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PRE-INDUSTRIAL STRATIFICATION SYSTEMS

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SOCIETIES that rely primarily on human or animal sources of productive power are usually regarded as "pre-industrial." This label involves no expectations about their future. Although pre-industrial societies vary greatly in their structure and developmental level, at this stage we need only distinguish traditional pre-industrial societies from the "national" units in which they are currently incorporated. Even when both these units are equally pre-industrial, they differ sharply in structure, boundaries and orientation. Industrialization appeals to few traditional pre-industrial societies as a desirable programme. To "national" pre-industrial societies, it may be a structural necessity, and in emergent nations, industrialization is always a national programme, even where its impact on local units is greatest.

THE PROBLEM OF STRATIFICATION

The nature of stratification is more complex and critical for our discussion. The common distinction between concrete and analytic structures, that is, between membership units and generalized aspects of social process,¹ suggests parallel distinctions between analytic and concrete concepts of stratification. Since the approach presented here differs from others in current use, I should try to indicate these differences at once.

Stratification is often conceived as the evaluative ranking of social units. Some theorists regard it as an abstract necessity of all social systems. Concretely, it refers to empirical distributions of advantages

¹ Marion J. Levy Jr., *The Structure of Society* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952), pp. 88-89.

and benefits in specific societies.² Analytically, it connotes the abstract possibilities of evaluative rankings on any number of special scales.³ As observers, we can construct as many stratification scales as we wish by employing any criteria we choose, separately or together; but we should not confuse these abstract possibilities or analytic artifacts with empirical systems of social stratification. The significance of any analytic scale depends on its meaningful correspondence with a concrete system of stratification; and, as Smelser and Lipset suggest in their introductory paper, these concrete stratifications may be identified by the differential distribution of social advantages.

Stratification is a process as well as a state of affairs. Of these two referents, the first seems more fundamental, since the state of affairs is both a product and condition of social process. As an institutional order, the process of social stratification must be regulated by some principles which can be derived by analysis of the social structure; and, on the basis of structural analysis, I shall argue that stratification consists in the principles that regulate the distribution of social advantages. Thus, the unit to which my argument refers is the society rather than its various components, the concept of society being the one presented by S. F. Nadel and Marion Levy, Jr.⁴

Being highly differentiated, modern industrial societies may accommodate considerable diversity of evaluative scales in their systems of stratification. Nonetheless, these scales must be functionally consistent and related if they are to be simultaneously institutionalized. In less differentiated pre-industrial societies, the theoretically possible variety of scales is severely restricted by structural stereotyping of social units and individual life-cycles. When the more complex pre-industrial systems institutionalize two or more stratification scales, relations between them are usually well defined.

Since the social evaluations reflecting stratification are neither random nor contingent, the criteria on which they rest must be institutionalized within the social structure, and for this reason evaluative rankings express underlying structural principles. The logical alternative involves such randomness, contingency and discord in the aggregate of evaluations that it cannot constitute a ranking system at all. But if the actual ranking of social units expresses structural relations, the differ-

² Neil J. Smelser and Seymour Martin Lipset, "Social Structure, Mobility and Development," in this volume.

³ Levy, *op. cit.*, pp. 343-7, and Hilda Kuper, *An African Aristocracy: Rank among the Swazi* (London: Oxford University Press for International African Institute, 1947), pp. 6-7.

⁴ S. F. Nadel, *The Foundations of Social Anthropology* (London: Cohen and West, 1951), pp. 187-188; Levy, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

ential distribution of sanctions with which this rank order is identified will also be governed by structural principles. Such differential distributions of benefit and deprivation are no more random and contingent than the evaluative rankings that reflect them.

With these considerations in mind, while reviewing stratification in pre-industrial societies, I shall also explore relations between the prevailing distributions of advantage and the structural principles that regulate the processes of distribution. I shall also try to show why these principles are more significant for the analysis of social stratification than the mere distribution of advantages.

I approach this discussion of pre-industrial stratification systems as a social anthropologist, conscious of the divergences between sociology and social anthropology, especially in their conceptions of social structure and stratification. Despite personal involvement in a few small-scale societies, a social anthropologist is committed to comparative analysis; and in these comparisons his primary concern is with the particular combinations of structural principles underlying the observable variety of social processes and forms. For such analysis, the anthropologist's concept of social structure facilitates identification of these principles and their combinations. Thus, while the lineage principle is common to all lineages, these vary structurally as this principle is modified by others. In like manner, structural changes are modifications of structural units and relations that involve some rearrangement or alteration of the principles which constitute them. For this conception of social structure, the view of status as a bundle of rights and duties is critical. In static terms, structure can be conceived as an arrangement of such positions, some held by individuals, others by corporate units. Dynamically, structural change involves modification or rearrangement of the underlying principles. With this background, social anthropologists conceive societies positionally, as systems the key units of which are statuses, related to one another by their particular distributions of privilege, duty and right. Social action, change and stratification are understood by reference to the social structure.

In sociology, as I understand it, structure is often viewed as a set of "directional tendencies," or purposive processes of institutional action, which seek to satisfy the "functional prerequisites" of social order. In effect, the strategic concept for initial analysis is the role, usually defined by reference to normative expectations; and the society, as an action system with sufficient internal order to ensure its persistence, is identified as a normative consensual system. In analyzing congruent or incongruent role expectations, the sociologist relies heavily on such notions as norms, values, and value-orientations.

Many differences between sociology and anthropology flow from these divergent orientations; and some of these find expression in conflicting disciplinary approaches to the study of stratification. For many sociologists, "no society is 'classless' or unstratified";⁵ "social inequality in human society is marked by its ubiquity and its antiquity. Every known society, past and present, distributes its scarce and demanded goods unequally."⁶ Stratification is "a particular type of role differentiation, that is a requirement for any society."⁷ "Social stratification is a generalized aspect of the structure of all social systems."⁸ This being so, sociologists attempt "to explain, in functional terms, the universal necessity which calls forth stratification in any social system. . . . The main functional necessity explaining the universal presence of stratification is precisely the requirement faced by any society of placing and motivating individuals in the social structure."⁹ Though these views are not shared by all sociologists,¹⁰ they represent the prevailing sociological approach to a theory of stratification. The point of view they express contrasts so sharply with the social anthropological approach that in preparing this paper I have had to seek some common ground between the two in order to relate anthropological materials on pre-industrial societies to the framework of current sociological theory.

One can contrast the assertion that "no society is classless or unstratified" with representative anthropological statements. For Landtman, "one of the most remarkable facts ascertained and elucidated by sociology (is) that a condition of almost complete equality reigns among peoples in the lowest degrees of culture."¹¹ According to *Notes and Queries* (6th edition), "some societies are stratified in social classes or, where these are closed, castes. . . . Social classes entail differences in status and civic rights, often conditioned by descent, in the access to

⁵ Kingsley Davis and Wilbert E. Moore, "Some Principles of Stratification," *American Sociological Review*, 10 (April, 1956), p. 242.

⁶ Melvin M. Tumin, "Some Principles of Stratification: A Critical Analysis," *American Sociological Review*, 18 (August, 1953), p. 337.

⁷ David F. Aberle, Albert K. Cohen, Allison K. Davis, Marion J. Levy Jr., Francis X. Sutton, "The Functional Prerequisites of a Society," *Ethics*, 60 (January, 1950), p. 106.

⁸ Talcott Parsons, "A Revised Analytical Approach to the Theory of Social Stratification, in Reinhard Bendix and Seymour M. Lipset (eds.), *Class, Status and Power: A Reader in Stratification*, (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1953), p. 93. See also Talcott Parsons, "An Analytical Approach to the Theory of Social Stratification," *American Journal of Sociology*, 45 (May, 1940), reprinted in Talcott Parsons, *Essays in Sociological Theory, Pure and Applied*, 165-184 (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1949).

⁹ Davis and Moore, *op cit.*, p. 242.

¹⁰ T. B. Bottomore, *Sociology: A Guide to Problems and Literature* (38-40, 195-196), London: Allen and Unwin, 1963), pp. 38-40, and 195-196.

¹¹ Gunnar Landtman, *The Origin of the Inequality of Social Classes* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co., 1938), p. 3.

positions of power, influence or wealth, and also in occupation and habitual modes of living."¹² For Nadel, stratification is identified by the presence of social strata. Only "when a society is divided into large aggregates of individuals who share, in relevant respects, the same status and are marked off from other such aggregates by different status (may) we speak of social strata. . . . Clearly, the various age-groups in a society, or the two sexes, may also be collectively differentiated by status; yet we should not in that case speak of social strata."¹³ "Power and authority would seem to be more relevant criteria of social stratification than the varying access to other commonly valued benefits."¹⁴ By status, Nadel understands "the rights and obligations of any individual relative both to those of others and to the scale of worth-whileness in the group. . . . 'Rank' is a more highly formalised version of status. . . . 'Prestige' . . . a more fluid version. By status we mean . . . status in the widest relevant group . . . the politically effective corporation, so that Status means political status."¹⁵

Sahlins, having asked, "What is egalitarianism and what is stratification?" replies

Theoretically an egalitarian society would be one in which every individual is of equal status, a society in which no one outranks anyone. But even the most primitive societies could not be described as egalitarian in this sense. There are differences in status carrying differential privilege in every human organisation . . . [but] the qualifications are not everywhere the same. In certain societies, e.g., Australian aboriginal communities, the only qualifications for higher status are those which every society uses to some extent, namely sex, age and personal characteristics. Aside from these qualifications, there may be no others. A society in which the only principles of rank allocation are these universals can be designated "egalitarian," first, because this society is at the stratification minimum of organised human societies; second, because, given these qualifications, every individual has an equal chance to succeed to whatever statuses may be open. But a society unlike this, that is, one in which statuses are fixed by a mechanism beyond the universals, e.g. [by] inheritance, can be called "stratified."¹⁶

For Bohannon, "stratification . . . implies not merely a ranked hierarchy, but also a homogeneous quality in each of the various strata. This quality . . . is certainly absent in . . . 'situs' systems . . . and minimal in 'caste' systems."¹⁷

¹² Royal Anthropological Institute, *Notes and Queries on Anthropology* (6th ed., London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1951), p. 93. My italics.

¹³ Nadel, *op. cit.*, p. 174.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 175.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 171-172, 174.

¹⁶ Marshall Sahlins, *Social Stratification in Polynesia* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1958), pp. 1-2.

¹⁷ Paul Bohannon, *Social Anthropology* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1963), p. 165.

While anthropologists conceive stratification concretely, as a feature of some, but not all, societies, sociologists tend to stress its universality as an abstract necessity of all social systems, whether these are conceived analytically or not. Underlying these differing orientations is the anthropologists's emphasis on status as the primary concept for analysis of social structure, and the sociologist's emphasis on role. I suggest that this difference also explains why sociologists are keenly concerned with a theory of stratification, while anthropologists are little concerned about it. Because anthropologists conceive social structure as a status structure, in their view an inclusive theory of stratification would represent a general theory of all forms of social structure. On the other hand, because sociologists regard societies as systems of roles, they need a theory of stratification to analyze the articulation of these roles.

No discussion of "pre-industrial stratification systems" that fails to resolve these differences can provide a useful basis for their comparison or for the study of their re-stratification. Any general comparative survey of social stratification presupposes an acceptable notion of stratification. In seeking to arrive at this, I shall have to deal with the following questions, among others: (1) In what sense does an unequal distribution of advantages indicate stratification? (2) Whether "functionally requisite" or not, is stratification universal and coextensive with society? (3) How useful is the dichotomy between ascription and achievement for an analysis and typology of status systems? (4) How valid is the assertion that stratification expresses normative consensus? (5) How valid is the thesis that "positions which are combined in the same family cannot be made the basis of stratification?"¹⁸

EQUALITY AND INEQUALITY

Various sociologists identify stratification with prevailing inequalities in the distribution of social advantages or benefits. "If the rights and prerequisites of different positions in a society must be unequal, then the society must be stratified, because that is precisely what stratification means. . . . Every society, no matter how simple or complex, must differentiate persons in terms of both prestige and esteem, and must, therefore, possess a certain amount of institutionalized inequality."¹⁹ Being general, this formula neither attempts to distinguish types of social advantage, nor examines the distribution that identifies stratification. Here, the critical question is whether this distribution or the principles

¹⁸ Kurt B. Mayer, *Class and Society* (New York: Random House, 1955), p. 5.

¹⁹ Davis and Moore, *op. cit.*, p. 243.

which regulate it is the relevant object of study. Current social theory seeks to handle the second alternative by distinctions between systems in which status is ascribed and achieved; but the results are hardly satisfactory, first because all systems of stratification combine both principles, but more importantly because this device signally fails to answer the critical question, namely, in what sense is the unequal distribution of advantages evidence of stratification? Doubtless this obscurity is essential to the theoretical claim that stratification is a universal response of society to certain functional pre-requisites; but if this assumption obstructs discriminating analysis and comparison, it can scarcely provide a sound basis for the sociology of economic development. Especially, perhaps, because the theory based on it is said to represent such "a high degree of abstraction (that) . . . it is impossible to move directly from the kind of proposition we were making to descriptive propositions about, say, American society,"²⁰ a more pedestrian but operational scheme is needed.

Inequality seems to be the heart of the matter. It is with this in one form or another that sociologists identify stratification; but they generally leave obscure the sense in which these unequal rankings or distributions of advantage are crucial for stratification. And though these inequalities are conventional and institutionalized, being regarded as necessary on theoretical grounds, all their forms are treated as equally appropriate and legitimate. "Social inequality is thus an unconsciously evolved device by which societies ensure that the most important positions are conscientiously filled by the most qualified persons."²¹ It is difficult to show that the "most important positions" are always held by the "most qualified persons," or that they are always "conscientiously filled;" but if we accept these assumptions, the regimes of Adolf Hitler, Trujillo and Franklin Roosevelt are all equally appropriate and legitimate.

Since positional inequality is identified with stratification, it is useful to consider briefly what the diametrically opposite condition implies. Little effort has been made recently to see what such perfect equality involves.²² A condition of perfect equality of social positions is admittedly hard to conceive, and its duration over any period of time even more so. The reasons are evident. Such perfect equality involves the

²⁰ Kingsley Davis, "Reply" (to M. M. Tumin), *American Sociological Review*, 18 (August, 1953), p. 394.

²¹ Davis and Moore, *op cit.*, p. 243.

²² For valuable discussions, see Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "Discourse sur l'Origine et Fondement de l'Inegalite parmi les hommes" (1753) in C. E. Vaughan, *The Political Writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1915, 2 vols.). Also R. H. Tawney, *Equality* (4th edn., New York: Capricorn Books, 1961),

systematic elimination of all socially relevant differences, biological or structural, with the result that, except perhaps for their differing locations, all persons simultaneously hold identical positions, rights, duties and relations. In consequence, none hold any. Child and father, ill and hale, sane and insane, all are positionally identical. Clearly no such aggregate could survive midsummer, since this perfect equality eliminates right, obligation and relation as well as individuation, and institutes the preconditions of the Hobbesian "war of all against all." Such total elimination of positional differences automatically dissolves society, since society can only be defined by reference to differentiation, whether this is conceived relationally or in terms of action.

In a condition of absolute positional identity, individual organisms are the only possible units, but despite their biological differences, they are *ex definitione* identical. Such total antithesis of differentiation is of course biologically impossible. Populations being biologically differentiated, societies inevitably consist in differentiated positions and roles, with their correlative rights and duties. Such differentiation inherently involves the differential distribution of rights and duties, simply because this is what the differentiation consists in; but clearly stratification is only one mode of social differentiation and not identical with all its forms.

The point here is simply that in any society, at any point in time, the current distribution of social positions and advantages must always be unequal, because they are differentiated; and not merely because these "advantages" are highly various, but because the members of any society are heterogeneous as regards age, sex and personal qualities. Even in social systems subsumed by kinship, this will be the case, since mother and child are an indispensable asymmetrical pair. Instead of simplistic references to the universality of unequal distributions of right, duty and advantage—that is, to social differentiation of status and role—we must seek to discriminate the principles regulating and institutionalizing varying modes of distribution. Some of these modes may constitute a stratification, others may not. Not inequality, but the modes of its institutionalization, its bases and forms, are the relevant materials for identifying and analyzing stratification systems. We have to take inequality for granted, since total equality in any indispensable relation such as parent and child is merely inequality once removed and intensified.

In studying institutionalized inequality, two questions are essential, and a third perhaps even more important. Descriptively, we must ask "In what does inequality consist? What is its form, degree and scale?" Analytically, we must ask "On what is this distribution based, and how

does it relate to other features of the social order?" Historically, where data permit, we should ask, "How did the present system come into being? What changes has it recently undergone, or is currently undergoing?"

Whereas sociological theory regards answers to the first, descriptive question as proof of stratification, anthropologists generally rely on the second for the data by which they classify systems as "stratified" or unstratified. For them, simple inequality in the distribution of advantages is inevitable on grounds of biology and kinship, and therefore cannot provide sufficient evidence of stratification. In their view, the principles by which observable inequalities are institutionalized are the critical data. These principles differentiate systems in which inequalities are temporary, random or contingent from others in which access to advantageous positions is differentially distributed, so that, whatever the grounds, some persons are privileged and others disqualified. Systems of the latter sort may be stratified if the differential distribution of opportunities characterizes ranked strata having some internal homogeneity and external distinctness. Excluding biologically given differences—without which human society is of course impossible—inequality in the distribution of access to favored positions is decisive for societal classification as stratified; only some societies having differentially distributed opportunities may in fact be stratified; and stratification never consists in the mere existence or occupancy of these differential positions, but in the principles by which the distribution of access and opportunities is regulated.

Even when all members of a society enjoy equivalent opportunities to obtain positions of social precedence and advantage, at any given moment and over time, these must be distributed "unequally," in the sense that some persons hold them while others do not. "Photographic" accounts of current distributions fail to provide an adequate basis for social classification or analysis, simply because they assimilate sharply different types of society on the basis of superficial similarities.

Where access to the highest positions and advantages is equally open to all, these positions usually form an indefinite series, co-extensive in space and time with the society their dispersal identifies. They are accordingly highly standardized, and functional differentiation is limited thereby, the society concerned being typically acephalous. In intensity and span, integrative centralization corresponds with the degree of functional differentiation attained by a society; in form with its structural differentiation. Under conditions of centralization, equivalence of access to the highest positions and advantages will be limited in the first place by the small number of such positions relative to the size of the population. Since the chieftdom may only have one paramount at a

time, and few in any individual life-span, most members cannot reasonably expect to be chief. In Athens, where offices were filled by lot, a conscious effort was made to maintain this ideal equivalence within a clearly defined stratum by devices combining the principles of divination and roulette.²³ Neither achievement nor ascription adequately describes this mode of recruitment.

UNSTRATIFIED SYSTEMS

Given the preceding discussion, it will be useful to describe various types of unstratified society, to clarify their variety and institutional mechanisms.

The political structure of many East African societies consists in a hierarchy of male age-sets. Organizational details vary widely as between societies; but in all, age-sets are ranked by seniority, and in most the different sets have differing roles, rights and duties. Age-mates are social and jural equals, and each set exercises jurisdiction over its members. Seniority regulates relations between successive sets. At regular intervals, new sets are instituted in tribal ceremonies that move all senior sets forward into the next higher grades. Rights to marry, to beget children, to establish a homestead, to participate in civil or judicial councils, to officiate at rituals, to go on raids, are all variably integrated with this age-stratification. At any given moment an unequal distribution of rights and advantages obtains among these peoples; but the mode of institutionalization guarantees the automatic transfer of positions and advantages to junior sets at determinate intervals, and thus ensures equality of access over time. The seniority principle, basic to age-set differentiation, regulates this distribution of social positions and access to them. Inequalities are always temporary, and each individual in turn automatically moves through the same series of positions by virtue of his compulsory identification with an age-set. Despite their internal homogeneity and external distinctiveness, given their ceaseless progression, it is patently ridiculous to designate these cohorts by the same term used for castes, estates, slavery or social classes. In age-stratification, mobility is identical with the system, in its rhythm and limits. The principles by which differential advantages are institutionally distributed in these age-systems are directly opposed to those constituting stratification. These conditions occur in varying form among the Galla, the Nandi, Kipsigi,

²³ H. Ward Fowler, *The City State of the Greeks and Romans* (London: Macmillan, 1952), pp. 166-167.

Terik, Masai, Turkana, Jie, Karimojong, Kikuyu, Kadara, Hidatsa, etc.²⁴

Stratification is scarcely possible below a certain minimum level of differentiation; but even where a number of asymmetrical roles and units are differentiated, these may be so distributed as to preclude stratification. According to Lauriston Sharp, this is the condition of the Australian Yir Yuront, where "a hierarchy of a pyramidal or inverted Y type to include all men in the system is an impossibility,"²⁵ since each individual participates as superior and inferior in an exactly equal number of dyadic relations. Since the 28 Yir Yuront kinship relations embrace virtually all institutionalized roles, despite their asymmetry, their distribution enjoins social equality by restricting inequalities to individual relations, and by so distributing these that no individual lacks 14 superiors and 14 inferiors simultaneously. Few systems achieve this mathematical perfection. That of the Yir Yuront gives such extreme stress to specific asymmetrical relations that even the concept of *situs* seems excluded, much less stratification.

Different patterns appear among the Ituri pygmies and Bushmen, whose bilateral kinship institutions differentiate fewer roles and pattern them less strongly. These peoples are so weakly differentiated that stratification is impossible for them. Pygmy bands lack effective leaders and any differential distribution of sanctions or privileges among their members, above the level of the household. Individuals are free to leave or enter a band, unless members oppose their entry. Since all pygmy households are equally self-sufficient and interdependent, the distribution of household and inter-household roles is constant and

²⁴ G. W. B. Huntingford, *The Nandi of Kenya* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1953), and *The Galla of Ethiopia* (London: International African Institute, 1955); A. H. J. Prins, *East African Age-class Systems* (Groningen: J. B. Wolters, 1953); J. G. Peristiany, *The Social Institutions of the Kipsigis* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1939); Pamela Gulliver and P. H. Gulliver, *The Central Nilo-Hamites* (London: International African Institute, 1953); P. H. Gulliver, "The Age-set Organization of the Jie Tribe," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 83 (December, 1953), pp. 147-168, and "Turkana Age-Orientation," *American Anthropologist*, 60 (October, 1958), pp. 900-922; B. Bernardi, "The Age-Set System of the Nilo-Hamites," *Africa*, 22 (October, 1952), pp. 316-332; H. E. Lambert, *Kikuyu Social and Political Institutions* (London: Oxford University Press, 1956); N. Dyson-Hudson, "The Karimojong Age System," *Ethnology*, 2 (July, 1963), pp. 353-401; Robert A. LeVine and Walter H. Sangree, "The Diffusion of Age-Group Organisation in East Africa: A Controlled Comparison," *Africa*, 32 (April, 1962), pp. 97-110; Robert H. Lowie, *Primitive Society* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1949), pp. 273-282; and H. A. Fosbrooke, "An Administrative Survey of the Masai Social System," *Tanganyika Notes and Records*, 26 (1948), pp. 1-50.

²⁵ Lauriston Sharp, "People without Politics," in Verne F. Ray (ed.), *Systems of Political Control and Bureaucracy in Human Societies*, (Seattle: American Ethnological Society, University of Washington Press, 1958), p. 5. See also W. Lloyd Warner, *A Black Civilization: A Social Study of an Australian Tribe* (New York: Harper & Row, 1958).

uniform. Pygmies approach the Durkheimian model of the primitive undifferentiated society that excludes stratification, whether on grounds of ascription or achievement. Neither in ritual, hunting, kinship nor band relations do they exhibit any discernible inequalities of rank or advantage. In the familial sphere, the apparently unequal distribution of rights and duties has a simple biological basis in congruent inequalities of capacity.²⁶

Pygmies are not unique. !Kung Bushmen evince similar patterns. !Kung live in bands, each with its component families and fixed resources of water rights, veldkos areas, mangbetti woods, etc. Each band has a headman, normally recruited by descent, who exercises symbolic custody of band resources. Among !Kung, bands cannot exist without headmen, but these may or may not reside in their bands. A "stranger" seeking water first asks the headman's permission before visiting the band's water-hole; but the headman will only refuse if the band members object—a rare event. Band headmen may be children or women, where men are unavailable for succession; apparently nobody wants the role. Headmen have no advantages that distinguish them from other !Kung. Band members hunt in small teams of their own choice; they are obliged by various institutions to distribute the meat of the hunt rather widely. Very few men are polygynists and these may or may not be headmen. When away from their bands, headmen have neither special statuses nor obligations. With the exceptions mentioned above, this is also their position within the band.

Certain devices of fictive kinship ensure the extension of kinship terms and behaviour to non-kin, so that in effect all !Kung are related to one another directly or indirectly in ways entailing specific rights and obligations; but the roster of differentiated relations is short by comparison with the Yir Yuront. In some relations, real or fictive, each !Kung will enjoy some advantage; in others his role is inferior; in the remainder the relation is symmetrical. The narrow bilateral kinship system by which kin are dispersed, mainly through marriage, provides no basis for gerontocracy; nor do !Kung allocate status on grounds of age. As among Pygmies and Andamanese, !Kung bands hold frequent rituals in which all adult members take part. All men are shamans. They share identical ritual status and collective duties. In no sense can the !Kung be said to exhibit stratification above the level of the family.²⁷

²⁶ Colin Turnbull, *The Forest People* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1961).

²⁷ Lorna Marshall, "The Kin Terminology System of the !Kung Bushmen," *Africa*, 27 (January, 1957), pp. 1-25; "Marriage among the !Kung Bushmen," *Africa*, 29 (October, 1959), pp. 335-365; "!Kung Bushmen Bands," *Africa*, 30 (October, 1960), pp. 225-355; "Sharing, Talking and Giving: Relief of Social Tensions among !Kung Bushmen," *Africa*, 31 (January, 1961) pp. 24-49; "!Kung Bushmen Religious Beliefs," *Africa*, 32 (July, 1962), pp. 221-252.

Descent provides another basis on which distributions of differential position and advantage may be so organized that equal access and automatic transfers prevail. Here also, societies vary: some trace descent through the male, others through the female line, and others through both lines, together or separately. In societies of the last type, all individuals simultaneously belong to their father's patrilineage and to their mother's matrilineage. In each, they hold different rights and obligations and enjoy a different status. These differences are balanced, and thus distinguish the complementary lineage forms.

Lineages, as these unilineal descent groups are called, vary widely in their depth, span, scale, form, functions and other attributes. Some incorporate sizable tribes, such as the Gusii, Tiv, Lugbara, or the issue of Abraham. Where this occurs, the component lineages are distinguished in a hierarchic series of corporations having an explicit segmentary organization corresponding to the genealogy. Social distance is then defined by the range of collateral kinship. Hierarchic relations of descent indicate jural identity. Close lineage kin share exclusive solidary obligations and identical jural status. As the range of kinship extends, jural differentiation increases, the relevant units being groups rather than individuals. The segmentary lineage is a system of corporate groups organized in a hierarchy of co-ordinate divisions of differing depth and span, and unified by an ideology of common descent.²⁸

Long ago Radcliffe-Brown isolated the principles on which these corporate lineages are based, namely the unity of the sibling group as seen from without, and the equivalence of same-sex siblings.²⁹ Given the tradition of tracing descent through one sex to the exclusion of the other, these principles, if observed, inevitably promote corporate unilineal descent groups with a segmentary internal structure. Duplicated, they develop a system of double descent. Modifications that deviate from

²⁸ Max Gluckman, "Introduction," in J. C. Mitchell and J. A. Barnes, *The Lamba Village*, Communications of the School of African Studies, No. 24 (Cape-town, 1948), pp. 5-8; Meyer Fortes, "The Structure of Unilineal Descent Groups," *American Anthropologist*, 55 (February, 1953), pp. 17-41; M. G. Smith, "On Segmentary Lineage Systems," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 86, part 2 (December, 1956), pp. 39-80; and Rosemary Harris, "The Political Significance of Double Unilineal Descent," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 92 part 1 (June, 1962), pp. 86-101. For an excellent collection of lineage studies, see J. Middleton and D. Tait (eds.), *Tribes Without Rulers* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958).

²⁹ A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, "The Social Organization of Australian Tribes," *Oceania*, 1 (1930-31), parts 1-4, pp. 34-63, 206-246, 322-341, 426-456; "Patrilineal and Matrilineal Succession," reprinted in A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, *Structure and Function in Primitive Society* (London, Cohen and West, 1952), pp. 32-48; "The Study of Kinship Systems," reprinted in *Structure and Function in Primitive Society*, pp. 49-89; and "Introduction," in A. R. Radcliffe-Brown and Daryll Forde (eds.), *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage* (London: Oxford University Press, 1950) pp. 1-85.

these principles produce structures differing from the segmentary model in direct correspondence. Some illustrations of this are mentioned below.

For its emergence and continuity, the segmentary lineage presumes the jural, ritual and social equivalence of siblings in the direct line of descent. Accordingly, it classifies different sibling groups as units of co-ordinate status, each internally undifferentiated, therefore excluding jural inequalities among its members, even though at any given moment the senior men enjoy superior social and ritual advantages as family heads and custodians of lineage rights. The equivalence of lineage members really consists in the equal distribution of rights and access to such positions among them, as they mature. Thus, the segmentary lineage, a rather widespread social form, excludes internal stratification, despite the inevitable inequalities in the current distribution of advantages inherent in its generational and familial composition. In place of horizontal strata, the lineage principle establishes vertical divisions between lineages as units of corporate status, as befits Durkheim's segmental model. The effect is to restrict lateral or inter-lineage mobility, while instituting vertical or intra-lineage mobility. The status system of the corporate lineage is thus diametrically opposite to hierarchic ranking; and all men are status peers in societies organized on these lines, since all lineages are co-ordinate at some level of the organization.

FAMILY AND STRATIFICATION

Despite the differential distribution of rights, duties and advantages within Pygmy or Bushmen families, I do not regard them as stratified, for two reasons. First, these differentiations do not go beyond what is essential for the definition and maintenance of the family as a unit of husband, wife and offspring. Second, the differentiated positions are equally open to all in due course. Without these differentiations, the family could not be constituted or identified. Children would have no fathers.

Whether the family everywhere exhibits this lack of internal stratification is surely an empirical matter. If we regard "hierarchical sex and age grading"³⁰ as stratification, then we must recognize the internal stratification of families in all societies where such grading occurs. Siblings who belong to different age-sets ranked as senior and junior are distinguished within as well as beyond the family. Conversely, if we do not regard families as internally stratified, these age and sex distinctions

³⁰ Aberle, Cohen, Davis, Levy, Sutton, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

should not be represented as stratification. Some writers, however, simultaneously hold that stratification is universal and deny that families are ever internally stratified. Since societies such as the Bushmen or Pygmies lack any supra-familial organization, if their families are unstratified, then they lack stratification also. Thus, the postulate of the unstratified family contradicts the asserted universality of stratification, both being advanced by the same writers, with relevant functional explanations. In fact, the data show that social stratification is not universal, and that families are not universally exempt from it, on any definitions of society and the family one cares to fashion.

For Kingsley Davis,

those positions that may be combined in the same legitimate family—viz., positions based on sex, age and kinship—do not form part of the system of stratification. On the other hand, those positions that are socially prohibited from being combined in the same legal family—viz., different caste or class positions—constitute what we call stratification. With reference to the class hierarchy the family is a unit: its members occupy the same rank. This is because one of the family's main functions is the ascription of status. It could not very well perform this function if it did not, as a family, occupy a single position in the scale. Children are said to "acquire their parents' status," with the implication that two parents have a common status to transmit, and that the child gets this status automatically as a member of the family. In the same way, husband and wife are treated as social equals.³¹

The convenience of this doctrine for the analysis of Western industrial society has encouraged its acceptance without much effort to check its validity. Evidently it refers mainly to the nuclear family in monogamous societies, but since the thesis is unqualified it is now being applied to polygynous societies also.³² I shall therefore discuss its validity with reference to systems of either type. Even in monogamous societies, where siblings have differential rights to inheritance and succession, this generalization may not hold. The variety of organizational problems and solutions that such conditions present is illustrated by the coexistence of gavelkind, primogeniture, and "borough English" in medieval Britain.³³ Where wives and their offspring are differentially ranked in certain polygynous societies, these differences are often integrated with extra-familial stratification. Under such conditions the family functions

³¹ Kingsley Davis, *Human Society* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1949), p. 364; partly cited also in Davis, "Reply" (to M. M. Tumin), *op. cit.*, p. 394.

³² See Bohannan, *op. cit.*, pp. 166, 180-182.

³³ Sir Paul Vinogradoff, *Common Sense in Law* (3rd ed., rev. by H. G. Hanbury, London: Oxford University Press, 1959), pp. 122-123; George C. Homans, *Sentiments and Activities: Essays in Social Science* (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1962), pp. 148-155, 161-165.

quite efficiently as a mechanism of status placement by meticulously differentiating members instead of assimilating them.

Among the Swazi,

the clans are graded into a rough hierarchy, and the rank of a clan is measured by its position in the national structure. The entire clan as such does not hold this position, but only certain lineages. . . . In every large clan there are a number of parallel lineages, . . . linked up with the senior lineage at irregular points of the family tree. . . . In every lineage members are graded by their distance from the head.³⁴

Wives of a polygynist hold unequal status; during his lifetime they are graded primarily on the basis of seniority, the first taking precedence over the second, and so on, but after his death the children's rights to inheritance and succession are determined by their mother's rank and mode of marriage. . . . The fundamental principle underlying the selection of the main heir of a polygynist is that property and power are inherited from men and acquired by them, but are transmitted through women, whose rank, more than any other factor, determines the choice. "A ruler is ruler by his mother." . . . The tie between sons of the same father undoubtedly depends largely on the status of the wives, and it is over succession and inheritance that cleavages between half-brothers come out sharply and bitterly. . . . The main heir receives far and away the major share.³⁵

Among the Tswana, there are "three separate classes, nobles, . . . commoners, . . . and immigrants, . . . Within each class there are further distinctions. Among nobles, the more closely a man is related to the chief, the higher does he rank. . . . Among commoners . . . the head of any group is senior to all his dependents, among whom his own relatives are of higher status than the others."³⁶ "The children of paternal uncles are differentiated according to the relative status of their father. . . . If senior to one's father by birth, they are entitled to obedience and respect; if junior, their services can be freely commanded. The saying that a man's 'elder brother' is his chief, and his 'younger brother' his subject, summarises adequately the accepted relation. . . . But disputes sometimes occur owing to arbitrary exercise of authority and rival claims to property and position, and it is not fortuitous that most accusations of sorcery are made against one's relatives in the same ward."³⁷

Among the Zulu, "the closer a royal prince was (and is) by birth to the reigning king, the higher his social status. . . . The same rules

³⁴ Kuper, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

³⁵ Hilda Kuper, "Kinship among the Swazi" in Radcliffe-Brown and Forde (eds.), *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage, op. cit.*, pp. 93, 96, 98.

³⁶ I. Schapera, *The Tswana* (London: International African Institute, 1953), pp. 36-37, and "Kinship and Politics in Tswana History," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 93 (December, 1963), pp. 159-173.

³⁷ I. Schapera, "Kinship and Marriage among the Tswana," in Radcliffe-Brown and Forde (eds.), *op. cit.*, p. 104.

applied to the ruling families within the tribes.”³⁸ “The status of sons depends on the status of their mothers in the compound family.”³⁹

Wives are graded. One, the chief wife of the great house, who may be married late in life, will produce the main heir. She has placed under her a number of subordinate wives. Another wife is head of the left-hand house, which also contains subordinate wives; and another group of wives, in very big families, form the right-hand huts. . . . The junior wife and her children are under the authority of the senior wife and her children. . . . The sons’ rights and positions in their father’s home and in their agnatic lineage are determined by the positions of their mothers. Some of the main sources of litigation among the Zulu are disputes between half-brothers about their rights arising from the respective status of their mothers. . . . The positions of the wives’ huts in the village, their status in the tribe, the order of their marriage, their wedding ceremonial, the source of their marriage cattle, are all considered in evidence.⁴⁰

Among the Kachins of highland Burma, few of whom have plural wives, ultimogeniture prevails and “elder sons to-day usually move to another village,” to escape their high-ranking youngest brother. “A man’s rank is in theory precisely defined by his birth,” but since “an intolerable psychological situation is likely to arise” if he stays at home, the elder brother generally moves to his wife’s village as “bond slave (*mayam*) to his *mayu* (wife’s kin).” According to Leach, this “mechanism of lineage fission is closely linked with ideas about class status, and the process . . . is at the same time a process of social mobility up and down the class hierarchy. The choice that an individual makes about his place of residence affects the class status and prospects of his descendants.”⁴¹

Polynesia provides some the most elaborate examples of a unitary stratification system that ranks family members as well as families.

The mode of succession is primogeniture; the eldest son succeeds to the position of his father. . . . Not only is he differentiated from his younger brothers, but so also is every brother differentiated from every other, in accordance with their respective order of birth and the consequent prospects of succeeding to the position of their father. . . . The seniority principle in the family is a microcosm of the ramified social system. . . . As a consequence of seniority, the descendants of an older brother rank higher than the descendants of a younger brother. . . . *Every individual* within this group of descendants of a common ancestor holds a differing status, one precisely in proportion to his

³⁸ Max Gluckman, “The Kingdom of the Zulu of South Africa” in Meyer Fortes and E. E. Evans-Pritchard (eds.), *African Political Systems* (London: Oxford University Press, 1940), p. 34.

³⁹ Max Gluckman, “Kinship and Marriage among the Lozi of Northern Rhodesia and the Zulu of Natal” in Radcliffe-Browne and Forde (eds.), *op. cit.*, p. 186.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 183, 195-196.

⁴¹ Edmund Leach, *Political Systems of Highland Burma: A Study of Kachin Social Structure* (London: Bell and Sons, 1954), pp. 109, 160, 167-168.

distance from the senior line of descent in the group. . . . People descendent from remote collaterals of the common ancestor are lower in rank than those descendent from a more immediate relative of the chiefly line. People with the lowest status are those who have descended from younger brothers through younger brothers *ad infinitum*. The process of primogeniture succession and its consequent implication of seniority result in a ranking structure which encompasses the entire society. . . . In every ramified society one can recognise groups of statuses or status levels which are functionally significant in terms of differential socio-economic prerogatives. These different levels are normally present in all the larger ramares.⁴²

Among the Moslem Hausa, besides his legal wives, a man could have slave concubines. Under Muslim law a concubine who bore her master a child became freed on the master's death, when her child inherited with those of the four legal wives. Several Hausa Emirs in the last century were born of concubines. In this case, free and slave, the master and the concubine, are joined in the same family; but only on the former's death is the latter freed.

In Hausa families, "differences of marriage order take precedence among co-wives over other differences, such as age or parentage, but outside the household these other differences may have more significance The average Hausa woman probably makes three or four marriages before the menopause. . . . Under such conditions of marital instability, spouses cannot share the same social status. Indeed, the status differentiation of co-wives by reference to marriage order precludes their status identity with the common husband. Legally and politically this identity is also impossible,"⁴³ since "authority over women is divided between their husbands, to whom they are subordinate, and their kinsmen, who are their legal guardians. Thus the wife is not identified with her husband as his ward."⁴⁴ In Hausa society, "the status gradient produced by rank and lineage is finite and steep. . . . Inheritance . . . facilitates the economic differentiation of descent lines, . . . lineages include descent lines of widely differing status."⁴⁵

These data show that even within nuclear families, for example those of Hausa men and their concubines or wives, spouses may not share the same status, nor siblings the same rank, as among the Kachin, Polynesians or Bantu. In all the cases cited, the differential ranking of family members extends beyond the family to rank them and their descendants differently in the wider society. Thus the stratification

⁴² Sahlins, *op. cit.*, pp. 140-142, 147 (his italics).

⁴³ M. G. Smith, "The Hausa System of Social Status," *Africa*, 29 (July, 1959), p. 244.

⁴⁴ M. G. Smith, "Kebbi and Hausa Stratification," *British Journal of Sociology*, 12 (March, 1961), p. 59.

⁴⁵ Smith, "The Hausa System of Social Status," *op. cit.*, p. 241.

within the kin group supports and corresponds with that outside it, and this is an important feature of the political organization of these societies. For the Southern Bantu, Hoernlé generalizes, "among the children a strict hierarchy prevails, based on the seniority which serves as a fundamental principle of . . . Bantu society. The elder brother always takes precedence between brothers . . . and so too between sisters. . . . Outside the intimate circle of the immediate family, the same principles of kinship and seniority hold sway."⁴⁶ According to van Warmelo, "Bantu social structure knows no equals, as with whole sibs, so with individuals. The first-born of the same parents is always superior to those born after him, and this superiority is extended to his descendants, with varying consistency."⁴⁷ This is the type of rank-differentiated unilineal grouping that Kirchhoff identifies as the "conical clan." In his words, "it is precisely the nearness of relationship to the common ancestor of the group which matters. . . . (This) principle results in a group in which every single member, except brothers and sisters, has a different standing."⁴⁸ As our data show, Kirchhoff erred in ascribing equivalent status to siblings in these units. If siblings shared equivalent status, the conical clan could not emerge. In short, when societies rest their stratification on principles that differentiate descent lines in status by seniority, they do likewise with family members.

It is clear that many societies exhibit a stratification which differentiates family members as well as families. Thus, neither of the two general assumptions on which the functionalist theory of stratification rests are empirically valid. Neither is stratification universal, nor are families universally exempted from it.

If we ask why, given their inconsistency, these postulates of universal stratification and the unstratified family are combined, the answer seems to be that on this basis it is easy to distinguish different types of stratification system by reference to the family. The reasoning might be summarized as follows: (1) All societies are stratified. (2) In all societies, families are homogeneous units of status placement. (3) Stratification systems differ in the ways they treat families; some restrict opportunities to a limited number of families, others distribute them to all member-families equally. Systems of the first type are ascriptive and particularistic, while those of the second stress achievement and universalistic

⁴⁶ A. Winifred Hoernlé, "Social Organisation" in I. Schapera (ed.), *The Bantu-Speaking Tribes of South Africa* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1937), p. 71.

⁴⁷ N. J. van Warmelo, *Kinship Terminology of the South African Bantu* (Pretoria Department of Native Affairs, Union of South Africa, 1931), p. 11.

⁴⁸ Paul Kirchhoff, "The Principles of Clanship in Human Society," reprinted in Morton H. Fried, *Readings in Anthropology* (New York, Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1959), vol. 2, p. 266.

criteria. (4) Since systems of both types exhibit both stratification and familial status unity, a single general theory is applicable to all.

Ethnographic data show that these assumptions, and the theory that seeks to justify them, are invalid. The "universal necessities" imposed by functional prerequisites are simple misapprehensions. If my argument holds, the critical sources of difficulty for this functional theory are two-fold: first it seeks to explain structure by function, when the reverse is the wiser procedure. Structures are highly differentiated and complex, while functions tend to be generalized and rather abstract. Just as Malinowski failed adequately to account for the known range of variation in the family by his very general functional theory of the family, so it is probably impossible to "explain" the known variety of social structures by a single functional theory of stratification. Secondly, in seeking universality, this theory creates difficulties for itself by regarding any set of observable inequalities in the distribution of advantage as stratification, irrespective of the mode of their institutionalization. Given this, the errors regarding relations between family and stratification seem inevitable. But in segmentary lineages, which are political structures despite their familial components, and in age-set systems, though positions of unequal advantage and responsibility are general, the mode of their institutionalization involves an automatic serial rotation of these positions, since the modal life-cycle and life-chances are equal and standardized. Stratification consists in institutionalized differentiations of access to positions of differing advantage, rather than in the mere fact of social differentiation.

When unilineal descent principles are combined with internal differentiation of rank between siblings, on grounds of either matrilineation or seniority by birth, the resulting internal stratification of the lineage group precludes the status equivalence of siblings, and the co-ordinate status of segments descended from them. As a direct effect of these principles of status differentiation, and in exact correspondence with their intensity, the structure of the unilineal descent group diverges from the pure model of the segmentary lineage as a hierarchy of levels, the members of which are all co-ordinate. In similar fashion, the ascriptive universalism of the age-set will be modified by principles that impose status inequalities among its members on other grounds. Similarly, band organization varies societally as a correlate of the differing principles on which the bands are constituted. However important, stratification—the differential distribution of access to advantageous positions—is only one of these modifying principles.

THE PROBLEM OF CONSENSUS

There are two sides to my argument. Negatively, I seek to show certain inadequacies in the current theory of stratification. Positively, I am suggesting that the principles that regulate access to positions of advantage also define political units such as age-sets, bands, segmentary lineages, ramages, etc. In short, I wish to stress the political basis of social stratification. Unstratified societies are acephalous, and in these units status consists of membership in the modal political units. Stratification is correlated with hierarchical political organization, which may or may not be fully centralized. Like other principles and modes of social differentiation, stratification has political bases and implications. Whether restrictive or egalitarian, differentiation is a condition of political organization. Some highly differentiated societies may not exhibit determinate strata; others do; but even systems with primary stress on *situs* will gravitate toward stratification unless certain principles prevent it. Stable *situs* systems may thus represent an arrested intermediate type between the formally stratified and the unstratified. The differences between the latter pair are fundamental.

I fail to see in what sense it is useful or accurate to describe personal status differences in bands, segmentary lineages or age-organized societies as either ascribed or achieved. Neither term seems meaningful here. The utility of either presupposes some hierarchic differentiation of positions and some principles by which access to them is differentially distributed. As these principles vary, status is usually said to be ascribed or achieved. The utility of this dichotomy is also doubtful on other grounds.

Munro Edmondson illustrates some of the operational difficulties in his distinctions between ascribed, achieved, and associational status. In his view, statuses differentiated on age, sex, and kinship are ascribed, while achieved statuses include differentiations based on religion, economy or politics. By associational status, he indicates differentiations based on membership in such voluntary or compulsory organizations as dance societies, ceremonial associations, fraternities, religious orders, clans or *gentes*, phratries, bands, villages, tribes, age-grades or stratified ranks.⁴⁹ The inconsistencies of this effort are apparent.

An important theme of the following paragraphs is that ascription and achievement of status are regularly concurrent in stratified societies.

⁴⁹ Munro S. Edmondson, *Status Terminology and the Social Structure of North American Indians* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1958), pp. 8-9.

Wherever secular stratification is overtly or formally ascriptive, positions are achieved or held by competitive struggles. Wherever the conditions of stratification formally stress individual achievement, ascriptive factors are crucial. Ideal-type analysis of these complex and very varied systems is not merely inadequate but misleading. Even an analysis in terms of dominant and subordinate value systems fails to deal adequately with their structural complexity and variety.⁵⁰ We must always seek the structural particulars, resisting reductionist temptations inherent in value theory until the essentials of a given system have been isolated as a particular complex of principles, and compared with others of similar and differing character. Quite probably such enquiries may require somewhat less ambiguous categories than ascription or achievement; attention to restriction, sponsorship, competition and personal or impersonal selection may be more useful.

Stratification consists in the restriction of access to positions of varying advantage. If uninstitutionalized, such "restriction" can only be random, unprincipled, contingent and temporary. Not to be so, it must be institutionalized on the basis of certain principles, whatever these might be. Such institutionalization always involves a historical selection of the relevant principles. Where the various principles that regulate this differential distribution of opportunities are mutually conflicting and obstructive, dissensus is generated, and the system may break down. Thus adequate institutionalization involves mutual accommodation of the relevant principles into a congruent scheme. These principles may and do vary widely; so do the positions and rewards to which they relate, and so does their mutual congruence and interdependence. Where the relevant principles regulating opportunities and defining the structural significance of positions are loosely integrated, a *situs* system may emerge, and such a system may enjoy adequate consensus. While the resilience of a stratification system depends on the consensus it elicits, this consensus itself depends on the character, congruence and inclusiveness of the principles that establish the stratification. Even though its constitutive principles are congruent and mutually reinforcing, a stratification may lack adequate consensus if these principles are not sufficiently inclusive. The political nature and implications of stratification are directly evident here.

To postulate a consensual normative basis for all forms of stratification is an unnecessary error which may be traced to the influence of

⁵⁰ Florence Kluckhohn and Fred L. Strodtbeck, *Variations in Value-Orientations* (Evanston, Ill.: Row, Peterson, 1961), pp. 32-35.

Weber and Durkheim.⁵¹ It is also very common nowadays, and recurs at various levels of specificity as an indispensable premise for the analysis of society by reference to values. Thus, "regardless of the type of stratification and authority system, a normative scale of priorities for allocating scarce values (precedence, property rights, power, etc.) is . . . always vital."⁵² "Human society achieves its unity primarily through the possession by its members of certain ultimate values and ends in common."⁵³ "Stratification in its *valuational aspect*, then, is the ranking of units in a social system in accordance with the standards of the common value system."⁵⁴

Normative consensus expressed in agreement about standards relevant for ranking persons and positions is perhaps the most efficient basis for a system of differentiated access; but it is neither the only one, nor self-generating; and its principal conditions, ethnic homogeneity and identification by birth with a unit having a continuous history, are not general among underdeveloped nations currently engaged in industrialization. In consequence, as Shils observes, "consensus" may have to be "coerced."⁵⁵ This empties the notion of any positive meaning. Furnivall succinctly described some of these societies in their colonial phase as "plural societies." Perhaps this pluralism persists into early independence. In the plural society, "as a whole, there is no common social will. There may be apathy on such a vital point as defence against aggression. Few recognize that in fact all the members of all sections have material interests in common, but most see that on many points their material interests are opposed."⁵⁶ In these colonial and post-colonial societies, the system of stratification is one of the most fertile sources of discord. Its continuity often depends on constraint rather than consensus.

Schwab provides an illuminating application of consensualist theory and procedure in his discussion of stratification in Gwelo, a Rhodesian mining town of 7,000 Europeans and 25,000 Africans, mainly Shona,

⁵¹ For representative statements by these writers, see Emile Durkheim, *Professional Ethics and Civic Morals*, trans. Cornelia Brookfield (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1957) p. 61; Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, translated by Talcott Parsons and A. R. Henderson (London: William Hodge, 1947) Ch. 1, sec. 5 and p. 298.

⁵² Aberle, Cohen, Davis, Levy, and Sutton, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

⁵³ Davis and Moore, *op. cit.*, p. 244.

⁵⁴ Parsons, "A Revised Analytical Approach to the Theory of Social Stratification," p. 93 (his italics).

⁵⁵ Edward A. Shils, *Political Development in the New States* (Gravenhage: Mouton, 1962), pp. 14, 16, 35, 58, 64, 70.

⁵⁶ John S. Furnivall, *Colonial Policy and Practice* (New York: New York University Press, 1956), p. 308. For comparative materials, see also International Institute of Different Civilisations, *Ethnic and Cultural Pluralism in Inter-Tropical Countries* (Brussels: INCIDI, 1957).

Ndebele, etc. Having defined social stratification as "the differential ranking of functionally significant roles in terms of a common set of values," he asks, quite correctly, "What are the functionally significant roles?" and "Is there a shared and common value system by which these roles are evaluated?" His answer follows immediately. "Clearly, in the African urban social system in Gwelo, which is marked by extreme heterogeneity and fluidity in norms and social behaviour, there is no single system of values by which individuals are ranked higher or lower according to their various roles and activities. Therefore what we must ask is whether there is one common set of values which predominates in the urban context, over all other value systems and which then may serve as a source of differential evaluation." In short, having failed to find evidence of a common value system, we must postulate one; and this follows duly in the next paragraph. "In any society, a person holds numerous roles, any one of which could be used as a basis for evaluation. Here I shall consider that the relevant roles for evaluation in the system of stratification in Gwelo are those that are socially functional within the urban context, and require . . . full-time participation. . . . In Gwelo, this means the roles an individual has within the urban industrial economic system." The illusory quality of this "common value system" is almost immediately apparent. "The most striking feature of the Gwelo social system is the discrimination in roles between Africans and Europeans. By custom and law, occupational categories have been stereotyped."⁵⁷ In short, the stratification is political in base and ultimately rests on force. Although among the Africans, "tribal affiliation is a primary category . . . of differentiation," Schwab regards such differentiation as secondary to "the socially functional roles in the urban industrial system which I have taken to be the primary basis for the system of social stratification."⁵⁸

Schwab's frankness may be unique, but his assumptions and procedure are not. One major weakness of current sociological studies of stratification is their commitment to this postulate of a normative consensual basis and integrative function, even where the stratification is forcibly imposed. History is full of dead and overthrown stratification systems—e.g., that of 18th-century France.

Consensual normative bases can hardly be claimed for systems that were overthrown by popular revolt or subverted by new religious ideologies, or which provoked extensive withdrawal, such as the migra-

⁵⁷ W. B. Schwab, "Social Stratification in Gwelo," in Aidan Southall (ed.), *Social Change in Modern Africa*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), pp. 128-129.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 131.

tions to America beginning in 1620, or a series of unsuccessful revolts, such as New World slavery. Simply to say that "stratification systems may in fact endure for considerable periods without causing rebellion or revolt, but because of the differential distribution of power (including knowledge), this is neither surprising nor to the point,"⁵⁹ is merely begging the question. This confession admits that stratification may rest on other bases than "a common system of values;" and likewise social order. It is also a direct contradiction of the same writer's earlier thesis.⁶⁰ As I have pointed out elsewhere, "Social quiescence and cohesion differ sharply, and so do regulation and integration but, if we begin by assuming that integration prevails, it is virtually impossible to distinguish these conditions. . . . It is especially difficult to isolate the positive effects of common values in culturally split societies that owe their form and maintenance to a special concentration of regulative powers in the dominant group."⁶¹

The evidence shows that while some societies have integrated consensual normative systems, others are not, but depend on coercion for establishment and continuity. While stable acephalous societies lack stratification but are consensually integrated, stratified societies may or may not have consensual bases. Ubiquitous cleavages between groups labelled Conservative, Liberal, Communist, Fascist or other, indicate how widespread dissensus about the current stratification may be.

In the following sections, I shall therefore contrast stratification systems whose stability varies as an effect of differences in the inclusiveness and congruence of the structural principles which define them. All the systems discussed below are mixed in the sense that they combine institutional arrangements for the ascription and achievement of status. By considering their differing stability, we can explore the relations between the structural principles on which these systems are based and the levels of consensus or dissensus that they exhibit.

This is not the place for a formal discussion of stability. By a stable system, I merely mean one that does not generate internal movements aimed at radical structural change. By an unstable system, I mean one with a history of violent internal movements for such change. By comparing systems of different degrees of stability, I merely wish to show how consensus varies as a function of the structural basis of their stratifications; and thus to suggest that instead of simply postulating

⁵⁹ Wilbert E. Moore, *Social Change* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1963), p. 83.

⁶⁰ Davis and Moore, *op. cit.*, pp. 244, 246.

⁶¹ M. G. Smith, "Social and Cultural Pluralism" in Vera Rubin (ed.), *Social and Cultural Pluralism in the Caribbean*, Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences, 83 (1960), pp. 775-776.

normative consensus as the basis of all social order and stratification, we should analyze the structural conditions that regulate its incidence, intensity and scope.

STABLE MIXED SYSTEMS

Opinion varies as to appropriate unit for stratification analysis. Some writers stress positions, others roles, others individuals, groups, or social categories. All agree that stratification consists in status rankings. Each of the statuses ranked has an absolute value, that is, its constitutive rights and powers; each also has a relative value in comparison to some or all others. This relative value varies with the units compared. The absolute value also varies as the right and powers of the status are latent or manifest. When these are latent, the absolute significance of the position or incumbent is of less interest than its relative significance in the system of positions. In a rigid, well-defined stratification, rankings are always constant and clear, despite the latency or relativism of the units, and this means that the system must observe certain laws of economy. It must be based on one or two very simple general principles, such as birth and ritual status, or birth and jural status. Where the system rests on several principles, ambiguities of relative status are almost unavoidable, and the system loses its rigidity as well as its definition. I can illustrate this by reviewing some familiar forms of stratification.

In a consensually based society, the unequal distributions of opportunities that constitute its stratification are accepted as part of the normal order of things, as for instance in Hindu India, medieval Japan or Europe. Such differential distributions of opportunity may have differing bases and may relate to ritual, material or social values. Several such systems of differentiation may co-exist without any single one being clearly primary. While some societies exhibit only one stratification scale, others exhibit more. In either event, the consensus on which the stratification rests also supports the political order. Systems lacking an adequate consensus differ in their properties, problems and potential.

Indian caste is an instance of a rigorously ascriptive system of ritual status, which enjoys such profound support that modernization makes limited headway against it. Caste being primarily ritual in its base, ranking and referents, it easily accommodates variable local secular rankings based on wealth, power, knowledge, etc. Its immutability simply means that ritual status is absolute, even when latent; and this condition restricts realignments and individual mobility to the secondary secular sphere. Although individual movement between castes is virtually nil,

within limits people may change their occupation and residence and, by changing their ritual observance, they can also seek to elevate their ritual status and that of their issue. But since personal status is identical with caste status, individual mobility on this level is minimal, though *jati* (sub-castes) may change their relative status over the generations by internal fission, re-location, and by adopting new external ritual symbols. Given the deep consensual basis of caste, such enhancement of *jati* status corresponds to the more stringent observance of ritual norms. The system evokes this intense support through its identification of the social and religious orders. The religious principles that regulate caste differentiation legitimate the entire structure as a religious order.⁶²

The feudal organization of medieval Europe and Japan also rested on fairly general consensus and habituation. Despite their institutional cleavages, these populations shared common cults and community membership, much as the Brahmins and *harijans* do. In differing places and periods, the rigidity of these feudal orders varied; but all based their differential distribution of opportunities primarily on birth. Some were born free, others serf, some noble, others villagers, merchants, and so on. Even guilds sought to restrict membership by descent from members. In both areas, only such religious structures as the Catholic Church or the Buddhist monasteries, by their celibacy rules, excluded recruitment by descent, thus implicitly presenting alternative structures. Nonetheless church recruitment for offices of varying rank was qualified by the candidate's birth status. In these systems, the principal avenue of individual mobility was physical transfer and re-location, usually in a town. Only thus could one escape the direct implications of one's birth status.

Nonetheless, these estate systems differ sharply from caste. Ritual heredity differentiates castes, but in estate systems, hereditary differences are secular in base and referents. While caste can accommodate

⁶² J. H. Hutton, *Caste in India*, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1946); H. N. C. Stevenson, "Status Evaluation in the Hindu Caste System," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 84 (1954), pp. 45-65; M. N. Srivinas, Y. B. Dainle, S. Shahani, Andre Beteille, "Caste: A Trend Report and Bibliography," *Current Sociology*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (Oxford: Blackwells, 1959); A. L. Basham, *The Wonder That Was India* (New York: Grove Press, 1959) Ch. 5; Edmund Leach (ed.), *Aspects of Caste in South India, Ceylon and Northwest Pakistan*, Cambridge Papers in Social Anthropology, No. 2 (London: Cambridge University Press, 1960); Taya Zinkin, *Caste Today* (London: Institute of Race Relations, Oxford University Press, 1960); H. H. Gerth and C. W. Mills (eds.), *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (London: Oxford University Press, 1947), pp. 396-615; McKim Marriott (ed.), *Village India: Studies in the Little Community* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955); Adrian Mayer, *Caste and Kinship in Central India* (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1960); T. O. Beidelman, *A Comparative Analysis of the Jajmani System* (Locust Valley, N. Y.: J. J. Augustin, 1959); F. G. Bailey, *Tribe, Caste and Nation* (Manchester University Press, 1960); Pauline Mahar Kalenda, "Toward a Model of the Hindu Jajmani System," *Human Organization*, 22 (March, 1963), pp. 11-31.

secular ranking as a secondary local stratification, in medieval Europe, ritual stratification was itself indirectly dependent on birth differences of a secular nature. Under caste, secular relations among ranked castes are rather variable; and instances of Sudras acquiring Kshatriya status by virtue of their territorial and military dominance are well known. In the secular estate system, the political bases and correlates of stratification are fixed and clear. Members of superior strata exercise jurisdiction over members of inferior ones, individually and collectively. Short of rebellion, the only hope for the subordinate strata to improve their lot is by physical withdrawal—to the town. In Europe, besides strata differentiated by birth and political status, the nobility was also divided between Church and State. In the secular sphere, nobles competed for titles, land and power against rivals also qualified for this competition by birth; in the ritual sphere, birth status was qualified by secondary emphasis on learned clerical skills.⁶³

This baronial competition has numerous parallels in other intermediate societies. In India, Kshatriyas were rivals or allies; in Buganda, Anuak, Zulu, Swazi, etc., royals fought for the throne while eligible commoners, recruited restrictively, competed for lesser offices open to them. Among the Hausa-Fulani, royals competed for the throne, noble lineages for reserved office, clerics for clerical office, slaves and eunuchs for theirs also. In Japan, *daimyo* were recruited mainly from *daimyo* and *samurai* competed with *samurai*. We cannot simply write off these combinations of restriction and competition as transitional phenomena, as Nadel would have us do.⁶⁴ The combination of competitive achievement and restricted eligibility is too variable and widespread to be glossed over lightly. Examination may show that it is in one form or

⁶³ Sir George B. Sansom, *Japan: A Short Cultural History* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1962); John W. Hall, "Feudalism in Japan: A Reassessment," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 5 (October, 1962), pp. 15-51; E. O. Reischauer, "Japan" in Rushton Coulborn (ed.), *Feudalism in History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1956); Marc Bloch, *Feudal Society* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961); Robert J. Smith, "Aspects of Mobility in Pre-Industrial Japanese Cities," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 5 (July, 1963), pp. 416-423; F. L. Ganshof, *Feudalism* (London: Longmans, Green, 1952); H. S. Bennett, *Life on the English Manor: A Study of Peasant Conditions, 1150-1400* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1960); Henri Pirenne, *Economic and Social History of Medieval Europe* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1963) and *Medieval Cities: Their Origins and the Revival of Trade* (New York: Doubleday & Company, no date); Max Weber, *General Economic History*, trans. by Frank Knight (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, no date); M. M. Postan, E. E. Rich and Edward Miller (eds.), *Economic Organization and Policies in the Middle Ages, The Cambridge Economic History of Europe*, Vol. 3 (London: Cambridge University Press, 1963); G. G. Coulton, *The Medieval Scene* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1959); John P. Davis, *Corporations* (New York: Capricorn Books, 1961).

⁶⁴ Nadel, *op. cit.*, p. 171.

another a universal feature of all stratification systems. Certainly such mixed systems vary widely in their particulars, and merit detailed study. Even modern industrial societies whose ideologies explicitly stress universalistic and achievement orientations exhibit restrictive particularisms which, despite their educational and financial bases, effectively preserve racial and social inequalities. Without this structured contrast with ideology, the conflicting interpretations of American stratification by such writers as Parsons, Mills and Warner are incomprehensible.⁶⁵

Recent studies of the Chinese bureaucracy warn us against classifying mixed systems loosely as ascriptive or open, and also against overlooking the critical analytic differences between ideal and actual patterns. Though in theory recruiting its officials by competition—and so encouraging social and economic mobility—positions in the Chinese bureaucracy were often acquired on other grounds; and though the Chinese stratification was notoriously static, movements between the gentry, bureaucrats, peasants and commercial class were apparently continuous. Despite Confucianism and these institutional provisions for social circulation, this stratification also lacked a religious ideology adequate to maintain general consensus, as the various revolts that punctuated Chinese history show.

In any centralized society of moderate scale, the number of highly rewarded positions will be small by comparison with the number of eligible candidates, however restrictive the conditions of eligibility. Technical qualifications may be stressed, but unless the opportunities to acquire them are uniformly distributed throughout the society, its stratification has a restrictive base, and the achievement of individual status by competition is qualified accordingly. Unequal distributions of educational and occupational opportunities may thus generalize ascriptions by birth and effectively maintain these long after they have been formally repudiated. Under such conditions, the stratification cannot be accurately represented either as an open system or an ascriptive one, or as a transitional form; its particulars require detailed analysis; and to distinguish the conditions and consequences of its combination of principles, we must ask what regulates the range and scope of the competition, and the recruitment of competitors, and what differential rewards and dis-

⁶⁵ Parsons, *op. cit.*; W. Lloyd Warner, Marcia Meeker and Kenneth Eells, *Social Class in America: A Manual of Procedure for the Measurement of Social Status* (Chicago: Science Research Associates, 1949); W. Lloyd Warner and Paul S. Lunt, *The Social Life of a Modern Community* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1941); Irving L. Horowitz (ed.), *Power, Politics and People: The Collected Essays of C. Wright Mills* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1963), pp. 23-71, 365-323; C. Wright Mills, *The Sociological Imagination* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959).

abilities are involved. In India, where inter-caste competition is ruled out, ritual heredity is the principle of recruitment, and differential ritual status the explicit reward. In feudal societies, descent is the basis of a differential distribution of jural status, including rights to land, jurisdiction and political office, these being the main rewards. In systems where "technical" qualifications prevail, such as Imperial China and the modern West, differential educational opportunities are the mode of restriction, and occupational status the main reward. Various combinations of these arrangements can be found in historical and contemporary societies, industrial or other.

UNSTABLE MIXED SYSTEMS

A consensualist theory of stratification tends to overlook conquest states, despotisms and slavery, which usually evince clear stratifications. Conquest and its consolidation establishes a stratification explicitly based on force, as for instance in Norman Britain, among the Swat Pathans, or in Aztec Mexico.⁶⁶ Accommodations developed during the process of consolidation may establish a solidary stratification on consensual or symbiotic bases,⁶⁷ or they may not. In Ruanda until recently, various writers believed that the subject Hutu accepted the "premise of inequality" on which Ruanda stratification was based. The introduction of democratic electoral processes has shown the error of this view.⁶⁸ Despite

⁶⁶ Fredrik Barth, *Political Leadership among Swat Pathans*, London School of Economics Monographs on Social Anthropology, No. 19 (London: University of London Press, 1959); Jacques Soustelle, *Daily Life of the Aztecs* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1962); Manuel M. Moreno, *La Organizacion Politica y Social de los Aztecas* (Mexico: Instituto Nacional de Anthropologia, 1962); Ignacio Bernal, *Mexico before Cortez: Art, History, Legend*, trans. by Willis Branstone (New York: Doubleday, 1963).

⁶⁷ See S. F. Nadel, "Social Symbiosis and Tribal Organization," *Man*, 38 (June, 1938), pp. 85-90, and *A Black Byzantium: The Kingdom of Nupe in Nigeria* (London: Oxford University Press, 1941); and M. G. Smith, *Stratification in Grenada* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965).

⁶⁸ J. J. Maquet, "The Kingdom of Ruanda," in Daryll Forde (ed.), *African Worlds: Studies in the Cosmological Ideas and Social Values of African Peoples* (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), pp. 164-189; J. J. Maquet, *The Premise of Inequality in Ruanda* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961); A. Kagame, "Le Pluralisme ethnique et culturel dans le Ruanda" in *Ethnic and Cultural Pluralism in Inter-tropical Countries* (Brussels: INCIDI, 1957), pp. 268-293; Marcel d'Hertevelt, "Stratification Sociale et Structure Politique au Rwanda," *La Revue Nouvelle* 31 (Brussels: May, 1960), pp. 449-462, "Les Elections Communales et le Consensus Politique au Rwanda," *Zaire*, 14 (1960), pp. 403-438, and "Le Rwanda" and "Developpements Recents" in M. d'Hertevelt, A. Troubworst, J. Scherer (eds.), *Les Anciens Royaumes de la Zone Meridionale: Rwanda, Burundi, Buha* (London: International African Institute, 1962), pp. 9-112, 227-236.

a common ideology of divine kingship, Hutu expelled their Tutsi rulers with amazing efficiency and speed. In Hausaland (North Nigeria), where conditions are comparable, the ruling Fulani, whose power rests on conquest legitimated by Islam, are exposed to no such threat; the differences here are rather interesting. Tutsi consolidation in Ruanda instituted "caste endogamy" and a perpetual exclusion of Hutu from positions of social advantage in ritual, political, military and other fields. Fulani intermarried with Hausa, adopted their language and political institutions, and provided ample opportunities for mobility into important positions. Whereas the divine kingship of Ruanda remained the property of the Tutsi "caste" and identified with it, in North Nigeria Fulani domination is expressly identified with Islam and its faithful observance. In line with this, Fulani stress Islam as an indispensable qualification for political office, descent being secondary though highly strategic. Hausa subjects accept this mixed regime, with its unequal opportunities, partly because it is legitimated by Islam, partly because the commercial context provides opportunities for the pursuit of compensatory values, and partly because the distribution of power discourages protest.⁶⁹

Until 1900, slavery enjoyed official sanction in Hausaland; in some Hausa states, perhaps one-half the population were slaves, but to my knowledge the Hausa never experienced any slave revolt. In the West Indies and Brazil, where slavery was widespread, revolts were frequent and often serious.⁷⁰ Haiti owes its independence to such a revolt.⁷¹ In Surinam, Jamaica and the Guianas, large groups of slaves withdrew to settle in inaccessible jungles or mountains, where their descendants presently remain. The contrasting responses in these Mohammedan and Christian slave systems illustrate how consensus may vary even in systems that are formally very similar. While some systems of slavery

⁶⁹ S. J. Hogben, *The Muhammadan Emirates of Northern Nigeria* (London: Oxford University Press, 1930); and M. G. Smith, "Historical and Cultural Conditions of Political Corruption among the Hausa," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 6 (January, 1964), pp. 164-194; *The Economy of Hausa Communities of Zaria Province* Colonial Research Publications No. 16 (London: H. M. Stationery Office, 1955), and *Government in Zazzau, 1800-1950* (London: Oxford University Press, 1960).

⁷⁰ Arturo Ramos, *The Negro in Brazil*, trans. by Richard Pattee (Washington, D.C.: Associated Publishers, 1939), pp. 25-43; J. H. Parry and P. M. Sherlock, *A Short History of the West Indies* (London: Macmillan, 1956), pp. 72, 151, 163, 186; Melville J. Herskovits, *The Myth of the Negro Past* (New York: Harper & Row, 1941); M. G. Smith, "Some Aspects of Social Structure in the British Caribbean about 1820," *Social and Economic Studies*, 1 (August, 1953), pp. 55-80; Stanley M. Elkins, *Slavery: A Problem in American Institutional and Intellectual Life* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1963).

⁷¹ James Leyburn, *The Haitian People* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1941).

excite revolt, others do not. I have shown elsewhere how the assimilation of slave and free through religious and kinship institutions inhibits revolt, while the reverse obstructs satisfactory accommodations.⁷²

The traditionalist Latin American societies present varied phenomena: revolts followed by acquiescence, competition within restrictively defined circles, political nullification of subordinate strata, and a universal Church identified with the social structure, both as critic and sanction. Systems of this sort may endure despite evident inequalities, dissent and apathy, partly through force, partly through inertia, partly because their organizational complexity and structural differentiation inhibits the emergence of effective large-scale movements with coherent programs. Castros are, perhaps, not only exceptional but limited in their effect.⁷³

Latin American societies vary greatly in their particulars, but all display certain common features. Cultural and social pluralism prevails with racial stereotypes or classifications and correlative value divergences. Mobility is restricted, though individual "Indians can move, albeit slowly, into rural Mestizo classification."⁷⁴

In general, South American countries impose fairly rigid barriers to both horizontal and vertical movement out of Indian society. . . . There is considerable reason to believe that some very distinctive rural Mestizo cultures are also plural societies, as rigidly demarcated as are Indian cultures. . . . In Mexico, large masses of rural Mestizos have substantially the same culture as many Indians, but do not form distinctive plural societies, although there is a high degree of localism and regionalism. The only countries where the feudal class system and, more particularly, feudal class attitudes have disappeared to any extent are the Europe-oriented countries and Mexico.⁷⁵

The resilience or immobility of Latin American stratification may thus be in part a function of the cultural diversity of the large subordinate strata. This reinforces community closures among Mestizos and Indians alike, each community maintaining its distinctive status system. An individual's status is thus derived from his community. Such ethnic heterogeneity generates "racial" structures of discrimination which perpetuate the structure of inequality as a base for cultural and social differences, even where the populations thus segregated are overtly sim-

⁷² M. G. Smith, "Slavery and Emancipation in Two Societies," *Social and Economic Studies*, 3, (October, 1954), pp. 239-280.

⁷³ Wyatt McGaffey, "Social Structure and Mobility in Cuba," *Anthropological Quarterly*, 34 (April, 1961), pp. 84-109; Richard N. Adams, John P. Gillin, A. R. Holmberg, Oscar Lewis, R. W. Patch, Charles Wagley, and L. Bryson, *Social Change in Latin America Today: Its Implications for United States Policy* (New York: Random House, 1961).

⁷⁴ Ralph Beals, "Social Stratification in Latin America," *American Journal of Sociology*, 58 (January, 1953), p. 338.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 336.

ilar in race, as for instance in Haiti or Guatemala.⁷⁶ Beals' conclusion that "the use of strictly economic or economic and political criteria for class analysis of Latin America is the least fruitful approach"⁷⁷ may hold for other societies in which "the significant feature of the stratification is its bifurcation,"⁷⁸ with many segments among the subordinate strata.

Simple increases in market opportunity will not usually alter these stratifications, for two reasons. In many cases these economic differentiations are integrated with the system of stratification as conditional or dependent factors; in others, as India, they may be simply irrelevant. Geographical mobility, especially to the large anonymous cities, may offer an opportunity to escape one's given status; but this is only significant where one wishes to escape, or where ritual conditions permit it. In secular systems, unless individual levels of aspiration and expectation are adjusted to the conditions of stratification, dissent and protests are likely; but to be effective, these presume that the subordinate strata are not vertically divided into closed communities. In these unstable systems, with more or less dissensus, ascription and competition co-exist, and in the most extreme form of this system, the plural society, the closed community is often represented by occupationally specialized ethnic groups, such as the Jews, Chinese, etc., often represent closed communities.⁷⁹

CONCLUSION

I summarize my argument as follows. Stratification is a mode of social differentiation, and though social structures may be viewed as

⁷⁶ Melvin M. Tumin, *Caste in a Peasant Society* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1952), John Gillin, "Mestizo America" in Ralph Linton (ed.), *Most of the World* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1948), and *The Culture of Security in San Carlos* (New Orleans: Middle American Research Institute, Publication No. 16, 1951). For Haiti, see John Lobb, "Caste and Class in Haiti," *American Journal of Sociology*, 46 (January, 1940), pp. 23-24; Leyburn, *op. cit.*, and George E. Simpson, "Haiti's Social Structure," *American Sociological Review*, 6 (1941), pp. 640-649, and "Social Stratification in the Caribbean," *Phylon*, 24 (January, 1962), pp. 29-46.

⁷⁷ Ralph Beals, *op. cit.*, p. 339.

⁷⁸ Gideon Sjoberg, "Folk and Feudal Societies," *American Journal of Sociology*, 58 (November, 1952), p. 233.

⁷⁹ Leonard Broom, "The Social Differentiation of Jamaica," *American Sociological Review*, 19 (April, 1954), pp. 115-125, and "Urbanization and the Plural Society," in Vera Rubin (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 880-891; Burton Benedict, "Stratification in Plural Societies," *American Anthropologist*, (December, 1962), pp. 1235-1246, and *Indians in a Plural Society*, Colonial Research Studies No. 34 (London: H. M. Stationery Office, 1961); R. A. J. van Lier, *The Development and Nature of Society in the West Indies* (Amsterdam: Royal Institute for the Indies, 1950); and Furnivall, *op. cit.*, pp. 304-312.

status systems, only some of these are stratified. All such systems display observable unequal distributions of advantage, but they fall into quite distinct categories. Some societies institutionalize equal access to positions of advantage; this involves uniformity in the positions and in the modes of recruitment. Such societies lack stratification. Other societies institutionalize unequal access to positions of advantage, and display stratification in various forms and degrees. In all cases, unstratified societies are politically decentralized, and the political and status structures are coincident. Units, the members of which share an identical status, are the corporations on which political and administrative order rests. These units of public order and regulation are mutually distinguished and related by the same principles that regulate the distribution of status. Nor could it be otherwise, since status is a jural and political condition. These acephalous unstratified societies vary quite widely in structure, but if stable they all rest on general normative consensus.

Stratified societies also vary in many ways. Some, with diverse bases of distribution, emphasize status to the virtual exclusion of ranked strata; others distinguish ranked strata of varying kinds, some being defined jurally, others ritually, yet others racially and culturally. In all cases, the principles that differentiate and regulate this unequal distribution of opportunities are identical with those that distinguish and regulate publics as corporate units of internal order and external articulation. That is to say, the principles of stratification are basic to the political order. Nor could it be otherwise, since the differentiated statuses have jural and political connotations, directly or indirectly, as Max Weber recurrently observed.⁸⁰

The principal criteria of status differentiation are linked directly or indirectly with the various types of reward, and these criteria may vary from ritual or jural capacity, from race, culture or wealth to education and occupational qualifications; but in all cases the widest span of the status system coincides with the limits of the widest effective political unit, as Nadel points out; and its basis and significance lie in the political sphere. For this reason, stratification cannot be adequately studied in terms of underlying value-orientations; it represents an order interdependent with the political order, based on certain concrete structural principles. In consequence of these principles, people might develop adjustive value-orientations, or protestant ones; but we must explain the values by reference to the structural principles that generate them, rather than the reverse.

⁸⁰ Hans Gerth and C. Wright Mills, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (London: Oxford University Press, 1947), pp. 160-161, 163-164, 171, 179, 191-193, 259-260, 276, 283, 298, 300-301.

If my argument holds, economic variables cannot have unconditional priority in the allocation of status unless uniformly open conditions of occupational recruitment are institutionalized, so that expansive market opportunities will generate increased mobility. In such conditions, one would expect that market contraction would stimulate institutional barriers to mobility; in no society known to me, however, have economic or occupational differences served as unconditional criteria of status allocation. Restricted eligibilities are always important, though often covert. So far as economic and occupational opportunities or achievements are regulated by other principles of status allocation such as ritual, birth, race, cultural difference, etc., market fluctuations may leave the structure unaffected; but any general process of restratification is always political.

While stratification systems vary in stability as a function of their normative consensual structure, this consensus is itself dependent on the character, congruence and inclusiveness of the structural principles on which the stratification is based. Some stratified societies, despite high inequalities, develop a consensus that legitimates the order. Others, with similar or lesser inequalities, do not. The source of these differences seems to lie in the nature of the principles that regulate the systems rather than in the scale of inequalities as such. The wider the consensus and the more inclusive the legitimating ideology, the more absolute may be the tolerable differences between ranked strata and the wider the span of the stratification. India, China, feudal Europe, Japan, and Latin America illustrate this. Situs structures correspond to narrow spans of differential advantage and diverse or competing legitimating norms. History shows many examples of political orders, that is, status structures, which endure for more or less time despite popular dissent. European absolutism, New World slavery or peonage and modern colonialism are merely the most obvious examples. To regard stratification as universal, and as always based on common values, is doubly mistaken. In societies lacking consensus, stratification is explicitly political in base, function and form. In societies with consensual foundations, the status structure, whether stratified or not, is at least implicitly political in function, basis and form, and generally explicitly so. Where present, whatever its bases, stratification is a condition and focus of the political order as well as a product of political history. In societies with "bifurcated" or plural stratifications, such as Latin America, India, China, colonial Africa, South Africa, the Middle East, and the West Indies, the re-stratification requisite for adequate economic mobility to support industrialization may thus develop only through explicit political action that seeks to rearrange the relations and categories forming the structure.

If an industrializing "emergent nation" is a territorial association of

diverse indigenous societies, the "national" stratification inevitably differs from that of these indigenous units; hence the generality and political basis of plural or "bifurcated" systems. Moreover, the process of industrialization pursued at the national level itself intensifies the differentiation of these two types of stratification. The local distribution of these industrializing efforts also differentiates their structures from the pre-industrial systems around them. When tribesmen move to industrial towns, they may or may not lose their tribal identifications, wholly or in part; but in either event they enter a different milieu with its own logic and organization. In various urban industrial situations, such immigrants encounter differing structures of opportunity, incentive, restriction and sanction; and if they remain, they must accommodate to these as best they can. Normally, these structures of opportunity and restriction are politically determined and enforced; the events of this American summer (1964) or the processes of de-colonization are patent evidence. This constraint may also be true of the movement to town. While canalizing the accommodation of their urban proletariats, such social structures generate divergent responses according to the particulars of their situation. Amerindians in Tegucigalpa, Bantu in Johannesburg, Ibo in Enugu, Gonds in Orissa, Mende or Temne in Freetown, face rather different structures of opportunity and restriction, and, partly for this reason, they react differently.