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THEORY AND POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY

JONATHAN H. TURNER AND CHARLES POWERS

Introduction

Like many substantive areas of inquiry in the social sciences, political sociology is a mixture of conceptual distinctions, empirical descriptions, policy statements, and ideological proselytizing. The volume and diversity of the literature in political sociology attests to its intrinsic fascination and importance in understanding patterns of human organization. Yet, this very diversity underscores and highlights the intellectual disarray of work in this area. There are few guiding principles, accepted taxonomies, unchallenged empirical generalizations, and sacred policy truths. Indeed, there is not even a clear definition of the field.

How, then, are we to approach such a broad and ephemeral topic? The best way to begin is with a definition of what theory should be about in a field like political sociology. Theory should seek to generate understanding of the fundamental properties of some universe or domain. Hence, theory in political sociology must address a generic property of social systems around which all of the current literature revolves. This property is power. Human affairs are often typified by the existence of power, and thus, political sociology can be defined as that field which seeks to understand the properties of power and how these properties influence, and are influenced by, the creation, maintenance, and change of patterns of social organization.

With this provisional definition, we can begin a more detailed analysis of theory in political sociology. In the first section, the various theoretical

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strategies in sociology are examined, with particular emphasis on how they have influenced the field of political sociology. Then, in the remaining sections of this chapter, we will attempt to summarize and consolidate the theory of the nature of power in human affairs.

Theory in Sociology

Sociologists are in sharp disagreement over the proper approach to building theory. This disagreement is reflected in a number of divergent theoretical strategies, with the result that "theory" in sociology means different things to different scholars. This divergence also explains the problems with developing a succinct summary of theory in political sociology. In general, four strategies dominate theoretical activity in sociology: (1) the "covering law" or axiomatic approach; (2) the classificatory or taxonomic orientation; (3) the causal modeling strategy; and (4) the empirical regularities approach. Each of these is examined below.

The Covering Law or Axiomatic Approach

This approach views theory as a process of generating abstract principles or axioms from which specific deductions to the empirical realm are made. Such principles provide an explanation of empirical events when the deductions follow logically from the axioms. The axioms thus represent covering laws because they are invoked, and deductions from them are made, when the relationships among the abstract concepts that they contain are relevant to a particular set of empirical events (Homans, 1967; 1974).

A good many explanations in the physical and biological sciences are axiomatic, whereas comparatively few in sociology reveal this format. It is probably for this reason that the natural sciences are considered "more mature" than the social sciences in general and sociology, political science, and anthropology in particular. Rather than search for abstract laws or principles, sociologists are more likely to develop taxonomies, causal models, and descriptions of empirical regularities.

The Classificatory or Taxonomic Approach

Much of what is considered theory in sociology is, in reality, taxonomy. The essence of this approach is to construct an abstract classificatory scheme which is imposed on empirical events. The taxonomy orders a particular domain by accentuating its most important dimensions and their relations. Explanation thus consists of discovering the place of a set of empirical regularities within the abstract taxonomy.

The periodic table in chemistry, the Linnaean classification scheme, Max Weber's various ideal types on such matters as power, stratification, bureaucracy, and the like, and Talcott Parsons's complex "action scheme" (Parsons & Platt, 1973) all represent efforts to understand the world in terms of taxonomies. Sometimes the taxonomy is purported to explain empirical events and their relations, whereas at other times the taxonomy is considered to be a necessary prelude to developing the abstract principles of the axiomatic approach.

The Causal Modeling Approach

Far more than natural scientists, sociologists have been concerned with causality—that is, with determining how antecedent events produce subsequent events. Probably because multivariate correlational techniques lend themselves to sorting out the influence of variables on one another, causal modeling has become a prevalent form of theorizing in sociology. This strategy seeks understanding by identifying statistically observable connections among the variable properties of the social world. Causal models will thus reveal a time sequence of independent, intervening, and dependent variables. Variations in the dependent variables will be seen as "caused by" variations in the independent variables, as these influence variations in intervening variables (Duncan, 1975).

Such models tend to be less abstract than either axiomatic or taxonomic strategies since their power rests on showing how measurable variations in one set of empirical events account for measurable variations in other empirical occurrences. The result is that models are tied to specific measures of empirical variables in particular contexts. However, as soon as one abstracts away from the empirical world, the causal connections become more obscure and vague. For this reason, causal models are less frequently employed as explanations in the natural sciences than in the social sciences. More typically, statistical models are viewed as descriptions of particular events, but in sociology causal models have, since Max Weber's and Emile Durkheim's use of them, been considered to constitute theoretical explanations. Theory in political sociology has, likewise, been greatly taken with the causal-model strategy (Braungart, 1974).

The Empirical Regularities Approach

Explanation in sociology often involves little more than descriptions of regularities in the flow of empirical events. For example, the industrialization process is often considered to follow a general sequence and to reveal certain consequences for social structure, culture, and personality. With these general regularities in mind, particular events in concrete contexts are then "explained" by reference to these regularities. In this way, the demographic

transition, rising literacy, urbanization, and other events associated with modernization are considered to be understood with reference to what "usually occurs" during economic development (Parsons, 1966).

To use previous empirical regularities to understand subsequent regularities would not be considered an explanation in the natural sciences. Rather, such empirical regularities would be considered an explanandum in need of an explananda—that is, something requiring an explanation. But in the social sciences, particularly sociology, political science, and anthropology, articulation of regularities in the empirical world is often viewed as an explanation of those regularities.

Problems and Prospects in Various Theoretical Strategies

Each of these four theoretical strategies presents sociology with a number of problems. And much of the lack of theory in political sociology stems from the failure to recognize the strengths and weaknesses inherent in each strategy. The axiomatic approach allows for the development of relatively few abstract laws or principles which can then be applied, through the vehicle of logic, to many diverse empirical cases. The problem with this strategy is that it does not emphasize causality *per se,* only the affinities, covariance, and equivalence of phenomena. For example, $E = mc^2$ is an enormously powerful principle, but it does not state causality. Moreover, by their abstractness the connection between the principle and the empirical realm is often difficult to visualize. Yet, the development of such abstract principles remains the goal of all science. And to the degree that sociology fails to enunciate principles of human organization, it will remain an immature science. It follows that political sociology will not be a science until abstract principles on the properties of power and its relationship to other properties of the social world are developed.

When done well, the taxonomic approach has the advantage of isolating generic dimensions of the social world and providing categories for the classification of empirical phenomena. The periodic table, for instance, calls attention to the number of neutrons, protons, and electrons elements have. In this way, the universe is seen as orderly, stimulating a search for laws which can explain why such order should exist. Darwinian theory, for example, offered an explanation as to why it is possible to construct a Linnaean classification system. The problem with the taxonomic approach is that it often becomes an end in itself. There is overconcern in both finding the place of an empirical event in the taxonomy and enumerating new categories. Much of political science and sociology has involved enumeration of categories, taxonomies, and classification schemes. Little is wrong with such efforts in themselves, as long as their descriptive (as opposed to explanatory) and pre-theoretical character is recognized. Yet, the lack of powerful abstract principles attests to the failure of sociologists to move beyond their comfortable taxonomies.

Causal models possess the advantage of allowing analysts to visualize connections among variables and sequences of events over time. Axiomatic and taxonomic strategies do not necessarily trace causal connections, and thus, if one is concerned with causality, these strategies will pose problems. Yet, causal models have a major limitation: the specific "causes" of a phenomenon are often idiosyncratic to a particular time period or context. As a result, it can prove extremely difficult to generalize causal models beyond such particulars. Secondly, even if more generic variables are part of the causal model, these models cannot become too abstract without losing the very attribute which makes them useful—namely, the capacity to trace connections among specific events. For as the variables become increasingly abstract in order to embrace greater time periods and more empirical contexts, the particulars of situations must be eliminated, with the result that less and less variance in the variables of interest can be explained. Thirdly, causal models create regress problems of the nature: What caused *a*? *b* caused *a*. What, then, caused *b*? *c* caused *b*. What, then, caused *c*? And so on. Causal analysis is thus important for descriptive purposes, but its ability to generate abstract principles is limited by the necessity of remaining tied to the flow of empirical events.

The empirical regularities approach offers the advantage of allowing investigators to see general trends in the social world. Yet, it is primarily a descriptive strategy which generates statements of empirical regularities which require explanation. Often, "explanations" of regularities involve construction of causal models, but these models only make the description more precise. The result is that much of what is termed "explanation" in sociology is little more than detailed descriptions of present (and perhaps historical) conditions.

As these remarks emphasize, there are many problems in using taxonomies, causal models, and statements of empirical regularities as explanatory devices. These "theoretical" approaches are, in reality, useful descriptive methodologies. In their own ways, they each allow for ordering the complexity of empirical events. And hence, they can be enormously useful in inducing more abstract theoretical principles or in presenting data for the testing of hypotheses deduced from existing axioms. We have emphasized these facts because almost every area of inquiry in sociology is guided, or misguided, by descriptive methodologies. Too often, these methodologies are considered theory, and as a consequence, sociology abounds with "theories of" almost any substantive phenomena, such as juvenile delinquency, marital discord, demographic transitions, modernization, ethnic relations, collective behavior, or political decision making.

Political sociology is particularly vulnerable to this use of empirical

descriptions as theoretical explanation. The consequence of this vulnerability is for "theory" in political sociology to constitute a grab bag of taxonomies, statements of causal connections, and summaries of empirical regularities. One is far more likely to find "theories of" public-opinion formation (Robinson, 1976), voting behavior (Burnham, 1974), interest group behavior (Almy, 1973; Jenkins & Perrow, 1977), protest movements (Kritzer, 1977), revolutions (Chirot & Ragin, 1975), world systems (Research Working Group, 1979), political extremism (Hoffer, 1951), and other empirical events than abstract statements on the properties of power in human social systems. Theory in political sociology, as in all areas of inquiry that are intrinsically interesting and policy relevant, is poorly developed.

This situation obviously presents a chapter on theory in political sociology with an immediate crisis: the lack of a clear subject matter. The solution to this problem is to examine the existing literature that purports to be theoretical and extract, where possible, abstract principles on the properties and dynamics of power. In this way, we can review the existing conceptual literature and create a subject matter for this chapter on theory in political sociology.

In the following sections, the principles of sociology's first masters will be extracted. Then, the major contemporary theoretical perspectives in sociology will be explored, with an eye to seeing what theoretical principles they contain. And finally, an effort to induce the more abstract principles from the largely descriptive literature on political sociology will be made. In this way, a tentative beginning at developing theoretical principles on one of the most important dimensions of human organization—power—can be initiated.

Theoretical Models and Principles of the Early Masters

Sociology emerged as a self-conscious discipline in the early 1800s. Enlightenment thinkers in France and political moralists in the British Isles had, of course, set the stage for sociology in the eighteenth century (Turner & Beeghley, 1981). But the convergence of social thought and science did not occur until the second decade of the nineteenth century. The forging of this convergence was performed by Auguste Comte in his *Course of Positive Philosophy* (1830–1842/1854) and his *System of Positive Polity* (1851–1854/1875–1877). Neither of these works presents any major theoretical insights on political processes, but the vision of a "science of society" is worthy of our consideration.

Auguste Comte and "The Science of Society"

Comte preferred the term "social physics" to sociology. The reason for this preference was twofold. First, before the term "physics" was usurped by a particular natural science, it denoted a search into the character of the fundamental properties of structure and growth in nature. Social physics was, therefore, to involve a search for the fundamental structural elements and dynamics of society. Second, Comte accepted the approach of natural science, particularly the emerging discipline of physics. He held Newton's law of gravitation as the ideal for sociological theory. This ideal stressed that sociological laws would state the fundamental relations among social phenomena. Causality, function, and empirical description were to be less important than a search for the laws of affinity among social events. As he underscored (1851/1875, p. 4):

> the first characteristic of Positive Philosophy is that it regards all phenomena as subject to invariable natural *Laws*. Our business is,—seeing how vain is any research into what are called *Causes*, whether first or final,—to pursue an accurate discovery of these Laws, with a view to reducing them to the smallest possible number. By speculating upon causes, we could solve no difficulty about origin and purpose. Our real business is to analyse accurately the circumstances of phenomena, and to connect them by the natural relations of succession and resemblance. The best illustration of this is in the case of the doctrine of Gravitation. (emphasis in original)

If this original vision of sociology had been followed, it is likely that all sociological theory would be more developed. But as later scholars began to explore social phenomena, particularly the dynamics of power, they increasingly failed to heed Comte's advice. Yet, despite the increasing emphasis on models, taxonomies, and description, they achieved considerable insight into the nature—or physics—of political processes. And as we will attempt to demonstrate, these insights can be reformulated as abstract principles.

Herbert Spencer on Political Processes

Much of the commentary on the first British sociologist, Herbert Spencer, condemns his naive evolutionism, his laissez-faire ideology, his extreme organicism, and his functionalism. Most of these critiques are based on a partial, selective, and biased reading of Spencer. For while his earliest work is replete with laissez-faire moralizing (1850/1888), his purely sociological works (1873, 1874–1896) are anything but naive, extreme, or overly functional. On the contrary, they are filled with insights on the dialectical and developmental dynamics of human systems. Moreover, in passages which modern sociologists would do well to emulate, Spencer translated his models into interesting and provocative theoretical principles. In our review of Spencer on political processes, we focus first on his developmental and dialectical models and then on how these models can be translated into a series of abstract principles.

Spencer's Developmental Model. Spencer saw the evolution of societies as involving an increase in the differentiation of structures along three major axes: (1) the regulatory, (2) the operative, and (3) the distributive. The regulatory axis concerns internal and external control, and hence, it will be the center of power in a social system. The operative axis concerns internal productive processes within a system, whereas the distributive axis embodies those structures involved in the movement of human, material, and symbolic resources in a system.

Spencer's model of development is diagramed in Figure 1. This figure is constructed from Spencer's analytical and descriptive statements in *The Principles of Sociology* (1874–1896). This model can be viewed as both descriptive and theoretical. At the descriptive level, it chronicles the sequence of differentiation among and within the regulatory, operative, and distributive axes as societal social systems move from simple, undifferentiated forms to modern, industrial forms. Moreover, it is a taxonomy of stages in the differentiation of societal systems. In both cases, the model surpasses in accuracy and power all others developed in the nineteenth century and is still the equal of those developed in recent decades (Lenski, 1966; Lenski & Lenski, 1978; Parsons, 1966, 1971).

At a more theoretical level, the model implies several propositions about political differentiation. First, the initial point of differentiation in societies occurs between regulatory and operative processes. Only later, when the volume and diversity of transactions and movements in societies increase do separate distributive structures develop. Secondly, differentiation within the regulatory system reveals a cycle of consolidation of power, expansion, and further consolidation through even more complex forms of government. Thus, the organization of power in social systems tends to be episodic and a positive function of expansion in operative and distributive processes. These more analytical statements have implications for theory in political sociology. Yet, it is Spencer's analysis of the internal dialectics of social systems where these theoretical implications are most evident.

Spencer's Dialectical Model. Spencer felt that during their development, social systems go through a cycle where power becomes highly centralized and then less centralized. Spencer saw centralization as primarily either a response to environmental threats and conflict or a response to extreme internal diversity. But he also recognized that the processes of centralization and decentralization of power are fundamentally linked to the processes of differentiation and integration in social systems (Spencer, 1874). Social systems will be centralized rapidly under conditions of external or internal threat, but in addition to these forces, they possess an inherent dialectic in which decentralized systems experience pressures for increased centralization while highly centralized systems evidence pressures for less direct control by centralized authority. Contrary to much of the commentary

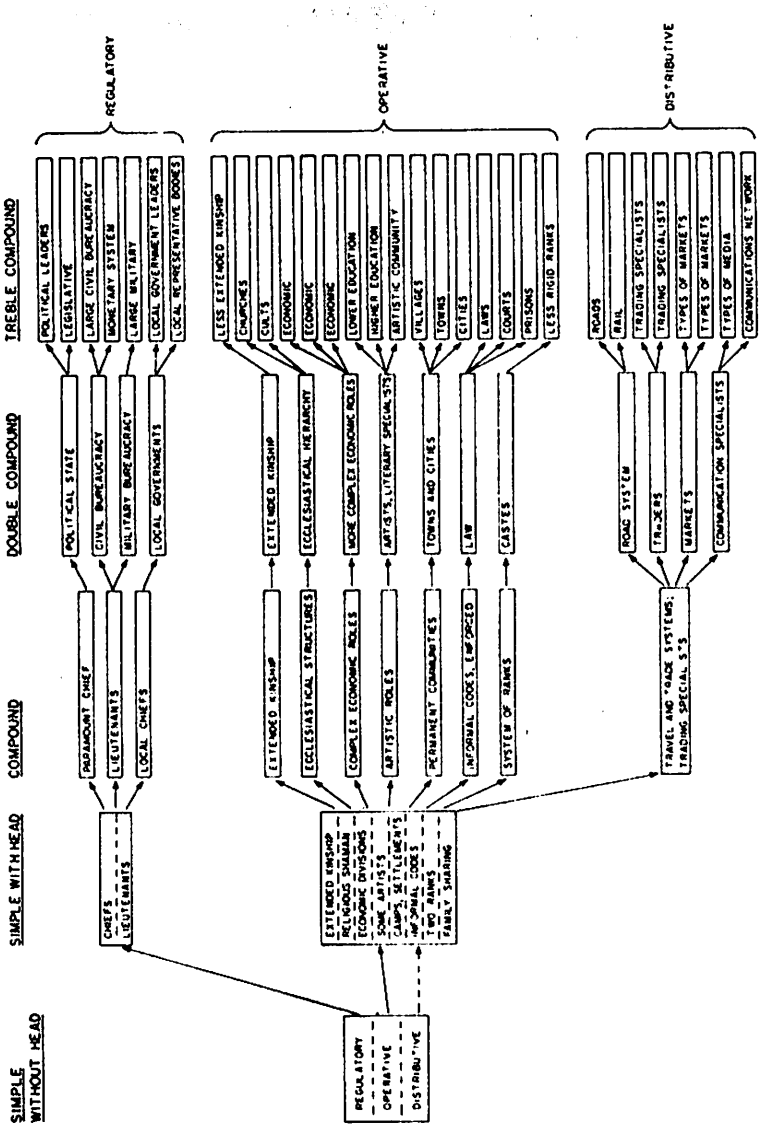

Figure 1. Spencer's model of evolutionary development.

on Spencer (e.g., Coser, 1977), it is this cyclical process that Spencer denoted with his distinction between "militant" and "industrial" societies. Too often, this distinction is viewed as an evolutionary sequence, but such a view represents one of the most consistent misreadings of Spencer's *The Principles of Sociology* (1876, Vol. 1, pp. 449–597). For Spencer, "militant" denotes the degree of centralization of power and control of internal system processes, whereas "industrial" refers not to a particular mode of economic production (such as industrial capitalism) but to the deregulation of internal-system processes. Hence, both traditional and modern societies can be either militant or industrial—a point of emphasis that is ignored in efforts to view Spencer's distinction between militant and industrial as denoting a unievolutionary trend. When this fact is recognized, a model such as that diagrammed in Figure 2 emerges. If we begin analysis of Figure 2 with the phases at box 1, as Spencer would have intended, then the cycle is initiated with differentiation and diversification of the system and its constituent parts. Such growth leads to integrative problems which increase with further diversifications of units (box 2), eventually creating pressures for consolidation of differentiated and diversified units (box 3). At some point, and under variable empirical conditions, these pressures lead to centralization of power (box 4) which results in tight control of internal operative and distributive processes by regulatory centers (box 5). Over time, such control creates stagnation by limiting the developmental options of system units (box 6), with the result that pressures for deregulation mount (box 7). At some point, under a variety of empirical conditions, these pressures lead to decentralization (box 8) which sets off a new wave of differentiation and diversification (box 1).

This model, which appears in *The Principles of Sociology* (1876, pp. 576–587), supplements Spencer's general view of evolution by specifying the more rhythmic cycles that occur during growth and differentiation of societal social systems. Yet, as provocative as these models are, it is their translation into abstract theoretical principles that marks Spencer's contribution to political sociology. For as Spencer recognized, properties of power such as its distribution and centralization are intimately connected to such generic variables as system size, differentiation, diversity, and threat.

Spencer's Theoretical Principles. While Spencer did not state most of his principles as propositions, it is not difficult to translate them into statements of covariance. In Table 1, Spencer's 14 theoretical principles from *The Principles of Sociology* (1874–1896) are listed under two headings: (1) system size differentiation and (2) internal differentiation. For Spencer, growth and differentiation are fundamentally interconnected, as is summarized in principles 1–4. But it is in principles 5–14 that the implications of differentiation for political processes are enumerated. As principles 5–8 underscore, differentiation occurs initially along the regulatory and operative axes and then along the distributive axis. These patterns of differentiation

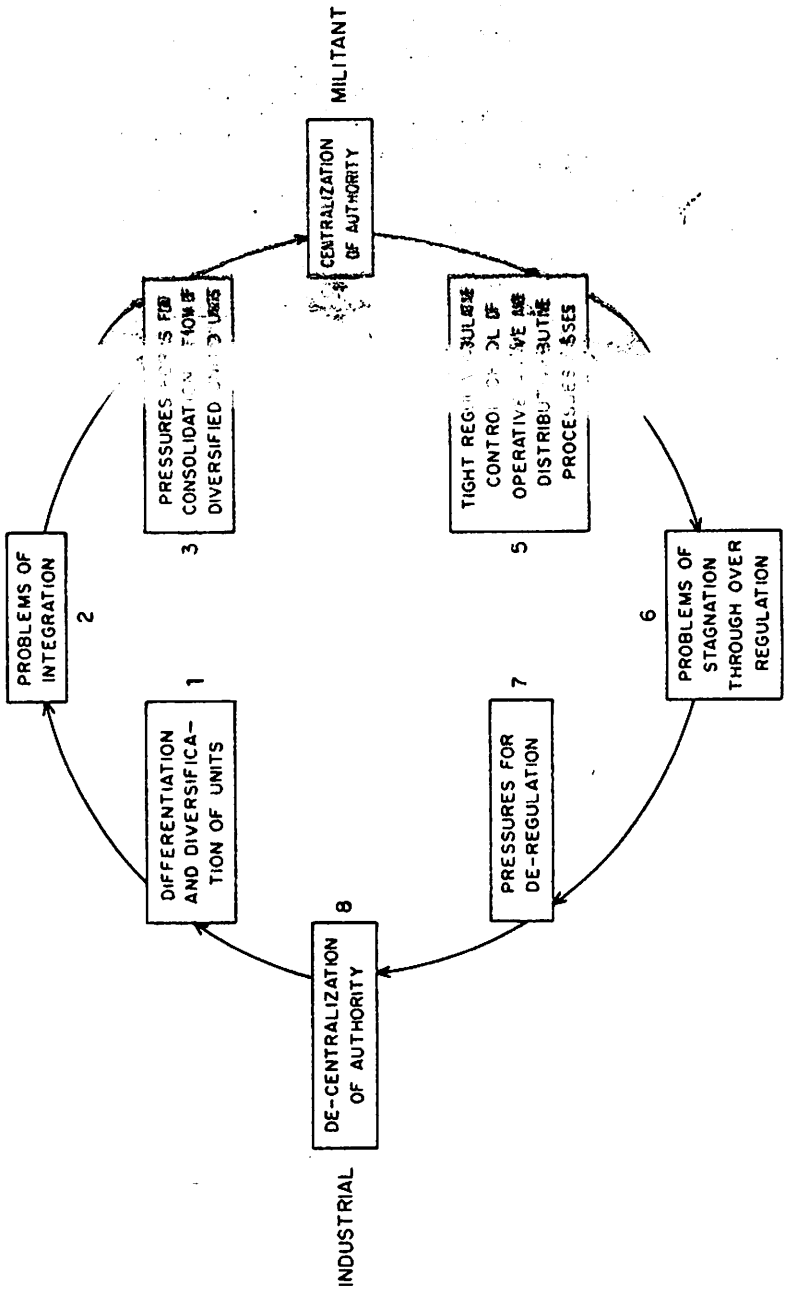

Figure 2. Spencer's dialectical model.

Table 1. Spencer's Major Theoretical Principles

System Size and Differentiation

1. The larger is a social system, the greater will be its level of structural differentiation.
2. The greater is the rate of growth of a social system, the greater is its rate and degree of structural differentiation.
3. The more growth in the numbers of members in a social system is concentrated, the more likely is that growth to be accompanied by high rates of structural differentiation.
4. The more growth and differentiation at one point in time has resulted in structural integration of system units, the more likely is that system to grow and differentiate further at a subsequent point in time.

Internal Differentiation

5. The more a social system has initiated the process of structural differentiation, the more likely is the initial axis of differentiation to be between regulatory and operative structures.
6. The more a social system has differentiated separate regulatory and operative structures and the greater the volume of activity in that system, the more likely are separate mediating structures involved in distributive processes to become differentiated from regulatory and operative structures.
7. The more differentiated the three major axes in a social system, the greater its integrative problems, and hence, the more likely are relations of mutual inderdependence and centralized authority to develop in that system.
8. The greater is the degree of differentiation along the regulatory axes, the more likely is differentiation to occur initially between structures dealing with (a) the external environment and (b) internal activities; and only after the differentiation of (a) and (b) is differentiation of regulatory structures for facilitating the exchange of resources likely to occur.
9. The greater is the degree of differentiation along the operative axes, the more likely are diverse activities to become spatially separated and localized.
10. The greater is the degree of external environmental threat to a differentiating system, the greater is the degree of internal control exercised by the regulatory system.
11. The greater is the degree of threat to system stability posed by dissimilar units, the greater is the degree of internal control exercised by the regulatory system.
12. The greater is the degree of control by the regulatory system, the more is growth and differentiation of operative and distributive structures circumscribed by the narrow goals of the regulatory system.
13. The more operative and regulatory structures are circumscribed by centralized regulatory structures, the more likely are they, over time, to resist such control, and the more they resist, the more likely is control to decrease.
14. The less operative and distributive processes are circumscribed by centralized regulatory structures, the greater are problems of internal integration and the more likely is the regulatory system to increase efforts at centralized control.

create integrative problems for a social system, which escalates pressures for centralization of power. Principles 5, 8, and 9 describe the pattern of such centralization. Principles 10 and 11 specify internal and external conditions that increase the degree of centralization of power. Principles 12–14 summarize the dialectical nature of centralized power. For as power is centralized, it creates conditions for decentralization, and conversely, decentralized power in a differentiating system will, over time, increase the probability of centralization, especially under conditions of internal diversity and external threat.

These 14 principles have rarely been acknowledged by political sociologists, who typically condemn Spencer's political ideology. But this ideology rarely intrudes into Spencer's formal sociological work—certainly no more so than in the work of any other social scientist. It can be concluded, we believe, that these principles contain as much insight into the properties and dynamics of power as those developed by others of the last century. As we will continue to argue, much "political theory" in sociology has involved rediscovery of Spencer's fundamental insights.

Karl Marx's Models and Principles

Karl Marx did not, of course, subscribe to the notion that scientific theory could develop universal laws. Rather, theory could be used to discover the essential workings of a given historical epoch and these workings could be expressed as a series of relational statements, as was done, for example, in *Capital* (1867–1894/1967). Yet, in Marx's analysis of power and in his fervent advocacy of revolution, he developed models and principles which capture at least some of the generic properties and dynamics of power in social systems. But we should emphasize—indeed, warn—that our discussion of Marx will not be "Marxian" in either his sense, or in the senses of the somewhat diverse and confused array of scholars who go by the title of Marxists. Our analysis will treat Marx seriously as a theorist—indeed, as a social "physicist."

Marx's Theoretical Model. Marx's great insight, we feel, was to link the distribution of power, and the manner of its use, to the nature of economic production. Technology—that is, knowledge about how to manipulate the environment—determines the nature of productive activity and the organization of work. In turn, the nature of economic organization determines the distribution of power. By virtue of owning and controlling the productive apparatus in a society, power is invested in the hands of a few who can use their control over the means of production to influence the distribution of other valuable resources, such as material goods and prestige. They can also control the profile of institutional complexes and cultural symbols that regulate and mobilize sentiments and activity. But Marx also saw that the concentration of power produces resistance, especially as the power to control system activity is used to escalate deprivations and to generate alienation.

Marx's analysis can be viewed at either an abstract or an empirical level. At the empirical level, the analysis is of societies and of how ownership of property creates classes and the conditions favorable to class consciousness, political mobilization, conflict, and altered patterns of property and power. At a more abstract and analytical level, Marx's model deals with the

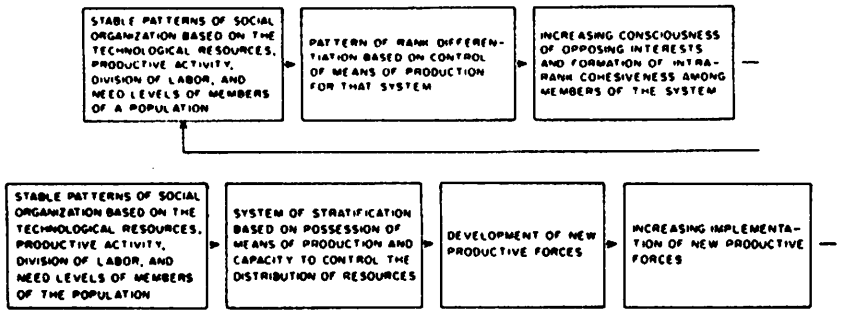

Figure 3. Marx's abstract and empirical models.

relationship of technology, productive activity, and organization of power for any social system and with how the existence of power differentials produces conditions favoring reorganization of the system. These two types of models are presented in Figure 3 (Turner & Beeghley, 1981). As can be seen from the models, Marx saw movement from one stage to another as the result of certain conditions. It is in specifying these conditions that he began to develop some abstract principles on the distribution and redistribution of power in social systems.

Marx's Theoretical Principles. In Table 2, we have summarized Marx's basic theoretical principles (Turner & Beeghley, 1981). Principles 1–3 simply document Marx's assertion that technology, production, differentiation, and population size are fundamentally interrelated. In this assertion, Marx's analysis is not much different than Spencer's (1876) or Durkheim's (1893/1964). Propositions 4 and 5, however, begin to make Marx's statements more unique. Here it is recognized that there are three primary bases for system integration: (1) concentration of power, (2) stratification, and (3) cultural unification. Furthermore, there is clear understanding that the concentration of power will determine the profile of stratification and cultural symbols. Propositions 6–9 summarize, at an abstract level, Marx's statements on the conditions under which power begets counterpower and consequent efforts to diffuse the power of elites. Propositions 10 and 11 simply describe what Marx thought—or hoped—would be the outcome of organized opposition. Had Marx paid more attention to specifying the conditions under which propositions 10 and 11 hold true (as he does for 6–9), his principles would be even more useful.

As they stand, these principles link the dynamics of power to the broader structure of a social system. They contain insights that are not confined only to societal social systems. Rather, they capture some of the important dynamics of power in all types of social systems, for they specify some of the most generic conditions under which power produces organized resistance

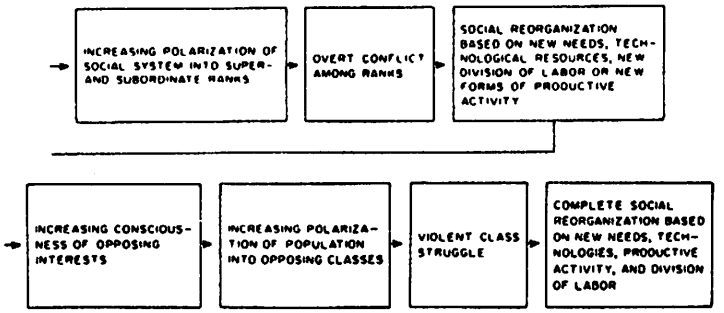

Figure 3. (*continued*)

and the redistribution of power. It is our belief that this is Marx's major theoretical contribution. While his analysis of capitalism and his predictions of the future are intriguing and often correct, his enduring contribution to science (a contribution which would have been of little interest to him) is in the principles enumerated in Table 2. They will form the core of political theory long after Marx's empirical work is forgotten or viewed as a historical and ideological curiosity.

Emile Durkheim's Theoretical Principles

Emile Durkheim devoted his intellectual career to outlining the varying bases of integration in social systems. In this broad effort, he frequently made reference to power as a source of integration. But as is well known, his moral commitments forced him to emphasize the significance of ideas or cultural symbols in providing system integration. He consistently failed to recognize, or was not particularly bothered by, Marx's insight that ideas are often the tools of oppression. Yet, a consistent theme in Durkheim's writing is his distrust of centralized power unbridled by sources of counterpower. Borrowing from Tocqueville, he felt that while centralized power is necessary for system integration, it will be abused unless it is mitigated by other sources of political authority. Indeed, he saw his famous "occupational groups" of workers communally organized around various societal functions as a political force which provided not just representatives to the federal government but also a check on potential abuses of powers. Moreover, power is analyzed only in relation to how it, along with other sources of integration, can contribute to a stable, just, and cohesive society (Durkheim, 1893/1964).

Despite these moral overtones, Durkheim's analysis of societal integration in both its "normal" and "pathological" states provides considerable insight into its relationship to social organization. In this analysis, no clear model of political processes emerges, as was the case with Spencer and Marx.

Table 2. Marx's Theoretical Principles

1. The greater is the level of technological resources available to members of a population, the greater is their productive activity, and conversely, the greater the productive activity of a population, the more likely is the level of technology to increase, setting into motion increased productivity.
2. The greater is the level of productive activity among members of a population, the more likely is that population to reveal high levels of social differentiation, and conversely, the greater the social differentiation, the more likely is productivity to increase, setting into motion pressures for increased differentiation.
3. The greater are the levels of productivity and social differentiation in a system, the greater is the capacity of that system to support a larger population, and by implication, the larger the population, the greater are the pressures for increased productivity and social differentiation.
4. The larger is the population and the greater is the degree of social differentiation, the more is integration among members of that population achieved, at least in the short run, through the rank differentiation and concentration of power.
5. The greater the levels of rank differentiation and concentration of power, the more likely are belief and normative systems to be controlled by those with power and used to legitimate the inequalities in the distribution of scarce resources that are associated with rank differentiation.
6. The more unequal the distribution of scarce resources in a system, the greater will be the conflict of interest between dominant and subordinate segments in that system.
   A. The more those with power use this power to consolidate their control over other resources, the more unequal the distribution of scarce resources in a system.
   B. The more those with power seek to limit the upward mobility of those in lower ranks, the more unequal the distribution of scarce resources in a system.
7. The more subordinate segments become aware of their true collective interests, the more likely they are to question the legitimacy of the unequal distribution of scarce resources.
   A. The more social changes wrought by dominant segments disrupt existing relations among subordinates, the more likely are the latter to become aware of their true collective interests.
   B. The more practices of dominant segments create alienative dispositions among subordinates, the more likely are the latter to become aware of their true collective interests.
   C. The more members of subordinate segments can communicate their grievances to each other, the more likely they are to become aware of their true collective interests.
      (1) The more spatial concentration of members of subordinate groups, the more likely are they to communicate their grievances.
      (2) The more subordinates have access to educational media, the more diverse the means of their communication, and the more likely are they to communicate their grievances.
   D. The more subordinate segments can develop unifying systems of beliefs, the more likely they are to become aware of their true collective interests.
      (1) The greater the capacity to recruit or generate ideological spokespersons, the more likely ideological unification.
      (2) The less the ability of dominant groups to regulate the socialization processes and communication networks in a system, the more likely ideological unification.
8. The more subordinate segments of a system are aware of their collective interests, the greater their questioning of the legitimacy in the distribution of scarce resources and the more likely they are to organize and initiate overt conflict against dominant segments of a system.
   A. The more the deprivations of subordinates move from an absolute to a relative basis, the more likely they are to organize and initiate conflict.
   B. The less the ability of dominant groups to make manifest their collective interests, the more likely are subordinate groups to organize and initiate conflict.
   C. The greater the ability of subordinate groups to develop a leadership structure, the more likely they are to organize and initiate conflict.
9. The more subordinate segments are unified by a common belief and the more developed their political leadership structure, the more the dominant and subjugated segments of a social system will become polarized.
10. The more polarized the dominant and subjugated, the more violent will be the ensuing conflict.
11. The more violent the conflict, the greater will be the structural change of the system and the redistribution of scarce resources.

Rather, only a series of provocative principles can be discerned. These are summarized in Table 3 (Durkheim, 1893/1964, 1897/1951). Propositions 1–3 document Durkheim's demographic and ecological vision of societal differentiation. Propositions 4–9 present his view of "normal" integrative processes in differentiating systems. Values and beliefs become general, but are made concrete through clear norms within and between groupings which emerge around specific role activities. Power becomes centralized, but it is balanced by subgroups. And social control emphasizes restitution and reintegration rather than punishment and banishment. Propositions 10–15 analyze "abnormal" and "pathological" states and forms of integration in social systems. Principles 10–13 summarize Durkheim's arguments on egoism, anomie, and poor coordination. Proposition 14 emphasizes Durkheim's belief that centralization of power is a major source of system integration, for without such centralization, integrative problems increase. Proposition 14, however, stresses that unchecked power creates severe tensions within and among system units. And proposition 15 argues that for a system to be integrated, talents and rewards must be seen as correlated.

Within these principles is a fundamental insight. The dynamics of power can only be understood with reference to the processes of differentiation, value generalization, subgroup formation, and normative specification of exchanges within and between system units. Theoretical efforts to understand power must therefore involve statements of the conditions under which centralization of power is, or is not, balanced by subgroups as sources of counterpower, generalized cultural symbols, and normative clarity. It is through the relations among these forces, Durkheim argued, that the dynamics of power in social systems are to be understood.

Table 3. Durkheim's Theoretical Principles

1. The greater the concentration of a population, the greater the social contact, and hence, the greater the rate of interaction among members of that population.
2. The greater the rates of interaction among a concentrated population, the greater the competition over scarce resources among members of that population.
3. The greater the competition for resources among members of a population, the more likely are members of that population to become socially differentiated.
4. The greater the degree of system differentiation, the more generalized are the values, beliefs, and other evaluational symbols of that system.
5. The greater the degree of differentiation and value generalization, the more likely is normative specification of evaluational premises for relations within and between social units.
6. The greater the degree of differentiation and value generalization, the more likely are subgroups to form around similar or related role activities.
7. The greater the degree of differentiation and value generalization, the more likely is coordination of activity to be vested in a centralized authority.
8. The greater the degree of centralized authority in a differentiated system revealing subgroups, the more likely are subgroups to become centers of counterauthority mitigating the centralized authority system.
9. The greater the degree of differentiation and value generalization in a system, the more likely are sanctions against deviance to be restitutive than punitive.
10. The greater the degree of structural differentiation and value generalization, without a corresponding degree of normative specification, the greater is the level of anomie in a system, and hence the more likely are individuals to be poorly integrated into that system and the greater is the rate of deviance in that system.
11. The greater the degree of structural differentiation and value generalization, without a corresponding degree of subgroup formation, the greater is the level of egoism in a system, and hence the more likely are individuals to be poorly integrated into that system and the greater is the rate of deviance in that system.
12. The greater the differentiation and value generalization in a social system, and the less the normative specification of relations among social units, then the less is the coordination of units, and hence, the less integrated is the system.
13. The greater the differentiation and generalization of values in a social system, and the less the centralization of authority, then the less is the coordination of units, and hence, the less integrated is that system.
14. The greater the differentiation, value generalization, and centralization of authority in a social system, and the less the countervailing power of subgroups, then the greater is the level of tension between those with and without power, and hence, the less integrated is the system.
15. The greater the differentiation and value generalization in a social system, and the less the correlation perceived to exist between the distribution of scarce resources and talents, then the greater is the level of tension between those with and without resources, and hence, the less integrated is the system.

Vilfredo Pareto's Models and Principles

Vilfredo Pareto is often remembered for his use of awkward terms such as "sentiments," "derivations," and "residues." And in political sociology, his description of personality types and the circulation of economic elites ("speculators" and "rentiers") and political elites ("lions" and "foxes") is often

cited and then forgotten. Rarely have scholars sought to go beyond Pareto's terminology and examine the more general model and principles of his sociology. In our review of Pareto, we will abandon his terminology in favor of more modern labels and we will emphasize the structural (as opposed to personality) dynamics that Pareto examined.

Pareto's Equilibrium Model of Social System Change. Throughout his long and varied intellectual career, Pareto employed the frequently misunderstood concept of "equilibrium." For Pareto, this concept merely denoted that the properties of social systems are interrelated and that change in one part would create pressures for change in other parts. Moreover, inherent in Pareto's analysis is the notion of structural contradiction: social systems create the conditions for their own transformation and tend to cycle between identifiable states. With the concepts of equilibrium and cyclical change, Pareto initially sought to describe the general tendencies of social systems. This description took the form of the model presented in Figure 4.

In Figure 4, the basic properties of social systems are considered to be (1) political power, (2) economic productivity, and (3) cultural beliefs. As is evident, these properties vary in a discernible pattern between states of high and low productivity, centralized and decentralized power, and innovative and traditional beliefs. The cycle is initiated by changes in either productivity or power, but once initiated the three elements move in the pattern depicted in the figure. Centralization of power occurs coterminously with declining productivity, whereas increases in productivity are accompanied by decentralization of power. After a lag, beliefs are altered toward an innovative and liberal profile during periods of decentralization and expanded productivity; conversely, they are changed toward a more traditional and conservative profile during periods of decreased productivity and political centralization (Powers, 1980; Powers, Turner, & Beeghley, 1981).

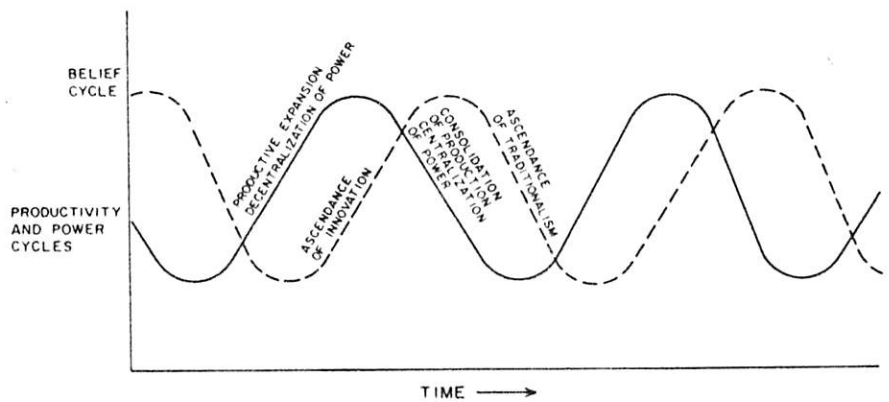

Figure 4. States of social systems reflecting cycles of productivity, power, and beliefs.

Table 4. Pareto's Theoretical Principles on Political Processes

The Cycle of Power

1. The greater is the degree of decentralized decision making in a social system, the greater will be the use of cooptation as a means of social control.
2. The more continued is the use of cooptation as a means of social control in a social system, the greater are the number and diversity of control activities.
3. The greater is the number and diversity of control activities in a social system, the more likely are problems of coordination and control to increase.
4. The more problems of coordination and control in a social system increase, the more likely are efforts at consolidation and centralization of power to increase.
5. The more efforts at consolidation and centralization of power increase in a previously decentralized social system, the greater is the resistance from diverse system units.
6. The greater is the resistance to efforts at consolidation and centralization of power in a previously decentralized social system, the more likely is force, or the threat of force, to be used as a means of social control.
7. The greater and more prolonged the use of force as a means of social control in a social system, the more likely, over the long run, are system units to resist centralized power and to initiate pressures for the decentralization of power.

The Dialectic of Productivity and Cultural Beliefs

8. The greater is the level of economic productivity in a social system, the greater will be the depletion of capital, and the greater is the likelihood over time of lessened productivity; and conversely, the less is the level of economic productivity, the greater will be the accumulation of capital, and the greater is the likelihood over time of increased productivity.
9. The more cultural values and beliefs resemble a liberal profile in a social system, the more they become diverse ambiguities over time, and the greater are the pressures in the population for the coherence and clarity of traditional cultural directive; and conversely, the more cultural values and beliefs resemble a traditional profile in a social system, the more they begin over time to contradict people's actual experiences, and the greater are the pressures in the population for the existential relevance of liberal cultural directives.

The Interrelations of Political, Economic, and Cultural Dialectics

10. The greater is the level of production and decentralization in a social system, and the greater is the rate of movement of cultural directives toward a liberal profile, then the greater are the number of exploiters and avenues for cooptive exploitation in that system.
11. The greater is the number of exploiters and avenues of exploitation in a decentralized social system, then the more likely are inequities to increase and the greater is the level of alienation among nonelites in that system.
12. The greater is the level of alienation of nonelites in a social system, the more likely are they to become aware of inequalities, to resist exploitation, and to debunk cultural beliefs.
13. The greater are the efforts of nonelites to resist exploitation by decentralized elites in a social system, the more likely are elites to begin centralizing power and using coercive force.
14. The more power becomes centralized in a predominantly decentralized social system, then (a) the more productivity becomes contracted in a previously expanding economic system, (b) the less the number of avenues for exploitation, and (c) the more likely are cultural directives to become traditional in profile.
15. The greater is the degree of centralization and decrease in productivity in a social system, and the greater is the rate of movement of cultural directives toward a traditional profile, then the greater is the level of exploitation through appropriation of resources by a few elites.

Table 4. (*continued*)

16. The greater is the level of exploitation by centralized elites in a social system, the more likely inequalities are to increase, the greater is the level of alienation of nonelites, the more are nonelites aware of inequalities, and the more likely are nonelites to resist exploitation and debunk cultural beliefs.
17. The greater are the efforts of nonelites to resist exploitation by a centralized elite in a social system, the more likely are elites to become decentralized, the more likely are cooptive means of exploitation to be initiated, and the more likely are beliefs to shift toward a liberal profile.

While external forces can initiate the cycle, Pareto emphasized that the internal dynamics of the economy and political system, especially as they interact with each other and cultural beliefs, will assure that the general pattern depicted in Figure 4 will occur. As Pareto began to explain why this pattern should prevail, he developed some theoretical principles on political processes in social systems.

Pareto's Theoretical Principles. Pareto's theoretical principles focus on the pattern of change among the three cycles illustrated in Figure 4 and on the relationships among power, productivity, and beliefs. His analysis is extremely complex and only some of the key propositions can be discussed here. In Table 4, we have delineated the most important principles on political processes in Pareto's analysis.

Pareto's principles tend to be complex and numerous because they express curvilinear relationships over time. Yet, by dividing his principles into three headings, the nature of his analysis becomes evident. As principles 1–7 underscore, Pareto saw force and cooptation as the opposite extremes of power. The use of force involves centralization of power and creates pressures for decentralization of power and the use of cooptive techniques, but conversely, cooptation sets into motion pressures for centralization of power and the use of force.

This cyclical process is inherent in the nature of power, but it is accelerated or retarded by dialectical processes in economic productivity and cultural beliefs. As the principles emphasize, economic decentralization increases the number of avenues of economic exploitation and, in so doing, escalates inequalities and alienation. In turn, these create integrative problems which can be resolved only by the increasing use of force. The use of force to integrate a system fosters the centralization of power. But as power becomes centralized with force as the major mechanism of social control, new forms of exploitation by economic and political elites emerge, inequalities increase, and alienation escalates. Eventually, these create conditions favoring the decentralization of power.

Cultural beliefs also influence these political processes directly and indirectly through their impact on the economic cycle. As is stressed in Table 4, innovative values and beliefs create pressures for more traditional cultural

premises, and vice versa. Innovative values and beliefs also encourage decentralization of power and investment in economic expansion, whereas conservative beliefs legitimate centralization of power and decreased investment. In so doing, they encourage and accelerate movement toward the diverse forms of exploitation, inequality, and alienation that come with either a high or low degree of political centralization (Pareto, 1901/1968, 1916/1935).

Many of Spencer's, Marx's, and Durkheim's insights can be found in these principles. Power is linked to both economic and cultural variables and is seen to cycle between centralized and decentralized states. And theoretical understanding of power, as with Spencer, Marx, and Durkheim, is seen as coming from abstract statements that articulate the relationship of centralized and decentralized power to its own internal dialectic and to processes in the broader society, particularly cultural beliefs, patterns of inequality, alienation, and accumulated frustrations.

Max Weber's Models and Principles

In many ways, Max Weber was not a theorist. Such a statement runs counter to much of the conventional wisdom on Weber, but if we examine his works carefully, it is clear that he was more an "institutional ethnographer" than a theorist. He desired to describe the critical properties of social events as they unfolded historically. True, he also sought to compare societies, extract their common properties, and make generalizations about these common properties. But Weber's methods reveal his descriptive concerns: (1) the use of the ideal type as an analytical yardstick for comparing diverse systems; (2) the use of empirical generalizations to capture the common events of societies; and (3) the development of causal models to describe the sequence of events in particular historical processes. Rarely does one find in these descriptive techniques an effort to abstract above historical and empirical events and to state the fundamental relations among social phenomena. While Spencer, Marx, Durkheim, and Pareto were all concerned with describing the flow of empirical events, their analyses are easily translated into more abstract principles. Such is not the case with Weber. Conversely, Weber's descriptions are more insightful than those of his predecessors and contemporaries.

What, then, can Weber tell us, theoretically, about power? Despite his descriptive concerns, Weber's analyses do yield some interesting theoretical insights. But these must be culled out of the many volumes of descriptive material.

Weber's Models of Power. Weber's analysis of power is confined primarily to (a) understanding its shifting basis of legitimacy and (b) relating different bases of legitimacy to changing patterns of social organization. In these dual concerns, Weber constructed, at least implicitly, two interesting models: (1) the evolutionary model of rationalization of authority; and (2) the

organizational model of authority and the scale of social organization. Each of these is examined below.

The Evolutionary Model of Power. Throughout Weber's work (1947) is the view that, over the long haul, traditional authority will be challenged by charismatic leaders who question the inequalities and rigidities of social systems organized around tradition. Yet, as Weber insightfully argued, revolutionary leaders must eventually deal with the problems of reorganizing social relations. Indeed, charismatic leadership is inherently short-term, since problems of implementing the ideals expressed by charismatic leaders create pressures for "routinization of authority." The best way to reorganize social relations is through the creation of bureaucratic structures and legal regulations. Over time, charismatic authority is transformed into rational-legal authority.

In Figure 5, we have sought to capture some of these dynamics. The arrows connecting boxes indicate causal connections, while the feedback arrows underscore that a system can cycle at a particular stage for a time. For example, the defeat of charismatic leaders can occur, causing escalated inequalities until a successful revolt occurs. Or, there may be a succession of charismatic leaders until one of them can restore order and control in the postrevolutionary era. The arrows coming up from the bottom of the figure, between boxes, stress that certain conditions typically exist in order for a system to become transformed and to move from one stage to the next. These conditions are sometimes idiosyncratic to particular times and places, whereas at other times they are more generic. Weber did not specify all such conditions; he felt that many of them were historically unique.

Weber's Model of Power and the Scale of Social Organization. Like all analysts of his time, Weber was interested in the processes of growth and social differentiation. For Weber, the scale of social organization—that is, the number of people who can be coordinated, the volume of their transactions, and their ecological dispersion—is related to the level of bureaucratization. In turn, the degree of bureaucratization is related to the existence of power centers that are legitimated by law. And legal legitimation of authority is related to the existence of universalistic legal codes and procedures for adjudication of law. At least implicitly, Weber saw these relations as cyclical. His argument is expressed in Figure 6.

As the model emphasizes, there is a circular, or positive-feedback, relation among legal codes, rational-legal authority, bureaucratization, and the scale of social organization. As the scale of social organization expands, so must legal codes expand in order to regulate and coordinate activity. In turn, the expansion of legal codes increasingly fosters legitimation of power through law; and the use of rational-legal authority requires bureaucracies which result in an expansion of social organization; and so on, until specific empirical conditions break the cycle.

Max Weber's Theoretical Principles. In these models, and in his

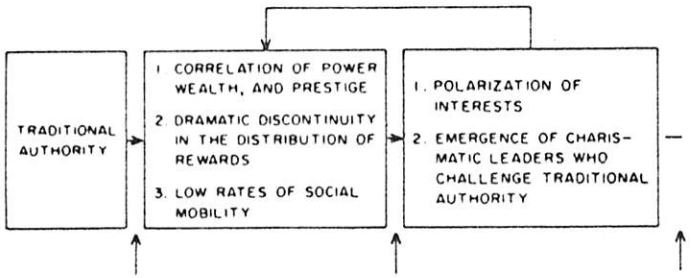

Figure 5. Weber's evolutionary model of power.

other descriptive statements, are a number of interesting theoretical principles that express what Weber saw as some of the fundamental properties and dynamics of power. In Table 5, we have summarized these more abstract principles that can be seen in Weber's work.

In these principles, we have tried to abstract from Weber's more descriptive statements to express them as more generic propositions. Obviously, the complexity and subtlety of Weber's work is lost, but the theoretical (as opposed to descriptive) power of his argument is highlighted. When expressed more abstractly, Weber's argument resembles Marx's, but with important differences. Like Marx, Weber viewed traditional authority as inherently unstable to the extent that it consolidates status, class, and party. But unlike Marx, Weber felt that complexity and rationality (a) lowered the correlation of status, class, and party, (b) decreased the level of discontinuity in social

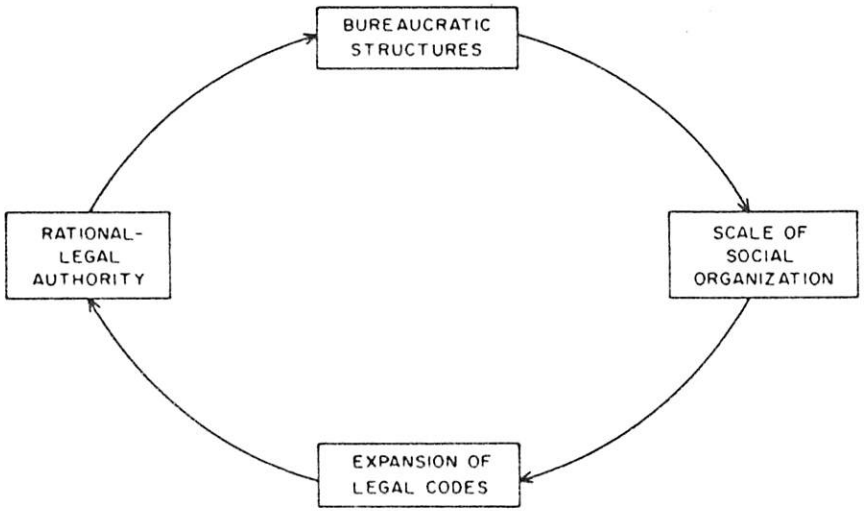

Figure 6. Weber's model of power and scale of social organization.

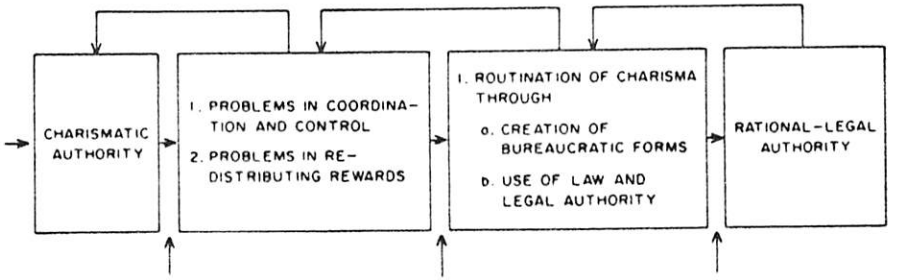

Figure 5. (*continued*)

hierarchies, and (c) unblocked channels of upward mobility. The result would be a more stable and large-scale system which, while depersonalizing and alienating, promotes mobility. Change would still occur as a result of conflicts, but conflict would involve less polarized groups and less charisma (Weber, 1946, pp. 180–195).

Contemporary Theoretical Perspectives and Political Sociology

Much contemporary theorizing about power has occurred within a series of broad conceptual perspectives. These theoretical perspectives deal with the general "problem of order"—that is, how patterns of social organization are

Table 5. Weber's Abstract Theoretical Principles

1. The scale of social organization is a positive function of the degree of:
   - A. rational-legal authority
   - B. bureaucratization
   - C. universalistic legal codes
2. The continuity in patterns of social organization is a positive function of the degree of legitimacy given to political authority, and the degree of legitimacy of political authority is a negative function of:
   - A. the degree of correlation of status, classes, and power, with the degree of correlation being a negative function of rationality in, and complexity of, patterns of organization
   - B. the degree of discontinuity in social hierarchies, with the degree of discontinuity being a negative function of rationality in, and complexity of, patterns of social organization
   - C. the degree to which upward mobility for lower ranking units is blocked, with the degree of blockage being a degree negative function of rationality in, and complexity of, patterns of social organization
3. The degree of change in patterns of social organization is a positive function of conflict, and the degree of conflict is a positive function of:
   - A. the degree of polarization of status, class, and power groups, with the degree of polarization being a positive function of 2A, 2B, and 2C
   - B. the availability of charismatic leaders who oppose the existing distribution of power

created, maintained, and changed (Turner, 1978). Since power is a major property of social order, each perspective is involved in "political" theorizing. However, since these are general perspectives, we must select from them those elements that bear most directly on political processes in human systems. Moreover, only some of the general perspectives can shed light on political theory. Thus, our review of contemporary sociological theory and political sociology will be somewhat selective. In particular, we will examine only three dominant contemporary perspectives in terms of their models and principles of political processes. These three general perspectives are functionalism, conflict theory, and exchange theory. Other general sociological perspectives, such as role theory, interactionism, and ethnomethodology, do not offer insights into political processes, and hence, are not examined in this chapter.

Functional Theory and Political Sociology

Functional theory owes its inspiration and its concern with how a property of a social system contributes to the maintenance of that system to Comte, Spencer, and Durkheim. As functionalism developed (Turner & Maryanski, 1979), the mode of analysis became more precise. This mode is represented in Figure 7.

Within this general mode of analysis, highly analytic work (Parsons, 1951) as well as empirical work (Goldschmidt, 1966; Merton, 1968) has been conducted. The key ingredient of these analyses is the concept of system "requisites" or "needs." More empirically oriented functional analyses tend to view "needs" as varying from one empirical system to another. In this approach, specific social and cultural structures are analyzed in terms of their consequences for the needs of the larger social whole within which they are embedded. In contrast, more analytical approaches tend to isolate several generic needs that all social systems must meet in order to remain viable and then to analyze how specific structures meet these universal needs. It is this more analytic form of functional analysis that will occupy our attention in this section. In particular, we will examine the functional approach of Talcott Parsons who, until his recent death, was the most prominent practitioner of analytic functionalism.

Talcott Parsons's Analytic Models and Political Sociology. Parsons developed two types of models which bear on the field of political

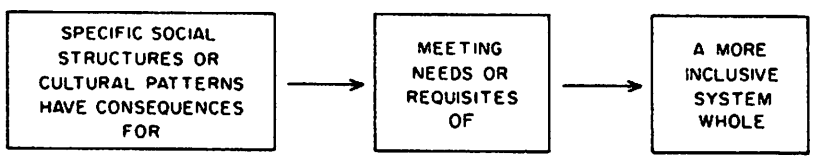

Figure 7. The general mode of functional analysis.

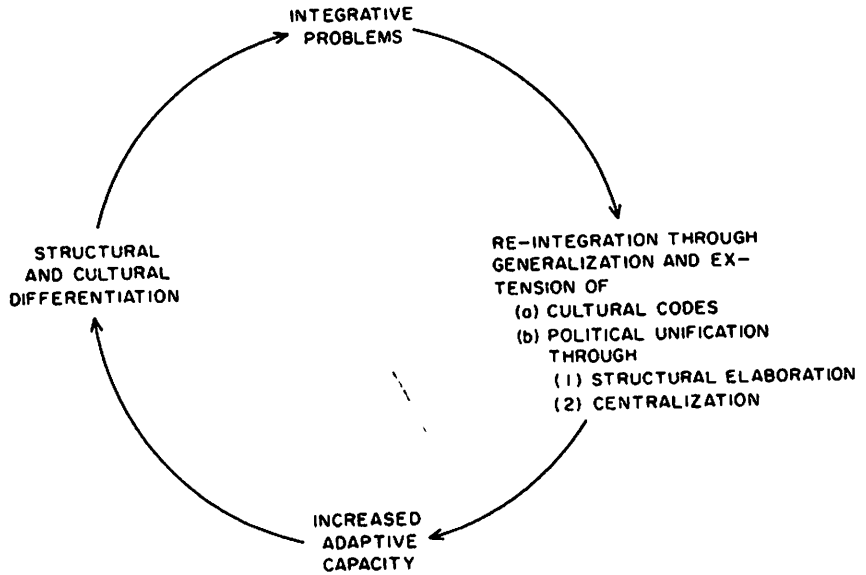

Figure 8. Parsons's model of evolutionary change and political processes.

sociology. One is the developmental or evolutionary model implicit in his analysis of change (Parsons, 1966, 1971), and the other is the taxonomic model evident in his requisite functionalism. Each of these is discussed below.

Parsons's Developmental Model. In his analysis of long-term evolutionary development, Parsons has employed a model similar to that developed by Spencer (see Figures 1 and 2). Evolution is viewed as a process of (a) structural and cultural differentiation, (b) the creation of integrative problems through differentiation, (c) reintegration through value generalization and political expansion, (d) increased adaptive capacity or "upgrading" as a result of such reintegration, and (e) further differentiation of society and culture. Implicit in this analysis is the model diagramed in Figure 8.

Several points about this model need to be emphasized. First, it is a cyclical model. Cultural and structural differentiation create a series of conditions that, over time, increase the likelihood of subsequent differentiation. Secondly, the impetus to political development comes from integrative problems inherent in the process of differentiation. Third, integration involves more than elaboration and centralization of the polity; it must also include the acceptance of common and generalized values as well as other evaluative symbols by all differentiated units.

Parsons's model thus points to the fundamental conditions—problems of integration, coordination, and control—that result in structural elaboration of political structures. Whether this elaboration is the assumption of power by

one clan and the creation of a paramount chief and lieutenants or the elaboration of the civil and military bureaucracy of a modern state, the general conditions producing this organization of power are the same. We suspect, also, that what is true of societal social systems also holds for other types of social units, such as organizations and communities. Moreover, as Spencer failed to recognize and as Pareto and Durkheim stressed, the organization of power and its centralization can only be effective, in the long run, when system units share some common cultural symbols which bind them to the system and which legitimate the elaboration of political authority.

Parsons's Taxonomic Models. Parsons's functional-requisite scheme is well known, so only its general contours need to be mentioned briefly. Parsons believed that action systems, as well as all dimensions of "the human condition" (Parsons, 1978), reveal four fundamental survival problems or functional requisites: adaptation, goal attainment, integration, and latency (see Table 6 for definitions). All structures in social systems can be classified as meeting one of these requisites (as can all symbolic components of cultural systems, traits of personality systems, and so on). Thus, the AGIL scheme represents a way to classify structures with respect to the needs of the system that they meet. It is for this reason that we have termed this model "taxonomic." But it is more than taxonomy because it explicitly seeks to specify the relations among, and some of the dynamics of, components of a system.

In Figure 9 we have reproduced Parsons's four-functions model and then inserted Parsons and Smelser's (1956) view of the key interchanges among functional sectors for societal social systems. We have only reproduced the interchanges between the goal attainment sector, on the one hand, and the other three sectors, on the other, since these interchanges are the most directly related to political processes. As can be seen, each interchange between the goal attainment sector and the other sectors is a double interchange. Capital and productivity are exchanged between the A and G structures; allocating power and political loyalty are exchanged between the L and G structures; and imperative coordination and contingent support are exchanged between the I and G structures. Such a model implicitly argues that in order to understand

Table 6. Parsons's Four Functional Requisites

Adaptation	The problem of securing resources from the environment, converting them into useful products, and distributing them to system units
Goal attainment	The problem of establishing system goals and priorities among them, as well as mobilizing and allocating system resources toward the attainment of goals
Integration	The problem of maintaining coordination among, and control of, system units
Latency	The dual problem of (1) generating new units that can fit into the system ("pattern maintenance," in Parsons's terms) and (2) resolving tensions within existing units ("tension management")

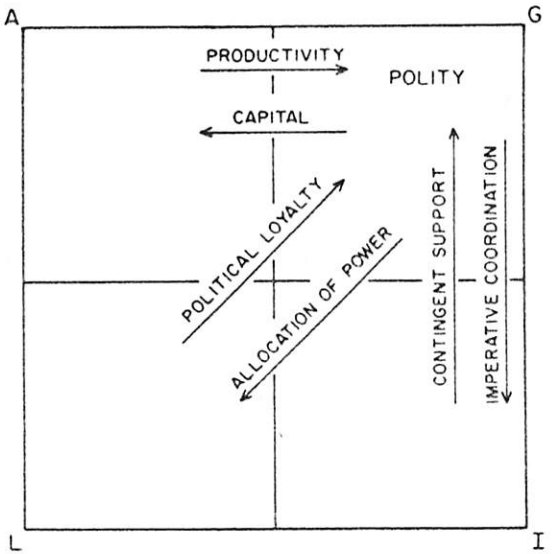

Figure 9. Analytic interchanges and political processes.

"social reality" in general, and political processes in particular, it is necessary to determine which functional need a structure is primarily involved in meeting. Hence, the polity is the principal structure meeting problems of setting goals, of establishing priorities among goals, of mobilizing human and material resources, and of allocating resources. To understand the specific dynamics of the polity, it is necessary to examine (a) the nature of the polity, as well as its various subsystems, and (b) the nature of its exchanges with structures that meet the other three functional problems. It is this dual concern with classification *and* specification of relationships, or exchanges, of the units classified that makes much of Parsons's work a "taxonomic model."

As Parsons worked with such taxonomic models, he extended them in a number of interesting directions. One direction was to view each of the four functional sectors as employing a distinctive "symbolic medium" for carrying out relations and exchanges within that sector and for conducting exchanges with other sectors. Thus, in societal social systems, he began to view money as the medium of exchange in the adaptive sector, power as the medium of the goal attainment sector, influence as the medium of the integrative sector, and commitments as the medium of the latency sector. The result is to view activity in the A sector as involving the use of money as the dominant medium of exchange, with activities in the G, L, and I sectors as employing, respectively, power, commitments, and influence as the prevailing media. Moreover, exchanges between sectors will involve the exchange of one type of medium for another. Hence, a societal social system can be viewed as laced together by

he exchanges among subsystems employing different symbolic media. These xchanges can be represented as shown in Figure 10 (Parsons & Platt, 1973).

Such a model specifies the underlying reasons for the content of xchanges delineated in Figure 9. It also emphasizes that it is impossible to nderstand political processes without recognizing that the polity employs a istinctive medium—power—and is engaged in a complex series of exchanges vith other structures using other symbolic media—that is, money, commit-nents, and influence. Political processes will, therefore, be influenced by the ature of such exchanges among symbolic media. In fact, the dynamics of a ociety will reflect the level of such media resources and their specific modes of xchange.

Another direction in which Parsons has taken his AGIL taxonomy is oward the study of the cyclical phases of change (Parsons, Bales, & Shils, 953). Parsons has argued that systems reveal periods where either adaptive, oal attainment, latency, or integrative problems dominate. Moreover, such roblems reveal a particular order, leading Parsons to view efforts at resolving urvival problems as evidencing a pattern of "phase dominance." This pattern s depicted in Figure 11. All external forces, Parsons has argued, immediately ecome translated into goal attainment problems. That is, they require ecisions on goals, priorities, and the mobilization and allocation of esources. In turn, these decisions will create problems of adaptation. ingular focus on and reduction of adaptive problems through modified mployment of resources exacerbates integrative problems. As integrative

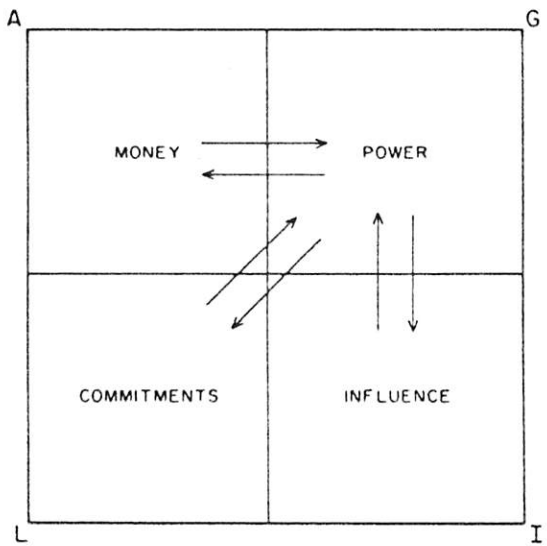

Figure 10. Exchanges among symbolic media.

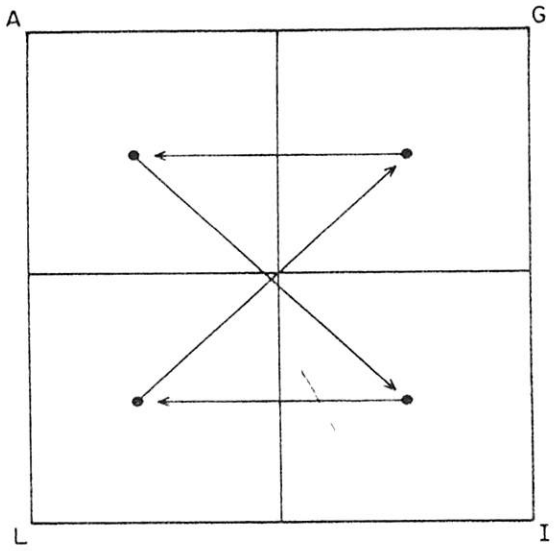

Figure 11. Phase dominance and political processes.

problems are assuaged, units must confront the crises of latency inherent in adjusting to standards implicit in new structural arrangements around which integration takes place. Once latency problems are resolved, then a goal attainment problem is likely to ensue, and so on, as systems cycle again and again through this pattern of phase dominance. Such a model emphasizes that goal attainment problems, and the political processes that meet them, are linked in a predictable way to problems in other sectors of the system. The model also represents one way of explaining why there is a lag between political crises in social systems, since such crises come after a sequence of crises in the adaptive, integrative, and latency sectors of a social system.

The taxonomic models developed by Parsons are primarily descriptive. They provide categories for making observations of empirical events. By examining a particular empirical system with these categories, and their specified linkages, considerable descriptive insight into the structure and dynamics of the system can be attained. This fact helps answer a question that many critics of Parsons have often asked: Why are Parsons's analyses of concrete empirical systems so insightful and lucid, while his abstract, analytical work seems so obscure? The implied contradiction in this question is, of course, a false issue, because Parsons's analytic categories and their relations provide him with a guide or analytical map for making insightful empirical observations. They do so, Parsons has argued, because they are functional categories—that is, because they ultimately address the basic survival problems of social systems.

From Parsons's viewpoint, his efforts provide researchers with an analytic yardstick for determining what it is that is important to observe in social systems. For political sociologists, then, it is first important to recognize that government resolves goal attainment problems. Next, it is essential to recognize that government is always involved in the same kinds of basic exchanges with structures in other functional sectors. Further, these exchanges within and between sectors are shaped by the use of distinctive media. And finally, systems reveal cyclical patterns in the crises that they confront. While these points of emphasis in Parsons's taxonomic models provide descriptive criteria for researchers, there are a number of more abstract principles implicit in them. When these principles are combined with those contained in Parsons's developmental model (see Figure 8), an interesting set of propositions emerges.

Talcott Parsons's Theoretical Principles on Political Processes. Parsons always maintained considerable ambivalence toward axiomatic theory. He much preferred, as he saw it, a "biological vision" of theory where the basic units of systems are isolated and their connections are articulated. He always felt that such an approach is necessary for two reasons. First, it

Table 7. Talcott Parsons's Principles on Political Processes

1. The greater (lesser) are the integrative problems created by structural and cultural differentiation, the greater (lesser) are the pressures for elaboration and differentiation of structures using power as their medium of exchange.
   A. The more (less) differentiated are structures resolving adaptive, goal attainment, integrative, and latency problems in a system, the greater (lesser) their use of distinctive symbolic media and the more (less) complex are the exchanges between structures using power as their primary medium and those using other media.
2. The greater (lesser) is the level of structural elaboration and differentiation of structures using power as their medium of exchange, the greater (lesser) are the pressures for centralization in the decision-making capacities of these structures.
   A. The more (less) complex the exchanges of power and other symbolic media, the greater (lesser) is the potential for imbalanced exchanges and resulting tensions in the system, and the greater (lesser) are the pressures for the accumulation of power as a resource to resolve tensions.
   B. The more (less) power is accumulated as a resource, the more (less) severe are goal attainment problems and the greater (lesser) are pressures for consolidation and centralization of decision-making prerogatives.
3. The greater (lesser) is the degree of structural and cultural differentiation in general, and political differentiation and centralization in particular, the greater (lesser) are the pressures for generalization of values and beliefs.
4. The greater (lesser) is the level of differentiation in a system, and the more (less) distinctive media are employed by its functional subsystems, the more (less) likely are crises to emerge in that system, and the more (less) likely are they to reveal a clear sequence of goal attainment problems followed by adaptive problems, integrative problems followed by latency problems, and latency problems followed by goal attainment problems.

provides a map of reality, or a set of metatheoretical assumptions, that can guide theory and research. Secondly, taxonomy must precede any effort to develop abstract principles since without the taxonomy the world does not reveal its orderly character. And without regularity, there is nothing to explain with abstract principles (Parsons, 1980).

For these reasons, Parsons never devoted much effort to formulating abstract principles. Rather, he hoped that others could use his taxonomies to construct such principles if they felt them to be necessary in explanation. In Table 7, we offer just a few "Parsonsian principles" to illustrate what can be extracted and abstracted from Parsons's "analytic realism," as he first termed his strategy (Parsons, 1937). This is not an exhaustive list, of course, for it is only intended to illustrate how it is possible to move from Parsons's modeling and taxonomic approach to a more axiomatic format.

Conflict Theory and Political Sociology

Drawing most of its inspiration from Karl Marx (Marx & Engels, 1848/1955), and to a lesser extent from George Simmel (1908/1964), contemporary conflict theory examines the properties of conflict and their impact on the organization of social systems. The general model of all conflict theory is delineated in Figure 12. In this model, the unequal distribution of resources in social systems creates pressures for conflict among those with varying shares of resources. In turn, such conflict leads to change in, and reorganization of, the social system.

Since power is a critical resource which is unequally distributed and since conflict involves the mobilization of power among groupings, contemporary conflict theory has much to offer political sociology. Indeed, conflict theory explicitly examines the distribution of power and its redistribution through conflict. We can begin to appreciate the contribution of conflict theory by examining, first of all, its general causal model and then some of its important theoretical principles.

Models of Conflict Processes. One of the major conceptual problems with conflict theory is the vague definition of conflict that is typically offered. Some definitions are extremely broad and embrace "contests, competitions, disputes, and tensions as well as manifest clashes between social

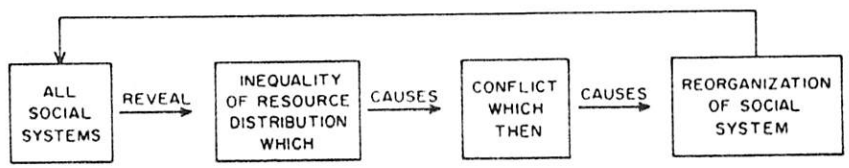

Figure 12. The general conflict model.

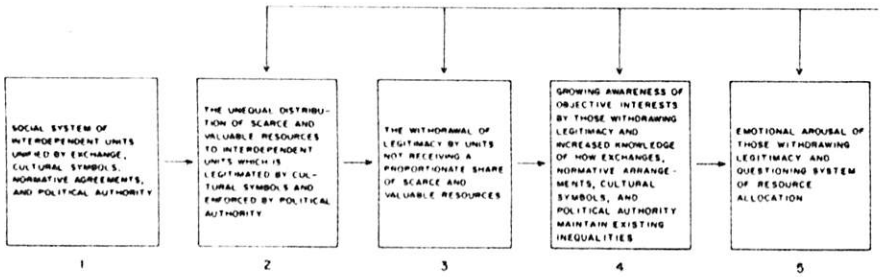

Figure 13. Stages in the conflict process.

forces" (Dahrendorf, 1957, p. 135). When such a broad array of behaviors, states, dispositions, and actions are termed "conflict," the resulting model may be stretched to include what are really quite different phenomena. Other definitions are more narrow and confine conflict to "interaction in which one party intends to deprive, control, injure or eliminate another, against the will of that other" (Williams, 1970, p. 217). In our analysis of conflict, we will implicitly employ this narrower definition and examine how conflict emerges as a result of a given distribution and use of power and how its varying degrees of intensity and violence result in political reorganization. In so doing, we will embrace the key concepts and variables of most contemporary conflict theorists.

The conflict model is a processual representation of "stages," with existing inequalities, coupled with structural and cultural conditions, generating conflict, change, and system reorganization. Various models posit somewhat different stages and conditions, but despite these differences, there is a general convergence of thinking. This convergence is represented in the composite model outlined in Figure 13.

In this composite model, ten stages are isolated. The arrows between the boxes are intended to denote a causal sequence in which conditions at one stage lead to those in the next. The arrows on top of the boxes highlight the fact that there are many critical feedback loops in the conflict process. For example, the conflict process may be arrested at stage 6 until periodic outbursts have aroused people sufficiently (stage 5) or until increased awareness (stage 4) and withdrawal of legitimacy (stage 3) have reached critical levels. Or, to take another example of such feedback, high degrees of organized political opposition (stage 8) may require a number of conflict episodes (stage 9) with agents of political authority.

The model in Figure 13 is essentially descriptive. It simply describes prominent stages (and their complex interaction) of the conflict process as it leads to social and political change. In order to be more theoretical and explanatory, the general conditions producing movement from one stage to another need to be specified. And as conflict theorists have sought to specify

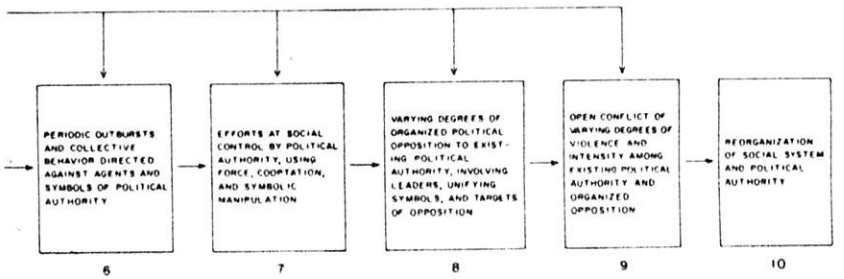

Figure 13. (*continued*)

these conditions, they have developed a number of interesting theoretical principles.

Principles on Conflict Processes. As we have just emphasized, theoretical principles on the conflict process must address the conditions under which the sequential and feedback relations delineated in Figure 13 are likely to occur. In general, when formulating more abstract principles, conflict theorists tend to focus on some of the stages shown in Figure 13 more than others. Principles concerning the conditions favoring the withdrawal of legitimacy (stage 3), emotional arousal (stage 5), collective outbursts (stage 6), and degree of political organization (stage 8) figure prominently in theoretical efforts. The other stages are much less likely to be the topic of abstract theoretical principles. This skewed emphasis becomes evident when some of the most prominent principles are enumerated, as is done in Table 8. In the propositions of Table 8 can be found Marx's, Simmel's, Pareto's, and Spencer's legacies, as well as the thrust of more recent work on conflict processes. Obviously, these propositions do not represent a complete theory; rather, they should be viewed as plausible statements that can stimulate both empirical research and theoretical speculation. But for the present, these propositions summarize the contributions of conflict theory to political sociology.

Exchange Theory and Political Sociology

Exchange theory views action and interaction among both individuals and collectivities as a process revealing the following elements:

1. All actors possess resources that they will expend in order to receive valued resources from other actors;
2. All actors make calculations as to the reward value or utility of resources that other actors have to offer and as to the costs that they must incur in (a) the loss of their resources and (b) the loss of alternative resources from other actors. Such calculations are made in terms

Table 8. Principles of Conflict and Political Reorganization

1. In a system of interrelated units revealing relations of exchange, normative agreements, common cultural symbols, and political authority, the degree of rank differentiation will be a positive function of:
   A. system size
   B. system productivity
   C. system centralization of power
2. In a system revealing rank differentiation, the withdrawal of legitimacy will be a positive function of:
   A. the superimposition of rewards and deprivations
   B. blocked channels of upward mobility
   C. scarcity of channels for redressing grievances
   D. weakness of common cultural symbols
3. In a system of rank differentiation where the withdrawal of legitimacy has been initiated, the degree of emotional arousal of subordinates will be a positive function of:
   A. the extent of coercion (as opposed to cooptation) by political authority
   B. the extent of alienation of the subordinate population from key institutional roles
   C. the extent to which conditions produce a sudden escalation in perceived deprivations by the subordinate population
4. In a system of rank differentiation where the subordinate population has begun to withdraw legitimacy and where their emotions have escalated, the incidence of collective outbursts against political authority will be a negative function of:
   A. leadership among subordinates
   B. clear articulation of interests among subordinates
   C. common values and beliefs among subordinates
   D. clear communication networks among subordinates

   and a positive function of:
   E. ecological concentration of subordinates
   F. reliance on the use of force by agents of political authority
   G. real and symbol targets representing political authority
5. In a system characterized by collective outbursts of subordinates against political authority, the effectiveness of efforts at social control by political authority is a positive function of:
   A. the number and size of middle ranks committed to existing structures and cultural symbols
   B. the capacity of political elites to coopt the goals of the deprived through alterations in policies and practices
6. The degree of organized political opposition to political authority will be a positive function of:
   A. the leadership resources available to subordinates
   B. the degree to which the interests and goals of subordinates can be articulated by leaders and accepted by members
   C. the coherence and salience of unifying beliefs and other cultural symbols among subordinates
   D. the availability of communication channels among subordinates
   E. the degree of tolerance of opposition by political authority
7. The degree of sustained violence in relations between political authority and organized subordinates is a positive function of:
   A. the extent to which political authority uses coercive force as the dominant means of social control
   B. the extent to which opposition is only moderately organized
   C. the extent to which subordinates perceive that the costs of opposition are less than the costs of compliance. Such calculations are a positive function of:
      (1) degree of alienation from key roles
      (2) degree of escalation on perceived deprivations
      (3) degree of disruption of role activities by agents of political authority
8. The degree to which violence in relations between subordinates and political authority leads to political reorganization is a positive function of:
   A. the size of the subordinate population
   B. the material, symbolic, and organizational resources available to subordinates to pursue conflict
   C. the capacity to mobilize middle rank populations to pursue conflict against, or to withdraw legitimacy from, the centralized authority
   D. the degree of incapacity of political authority to use sustained coercive force
9. The degree of sustained nonviolence in relations between political authority and organized subordinates is a positive function of:
   A. the extent to which political authority uses cooptation as the dominant means of social control
   B. the extent to which the opposition is highly organized
   C. the extent to which subordinates perceive that the costs of opposition are greater than the costs of compliance. Such calculations are a positive function of:
      (1) the degree of reward value in key institutional roles
      (2) the degree of stability in perceived deprivations
      (3) the degree of stability in role activities
10. The degree to which nonviolence in relations between subordinates and political authority leads to political reorganization is a positive function of:
    A. the size of the subordinate population
    B. the material, symbolic, and organizational resources available to pursue opposition
    C. the capacity to mobilize middle rank populations to exert political pressures
    D. the capacity of political authority to readjust its internal structure and key institutional structure

of (a) the needs and/or goals of actors, (b) the availability of resources in the environment, and (c) the level and value of actors' own resources;

3. All actors make calculations in order to receive from other actors resources that exceed in value or utility those resources that must be expended;
4. Social relations involve a constant process of exchange of resources among actors and both the dynamics and statics of social relations are to be explained by reference to the degree of balance or imbalance in such exchanges of resources among actors.

While the specific terminology of exchange theorists varies—some preferring a psychological vocabulary, others game theory terms, and still others the vocabulary of classical economics—the thrust of their analysis is

the same. Moreover, even though the units of analysis vary (individuals, groups, organizations, nations, and so on) there are certain common models and principles that typify all exchange analyses. And as we will emphasize, all exchange perspectives analyze power as a core property of exchange relations. This fact can be made most evident by examining Table 9, where the principal concepts of exchange theory are listed and defined.

From the definitions of Table 9, it is evident that power is a dimension inherent in the exchange of resources. When one actor has resources that another values highly and cannot get elsewhere, then the actor possessing such resources also has power because this actor can extract compliance as a price for receiving the valued resource. Since actors rarely possess and exchange equally valued resources, power is a ubiquitous fact of all social relations. Thus, it is likely that exchange theory should shed considerable light on the properties and dynamics of power in human social systems (Blau, 1964; Emerson, 1972; Homans, 1974). This fact can be best appreciated by examining the models and principles of exchange theory that bear most directly on political processes.

Exchange Models and Political Sociology. All exchange theories reveal a roughly similar model involving (1) exchanges of resources among actors, (2) competition to secure the most favorable ratio of costs to rewards, (3) differentiation of actors in terms of prestige and power, and (4) tensions resulting from such differentiation. In Figure 14 we have outlined the main contours of this implicit model. This model is typically applied to both micro- and macro-exchange processes, whether the actors are individual people or

Table 9. Exchange Theory Concepts

Actor	An individual or collectivity of individuals
Resources	Qualities and properties of an actor that are viewed as potentially rewarding to other actors
Reward	A resource that has the capacity to bestow gratifications
Value	The degree of gratification that a resource is perceived to have
Exchange	The reciprocal process whereby actors reward one another
Exchange relation	A situation in which actors exchange rewards over a period of time
Cost	The number and value of rewards foregone in an exchange relation
Alternatives	The number and sources in the environment which can bestow a reward
Profit	Rewards less the costs in receiving a reward
Dependence	The degree to which an actor must rely on another actor for a given type of reward
Balance	The degree to which the rewards given are considered to be proportionate to those received
Imbalance	The degree to which the rewards given are considered to be disproportionate to those received
Power	The degree to which the dependency of one actor on another for a reward can allow the latter to extract compliance as a condition for receiving that reward

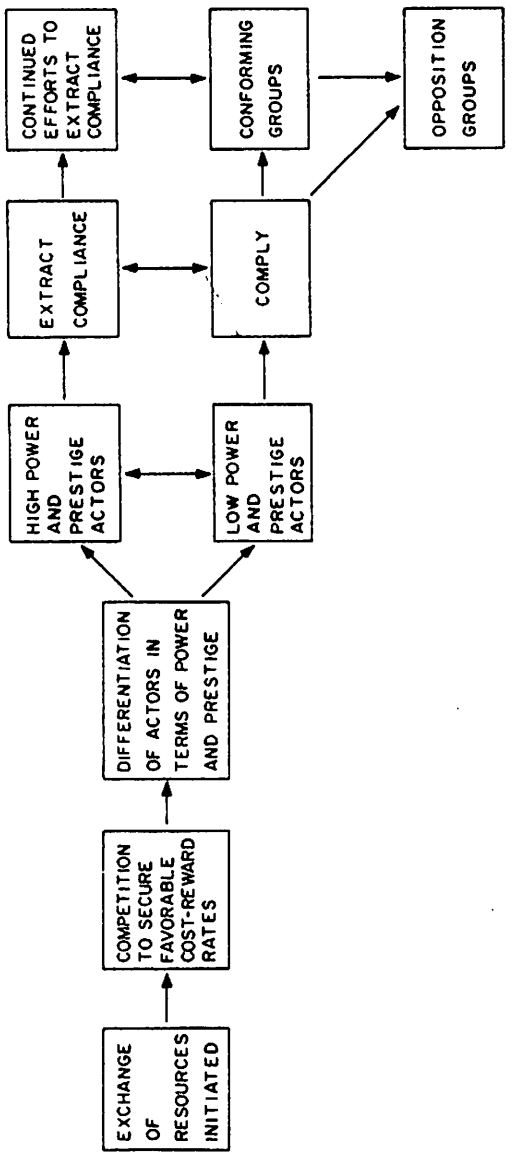

Figure 14. The basic exchange model.

collective units. The key dynamic is that, over time, the actors with the most valued resources are able to extract honor and prestige; if their resources are sufficiently valued by others, they can force others to comply with their dictates. Such power differences reveal an inherent tension, since compliance is costly and leads to efforts to change the exchange relationship (Blau, 1964). Thus, exchange relationships that reveal power differentials will, over time, evidence the situation diagramed at the far right side of the model in Figure 14. Those with power will continue to extract compliance, some will comply, and still others will stand in opposition to both of these parties (Blau, 1964; Homans, 1974).

At such an abstract level, the applicability of this model to political processes is not entirely clear. But unlike much theorizing in sociology, exchange theorists have been concerned with developing abstract principles to explain the conditions that lead to the differentiation of exchange relations in terms of power and the creation of political opposition. Thus, as we begin to analyze exchange principles, the relevance of the model for understanding the properties and dynamics of power becomes more evident.

Exchange Principles and Political Sociology. Ultimately, exchange theory interfaces with political sociology on two related issues: Why do differences in power exist in social relations? How are such differences maintained or changed? The answer of exchange theory to these questions is to be found in the principles listed in Table 10. These principles offer a number of insights on the properties and dynamics of power. First, power inheres in the basic interactive process, at both the micro- and macrolevels. Power is a property of social relations where resources are exchanged and where those provided by one party (whether an individual or collectivity) are more valuable. Second, tension and opposition are built into the exchange process, and hence all human relations. Principle 3 on "marginal utility" assures that principle 2 will be, at some time, violated and will therefore invoke the processes described in principle 4. Moreover, given that actors are likely to have many exchange relations, it is also likely that they will have changing needs, goals, and priorities. Thus, established patterns are always subject to change, inviting negative sanctions (principle 4). Inherent in exchange relations, then, are sources of tension and conflict.

These sources are compounded by the differentiation of power—a third point that needs to be emphasized. Principles 5–8 specify the conditions which reduce power and dependency; their converse will increase the differentiation of power among actors, whether these be individuals, a community, or a national political system. From an exchange viewpoint, then, power is a property of social systems that results from the differential valuation of resources. While such a viewpoint underemphasizes coercive force and the imposition of constraints, it does point to a fact that is often ignored in the conflict perspective: power is not unilateral and involves some rewards for those who are subject to its use.

Table 10. Exchange Principles and Political Processes

General Exchange Principles

1. The greater the net reward actors expect to receive from an exchange of resources, the more likely are they to emit actions necessary to receive the valuable resource.
2. The more often actors have exchanged resources and the longer such exchanges have endured, the more likely are those exchange relations to become obligatory and regulated by norms, values, and beliefs.
3. The more often actors have received a given resource in an exchange relationship, the less valuable that reward and the less likely are actions in pursuit of that resource.
4. The more actors do not receive an expected resource in an exchange relationship, the more likely are they to initiate negative sanctions against the actor(s) who are seen to violate the expectation.

Exchange Principles and Differentiation of Power

5. The more valuable the resources that an actor can supply in return for the receipt of particularly valued resources, the less those providing these particularly valued resources can extract compliance, and hence, the less dependent is the exchange relationship.
6. The more alternative sources of a resource that an actor has, the less those providing valuable resources can extract compliance, and hence, the less dependent is the exchange relationship.
7. The more those receiving valuable resource can employ physical force and coercion to secure that resource, the less those providing the resource can extract compliance, and hence, the less dependent is the exchange relationship.
8. The more actors receiving a valuable resource can do without the resource, the less those providing the resource can extract compliance, and hence, the less dependent is the exchange relationship.

Exchange Principles and Opposition to Power

9. The more an exchange relationship involves dependence, and the less successful are initial efforts at finding alternatives, practicing abstinence, and using coercion, the more likely are dependent parties to organize their opposition, especially when:
   A. rewards and costs move toward equality
   B. norms, values, and beliefs regulating the exchange fail to be realized or followed
   C. dependent parties experience their situation collectively, which is facilitated by:
      (1) ecological concentration
      (2) communication networks
      (3) availability of leaders
      (4) availability of unifying symbols
      (5) availability of clear targets of opposition
10. The less successful are organized efforts to reduce dependency and redefine the exchange relation, the more likely are these efforts to expand and endure, and the more likely are patterns of power differentiation to be changed.

But it also emphasizes that power relations are inherently unstable, over the long run. And this is our fourth point. Actors will seek to counter their dependency through abstinence, coercion, and searches for alternatives. Moreover, as Marx, Spencer, Pareto, Durkheim, and all conflict theorists emphasize, power generates organized opposition, as is specified in propositions 9A, B, and C of Table 10. And it also creates the conditions for social change and redistribution of power (see proposition 10 of Table 10).

These principles emphasize that whatever the context—whether interpersonal relations, the nation-state, or the world system—opposition is a positive function of the degree to which dependency leads those with power to extract higher costs from subordinates in the form of requests for additional compliance, decreases in the resources allocated, or violation of established agreements. When efforts to extract higher costs are experienced collectively by subordinates (propositions 1–5), then opposition to political authority will increase. Stable power relations—at least, those that are stable in the short run—involve the maintenance of established relations through norms, values, and beliefs and a continued supply of resources that exceed the costs of compliance. Unstable political systems are those in which political authority (a) cannot provide highly valued resources that people are not willing to do without, (b) cannot prevent a population from seeking valued resources elsewhere, (c) cannot reduce efforts at coercion, (d) cannot maintain regulatory agreements, and (e) cannot keep resources in excess of costs. A stable political system would reveal the converse of these conditions.

Thus, exchange theory provides an interesting set of abstract principles for viewing power in the social world. As deductions from these principles to specific empirical contexts (nations, world systems, communities, organizations, etc.) are made, then the weights of the variables in these principles can be more accurately determined, with the result that the nature of political processes can be more readily understood.

Theoretical Implications of Recent Research in Political Sociology

Political sociology had developed into a major area of inquiry by the end of World War II. There was an explosion of interest in politics at that time. Academics began articulating a wide array of interesting hypotheses and executing systematic investigations of empirical phenomena that had been the subject of speculation by earlier generations of scholars. Ideas were tested, research techniques were refined, and many stimulating lines of thought were disconfirmed by the weight of empirical evidence. For example, "working-class authoritarianism" (Grabb, 1979) and "status inconsistency" (Broom & Jones, 1970) as sources of conservatism, and frustrated parent–child relations as an explanation for youth rebellion (Orum & Cohen, 1973) were among the more prominent modes of analysis to be disconfirmed or to yield contradictory findings. Other lines of inquiry have proven to be more useful and can serve as foundations for contemporary research. Thus, the post–World War II era involved a period during which a large and diverse research literature was produced and a period during which less profitable lines of analysis were slowly abandoned.

The ubiquitous nature of power relations and the eclectic interests of

those identifying themselves as political sociologists have encouraged the production of an extraordinarily rich and varied literature on power. But herein lies the shortfall of the substantive area. Because political phenomena are intrinsically interesting, topical research becomes self-justifying on the basis of current relevance. The result of this situation is that investigators often fail to call attention to the broader theoretical implications of their work. This tendency has been reinforced by a crisis mentality pervasive among political sociologists. Pressing social issues are always well represented in the literature, while underlying dynamics of power are largely ignored. Studies of political participation, alienation, protest movements, extremity of political opinion, coalition formation, interlocking directorates, pluralist compromises, global economy, and other topical areas are frequently treated as unrelated fields of inquiry. Thus, examinations of general processes through which power is generated, maintained, transferred, and/or diminished have been implicitly discouraged.

Many of the chapters in this volume examine these topical areas, and thus, our concern in this section is only with sorting out the theoretical implications of the research literature on political sociology. In our tentative effort along these lines, we will (a) organize the research literature around units of analysis, (b) summarize very briefly the key findings, and (c) assess the theoretical implications of these findings. When organizing the literature around units of analysis, we can observe research devoted to the following structures: individuals, small groups, formal organizations, communities, social movements, societies, and global systems. As we will come to appreciate, many of the research findings and conclusions in these areas overlap each other. Moreover, these overlapping findings constitute empirical generalizations that follow from the more abstract principles developed by sociology's first masters and by theorists operating within one of the dominant contemporary perspectives outlined earlier.

Individuals as Units of Analysis

When individuals are treated as units of analysis in studies of political processes, concern has typically been with three related issues: (1) voting behavior, (2) political participation, and (3) political alienation. All of these specific research areas address the more generic question of commitments to, and mobilization of support for, the instruments of power. Ultimately, the particular findings of these research traditions have theoretical (as opposed to topical and applied) relevance for this more generic question.

Voting Behavior. There have been three waves of research on voting behavior, each of which has refined our understanding of this process. The first classic study was conducted by Lazarsfeld (Lazarsfeld, Berelson, & Gaudet, 1944), the next by Campbell and his associates (Campbell, Converse,

Miller, & Stokes, 1964), and the most recent by Nie and Verba (Nie, Verba, & Petrocik, 1976; Verba & Nie, 1972). Each of these landmark studies has stimulated extensive research activity that has refined our knowledge of voting processes. When these studies are viewed collectively, the empirical generalizations listed in Table 11 emerge. While these generalizations emerged from voting studies, we have stated them more abstractly (since voting behavior is only one form of political commitment and participation). What emerges are generalizations that can guide the development of more abstract theoretical principles. These principles will revolve around the following issues: What variables explain intensification of politically relevant beliefs? What variables explain homogeneity and heterogeneity of politically relevant beliefs? What variables explain mobilization of individuals to act on their political beliefs? Answers to these questions involve such generic properties of social systems as their differentiation (both ecological and rank), cohesiveness of subgroups, and the correspondence of political beliefs and material interests. These empirical propositions, and the more generic properties of social systems that they incorporate, suggest the principles listed in Table 12.

The more abstract propositions in Table 12 fail to specify the conditions promoting high weights for rates of interaction, group identification, simplicity of issues, intensity of beliefs, relevance to material conditions, action-related resources, and polarization. To some extent, these will be determined by existing empirical conditions, but Marx and conflict theorists do provide a clue as to what some of these conditions might be (see Tables 2

Table 11. Theoretically Relevant Empirical Generalizations from Voting Studies

1. The more a political belief represents the material interests of an individual, the more inclined is that person to adopt the belief in question.
2. Within a group, the more widely held are political beliefs and the more widely practiced are political behaviors, the more likely is any given member to adopt those beliefs and practices.
3. The more a person interacts in a group, the more likely is that person to adopt political beliefs and practices which are common to that group.
4. The more intense is identification with a group, the more likely are group members to adopt common attitudes.
5. The more strongly felt is a belief, the more likely are there to be diverse and directed behavioral manifestations of that belief.
6. The greater are the socioeconomic and political resources at one's disposal, the more likely are beliefs to be manifested by participation in politics.
7. The greater and more dramatic the emergence of new political issues, the less likely are young participants to replicate the beliefs and patterns of participation of older cohorts.
8. The more issues are simplified, structured, and defined as politically relevant (usually by campaign organizations and mass media) the broader the range of issues over which people develop opinions and the more ideologically consistent one person's attitudes are likely to be.
9. Politicization of issues leads to increasing homogeneity of opinion within subgroups, increasing heterogeneity of opinion between subgroups, and increasing definition of issues raised within the political arena as matters of group conflict.

Table 12. Abstract Theoretical Principles Suggested by Voting-Behavior Studies

1. The degree to which individuals in a system develop common political beliefs is a positive function of (a) their rates of interaction, (b) their degree of group identification, and (c) the simplicity of issues (as presented) over which members develop beliefs.
2. The degree to which individuals translate common beliefs into political action is a positive function of (a) the intensity with which they hold beliefs, (b) the relevance of beliefs to their material interests, (c) the action-related resources available to individuals holding common beliefs, and (d) polarization of groups in the society along political issues.

and 8). Their principles state conditions leading to mobilization that results in conflict. But these conditions, under lower levels of intensity than is typically envisioned by conflict theorists, can help explain less dramatic forms of belief codification and political action. One important task is to specify these conditions more precisely and to integrate them with studies of less intense patterns of political action, such as voting behavior.

Individual Participation in Political Processes. Recognizing that voting behavior is only one of many politically motivated behaviors, voting studies have come under an increasing number of conceptual attacks (Milbrath, 1965). Nie and Verba (1975; also Verba & Nie, 1972), for example, have argued that (a) different modes of participation are analytically distinct, (b) different types of motivation relevant to political participation are analytically distinct, and (c) each distinct motive is manifested in a different form of involvement. Hence, there are qualitatively different types of political actors rather than a simple distinction between more or less involved unidimensional actors.

Yet, despite the recognition that political behavior takes many forms, ranging from "conventional" (voting, organization, party participation, etc.) to "unconventional" (crowd behavior, riots, revolutions, etc.), few explicit propositions have emerged from the literature except the general recognition that conventional behavior is most likely when people attribute legitimacy to political elites and, conversely, that unconventional behavior is related to alienation. Indeed, a glance at Marxian principles reveals considerably more insight than is evident in the current research literature (see Table 2).

Alienation Research and Political Behavior. The American tradition has been to treat alienation as an individual affliction (European scholars have always tended to treat it as a property of social systems) and to focus on alienation as a critical factor influencing the propensity of individuals to participate in politics. Alienation has been defined in terms of any one or any combination of six dimensions: social isolation, normlessness, cultural estrangement, estrangement from work, meaninglessness, and powerlessness (Seeman, 1975). The way in which participation is viewed depends largely on how alienation is conceptualized. The concept was initially used (in American political sociology) to imply that socially isolated individuals are inclined to

political extremism. Many have argued that the ineffectual nature of social ties in modern society inevitably leads to declining social control and increasing alienation and radicalism. Kornhauser (1959) presents the most popular articulation of this position. During modernization, the holistic social contacts people enjoyed in a more traditional era are replaced by the impersonal ties of a "mass society." Without the security which close social bonds provide, the average person is likely to experience a decline in feelings of self-worth and self-evaluation. Kornhauser maintains that the probability of mass participation in fringe movements increases as this occurs.

Although the view that social isolation leads to radicalism has some intuitive appeal, it has been questioned by students of alienation and it is inconsistent with the findings of political sociologists who focus on small groups as their units of analysis (see pp. 185–187, below). Participation in politics seems to be contingent on membership in groups which support political action. Hence, the least isolated individuals are likely to be the most active. Social isolates tend to withdraw from political involvement and are unlikely candidates for participation in radical movements.

Rejecting the isolation-leads-to-radicalism hypothesis, however, is not synonymous with discounting the importance of all forms of alienation. A sense of powerlessness is associated with radicalism among activists. This insight is consistent with findings introduced earlier. Those who believe that they have meaningful input (e.g., power) participate in conventional and socially accepted ways, while those who feel powerless to affect the system as it is presently constituted and doubt that leaders will initiate efforts to redress power imbalance are inclined to participate in nonconventional ways. The powerless wish to change conventions in the hope that power that will be redistributed (Paige, 1970; Seeman, 1972). Yet, few well documented research findings have emerged from the literature on alienation. Indeed, these findings do not extend, or expand on, Marx's principles (Table 2) to any great degree or those developed by Durkheim (Table 3) on integration, anomie, and egoism.

In sum, then, research on individual political behavior is greatly skewed toward voting behavior and, hence, is too selective and narrow to be of great theoretical value. At best, the propositions presented in Table 12 can be pulled from the scattered empirical observations. Efforts to generate insights on nonvoting forms of participation have yet to generate empirical generalizations that can inform more abstract theoretical formulations beyond those already developed (see Tables 1–10).

Groups as Units of Analysis

Interest in groups has waxed and waned among political sociologists. Studies which have been executed are of three types: (1) work examining the role of informal associations in mobilizing political participation; (2) studies examining the use of power within groups; and (3) studies of leadership in groups.

Group Research on Political Mobilization.

Although Lazarsfeld identified face-to-face interaction as the most important source of attitude development and opinion change, there has been a dearth of small-group analysis in political sociology (elite networks will be discussed below, pp. 190–192). The development of survey research techniques has simplified analysis of public opinion, leaving analysis of the actual process of opinion formation within groups a comparatively difficult and unattractive endeavor. As a result, social-network analysis remains a promising but essentially unexplored area for political sociological investigation (Sheingold, 1973). The few network studies which have been executed are highly informative. While politically less active citizens rely on, and are influenced by, mass media rather than group communications, people for whom politics is salient rely on and are influenced by small-group communications rather than mass media (Robinson, 1976). Moreover, the politically involved are distinguishable from the politically uninvolved on the basis of the types of groups in which they are members. Persons for whom politics has little salience generally belong to groups which define politics as a relatively unimportant concern. For instance, child-centered groups inhibit the development of political consciousness and activism among mothers (Lynn & Flora, 1973).

The most important discovery of political sociologists analyzing networks is that people get involved in politics by being integrated into politically oriented small groups rather than through any sense of frustration or isolation (Wilson & Orum, 1976). And importantly, membership in politically oriented networks fosters expression of minority opinion (Finifter, 1974). Hence, analyses of small groups reconfirm some of the general insights arrived at by political sociologists focusing on individuals as units of analysis (see Table 11).

The Exercise of Power in Small Groups.

One of the most important efforts in conceptualization of power in small groups has emerged from the research of Richard Emerson (1962, 1972). Emerson maintains that *A*'s power over *B* is equal to *B*'s dependence on *A* for rewards. If, for example, *B* wants recognition from a high-status-group member or if *B* wants the assistance of someone with certain specialized skills, *A*'s power over *B* will be a direct function of the extent to which *A* possesses the requisite status or skills and an inverse function of the availability of persons other than *A* who also possess the requisite statuses or skills and to whom *B* might turn. Thus, power has its most fundamental basis in exchange. Emerson's research is a good example of how a careful examination of power in small groups can generate more abstract principles that have applicability to the dynamics of all power relations (see the general exchange principles in Table 10, particularly 5–8).

Leadership in Small Groups. There is much to be learned from politics within small groups and many of our insights about groups come from the pioneering work of Robert Fred Bales (1950). Group members who show special skill in achieving objectives are rewarded with status, power, and the prerogatives of leadership. Most groups develop dual leadership, with an instrumental-task leader and an emotional-expressive leader, because effectiveness and social cohesion are both culturally valued. These leadership roles entail different responsibilities, and distinct behavioral modes tend to develop as a result. But in most cases, occupants of the two leadership roles interact with, and are supportive of, one another. Cohesion among occupants of leadership roles is associated with group consensus and militates against disruptive conflict.

Factionalism most frequently occurs in heterogeneous groups or in groups embedded in changing environments. Heterogeneous groups are often composed of members who have different values and who thus have difficulty reaching a consensus on task or emotional leadership. Conflict can emerge among persons competing for leadership positions from different bases of support, or conflict can arise simply because the power and prerogatives of different group members are not agreed on. Dissension can also arise when there is change in the environment in which a group is embedded. Significant environmental change almost always causes a shift in the relative importance of instrumental and emotional functions within the group. Since status and power result from problem-solving ability, environmental change results in a shift in the relative status of instrumental and emotional leaders (Bales & Slater, 1955).

Much like Emerson's research, a number of empirical generalizations emerge from Bales's research that have implications for the dynamics of power in units other than small groups. Several of these generalizations are summarized in Table 13. Some of these generalizations simply confirm the exchange propositions listed in Table 10. Other generalizations stress the

Table 13. Theoretically Relevant Generalizations from Bales's Research

1. The more recognition a given group member receives in comparison with other group members for contributions to the accomplishment of group goals, the more prestige and authority will that member receive.
2. The more homogeneous is the group, the more likely is there to be consensus over attribution of status and authority.
3. The more narrowly and clearly defined are the activities and interactions within the group, the more likely is there to be consensus over attribution of status and authority.
4. The more stable are environmental conditions, the more likely is consensus over attribution of status and authority.
5. The greater is the consensus in attribution of status and authority, the more likely are leaders to cooperate and the less likely are they to conflict.

fundamental relationship in social systems among power, differentiation, and change. Power is less likely to be legitimated in differentiated systems, since some sectors will have interests that run counter to those sectors that hold power. Moreover, environmental changes are likely to alter the goals and interests of some units within a system, setting into motion efforts to withdraw legitimacy and alter power relations. In many ways, such generalizations represent confirmation for exchange principles 9 and 10 in Table 10 and conflict principles in Table 8. Of course, many of the links among Bales's principles and those in Tables 8 and 10 are unclear, but there is a clear affinity or convergence, suggesting that there are certain abstract principles on power that apply to all social systems, from a small group to a system of societies.

The Structure of Power in Complex Organizations

Interesting and important examinations of power have emerged from study of formal organizations. A debate over the democratic, oligarchical, and autocratic proclivities of formal organizations has raged for nearly 50 years and continues to be an issue of some importance. In addition, students of organization are currently investigating the implications of uncertainty, dependence, and structural linkage for organizational power. These diverse lines of research bring great creative insight to bear on the same fundamental questions. Where is the decision-making capacity located within complex organizations? What structural features influence organizational capability to mobilize power and to withstand incapacitation by internally generated demands? In what ways does organizational complexity promote or inhibit societal change?

Max Weber (1946; 1968) argued that the trend toward bureaucratization has increased organizational efficiency and effectiveness in all spheres of life at the same time that it has undermined individual autonomy (see pp. 160–163). Another seminal work on the dynamics of power in formal organizations is *Political Parties* by Robert Michels (1911/1959). Michels's thesis, known as the "iron law of oligarchy" (and examined with exceptional insight by May [1965]), states that formal organizations tend toward a midpoint on a structural continuum ranging from pure democracy to pure autocracy. The need for rapid decision making, combined with difficulties in maintaining effective internal communication and culling experienced leadership, militate against either democratic or autocratic structural forms.

The larger and more structurally differentiated an organization, the more constrained into an oligarchical pattern it is likely to be, because the more difficult it becomes for either (a) all units to participate equally in decision making or (b) one unit to have sufficient information from, and control over, all sectors of the organization to be the sole participant in decision making. In passages reminiscent of Spencer's dialectic model (see Figure 2), and Pareto's

model (Figure 4), Michels argued that organizations which were originally democratic tend toward greater centralization of power in the hands of a dominant elite. Organizations which were originally autocratic tend toward development of a more diversified elite structure with countervailing checks and balances. In either case, organizational complexity necessitates oligarchy which is inherently conservative for a number of reasons including the promotion of a hierarchical system of rewards which undermines potential resistance by atomizing class interests.

In *Union Democracy* (1956), Lipset, Trow, and Coleman argue against Michels's thesis that organizations necessarily tend toward oligarchy. Pointing to the International Typographical Union, the authors indicate that broad dispersion of political resources facilitates development of political opposition and impedes oligarchical tendencies. Local autonomy, organs for communication, stability of membership, level of interest among the membership in the organization, and diffuseness of member interaction are among the factors promoting broad based participation and the development of opposition blocks, while job routinization and threats from external environment discourage broad based participation and the development of opposition blocks.

Where political resources are widely available, dominant organizational units are often wise to include less powerful units in decision making. By incorporating new elements into policymaking structures, potential sources of rival power can be coopted. This is precisely how the Tennessee Valley Authority was able to avert conflict with local interests and achieve its overall objectives (Selznick, 1949). Providing a viable mechanism through which localized interests provide input is more important, as a strategy for cooptation, than actually allowing those interests to become principal decision makers.

Recent studies tend to conceptualize organizations as decision-making structures functioning under conditions of uncertainty. On the basis of research in this area, Thompson (1967) and others have concluded that the more subject a unit is to uncertainty, the less power it has. The reasoning is similar to that developed by Emerson and other exchange theorists: Certainty about future events allows organizational functionaries to select among potential courses of action in an attempt to maximize outcomes. By limiting organizational ability to plan, uncertainty makes the organization dependent on environmental contingencies (including the policy outputs of other organizations). Hence, power is an inverse function of this dependence.

Units can respond to the powerlessness resulting from uncertainty in a number of ways. In general terms, uncertainty can be reduced by exerting control over the external environment or coordinating organizational activities to coincide with exigencies in the external environment. Development of boundary units exemplifies the first approach, while vertical integration of organizations specializing in complementary activities and seeking to limit uncertainty of inputs and outputs exemplifies the second. But development of external relations can be at the expense of dependency and hence, reduced freedom of action.

Since Weber's analysis of bureaucracy, the political importance of organizational linkages to broader political processes has been subject to considerable research. In general, it has been concluded that an organization linked with the political elites is likely to support the policy output of the elite. Moreover, the existence of ties acts to inhibit radical or nonconventional modes of participation in establishment politics and encourages the articulation of muted rather than complete demands (Gordon, 1970). The effects of linkage are particularly noticeable when organization members perceive that, in the future, they may come to benefit more substantially from the establishment. For example, those Latin American student governments from which political parties and government bureaucracies recruit new personnel tend not to be radical (Weinberg & Walker, 1969). These findings merely confirm the

Table 14. Theoretically Relevant Generalizations of Organizational Research

1. The larger and more complex are organizations, the less capable are subordinate units of equal participation in decision making.
2. The larger and more complex are organizations, the less capable is any one unit of exercising absolute control over diverse units.
3. The potential of a subordinate unit to create a base of political power is a positive function of:
   A. its internal cohesion
   B. the diffuseness of interaction among members
   C. internal structural complexity
   D. its control over communications
   E. its autonomy from other units
4. The more numerous and equally matched are bases of political power, then
   A. the greater are the number of parties with input into decision making
   B. the more likely are decisions to be subject to adjudication
   C. the less costly is dissent for subordinate units
5. The more regular are the two-directional vertical communications within an organization,
   A. the greater is the level of general cohesion
   B. the more supportive of organizational policy are subordinate units likely to be
   C. the greater is the level of certainty within subunits
   D. the greater is the level of dependence among subunits
   E. the more likely is participation to assume conventional form
6. The greater the level of external threat, the more likely is power to become increasingly concentrated, and, controlling for level of centralization, the more supportive of organizational policy are subordinate units likely to be.
7. The more complex is the structure of an organization, the more continuous is the distribution of rewards likely to be.
8. The more continuous is the distribution of rewards in an organization, the more likely are people to concern themselves with individual mobility within established channels and the less likely are people to demand radical reorganization of the reward structure.

views articulated earlier in this paper that (a) individuals and social units attempt to maximize outcomes and (b) people accept the status quo as long as individual advancement along a hierarchical reward continuum is deemed possible (see Tables 8 and 10).

A few organizational theorists have made overt attempts to call attention to generic qualities of power and conflict by generalizing from societal-level change to organizations. For example, dissent tends to be most costly in centralized, nondemocratic organizations, just as it does in autocratic societies. Consequently, efforts to unseat established authority are likely to take the form of clandestine operations rather than conventional modes of participation and are most likely to be successful when forces normally allied with the establishment can be effectively neutralized (Zald & Berger, 1978).

Relevant insights from organizational theory and research are summarized in Table 14 as a series of empirical generalizations. These generalizations, we feel, clearly have implications for political processes in units other than complex organizations. By simply escalating the level of abstraction in these principles away from organizations to societies and other types of social systems, the broader implications of organizational-power studies become evident. Centralization of power is fundamentally related to complexity; independent action is restrained by structural linkage; and opposition to power is related to (a) the capacity of political elites to meet the needs and interests of nonelites, (b) the existence of institutionalized means for resolving conflicts, (c) the existence of continuous or noncontinuous ranks, and (d) the possibilities for individual upward mobility. Such principles capture much of the Marxian legacy (see Table 2) and modern conflict theory (see Table 8 and Figure 13).

Community Power

In recent decades, a considerable amount of attention has been devoted to description of community power structures. "Pluralist" and "power elite" approaches have been suggested as ways of viewing power, decision making, and policy output on a municipal level. Each perspective makes assumptions about the ways in which popular demands and available resources influence elite activity. But the primary objective of these perspectives is to describe decision-making apparatus rather than the dynamics through which external inputs are introduced into the decision-making process.

The pluralist perspective suggests that political decisions and allocation of community resources reflect compromise among all the parties with interests relevant to an issue. Divergent interests, which possess their own independent bases of support, compete for available resources, and outcomes are reached by arriving at mutually acceptable compromise. In spite of intense debate over issues related to resource allocation, system stability is maintained

because there is underlying agreement among all parties that a decision-making system should always be open to input from diverse interests. Furthermore, diversity of interests and decentralization of power prevent any unified coalition from exerting dominance over the decision-making process (Dahl, 1961).

Pluralist studies are based on two fundamental assumptions. First, the bases of power are assumed to be numerous and differentiated. Hence, the identifiable elite is presumed to be a large and diverse group with varying talents and segmented interests. The elite is perceived to be divided rather than unified, and as issues change, influence is believed to shift from one segment of the elite to another. The second pluralist assumption is that elites encourage participation in decision making by all interested groups. Embodied as the "elite theory of democracy," this assumption implies that minority interests are protected by elite normative orientations favoring broad public participation. Both of these pluralist assumptions have been seen as problematic (Domhoff, 1967; Lawrence, 1976).

Adherents of the power elite position maintain that a small, homogeneous, unified group of individuals dominate decision making on the community and national levels. These individuals are believed to be connected to national elites and, by virtue of these connections, are able to participate in and exert influence over governmental and civic affairs. In particular, the power elite is able to control the flow of politically relevant information and determine agenda to be addressed by decision makers. Such capacities provide members of the power elite with tremendous resources for mobilizing support and for neutralizing opposition (Hunter, 1953; Mills, 1956). Adherents of the power elite position argue that these resources can be used in subtle but profoundly effective ways.

The available evidence tends to substantiate the position that a power elite does exist. Influential elites have been found to belong to the same clubs, to socialize together, and to share common opinions (Domhoff, 1967). And contrary to the predictions of pluralist scholars, corporate owners and managers continue to share the same ideology and common class interests. The most interesting development of power elite research has been the network analysis of interlocking directorates. If one person sits on the board of directors of more than one company, the decisions of two boards may be linked by virtue of the influence exerted by directors with membership on both boards. This places tremendous power in the hands of persons occupying joint positions.

The largest and most influential corporations are more likely to be joined through interlocking directorates than are smaller firms, and the wealthy members of the elite (that is, those who are most likely to have inherited rather than earned their privileged positions) are likely to hold multiple board memberships. Hence, a power elite emerges. Indirect influence of the elite

extends downward because major corporations and financial institutions are elite controlled, and those institutions are often major stockholders in smaller companies (Kerbo & Della Fave, 1979; Zeitlin, 1974). Furthermore, members of the power elite are likely to exert influence in civic and governmental circles (Ratcliff, Gallagher, & Ratcliff, 1979). Yet, those advocating a power elite perspective are not in agreement about the intent of the powerful. Some maintain that members of the power elite exploit their positions by promoting the interests of the wealthy. Others argue that the emergence of a power elite is inevitable and that elite and mass interests are similar.

A weakness in the power elite position is its implications that the public is alienated and that industrial elites enjoy a monolithic dominance over elites with political or other bases of power. These implications have been challenged by a number of critics of the power elite position (e.g., Kuo, 1973).

Adherents of both the pluralist and power elite perspectives are convinced that their position is *the only* appropriate description of community power, in part because both groups have examined communities in which their models fit best. The dogmatism which has resulted from each group's confidence in its own model is unfortunate, for it inhibits theory development (Bachrach & Baratz, 1962, 1963; Laumann & Marsden, 1979). From a theoretical viewpoint, the issue is not whether American communities reveal a power elite or pluralistic decision-making process. Some communities may reveal one or the other at different points in their history. The elite versus pluralist debate is, in reality, an atheoretical debate over what are variable conditions from one empirical system to another. Of more theoretical importance in this literature is the issue of what political processes are most likely to operate, given either a power elite or a pluralist decision-making elite (or centralized or decentralized centers of power). Relatively few propositions on this theoretical issue have emerged, primarily because advocates of one position or the other have been busy arguing with, and past, each other. But,

TABLE 15. Theoretically Relevant Generalizations of the Community Power Debate

1. The more numerous, heterogeneous, and equal in strength are independent power centers in a system, the larger and more diverse will be the decision-making elite in that system.
2. The larger and more diverse is the decision-making elite in a system, and the more equitable the distribution of power among elites, the less costly will dissent be for subordinate units, and the more likely are potential issues to be raised for adjudication in that system.
3. The larger and more diverse the decision-making elite in a system, and the more equitable the distribution of power among elites, the more likely are issues raised for adjudication to be settled by compromise in that system.
4. The greater is the neutralization of disinterested decision makers (who normally support the status quo) in a system, the more likely is structural change as an outcome of compromise in that system.

TABLE 16. Generalizations from the Sociopolitical-Movements Literature

1. The degree of polarization separating one group from other collectivities is a positive function of:
   A. material inequality between the group and other collectivities
   B. absence of mobility between the group and other collectivities
   C. sense of commonality and distinctiveness within the group
2. The mobilization of an organized opposition movement within a group is a positive function of:
   A. polarization separating the group from other collectivities in society
   B. geographic and social structural segmentation of the group from other collectivities
   C. group resources, including institutional complexity
3. The mobilization of an organized opposition movement uniting different groups in society is:
   A. a negative function of polarization separating the groups
   B. a negative function of degree of geographic and social structural segmentation separating the groups
   C. a positive function of group resources, including the institutional complexity of each group
4. The more coercion exerted on a social movement by an established power structure, the more likely is the movement to be fragmented into affinity groups.
5. The less the social solidarity, ideological commitment, and possession of political resources of opposition groups, the more likely are affinity groups to dissolve.
6. The greater is the extent to which salient cleavages in a society are based on class, the more likely are revolutionary outcomes to result from conflict, and the less likely is secession to result from conflict.

in Table 15, we have listed a number of the empirical generalizations that emerge from the acrimonious literature.

Social Movements

Social movements are among the more enduring subjects of interest to political sociologists, no doubt because the twentieth century has been a period of sociopolitical upheaval. Social movements are collective attempts to bring about fundamental structural change; and by definition they represent the division of society along cleavages which have become highly salient. Although social movements often originate in distinctly nonpolitical forms, movements become politicized as tensions accumulate from unmet demands and as diffuse complaints are galvanized into an awareness of widespread deficiencies in the status quo (Smelser, 1963).

In many ways, social movements are a particular form of the more general conflict processes outlined in Figure 13 and Table 8. This fact becomes particularly evident when the empirical generalizations from this literature are stated somewhat more abstractly than is typical in the social-movements literature. These generalizations are summarized in Table 16.

Generic questions confronting students of social mobilization concern the conditions under which groups in society become polarized and the

principles governing the mobilization of organized opposition to established centers of power. Generalizations found in the literature on political movements add little to Marx's basic insights. They are more interesting and important as chronologies of contemporary phenomena than as theoretical statements. But they do call attention to the salience of ethnic cleavage and other features of political life that Marx left unaccentuated.

Political movements can emerge along any cleavage which is salient in society: class, ethnicity, and religion being the divisions which most commonly give rise to movements. The major precondition for development of a movement is met whenever members of a group come to believe that their interests are unprotected by the existing system. This sense of oppression is most likely to develop in societies marked by great inequality, little mobility, and both geographic and social structural segmentation of the groups concerned (Tomlinson, 1968). Hence, material interests are usually the focal point for grievances even when a society is fragmented along ethnic or religious lines. But when nonclass differences form salient bases of cleavage, members of opposing groups are unlikely to unite over, or even recognize, common material interests (House & Mason, 1975).

Even when widespread dissatisfaction can be taken as a given, the organization and mobilization of a political movement remains problematic. Social aggregates which are internally organized but are isolated from other sectors of society stand the greatest chance of being mobilized (Oberschall, 1973). Thus, the emergence of a social movement among Latin American peasants is inhibited by lack of contact among peasants and by the ubiquitous character of patron–client relationships through which the direct dependence of the peasant is structurally maintained. The patronage system has been so successful for so long because political action is a social structural phenomena and peasants are attached to and integrated with patrons rather than one another (Huizer, 1970).

Within isolated aggregates, the more substantial are the political resources and institutional complexity (itself a political resource in light of capacity to channel opportunities, disseminate information, and focus collective effort), the greater are chances for mobilization. But the relationship between resources and mobilization is not unidirectional. Mobilization enables a movement to expand its organizational apparatus, exert greater control over diverse elements, and subvert institutions dominated by other sectors of the society (Etzioni, 1968).

Outcomes are subject to many influences. Suppression by the established order, for example, results in fragmentation of a movement into small units which either dissipate or tend to become absorbed by conventional forms of political behavior (Oberschall, 1973). And while high levels of class conflict can result in revolutionary change, extreme cases of ethnic or religious conflict tend toward secession and civil war (Hechter, 1978). The outcomes of

individual crowd situations are subject to a wide variety of idiosyncratic situational influences (McPhail, 1971).

Societies as Units of Analysis: Modernization and Political Development

Most approaches employing societies as units of analysis direct attention to the study of either modernization or political development. The modernization literature suggests that the spread of industrial technology promotes political as well as economic and social change. Hence, the division of labor, the conversion to inanimate forms of energy, mass production, urbanization, replacement of ascriptive by achieved statuses, and bureaucratization of government are viewed as coterminous aspects of a single transformation (Apter, 1965; Parsons, 1971).

Most of the imagery employed by modernization theorists is positive. The breakdown of old social ties facilitates mobilization of effort toward the accomplishment of collective ends resulting in the transformation of society (Deutsch, 1961; Rostow, 1971). Mass production makes it possible to reduce inequality, and democratization is encouraged by most facets of the modernization process, including urbanization and the decline of ascriptive statuses (Lenski, 1966). Other views of modernization are more pessimistic. Modernization can polarize a nation-state by making people aware of group differences, unleash a revolution of rising expectations the polity cannot sustain, and generate conflict arising from the power shift when sectors of society change at different rates (Melson & Wolpe, 1970; Sofranko & Bealer, 1972).

Singular concern with a particular historical epoch limits the theoretical utility of the modernization literature. The study of political development is not linked to any particular set of historical events, and it is more general and has greater theoretical importance for that reason (Huntington, 1965). Level of political development, which might be defined as the capacity to coordinate

TABLE 17. Generalizations from Modernization and Political-Development Literatures

1. The greater the volume and variety of activity in a system, the more highly differentiated will be coordination and control structures.
2. The greater the level of differentiation in a system, the more problematic is integration of that system.
3. The more highly integrated is a system, the greater is the capacity of that system for further differentiation. Integration is a positive function of:
   A. the extent to which the distribution of rewards is continuous
   B. success in alleviating grievances, thereby promoting system legitimacy
   C. the degree to which change is balanced

the control of human activity, is limited by properties generic to all systems. The generalizations offered in this literature are insightful, and they are summarized in Table 17; but they add little to Spencerian and Weberian principles.

A major deficiency in much of the literature on modernization and development is the lack of attention paid to dependency as a special facet of underdevelopment. Dependency can involve extensive penetration by structural appendages of more developed areas. Thus, exploring the implications of interpenetration is likely to have great theoretical significance (Bill & Hardgrave, 1973).

Dependency Theory and the World Systems Approach

The "dependency" approach considers the generic question of penetration of one system by another; it focuses specifically on penetration of Third-World economies by the commercial interests of industrial nations and attributes "underdevelopment" to these outside influences. A major premise is that indigenous elites are coopted by a worldwide commercial-power elite, with the result that the indigenous elite promotes the interests of the world-wide elite by facilitating exportation of raw materials, by preventing the development of a domestic manufacturing sector, and by neutralizing internal bases of political resistance. Wealth flows to the "core" (Western industrial areas) of the global system, and development is sacrificed in peripheral (less developed) areas (Chilcote, 1974; Galtung, 1971). This analysis is frequently extended to "internal colonies" within industrial nations—depressed areas inhabited by minority populations (Fusfeld, 1973)—a fact which speaks to the generic nature of the question being addressed.

One important mechanism through which dependency curtails development is decapitalization. Many multinational corporations, for example, anticipate recovering and removing 50% of their total investment yearly in order to satisfy criteria for investing in "less developed countries." The flow of resources from the periphery to the core is generally viewed as most complete under conditions of commercial monopolization (Frank, 1966), although some dependency researchers argue against models which underestimate the level and diversity of indigenous economic activity in dependent areas.

Current evidence suggests that dependency, as reflected in foreign assistance and investment, does inhibit long-term economic growth in peripheral areas and is associated with increasing inequality (Bornschier & Ballmer-Cao, 1979). These findings suggest the possibility that monolithic power halts activity it does not control and in so doing eliminates the possibility of an institutional revolution in which competing structures grow and eventually subsume previously dominant structures. This leaves popular uprising as the only alternative means of inducing changes which are not

sponsored by the elite. (It is interesting to note that the hierarchical and segmented divisions of labor and rewards described by dependency researchers are similar to those described as consciousness inducing in the mobilization literature.) Ultimately power is based on the independent control of indigenous activity. Thus, from dependency theory comes one basic principle: The greater is the penetration of a system by external forces, and the greater is the control of a system by these external forces, the more likely are indigenous, autonomously controlled social structures to be dissolved or neutralized, and the less substantial the local power base.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have sought to summarize the diverse theoretical literature on power. As is evident, this sociological literature lacks a clear focus. The reasons for this situation are various, including: (1) the lack of consensus over what theory is, what it should be, and what it can be; (2) the sparsity of inquiry into the generic properties of power; (3) the failure to move beyond topical issues of immediate relevance; and (4) the descriptive bias of sociological inquiry, in general, and that of political sociology, in particular.

These failings will persist, we believe, until sociologists begin to take the task of theory building more seriously. There are several steps that must be taken to redirect our efforts. First, sociologists must recognize that theory is about generic and universal properties of the social world. One does not have theories about specific empirical events in particular times, places, and contexts. Theory in political sociology suffers greatly from the current overconcern with unique and situation-specific empirical events. Second, the domain of political sociology must be seen more clearly as an examination of only one generic property of social systems—power. Concern must be with specifying the general conditions under which varying degrees and forms of power are created, maintained, and changed in diverse types of social systems. Specific empirical cases must be viewed with an eye to what they can do to inform this more general issue. Third, it is necessary to recapture a clear vision of what theory in the more developed sciences is. It is *not* taxonomy; it is *not* description; and it is *not* causal modeling. Theory is composed of abstract statements that establish an affinity and/or correspondence among basic properties of a universe. These abstract statements are then used as axioms, or covering laws, to explain particular sets of empirical events.

It is for this reason that we have sought to translate conceptual and empirical work in political sociology into more abstract propositions. While there are points of overlap, redundancy, and contradiction among the propositions in Tables 1–17, they at least offer a place to begin consolidation and reconciliation—for the current state of sociological theory on political processes (that is, on power) is contained in these 17 tables. If readers find

these propositions deficient, then the state of sociological theory on power is less than it should be. Our goal must be to reduce the number of abstract statements so that some basic laws on power as a generic property of social systems can be generated. This chapter thus represents a plea for more serious theorizing in sociology, in general, and in political sociology, in particular. For we cannot continue to describe, categorize, and model political processes. The goal of theory is to explain these processes with abstract laws.

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4

POLITICS AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE

RICHARD M. MERELMAN

Introduction

The question of how the political system and the social structure are connected to each other has vexed social scientists from the beginning of the social scientific enterprise. Theorists differ about the extent to which politics can be free from such constraints as, among others, patterns of ethnic cleavage, class friction, geographical regionalism, and racial division. Broadly speaking, it is possible to divide theorists into three distinct schools of thinking on this question.

The first school is that of the traditional conservative. T. S. Eliot (1949), for example, argues that the political system is intimately associated with social structure, chiefly because all properly functioning political systems are guided by traditional moral norms. Chaos results whenever the political system attempts to interfere with the moral norms generated by organic folk and high cultures. From this vantage point, Eliot and other conservatives attack the efforts of the "welfare state" to alter age-old social inequalities in the interest of novel moral considerations. To Eliot, as well as to other conservatives, the political system of a society must typify the traditional moral constraints that permeate society as a whole. Moral diversity, as between a modern, egalitarian polity and a traditional, inegalitarian society, spells disaster for both politics and society.

Other traditionalists go farther even than Eliot in arguing that the natural relation of politics to social structure is one of moral consensus, mutual support, and mutual reinforcement. Ortega y Gasset (1932) argues, for ex-

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