

G E O R G S I M M E L

Conflict

TRANSLATED BY KURT H. WOLFF

*The Web of
Group-Affiliations*

TRANSLATED BY REINHARD BENDIX

WITH A FOREWORD BY EVERETT C. HUGHES

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The Web of Group-Affiliations¹

TRANSLATED BY REINHARD BENDIX

1. Translation of "Die Kreuzung sozialer Kreise," *Soziologie* (Munich: Duncker & Humblot, 1922), pp. 305-44. The title of this chapter, "Die Kreuzung sozialer Kreise," has not been translated. A literal translation of this phrase, "intersection of social circles," is almost meaningless. What Simmel had in mind was that each individual is unique in the sense that his pattern of group-affiliations is never exactly the same as that of any other individual. He may belong to a different set of groups as compared with another person, and even if he belonged to the same groups, he would still orient himself or he would define his situation (in the terms of W. I. Thomas), with reference to groups or social categories, which distinguish him from the other. (This has recently been elaborated by Robert K. Merton and others under the heading "reference group theory.") And because the same individual belongs to many groups, Simmel refers to him as "standing at the intersection of social circles."

Two further comments may prove helpful to the reader. In using the word "circle" as a synonym for "group," Simmel often plays with geometric analogies; it has seemed advisable to me to minimize this play with words in so far as this seemed compatible with an accurate rendering of Simmel's thought. I have used the term "group-formation" when Simmel refers to the origin of a "social circle," and the term "group-affiliation" when he has in mind that an individual "belongs to a social circle." I would ask the reader to keep in mind that in Simmel's view these terms should be interpreted broadly. He speaks, for example, of women as a social circle or group, not only when they "form" a group or are "affiliated" with one, but also when they perform a given social role in society.

Phrases in square brackets have been added, when this seemed necessary for clarity. All sub-headings have been added also. The footnotes are Simmel's when marked by the initials G.S., and the translator's when marked R.B. Unmarked footnotes are sentences from Simmel's text which have been made into footnotes for the sake of clarity.

ANALOGIES BETWEEN PERCEPTION AND GROUP-FORMATION

THE DIFFERENCE between thinking in its advanced and its primitive form is shown in the different motives which determine the association of ideas. To the primitive mind any accidental coexistence of objects in time and space is psychologically sufficient to lead to a connection between ideas.

At first, that unification of attributes, which makes up a concrete object, seems to be a unified whole. But [upon examination it appears that] each composite attribute is closely connected with other attributes which together make up that specific environmental context in which one has come to know them. To become conscious of a concrete object [as a configuration of these attributes and] as a distinct conception is possible only when the idea [of the object] occurs in many different connections. Then the likeness and the interrelation among these connections becomes clearly evident, and the conception of the object frees itself more and more from its ties with attributes which are actually different and which were bound together with the object only through an accidental coexistence. Thus, the association of ideas is no longer a simple response to what is actually perceived. Instead, it becomes grounded in the content of what is perceived, and more complex concepts are developed upon this basis. In this manner there emerges the likeness or similarity of the attributes [which make up a concrete object] and these attributes are consequently disentangled from their various accidental and irrelevant connections.

The development which takes place among ideas finds an analogue in the relationship of individuals to each other. At

first the individual sees himself in an environment which is relatively indifferent to his individuality, but which has implicated him in a web of circumstances. These circumstances impose on him a close coexistence with those whom the accident of birth has placed next to him. This close coexistence represents the first condition of the phylogenetic and ontogenetic development, whose continuation aims toward the association of homogeneous members from heterogeneous groups. Thus, the family comprises a number of different individuals, who are at first entirely dependent on this familial association. However, as the development of society progresses, each individual establishes for himself contacts with persons who stand outside this original group-affiliation, but who are "related" to him by virtue of an actual similarity of talents, inclinations, activities, and so on. The association of persons because of external coexistence is more and more superseded by association in accordance with internal relationships. Just as a higher concept binds together the elements which a great number of very different perceptual complexes have in common, so do practical considerations bind together like individuals, who are otherwise affiliated with quite alien and unrelated groups. New contacts are established between individuals which penetrate every nook and cranny of the contacts that are earlier, relatively more natural and that are held together by relationships of a more sensual kind.

PROPINQUITY AND INTEREST AS A BASIS OF GROUP-FORMATION

THE INDEPENDENT GROUPS, whose alliances used to constitute universities at an earlier time, were divided according to the nationality of the students. Later on, so-called faculties were developed in the place of such alliances. These faculties were academic departments according to common areas of study. Thus, a group whose cohesion depended upon geographic and physiological factors, *terminus a quo*, was entirely

replaced by a group whose cohesion was based on purpose, on factual considerations, or, if one will, on individual interests.

The development of the English trade unions shows the same pattern, though its characteristics were somewhat more complex. Originally, the individual trade unions tended toward local exclusiveness: they were closed to workers who came from elsewhere. Frictions and petty jealousies between such separate groups were unavoidable. However, the tendency toward a uniform organization of trades throughout the country gradually eliminated this situation. The following example shows that this change had become inevitable. When the cotton weavers decided upon uniform piece rates, it was apparent that this would lead to a concentration of the industry in favorably located places and to losses for the more remote villages. Yet, even the representatives of these remote villages voted for uniform piece rates because this was deemed best for the industry as a whole.

Although from the beginning workers came together on the basis of their similar activities, their association depended largely on the fact that they were neighbors. Unquestionably this contributed to a close contact between a specific trade and the associations of the other trades, as long as the latter existed in the same locality. In the course of its development the association of workers in one trade was removed from this dependence on local relationships. Henceforth, the similarity in the occupation of the members became the only determinant of the relationship between the association and those in other trades. An historian of the trade unions has expressed this change by saying that the *trade* had become the governing principle of the workers' organizations in place of the *city*. There is an element of freedom operating here: for however much confinement there may be in the position of the worker, membership in a trade union implies more freedom of choice for the individual than belonging to the citizenry of a town.

In general, this type of development tends to enlarge the sphere of freedom: not because the affiliation with, and the dependence on groups, has been abandoned, but because it has become a matter of choice with whom one affiliates and upon whom one is dependent. Any association, which is based on local relationships or is otherwise brought about without the individual's participation, differs from affiliations which are freely chosen, because as a rule the latter will make it possible for the individual to make his beliefs and desires felt. Hence, such groupings may be based upon relationships which grow out of the nature of the individuals concerned.

PRIMARY GROUPS

AND MILITARY ORGANIZATIONS

IN ORDER TO BUILD a stable organizational structure, it is often expedient to utilize relationships which have arisen in this manner, though the purpose of the organization may diverge markedly from the causes which prompted its initial development. Among the Syssitians of Sparta, fifteen men sat at one table according to free choice. *One* vote was sufficient to bar a man from joining the table. This "company of the table" [Tischgenossenschaft] was then made the basic unit of the army. Here the actual tendencies and sympathies of the individuals intermingled with the ties of neighborhood and of kinship as the basis for the formation of a primary, communal group. The army organization, for which these tendencies and sympathies of individuals were utilized, was extremely strict and impersonal. Yet, the option of the Syssitian fellowship formed a flexible link between the army and the equally impersonal ties of locality and of kinship. The rational meaning of the table-company, based on free choice, buttressed the rationality of the army organization, which was established along entirely different lines. However, the unconditional prerogative of the military organization broke

down the clan-organization of the Spartans, quite apart from the special technique of establishing the units of the army. In the rest of Greece it was a given clan or local district which constituted a military unit. Only in Sparta did the objective interest of the military break down this bias [of locale or of kinship]; there the unit of military organization was determined according to purely military considerations.

Even among primitive peoples, for example in Africa, one can observe how the organization of government along lines of war-like centralization has destroyed the clan-organization of the tribe. Since women in general represent the principle of indigenous family-solidarity, we can explain thereby the enmity against everything feminine and the social impotence of women in military organizations. Nevertheless, a patriarchy among war-like peoples may develop with relative frequency. On the one hand, it may develop out of the explicit separation of civil and military affairs. On the other hand, it may result from psychological motives: the warrior is tyrannical and brutal at home, to be sure, but he is also tired and lazy. He is satisfied if his wants are taken care of and someone else has the governing power. But these conditions of civil society have nothing to do with those purposive [primarily military considerations], which destroy the clan and create a new, purely rational structure from its fragments.

The decisive fact is that the warriors form an organized whole entirely on a military basis and without regard to any other interests. In other respects these warriors may be separated from one another by quite different [personal] relations which would be irrational only if these other relations would affect the military organization. The choice of comrades among the Syssitians of Sparta meant that freedom was a principle of efficient organization, which is not often the case. For in this case the qualities of the individual personality became the determinants of group-solidarity. Compared with

the usual reasons, this is a completely new, revolutionary and clearly intelligible basis of solidarity, even if it is arbitrary and irrational in specific instances.

It is in this sense that the principle of "free association" prevailed in the last three centuries of the middle ages in Germany. In the earliest times of free village communities the solidarity of men was a matter of local development. Then, the feudal era created quite a different external basis of unity stemming from the relationship of the men to *one* lord. Only the principle of "free association" made the will of the associated individuals the basis of unity. It is obvious that the community-life of individuals must have assumed very peculiar forms as those earlier bases of unity were replaced. These bases had appeared as preordained, they had molded the individual and were not initiated by him, but they were subsequently eliminated or thwarted by the spontaneous actions of the individual.

AFFILIATION WITH TWO GROUPS OF DIFFERENT TYPE

THE UNITY of a group [which is based on "voluntary association"] is of a later type. It grows out of a more primitive type, but need not always be of a more rational character. The consequences for the external position as well as for the internal make-up of the individual will have a special character if both types [of establishing unity] are founded upon equally deep-seated causes that lie beyond the control of the individual.

The Australian aborigines, whose cultural position is very primitive, live in small, rather close-knit tribes. But the entire population is divided into five *gentes* or totemic associations in such a way that members of the various *gentes* are found in each tribe and each gens extends over several tribes. Within the tribe the members of the same totemic association do not engage in collective action. Rather, the fact of their member-

ship becomes an element in all other groups, however defined, and as such these members of the totemic association constitute an extended family. If in a fight between two hordes the members of the same totem meet, they avoid each other and seek out another opponent, which is likewise reported of the Mortlack Islanders. Sexual relations take place between men and women according to the conditions of the *gentes*, even though they are members of different tribes and have never met in any other way. Those wretched people are quite incapable of engaging in rational, collective action, properly so-called. But by belonging to two such sharply divided groups [the gens and the tribe] they must experience an enrichment of their lives, a tension and a doubling of their vitality, which they could probably not attain otherwise.

In modern family life a somewhat similar affiliation [with two divided groups] is often established by virtue of the solidarity among members of the same sex, though the content and the effect [of this affiliation] are of a very different kind. For example, a mother's instincts will cause her to side with her son as her own kin on occasions when she is drawn into the disputes between himself and his wife. But on another occasion her instincts may cause her to take the side of her daughter-in-law as a member of her own sex.² To belong to the same sex is one of the causes for collective action, which pervades social life perennially, and which intermingles with all other causes of collective action in the most varied ways and degrees. The fact that two persons are of the same sex will, as a rule, act as an organic and natural [cause of collective action] in contrast to which other causes [of collective action] have something of the individual, intentional, and conscious about them. However, in the case referred to, one may sense perhaps that the relationship between mother and

2. Of course, this applies only in so far as her instincts are acted out *a priori*, and without regard to all the individual nuances of the case.

son is the natural and effective one, while the solidarity of one woman with another is of a secondary and deliberate nature, which is more significant in an abstract than in an existential sense. Yet, to be of the same sex is sometimes a cause of solidarity, which is peculiar in the sense that it is primary, fundamental, and independent of all arbitrary decisions. Yet, this solidarity can become effective only through mediation, reflection and conscious striving. Hence, these much later and accidental causes function in fact as the first and unavoidable cause of group-formation.

ORGANIC AND RATIONAL CRITERIA OF GROUP-FORMATION

IN RELATIVELY UNCOMPLICATED situations age groups may function as a sociological criterion and may become a basis of division for the entire group. Like the division between the sexes, age groups stand midway between the organic and the rational. For example, in Sparta around 200 B.C. political parties were designated as the elders, the young men, and the youngsters. Similarly, among different primitive peoples one finds men organized in age-groups, each of which has a special social significance and a special way of life. The basis of this solidarity is entirely personal and impersonal at the same time.

Obviously, age-groups provide such a basis of solidarity only when the culture is still without an extensive intellectual life. For this would immediately foster the unfolding of individual intellectual differences, of differences in the development of ideas, of political parties depending on ideologies. And as a result individuals of quite different age-groups would feel that they belong together. It is, indeed, this lack of an acquired education which is one of the reasons why youth as such shows a certain solidarity, why young people are attracted to one another much more so than are older people.

Youths are often surprisingly indifferent towards each other's individuality.

The division by age-groups is a cause, though an extremely awkward cause, of group-formation, which combines personal and objective criteria. The organic and rational causes of group-formation, whose contrast is usually emphasized, are here brought together. A purely physiological aspect of individuals, their age, becomes a basis for joint action. Age is an entirely natural and personal fact which here works as a completely objective principle. It is understandable that this fact gains great importance for the social structure of primitive peoples, since age is relieved of all elements of caprice, since the fact of age is immediately apparent and as such readily determines one's outlook on life.

Group-affiliations which are formed according to objective criteria constitute a superstructure which develops over and above those group-affiliations which are formed according to natural, immediately given criteria. One of the simplest examples is the original cohesion of the family-group which is modified in such a way that the individual member introduces his family into other groups. One of the most complex examples is the "republic of scholars" which is in part an intellectual and in part a real association of all persons, who join in the pursuit of such a highly general goal as knowledge. In all other respects these scholars belong to the most varied groups—with regard to their nationality, their personal and special interests, their social position, and so on.

The period of the Renaissance demonstrated most clearly the power of intellectual and educational interests to bring together in a new community like-minded people from a large variety of different groups. Humanistic interests broke down the medieval isolation of social groups and of estates. They gave to people who represented the most diverse points of

view and who often remained faithful to the most diverse occupations, a common interest in ideas and in knowledge. This common interest, whether one of active pursuit or of passive appreciation, cut across all previously established forms and institutions of medieval life. Humanism at that time entered the experience of all peoples and groups from the outside as something that was equally strange to all. And this very fact made it possible for Humanism to become a common area of interest for them all, or at any rate for certain people among them.

For example, the idea prevailed that all things famous belonged together. This is shown by the collections of biographies which began to appear in the 14th century. These biographies described in a single work people of excellence from many fields, whether they were theologians, or artists, statesmen or philologists. In their way, the secular rulers gave recognition to this new rank-order, which involved a new analysis and synthesis of social groups. Robert of Naples befriended Petrarch and makes him a gift of his own purple cape.

Two hundred years later this social action has shed its lyric guise and has assumed a more objective and strictly limited form. Francis I of France wanted to make that social group, which was concerned exclusively with the higher learning, completely independent and autonomous even in relation to the universities. These universities were charged with the education of theologians and jurists. But Francis I proposed a separate academy, whose members would devote themselves to investigation and teaching without having any practical purpose in mind. It was a consequence of this separation of what is intellectually significant from every other value that the Venetian Senate accompanied the extradition of Giordano Bruno with this letter to the Papal Court. Bruno was one of the worst heretics, it said, he had done the most reprehensible things, he had led a dissolute, even a devilish

life. In other respects, however, he was one of the most distinguished intellects that could be imagined, a man of rare learning and spiritual greatness.

The restlessness and the adventurous spirit of the Humanists, their often unstable and unreliable character, were in keeping with the independence of the intellect, which was the central focus of their lives. This independence made them indifferent to all other obligations usually incumbent upon men. The individual humanist spent his life in a colorful variety of life-situations. This way of life was symbolic of the movement of Humanism, which embraced the poor scholar and the monk, the powerful General and the brilliant Duchess, in a single framework of intellectual interests. Thereby the way was opened for a most important, further differentiation of the social structure, though there are precedents for such a development in antiquity.

Criteria derived from knowledge came to serve as the basis of social differentiation and group-formation. Up to the Renaissance, social differentiation and group-formation had been based either on criteria of self-interest (economic, military, and political in a broad or narrow sense), or of emotion (religious), or of a mixture of both (familial). Now, intellectual and rational interests came to form groups, whose members were gathered from many other social groups. This is a striking example of the general trend, that the formation of groups, which has occurred more recently, often bears a rational character, and that the substantive purpose of these groups is the result of conscious reflection and intelligent planning. Thus, secondary groups, because of their rational formation, give the appearance of being determined by a purpose, since their affairs revolve around intellectually articulated interests.

MULTIPLE GROUP-AFFILIATIONS WHICH ARE NOT IN CONFLICT

THE NUMBER of different social groups in which the individual participates, is one of the earmarks of culture. The modern person belongs first of all to his parental family, then to his family of procreation and thereby also to the family of his wife. Beyond this he belongs to his occupational group, which often involves him in several interest-groups. For example, in an occupation that embraces both supervisory and subordinate personnel, each person participates in the affairs of his particular business, department office, etc., each of which comprises higher and lower employees. Moreover, a person also participates in a group made up of similarly situated employees from several, different firms. Then, a person is likely to be aware of his citizenship, of the fact that he belongs to a particular social class. He is, moreover, a reserve-officer, he belongs to a few clubs and engages in a social life which puts him in touch with different social groups. This is a great variety of groups. Some of these groups are integrated. Others are, however, so arranged that one group appears as the original focus of an individual's affiliation, from which he then turns toward affiliation with other, quite different groups on the basis of his special qualities, which distinguish him from other members of his primary group. His bond with the primary group may well continue to exist, like one aspect of a complex image, which retains its original time-space coordinates though the image itself has long since become established psychologically as an objective configuration in its own right.

During the Middle Ages the individual had certain typical opportunities of group-affiliation, over and above his citizenship in his community. The Hansa League was an association of cities, which permitted the individual to participate in a wide range of activities that not only extended beyond each individual city but far beyond the boundaries of the German

Reich. Likewise, the medieval guilds were not organized in accordance with the jurisdiction of towns; instead, affiliation of the individual with the guild had no reference to his status as a citizen within a town but involved him in an organization extending throughout all of Germany. And journeyment-associations extended beyond the boundaries of the guilds, just as the guilds extended their jurisdiction beyond the boundaries of the towns.

These patterns [of group-affiliation] had the peculiarity of treating the individual as a member of a group rather than as an individual, and of incorporating him thereby in other groups as well. An association which is derived from the membership of other associations places the individual in a number of groups. But these groups do not overlap and the problems which they entail for the individual, differ from the problems posed by the sociological constellations which will be discussed subsequently. Group-formation during the Middle Ages was inspired by the idea that only equals could be associated, however often the practice deviated from the theory. This idea obviously was connected with the completeness with which medieval man surrendered himself to his group-affiliation. Hence, cities allied themselves first of all with cities, monasteries with monasteries, guilds with related guilds. This was an extension of the equalitarian principle, even though in fact members of one corporate body may not have been the equals of members from an allied group. But as *members of a corporate body* they were equals. The alliance was valid only in so far as this was the case, and the fact that the members were individually differentiated in other respects was irrelevant. This way of doing things was extended to alliances between *different* groups, but these groups were regarded even then as equal powers within the new alliance. The individual as such was not a fact in such an alliance; hence his indirect participation in it did not add an individuating element to his personality. Nevertheless, as

will be discussed later, this was the transitional step from the medieval type to the modern type of group-formation. The medieval group in the strict sense was one which did not permit the individual to become a member in other groups, a rule which the old guilds and the early medieval corporations probably illustrate most clearly. The modern type of group-formation makes it possible for the isolated individual to become a member in whatever number of groups he chooses. Many consequences resulted from this.

GROUP-AFFILIATIONS AND THE INDIVIDUAL PERSONALITY

THE GROUPS WITH WHICH the individual is affiliated constitute a system of coordinates, as it were, such that each new group with which he becomes affiliated circumscribes him more exactly and more unambiguously. To belong to any one of these groups leaves the individual considerable leeway. But the larger the number of groups to which an individual belongs, the more improbable is it that other persons will exhibit the same combination of group-affiliations, that these particular groups will "intersect" once again [in a second individual]. Concrete objects lose their individual characteristics as we subsume them under a general concept in accordance with one of their attributes. And concrete objects regain their individual characteristics as other concepts are emphasized under which their several attributes may be subsumed. To speak Platonically, each thing has a part in as many ideas as it has manifold attributes, and it achieves thereby its individual determination. There is an analogous relationship between the individual and the groups with which he is affiliated.

A concrete object with which we are confronted has been called the synthesis of perceptions. And each object has a more enduring configuration, so to speak, the more various the perceptions are, which have entered into it. Similarly as

individuals, we form the personality out of particular elements of life, each of which has arisen from, or is interwoven with, society. This personality is subjectivity par excellence in the sense that it combines the elements of culture in an individual manner. There is here a reciprocal relation between the subjective and the objective. As the person becomes affiliated with a social group, he surrenders himself to it. A synthesis of such subjective affiliations creates a group in an objective sense. But the person also regains his individuality, because his pattern of participation is unique; hence the fact of multiple group-participation creates in turn a new subjective element. Causal determination of, and purposive actions by, the individual appear as two sides of the same coin. The genesis of the personality has been interpreted as the point of intersection for innumerable social influences, as the end-product of heritages derived from the most diverse groups and periods of adjustment. Hence, individuality was interpreted as that particular set of constituent elements which in their quality and combination make up the individual. But as the individual becomes affiliated with social groups in accordance with the diversity of his drives and interests, he thereby expresses and returns what he has "received," though he does so consciously and on a higher level.

As the individual leaves his established position within *one* primary group, he comes to stand at a point at which many groups "intersect." The individual as a moral personality comes to be circumscribed in an entirely new way, but he also faces new problems. The security and lack of ambiguity in his former position gives way to uncertainty in the conditions of his life. This is the sense of an old English proverb which says: he who speaks two languages is a knave. It is true that external and internal conflicts arise through the multiplicity of group-affiliations, which threaten the individual with psychological tensions or even a schizophrenic break. But it is also true that multiple group-affiliations can

strengthen the individual and reenforce the integration of his personality. Conflicting and integrating tendencies are mutually reinforcing. Conflicting tendencies can arise just because the individual has a core of inner unity. The ego can become more clearly conscious of this unity, the more he is confronted with the task of reconciling within himself a diversity of group-interests. The effect of marriage on both spouses is that they belong to several families; this has always been a source of enrichment, a way of expanding one's interests and relationships but also of intensifying one's conflicts. These conflicts may induce the individual to make internal and external adjustments, but also to assert himself energetically.

In primitive clan-organizations the individual would participate in several groups in such a way that he belonged to the kinship or totemic group of his mother, but also to the narrower, familial or local association of his father. Now these simple people are not equal to conflicts such as those just mentioned, which is basically due to the fact that they lack a firm awareness of themselves as personalities. With peculiar purposefulness these two kinds of association are therefore so differently arranged that they do not encroach upon each other. Relationships on the maternal side have a more ideal, spiritual nature, whereas on the paternal side they are real, material and directly effective. In the case of the Australian aborigines, i.e., the Hereros, and among many other hunting tribes, maternal kinship, and similarly the totemic association, do not constitute a basis for community-living. They have no effect on daily life, but only on festive occasions of deep significance, such as marriage ceremonies and ceremonies occasioned by death and blood revenge. The last of these has an ideal, abstract character in the lives of the primitive peoples. The totemic association is transmitted through maternal descent and, therefore, it is often scattered through many tribes and hordes. It is held together only by

common taboos on food and common ceremonials, and particularly by means of special names and special symbols on weapons. On the other hand, the paternal kinship-relations encompass all of daily life, waging war, alliances, inheritance, hunting, and so on. They do not have these taboos and symbols and do not need them, because the bond of a community in one locality and the convergence of their direct interests provide the basis for a sense of group-cohesion. At this stage, each connection which is not local usually assumes a more ideal character. It is the sign of a higher social development that group-cohesion can transcend local ties and yet be thoroughly realistic and concrete. But if the individual in a primitive tribe belongs to both the paternal-local group and to the maternal clan, these groups must be separated from each other in terms of the distinctly concrete or distinctly abstract values which they embody. Given the undifferentiated character of the primitive mind, this separation is a precondition for the possibility that the same individual belongs to both groups.

GROUP-AFFILIATIONS AND THE FAMILY

THE CATHOLIC PRIESTHOOD represents examples of multiple group-affiliations which are unique in kind and also in the degree to which they were successful. No estate was excluded from the recruitment of priests and monks. The power of the ecclesiastical estate greatly attracted both the highest and the lowest social elements. In medieval England strong aversions between social classes prevailed generally. However, the priesthood, although it formed a strong and compact class, did not engender real class-hatred because it originated from all classes and every family had some relative who belonged to it. A similar situation was created by the fact that church-property existed everywhere. Because there was some church-property in every province and al-

most every community, alongside the infinite number of property titles characteristic of the Middle Ages, there arose an inter-regional uniformity of the clerical estate, which was both cause and consequence of its purposive unity. To date, this is the greatest example in history of the formation of a social group which cuts across all other existing groups. But at the same time it is characterized by the fact that it actually produced no overlapping of group-affiliations in the individuals. The priesthood could establish a relationship to, and could communicate with, all existing social strata in a manner which was entirely unbiased, because the individual priest was completely released from the ties with his social stratum; he was not even permitted to retain his name. Otherwise, these ties would have determined the personality of the priest together with those which he had newly gained in the priesthood.

But the personality of the priest was determined instead by his affiliation with the priesthood and the consequences of this situation confirm our analysis, albeit by means of a contradiction. The priest may possess no individuality in the normal sense, he cannot possess any traits which would differentiate him from other priests. Since he is entirely a priest, he must be a priest to the exclusion of all other concerns. Thus, the overlapping of group-affiliations has no effect upon the individual in this case, but only upon the estate as a whole, which is made up of *former* members of *all* estates and groups. That the priesthood as a higher social form was determined sociologically on the basis of overlapping group-affiliations, was possible only because the priesthood stood in the same relationship to all of the groups. Among the means utilized by Catholicism, celibacy is the most radical method by which the individual priest was put outside the network of group-affiliations.

Marriage constitutes a sociological determination of such finality that the individual is no longer quite free to attain a

position in a group other than his family which would correspond to his interest in this second group. It is significant that the lower Russian clergyman, whose task demanded that he live among the people, is generally married, while the higher, ruling clergy are celibate. On the other hand, even the lowest ranking, Roman Catholic priest occupies in his village a somewhat abstract position which isolates him from the community-life of his environment. To be sure, the priesthood of the Russian Church is only an approximation of the Protestant clergy, which as a matter of principle is entirely enmeshed in civil life. The Russian priesthood is almost completely endogenous: priests of the Greek Orthodox Church seldom marry anyone other than the daughters of priests. Marriage is often so significant for the other sociological ties of the husband, that associations are actually differentiated on the basis of whether or not the marriage of their members are of consequence for these associations.

In the Middle Ages and even later the marriage of a journeyman was regarded with displeasure by his fellows. Indeed, in several associations of journeymen difficulties were placed in the way of a married journeyman who desired membership. For marriage restricted the migration of journeymen, which was essential not only for the unity and inner solidarity of the journeymen's estate, but also for the ready mobility of the group in accordance with shifting opportunities for work. The marriage of a journeyman ran counter also to the homogeneity of interest, the independence of the group in relation to their masters, and the social cohesion of the estate. Because of the peculiar structure of marriage and the family, the overlapping of group-affiliations inevitably resulted in this case in the rather extensive withdrawal of the individual from all social ties.

It is apparent that, for similar reasons, celibacy was considered appropriate for the soldier wherever a clearly differentiated military estate [officer corps] existed. However, in

the Macedonian regiments of the Ptolemies and afterwards in the era of the Roman Emperors, soldiers were permitted to marry or to have concubines. [This distinction between officers and men is similar to the distinction between the higher and the lower Russian clergy.] The regiments were often replenished from among the offspring of these unions. Only the thoroughgoing fusion of the modern army with the structure of national life has completely abolished the rule of celibacy for the officers.

It is also plain that the same formal pattern of social relations may occur with reference to other conditions, even though this is not so striking and basic as that of marriage. The old scholastic universities refused to accept students [who were native residents of the town]. In the city of Bologna the rights of membership in the university were withdrawn from those students who acquired citizenship after a residence of more than ten years. In like manner, the Hanseatic League of German merchants in Flanders excluded every compatriot who had acquired Flemish citizenship.

As a rule an overlapping of group-affiliations cannot occur if the social groups involved are too far apart with regard to their purpose and in terms of the demands they make upon the individual. And a group which wants its members to become absorbed unconditionally in its activities must regard it as incompatible with this principle if an individual is differentiated from other members by virtue of his simultaneous affiliation with another group. Of course, the element of jealousy between groups enters in as well.

CROSS-PRESSURES ARISING FROM MULTIPLE GROUP-AFFILIATIONS: EXAMPLES FROM THE MIDDLE AGES

THE SOCIOLOGICAL DETERMINATION of the individual will be greater when the groups which influence him are juxtaposed

than if they are concentric. That is to say, human aggregates such as the nation, a common social position, an occupation, and specific niches within the latter, do not allot any special position to the person who participates in them, because participation in the smallest of these groups already implies participation in the larger groups. But groups which are interrelated in this way do not always control individuals in a unified way. The fact that these associations are related to each other in a concentric way may mean not that they are related organically but that they are in mechanical juxtaposition. Hence, these associations will affect the individual, as if each of them was independent of the other.

This is manifest in earlier systems of law, when a person guilty of a crime is punished twice: by the immediate group to which he belongs and by the wider one which includes the first. If in late medieval Frankfurt a member of a guild had not fulfilled his obligation to render military service, he was punished by the head of his guild, but also by the city council. In a similar way, if in a libel suit the injured party had obtained satisfaction from the guild, it would still seek justice in the regular courts. And conversely, in the older guild systems the guild reserved the right to punish an offender, even though the court had already done so. This two-in-one type of procedure made it clear to the person affected by it that the two groups which enveloped him concentrically in a certain sense were also "intersecting" one another in his person. For his affiliation with the immediate group did not by any means comprise all the obligations which his affiliation with the larger group entailed. This is seen in the example cited above, in which the fact that a person belongs to a special category within a general occupational classification means that all those rules apply to him which apply to this general classification.

An antagonistic relationship between the immediate and the broader group has a special significance for the situation

of the individual. This is shown in the following case.³ If a larger group "A" consists of the smaller groups "m" and "n," it may happen that "A" is identical only with "m" in its immediate but essential implications, while "n" is in this respect opposed to "m". This was the relation between the free "Burgenses" or communities of townspeople and the Episcopal officials. In the early Middle Ages both groups together often made up the main body of a town's citizens; they actually constituted the city in the broad sense. But in the narrow sense only the townspeople proper were "the city." The officials and vassals of the episcopacy thus had a double position. They were members of the citizenry, and yet their interests and rights made them a part of quite different groups. Therefore, they were a part of the "Burgenses," on the one hand, but they stood in contrast to them, on the other. Their very position as vassals of the Bishop which alienated them from the town made them in every single case members of this particular town. If the townspeople were divided, for example, into guilds, then each individual was uniformly a member of this immediate group as well as of the broader community of the town. The Episcopal officials of the Bishop, however, were a part of the town-community, on the one hand, but they were differentiated from it, on the other. This relationship was so contradictory that later on the vassals either entered the community of townspeople proper or withdrew from it altogether.

Such awkwardness and difficulties arise for the person as a result of his affiliation with groups which surround him concentrically. Yet, this is one of the first and most direct ways in which the individual, who has begun his social existence by being affiliated with one group only, comes to participate in a number of groups. The peculiar character of group-formation in the Middle Ages in contrast with the modern

3. There are of course countless cases in which there is a general conflict between the whole and the part; these are not considered here.

way has been stressed frequently. In the Middle Ages affiliation with a group absorbed the whole man. It served not only a momentary purpose, which was defined objectively. It was rather an association of all who had combined for the sake of that purpose while the association absorbed the whole life of each of them. If the urge to form associations persisted, then it was accompanied by having whole associations combined in confederations of a higher order. This form, which enables the single individual to participate in a number of groups without alienating him from his affiliation with his original locality, may appear simple today, but it was in fact a great social invention. This form could be serviceable as long as men had not invented purposive associations, which made it possible for persons to work together by impersonal means for impersonal ends, and thereby to leave the personality of the individual inviolate. The enrichment of the individual as a social being which was attainable under the Medieval type of group-formation, was to be sure, a limited one, while the enrichment made possible by purposive associations is not limited in this sense.

Still, the enrichment under the Medieval type was considerable, for what the individual obtained from his affiliation with the larger group was in no way contained in the affiliation with his immediate group. By way of contrast, the concept "tree" of which the oak is a part, does contain all the elements of the concept "plant," which comprises the concept "tree" though much else besides. To subsume the oak under the concept "plant" entails a meaning for the oak, which is not revealed by subsuming "oak" under the conceptual "tree," however much the "tree" includes the conceptual elements of "plant" logically. This meaning is given by relating the oak to everything that is "plant" without being "tree." Much would have been gained in the medieval pattern of group-affiliation, even if nothing else had occurred than what is suggested by this analogy. The concentric pattern

of group-affiliations is a systematic and often also an historical stage, which is prior to that situation in which the groups with which persons affiliate are juxtaposed and "intersect" in one and the same person.

INDIVIDUALISM AND MULTIPLE GROUP-AFFILIATION

THE MODERN PATTERN differs sharply from the concentric pattern of group-affiliations as far as a person's achievements are concerned. Today someone may belong, aside from his occupational position, to a scientific association, he may sit on a board of directors of a corporation and occupy an honorific position in the city government. Such a person will be more clearly determined sociologically, the less his participation in one group by itself enjoins upon him participation in another. He is determined sociologically in the sense that the groups "intersect" in his person by virtue of his affiliation with them. Whether or not the fact that a person who performs several functions reveals a characteristic combination of his talents, a special breadth of activity depends not only on his participation in several offices and institutions but naturally on the extent of their division of labor. In this way, the objective structure of a society provides a framework within which an individual's non-interchangeable and singular characteristics may develop and find expression, depending on the greater or lesser possibilities which that structure allows.

In England, it was long customary to staff a number of quite different administrative bodies with the same personnel. Already in the Middle Ages one and the same person could be a circuit judge and a justice in Ireland, a member of the Treasury and a Baron of the Exchequer, a member of the King's court of justice and a Justice in Banco. As the same group of persons formed so many different official boards, it is apparent that none of these persons were especially char-

acterized by the mere fact of their participation on these boards. The objective functions of each person could not be differentiated sufficiently under these circumstances. And, therefore, his performance of several functions could not be an essential rationale of his individuality, nor could a knowledge of these functions provide a sufficient clue in this respect.

The individual may add affiliations with new groups to the single affiliation which has hitherto influenced him in a pervasive and one-sided manner. The mere fact that he does so is sufficient, quite apart from the nature of the groups involved, to give him a stronger awareness of individuality in general, and at least to counteract the tendency of taking his initial group's affiliations for granted. For this reason, representatives of the groups with which an individual is affiliated, are already opposed to the mere formality of a new affiliation, even if the purpose of the latter does not involve any competition with the previous group affiliations.

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the frequent imperial prohibitions of alliances between German towns were probably designed to meet real dangers. But in the Frankish, and at first also in the German, empire it was much more a matter of abstract principle that the government and the Church were opposed to the guilds. This was a case of an association based on free choice [guilds], the principle of which permitted an unlimited increase of associations; such associations were necessarily rivals of the powers exercised by existing associations. The mere fact of multiple group-affiliations enabled the person to achieve for himself an individualized situation in which the groups had to be oriented towards the individual. In the earlier situation the individual was wholly absorbed by, and remained oriented toward, the group.

Opportunities for individualization proliferate into infinity also because the same person can occupy positions of different rank in the various groups to which he belongs. This is

already important with regard to familial relationships. The dissolution of the primitive Germanic class-organization was furthered greatly because consideration was given to the relatives of the wife as well as to all in-law relations. Thus one could belong to different kinship-groups at the same time. The rights and duties of each of these groups conflicted with those of every other so effectively that it has been said that only relatives existed but no kinship-associations. However, this result would not have come about, indeed the entire situation could not have arisen to this extent, if the individual had occupied the same position with regard to each line of relatives. But the individual occupied a central position in one group of relatives, while his position was peripheral in another; he had an authoritative position in the one group, but in the other his position made him the equal of many other relatives. In one situation the individual's economic interests would be involved, in another his involvement would be significant only in a personal sense. The structure of these connections excluded the possibility that a second individual would occupy exactly the same position within the same context.

Under these conditions of unilateral kinship the individual would have been born into a fixed position. And the accent of importance remained ever on the position which dominated the individual because kinship unilaterally determined that position. On the other hand, if the relations between kinship groups were multilateral, then it was the individual who brought about the contact of one line of relatives with another. Within the family such positions and their individual combinations could arise by themselves, as it were.

But each new group-formation produces immediately, and in a more deliberate way than the family, a certain inequality, a differentiation between the leaders and the led. If, as in the case of the humanists mentioned above, a common interest established a bond between persons of high and of

low status, then this made inoperative such differences as divided them otherwise. Yet, new differences between high and low arose within this community of scholars according to criteria that were germane to it but that were out of keeping with the criteria of high and low, which prevailed in the other groups with which the humanists were affiliated. In this manner the personality of each individual was determined in a more characteristic and many-sided way than would be the case otherwise.

However, the same result can also be achieved, if equality prevails within a newly formed group, while its members occupy and retain positions of greatly varied rank in those groups with which they have been affiliated hitherto. Such a case is a highly significant sociological type in the sense that both the individual who ranks low in his original group and another who ranks high in his group, are now equals in a social sense. Medieval knighthood worked in this way, for example. Under its rules, the ministerial vassals of a Princely Court were members of an association of peers to which the prince, and even the emperor, belonged. All members of this association were equals in matters relating to the knighthood. This gave the ministerial vassal a position which had nothing to do with his duties of office, and rights which did not stem from his lord. The differences of birth between nobility, freemen, and vassals were not thereby eliminated. But these differences were "intersected" by a new line of division which was established by the association of all those who were bound together as equals in accordance with the rights and customs of knighthood. To be sure this association did not establish a real community but one which was effective through a common ideal; but as such this community maintained *one* standard of judgment for all. Any person, although he was affiliated with groups in which he stood either high or low, was at the same time part of a group in which he was the "equal" of every other. This was

a combination of group-affiliation of a singular kind, which determined and enriched the vitality of the individual as a social being.

One and the same person may occupy positions of different rank in different groups. Since these positions are completely independent of one another, strange combinations of group-affiliations can arise. Thus, an intellectually and socially prominent man has to subordinate himself to a non-commissioned officer in countries with universal military training. Or take the beggar's guild in Paris which elects a "king," who was originally a beggar like all the others, and who, as far as I know, remains one, but who is given truly princely honors and privileges. This is perhaps the most remarkable and individualizing combination of low rank in one and high rank in another social position.

This overlapping may also take place within one and the same situation as soon as this includes a multiplicity of relationships—as for example in the case of the private tutor or even more so the earlier tutors of aristocratic youths. The tutor of princes is to be superior to his charge, he is to dominate and direct him—and yet he is, on the other hand, a servant, while his charge is the master. Another case: a corporal in Cromwell's army, who was well versed in the Bible, could deliver a moralizing sermon to his major, while he obeyed him without reservation in matters of military service. Finally, the content of these multiple relationships has decisive consequences for the individual the more they are a part of his personal life. There is, for example, the characteristic phenomenon of the aristocrat with liberal sentiments, of the man of the world who has distinctly religious tendencies, of the scholars, who seek their social contacts exclusively among men of affairs.

MULTIPLE GROUP-AFFILIATIONS WITHIN A SINGLE GROUP

A TYPICAL EXAMPLE of multiple group-affiliations within a single group is the competition among persons who show their solidarity in other respects. On the one hand the merchant joins other merchants in a group which has a great number of common interests: legislation on issues of economic policy, the social prestige of business, representation of business-interests, joint action as over against the general public in order to maintain certain prices, and many others. All of these concern the world of commerce as such and make it appear to others as a unified group. On the other hand, each merchant is in competition with many others. To enter this occupation creates for him at one and the same time association and isolation, equalization and particularization. He pursues his interests by means of the most bitter competition with those with whom he must often unite closely for the sake of common interests. This inner contrast is probably most pronounced in the area of commerce, but it is present in some way in all other areas as well, down to the ephemeral socializing of an evening party.

An infinite range of individualizing combinations is made possible by the fact that the individual belongs to a multiplicity of groups, in which the relationship between competition and socialization varies greatly. It is a trivial observation that the instinctive needs of man prompt him to act in these mutually conflicting ways: he feels and acts *with* others but also *against* others. A certain measure of the one and the other, and a certain proportion between them, is a purely formal necessity for man, which he meets in the most manifold ways. Often this occurs in a manner, which makes an individual's action understandable not on the basis of its objective meanings, but on the basis of the satisfaction which it affords to the formal drives mentioned above. Individuality is characterized, both in regard to its natural striving and its

historical development, by that proportion between socialization and competition which is decisive for it.

And the reverse tendency arises on the same basis: the individual's need for a clearer articulation and for a more unambiguous development of his personality, forces him to select certain groups. And from their combination he gains his maximum of individuality—the one group offering him opportunities for socialization, the other opportunities for competition. Thus, the members of a group in which keen competition prevails will gladly seek out such other groups as are lacking in competition as much as possible. As a result businessmen have a decided preference for social clubs. The estate-consciousness of the aristocrat, on the other hand, rather excludes competition within his own circle; hence, it makes supplementations of that sort [i.e., social clubs] largely superfluous. This suggests forms of socialization to the aristocrat which contain stronger competitive elements—for example, those clubs which are held together by a common interest in sports.

Finally, I shall mention here the frequent discrepancies which arise because an individual or a group are controlled by interests that are opposed to each other. This may permit individuals and groups to belong at the same time to parties which are opposed to each other. Individuals are likely to become affiliated with conflicting groups, if in a many-sided culture the political parties are intensely active. Under such conditions it usually happens that the political parties also represent the different viewpoints on those questions which have nothing at all to do with politics. Thus, a certain tendency in literature, art, religion, etc., is associated with one party, an opposite tendency with another. The dividing line which separates the parties is, thereby, extended throughout the entire range of human interests. Obviously, an individual who will not surrender completely to the dictates of the party, will join a group, say on the basis of his esthetic or

religious convictions, which is amalgamated with his political enemies. He will be affiliated with two groups which regard each other as opponents.

RELIGION AS A FACTOR IN MULTIPLE GROUP-AFFILIATIONS

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION is the most important and at the same time the most characteristic example [of individualization] ever since religion has been emancipated from racial, national, or local ties, a world-historical fact of immeasurable significance. Either the religious community embraces the civic community in terms of its other essential or comprehensive interests, or the religious community is entirely free of all solidarity with whatever is *not* religion. The nature of religion is completely expressed in both of these sociological types, though in a different language or at another level of development in each case.

It is understandable that the co-existence and the sharing of human interests is not possible with people who do not share one's faith. The deeply justified need for unity was satisfied, *a priori* so to speak, in all of ancient civilization, in the Semitic as well as the Graeco-Roman world. Religion was made an affair of the tribe or the state. With a few exceptions, the deity was identified with the interests of the political group, and the duties toward Him were identical with the all-embracing duties toward the latter.

Yet the power of religious motivation is equally apparent, where it is independent of all social ties originating from other motives, and where it is strong enough to bring together believers adhering to the same creed, in spite of all the differences between them which arise out of their other affiliations. This form of religious organization is obviously a highly individualistic one. The religious temper has lost the support which it had obtained from its integration with the entire complex of social ties. Now religious experience is

based upon the soul of the individual and it is his responsibility; on that basis the individual seeks to establish a bond with others who are similarly qualified in terms of their religious experience, but perhaps in no other respect. Christianity in its pure sense is an entirely individualistic religion, and this has made possible its diffusion throughout the manifold of national and local groups.⁴ The Christian was conscious of the fact that he took with him his church-affiliation into every community of his choosing, regardless of the psychological influences and the duties which such a community exerted and made incumbent upon him. This consciousness must have created a feeling of individual determination and self-confidence.

This sociological significance of religion reflects its dual relationship to life. On the one hand, religion stands in contrast to the whole substance of human life; it is the counterpart and the equivalent of life itself, aloof from its secular movements and interests. On the other hand, religion takes sides among the parties in the secular life, though it had elevated itself above the world of affairs as a matter of principle. As such religion is an element of secular life alongside all its other elements; it becomes involved in the multitude of changing relationships though at the same time it rejects this involvement. As a result a remarkable involution occurs. The disavowal of all social ties, which is evidence of a deep religiosity, allows the individual and his religious group to come in contact with any number of other groups with whose members they do not share any common interests. And the relationships again serve to distinguish and to determine the individuals concerned as well as the religious groups.

This pattern is repeated in many specific religious situa-

4. In this respect Christianity is surpassed only by Buddhism in its original form, although Buddhism is not a religion in the real sense of that word, since it teaches that salvation can be won only in an absolutely personal way, without any transcendental mediation.

tions and in the peculiar intertwining between the religious and the other interests of individuals. In the quarrels between France and Spain, the Huguenots placed themselves at one time at the service of the king, when the struggles turned against Catholic Spain and its friends in France. On another occasion, when they were oppressed by the king, they joined Spain directly. The cruel suppression of the Irish Catholics by England revealed a dual position of another type. One day the Protestants of England and Ireland would feel united against a common religious enemy without regard for their fellow countrymen; the next day the Protestants and Catholics of Ireland would be united against the suppressor of their common fatherland without consideration of religious differences. By way of contrast the European states intervened in Asia to defend Chinese or Turkish Christians; but this action seemed quite outrageous and incomprehensible to people like the Chinese, among whom the primitive identity of religious and political group-affiliation is still unbroken.

But where this unity has been broken as much as in Switzerland, the abstract nature of religion—which because of this abstract quality occupies a definite position in relation to all other interests—brings about immediately very characteristic patterns of group-affiliation. Because of the enormous differences between its cantons, Switzerland does not have a system of political parties such that politically like-minded people in the various cantons would divide themselves into major parties with regard to the national government. Only the *ultramontaine people of all cantons*, [i.e., Catholics who follow the Papal authority in all questions of secular and ecclesiastical policy] form a joint group in political affairs.

One can assume without question that this emancipation of religious from political ties has also consequences in the opposite direction, in that it will make possible political mergers which would have been frustrated by the continuing unity of both. The most striking example is perhaps the union

between Scotland and England in 1707. For both countries the advantages of becoming a *single* state were bound up with the continued existence of the two churches. Up to that time political and religious concepts had been closely interrelated in both countries. Only the separation of Church and State made the amalgamation of political interests between the two countries possible; otherwise the ecclesiastical interests would not have tolerated it. It was said of the two countries that they could preserve harmony only by agreeing to differ. Once this solution, together with its consequences for group-affiliation, had taken place, then it was no longer possible to abolish the freedom which had been gained. Hence the principle: *cuius regio eius religio*, is valid only if it does not need to be stated explicitly, but instead reflects the existence of a naive and undifferentiated condition in which Church and State are at one.

It is quite remarkable when the religious point of view overcomes all other bases of separation and amalgamates persons and interests despite their natural differentiation. Yet, this religious unity is thought of as quite parallel to those [other cases of organized solidarity] which arise merely on the basis of an objective differentiation. Thus in 1896 the Jewish workers of Manchester came together in an organization which was to include *all* categories of workers (mainly these were tailors, shoemakers, and bakers) and which intended to make common cause with the other trade unions in regard to the interests of labor. But the other trade unions were organized in accordance with the *objective* differences between types of work. This principle of organization was so important that the Trade Unions could not be induced to amalgamate with the International, because the latter was constituted without regard for the type of work in which its members were engaged. Although the case of the Jewish workers seems to go back to the undifferentiated community of interests in the religious as well as the social and economic

sense, it reveals nevertheless the separation of these interests, at least on principle. The voluntary coordination of the Jewish workers with trade-unions organized on a purely objective basis [namely the division of labor] reveals that their organization was based on a practical purpose [rather than in accordance with religious belief].

The situation is manifestly different in the case of the Catholic trade unions of Germany, because of their great scope, because of the political significance of Catholicism in Germany, and because their religion does not place the Catholic workers in as conspicuous a position as the Jewish workers. (For example, in Germany the religious differentiation has produced special workers' associations within the general Catholic organizations. In Aachen a number of years ago, weavers, spinners, finishers, needlemakers, metal workers and construction workers were organized in this way.) Catholic organizations are large enough to allow for this division without involving an overlapping of group-affiliations such that each of these special associations would join with non-Catholic workers in the same trade. Still, this latter development has already occurred on occasion and that inner division is apparently the first step in this direction.

PRIESTHOOD AS A SPECIAL TYPE OF GROUP-FORMATION

FINALLY there arise overlapping group-affiliations on a higher level, in that religious forces become sublimated in the priesthood. The relationship between believers and priests involves representation and leadership, control and cooperation, veneration and the provision of material sustenance. To be sure, the sociological form of this relationship varies in some respects with each religion. But the relations between believers and priests have so much in common that one can, with reservations, speak of a formally similar position of the priest within groups, however much these differ in all other

respects.⁵ Out of this there arises above all a solidarity of interests, a mutual understanding, a cohesiveness among the priests, which under certain conditions can even drown out the substantive antagonism between Evangelical ministers and Catholic priests.

A single priest or a kindred group of priests belong both to a national, a denominational, and in some sense a party-like association, and to that association of all clergies which arises partly from a sociological and partly from an ethical-metaphysical kinship. This overlapping of group-affiliations gives to the individual priest a peculiarly determined character which sets him apart from other members of the one group as well as of the other. [Simmel refers here to the contrast between the priest and the believers as a group within one church, and to the contrast between the priests of all churches and all believers.]

INDIVIDUALISM AND COLLECTIVISM IN MODERN SOCIETY

THE DEVELOPMENT of the public mind shows itself by the fact that a sufficient number of groups is present which have form and organization. Their number is sufficient in the sense that they give an individual of many gifts the opportunity to pursue each of his interests in association with others. Such multiplicity of groups implies that the ideals of collectivism and of individualism are approximated to the same extent. On the one hand the individual finds a community for each of his inclinations and strivings which makes it easier to satisfy them. This community provides an organizational form for his activities, and it offers in this way all the advantages of group-membership as well as of organizational experience. On the other hand, the specific qualities of the individual are preserved through the combination of

⁵. In the same way we may speak of the formally similar position of the nobleman, the warrior, the merchant.

groups which can be a different combination in each case.

Thus one can say that society arises from the individual and that the individual arises out of association. An advanced culture broadens more and more the social groups to which we belong with our whole personality; but at the same time the individual is made to rely on his own resources to a greater extent and he is deprived of many supports and advantages associated with the tightly-knit, primary group. Thus, the creation of groups and associations in which any number of people can come together on the basis of their interest in a common purpose, compensates for that isolation of the personality which develops out of breaking away from the narrow confines of earlier circumstances.

GROUP-FORMATION AND THE "CODE OF HONOR"

THE EXTENT to which associations [based on interest] also form a tightly-knit group may be gauged on the basis of whether and to what extent such a group has developed a special code of "honor." Such a code would imply that every member of the group would feel that his honor was diminished whenever any member suffered an insult or a deprivation of his honor. In this sense the association possesses a collective sense of honor, whose changes are reflected in the sense of honor of each member. Groups make certain that the conduct of their members will be appropriate through the establishment of a specific concept of honor, such as family-honor, the honor of an officer, the reputation of a businessman for honest dealing. They do so especially with regard to those specific differences which mark them off from the broadest social group [the state]. It should be remembered that the public laws which regulate the conduct of individuals towards the state under the threat of coercion contain no stipulation concerning their conduct within the group. A single person may be affiliated with a number of

particular groups, which create specific codes of honor. The broader group [such as the state] develops a concept of honor which is valid for the members of special groups. But this broad concept is more abstract, more general than, and in this sense different from, the particularistic concepts of honor of the special groups.

Hence, criteria of honor in all their intricacies become the symbols of social groups. Status-honor even exists in the negative sense. This status-dishonor, so to speak, allows for a certain latitude of behavior, which is regarded as human enough or even as honorable in the entire society. This negative code permits deviation from, just as the positive code of honor adds demands [to, what is already generally expected]. Thus, many categories of tradesmen and especially speculators but also the Penny-a-Liner [hackwriter] and the Demi-Monde were permitted to do certain things which would not be regarded generally as honorable, but in which they were protected by a good conscience derived from an established code of conduct. However, alongside this conventional form of dishonorable conduct, the individual can be quite honorable in the established sense of the word in his general human relationships, just as the adherence to a specific code of honor does not prevent the individual from behaving on the side in a way that would be considered quite dishonorable by generally accepted criteria. Thus, different aspects of the individual can be subsumed under different codes of honor which reflect the different groups to which the person belongs simultaneously.

As a result, the same demand can receive two emphases which are quite different. It may be the maxim of an individual not to suffer insults in silence, but he will act on this maxim in private life one way, and in quite a different manner as a reserve officer or as an incumbent of an official position. Respect for women as a means to maintain one's own mascu-

line honor will have its characteristic emphasis in a pastor's family and a different one in a group of young lieutenants. Hence, a member of the latter group who comes from a pastor's family, can perceive clearly his membership in both groups through his experience of the conflict between these two concepts of honor.

Generally, this elaboration of special codes of honor for different status-groups reveals one of the most important, formal-sociological developments. It manifests itself a thousandfold in a wholly rudimentary manner, in mere nuances of feeling and acting, and often disguised by motives of a more personal or more materialistic kind. The narrowly circumscribed and strict custom of earlier conditions was one in which the social group as a whole, i.e., its central governing body, regulated the conduct of the individual in the most varied ways. Since then, the group has limited its regulations more and more to the basic interests of the general public. By the same token the individual has gained more and more spheres of freedom for himself. These spheres of freedom are then preempted by new group-formations, but in such a way that the individual determines on the basis of his interests to which group he wants to belong.

As a consequence the feeling of honor suffices, in lieu of external methods of coercion, to make the individual conform to those norms which are required for the stability of the group. Moreover, this process does not originate solely from the coercive power of government. Group-sanctions originally control the several aspects of an individual's interests, and these interests are essentially unrelated to the purposes of the sanctions. But in the end the individual is left to pursue his interests by joining with others in special associations, in which participation is a matter of personal choice. Such a development occurs also in the family, in the guild, in the religious community, etc. The problem of social-

ization can be solved in these special associations in a much more adequate way than in the earlier, more confining groups which neglected the concerns of the individual.

PATTERNS OF FREEDOM AND OBLIGATION

NO MATTER how extensive, severe and all pervasive the control of group-sanctions over the individual may be, there will remain some relationships in his life which will escape it. These relationships will be left in a careless and aimless way to the pure arbitrariness of the individual, the more so, in fact, the more the remaining relationships are subject to coercion. Accordingly, the Greek citizen, but still more the citizen of ancient Rome, had to submit unconditionally to the norms and purposes of his national community in all matters connected in any way with politics. But as the master of his home he exercised an autocratic rule which was just as unconditional. Similarly, the close social cohesion which we observe in small primitive tribes, permits its individual members a complete freedom to behave in any way they please toward persons not belonging to the tribe. Again, tyranny is correlated with, and indeed supports, the most perfect freedom and an utter abandon of all restraint in those personal relations which have no importance to its own purposes. This is an inexpedient distribution of collective coercion and individual arbitrariness.

It is more appropriate and just, if objective facts and personal interests determine the form and the purpose of voluntary associations. In that case the activities which were previously uncontrolled and wholly determined by the individual will find a collectivist form. For the individual seeks to establish social contacts with regard to his several interests to the extent that he is liberated [from coercive sanctions]. And he will limit his arbitrariness voluntarily, since it is but a compensatory substitute for being wholly determined by collective sanctions. Thus we find an especially strong devel-

opment of club life⁶ in countries with great political freedom. And we find a lively development of sects in those religious communities which are without an ecclesiastic power of strong hierarchical tendencies. In short, freedom and obligation are more evenly distributed, if the process of socialization allows for the possibility that homogeneous individuals come together from heterogeneous groups rather than compel the heterogeneous components of the individual to be [accommodated to the uniform demands] of one group.

MECHANICAL AND FUNCTIONAL CRITERIA AS PRINCIPLES OF ORGANIZATION IN ADMINISTRATION, MEDICINE, TRADE, AND CONSUMERS' COOPERATIVES

ONE OF the most important forms of a progressive development may be characterized as follows. The differentiation and division of labor is at first of a quantitative nature so to speak. Spheres of activity are divided in such a fashion that an individual, or a group, may be engaged in different activities, and each sphere of activity comprises a number of qualitatively different relations. However, later on these differences are distinguished and segregated, and like elements from all of the groups are now integrated in one qualitatively uniform activity.

In the development of public administration we frequently

6. Of course, this club life may also develop on a different political basis, for instance, where decidedly individualistic tendencies clash with an extensive governmental tutelage. In this case, the emphasis is placed especially on the individualistic element in the formation of clubs, on the amount of freedom which is embodied in such clubs as over against governmental regulation. This provides the individual with organizational support against the state. Here, as in the case mentioned in the text, the consciousness of freedom and of obligation join on a sociological basis. But in the example in the text, the consciousness of freedom pertains to the political grouping, the consciousness of obligation to the club. Here it is the other way around. The same holds true for the second example in the text.

find that at first the center of government lacks all differentiation. Only later on, a series of functions are distinguished, such that each is controlled either by a single person or a single administrative authority. However, these administrative functions are at first limited to a restricted local area. For example, the French National Council sends an "Intendant" into a province in order to exercise there all of the different functions which are otherwise exercised by the Council itself in the whole country. This division of labor is based on local areas according to the amount of work involved.

The later development of a division of functions differs from this geographic division, as, for instance, in the case of various ministries which develop out of the National Council. The activity of each of these ministries extends over the entire country, but only with regard to one function which is qualitatively distinct from others. The system of promotion of civil services employees which applies throughout the country, corresponds to this process. This nation-wide system has two advantageous features as contrasted with promotions limited to one geographic area. It makes it possible for an official to be transferred with relative ease to a position which is most suitable for him in terms of his ability and merits. And the system promotes more intimate reciprocal relations among the sections of the country with regard to each function of government. Therefore, only transfers of higher civil servants answer the purpose, while as a rule subordinate officials remain in the same sphere of activity all their lives. Hence, personal talent is of greater importance in the higher civil servant than in the routine activity of the subordinate. And this personal talent is both cause and effect of the changing interaction between his official functions and the trends and interests of many different localities. The degree of freedom evident in this network of overlapping group-affiliations [of the higher civil servant in France] is

greater than it would be in an assignment fixed to a specific locality. This greater degree of freedom has its analogue in the life of the individual as we have seen.

Now we must consider a phenomenon which seems to contradict the differentiation just shown in the illustration from France. But in reality this does represent the same phenomenon on a higher level. During the Directory⁷ each government department was controlled almost independently, the Legal Branch by Rewbell, the Police by Barras, the War Department by Carnot, etc. However, a completely different division of functions existed for the appointment of civil servants in the provinces. Here, Rewbell administered the East, Barras the South, Carnot the North, etc. Hence, the differentiation of administrative functions was preserved in accordance with objective criteria, which cut across all local differences. However, in appointing civil servants, technical competence was actually only a secondary requirement. More important was knowledge of the local area and personnel. In this case, the procedure of a regional division of functions, which cut across all varieties of technical competence, was the suitable one.

A contrasting illustration is shown by the remarkable lack of differentiation of the Consejos, advisory ministries, which were formed under Philipp II of Spain. According to an Italian report, there were the following ministries: dell'Indie, di Castiglia, d'Aragona, d'inquisizione, di camera, dell'ordini, di guerra, di hazzienda, di giustizia, d'Italia, di stato. Since all of these seem to have been co-ordinated, the activities of the technical ministers and those of the regional ministers must have been in incessant collision. Here we have a division of functions as such, so to speak, based on no principle at all, because the regional division and the division by subject matter are made equally effective *without* differentiation.

⁷ The period from 1795 to 1799 when five men constituted the executive of the French government. (R.B.)

In ancient Egypt specialization in medicine required a different training for those physicians treating the arm from those treating the leg. This, then, was also a "local" differentiation in terms of parts of the body. Unlike this practice, modern medicine entrusts the same pathological conditions, no matter on what part of the body they occur, to the same specialist, so that again functional identity prevails in what is treated together, rather than accidental external criteria. This criterion of functional identity is reversed—though in a different aspect—in the case of those specialists who treat all ailments rather than special ailments only, but who do so only by one special method or remedy. Practitioners, for example, who cure everything exclusively with water. Here we notice the same one-sidedness as in the case of the Egyptian physicians, only that—thanks to modern developments—it is of a functional rather than "local" character.

This proves that even when things are grouped together according to functional criteria, there still remains the difference between a method which uses external mechanical criteria and one which employs criteria that are appropriate in objective terms. For example, modern methods of distribution are illustrated by stores carrying different items for the production of complicated objects—as for instance, all supplies for railroads, all articles for restaurateurs, for dentists, shoemakers, warehouses for all household and kitchen furnishings, etc. These new methods of distribution supersede older methods which differentiated between items and grouped them together according to mechanical criteria. The consistent viewpoint according to which items obtained from the most varied sources of production are here assembled, consists in their relation to a common purpose which all of them serve, *terminus ad quem*. In most other cases, the division of labor is organized in terms of the uniformity in the method of production, *terminus a quo*. Stores which assemble commodities with regard to one common purpose, presuppose

others that do so with regard to their common source of production. The first type represents an accentuated form of the division of labor by bringing together parts from entirely heterogeneous branches of production, each of which operates on the basis of a detailed division of labor. To bring together diverse parts in accordance with one viewpoint means, figuratively speaking, that a new key brings various parts in harmony with each other.

Finally, the consumer's cooperatives represent another, entirely different case in which group-formation depends on objective considerations which are combined with others that are logically incompatible with them. This holds true especially for those cooperatives established for definite occupational categories: for laborers, army-officers, civil servants. The goods carried in cooperatives for officers and civil servants are—with a few exceptions—the same. It is a pure formality, independent of all substantive considerations, which keeps the cooperatives for these two groups separated. Yet, the practical purpose involved is this: the department store for German civil servants is a joint stock company which has the same relations with its customers as any privately owned store. The more people buy there, the better this serves its purpose; restriction to a special group of customers would not be a requirement necessary for its successful operation. Yet, if it had been run simply as a cooperative store serving everybody, or as an ordinary store selling reliably at standard prices, it certainly would have lagged far behind the success which was actually attained. It was in fact this restriction of customers to a particular group which obviated difficulties and uncertainties usually incurred in ordinary business, though the restriction was entirely unnecessary on any substantive grounds. This restriction has a strong appeal to all those included in the group of customers, if for no other reason than that it excludes all others. All these facts—except perhaps this last one—have in themselves no apparent socio-

logical significance. They serve here only as analogies of sociological combinations and developments and as such they illustrate that the latter conform to formal and normative patterns, which prevail generally far beyond the field of sociology.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CONCEPTS IN THE FORMATION OF GROUPS

THE UNITY OF OBJECTS in accordance with external, mechanical criteria, the differentiation of objects, the synthesis of elements on rational and substantive grounds, the construction of new configurations from a higher and more comprehensive point of view—all these are typical forms of the human intellect. Sociological patterns are revealed in social life in an unlimited number of ways, but these patterns themselves are emanations of more general and deeply seated psychological functions. Throughout, form and content are but relative concepts. They are categories of knowledge to master the phenomena, and to organize them intellectually, so that the same thing which in any one relation, as though looked at from above, appears as form, must be labelled "content" in another relation, as though looked at from below.

The solidarity of wage labor exemplifies a group-formation based on a pervasive social awareness. This social consciousness is especially interesting because it presupposes a high degree of abstraction over and above the particularities of individuals and of groups. No matter what the job of the individual worker may be, whether he makes cannons or toys, the very fact that he is working for wages makes him join the group of those who are paid in the same way. The workers' identical relation to capital constitutes the decisive factor, i.e. wage labor is in a similar condition in the most diversified activities and all those are organized who find themselves in this condition.

There is immense significance in the psychological differ-

entiation, by which the collective concept "laborer" evolved from such concepts as weavers, mechanics, miners, etc. This was already recognized by the English Conservatives at the beginning of the nineteenth century. By means of the Corresponding Societies Act, they succeeded in prohibiting all written communication among workers' associations as well as among all societies whose membership was composed of people from different trades. Evidently, the Conservatives were well aware that in this way a new social stratum would be created and that unpredictable complications would arise from the relations between this new stratum and the older ones. This new social stratum would be established, 1. if the general pattern of labor-relations was once severed from its fusion with each special trade; 2. if the association of a number of trades would emphasize those interests common to all workers and thereby paralyze the divisive effects of the differences existing between them.

After the various trades have developed out of the growing division of labor, more abstract considerations now cut across the differences between the trades and establish a new social group on the basis of what the trades have in common. Here, logical and socio-historical processes act and react on one another. To achieve this result, industry had to develop to such an extent, that hundreds or thousands of workers were subject to identical working conditions and that the interdependence of the different trades would grow along with the increasing division of labor. A money-economy had to become all-pervasive so that the value of the individual's performance would be reduced entirely to its monetary equivalent. Finally, demands for a high standard of living had to increase out of proportion to the level of wages. All these developments are the conditions which give a decisive significance to the role of labor in society.

These social forces and relationships come to a focus in the general concept of the "wage laborer," and the "wage

laborer" is in turn a source of influences, which is based on the fact that workers have joined associations according to logical or formal criteria of like interests. As was mentioned above, the International Workingmen's Association had formed its sections at first without regard for the differences between trades. Later on this was changed and the sections were formed on the basis of the trade unions. Yet, this change was merely a formal organizational device which was believed to be more conducive to the general interest of workers. The guiding consideration of this policy was still the idea of "workers as such." This idea obliterated conceptually all the different types of labor, and this merely logical notion has assumed juridical significance. Safety measures, accident-insurance and their attendant rights have created a juridical concept of the worker and have given it substantive meaning, so that the mere fact that someone is a worker, has by itself certain legal consequences.

Moreover, there were purely factual consequences in addition to the logical, ethical, juridical implications of the fact that workers were regarded as such irrespective of all the differences between them. Only this made a "general strike" possible, since such a strike would not serve the purpose of a single trade, but would be called in order to force through a recognition of political rights for labor as a whole, as did, for example, the strike of the Chartists in 1842, or the Belgian strike of 1893. It is interesting to observe how this concept, once it had become a general idea, retained this general character and had the same consequences, even in smaller aggregations.

In France, there has been a law concerning professional and trade associations since 1884 according to which twenty or more persons of the *same* or related occupations may constitute themselves as a syndicate without a license from the government. Soon after, a syndicate of "railroad workers" was founded, whose members did not in fact pursue the same

occupation. The common factor among all these smiths and porters, switchmen and saddlers, conductors and mechanics was exclusively that they were all workers in the employ of the railroad. The purpose of forming such a syndicate was, of course, that in this way the individual occupation could put pressure on the management, for which the isolated strength of each group would not have sufficed. The general concept of the "worker" has been given a narrower meaning: the general concept of the "railroad worker." In this case a logical procedure has been used to eliminate all the specialized types of railroad-work and the general concept of the "railroad worker" has become by the same token an immediately practical matter.

The form in which the broader concept of "the worker" brings about the same result usually involves a coalition of coalitions. In this case, the initial association has already eliminated all personal elements and the abstract concept of the carpenter or the shoemaker, of the glassblower or the weaver prevails. But once a coalition of such associations takes place, then the abstract concept of "the worker" stands out because all substantive differences between different types of work are ruled out as a matter of principle. The mason as such does not care, of course, whether the calico printer, who belongs to the same trade union federation, gets higher or lower hourly wages. Hence, the purpose of the federation is to obtain more favorable working conditions not for the individual worker but for labor as a whole.

The Solidarity of Employers. Similar relations occur when employers in different types of business form a coalition. The employer in one type of business is essentially indifferent towards the employer-employee relations in another. The aim of the coalition is only to strengthen the position of employers as a whole as opposed to labor as a whole. The general concept of "the entrepreneur" must arise as a correlate to that of labor. But this logical simultaneity does not have an

immediate psychological and practical equivalent. This is probably due to three reasons: 1. the smaller number of employers as compared to the number of workers; the larger the number of a given kind are involved, the more readily a general concept is formed; 2. the competition of employers among each other, which does not exist among the workers; and 3. the identification of entrepreneurial activity in each case with its own field of endeavor, an identification which has been mitigated only in recent times in the course of capitalist development.

Modern industrial technique renders the worker much more indifferent to his specific type of work than the employer to his factory. That is the reason why for the worker the connection with all his fellow workers is more obvious, regardless of specialization, than is true in the parallel case of the employer and his connection with his fellow employers. In the end, the solidarity of labor had nevertheless the effect of creating in many respects a solidarity of employers and of giving rise thereby to a general concept of "the entrepreneur."

Coalitions of employers were formed not only in the same type of business; federations were also formed on the basis of employer-associations in different types of business. Already in 1892 an association of employers was formed in the United States in view of the strikes of workers which were getting out of hand. This association of employers was designed to oppose labor with party-like solidarity and resistance. At an earlier time, there had existed an essential solidarity between employer and employee, despite many disputes between them. This solidarity had been based on the identification of both with the productive activity itself. But the general concepts of "the worker" and "the entrepreneur" have cut across each particular pattern of employer-employee relations. Thereby, general concepts have gained preponderance over the solidarity between employer and employee which had formerly existed. In lieu of this solidarity we now

have the relation of two general, abstract concepts, and the conflict between them seems logically predetermined. The individual worker and the individual employer represent merely accidental examples of the general concepts, and the substantive ties between them, which were based on their common interest in the work, are receding.

The Solidarity of the Mercantile Class. Sociologically the genesis of the mercantile class is related to that of the laboring class. Based partly on concrete and partly on abstract considerations, the mercantile class is a combination of persons, each of whom is only a merchant in general no matter what he sells. However, in this case it is relatively easy to detach the general from the specific, because the function of the individual salesman is such that the form of his activity is largely independent from its substance. The difference between the activity of the worker and of the salesman may be stated as follows. The activity of the worker depends entirely on what he does; hence it is difficult to separate the concept of his activity from the nature of his work. The activity of the salesman, on the other hand, is relatively independent of the items with which he deals. Especially in primitive conditions a great variety and an unpredictable change of objects may all be involved in the same functions of purchasing, peddling and finding buyers. Originally there is reference to "the merchant" as such. To this day, we frequently find store-signs in small German towns with the inscription "Merchandise" without further indication of the kind of goods sold in the store.

These functional characteristics of the individual merchant are again the characteristics of the great number of businessmen in a developed economy. The variety of commodities is divided among the special branches of commerce. This allows the common element in all commercial dealings to become the logical tie of the mercantile class, since these dealings are not intimately tied up with each type of business in

any case. This community of interest is embodied in a concept [the mercantile class] which cuts across all the differences between types of business. And the barriers between businessmen which had existed apart from the differences of goods in which they traded were also broken down by the concept of the mercantile class.

Until the beginning of our modern era the individual foreign "nations" possessed specific privileges in the important commercial centers. These privileges demarcated them from one another, and from the residents as well, and caused each to establish itself as a special group. In the sixteenth century, however, when free trade was granted in Antwerp and Lyon, the merchants came together in large numbers unfettered by the conflicts and the segregation arising from these privileges. Coincident with this unprecedented concentration of commercial traffic, a general "mercantile class" was formed from among the individuals of the former "nations." Now the rights and usages were similar for all members of the mercantile class; they were no longer affected by differences between types of business or by differences arising from individual and national peculiarities. Even now one can observe that the rules governing commercial transactions become more clearly separated from the stipulations required for any one type of transaction, as the subdivisions of a given branch of production increase in number. On the other hand, in places essentially devoted to one branch of industry, we find that the concept "industrialist" is still identified implicitly with the local specialty of production, as in the case of the iron-magnate, the clothing or the toy-manufacturer. In one-industry towns the customary practices of other fields of business and of industrial transactions in general will be borrowed from that branch of production of which people are most conscious.

In this case, too, experience is in keeping throughout with the psychology of logical reasoning: if there was only one

species of trees, the concept "tree" would never have been created. In the same way, it is the highly discriminating perception of catholic training and activities who tends to have cosmopolitan reactions and convictions; one-sided people perceive what is human only in terms of their own limited horizon, since they are lacking in empathy for people different from themselves and are unable to experience vicariously what is common to all men. As has been mentioned, the practical consequences of the formation of higher generalities [concepts, associations, etc.] need not always occur in chronological order; frequently these generalities may, in turn, provide the stimulus, which helps to create a consciousness of social solidarity. Thus, the solidarity of craftsmen is promoted, for example, by the system of apprenticeship. The wages and the quality of labor may be reduced by an excessive employment of apprentices. But remedial action against this abuse in one craft would have the effect that the apprentices would be pushed out of one trade only to over-crowd another. This proves that only united action can help. And united action is possible only when there is a variety of crafts at the same time that a consciousness of the unity of all the craft-trades arises, which transcends the specific differences between them.

The Solidarity of Women. Finally I mention a fourth example⁸ in addition to those of labor, the employers and the mercantile class. This example illustrates the segregation of a more or less abstract group, whose general conceptual elements had been associated closely with the separate affiliations of each group-member. Because of this conceptual segregation these members constitute a new social group. But they now stand at the "crossroads" between this new affiliation and the old ties, which remain from the time when each

8. Simmel actually speaks of the *third* example. But his treatment differentiates between employers of labor and merchants, in addition to his discussion of labor. Therefore I call the following discussion of women a "fourth example." (R.B.)

member was confined to a single group. I am referring to the social development of the concept "woman" in recent times. This development enables us to observe a number of complex formal patterns, not easily observed otherwise.

Up to now the sociological position of the individual woman had certain peculiar elements. The most general of her qualities, the fact that she was a woman and as such served the functions proper to her sex, caused her to be classified with all other women under one general concept. It was exactly this circumstance which removed her from the processes of group-formation in their strict sense, as well as from all actual solidarity with other women. Because of her peculiar functions she was relegated to activities within the limits of her home, confined to devote herself to a single individual, and prevented from transcending the group-relations established by marriage, family, social life, and perhaps charity and religion. The parallelism in the way of life and the activities of women is of such a nature as to effectively prevent the development of associations on the basis of this equality. This is the case, because each woman is so totally preoccupied in her own sphere that another, equally situated woman is by the same token totally excluded. In this way, her general qualification as a woman is from the outset the fundamental reason why she will become an integral part of her home and its range of interests. This is in utmost sociological contrast to the salesman, for example, whose activity is almost automatically divided into general form and special contents, as we have seen above. In very primitive ethnological conditions women appear to be less dissociated and act on occasion as a unified party in opposition to the men. In these cases the woman probably has not yet become absorbed so completely by domestic interests as she has in the more highly developed epochs. However tyrannical the domination of the man may be, these simpler and less differentiated conditions of family and home do not lead her as far away from the general femi-

nine interests, shared by all women, as does the cultured home which absorbs all her energies in this one particular network of obligations.

In our time it is sociologically very characteristic that this network of obligations has become less stringent and the problem of the emancipation of women has arisen. This problem has become a common concern of women as a group which has led to all sorts of actions, changes of conditions, and to the formation of groups. Isolation of women from one another, caused by the integration of each into an entirely individual sphere, was based upon the complete differentiation of women from men. As a result of our culture, man appears on the whole to be the higher type in terms of the training of intellect and the development of activity, in terms of self-assertion and the ability to relate to the environment. Even apart from questions of ranking, the two sexes appear to be so essentially different, that they can only be destined to complement one another. The meaning of feminine existence lies exclusively in what the man cannot be or do, or does not want to be or do. Consequently, this meaning of the life of women does not refer to a relation on equal, but on unequal terms, and it is in this relation that women are almost completely absorbed.

In recent years, women have placed themselves in direct opposition to men in aiming at equalization in all these respects, and occasionally they have succeeded, in such matters as personal position and economic independence, intellectual attainment and consciousness of self, in their freedom in society, and in their role in public life. A differentiation from men along party-lines, which emphasizes the solidarity of interests among women becomes noticeable as soon as their basic dissimilarity as over against men decreases with regard to their ways of life, their interest-orientation, and in terms of the law. These party-alignments [of women against men] are both cause and consequence of this development.

Very often it is in those comic figures of the emancipation, in those women whose ambition it is to be entirely masculine in their personality and their appearance, that we find the most passionate antagonism against men. This pattern is easily understood. The independence of women will develop to the same extent that their position, their value, and their qualities become equal to those of the men, to whom women had stood either in a relation of inferiority or, at any rate, of dissimilarity and, consequently, in a relation of dependence. It is apparent that this partial freedom makes those qualities more conspicuous and effective which women have in common with men, and which had to be suppressed previously in a relationship which confined the woman to a subordinate and complementary role. This is, then, an extraordinarily clear-cut case of group-formation on a higher level, which is based on the fact that members are brought together by a general concept. Previously, each of the members had been confined to a single group; now the new group emancipates them from this confining relationship.

This analysis is not altered by the fact that the movement for the emancipation of women goes in one direction with regard to working-class, and in an opposite direction with regard to middle-class women. The development of industry has given economic and social freedom to the proletarian woman—no matter how scanty her individual freedom may be. The girl works in a factory at an age at which she would still require the protected atmosphere of the parental home. The married woman works away from home, and this forces her to neglect her duties toward home, husband, and children. In this case, the woman is in fact released from this all-embracing tie which had been tantamount to her total subordination to the man, or to a complete separation of activities between them. This sociological fact is indeed undesirable and pernicious. But that does not change it, nor is it changed by the desire of the proletarian woman to

have that "freedom" limited, and to have the possibility of again devoting herself to a greater extent to her family as a wife and mother. The same economic development has also affected women of the middle-class by separating from the home a great many domestic activities, both service and productive activities. Consequently, a very large number of women have been deprived of an adequate outlet for their energy, while they remain restricted in the main to the tasks of the home. These women long to have the freedom to engage in economic or other activities; in an emotional sense they feel just as removed from the special sphere of the home as the proletarian woman is externally. The difference in practical endeavor is a consequence of the difference between the social strata in which the separation from the home occurs. One class of women wants to return to the home, the other wants to escape it. These discrepancies are, nevertheless, compatible with interests which all women have in common: the rights of women with regard to marital laws, property laws, custody of children, etc., are of equal concern to both classes.

Moreover, the essential fact remains that the sociological isolation of the woman, the consequence of her absorption in the home, is being superseded in both classes by her separation from the home. This is the effect of modern industrialization. This separation may be too great or too little. But the independence which has been attained, or which is desired, accentuates the fact in either case that the modern woman is one who confronts the same practical situations and who has the same needs as other women. The general concept "woman" loses its purely abstract characteristics through the decline of the woman's complete preoccupation with the home. The general concept has become the guiding purpose of a cohesive group which is manifest in such details as charitable clubs organized exclusively by women and for women, leagues for the attainment of the rights of

women, associations of women-students, women's congresses, and the organization of women for the realization of political and social goals.

The traditional identification of the concept "woman" with the special role of women in the home is extraordinarily close; it is much closer than the corresponding identification of the concepts "worker" or "trader" with their special roles. Hence today no one can predict either direction or limitation of the movement for the emancipation of women. However, this much can be said, that already many women as individuals are aware of their position at the "crossroads" of many groups. On one hand, they feel closely tied to the individuals and the activities which fill their personal life. But they are conscious, on the other hand, of their solidarity with all women.

In these cases [of labor, of employers, and of women] the more comprehensive, superordinated group is differentiated from, and superseded, the more personal group-affiliations, which only contained certain potentialities for the formation of the superordinated group. But it may occur also that more coordinated groups are differentiated from one another. The guilds, for example, exercised complete supervision over the individual such that all of his activities would be regulated by the interests of the craft. If a boy had been accepted as an apprentice by a master, he became a member of the master's family. This meant that the individual's work in his trade became the center of his life in an unmistakable way. It included his political life and quite often his love life, too. Of the steps by which this amalgamation [between occupational activity and personal life] is dissolved, we need to deal only with the consequences of the division of labor.

OCCUPATIONAL ACTIVITY AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF PERSONAL INTERESTS

ALL OTHER THINGS being equal, it can be said of everyone whose life is determined by a group of central, all-absorbing interests, that the influence of these interests on the person's life will diminish to the extent that they become less comprehensive. The occupation of an individual will appear to encompass the whole non-vocational world of ideas, even though it already involves many elements and a variety of ideas, because the consciousness of the individual is confined to that occupation. There need not exist any real relation between the particular occupation and the world outside. But an occupation which is not specialized necessarily requires a relatively rapid adjustment of ideas. This [intensified activity of the imagination] calls for a great deal of psychic energy⁹ and the cultivation of other interests suffers accordingly. And as a consequence, these enfeebled interests are likely to become dependent—either by association or otherwise—upon the occupation which is of central concern to the individual.

This predominance of one interest at the expense of others may be compared to the emotional life of a man who is absorbed by a great passion. A man under its spell will establish some kind of association between his passion and even the most remote items which enter his awareness, though there is no substantive connection whatever between the two. And an equally absorbing, emotional identification will result in every occupation, which permits only a relatively small amount of mental energy to be invested in other aspects of life. This is one of the most important consequences of the division of labor. It is based upon the psychological fact, mentioned above, that within a given period of time—all other things being equal—the expenditure of mental energy increases with

9. To be sure, this is a symbolic expression that is indispensable in dealing with complicated psychological problems.

the frequency with which consciousness must shift from one idea or image to another. This shift of ideas is comparable in its consequences to the intensity of a passion. This is the reason—again all other things being equal—why an occupation which is not specialized rather than one which is, becomes the central concern in the life of a person and as such absorbs all his other interests. This is especially true of those historical periods in which the non-vocational life of the person lacked the colorful variety and changeable stimulations of modern times.¹⁰

It has to be added that one-sided occupations are usually of a rather mechanical nature. Therefore, they allow the individual to give more of his attention to non-vocational relations which have a value and an independence of their own.¹¹ This pursuit of separate but coordinate interests is furthered also by another consequence of the division of labor. This has to do with the formation of groups discussed above, i.e., groups which are based on an abstract concept and which are, thereby, separated from the particular group-affiliations of individuals. Associations between central and peripheral ideas and interests, although they resulted merely from psychological and historical causes, are usually considered essential and necessary. This view prevails until experience teaches us that there are persons who combine the same central ideas with different peripheral ones, or vice versa. If, then, the pursuit of an occupation had made all other interests in life dependent on it, it follows that this dependence had to decrease as the division of labor increased. For many similarities between the non-vocational interests of individuals were re-

10. Simmel refers throughout to all those interests and relations which lie outside an individual's principal occupation. I have translated this by the term "non-vocational," because the term "avocational" is too narrow in scope to render the author's meaning. Simmel does not refer to leisure-time activities, but to all activities outside the occupation. (R.B.)

11. This statement does not apply to those occupations which absorb all the strength and time of an individual and thereby lead to an atrophy of his

vealed despite the differences between their occupations.

This pattern of development is exceedingly significant both for the inner make-up and the external conditions of people. A certain element in our personality is combined with a second, representing the specific elaboration of a characteristic which this second element shares with many other elements. At first, this combination takes hold of the second element in both its specific and its general character. But then a process of separation occurs, whereby the first element somehow combines with a third, which shares the general features of the second, though in an entirely different, specific elaboration. This process may have two wholly opposite consequences, depending upon how the general and the specific components of the second element blend with one another. If this blending is very intimate, the original combination of the elements will be completely destroyed.

This will often be the case, for example, where the moral life is tied to religion. For the individual his religion is as a rule the only religion; another religion is out of the question for him. He bases his moral convictions upon the special precepts of his religion. Subsequently, experience may convince him that the moral persuasion of other individuals is as genuine and as valuable as his own, but that it has been derived from completely different religious ideas. Only in rare cases is he likely to conclude, that morality is connected only with the religious mood in general, i.e., with what is common to all religions. He is more likely to draw a more far-reaching conclusion, namely that morality has nothing to do with religion at all. On this basis he will arrive at the view that morality is autonomous and he will not associate morality with the residual concept of the generally religious, which would be equally justified on logical grounds.

The case is different, if a man derives his satisfaction of having done his duty only from a kind of altruism which he continually associates with a painful suppression of his ego

and with an ascetic self-torment. He sees that other people derive the same peace of mind and tranquillity of conscience from an altruism which is easily and freely exercised from a serene and unquestioning devotion to other. Yet, in this case he will not readily conclude that the inner peace and the feeling of being worthy, which he desires, have nothing to do with sacrifice for the other person. He is more likely to conclude only that altruism does not require sacrifices in an ascetic manner. He will feel that altruism may be practiced in a different way and still have the same success, if only its general characteristics are preserved.

The separation of vocational from all other interests in life, which was discussed previously in terms of the multiplicity of occupations and its effects, constitutes a phenomenon half-way between the two examples given above; but in the main it will tend toward the first example. The very fact that a person has a vocation will always be linked to his life in its entirety. This formal or general characteristic will always be the center with reference to which many other aspects of his life are oriented. Still, this is a formal function of the vocation. As such it is compatible with the increasing separation of all vocational interests from one's personal life in the proper sense of that word.

The growing differentiation of occupations has taught the individual that all interests in life which lie outside a specific vocation, but which are similar in orientation, may be combined with different occupations. Consequently, such interests must be independent from his specific occupation to a considerable degree. And the same independence of personal life from occupation results from the progressive differentiation of all non-vocational interests, which occurs in the course of cultural development. People in different occupations may have the same non-vocational interests; and people who have different non-vocational interests may pursue the

same occupation. This has the consequence of furthering the actual and the psychological separation of one from the other.

ASSOCIATION ON THE BASIS OF EXTERNAL OR OF RATIONAL CRITERIA

WE HAVE OBSERVED the progress from a differentiation and combination [of individuals or ideas] according to external, schematic criteria to a differentiation and combination in terms of their real solidarity or affinity. This has an important analogy in the field of biological theory. Formerly, it was believed possible to solve the main problems of knowledge by combining large groups of living organisms according to the external symptoms of their kinship. However, a deeper and more accurate insight was gained by discovering morphological and physiological similarities in living organisms which were very different in appearance and which had been classified accordingly as different species. In this way the laws of organic life were arrived at. These laws were manifest at points far removed from one another on the scale of organic life. And the recognition of these laws brought about a unification of that which previously had been assigned, in terms of external criteria, to species of an entirely independent genesis. Here again a higher stage of development is indicated by the unification of what is homogeneous in terms of substantive criteria, and by its separation from heterogeneous associations.

For a group to be formed according to rational rather than mechanical and external criteria, it need not always gather its members from different structures. Hence, it need not always involve the creation of new groups. It may happen that exactly the same group is transformed from an external to a rational basis. In a group which is already in existence, a higher, more organic concept displaces the cruder and more accidental concept. And now the higher concept serves the

basic function of holding the group together. This is approximately the pattern of development of the so-called *iurati* *communia* in Rouen and other cities of northern France during the 12th century. These *communia* were associations whose members were pledged to each other by oath. These associations were probably identical with the citizenry [*Bürgerschaft*] in all essentials, though not entirely and not on principle. For we learn from the constitutions of the *iurati communiae* that residents have committed a crime against the *iurati* and that some claim to belong to them under false pretenses. But further: the law stipulates that those who have lived in the city for a year and a day shall take an oath to the *communia*. And those who wish to leave the latter must also leave the city. This community became in the end so powerful in every respect that it absorbed the entire citizenry, though not always quite voluntarily. Here we have, at first, a purely local, rather accidental symbiosis of townspeople. However, this symbiotic relationship is gradually permeated by an association which is deliberate, which is based upon a principle and directed by a purpose. Eventually, the entire complex constitutes a new and a higher type of group-formation, although neither its members nor the fact of their solidarity have been modified in any essential respect. A group which is organized rationally and on the basis of a central idea does not cut across the more primitive, or, if one will, the more natural group. In a way, it is rather a more sacred, a more spiritual form by means of which those who are unwitting members of a group [the town] find themselves together as if for the first time [in the *iurati*].

This formal development is repeated in the relation between colonies and their homeland, though this example is worlds removed from the one cited previously. European colonization, since Columbus and Vasco da Gama, suffered from the fact that territories were obligated to pay tribute, although they were remote from the homeland, and hardly derived

any advantage from their affiliation with it. Meanwhile the homeland regarded the colonies merely as property. This form of association had no substantive justification and led to the secession of most of the colonies. The reason for secession was eliminated only when the idea of a Greater Britain arose, that the colony is but a province of the homeland with the same rights as any of the provinces geographically located inside the homeland. For, now the mode of association had changed from one in which the elements were welded together crudely and externally, to one in which they formed a bond of solidarity in a higher sense. Now the unity between homeland and colony was no longer rigid but elastic. The self-government of the colony was analogous to the relative independence of a limb on a body. Earlier examples showed a juxtaposition between group-formations based on schematic and on rational syntheses; this juxtaposition arose from new group-formations that cut across old affiliations. In this example [of homeland and colonies] the association based on a rational synthesis is not in juxtaposition to, but supersedes that based on a schematic synthesis.

EXTERNAL AND RATIONAL CRITERIA OF GROUP-FORMATION ACCORDING TO AN EVOLUTIONARY FRAME OF REFERENCE

THE SUCCESS of rational over superficial and schematic principles of group-formation accompanies the general progress of civilization. Yet this rational group-formation can be disrupted under certain circumstances, since it is not of an *a priori* character. The solidarity of the family may appear to be based on an external principle if it is compared to an association based on factual considerations. But the family will appear to be based on factual considerations in turn, if it is compared with groups based purely on numerical classifications, such as the companies of ten or a hundred in ancient Peru, in China, and in a large part of Europe in the early

Middle Ages. The social and political solidarity of the family and its collective liability for each of its members makes good sense; the rationality of this pattern becomes apparent, as the effects of heredity become known. But there is no national basis for always welding together in a group the same number of men treated as a unit—with regard to organization, compulsory military service, taxation, responsibility in case of a crime, etc. Nevertheless, where we are able to trace its development, such a group takes the place of the principle of kinship and represents a higher cultural level.

The justification for a group formed on the basis of numbers does not lie in the starting point, but in the goal, the *terminus ad quem*. As far as the starting point, the *terminus a quo*, is concerned, the family surpasses anything else as the basis for the differentiation and integration of groups. But groups formed on the basis of numbers are apparently better suited than the family for the achievement of a higher, national purpose, just because they are based on external characteristics, which can be more easily surveyed and organized. In ancient times the organization of armies was largely based on the clan or the family. In their Heroic Age the Greeks were fighting in phyle and phratry, the Germanic peoples in tribes and kinship-groups, and the ancient Scots in their clans, each of which could be identified by special insignia during the greater collective military expeditions. This organic structure was certainly useful in many respects: a great capacity of individual divisions to hold together, a stimulus to ambition, a certain relief of the supreme command from concern with the individual soldier and with the organization of each cadre. However, these advantages were obtained at a price. Frequent outbreaks of old prejudices and feuds between the clans would paralyze the unity of the whole movement. And among themselves the individual divisions were lacking in organic unity and cohesion to the same extent that each division possessed these qualities internally. Hence, the

whole army was put together from its units in an inorganic manner, after all, despite the fact, or again just because of the fact that these units were organic in themselves.

The mechanical organization of later armies disregards the question of primary contacts among the members of a division. But from the point of view of the whole, this is a much more organic form of internal organization. The term "organic" is interpreted here as the uniform and purposive regulation of every smallest part by one single idea and the reciprocal determination between each element and every other. This more modern type of organization directly incorporates the individual. Its subdivisions and groupings ruthlessly cut across all other types of organization, and in so doing they destroy organic in favor of mechanic associations. However, this mechanical form of organization is incomparably more efficient than other forms in promoting the purpose which had also constituted the value of the more organic types of organization. The concept of *technology*, which is essential only in modern times, becomes relevant at this point. Modern techniques have succeeded in reaching more intellectual ends with more mechanical means, compared with the way of life of primitive periods which was less roundabout, more uniform and more instinctive.

This development is evident also in the principles of parliamentary election and in the way in which the organization of electoral districts cuts across already existing social groups. The representation of classes—as for instance the General States under Philipp the Fair which were the representatives of clergy, nobility, cities—appears at first to be natural and organic. This may be contrasted with the purely external organization of the electorate, such as the General States of the Netherlands under Philipp II of Spain, which were the local representatives of the individual provinces. The territorial division of the electorate involves the inclusion of so many different, sometimes irreconcilable interests, that it

precludes a coherent expression of opinion through a single representative and his vote. The representation through interest-groups, which appears to be more rational than this mechanical and external method of representation, seems to succeed just in this point. But the case is actually the same as that of military organization. The individual groups, i.e., interest-groups with their representatives, are more organically constituted internally, but they stand side by side in a merely symbiotic relationship. Electoral procedures based on territorial units are more mechanical, to be sure, but the exclusively local election need not necessarily mean the representation of exclusively local interests. Indeed, this is precisely the technique for the organic integration of the whole. As a matter of principle the individual delegate represents the entire area. The ensuing separation into parties according to *political* tendencies implies then only differences of belief concerning the means by which the welfare of the nation is to be achieved. This is the only thing that matters, at least in the ideal case. The representation of estates or of interest-groups cuts across the merely external borderlines between areas by the force of its logic. But this partial rationality is deceptive; it obscures the fact that a mechanical subdivision on the basis of territorial units is in fact a technique which makes possible a much higher, organic synthesis of the whole.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

THIS IS THE PRINCIPAL PATTERN of the development of culture, which also comprises the sociological factors. Meaningful and profoundly significant institutions and behavior patterns are replaced by those which in themselves appear to be completely mechanical, external, and inanimate. But the latter have a higher purpose, which reaches beyond that of the earlier level of organization. And this higher purpose gives to the collective impact and to the consequences of institutions and behavior-patterns, an intellectual significance

which is inevitably lacking in each single element. This is the characteristic of the modern soldier as over against the medieval knight, of factory work as over against handicraft work, of the modern levelling and uniformity of so many aspects of life, which were formerly left to the free and creative response of the individual.

On the one hand, organizations are too extensive and complex today to allow each of their members to express one idea completely, so to speak. Each of the members can have only mechanical significance without any meaning in themselves. Only as a member of the whole can he contribute his part toward the realization of an idea. On the other hand, the intellectual element in every activity is often differentiated so that the mechanical and the intellectual come to exist separately. For instance, the woman handling an embroidering machine engages in a much less imaginative activity than the woman embroidering by hand. The imaginative impulses of this activity have been transferred to the machine, they have become objectified. Thus, it is possible for social institutions, gradations, associations to become more mechanical and external, and yet, to serve cultural progress and the internal coherence of a whole group.

This is the case if a higher social purpose is at stake to which the individual must submit. This higher purpose will no longer permit them to retain the spirit and the rationale which under earlier social conditions gave to institutions and associations a terminus to their purposive activities. In this way we may explain the transition from the principle of kinship to the principle of social divisions by numbers, e.g., associations of ten, even though the latter principle involves an association of heterogeneous elements as opposed to the natural homogeneity of the family.