

gives to the beggar, God will give back to her in the next life. She undergoes fasting during some specific days of the year not for reasons of health but because she believes that God will be pleased with this sacrifice. The cow should be respected as a mother and should not be slaughtered. No Hindu should eat beef. This is all done in the name of religion although it is nowhere written that Hindus should not eat beef. It is a ritual in the garb of religion and it is respected because it bears the stamp of religion.

Let me draw your attention back to the word *Hiya* (shame) used by Lynch. We have exactly the same word with the same meaning in Hindu. *Hiya* is considered appropriate not only for women but also for men. Many activities of the Indians are controlled by *Hiya*. It is due to *Hiya* that, generally, people hesitate to ask for a loan. Among the upper cas-

tes, they will not borrow money from relatives because of *Hiya*. A woman will not dance before a man, because of *Hiya*. Thus, the *Hiya* has the same place in the life of Indians as it has in the life of Filipinos, of course, in varying degrees.

I will conclude with the value concerning respect for women. In India, the field of operation for wife and husband is separate. The wife is the master of the house and the husband is master of out-of-home work. But this varies from caste to caste and from place to place. A Rajput or Brahman will not allow his wife to work in the field. The wife will not go to the party with the husband because that is not her field. Her field is, the home. But compared to the freedom enjoyed by Philippine and American women, the Indian women is not yet as free. The husband still dominates in most decisions, though matters pertaining to the family are decided mostly in consultation with the wife.

## Decisional Sociology

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Last September, at the annual meetings of the American Sociological Association in Montreal, Canada, I heard Dr. George Homans, outgoing President of the Association, launch a most vigorous attack upon the structural-functional theory of society in his presidential address. As I sat listening to Professor Homans, I could not help disagreeing with the sweeping nature of his condemnation. Surely, this theory and approach to the stu-

dy of society contains much that is valuable, and has provided many penetrating insights into the workings of social organizations and the maintenance of their equilibrium. It would seem unreasonable to relegate all this to the scrap heap.

Yet, upon reflection at that time, I found that I had to agree with the basic thesis of Dr. Homans, although not with many of his wider-reaching strictures. The structural-functional approach, if taken as a complete theory of society or even as the central core of a more elaborate theory, seems inadequate. Its conservative bias,

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and its inability to provide a genuinely useful theory of social change, certainly one of the central problems of both society and the science of society, reveal its ineptitude to play the integrating role in sociological theory.

In fact, the structural-functional approach already appears to have passed the zenith of its popularity and to be today upon the wane. Like so many of its predecessors, it seems destined to yield the center of the stage to some new theory, and to step to the side to take its place among the many partial theories that help explain this or that aspect of social phenomena. Such part theories have a place in the total sociological picture, and often have much to contribute, but none which has thus far appeared seems adequate to assume the central and integrating position in sociological theory.

If one considers those part approaches that have first appeared most promising, but which have eventually been relegated to less central parts of the stage, one is struck by the fact that each seems to be an attempt to explain the decisions made by members of social groups (from one point of view or another). The social fact of Durkheim, which that scientist elevated to the summit position of sociology, attempted to explain decisions of individuals on the basis of cultural training and social pressures. Tarde's laws of imitation, on the contrary, tried to explain such decisions on the basis of admiration, emulation, and the desire to follow a model. Thomas and Znaniecki's interests, wishes, or desires similarly attempted to explain behavior, and therefore the decisions on which such behavior rested, on the basis of more leading tendencies to act in certain directions. The study of attitudes, and prejudice especially, which has undoubtedly provided findings of great theoretical and practical value, was a flowering of this type of

approach, and still continues to enjoy wide usage. Max Weber focused his sociology upon social action which might be due to rational, traditional, or emotional factors which had influenced a decision.

More recently, Radcliffe-Brown, Linton, Malinowski, Eggan, Merton, Davis and others developed the functional or structural-functional approach to the study of society. The members of a society perceive a particular item of their culture or social organization as functional (or eufunctional), that is, as contributing to the perseverance of their way of life and society under some aspect. The function which they speak of may be only the surface reason (manifest function) for their regard for the particular item, and in reality the important reason (latent function) for their high valuation of the item may lie at a deeper level in their consciousness—at a level where things are only half understood and dimly felt, if they are not indeed in the subconscious. In any case, the high value which persons place upon items which are conceived to contribute to the perseverance of their way of life influence them as a group to make decisions which would preserve and conserve such items, and to carry out such decisions in external behavior.

The institutional sociology of Talcott Parsons in its later forms, while focusing upon social action after the lead of Max Weber, also attempts to understand decisions from which social action flows in terms of modes of making decisions (or deciding not to act). The motives for acting (and therefore for deciding) Parsons reduces to three categories: cognitive, emotional or cathectic, and evaluative (which modes in actual cases not only can be, but usually are, mixed). The modes by which various value hierarchies can be arranged (whether individual or societal hierarchies are under

study in the case in point) Parsons divides into cognitive, appreciative, or integrative (moral). The value hierarchies obviously influence individual and group decisions, also, and thus flow forth into action from a point somewhat further back in the psyche than motivation. More accurately, they are the reasons why this or that motivation is appealing to persons belonging to particular cultures.

In short, then, we are confronted with a situation in which the leading social scientists of the past eighty-odd years have recognized the prime importance of the decision of the individual for behavioral or human science, but somehow have failed to focus their sociologies directly upon the decision. They have all contributed part theories which attempt to explain decisions upon the grounds of these or those social phenomena which are obviously involved, but they have not focused directly upon the decision. Did they fail to recognize the forest because of the trees? It is my contention that sociological theory must directly focus upon the decision itself before it can begin to be adequate to explain social reality. I contend that only decisional sociology has a chance to become an adequate sociology.

At this point, let me anticipate several objections. I am not reducing sociology to psychology. The type of decision I am talking about is one that chooses such action as is by its nature related to two or more members of a social group, whether the decision is made by an individual person or by a group.

Nor am I reducing sociology and sociological research to a parlor game in which one sits and tries to imagine what motives might have prompted this or that course of action which launched a social movement or otherwise affected members of a group. The same hard research methods of interview, question-

naire, observation, and projective test are available to researchers attempting to understand or to trigger decisions as are now available for attitude testing, stratification studies, urban research, and the like.

Nor do I attempt to transform sociology into a study of conscious, clear-cut, rational decisions. I define decision as the approval and choice, or the maintenance of an action or line of action, whether or not such approval is explicit, new or habitual, conscious, half-conscious, or unconscious. The man who combs his hair in the morning has a habitual decision to do so, although he customarily does not avert to this decision when performing the operation. One need only imagine the difficulty of making the alternative decision to go forth into the everyday world with head consciously uncombed, to realize the truth that this is an habitual decision, trained into him by his culture and based upon his values.

Decisional Sociology appears to be a more adequate approach to the study of society than previous formulations. It can integrate what is valuable from the part theories into a consistent whole. For example, it can explain the persistence of cultural and social items in terms of folkways, mores, eufunction, and cultural "goodness of fit." When involved with problems of change, it focuses directly upon the source of change, decision-making by persons whose actions relate to other members of a social group, and it presumably will be able to fashion new concepts to supplement older ones so as to feature a changing situation in conjunction with rationality, economic utility and growth, population pressures, bettered communications, invention and diffusion or acculturation and so forth. Decisional Sociology ought to be equally effective in problems of social statics and problems of social dynamics.

My time is limited and growing to an end. Let me give, as an example of the usefulness of the decisional approach, a problem in applied sociology. Imagine a development team attempting to induce the small farmers of a particular area to employ certified seeds for planting corn, to use improved planting techniques, and to make use of appropriate fertilizers to increase crop yields. Imagine too that the farmers in question are poorly educated, practise traditional methods of farming quite different in both cultural traits and social organization from the progressive methods desirable, and in addition possess a pervasive complex of folk-religious rituals which have as manifest or latent functions assuring the favor of the spirit world, and relieving anxieties about the possibilities of a poor crop. Let us suppose in addition that this complex of rituals is tied into the rural culture with considerable emotional intensity, and that the complex is of such a nature as to render the rural farmer indifferent and even hostile to the introduction of more progressive methods of farming.

A decisional approach to this situation would recognize the need to find individuals whose social position, educational background, experience, and personal traits would make them more receptive to the innovations desired, and less tenacious of the traditional posture.

The next step would be to try to influence them to make the desired decisions by opening channels of communication between the agency of innovation and the target individuals and among the target individuals themselves in such a way as to bring home by the best possible means the desirability of the goals to be secured by the innovations. Once a core of individuals has been found who have made the desired decisions, they

should be supported for four or five years by all technical assistance needed for successful implementation of the new techniques, including whatever psychological counselling services which might be required to alleviate qualms and anxieties about offenses being offered to the spirits. Their successes should be analyzed and communicated to their neighbors in the local area until these begin to make decisions to adopt this or that technique and to follow along behind this social movement which has been started.

In conclusion, by making *the decision* the focus of sociology, the science will rid itself of the naive assumption, less often but still not rarely found today among its practitioners, that man's behavior can be understood from analogy with the natural sciences, as though if we push enough right buttons, we can predetermine the way a man will act. By amassing knowledge of a people's culture, social organization, and value structure, and by correct application of this knowledge, we may be able to construct valid probability statements or statistical laws such as 50, 80, or 95 times out of a hundred, such persons will decide to do this or that. But these remain only probability statements; i.e., in the individual case we cannot know with certainty beforehand what the decision will be. The individual will decide for himself, from his personal point of view, to do what here and now seems good to him, and the chief basis of his choice may be rational, traditional, or emotional, and this basis may change radically over time because of changes in outlook or in mood. Is this bad? I think not. If sociology is and must be a probability science, this is because of the unique nature of its primary object, man. Man is a decision-making being, and taking proper account of this is essential to a sound empiric science of man.