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Analytical Theorizing

JONATHAN H. TURNER

The term 'analytical' is admittedly vague, but I use it here to describe a range of theoretical approaches which make the following assumptions: there is an external universe 'out there' which exists independently of our conceptualizations of it; this universe reveals certain timeless, universal and invariant properties; the goal of sociological theory is to isolate these generic properties and understand their operation. These assertions invite, I am afraid, an avalanche of criticism and immediately immerse theoretical activity into a philosophical debate which, by its nature, is unresolvable. Indeed, social theorists have spent far too much time defending or attacking the position of analytical theorizing, and as a result, they have neglected the main task of all theory: to understand how the social world operates. I do not want to be yet another Brer Rabbit who is pulled into this philosophical quagmire, but let me at least frame, in general terms, some of the philosophical issues.

The Philosophical Debate

Analytical theory assumes that, in A. R. Radcliffe-Brown's words, a 'natural science of society' is possible (Radcliffe-Brown: 1948). This argument was given its most forceful expression by the titular founder of sociology, Auguste Comte, who argued that sociology could be a 'positivistic science'. Thus, analytical theory and positivism are closely allied, but the nature of this alliance is obscured by the fact that portrayals of positivism vary considerably. Unlike some recent portrayals of positivism that associate this term with 'raw empiricism', Comte argued that 'no real observation of any kind of phenomenon is possible, except in as far as it is first directed, and finally interpreted, by some theory' (Comte: 1830–42, p. 242). Indeed, Comte saw as a 'great hindrance ... the empiricism which is introduced into [positivism] by those who, in the name of impartiality, would interdict the use of any theory whatever' (p. 242). Thus, positivism means the use of theory to interpret empirical events and, conversely, the reliance on observation to

assess the plausibility of theory. But what is the nature of theory in Comte's positivism? The opening pages of his *Positive Philosophy* inform us.

> 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 analyze 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 (Comte: 1830–42, pp. 5–6).

The above quotation makes a number of critical points. First, sociological theory involves the search for abstract natural laws. There should be relatively few laws; and one principal goal of theoretical activity is to reduce the number of laws so that only basic, fundamental and invariant properties of the universe are subject to theoretical analysis.

Second, causal and functional analysis are inappropriate. Here, Comte seems to accept David Hume's analysis of the impossibility of determining the cause of phenomena, but he adds a similar warning about analysis of phenomena in terms of the purposes, ends or needs that they serve. Sadly, sociology ignored Comte's warning. Indeed, Émile Durkheim was to 'stand Comte on his head' in 1895 with the publication of *The Rules of the Sociological Method* which argued for both causal and functional analysis (Durkheim: 1983). I think that we would have been far wiser, as a theoretical discipline, to follow Comte's 'old rules of the sociological method' rather than Durkheim's proposal; and as I will indicate shortly, we certainly should not follow Giddens's and others' proposals for 'New Rules' of the sociological method (Giddens: 1977). Unfortunately, sociological theory was to follow Durkheim's rather than Comte's advice and, more recently, a variety of anti-positivist treatises. The overall result is to divert and dilute theorizing in sociology.

Third, sociological laws should be modelled after the physics of Comte's time, but the form of the laws is left rather vague. Terms like 'natural relations of succession and resemblance' are imprecise, especially since causal concerns have been eliminated. In dealing with this vagueness, more modern portrayals of positivism in philosophy have somewhat misinterpreted Comte's programme and inserted rigid criteria for formulating the 'natural relations' of phenomena (e.g., see Carnap: 1966; Hempel: 1965). This new positivism is often preceded by the modifier 'logical' and takes the following form (Keat and Orry: 1975): abstract laws express regularities in the universe; such laws 'explain' events when they predict what will occur in a specific empirical case; the vehicle of this explanation is 'logical deductions' from the law (the *explanas*) to a set of empirical phenomena (the *explicandum*); such 'logical deductions' take the form of using the laws as a premiss, inserting statements which 'connect' or 'attach' the law to a general

class of empirical phenomena and then making a prediction about what is expected to occur for one specific empirical case within this general class of phenomena; and if the prediction is not confirmed by the empirical case, the theory is re-assessed, although there is disagreement here over whether the theory is now 'falsified' (Popper: 1959; 1969) or whether its failure to be 'confirmed' merely requires a serious re-examination of the theory (Lakatos: 1970).

This view of positivism 'fills in' Comte's points of vagueness with excessively restrictive criteria which most analytical theorists do not, and cannot, follow. True, they often pay lip-service to them in their moments of philosophical/methodological reflection, but in their actual work they do not adhere to them. There are good reasons for this inability to follow the straitjacket of logical positivism and they are fundamental to analytical theorizing. Let me elaborate on these.

First, the criterion of prediction is unrealistic. When scientists must work in natural empirical systems, prediction is difficult, since controls cannot be imposed on the effects of extraneous variables. These extraneous forces may be unknown or unmeasurable with current methodologies, and even if they are known or measurable, there may be moral and political reasons for not imposing controls. This situation is true not just for social scientists but for all natural scientists. In recognizing the difficulties of prediction, however, I do not propose that we abandon efforts to be a natural science, any more than geology and biology re-assess their scientific worth when they cannot, respectively, predict earthquakes or speciation.

Second, the rejection of causality is a great weakness in some forms of positivism, whether Comte's or the versions of more modern philosophers. Such a rejection is acceptable when logical deductions from premisses to conclusion can be the criterion of explanation, but analytical theory must also be concerned with the processes that operate to connect phenomena. That is, it is important to know why, how and in what ways invariant properties of the universe operate. Such concerns will require the analysis of underlying social processes and, invariably, of causality. Depending on the theorist, causality may or may not be part of the formal laws, but it cannot be ignored (Keat and Urry: 1975).

Third, logical positivism assumes that the calculuses by which 'deductions' from premisses to conclusions, or from *explanas* to *explicandum*, are made are unambiguous and clear. In fact, they are not. Much of what constitutes a 'deductive system' in all scientific theory is folk-reasoning, and highly discursive. For example, the synthetic theory of evolution is discursive, although some portions of it (such as genetics) can be stated with a degree of precision. But when this theory is used to explain events, the application is not in terms of strict adherence to a calculus but, rather, in conformity with what 'seems reasonable' to a community of scholars. Having asserted this, however, I am not advocating retreat into a version of currently fashionable hermeneutics or relativism.

These considerations require that sociological theory loosen the requirements of logical positivism. We should still view as our goal the isolation and understanding of invariant, fundamental and basic features of the social universe, but we should not be intellectual fascists about it. Moreover, analytical theory must not be concerned with regularities *per se* but with the 'why' and 'how' of invariant regularities. Thus, my view of theory, which is shared by most analytical theorists, is this: we can develop abstract laws of invariant properties of the universe, but such laws will need to be supplemented by scenarios (models, descriptions, analogies) of the underlying processes of these properties. Moreover, explanation is in most cases not going to involve precise predictions and deductions, primarily because experimental controls are not possible in the tests of most theories. Explanation will consist, instead, of a more discursive use of abstract propositions and models to understand specific events. Deduction will be loose, and even metaphorical. And it will naturally be subject to argument and debate. But, sociology is not unique here; most sciences operate this way. While Thomas Kuhn's analysis is highly flawed, it did emphasize the social-political character of theories (Kuhn: 1970). But again, we do not need to abandon our search for invariant properties any more than physics has after recognizing that many formulations are stated, initially at least, rather loosely and that they are subject to political negotiation within a scientific community.

Let me close this section on the philosophical debate with a brief comment on the criticisms of positivism, even my rather relaxed portrayal of its tenets. One criticism is that theoretical statements are not so much descriptions or analyses of an independent, external reality as creations and constructions of the scientist. Theory is not about a reality 'out there', but rather it is a product of scientists' interests or their sense of aesthetics. A variant of this criticism is that theories are never tested against the 'hard facts' of an external world because the 'facts' themselves are also related to the scientists' interests and to the research protocols that are politically acceptable to a scientific community. Moreover, facts will be interpreted, or ignored, in light of the interests of scientists. The overall result, critics argue, is that the presumed self-correcting process of theory-hypothesis testing in science is an illusion.

My sense is that there is an important point to this criticism, but it is rather dramatically overstated. All concepts are, of course, reifications in some sense; all 'facts' are biased by our methods; and all facts are interpreted to some extent. But despite these problems, knowledge about the universe has been accumulated. This knowledge could not be wholly subjective or biased: otherwise, nuclear weapons would not explode, thermometers would not work, aeroplanes would not fly, and so on. If we took theory-building seriously in sociology, knowledge about the social universe would accumulate, albeit along the muddled path that it has in the 'hard sciences'. Thus, in the long run, the world out there does impose itself as a corrective to theoretical knowledge.

A second general line of criticism of the analytical approach that I am advocating is more specific to the social sciences and concerns the substan-

tive nature of the social universe. There are numerous variants of this argument but the central point is this: the very nature of the universe is alterable by virtue of human beings' capacity for thought, reflection and action. Laws about an invariant world are irrelevant or at least time-bound in social science because the social universe is constantly restructuring itself through the reflexive acts of humans. Moreover, humans can use social science theories to restructure the universe in ways that obviate the relevance of such laws (see, e.g., Giddens 1984). At best, then, laws and other theoretical tools such as modelling are temporal and pertinent to a specific historical period; at worst, they are never useful since the basic nature of the social universe is constantly reshaped.

Many who have made this charge – from Marx to Giddens – have violated it in their own work. For example, there would be little reason to pore over Marx, as contemporary theorists are wont to do, unless we sense that he unlocked some of the basic, generic and invariant dynamics of power. Or, why would Giddens (1981; 1984) bother to develop a 'theory of structuration' which posits relations among invariant properties of the universe, unless he sensed that he had penetrated beneath the surface historical changes to the core of human action, interaction and organization?

Many who make this charge confuse law and empirical generalization. Of course actual social systems change, as do solar, biological, geological and chemical systems in the empirical universe. But these changes do not alter, respectively, the laws of gravity, speciation, entropy, force/diffusion or the periodic table. Indeed, change occurs in accordance with these laws. Humans have always acted, interacted, differentiated and coordinated their social relations; these are some of the invariant properties of human organization and these are what our most abstract laws must address. Capitalism, nuclear families, caste systems, urbanization and other historical events are, of course, variable, but they are *not* the subject-matter of theory, as many would argue. Thus, while the structure of the social universe is constantly changing, the fundamental dynamics underlying this structure are not.

A third line of criticism of analytical theorizing comes from critical theorists (see, e.g., Habermas: 1972) who argue that positivism sees existing conditions as the way the social universe *must be* and, as a result, it cannot propose alternatives to the existing status quo. In their concern with lawful regularities that pertain to the way the universe is currently structured, positivists ideologically support existing conditions of human domination. Value-free science thus becomes a tool for supporting the interests of those who benefit most from existing social arrangements.

This criticism has some merit, but the critical theorist's alternative to positivism is to generate formulations which often have little foundation in the operative dynamics of the universe. Much critical theory, for example, is either pessimistic critique and/or construction of hopelessly naive utopias (see, e.g., Habermas: 1981).

Moreover, I think that this critique is based upon a view of positivism which is deficient. Theory should not merely describe existing structures

but uncover the underlying dynamics of these structures. Rather than 'theories of' capitalism, bureaucracy, urbanization and other empirical events, we need, respectively, theories of production, task organization, spatial destruction and other generic processes. Historical cases and empirical manifestations are not the subject-matter of laws; they are the place to test the plausibility of laws. For example, descriptions of regularities in capitalist economies are the data (not the theory) for testing the implications of abstract laws of production.

It can be argued, of course, that such 'laws of production' uncritically accept the status quo, but I would counter that patterns of human organization require production to be sustained and, hence, represent a generic property of human organization rather than a blind affirmation of the status quo. Much critical theory fails to recognize that there are invariant properties which theorists cannot 'wish away' with their utopias. Karl Marx made this mistake in 1848 by assuming that concentrated power 'withers away' in differentiated systems (Marx and Engels: 1971); more recently, Jürgen Habermas (1970; 1981) has proposed a utopian view of communicative action that under-emphasizes the extent to which *all* interaction is inherently distorted in complex systems.

My point here is twofold. First, if we look for invariant properties, we are less likely to make statements supportive of the status quo. Second, to assume that there are no invariant properties invites theory which increasingly fails to recognize that the world is not easily bent and, in some cases, can never be bent to the theorist's ideological fancies and fantasies.

It is not wise to delve any further into these philosophical questions. The position of analytical theorizing on these questions is clear. The real debate within analytical theory is over the best strategy for developing theoretical statements about the basic properties of the social universe.

The Varying Strategies of Analytical Theorizing

There are, I believe, four basic approaches to building sociological theory:[1] metatheoretical schemes; analytical schemes; propositional schemes; and modelling schemes. However, there are contradictory variants within these basic approaches, and so in actual practice there are considerably more than four. None the less, the variants will be examined under these four general headings.

Metatheorizing

Many in sociology argue that for theory to be productive, it is essential to block out the basic 'presuppositions' that should guide theoretical activity.

[1] For a more detailed analysis see Turner: 1985b; 1986, ch. 1.

That is, before adequate theorizing can occur, it is necessary to address such fundamental questions as: what is the nature of human activity, human interaction, human organization? What is the most appropriate set of procedures for developing theory and what kind of theory is possible? What are the central issues or critical problems on which sociological theory should concentrate? And so on. Such questions and the rather long treatises (e.g. Alexander: 1982–3) that they encourage pull theory into the old and unresolvable philosophical debates – idealism versus materialism, induction versus deduction, subjectivism versus objectivism, and the like.

What makes these treatises 'meta' – that is, 'coming after' or 'subsequent to', as the dictionary informs us – is that these philosophical issues are raised in the context of yet one more re-analysis of the 'great theorists', the favourite targets being Karl Marx, Max Weber, Émile Durkheim and, more recently, Talcott Parsons. Although these works are always scholarly, filled with long footnotes and relevant quotations, my sense is that they often suffocate theoretical activity. They embroil theory in unresolvable philosophical issues and they easily become scholastic treatises that lose sight of the goal of all theory: to explain how the social universe works. Thus, metatheorizing is interesting philosophy and, at times, a fascinating history of ideas, but it is not theory and it is not easily used in analytical theorizing.

Analytical schemes

A great deal of theorizing in sociology involves the construction of abstract systems of categories that presumably denote key properties of the universe and crucial relations among these properties. In essence, such schemes are typologies that map the important dynamics of the universe. Abstract concepts dissect the basic properties of the universe and then order these properties in a way that is presumed to offer insight into the structure and dynamics of the universe. Explanation of specific events is achieved when the scheme can be used to interpret some specific empirical process. Such interpretations are of two basic kinds: when the place or niche of an empirical event in the category system is found, then the empirical event is considered to be explained;[2] or, when the scheme can be used to construct a descriptive scenario of why and how events in an empirical situation transpired, then these events are seen as explained.[3]

These somewhat different views of explanation by analytical schemes reflect two contradictory approaches: 'naturalistic analytical schemes' and 'sensitizing analytical schemes'. The first assumes that the ordering of concepts in the scheme represents an 'analytical accentuation' of the ordering of the universe (Parsons: 1937); as a consequence of this isomorphism, explanation is usually seen as involving the discovery of the place of an

[2] See, for examples, Parsons: 1937; 1961; 1966; 1971a; 1971b; 1978.
[3] For examples, see Blumer (1969) and Giddens (1984).

empirical event in the scheme. The second approach usually rejects positivism as well as naturalism and argues that the system of concepts is only provisional and sensitizing (Blumer: 1969; Giddens: 1984). Since the universe will change, conceptual schemes must also change; at best, they can provide a useful way to interpret empirical events at a particular point in time.

Those following the naturalistic variant often argue in a vein similar to metatheorists: the analytical scheme is a necessary prerequisite for other kinds of theoretical activity (e.g. Münch: 1982). For until one has a scheme which denotes and orders at an analytical level the properties of the universe, it is difficult to know what to theorize about. Thus, for some, naturalistic analytical schemes are a necessary preliminary to the propositional and modelling approaches for developing sociological theory. In contrast, those employing sensitizing analytical schemes typically reject the search for universal laws as fruitless, since these laws will be obviated as the fundamental nature of the world changes (Giddens: 1977; 1984).

Propositional schemes

Propositional schemes revolve around statements that connect variables to one another. That is, propositions state the form of the relation between two or more variable properties of the social universe. Propositional schemes vary widely and can be grouped into three general types: 'axiomatic schemes', 'formal schemes' and 'empirical schemes'.

Axiomatic theorizing involves deductions, in terms of a precise calculus, from abstract axioms that contain precisely-defined concepts to an empirical event. Explanation consists of determining that an empirical event is 'covered' by one or more axioms. In actual fact, however, axiomatic theory is rarely possible in those sciences that cannot exert laboratory controls, define concepts in terms of 'exact classes' and use a formal calculus such as logic or mathematics (Freese: 1980). While sociologists (e.g. Emerson: 1972; Homans: 1974) often use the vocabulary of axiomatic theory – axioms, theorems, corollaries – they are rarely in a position to meet the requirements of true axiomatic theory. Instead, they engage in formal theorizing (Freese: 1980).

Formal theorizing is 'watered-down' axiomatic theorizing. Abstract laws are articulated and, in what is often a rough and discursive manner, 'deductions' to empirical events are made. Explanation consists of visualizing an empirical event as an instance or manifestation of the more abstract law. The goal of theorizing is thus to develop elementary laws or principles about basic properties of the universe.

The third type of propositional scheme – the empirical – is not really theory at all. But many theorists and researchers consider it to be so and therefore I must mention this kind of activity. Indeed, many critics of analytical theorizing use examples of empirical propositional schemes to indict positivism. For instance, I have already alluded to the tendency of

the critics of positivism to confuse abstract law about a generic phenomenon and generalization about a set of empirical events. This assertion that empirical generalizations are laws is then used to mount a rejection of positivism: there are no timeless laws because empirical events always change. Such a conclusion is based upon the inability of critics to recognize the difference between an empirical generalization and an abstract law. But even among those sympathetic to positivism, there is a tendency to confuse what is to be explained (the empirical generalization) with what is to explain (the abstract law). This confusion takes several forms.

One is to elevate the humble empirical generalization to the status of a 'law', as is the case with 'Golden's law', which merely reports that industrialization and literacy are positively correlated. Another is to follow Robert Merton's famous advocacy for 'theories of the middle range' where the goal is to develop some generalizations for a substantive area – say, urbanization, organizational control, deviance, socialization or some other substantive topic (Merton: 1968). Such 'theories' are, in fact, empirical generalizations whose regularities require a more abstract formulation to explain them. Yet a good many sociologists believe that these 'middle range' propositions are theories, despite their empirical character.

Thus, much propositional activity will not be useful to theory-building. The conditions necessary for axiomatic theory can rarely be met, and empirical propositions are not, by their nature, sufficiently abstract to be theoretical. Of the various propositional approaches, my view is that formal theory will be the most useful approach for developing analytical theory.

Modelling schemes

The use of the term 'model' is highly ambiguous in the social sciences. In the more mature sciences, a model is a way to represent visually a phenomenon in a way that exposes its underlying properties and their interconnections. In social theory, modelling involves a variety of activities, ranging from the construction of formal equations and computer simulations to graphic representations of relations among phenomena. I will restrict my usage of the term to theorizing in which concepts and their relations are presented as a visual picture that maps properties of the social universe and their interrelations.

A model, then, is a diagrammatic representation of events that includes: concepts that denote and highlight certain features of the universe; the arrangement of these concepts in visual space so as to reflect the ordering of events in the universe; symbols that mark the nature of connections among concepts. In sociological theory, two types of models are generally constructed: 'abstract-analytical models' and 'empirical-causal models'.

Abstract-analytical models develop context-free concepts – for example, concepts pertaining to production, centralization of power, differentiation, and the like – and then represent their relations in a visual picture. Such relations are usually expressed in causal terms, but these causal connections

are complex, involving varying weights and patterns (such as feedback loops, cycles, mutual effects and other non-linear connective representations).

In contrast, empirical-causal models are usually statements of correlation among measured variables, ordered in a linear and temporal sequence. The object is 'to explain variance' in a dependent variable in terms of a series of independent and intervening variables (Blalock: 1964; Duncan: 1966). Such exercises are, in reality, empirical description because the concepts in the model are measured variables for a particular empirical case. Yet, despite their lack of abstraction, they are often considered 'theoretical'. Thus, as with empirical propositional schemes, these more empirical models will be much less useful in theory-building than the analytical ones. Much like their propositional counterparts, causal models are regularities in data that require a more abstract theory to explain them.

This completes my review of various strategies for building sociological theory. As is evident, I see only some of these as appropriate for analytical theorizing and for theorizing in general. Let me now complete this review with a more explicit assessment of their relative merits.

Relative merits of diverse theoretical strategies

From an analytical viewpoint, theory should, first of all, be abstract and not tied to the particulars of an historical/empirical case. Hence, empirical modelling and empirical propositional schemes are not theory, but regularities in the data that require a theory to explain them. They are an *explicandum* in search of an *explanas*. Second, analytical theorizing emphasizes that theories must be tested against the facts, and thus metatheoretical schemes and elaborate analytical schemes are not theory proper. Whereas metatheory is highly philosophical and impossible to test, sensitizing analytical schemes can be used as starting-points for building testable theory. If the anti-positivist tenets of their practitioners can be ignored, such sensitizing analytical schemes provide a sound place to *begin* conceptualizing basic classes of variables that can be incorporated into testable propositions and models. This is also possible with naturalistic analytical schemes, but more difficult because they tend to become excessively concerned with their own architectural majesty. Finally, in contrast to some analytical theorists, I think that theory must involve more than abstract statements of regularities: it must address the issue of causality, but not the simple causality of empirical models. My view is that analytical models provide an important supplement to abstract propositions because they map the complex causal connections – direct and indirect effects, feedback loops, reciprocal effects, etc. – among the concepts in propositions. Without such models, it is difficult to know what processes and mechanisms are involved in creating the relations that are specified in a proposition.

In light of these considerations, then, analytical theory must be abstract; it must denote generic properties of the universe; it must be testable or

capable of generating testable propositions; and it cannot ignore causality, process and operative mechanisms. The best approach to theory-building in sociology is thus a combination of sensitizing analytical schemes, abstract formal propositions and analytical models (Turner: 1986). This is where the most creative synergy is; and while various analytical theorists tend to emphasize one over the other, it is the *simultaneous* use of all three approaches that offers the most potential for developing a 'natural science of society'. Figure 1 portrays in somewhat idealized form my argument.[4]

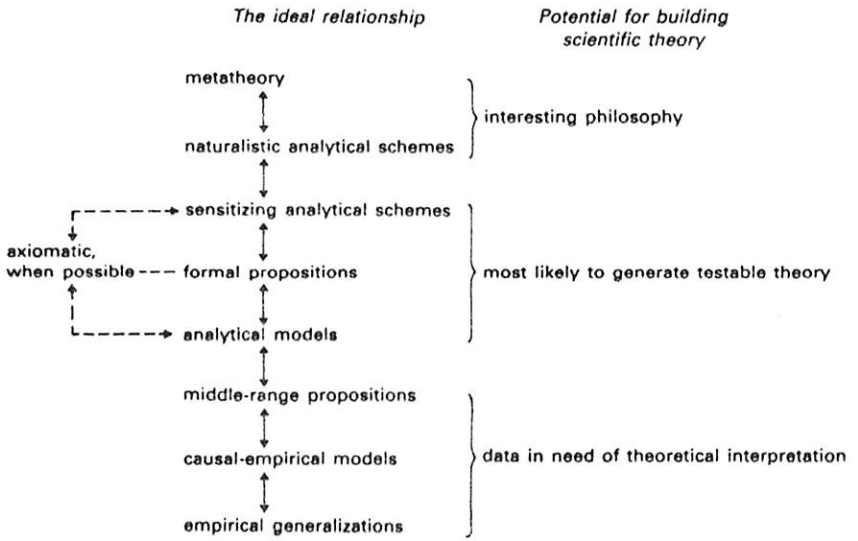

Figure 1 Relations among theoretical approaches and potential for building theory.

As is evident, one place to begin theorizing is by constructing sensitizing analytical schemes that denote in a provisional manner key properties of the social universe. By itself such activity is unproductive since the scheme cannot be tested. Rather, it can only be used to 'interpret' events. In my view, this is inadequate: it is also necessary to generate from the scheme abstract and testable propositions and, at the same time, to model the processes that operate to connect the concepts in the propositions. This exercise itself, regardless of empirical tests, can force revision of the sensitizing scheme. Or, construction of an analytical model can encourage rethinking of a proposition. The critical point here is that these three activities are mutually reinforcing; this is what I mean by 'creative synergy'.

In contrast, naturalistic analytical schemes and metatheorizing tend to

[4] See Turner (1985b; 1986) for more detailed portrayal of the elements in figure 1.

be too philosophical and detached from the actual workings of the world. They become overly reified and either concerned with their architecture or obsessed with their scholastic capacity to 'resolve' philosophical issues. Yet I do not consider these to be unimportant activities but, rather, as being useful only *after* we have developed laws and models in which we have confidence. Then, more philosophical discussion is useful and can force re-examination of laws and propositions. But without these laws and propositions, analytical schemes and metatheorizing become self-sustaining philosophical treatises. The vehicle for connecting propositions and models to more formal analytical schemes and metatheory is the sensitizing analytical scheme. These sensitizing schemes, when used to stimulate the formulation of propositions and when re-assessed in light of tests of propositions, can provide empirically-informed presuppositions for more complex naturalistic schemes and for metatheorizing. In turn, when metatheory and naturalistic schemes have been built from a propositional base, they can provide useful insights that force assessment of existing propositions and models. Yet without this attachment to testable theory, analytical schemes and metatheory float away into the reified and rarified world of philosophical speculation and debate.

On the more empirical side of theory-building, middle-range propositions that are, in essence, empirical generalizations for an entire substantive area can be useful as one way of testing more abstract theories. Such middle-range 'theories' order research findings for whole classes of empirical phenomena, and hence provide a consolidated set of data that can shed light on a theoretical law and model. Empirical-causal models can explicate the temporal processes that operate to connect variables in middle-range theories or a simple empirical generalization. As such, they can help to assess the plausibility of analytical models and abstract propositions. But without the abstract laws and models these more empirical approaches will not help to build theory. For if uninformed by abstract laws and formal models, then middle-range theories, causal models and empirical generalizations are constructed *ad hoc*, without concern for whether or not they illustrate an underlying dynamic of the universe. Only infrequently does one make inductions from these empirical formats and create theory, for the reality of theory-building is the other way around: theory first, then assessment with data. Of course, with such focused data comes an assessment of the theory. But when one starts with the particulars, one rarely rises above them.

Such is my position and that of most analytical theorists. Start with sensitizing schemes, propositions and models, and only then move on to the formal collection of data or to metatheorizing and scheme-building. Although most analytical theorists would agree with this kind of strategic statement, there is considerable disagreement over the substance of analytical theorizing.

Substantive Debate in Analytical Theorizing

The substantive debate in analytical theory is over the issue of what theory should be about. What are the most important properties of the social universe? Which of these should be studied first, or is more fundamental? How are microprocesses of action and interaction to be reconciled with macrodynamics of differentiation and integration of populations? These are the kinds of questions that consume analytical theory, and although they are obviously important, sociological theorists have spent far too much time debating them. Fortunately, there have also been more creative efforts to theorize, that is, to assert what is an important property in the social universe, to develop a sensitizing analytical scheme to frame the important questions, to develop abstract concepts and propositions and to construct analytical models to denote the operative mechanisms and processes inhering in this property.

I cannot review all of these theoretical efforts and so, instead, I propose to present my views on the basic properties of the universe and to illustrate the type of analytical theorizing that I feel will be most productive. In so doing, I will summarize most of the theoretical work in analytical theory, since my approach is highly eclectic and borrows heavily from others. But I should add several points of caution. First, I selectively borrow and, hence, do not do full justice to those from whom I take ideas. Second, I quite willingly take from those who might not consider themselves analytical theorists; in fact, they might well consider themselves hostile to the kind of theorizing that I advocate. With these qualifications, let me begin.

A sensitizing scheme for the analysis of human organization

As mentioned earlier, most naturalistic analytical schemes are too complex. Moreover, they tend to become ever more elaborate as new dimensions of reality are incorporated into the constantly proliferating system of categories and as new elements in the scheme are reconciled with older ones. Sensitizing analytical schemes also suffer from this tendency to become more elaborate, adding concepts and specifying new analytical connections. The more complex that analytical schemes become, I feel, the less their utility. In my view, complexity should be handled at the propositional and modelling level, not in the overarching conceptual framework. Thus, a sensitizing analytical scheme should merely denote generic *classes* of variables, with specific propositions and models filling in the details. Therefore, the sensitizing scheme proposed in figure 2 is far simpler than existing ones, although it does become more complex as each of its elements is analysed in more detail.

One reason for the complexity of existing schemes is that they try to do too much. They typically seek to account for 'everything, all at once' (Turner: 1984, ch. 1). Yet sciences have not progressed very far in their

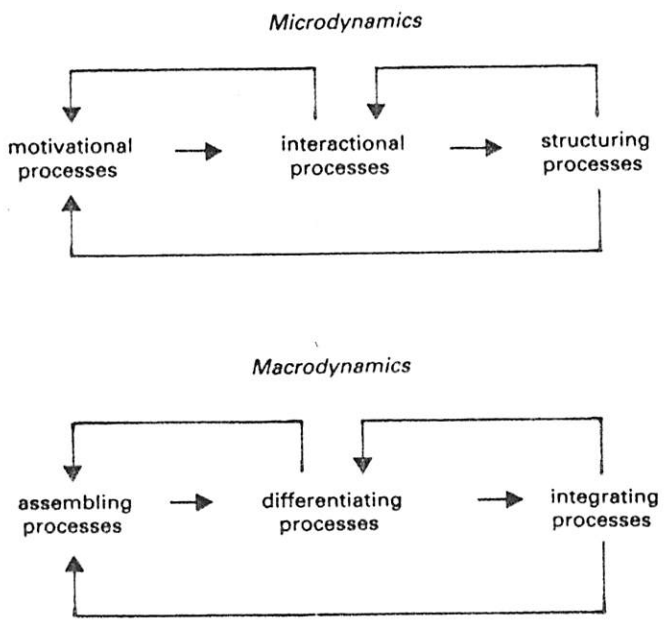

Figure 2 A sensitizing scheme for analytical theorizing.

early stages by trying to achieve premature comprehensiveness. This push for comprehensiveness is reflected in the recent resurgence of interest in the micro–macro 'link', or 'gap' as it is often called (Alexander *et al.*: 1986; Knorr-Cetina and Cicourel: 1981; Turner: 1983). Theorists now want to explain everything – micro and macro – all at once, despite the fact that neither microprocesses of interaction among individuals in situations or macrodynamics of aggregations of people have been adequately conceptualized. My view is that all this concern over understanding the micro-basis of the macro, and vice versa, is premature. Figure 1 proposes to retain the division between macro and microsociology, at least for the time being. Thus, there is a 'gap' between micro and macroprocesses and, except in the most metaphorical way, I do not propose to fill it.

With respect to microprocesses, I see three classes of dynamics as critical in analytical theorizing: those 'energizing' or 'pushing' individuals to interact (note that I do not say 'act' which has received too much conceptual emphasis in sociology) (Turner: 1985a); those operating on individuals as they mutually adjust their conduct towards each other; and those structuring chains of interaction over time and across space. As the arrows indicate, these microprocesses are interrelated, each operating as a parameter for the

others. In regard to macroprocesses, I see three types of dynamics as central to analytical theorizing: assembling processes determining the number of actors (whether individuals or collectivities) and their distribution in time and space; differentiation processes of actors in time and space; and integrating processes coordinating the interactions of actors over time and space.

Microdynamics

As I have suggested, analytical complexity should be added at the modelling level, and sometimes at the propositional level, because only here can theoretical ideas have a chance of being tested against the facts (with all the problems presented by the critics of positivism duly noted and rejected, at least in their extreme and intellectually debilitating form). Thus, the task of micro-analysis is to specify the dynamics of the three classes of variables – motivational, interactional and structuring – in abstract models and propositions. Let me begin with motivational processes.

Motivational processes

The explicit conceptualization of 'motives' has fallen into abeyance in theorizing because of all the problems involved in analysing and measuring 'what drives people' and 'makes them do things'. Instead, sociologists have talked about behaviour, action and interaction in ways that mask the extent to which they are addressing the issue of motivation. In so doing, they have obscured the analysis of both motivation and interaction. It is more useful to separate these analytically by presenting a simple model of what 'pushes', 'drives', 'energizes' and 'directs' people to interact with each other in certain ways. Admittedly, these terms are vague, but none the less they communicate my general intent.

There are four motivational processes in all situations of interaction: those processes involved in sustaining 'ontological security' (Giddens: 1984), or the implicit need to reduce anxiety and achieve a sense of trust with others; those revolving around the maintenance of what some interactionists term a 'core' self-conception, or the reaffirmation of one's central and basic definition of oneself as a certain type of being; those concerning what utilitarian economics and behavioural exchange theorists view as efforts of individuals to 'make a profit' or augment their material, symbolic, political or psychic resources in situations (Homans: 1974); and those dealing with what ethnomethodologists have at times termed 'facticity', or the presumption that the world has an obdurate or factual character and order (Garfinkel: 1984). These four processes correspond, respectively, to various conceptions of motivation in the psychoanalytic (Erikson: 1950), symbolic interactionist (Kuhn and McPartland: 1954), behavioural/utilitarian (Homans: 1974) and ethnomethodological traditions (Garfinkel: 1984). Typically these have been seen as antagonistic approaches, with certain notable exceptions (e.g. Collins: 1975; Giddens: 1984; Shibutani: 1968). In figure 3, an analytical model outlining the principal interrelations among these four processes is presented.

At the right-hand side of figure 3, I emphasize that all interaction is motivated by exchange considerations. People want to feel that they have increased their level of resources in exchange for the expenditure of energy and investment of resources. Naturally, the nature of resources can vary, but analytical exchange theories usually view power, prestige, approval and, at times, material well-being as the most generic. Thus, from the point of view of most contemporary exchange perspectives, individuals are 'driven' to seek some profit in terms of these classes of resources, and so much interaction involves negotiation over power, prestige and approval (and occasionally material benefits). I will not outline the arguments of exchange theory here, since they are well known, but the basic principles of exchange theory are, I feel, a good summary of *one* motivational process.

Another motivational process is also part of interpersonal exchanges: talk and conversation. I think that Collins (1986) is correct in his view that this is a major resource, as opposed to vehicle or medium, in interaction. That is, people 'spend' talk and conversation in hopes of receiving not just power (deference), prestige or approval, but also rewarding talk *per se*. Indeed, people negotiate over conversational resources as actively as they do over the other resources. Out of such conversations, they develop a 'sense' and 'feeling' of satisfaction, or what Collins has termed 'emotion'. That is, people spend and augment their 'emotional capital' in their conversational exchanges. Thus talk is not only a medium by which power, prestige and approval are transmitted; it is also a resource in itself.

Negotiations over conversational resources involve more than exchange, however. There is also a process of trying to 'fill in' and 'interpret' what is occurring in an interaction. A situation does not 'feel right' without the capacity to use words, non-verbal gestures, features of a setting and other cues to achieve a fuller 'sense' of 'what is being talked about' and 'what is going on'. As Garfinkel (1984) first emphasized, much of what occurs in an interaction involves interpretations of gestures in light of the context of interaction. People use implicit stocks of knowledge and understanding to interpret a conversation in order to feel comfortable in an interaction context. And they employ a variety of 'folk' or 'ethno' methods to generate a sense that each understands the other and that they are experiencing a similar world. Thus, in addition to an exchange of resources, conversations are negotiations over 'what is going on'; when this sense of mutual agreement on the nature of a situation is disrupted, as was evident in Garfinkel's famous 'breaching experiments', individuals work very hard to 'repair' the sense that they share, experience and participate in a common world. When individuals cannot sustain a sense of a common and shared universe, their anxiety increases; the sense of trust so necessary for ontological security is eroded, which, in turn, activates people to re-interpret and renegotiate their conversational exchanges. Such negotiations have the ironic consequence of sustaining anxiety, but if participants can use 'ethno' methods to achieve a

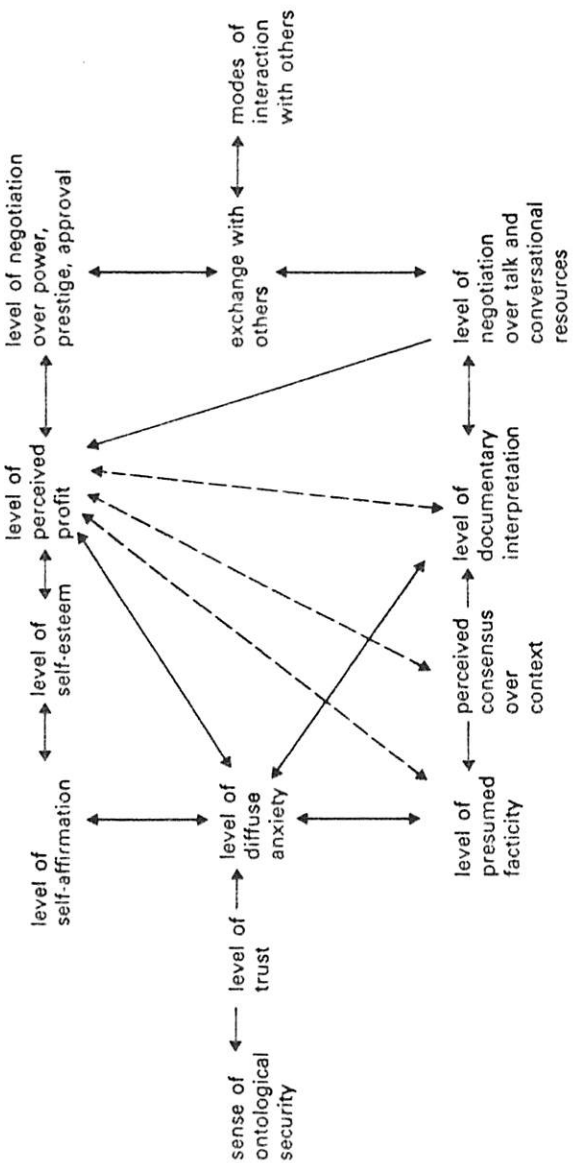

Figure 3 The dynamics of interpersonal motivation.

sense and presumption that they share a similar factual world, then anxiety is reduced. Hence, a need for 'facticity' is a powerful motivational force in human interaction, as is indicated by the processes shown at the bottom of figure 3.

Turning back to the top of figure 3, yet another motivating force in interaction is the effort to sustain a conception of oneself as a certain kind of person. This is done primarily through exchange relations revolving around power, prestige, approval and, at times, material well-being, as well as those concerning the receipt of emotional capital in conversations. Thus, if people sense that they receive a 'psychic profit' in their exchanges, they will also sustain their self-esteem, which I see as the major mechanism mediating between their 'core self' (Kuhn and Hickman: 1956) and exchange outcomes. As the dotted arrows indicate, a secondary process in sustaining a 'profit' is the dynamics leading to a sense of facticity. To the extent that achieving facticity is problematic, individuals will not feel that they have 'profited' from an interaction, and hence they will have difficulty sustaining their self-esteem and self-conception in that situation. Whether from this secondary source or simply from the inability to enhance emotional capital or extract approval, deference and prestige, a failure to confirm self creates anxiety which, in turn, disrupts the trust (in oneself) so essential to ontological security.

The details of this model cannot be explored here, but it does try to pull together diverse analytical traditions into a more synthetic view of motivational dynamics. In closing, let me illustrate my overall theoretical strategy by using the model to develop several abstract 'laws of motivation'.

> I The level of motivational energy of individuals in an interaction situation is an inverse function of the degree to which individuals fail to (*a*) achieve a sense of ontological security, (*b*) develop a presumption of facticity, (*c*) affirm their core self and (*d*) achieve a sense of resource augmentation.
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> II The form, direction and intensity of interaction in a situation will be a positive function of the relative salience of (*a*), (*b*), (*c*) and (*d*) above as well as of the absolute levels of (*a*), (*b*), (*c*) and (*d*) above.

These two principles state, at an abstract level, the general way in which people are 'energized' to interact. Obviously the propositions do not specify the processes of motivation, as does the model in figure 3. Thus, I think that the analytical model provides necessary details about the mechanisms (that is, anxiety, self-esteem, profit, consensus over context, documentary interpretation and negotiation). I would, of course, insert these into the propositions, but then the laws lose their simplicity and parsimony which for many purposes (such as their use in a deductive calculus) is desirable. Thus, as I indicated earlier, there is a creative interplay between abstract laws and analytical models. One without the other leaves something to be desired: the model is too complex to be tested as a whole (and hence its

conversion to simple laws is essential), but the simple laws do not delineate the complex causal processes and mechanisms that underlie the relations specified in the law (thus the need to supplement laws with abstract analytical models).

Interactional processes

The next element in the sensitizing scheme presented in figure 2 is the process of interaction itself. The key issue is this: what occurs as people mutually signal each other and interpret each other's gestures? Figure 4 outlines the critical processes: the use of stocks of implicit knowledge (Schütz: 1967) or 'stock-making' in my terms, to engage in a variety of signalling processes, notably stage-making (Goffman: 1959), role-making (Turner: 1962), claim-making (Habermas: 1981), and account-making (Garfinkel: 1984), and the use of stocks of knowledge, or 'stock-taking', to perform a number of interpretative processes, particularly account-taking (Garfinkel: 1984), claim-taking (Habermas: 1981), role-taking (Mead: 1934), and type-taking (Schütz: 1967). I cannot provide a detailed discussion of these processes, especially since the model in figure 4 draws from very diverse theoretical traditions, but let me enumerate on the processes that are delineated.

As George Herbert Mead was the first to recognize explicitly, interaction is a 'conversation of gestures'. People signal their respective courses of action (consciously and unconsciously) by emitting gestures, and at the same time, they interpret the gestures of others. Out of this simultaneous process of signalling and interpreting, people adjust their respective lines of conduct, with the pattern of such an adjustment being a function of the motivational processes discussed above. In order to signal and interpret, actors draw upon what Alfred Schütz termed 'stock knowledge at hand', or the stores of explicit and implicit meanings, conceptions, procedures, rules, attitudes and understanding that individuals acquire as they live, grow-up and participate in ongoing social relations. In order to signal, individuals stock-*make* in that they draw upon these stocks of knowledge to make or construct a line of conduct for themselves. Reciprocally, in order to interpret the gestures of others, individuals must stock-*take* in that they must take from their stocks of knowledge in order to 'make sense' of others' signals. This simultaneous process of stock-making and stock-taking is often implicit and unconscious. Yet, when signals are not acknowledged by others, when such signals cannot be easily interpreted or when motives for ontological security, self-affirmation, resource augmentation and facticity are not being met (see proposition II), then these processes of stock-making and stock-taking become much more explicit.

The middle sections of the model in figure 4 attempt to reconcile the early insights of Mead and Schütz with what are sometimes viewed as antagonistic traditions. These traditions are not antagonistic, however, because each has something to contribute to a synthetic view of interaction.

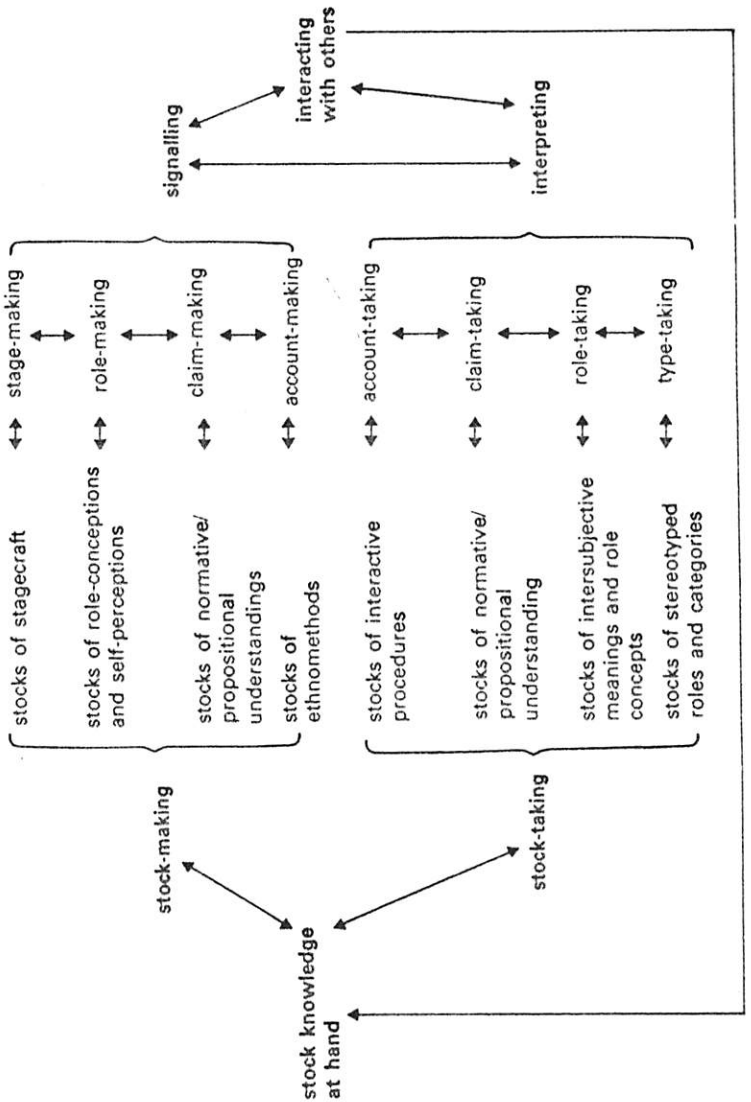

Figure 4 The dynamics of interaction.

Let me document this compatibility by discussing each of the elements outlined in the middle sections of figure 4.

As Goffman was the first to conceptualize explicitly and as Giddens (1984) has more recently done, interaction always involves 'stage-making'. People possess understandings about 'stagecraft' in that they 'know', at least implicitly, about such matters as the relative positioning of actors, the movement to and from front and backstage regions, and other aspects of the demography of space. By their positioning in space, or by their movement in space, people signal to others their intentions and expectations. Without this capacity to draw from stocks of knowledge and make for themselves a 'stage presence', interaction would be difficult, since individuals could not use their respective positions and movements in space to tell others about their respective actions.

Much of the manipulation of this positioning in space is designed to facilitate what Ralph Turner has termed role-making, or the orchestration of gestures to signal what role one is seeking to play in a situation. In such role-making activities, humans do not rely solely on stagecraft. They possess stocks of 'role conceptions' which denote syndromes of gestures and behavioural sequences associated with a particular line of conduct. Such role concepts can become very finely-tuned in that, for example, we can not only distinguish someone as playing a 'student role,' but also *what kind* of student role (serious, scholarly, athletic, social, etc.). People thus possess a vast repertoire of role concepts and from this repertoire, they seek to make a role for themselves by orchestrating their emission of gestures. Just which roles they make for themselves is, of course, circumscribed not only by the existing structure (students cannot be professors, for instance) but also by their stocks of self-perceptions and definitions. Thus, humans select from their repertoire of roles those which are consistent with their stocks of self-perceptions and definitions. Some of these self-perceptions follow from core self-conceptions that motivate interaction, but humans also possess stocks of more peripheral and situational images of themselves. For example, a person may recognize without great loss of self-esteem and degradation of core self that he or she is not good at sports, and as a consequence this person will make a role that corresponds to a self-image of poor proficiency in 'game situations'. Without this capacity to make roles, interaction would be unduly stressful and time-consuming, since individuals could not assume that their orchestration of gestures signalled a particular line of conduct to others. But with common conceptions of various types of roles, individuals can signal their intentions and trust that others will recognize what they are up to, without having constantly to re-signal their proposed line of conduct.

While I find much of Jürgen Habermas's 'critical project' excessively ideological, idealized and, at times, sociologically naive, his discussion of the 'ideal speech act' and 'communicative action' (Habermas: 1981) has none the less uncovered a basic dynamic in human interaction: the process of making 'validity claims'. As individuals interact, they make 'validity claims' that others can accept or challenge. Such claims involve assertions, typically implicit but at times explicit, about the authenticity and sincerity of gestures as manifestations of subjective experiences; about the efficiency and effectiveness of gestures as indicators of means to an end; and about the correctness of actions in terms of relevant norms. I do not share Habermas's ideological view that such claim-making (and the challenge and discourse that can ensue) are the essence of human liberation from forms of domination, but I do think that interaction involves a subtle and typically implicit process whereby each party 'asserts' that they are sincere, efficient and correct. Such claims are related to role-making efforts but they also draw upon shared stocks of knowledge about norms, understandings of sincere behaviour and culturally-agreed upon connections between means–ends.

The final signalling process is related to claim-making, but more directly to stocks of 'ethno' methods such as the 'et cetera principle', conversational sequences, normal forms and other folk practices (Cicourel: 1973; Heritage: 1984) which individuals use to create a *sense* of a social order. Thus, signalling always involves a process of 'account-making' in which individuals implicitly use various folk methods or procedures for convincing others that they share a common factual world. Garfinkel's breaching experiments (1963; 1984) as well as other analyses of conversations[5] indicate that such procedures are crucial for an interaction to proceed smoothly; when the use of these 'ethno' methods does not occur or when they are not understood or accepted, then the interaction becomes problematic. Thus, much of what individuals signal to others involves an effort to make an account of what is real and factual in the situation.

Simultaneous to these four signalling processes – stage-making, role-making, claim-making and account-making – are reciprocal processes of interpreting the signals emitted by others. Moreover to some degree humans also interpret their own signals, and thus interaction involves a reflexive monitoring of one's own as well as others' gestures.

Account-making goes side by side with 'account-taking', in which the signals of others as well as one's own, especially those pertaining to stocks of interpretative understandings, are used to develop a set of implicit presumptions about the background features of an interaction setting. That is, actors interpret certain classes of signals (i.e. folk methods) in order to 'fill in' and 'make sense' of what others are doing as well as to provide for themselves a sense, perhaps somewhat illusory, that they and other(s) share a common universe.

Related to such 'ethnomethodizing', if I can invent yet another word in a field filled with linguistic innovation, is the other side of Habermas's claim-making: 'claim-taking'. That is, the 'validity claims' of others (and oneself) as to sincerity, correctness and means–ends effectiveness are interpreted in light of stocks of normative understandings, means–ends formula

[5] See, for a review, Heritage: 1984.

and genre of authenticity. Such interpretation can lead to an acceptance of claims, or it can involve 'challenges' to any one or all three types of validity claims. If the latter occurs, then counter claim-making is signalled and the interaction will cycle around claim-making and claim-taking processes until validity claims by all parties are accepted (or one set of claims is simply imposed upon others through the capacity for coercion or for control of resources).

The third interpretative process is that first conceptualized by Mead as 'role-taking' and 'taking-the-role-of-the-other', or what Schütz termed 'reciprocity of perspectives'. The gestures or signals of others are used to put oneself in another's position or to assume his or her perspective. Such role-taking occurs on several levels, however. One is the converse of role-making where stocks of role conceptions are used to determine what role others are playing. Another, deeper level is the use of stocks of agreed understandings about how people typically act in various types of situations to fill in the background features necessary to understand why a person is behaving in a certain way. Together, these two levels of role-taking by individuals can provide a perspective on others' likely modes and directions of conduct.

At times, interaction involves what Schütz termed 'typification' or interaction in terms of 'ideal-types'. For much interaction involves placing others into stereotyped categories and then interacting with them as non-persons or ideals. Thus, role-taking can shift into 'type-taking' when a situation does not call for sensitive and finely-tuned interpretations of others' motives, feelings and attitudes. As type-taking occurs, the other interpretative processes of role-taking, claim-taking and account-taking decrease because, in essence, they are 'preprogrammed' into the stocks of stereotyped roles and categories that are used to type-take.

In sum, then, I see interaction as a dual and simultaneous process of signalling and interpreting, drawing from stocks of knowledge that individuals have acquired. Different theoretical approaches have emphasized varying aspects of this basic process, but none alone captures the full dynamics of interaction. The model in figure 4 attempts to pull these various approaches together into a more unified approach that views the processes of interpretation and signalling as interrelated. To complete this synthesis of diverse approaches to interactional processes in analytical theory, let me reformulate the key elements of the model into a few 'laws of interaction'.

III The degree of interaction by individuals is a situation in a joint and positive function of their respective levels of (*a*) signalling and (*b*) interpreting.

(*a*) The degree of signalling is a joint and positive function of the degree of stage-making, role-making, claim-making and account-making.

(*b*) The degree of interpreting is a joint and positive function of the degree of account-taking, claim-taking, role-taking and type-taking.

IV The degree of mutual accommodation and cooperation among individuals in an interaction situation is a positive function of the degree to which they share common stocks of knowledge and use these in their signalling and interpreting.

Structuring processes

Most interaction occurs within an existing structure which has been built up and sustained by previous interactions. Such structures are best viewed as constraining parameters (Blau: 1977) in that they circumscribe the staging activities of individuals by locating them within physical spaces; restrict the kinds of validating processes – that is, claims and challenges – that can occur; provide the contextual base for accounting activities that allows people to create a sense of reality; dictate the kinds of role-making that are possible; provide cues for the nature of role-taking; and organize people and their activities in ways that encourage (or discourage) mutual typification.

Yet, because individuals evidence distinct motivational profiles and because existing structures provide only parameters for the staging, validating, accounting, role-taking, role-making and typifying, there is always some potential for the restructuring of situations. The basic processes involved in such restructuring are, however, the same as those for sustaining an existing structure, and so we can use the same models and propositions to understand both structuring and restructuring. In figure 5, I present my views on the dynamics of these processes.

I will begin by outlining just what 'structure' is. First, it is a process, not a thing. To use the currently fashionable terms, it is 'produced' and 'reproduced' by individuals in interaction. Second, structure refers to the ordering of interactions across time and in space (Collins: 1975; Giddens: 1981; 1984). The time dimension can denote processes that order interactions for a particular set of individuals, but more important is the organization of interactions for *successive sets* of individuals who, as each passes through the existing structural parameters, reproduce these parameters. Third, such reproduction of structure is, as the right-hand side of figure 5 emphasizes, determined by the capacity of individuals in interaction to 'regionalize', 'routinize', 'normatize', 'ritualize' and 'categorize' their joint activities. Thus, structure is both the process and product of staging, validating, accounting, role-taking, role-making and typifying activities. These interactive processes produce (or reproduce) structure when they enable individuals to regionalize, routinize, normatize, ritualize and categorize their joint actions. Let me now analyse these five processes on the right-hand side of figure 5 in more detail.

As individuals stage-make (see figure 4), they negotiate over the utilization of space. They decide such questions as who occupies what territory, who can move where and how frequently, and who can come and go in space, and other similar issues of interactive demography and ecology. If actors

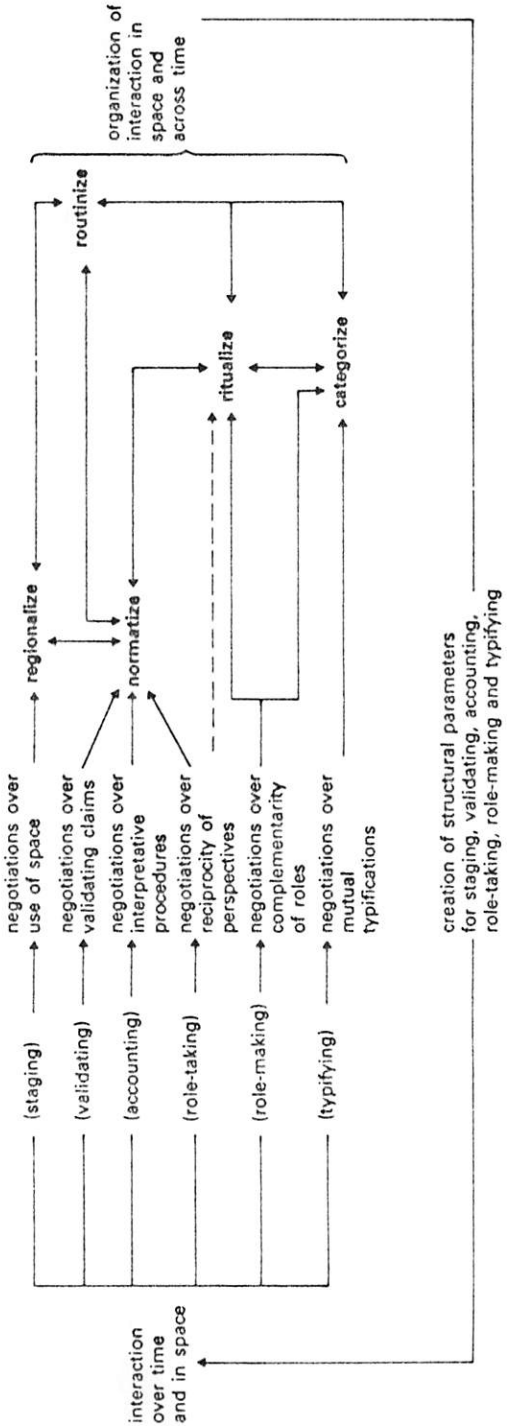

Figure 5 The process of structuring.

can agree on such issues, they regionalize their interaction in that their spatial distribution and mobility become patterned. Negotiations over space are, of course, facilitated when there are physical props, such as streets, corridors, buildings, rooms and offices, to constrain negotiations. Equally important, however, are normative agreements over what these props as well as interpersonal signals 'mean' to individuals. That is, regionalization involves rules, agreements and understandings about who can occupy what space, who can hold 'desirable' space and who can move in space (hence the arrow from 'normatize' to 'regionalize' in figure 5). Another important force, which is related to normatization but is also an independent factor in its own right, is routinization. Regionalization of activities is greatly facilitated when joint actions are routinized in that individuals do approximately the same things (move, gesture, talk, etc.) at the same time in the same space.

Conversely, both routinization and normatization are facilitated by regionalization. There is, then, mutual feedback among these processes. Routines facilitate the ordering of space, but once ordered, routines are easy to sustain (of course, if spatial order is disrupted, so are routines). Norms allow distributions in space to be interpreted, while guiding the joint activities of individuals occupying varying points in space; but once interactions are regionalized, the maintenance of the normative system is encouraged (conversely, if spatial order is disrupted, so will be the normative structure).

As is evident in figure 5, the creation of norms, or to 'normatize' as I call it, is critical to the process of structuring. Unfortunately, the concept of 'norm' has become unfashionable in social theory, primarily because of its association with functionalism. I propose that we retain this concept, but use it in ways that move beyond simple assumptions that for 'each status position there are attendant norms' or that 'roles are enactments of normative expectations'. Both of these assumptions are at times true, but they are more of a special case of normative interaction than the rule. As figure 5 emphasizes, I see norms as a process revolving around validating, accounting and role-taking. As people negotiate over what is proper, authentic and efficient (validating), as they negotiate over the proper interpretative procedures or 'ethno' methods for creating a sense of common reality (accounting), and as they try to put themselves in others' places and assume their perspective (role-taking), they *do* develop implicit and provisionally binding agreements about how they are to interact and adjust their conduct to each other. If humans could not do this, interaction would be too much work, for we would constantly and incessantly be negotiating over proper conduct. The development of these implicit agreements is facilitated by regionalization, routinization and ritualization (the latter concept denoting stereotyped sequences of gestures among interactants). Such norms become part of people's stocks of knowledge and they are used in appropriate contexts. Indeed, much role-taking, accounting and validating revolves around people's efforts to interpret in a particular situation which norms are being taken from stocks of knowledge.

Routines are also an important process in structuring. If sets of actors engage in more or less the same sequences of behaviour over time and in space, then the organization of interaction is greatly facilitated. Conversely, routines are influenced by the other structuring processes of regionalization, normatization, ritualization and categorization. When activities are ordered in space, it is easier to establish routines. If there are agreements over norms, then creating routines is encouraged. If interaction can also be ritualized so that people's encounters involve stereotyped sequences of gestures, then routines can be sustained without much 'interpersonal work' (that is, active and self-conscious signalling and interpreting). And when actors can effectively categorize each other as non-persons and thereby interact without great efforts at signalling and interpreting, then routines can be more readily established and maintained.

Rituals are another critical element in structuring. For when actors can open, sustain and close interaction in situations with stereotyped talk and gesturing, interaction can proceed more smoothly and become more readily ordered. Just what rituals to perform, how to perform them and when to perform them is normatively determined. But rituals are also the result of routinization and categorization. If actors can place each other in simple categories, then their interaction will be ritualized, involving predictable opening and closing gestures, with a typical form of conversation and gesturing between the opening and closing rituals. Similarly, routine activities encourage rituals, for as individuals seek to sustain their established routines they try to ritualize interaction so as to keep it from intruding (through having to do 'interpersonal' work) into their routines. But perhaps most important, rituals are related to role-making individuals negotiate over their respective roles, and if they can negotiate complementary roles, then they can ritualize much of their interaction. This is especially likely to be the case when the respective roles are unequal in terms of power (Collins: 1975).

The final basic structuring process is categorization which emerges out of people's negotiations over how mutually to typify one another and their relationship. This process of categorizing each other and each relationship is facilitated by successful role-making and by routinization as well as by ritualization of the relation. Categorization allows individuals to treat each other as non-persons and to avoid the time and energy involved in sensitive and finely-tuned signalling and interpreting. In this way, their interaction can proceed smoothly across time (in repeated encounters) and in space (without renegotiating who should be where).

I cannot explore here all of the subtleties of these five processes, but the arrows in figure 5 indicate how I would approach a more detailed analysis (Turner: forthcoming a). As people mutually signal and interpret, they are engaged in staging, validating, accounting, role-taking, role-making and typifying which, respectively, involve negotiations over space, validity claims, interpretative procedures, reciprocity of perspectives, respective roles and mutual typifications. Out of these processes come the structuring processes of regionalization, routinization, normatization, ritualization and categorization which organize interaction over time and in space. In turn, these structuring processes serve as structural parameters that constrain and circumscribe the interactive processes of staging, validating, accounting, role-taking, role-making and typifying. Such is, in general terms, my view of the process of structuring which incorporates much of the work in analytical theorizing on micro-interactive interpretations of 'social structure'. Let me complete my review by offering a few 'laws of structuring'.

V The degree of structuring of interaction is a positive and additive function of the degree to which that interaction can be (*a*) regionalized, (*b*) routinized, (*c*) normatized, (*d*) ritualized and (*e*) categorized.

(*a*) The degree of regionalization of interaction is a positive and additive function of the degree to which individuals can successfully negotiate over the use of space and routinize as well as normatize their joint activities.

(*b*) The degree of routinization of interaction is a positive and additive function of the degree to which individuals can normatize, regionalize, ritualize and categorize their joint activities.

(*c*) The degree of normatization of interaction is a positive and additive function of the degree to which individuals can successfully negotiate over validity claims, interpretative procedures and reciprocity of perspectives, and regionalize, routinize and ritualize their joint activities.

(*d*) The degree of ritualization of interaction is a positive and additive function of the degree to which individuals can successfully negotiate over reciprocity of perspectives as well as complementarity of roles, and normatize, routinize and categorize their joint activities.

(*e*) The degree of categorization of interaction is a positive and additive function of the degree to which individuals can successfully negotiate over mutual typifications as well as complementarity of roles, and ritualize as well as routinize their joint activities.

This completes my review of theoretical work in analytical theory on microdynamics. Obviously, I have taken ideas from scholars who would object to being classified as analytical theorists, but to the extent that analytical theory addresses the question of microprocesses, figures 3, 4 and 5 as well as propositions I–V capture the thrust of this theorizing. With some notable exceptions (e.g. Collins: 1975; 1986; Giddens: 1984; Turner: 1980), analytical theorizing has concentrated on macrodynamics, preferring to take interaction as a 'given', as 'random processes' (e.g. Mayhew and Leringen: 1976) or as a 'rate' (Blau: 1977). Let me now turn to this more macro-approach.

Macrodynamics

A clear consensus over just what constitutes 'macroreality' does not exist in sociological theorizing. Some macrosociologists view it as the analysis of structural properties, independent of those processes occurring among individuals (e.g. Blau: 1977; Mayhew: 1981). Others see macrosociology as the analysis of the various ways that micro-units are aggregated to form large-scale organizational and societal processes (e.g. Collins: 1975; 1986). Critics typically see all macro-analysis as a reification or hypostatization (Knorr-Cetina and Cicourel: 1981). Yet despite these kinds of criticism and the apparent conceptual confusion over the microbasis of social structure, it is still difficult to deny a simple fact of social life: human populations grow and aggregate into large numbers and create complex social forms that stretch across vast geographical regions and over considerable periods of time. To assert, as many do, that such forms can be analysed solely in terms of the constituent acts and interactions of individuals is misleading. Such reductionist approaches produce conceptual anarchy, for one can never see 'the wood for the trees', or even the trees through the branches.

There is no doubt, of course, that macroprocesses involve interactions among individuals, but it is often wise to bracket these out of analysis. For just as it is useful to ignore for most analytical purposes the respiratory and circulatory physiology of the human anatomy when studying many properties of interaction, so it is reasonable to ignore, for many purposes, individuals, individual acts and individual interactions. Naturally, knowing just what people do as they regionalize, routinize, normatize, ritualize and categorize their interactions (see figure 5) can serve as a useful *supplement* to macro-analysis, but such inquiry cannot substitute for pure macro-analysis where concern is with the processes by which larger numbers of actors are assembled, differentiated and integrated (see figure 2). Such is my position and that of most analytical theorists (Turner: 1983).

In figure 6, my views on the most basic and fundamental macrodynamics of human organization are delineated. I have grouped these dynamics, as in figure 2, under three constituent processes: *assemblage*, or the accretion of individuals and their productive capacities in space; *differentiation*, or the number of different sub-units and cultural symbols among members of an assembled population; and *integration*, or the degree to which relations among sub-units of an assembled population are coordinated. Unlike my analysis of microprocesses, however, I have not broken these down into three separate models. Rather, I have created one composite model which, if broken down, could be articulated in more detail. I plan to undertake such an analysis in the near future (Turner: forthcoming b), but for my present purposes the model is presented in its simplified form.

Processes of assemblage

Early sociological theorists, particularly Herbert Spencer (1905) and Émile Durkheim (1935), understood these dynamics well. They recognized that the growth of a population, its aggregation in delimited space and its modes of production are interrelated. Their analysis focused primarily on societies, but the relations among these processes hold for all other units of analysis as well. The pattern of interconnection is indicated by the direction of the arrows in figure 6: size/growth and production are mutually reinforcing, with each feeding back and increasing the values of the other, especially when values for material, organizational and technological resources are high; aggregation is related to size/growth and levels of production, and while there is some feedback between these forces, it is secondary and not indicated in this simplified version of the model. These specific processes of interconnection could be modelled in more detail, but I will not do so here.

In turn, each of these three processes is related to other forces, listed on the far left of figure 6. Aggregation is related to the available space and the way in which such space is currently organized (as well as to the existing patterns of social organization of subgroups: note arrow at top of figure 6). Growth/size is connected to the net rate of immigration into a population, the rate of indigenous population increase (reproduction), and external incorporation (i.e. mergers, conquests, alliances, etc.). Production is related to the level of relevant resources, primarily material, organizational, technological and political (note feedback arrow at bottom of figure 6). To summarize these processes as a simple set of 'laws of assemblage', I offer the following.

VI The level of assemblage for a population is a multiplicative function of its (*a*) size and rate of growth, (*b*) degree of ecological concentration and (*c*) level of production (a clear tautology, obviated below).

(*a*) The size and rate of growth of a population is an additive and positive function of external influx, internal increase, external incorporation and level of production.

(*b*) The degree of aggregation of a population is a positive and additive function of its size and rate of growth, level of production, capacity to organize space and the number and diversity of its subgroupings, while being an inverse function of the amount of available space.

(*c*) The level of production for a population is a positive multiplicative function of its size and rate of growth, level of material, organizational and technological resources and capacity to mobilize power.

The process of differentiation

Increases in aggregation, size/rate of growth, and production escalate the level of competition over resources among social units. Such competition

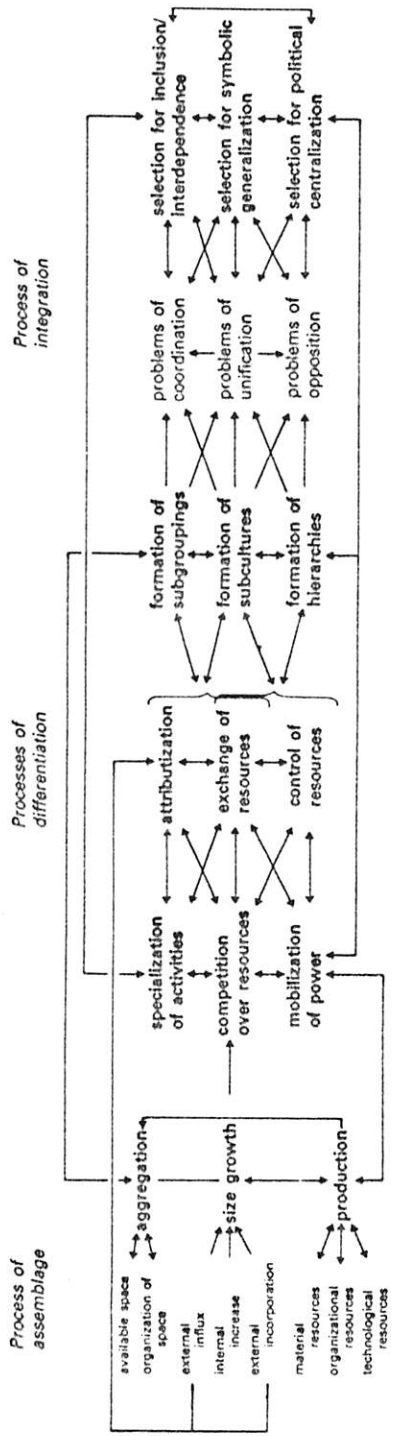

Figure 6 The process of assemblage, differentiation and integration.

sets in motion, as both Spencer and Durkheim emphasized, the process of differentiation among individuals and sub-units of organization in a population. This differentiation is the result of two mutually reinforcing cycles: one revolving around the processes of competition, specialization, exchange and the development of distinctive attributes, or what I term 'attributization', and the other around competition, exchange, power and control of resources. In turn, these two cycles produce three interrelated forms of differentiation: subgroups or heterogeneity, subcultures or symbolic diversity and hierarchies or inequalities (Blau: 1977). Before analysing these basic forms of differentiation, however, let me return to the mutually reinforcing cycles that produce them.

Competition and exchange are reciprocally related. Competition will, over time, produce exchange relations among differentiated actors, and conversely, exchange relations will, initially at least, increase the level of competition (Blau: 1966). Exchange and competition both produce specialization of activities (Durkheim: 1935; Spencer: 1905) since some can 'outcompete' others and force differentiation of activities and since exchange relations create pressures for actors to specialize in the provision for each other of different resources (Emerson: 1972). Competition, exchange and specialization all operate to create distinctive attributes – resource levels, activities, symbols and other parameters – among actors (Blau: 1977). Moreover, the assemblage processes of external influx and incorporation can also operate to make actors distinctive, since new members of a population can come from diverse systems (note arrow at top of figure 6). In turn, such distinctiveness encourages exchange of different resources, competition and specialization.

This cycle is reinforced and intensified by the mutually reinforcing effects of competition, exchange, mobilization of power and control of resources. Competition and exchange always involve efforts to mobilize power (Blau: 1966); and such mobilization increases, for a while at least, competition and exchange. Out of this positive feedback system, some actors are able to use power to control those resources – symbolic, material, organizational, etc. – that will increase their power, their capacity to engage in exchange and their ability to compete. And, as the arrow at the bottom of figure 6 indicates, existing patterns of political centralization operate to increase both mobilization of power and control of resources. In turn, these processes of mobilization and control escalate the level of specialization and the development of distinctive attributes because they accelerate, to a point, competition and encourage exchange.

Many of the reciprocal causal effects in these two cycles are either curvilinear or gradual *s*-functions. That is, they increase their respective values up to a point, and then level off or decline. Part of the reason for this pattern of relation resides in the self-transforming processes inhering in these cycles. For example, exchange increases competition, but once power has been mobilized and respective control of resources established, the exchange is more likely to become institutionalized (Blau: 1966) and

balanced (Emerson: 1972), thereby decreasing competition. Or, to take another example, competition increases the mobilization of power and the resulting control of resources, but once these are increased, this power and control can be used to suppress competition, at least for a while. What these examples illustrate is that there are many subprocesses to those delineated in figure 6 which can also be modelled in a finely-tuned analysis, but for my purposes here these more specific processes need only be mentioned.

Out of these two cycles come three basic forms of differentiation: the formation of subgroups whose internal solidarity is high and whose network structure is dense relative to other subgroups; the formation of distinctive subcultures whose stocks of knowledge and repertoires of symbols differ from each other and whose distinctiveness is both a cause and effect of subgroup formation; and the formation of hierarchies which vary in terms of the respective shares of material, political and cultural resources that various actors hold and the extent to which correlations in the distribution of resources are 'superimposed' (Dahrendorf: 1958; 1959), 'correlated' (Lenski: 1966) or 'consolidated' (Blau: 1977). Thus, the degree of differentiation of a population is defined in terms of the number of subgroups, subcultures and hierarchies, and the more differentiation, then the greater are problems of coordination or integration for a population. Before moving to this third macroprocess, however, let me reformulate this discussion in terms of a few 'laws of differentiation'.

VII The level of differentiation in a population is a positive and multiplicative function of the number of (*a*) subgroupings, (*b*) subcultures and (*c*) hierarchies evident in that population (an obvious tautology, which is obviated below).

(*a*) The number of subgroupings in a population is a curvilinear and multiplicative function of the level of exchange, competition, specialization and attributization among members of that population, while being a positive function of the number of subcultures in, and the rate of external influx/incorporation into, that population.

(*b*) The number of subcultures in a population is an additive and an *s*-function of the level of competition, exchange, specialization, attributization, mobilization of power and control of resources, while being a positive function of the formation of subgroupings and hierarchies.

(*c*) The number of hierarchies in a population is an inverse function of the mobilization of power and control of resources and a positive function of competition, exchange and formation of subcultures, with the degree of consolidation of hierarchies being a positive function of the mobilization of power and control of resources and a negative function of competition and exchange.

Integrating processes

The concept of 'integration' is admittedly vague, if not evaluative (that is, integration is 'good' and malintegration is 'bad'), but it is still useful as a label for several interrelated processes. For me, integration is a concept which varies along three separate dimensions: the degree of coordination among social units; the degree of symbolic unification among social units; and the degree of opposition and conflict among social units.

Viewed in these terms, the critical theoretical question becomes: what conditions promote or retard coordination, symbolic unification and opposition/conflict? In general terms, the existence *per se* of subgroupings, subcultures and hierarchies increases, respectively, problems of structural coordination, symbolic unification and conflictual opposition. Thus, inherent in the process of differentiation are problems of integration among variously differentiated units. Such problems set in motion 'selection pressures' for resolving such problems, but as the history of any society, organization, community or other macro-unit documents, the existence of such pressures does not guarantee selection for integrating processes. Indeed, in the long run, *all* patterns of organization disintegrate. None the less, in most macro-analytical theory, emphasis is on selection for structural and cultural forms that resolve, in varying degrees, problems of structural coordination, symbolic unification and conflictual opposition.

On the right-hand side of figure 6, I have outlined the critical processes of integration. Subgroup formation and subcultures create problems of coordination which, in turn, generate pressures for structural inclusion (subunits inside of ever more inclusive units)[6] and structural interdependence (overlapping membership as well as functional dependencies). The formation of subcultures and subgroups also poses, as Durkheim (1935) emphasized, the problem, of unifying a population with a 'common conscience' and 'collective conscience', or more generally, with common symbols (language, values, beliefs, norms, stocks of knowledge, etc.). The creation of hierarchies intensifies these problems. Conversely, such unification problems can also escalate selection pressures for structures resolving problems of coordination and opposition associated with hierarchies and subgroups.

The net effect of these problems of symbolic unification is to generate selection pressures for symbolic generalization, or the development of abstract and highly-generalized systems of symbols (values, beliefs, linguistic codes, stocks of knowledge) that can supplement the symbolic diversity of subgroups, subcultures and hierarchies. Durkheim called this process the 'enfeeblement of the collective conscience' and worried about the anomic consequences of highly-abstracted cultural codes, whereas Parsons (1966) termed it 'value generalization' and saw it as an integrating process that would allow for further social differentiation. They are both correct in this

[6] For a more detailed analysis, see Wallace: 1983.

sense: if generalized cultural codes are not compatible, salient or relevant to the more specific cultural codes of classes, subcultures or subgroups, then they aggravate problems of unification, but if they are compatible and salient, then they promote integration of subgroups, classes and subcultures. Thus, as the reciprocal arrows in figure 6 indicate, symbolic generalization can be a double-edged sword: it is essential for integration of differentiated systems but it is frequently inadequate to the task, and at times it aggravates not only problems of unification, but those of coordination and opposition as well.

Hierarchies among social units, especially when consolidated, correlated or superimposed, create problems of opposition, as all versions of conflict theory emphasize.[7] Such opposition can be intensified when there are few generalized symbols, but hierarchies also generate pressures for political centralization, in either of two ways. First, existing élites will politically centralize to control opposition and, second, if they are unsuccessful and the losers in conflict, the new élite will centralize power to consolidate its position and suppress remnants of the old hierarchy. Typically, appeals are made to generalized symbols (i.e. ideologies, values, beliefs) to legitimate these efforts and, if successful, they facilitate the centralization of power by creating legitimated authority. But as the long feedback arrow at the bottom of figure 6 underlines, these processes will set in motion the very forces that produce opposition. And as the arrows on the far right of the figure indicate, centralized power not only quells, for a time, opposition, it is also essential to structural inclusion and interdependence, since these involve regulation and control in terms of power and/or authority (Rueschemeyer: 1977). Indeed, the existence of inclusion and interdependence, as well as of generalized symbols, encourages political centralization. As the feedback arrow at the top of figure 6 highlights, politically-regulated inclusion and interdependence facilitate further specialization of activities. This increase in specialization sets in motion those dynamics creating escalated problems of symbolic unification and coordination that lead to more political centralization which, in the long run, generates opposition (as emphasized by the feedback arrow at the bottom of figure 6).[8]

Thus, inhering in the dynamics of integration are forces that increase differentiation and problems of integration. In all systems at some time in their history these problems escalate to a point where the social order collapses, only to be re-assembled in altered form. Such are, I think, the principal implications of the causal effects, cycles and feedback loops delineated in figure 6. Let me close this review of the right-hand sections of figure 6 by offering a few 'laws of integration'.

VIII The greater is the degree of differentiation of a population into subgroupings, subcultures and consolidated hierarchies, the greater are problems of structural coordination, symbolic unification and conflictual opposition in that population.

IX The greater are the problems of coordination, unification and opposition in a population, the greater are selection pressures for structural inclusion/interdependence, symbolic generalization and political centralization in that population.

X The more a population is integrated through political centralization, generalized symbols and patterns of interdependence/inclusion, the more likely is that population to increase its degree of differentiation and, hence, to intensify problems of coordination, unification and opposition.

[7] See Turner (1986) for a summary.

[8] For an empirical illustration and analysis of these processes, see Kelley and Klein: 1977.

Analytical Theorizing: Problems and Prospects

The major problem with analytical theorizing is that it exists within a hostile intellectual environment. Most social theorists, as is evident from the essays in this volume, would not accept the assumptions on the opening page of this chapter. Most social theorists would disagree that there are generic, timeless and universal properties of social organization; and most would not see the goal of theory as isolating these properties and developing abstract laws and models about their operation. There is, in my view, far too much scepticism, historicism, relativism and solipsism in social theory, and as a consequence theory typically involves discussions of issues and persons rather than of the operative dynamics of the social universe.

My proposal in this essay is to go back to Auguste Comte's original vision of sociology as a science. In this advocacy, I have outlined a general strategy: construct sensitizing analytical schemes, abstract laws and abstract analytical models; use each of these three analytical strategies as a corrective for the other two; then, test the abstract propositions as a check on their plausibility. I have illustrated this strategy by presenting my own views on micro-interactive and macrostructural processes. These views are only provisional and preliminary, and they have only been presented in outline form. Even so, my approach is eclectic and does bring together diverse scholars' work, and hence the models and propositions presented in this chapter do represent a schematic summary of analytical theorizing in contemporary sociology. The best prospects for sociology reside in further efforts to build this kind of analytical theory.

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Structuralism, Post-structuralism and the Production of Culture

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Structuralism, and post-structuralism also, are dead traditions of thought. Notwithstanding the promise they held in the fresh bloom of youth, they have ultimately failed to generate the revolution in philosophical understanding and social theory that was once their pledge. In this discussion, I shall seek not so much to write their obituary as to indicate what they have bequeathed to us today in respect of intellectual possessions which still might be put to good use. For although they did not transform our intellectual universe in the manner so often claimed, they none the less drew to our attention some problems of considerable and durable significance.

Of course, many have doubted that there ever was a coherent enough body of thought to be designated by the name 'structuralism', let alone the even vaguer appellation 'post-structuralism' (see Runciman: 1970). After all, most of the leading figures ordinarily lumped under these labels have rejected these terms as applying meaningfully to their own endeavours. Saussure, commonly regarded as the founder of structuralist linguistics, barely uses the term 'structure' at all in his work (Saussure: 1974). Lévi-Strauss at one time actively promoted the cause of both 'structural anthropology' and 'structuralism' more generally, but has become more cautious in characterizing his approach in these ways over the latter part of his career. Barthes may have in his early writings drawn fairly heavily from Lévi-Strauss, but later on any such connections became quite remote. Foucault, Lacan, Althusser and Derrida diverge radically both from the main ideas of Saussure and Lévi-Strauss and from one another. The homogeneity needed to speak of a distinct tradition of thought might appear to be almost completely lacking.

But for all their diversity there are a number of themes that crop up in the works of all these authors. Moreover, with the exception of Saussure, all are French and have been involved in networks of mutual influence and