atom. George Vold (b. 1896) sees it as a congeries of conflicting groups and V. Gordon Childe (b. 1892) continues the tradition of the biological-evolutionary school wherein Darwin's theory of variation is transferred from organic to social evolution. But, for the most part, today's theorists have developed more complicated models of society.

Contemporary attempts at integration. The insights of Durkheim, Weber, and Pareto have been combined by the ''social action–functionalist school.'' The basic unit of society is taken to be meaningful social action, i.e., an action that has meaning for the actor because it takes into account the behavior of others. Florian Znaniecki (1882–1958) termed this concern the ''humanistic coefficient of cultural data,'' while Robert MacIver (b. 1882) drew attention to the ''dynamic assessment'' of the situation made by the actor. Both of these men defined society as an emergent reality and recognized that in some way the ''whole'' has causal priority over the part. Znaniecki subsumed the concept of social action under the concept of system and prepared the way for the study of a society as an inclusive ''system of systems.'' MacIver proposed different levels of causal analysis and stressed the need to study the ''teleological aspects of social phenomena.'' For him, while social facts are products of individual meanings, they may be distributive phenomena (activities of a like nature), collective phe-

nomena (conjoint actions), or conjunctural phenomena (unpurposed results of activities by interdependent groups or individuals). Society includes all of these phenomena. Thus are joined in one model the micro- and macrosociological, the psychological and the organic approaches. MacIver added an evolutionary dimension. Society, while constituted by meaningful acts, is forever unfolding, and this process manifests itself in greater division of labor and increasing differentiation of associations and institutions.

Sorokin. In a sense Pitirim Sorokin (b. 1889) belongs to this school, although he denies any association with functionalism. His analysis is in terms of an idealistic organic model, but again, meaningful interaction is at the basis of society. Such interaction can be understood, however, only in terms of the total sociocultural system in which all the parts are mutually interdependent, some of which must be ''logico-meaningfully'' integrated. Sorokin denies neither the existence of unintegrated or neutral and contradictory or antagonistic elements nor the existence of congeries or elements related to the system only in terms of mechanical adjacency, but he does insist that every society is characterized by a central theme that is either sensate (equating truth with sense knowledge), ideational (equating truth with faith), or idealistic (equating truth with reason). In every society these central themes are forever changing. While MacIver sees a trend toward structural differentiation, Sorokin concludes to cycles of sensate, ideational, and idealistic themes.

Merton and Homans. The implications of Znaniecki's model have been developed by Robert Merton (b. 1910) and George Homans (b. 1910). Merton, influenced by Radcliffe-Brown and Malinowski, defines functions as the consequences of any act, aim, or purpose within an organic-type system, including society. These may serve to maintain or to disrupt the system, and society thus becomes not only an integrated whole, but a net balance of integration and deviance that in turn affects the individuals composing it. Homans, on the other hand, isolates the structural components that contribute to the whole: activities, interactions, sentiments, and norms, some of which are oriented to solving problems arising from the environment, others of which are oriented to the internal problem of integration and differentiation. Society therefore is composed of an external system and an internal system, which interact with each other and set the stage for its survival or collapse.

Parsons. Perhaps the most comprehensive model of society in contemporary sociology is that of Talcott Parsons (b. 1902). He postulates a homology of small and large systems, a continuity between two-person interaction and society. His model is based upon (1) a volunta-

ristic conception of social action with psychological overtones, (2) the physicalist notion of action space and the law of inertia, (3) the mechanistic idea of equilibrium, and (4) the organismic postulate of functional requisites. Therefore the model combines micro- and macroanalysis.

Parsons defines society as a system of interaction, and the relations between actors (status-role reciprocities) compose its structure. In a sense the system is superior to its units and ''calls'' for structural contributions for its functioning. A society must meet all the essential functional requisites for survival through its own resources and must not be a differentiated subsystem of a larger plurality or, more precisely, collectivity. In other words, it must be a relatively self-sufficient system and possess a common culture to coordinate differentiated units that in the long run depend on human individuals as actors. In effect, this means that a society must have the needed institutions to meet the requirements of goal attainment, adaptation to the environment, pattern maintenance (socialization and tension management), and integration.

While society as defined by Parsons cannot be equated with nation, the boundaries of a society tend to coincide with the territory under control of the highest-order political organization. This holds true in spite of increasing structural differentiation, the specialization of function and separation of the kinship system, the economy, religion, the legal system, and the polity because, in effect, any institution whose orientation is primarily cultural rather than societal lacks the legitimate authority to prescribe values and enforce norms for the society. Nonetheless, in Parsons' model each institution contributes to the maintenance of society and is involved in a process of exchange by which equilibrium is maintained. These intermeshing processes deal with decisions about the disposition and allocation of resources that, from the point of view of the system, are consumed, and with media of control that, like power, circulate from one unit to another. In effect, Parsons sees the dynamics of society mainly as the processing of information.

But this equilibrium-maintaining process does not imply a static structure. Society is a cybernetic system of control over behavior, and structural change is inevitable in the equilibrating process because roles are continuously being played by new actors and strains are inevitable in the exchange between societal units. Control can resolve these problems up to a point; but when a cumulative process begins, change in the normative structure results and its general direction is toward functional differentiation and increasing complexity of the system.

Evaluation. Contemporary theorists seem agreed that Parsons' model of society helps to resolve many of the differences between the so-called individualistic and collectivistic points of view, but that the two have not been fully integrated. Significant objections have been based upon the model's failure to explain adequately the basic fact of conflict and its contribution to the ''state of the system.'' Another objection is that the evolutionary nature of society is not really explained. Some sociologists, such as Lewis Coser and Ralph Dahrendorf, maintain that society is not in the harmonious balance implied by an equilibrium model. In their view, dissension arising from competition rather than consensus is a basic condition of society and a dialectical model of some sort is needed. Wilbert Moore insists that the notion of equilibrium either forecloses discussion of change or predicts change in one direction only, the restoration of society to a steady state. He suggests the use of a tension-management model, but one that makes no presumption that tensions or strains are in fact ''managed.'' Moore would make both order and change problematical and normal.

Pierre van den Berghe, while recognizing that societies show a tendency toward equilibrium and solidarity, argues that they generate the opposites as well and require other mechanisms of integration than consensus. Moreover, he agrees that the equilibrium model does not account for endogenous change through conflict and contradiction. He suggests that there is need for a dialectical model (one that does not reduce social reality to polarized opposites), but he also recognizes that social dialectics alone cannot account for change through differentiation and adaptation nor account for consensus. He therefore proposes a functional-dialectical model wherein both conflict and consensus are basic.

Such a model has not been developed but may be promising. The juxtaposition of the two approaches is not as arbitrary as it might seem. In a sense, interdependence contains its own dialectic and dialectical conflict and is based on some assumption of equilibrium. The model of structural-functional analysis postulates that society is a system composed of interrelated parts but, whether institutions or actors, the parts are to some extent relatively autonomous. These parts may adjust or react so that equilibrium and interdependence cannot be equated. Adjustment itself occurs within a tension system wherein autonomy and control interact dialectically (in the broad sense of the word) so that consensus or stability cannot be a permanent or total state of the system. And reaction occurs within a system of interdependence in which equilibrium forces are operative so that society cannot be adequately defined in terms of simple conflict or change. As a system of relatively autonomous but organized elements, society is empirically a whole whose equilibrium implies a tension system and whose dialectics imply an

evolving synthesis. As such, strain and deviancy are as much its components as harmony and conformity, and change as much its feature as stability.

Such a model, which might be called an evolving dialectical-equilibrium model, would seem to reunite the major insights of past theorists and resolve many of the contemporary objections to the structural-functional analysis of society. It would incorporate into one synthesis actor-interaction as well as holistic processes, conflict and consensus, stability and change as *facts* of society. Whether such a model is adopted sooner or later, the contemporary trend seems to point in such a direction.

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SOCIETY (CHURCH AS)

The term society has been in use to designate the Church throughout the history of Western Christian thought. However, it is only within the last two centuries that the term, with its corresponding systematic conceptualization, has found widespread favor and use in ecclesiology.

Patristic Era. Among the Fathers, St. Augustine often applied the term society to the Church. The term in St. Augustine, corresponding to his whole philosophical and religious spirit, has a strong emphasis on the interiority of the intrapersonal society involved, on the community of life being actually what it seems to be, and not merely fair seeming. The basic reason for this emphasis is his conviction that the Holy Spirit, who is ''the society of the Father and of the Son'' within the Trinity, is also the ground of the Church as a society:

> . . . the society of the unity of the Church of God, outside of which there is no forgiveness of sins, is, as it were, the proper work of the Holy Spirit (the Father and the Son, to be sure, working together with Him), because the Holy Spirit Himself

is in a certain sense the society of the Father and of the Son (*Serm.* 71.20.33; *Patrologia Latina* 38:463).

''The society by which we are made the one Body of God's only Son, is the Spirit's role'' (*ibid.* 17.28; *Patrologia Latina* 38:461). ''. . . no one can achieve eternal life and salvation apart from the society of Christ, which is realized in Him and with Him, when we are bathed in His Sacraments and incorporated into His members'' (*Pecc. merit.* 3.11.19; *Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum,* 60:145). Augustine asks, ''How should the city of God . . . originate, develop, and attain its destiny, if the life of the saints were not a social life?'' (*Civ.* 19.5; *Corpus Christianorum. Series latina* 48:669.) Even ''the peace of the heavenly city,'' which is the glorious Church of heaven, is called ''the perfectly ordered and harmonious society of those who find their joy in God and in one another in God'' (*ibid.* 19.13; *Corpus Christianorum. Series latina* 48:679). Augustine's generic understanding of what a society is can be gathered from a phrase of the *City of God:* ''. . . an assemblage of reasonable beings joined in society by their harmonious sharing in the object of their love'' (*ibid.* 19.24; *Corpus Christianorum. Series latina* 48:695).

Medieval and Later Scholasticism. Notwithstanding Augustine's patronage, the term society was slow to become one of the abstract collective names commonly used to designate the Church. Rather these were in large measure derived from the name *ecclesia,* which the Fathers and the scholastics explained etymologically as God's ''convocation'' of His people, with the ''congregation'' of the faithful resulting from God's calling (see St. Isidore of Seville, *De eccles. off.* 1.1.2; *Patrologia Latina* 83:739–740).

The following are examples of the continuing, though relatively minor, use of the term society. St. Thomas Aquinas, who uses the term rather infrequently, says that the grace of the Eucharist is ''the Mystical Body of Christ, which is the society of the saints'' (*Summa theologiae,* 3a, 80.4), thus intimately linking the society or communion of the saints with the Eucharistic Communion. In an Augustinian phrase St. Thomas calls the heavenly Church ''the well ordered society of those who enjoy the vision of God'' (*C. gent.* 4.50); it is St. Thomas's view that citizenship in the city of God ''will not be annulled in the future world but perfected'' (*In 3 sent.* 33.1.4). For a similar use of the term society with respect to the heavenly Church, (see *Summa theologiae,* 1a2ae, 4.8; *De carit.* 2; *De vit. spir.* 2; *In 1 Cor.* 10. *lect.* 5; *In 3 sent.* 19.5.1). In St. Thomas the concept society emphasizes the community of life, the interdependence (the *ordo ad invicem*) of those who share in the same common good (here the *ordo ad Deum*).