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THE CONCEPT "SITUATION" AS A SOCIOLOGICAL TOOL

by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I. Statement of the Problem

Analysis of sociological literature, especially that concerned more directly with methodological problems, shows that the term situation has gained considerable currency. In spite of its rather free use, however, exploration of the concept as a major sociological tool has been surprisingly limited. Eubank, for example, in his extended treatment of the concepts of sociology, does not analyze the situation as a separate concept, although he proposes the concept of "situation-self".[1] The term is not even to be found in Panunzio's Dictionary of Sociological Terms.[2] That the term does have a very useful common-sense meaning is testified by its wide use, but the analysis to follow will reveal that a number of rather critical problems are involved which have not been adequately recognized in the common-sense use of the term.

It seems desirable that a concept used so extensively as the situation-concept should be explored more thoroughly, both as to its theoretical and methodological implications. Its relationship to other major sociological concepts should be made more clear, and its possibilities as a sociological tool in conceptualization

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1. Eubank, E. E., The Concepts of Sociology, New York: D. C. Heath and Company, 1932, pp. 106-110.
2. Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1937.

and research should be explored. The purpose of this study is to begin such an exploration (1) by discovering how the term has been used in sociology and elsewhere, (2) by integrating the available material concerning it, and (3) by setting forth the implications which appear in the course of the study. It is realized that a concept grows by experimentation and observation as well as by critical thought, but experimentation proceeds by the hypotheses suggested by critical thought. The formulation of certain hypotheses is a part of this study.

II. Methodology

The research was begun by an attempt to locate the sociological treatments of the concept which were already available. It was known that W. I. Thomas and Florian Znaniecki had employed the concept in their writings and these sources were first explored. The consultation of text indexes and bibliographies revealed other data and some material was discovered quite by accident. An analysis of these materials made it evident that the problems of meaning and value were involved and data on these two problems were also gathered. The nature of the "situation-self" was seen to be relevant and this lead was followed, with results richer than expected. It also became evident that the "action dimension" of the situation would have to be clarified and this in turn lead to a consideration of certain "action schemas" in both sociology and psychology.

The term situation has been employed quite extensively in sociology and in psychology as well, especially by the Gestaltists,

the Field Theorists, and the Behaviorists. This material was canvassed and compared with that already on hand. In short, there was an attempt to locate as much material in which the term situation was used as could be found and then to supplement it with other material on the major problems which were seen to be directly involved, such as the problems of meaning, value, action, and the nature of the self. There can be no pretense of completeness in this exploratory study, but as the materials accumulated they were seen to assume a coherent pattern, and there is at least that assurance that the major outlines have been delineated.

As the study progressed it became evident that one of the major difficulties was the reconciling of diverse terminologies. In many cases the specific flavor of words tended to obscure genuine similarities of thought. Words have gone out of fashion or have incurred scientific displeasure. James' term, "spiritual self", would hardly be acceptable in present-day scientific discourse, and yet to have dismissed it, or to have assumed that it meant nothing, on that account, would have been to miss an important parallel between his treatment and that of others. In other cases the same word is used in a number of different ways. The word "Ego" is a case in point. To have assumed that because the same word was used, the same thing was meant would have lead again to misinterpretation. In every case it was necessary to attempt to pierce through terminological differences to the actual functional character of the thing or aspect meant.

On the other hand, differences of terminology and of orientation have had a certain positive advantage. They have acted like

magnifying glasses, throwing now one factor into prominence, now another. It has been possible to note factors appearing in exaggerated perspective from one position, which from the viewpoint of another author are so dwindled in importance and so named as to have escaped notice. In some cases, even where the relevance of a certain factor has been recognized for the specific situation under the scrutiny of the author, that factor has been named in such a way as to preclude its extension to other analogous situations, or at least to diminish the probability that such an extension would be made. Words are important cognitive tools. They both obscure and reveal. By their connotation they may suggest new fields of experimentation and speculation, or they may so isolate and hedge in an idea that it never reaches fruition. There has been an attempt throughout this study to break down conceptual walls by deliberate comparison of terminologies and meanings, and to generalize the findings in such a way as to give due recognition to the common factors discovered.

In brief, the methodology involved: (1) the gathering of the available materials treating the term situation as a concept, together with certain other materials concerning the "self", "meaning", "value", and "action" in which the term situation has been employed as a prominent sub-concept, (2) the critical comparison and integration of these materials into a more or less systematic treatment of the concept, and (3) the drawing of certain deductions from premises which grew directly out of the materials studied. These deductions are presented as

hypotheses, relatively unsupported by scientific experimentation as yet, but subject to such verification as tests of their pragmatic usefulness.

III. Presentation of Data

The procedure chosen is neither wholly systematic nor wholly historical. The first would have involved obscuring the contributions of various authors by piecemeal presentation, whereas the second would have involved a laborious tracing of influences which is neither possible because of insufficient evidence nor necessary for the purposes of this study.

Chapter II is devoted to an examination and comparison of the treatments of the concept by various sociologists and serves as something of an introduction to the problems to be examined in the following chapters.

Chapter III shifts the focus of emphasis to the self in the situation and involves the examination and comparison of a number of sociological and social-psychological treatments of the personality as it arises and takes form in the social situation.

Chapter IV is a consideration of the nature of the process by which the situation is defined. The problems of meaning, value, action, and the resulting "structure" of the situation are given attention here.

Chapter V presents some of the hypotheses and implications growing out of the foregoing materials as they relate to sociological theory and sociological research; and Chapter VI is a general summary of the findings and implications.

CHAPTER II

SOME SOCIOLOGICAL TREATMENTS OF THE CONCEPT

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the concept situation as it has been treated by sociologists and some closely allied social scientists. Although the contributions are arranged in chronological order by date of publication, it is not known to what extent the later writers were influenced by the earlier, except where it is explicitly indicated. As intimated in the previous chapter, the term situation has been taken over from common usage. Since this is the case, it will be well to examine the dictionary definition before going on to the more specialized treatments.

I. Common Usage

According to Webster,[1] the term situation is a noun taken directly from the French which came originally from a Medieval Latin word situatio. It refers to the "manner in which an object is placed; its location, especially as related to something else; also, a place; a locality." It refers to the "state of being situated or located; position, as regards conditions and circumstances; state; condition." A more specialized meaning refers to the "relative position or combination of circumstances at a

1. Webster's New International Dictionary of the English Language (Second Edition), unabridged, Springfield, Mass. G. & C. Merriam Company, 1935, p. 2350.

moment; a critical, trying, or unusual state of relation of affairs; as, to find oneself in an embarrassing situation." In narrative and drama a "situation" is "a particular complex of affairs at a given moment in the action especially one of striking interest," as in the climax. "The locus of an object with respect to events" is given as the philosophical meaning, while the psychological usage is given as "the sum total of stimuli that act upon an organism at a given moment". The term is further used to designate a "position or place of employment, as a situation in a store; a situation under the government".

It is no matter for wonder that a word so broad and useful should have been pressed into service in a great many different ways. Without any pretence at completeness a few of the adjectives with which it is found may be noted:

<u>As to content</u>. First, frequent references to the "social situation", the "family situation", the "economic situation", the "political situation", the "housing situation", the "crime situation", etc., are found both in popular and sociological literature.

<u>As to point of view</u>. With regard to point of view, the "personal situation", "subjective situation", "psychological situation", are often opposed to the "environmental situation" and the "objective situation".

<u>As to time</u>. With regard to scope or extent, the terms "momentary situation", "immediate situation", "whole situation", "life situation", and "total situation" are not uncommon.

Miscellaneous. A miscellaneous category of other common usages would include: "stimulus situation", "meaning situation", "conflict situation", "punishment situation", "reward situation".

This list could probably be expanded indefinitely, limited only by the number of adjectives available. Our aim, however, is to discover, if possible, what is common and generic to all these, and more particularly the significance of the term as a sociological tool.

II. Albion W. Small

So far as can be discovered, the earliest recognition of the "social situation" as a definite concept requiring some attention was by Albion W. Small in his treatise, General Sociology.[1] That the term was not given a recognized status at the time he wrote (1905) is indicated by the fact that he felt obliged to make some apology for its introduction:

> This term . . . like the term 'group' carries no dogmatic assumptions. It is not a means of smuggling into sociology any insidious theory. It is simply one of the inevitable terms for the sort of thing in which all the sociologists find their problems. . . . The term is innocent of theoretical implications. It is simply serviceable as a colorless designation of the phenomena which the sociologist must investigate.[2]

Postponing until later a discussion of whether or not the concept is as innocent of theoretical implications as Small assures his readers, let us see what he understands by it:

> . . . a 'social situation' is any portion of experience brought to attention as a point in time or space at which a tension of social forces is present. More

1. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1905.
2. Ibid., p. 500.

> simply, a 'social situation' is any circle of human relationships thought of as belonging together, and presenting the problem: What are the elements involved in this total, and how do these elements affect each other? . . . A 'social situation' is any phase of human life, from the least to the greatest, which invites observation, description, explanation. . . . The term is simply a convenient generic designation for every kind and degree of social combination which for the time being attracts attention as capable of consideration by itself.[1]

A social situation thus involves relationships between human beings, and the relationships may be between persons, between persons and groups, or between groups. The situation may be of any size, from two or more persons up to two or more nations, but Small does not indicate whether the size of the total to be considered a situation is determined by something in the phenomenon itself, or by the observer.

Although Small nowhere explicitly states it, we are left with the impression that there is something in the phenomenon itself which brands it for the observer as "a situation". It "invites observation, description, explanation," it "attracts attention as capable of consideration by itself", it is a "total" and it presents the problem: "what are the elements involved in this total, and how do these elements affect each other?". Are "tensions of social forces" characteristic of <u>all</u> social relationships or are there some "circles of human relationships" which are not characterized by "tensions" and hence not to be considered as situations? Certainly each of the examples Small cites is one in which the actors face a problem. Is the problem then the criteria of a situation? Small says:

1. <u>Ibid</u>.

> The sociologist takes it for granted that consciousness of an interest, of any sort, is presently followed by a choice that has reference to that interest. . . . He starts . . . with the assumption that perception of conditions is always followed by choices of some sort; and his interest is in discovering what variations in social situations have to do with human choices. . . . Causal explanation of the social process, as far back as the sociologist tries to carry it, would consist of supplying concrete values for the symbolic terms in a proposition of this form: The effective interest (purposes) of the actors being such and such, and the situation, as they viewed it, being so and so, their action was this and that, because, in their belief, it would tend to modify the situation thus and thus.[1]

The answer to our question is implied. Whenever an actor with a "purpose" or an "interest"[2] encounters a set of conditions within which he must make a choice, he is presented with a "situation". Moreover, he views the situation in a particular way, and performs some action in the belief that his action will tend to modify that situation. Without an "interest" there can be no problem for the actor, no choice, and hence no situation. If the set of conditions facing the actor is composed of the interests and actions of other actors, then there is the "tension of social forces" of which Small speaks. This "circle of human relationships" belongs together, because, as a set of conditions to his own action, it presents the actor with a problem. It "invites the attention" of the observer as "capable of consideration by itself" because the actor considers it by itself. As a totality, it presents the actor with

1. Ibid., pp. 647-648.

2. It should be recalled that Small's term for the fundamental human motiviations is "interests". The term will gain added meaning when discussed in connection with R. B. Berry's "interest theory of value" in Chapter IV.

a problem. There is, then, something in the phenomenon itself which brands it for the observer as "a situation". That something is the nexus of relationships between an actor with an interest, a set of conditions presenting a problem, the actor's particular view of these conditions, and an action leading to a modification of the set of conditions.

Small's treatment of the concept does not squarely face the problem of definining the point of view.[1] As he treats it, the term situation refers to both the actor's situation and the observer's situation. He recognizes that there must be a definition of the situation by the actors when he uses the phrase "the situation as they viewed it", and also that the observer has a different point of view when he says "how much of the explanation will ultimately be found on the side of the external situation, and how much on the side of the subjective reaction, nobody can foretell",[2] but in spite of this it is seldom possible to tell when he refers to the actor's and when to the observer's situation.

III. W. I. Thomas and F. Znaniecki

It is not known to what extent W. I. Thomas may have been influenced by his contact with A. W. Small during the long period in which they were colleagues at the University of Chicago.[3] Thomas

1. The term situation when used without further modification is apt to be ambiguous. The situation as the actor views it is the set of conditions in which he must act. He may or may not include himself in thinking about it. The situation as the observer views it, that is, as he employs it as a sociological tool, is a construct which includes both actor and the actor's set of conditions. Whenever necessary to avoid ambiguity, the terms "actor's situation" and "observer's situation" will be employed in this study. The problem of "objectivity" involved here is treated in Chapter V, Section V.

2. Small, Ibid., p. 647.

makes no particular mention of the concept situation as a sociological tool in his book Sex and Society[1], but it is possible to see the trend of his thought as it appears in the introductory to his Source Book for Social Origins.[2] Thomas relates the concepts of "social forces" and "process" which Small emphasizes, to the concepts of control, attention, and crisis.

> Control is not a social force, but is the object, realized or unrealized, of all purposive activity. . . . Control is the end to be secured and attention is the means of securing it. They are the objective and subjective sides of the same process. . . when something happens to disturb the run of habit the attention is called into play and devises a new mode of behavior which will meet the crisis. . . . The human mind is preeminently the organ of manipulation, of adjustment, of control. It operates through what we call knowledge. This in turn is based on memory and the ability to compare a present situation with similar situations in the past and to revise our judgments and actions in view of the past experience. . . .[3]

The "problem" which is involved in situations, according to Small, appears as the "crisis" in Thomas' account. Thomas makes no capital of the term situation at this point but when viewed in connection with his later work in collaboration with Florian Znaniecki, The Polish Peasant in Europe and America,[4] mention of it in the earlier work becomes significant. The close relationship of "attention" and "control" to the concepts of "attitude" and "value" as the subjective and objective aspects of the action process is not hard to see. Attitude and value are in a way the same two concepts made more specific.

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3. Thomas was at the University of Chicago from 1895 to 1918; Small from 1893 to 1926.

1. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1907.
2. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1909.
3. Ibid., pp. 13-18. (Italics mine)
4. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1918.

The concept situation and the two complementary concepts which it involves--attitudes and values--form the backbone and theoretical framework of the entire monograph on the Polish peasant, and resulted in what amounted to a new orientation in the now immense literature on attitudes.[1] It will not be possible to give attention to this body of literature in this study. That has already been most exhaustively done.[2] Attention can only be given here to the way in which attitudes are involved in the more inclusive configuration called the situation.

According to Thomas and Znaniecki:

> The situation is the set of values and attitudes with which the individual or the group has to deal in a process of activity and with regard to which this activity is planned and its results appreciated. Every concrete activity is the solution of a situation. The situation involves three kinds of data : (1) The objective conditions under which the individual or society has to act, that is, the totality of values--economic, social, religious, intellectual, etc.--which at the given moment affect directly or indirectly the conscious status of the individual or the group. (2) The pre-existing attitudes of the individual or the group which at the given moment have an actual influence upon his behavior. (3) The definition of the situation, that is, the more or less clear conception of the conditions and consciousness of the attitudes. And the definition of the situation is a necessary preliminary to any act of will, for in given conditions and with a given set of attitudes an indefinite plurality of actions is possible, and one definite action can appear only if these conditions are selected, interpreted, and combined in a determined way and if a certain systematization of these attitudes is reached, so that one of them becomes predominant and subordinates

1. Cf. Young, K. (editor), Social Attitudes (a group of papers in honor of Dr. Thomas), New York: Henry Holt & Company, 1931.

2. Cf. Kiepe, Helen Harriman, "The Status of the Attitude-Concept as a Tool in the Experimental Study of Social Action," (unpublished Master's Thesis), University of Oregon, 1940.

> the others. It happens, indeed, that a certain value imposes itself immediately and unreflectively and leads at once to action, or that an attitude as soon as it appears excludes the others and expresses itself unhesitatingly in an active process. In these cases, whose most radical examples are found in reflex and instinctive actions, the definition is already given to the individual by external conditions or by his own tendencies. But usually there is a process of reflection, after which either a ready social definition is applied or a new personal definition worked out.[1]

There are a number of points in common between Small's interpretation and that of Thomas and Znaniecki. First, the situation presents a problem to an actor who must choose a course of action. This problem consists of a set of conditions, both external and internal. The external conditions are further specified as a "totality of values", by Thomas and Znaniecki. It is not too much to say that literally everything outside the actor and affecting him are given as values--persons, things, events, institutional norms, cultural objects, and all the rest. The factors within the actor which Small calls "interests" and "purposes" are called "attitudes" by Thomas and Znaniecki, and are conceived by them as pre-existant to the particular situation. While Small only hints at the "definition of the situation", Thomas and Znaniecki treat it more fully. For Small, as well as for Thomas and Znaniecki, the definition precedes the choice or act of will. Small speaks of the "choice or volition which presently follows"[2] while Thomas and Znaniecki state that "the definition of the situation is a necessary preliminary to any act

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1. Thomas and Znaniecki, op. cit. (Two-volume edition, Vol. I), p. 68.
2. Cf. previous quotation, op. cit., p. 647.

of the will. . . ."[1] The latter authors further emphasize that the definition is usually a more or less conscious, reflective process concerned with the clarification, selection, interpretation and combination of the external conditions, and the systemitization of the attitudes, in which some are given predominance and others are subordinated.[2]

"Value" is used in the substantive sense by Thomas and Znaniecki:

> By a social value we understand <u>any datum</u> having an empirical content accessible to the members of some social group and a meaning with regard to which it is or may be an object of activity. Thus, a foodstuff, an instrument, a coin, a piece of poetry, a university, a myth, a scientific theory, are social values. Each of them has a content that is sensual . . . partly sensual, partly imaginary . . . or finally, only imaginary. . . . The meaning of these values becomes explicit when we take them in connection with human actions. The meaning of the foodstuff is with reference to its eventual consumption. . . . (etc). The social value is thus opposed to the natural thing, which has a content, but, as a part of nature, has no meaning for human activity, is treated as 'valueless'; when the natural thing assumes a meaning, it becomes thereby a social value. And naturally a social value may have many meanings, for it may refer to many different kinds of activity.[3]

In view of the long-standing controversy over the place of "values" in sociological methodology, it seems important to note that value always arises in a situational setting. The use of the term "value" in the substantive sense, that is, as a name for the empirical datum itself, is probably unfortunate, in that it tends to obscure the point that value is a relationship, not a concrete

1. <u>Cf</u>. previous quotation, <u>op. cit</u>., p. 68.
2. <u>Ibid</u>.,(<u>Cf</u>. Chapter IV for a criticism of this view.)
3. <u>Ibid</u>., p. 20. (Italics mine)

thing. As the viewpoint or interest changes, the value relationships change also. If this is clearly seen, the distinction between the values which the actor entertains and the values which the scientific researcher entertains becomes more clear.[1]

It should be noted that each of the examples given by Thomas and Znaniecki is presumably a positive value-object, although there is nothing in the definition which excludes negative value-objects, and this distinction is later made clear by both Thomas and Znaniecki.

An attitude, according to Thomas and Znaniecki, is

> . . . a process of individual consciousness which determines real or possible activity of the individual in the social world. Thus, hunger that compels the consumption of the foodstuff . . . (etc.) all these are attitudes. The attitude is thus the individual counterpart of the social value; activity, in whatever, form, is the bond between them. By its reference to activity and thereby to individual consciousness the value is distinguishable from the natural thing. By its reference to activity and thereby to the social world, the attitude is distinguished from the physical state.[2]

Attitude is thus treated as something within the actor having an outer referent, and value is treated as something outside the actor having an inner referent. It will be noted that the present author does not employ the terms "subjective" or "objective". It is believed that these terms are open to the same ambiguity as is the term situation by failing to make clear the point of view. From the observer's point of view, the inner state of the actor is just as "objective"--that is, outside the observer's body--as

1. Cf. Chapter V, this thesis.
2. Ibid., p. 27.

is the value-object toward which the actor directs his attention. On the other hand, both the value-object and the inner state of the actor, insofar as the observer can apprehend them at all, must be apprehended from his own subjective position and through his own subjective apparatus.[1] In this study, the terms "within the actor" and "outside the actor" will be employed.

"Activity, in whatever form" is "the bond" between the attitude and the value, according to Thomas and Znaniecki. It is difficult to discover whether they mean by this that activity is something empirically divided from both attitudes and values, and connecting them by logical reference only, or whether the authors would regard the three terms as different aspects of a single process of activity in extension, with the incipient stage (attitude) at one end connected by a continuation of the same activity to the consummatory stage (value) at the other. It is hard to escape the former, more or less atomistic, interpretation of their words. There is no doubt that the value-object can in some cases (as, for example, in the case of food) be empirically distinguished from the activity directed toward it, but this is hardly the case with attitude, which, even as they define it--"a process of individual consciousness"--seems to be inevitably an activity itself. It is just here that the objection to using the word "value" to refer to the empirical object arises, for certain activities in themselves appear to have value for the actor. Value, in other words, seems

1. Cf. Chapter V, this thesis.

to refer as much to a quality of the actor's activity in conjunction with certain objects as to the objects themselves. The same thing is true of "interest" and "purpose", which, as was pointed out, correspond closely to "attitude" as Thomas and Znaniecki use it.

Five years after the publication of The Polish Peasant in Europe and America, Thomas' book, The Unadjusted Girl, appeared (1923).[1] In 1925, Znaniecki published his Laws of Social Psychology.[2] From a comparison of these books, Floyd House thinks that "there is reason to believe that the theory of attitudes and values set forth in The Polish Peasant is due mainly to Znaniecki, while the four desires were Thomas' contribution."[3] There is no systematic treatment of "the situation" in The Unadjusted Girl, although the whole book is built on the concepts of the four wishes, the definition of the situation by the family and community, and private definitions of the situation.[4]

IV. Znaniecki

In his books, Cultural Reality[5] and Laws of Social Psychology[6], Znaniecki gives the most complete expositions of the concept social situation found.[7] Since his treatments are so complete, an abstract from the latter work rather than extended exposition of his ideas is offered at this point.

1. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1923.
2. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1925.
3. House, F. N., The Development of Sociology, New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1936, p. 287. House apparently did not include Thomas' concepts of attention and control in the comparison.
4. Cf. Chapter IV this thesis.
5. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1919, pp. 169-229.
6. Pp. 79-95.
7. Cf. also Znaniecki, Social Actions for scattered references.

Preliminary:

(1) The Social Tendency: Znaniecki's term for interest, purpose, or attitude, is "tendency" or more specifically, "social tendency" in social situations. The social tendency is necessarily involved in every situation as the source of its components.

(2) Definition of the Situation: Every tendency encounters certain conditions which compose the situation. However, the concrete milieu in which the action begins furnishes only the raw material upon which the subject draws to shape his own practical construction and interpretation of the actual conditions as affecting his tendency. He extracts some objects and facts from the total complexity of his sphere of experience and incorporates them into his action by taking practically into account only that aspect of them which, judging by past experiences, is apt to affect the course of the action. The definition of the situation may take place before overt action begins, or partly during the period of overt action, or the situation may be left undetermined almost to the end. Each of the following elements, as a part of the situation, is defined.

The Essential Elements of a Social Situation

(1) The Social Object: is the individual, group, real or imaginary, which the action of the subject is designed to influence or modify. The subject ordinarily does not deal with the social object in its full concreteness, but tends to schematize or pigeon-hole it in terms of the aspects of it which are relevant to the present course of action. Social objects may, however, become highly individualized through the course of many actions.

(2) The Expected Result of the Action: which in social actions always means a definite reaction which the subject purposes to provoke in the social object. The expected reaction, like the tendency and the social object, is actively schematized and stabilized by the subject and thus becomes in the full sense of the term a real element. This leaves room for a certain plasticity in the actual reaction which will never be exactly what the subject expects, but will nevertheless satisfy the tendency, if it falls within certain limits.

(3) The Instrumental Process: is the intended objective process by which the purposed social reaction is expected to be attained. This includes: words to be spoken; bodily movements to be made; physical processes to be causally

realized with the help of bodily movements; modifications of religious, intellectual, political, economic systems to be originate and made to bear upon the social object. This process is also schematized and stabilized as in defining the social object and the purposed result, and large variations are acceptable to the subject so long as it preserves the same significance with regard to the total situation as it had when first chosen and determined.

(4) The Reflected Self: which is the subject's own personality, as he imagines it viewed by others in his social situation. 'Self' may apply to a group as well as a person, if the group is the acting subject. The reflected self does not, perhaps, always appear in all social situations, but usually does, by virtue of the fact that human beings are not only subjects, but objects of action, and are able to so regard themselves. This self is necessarily partial and schematized with regard to the particular situation, but tends to grow and enlarge from past situations. Its content is chiefly social.

Common features of the above Elements:

Each of the elements is a Value: The elements are not merely experienced, they are appreciated as well, with regard to the social tendency, which is the ultimate source of valuation within the limits of the action. The value of the elements is not treated as a physiological state of the subject, but as the subject unsophisticatedly views them, as characters belonging, at least temporarily and relatively, to the objects themselves. Each element has an axiological meaning of pleasantness, unpleasantness, goodness, badness, utility, harmfulness, etc. for the subject. This axiologically significant character is a product of both former experiences, and of its relation to other elements in the present situation.

Comparing Znaniecki's treatment of the concept with those which have gone before, it will be noted that he has given another name to attitude, interest, or purpose. He has more fully explained the nature of the "definition of the situation", treating it as a process of abstraction which takes place during the action as well as before. He has made it explicit that values may be, and are,

both positive and negative. He has further differentiated the set of conditions which are given as values, into a reflected self, an object, an instrumental process, and an expected result. Although Znaniecki does not so place them, the tendency, the instrumental process, and the expected result, fall into an action sequence closely resembling the sequence: attitude, activity, and value.

It is not known whether Znaniecki takes the concept situation from Thomas or not. The first available record of his use of it in his Cultural Reality is dated one year after publication of The Polish Peasant in Europe and America. There is no doubt, however, that his treatments are more philosophically sophisticated than the others examined in this chapter, with the exception of Talcott Parsons', and possibly George Lundberg's.

V. William Healey

By 1925 other workers in the field of sociology were beginning to use the term situation and apply it in their research approach. A paper by William Healey, entitled "The Psychology of the Situation: A Fundamental for Understanding and Treatment of Delinquency and Crime,"[1] appeared in this year. Explaining the concept, he says:

> . . . does the term need defining? The whole picture is meant, the actor and the setting, including both things and other people. 'The situation' is the particular environment of the given member of society (the person of the sociologist) considered together with him as active in it.[2]

1. In The Child, The Clinic and The Court, New York: New Republic, Inc., 1925, pp. 37-52. (This paper is included with a group of others published and listed under above title without specific author as editor.)

2. Ibid., p. 38.

Healey emphasizes that the situation is "a whole" which includes the experiences and conduct problems over from previous situations in the form of "mental attitudes". Above all this "whole" is composed of a constant "interweaving of the individual and his environment", it is "a process":

> . . . the environment plays upon and modifies the individual, and what is usually not observed or set forth, the individual plays upon and modifies the environment. Then, as modified by each other, they act upon each other again, each reacting to the new situation. . . The total or the whole situation turns out thus for us to be a process.[1]

This "interweaving" Healey calls "circular response", acknowledging his indebtedness to Miss Follett for the term.[2] It is clear from the above, and from other remarks by Healey,[3] that the term "situation" is not synonomous with "environment". The environment is only part of the situation. The recognition of the difference between the observer's situation and the actor's situation clears up part of this confusion in the current use of the term, as was previously pointed out.

In conclusion, Healey presents several concepts which he believes to be "extraordinarily serviceable . . . concerning delinquency and delinquents". They are:

> The Situation: the delinquent and his setting.
> The Total Situation: made up of the physical and mental assets and liabilities of the delinquent as they bear upon his delinquency or recovery therefrom, plus the circumstances and conditions which influence him.

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1. Ibid., pp. 41-42.
2. Follett, Mary P., Creative Experience, New York: Longmans, Green & Company, 1924.
3. Healey, op. cit., p. 43.

The Psychological Situation: the mental capacities, activities and attitudes of the delinquent, plus the mental attitudes of others toward him.
The Situation as a Process: changing at every stage and step, particularly with any kind of treatment of the delinquent.
Circular Response: what the delinquent does to society when society does things to him, and, after that, what society does in return, and how he 'gets back' at it.[1]

Healey's emphasis on the processual aspect of the situation is especially noteworthy. Znaniecki's treatment shows clearly that every actor's situation is structured in terms of a time reference. This structure can be said, however, to exist at any given moment, the past and future extensions being supplied in symbolic form by the actor. Healey's emphasis is not that the actor' structures his situation in the time dimensions (indeed, there is no recognition of this at all), but that action(which necessarily takes place in the time dimension) changes the structure of the actor's situation. This change of emphasis is partly explained by the fact that Znaniecki's treatment is primarily from the actor's point of view, while Healey preserves the observer's point of view throughout.

VI. W. I. Thomas

In his presidential address to the American Sociological Society in 1927, entitled, "The Behavior Pattern and the Situation", W. I. Thomas reviews a number of experimental studies which conform

1. Ibid., p. 52.

to the situational viewpoint.[1] He is not primarily concerned with further theoretical elucidation of the concept, but he does partially clarify one point which was raised earlier in this study:

> In approaching problems of behavior it is possible to emphasize--to have in the focus of attention for working purposes--either the attitude, the value, or the situation. The attitude is the tendency to act, representing the drive, the affective stages, the wishes. The value represents the object or goal desired, and the situation represents the configuration of the factors conditioning the behavior reaction. It is also possible to work from the standpoint of adaptation--that is, how are attitudes and values modified according to the demands of given situations. Any one of these standpoints will involve all the others, since they together constitute a process.[2]

This more surely established the supposition that Thomas understands attitudes and values as representing simply the beginning and ending stages of an act, and yet the ambiguity of "value" and "goal" is still present. These terms cannot be considered as names for the empirical objects in themselves, but always refer to a relationship of an action to a thing.

VII. W. I. Thomas and D. S. Thomas

In their book, The Child in America,[3] W. I. Thomas and Dorothy Swain Thomas review the trend of developments in the study of child

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1. Publications of the American Sociological Society, XII (1927), pp. 1-13. Vervorn, Pfeffer, Loeb, and Jennings are cited as physiologists who began study of behavior in situations with regard to tropisms. Thorndyke, Yerkes, Pavlov, Watson, and Kohler are cited as psychologists working with both animal and human subjects in situations. Buhler, Herzer, Tudor-Hart, Anderson, and Goodenough on children; Freeman and associates on foster children; Richards on psychopathic children; Harry Stack Sullivan and associates on disordered persons; Shaw, Park, Burgess, Thrasher Zorbaugh on areas and delinquency; Healey and Bronner on delinquency--all of these are cited as applying a situational viewpoint. The list was not inclusive in 1927, and certainly by now many other names should be added.
2. W. I. Thomas, op. cit., p. 1.
3. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1928.

behavior, and show how in many cases a situational approach has been used. Thomas adds little in a theoretical way to his previous treatments of the concept in this book, however.

VIII. R. M. Hubbard

In a study of child behavior, as an associate of Dorothy Swain Thomas, Ruth M. Hubbard defines a social situation as "a group of two or more children playing together, either functionally or spacially".[1] Certain exclusions were made for the purposes of easier recording in this particular investigation, but the principal criteria were that of interactions between two or more children. Where social interaction exists, a social situation exists, according to Hubbard.

IX. L. von Wiese and H. Becker

Approaching social phenomena from the point of view of social processes, Leopold von Wiese and Howard Becker[2] hold that the situation is one factor in every process. According to their analysis, every "concrete social action" is the resultant of two factors: a personal attitude and a situation. Both attitude and situation can be further analyzed, however. Every attitude is the resultant of the socially relevant native equipment of the person and the experiences which he has undergone during his lifetime. Every situation

1. "A Method of Studying Spontaneous Group Formation," Chapter IV in Thomas, Dorothy Swain and associates, Some New Techniques for Studying Social Behavior, New York: Bureau of Publications, Teacher's College, Columbia University, 1929, p. 76.

2. Systematic Sociology, New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1932, pp. 174-178.

can be analyzed into the physical environment and the attitudes of other persons participating in the process in question. The attitudes of these other persons are to be analyzed in the same way as the attitudes of the actor.

Von Wiese and Becker recommend that one person should be taken as the point of departure, and that his behavior should be traced throughout the course of the whole process. If this proves to be insufficient, then the behavior of each of the other participants should be traced. Whether this is actually recommended as a research procedure, or whether it is merely a way of simplifying their symbolic formulation of the factors involved in a process, is not made clear.[1]

The authors caution that although attitudes and situation always work together, "permeating" each other, there is no warrant for expecting this relative importance of each to be equal. The actor's definition of the situation is recognized as follows:

> . . . situations are never registered with photographic exactitude and completeness by the human being, but are transformed when they impinge upon his particular equipment.[2]

The implication here is that "the situation" exists as something outside the actor, which is distorted as it passes through his sensory equipment. The term "situation" is treated as synonomous with "physical and social environment". This usage is hardly justified--the "situation" in any case is a construct of the actor, and the term does not properly apply only to the empirical objects

1. Cf. Chapter V this thesis for a discussion of the research possibilities of this technique.
2. Op. cit., p. 175

with which the actor comes into relationship. If the authors have in mind only the sensory distortion of these objects which the actor introduces, their account of the "definition of the situation" is seriously incomplete. As one last criticism of von Wiese's and Becker's presentation: there is no adequate recognition of the fact that the actor "structures" or "projects" his situation in the time dimension. The fact that process is the point of emphasis does not insure a recognition of this fact.

X. Talcott Parsons

The structure of action in terms of the time dimension is the principal concern of Talcott Parsons,[1] by way of contrast to von Wiese and Becker's presentation. Parsons emphasizes the fact that the scientific conceptualization of concrete phenomena presupposes a frame of reference and that this frame of reference, for the sciences of action,[2] is the "unit action". In the conceptual description of any concrete action a minimum of terms is logically implied:

> . . . an 'act' involves logically the following: (1) it implies an agent, an 'actor'. (2) For the purposes of definition the act must have an 'end', a future state of affairs toward which the process of action is oriented. (3) It must be initiated in a 'situation' of which the trends of development differ in one or more important respects from the state of affairs to which the action is oriented, the end. This situation is in turn analyzable into two elements: Those over which the actor has no control, that is which he cannot alter, or prevent from being altered, in conformity with his end; and those over

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1. E.g. Psychology, sociology, economics, and political science.
2. Ibid.

> which he has such control. The former may be termed the 'conditions' of action, the latter the 'means'. Finally (4) there is inherent in the conception of this unit, in its analytical uses, a certain mode of relationship between these elements. That is, in the choice of alternative means to the end, in so far as the situation allows alternatives, there is a 'normative orientation' of action.[1]

There may be some difficulty in equating Parsons' account with those mentioned before, although it may easily be recognized that he is concerned with the same configuration of factors. First, with regard to his use of the term "situation": the division of the factors into "means" and "conditions" may appear to leave out both the actor and the end as constituent elements.

This is not the case--at least not in the way it might first appear. Concerning the actor, Parsons says:

> The unit of reference which we are considering as the actor is not (the spacially delimited biological) organism, but an 'ego' or 'self'. The principal importance of this consideration is that the body of the actor forms, for him, just as much a part of the situation of action as does the 'external environment'. Among the conditions to which this action is subject are those relating to his own body, while among the most important of the means at his disposal are the 'powers' of his own body and, of course, his 'mind'. The analytical distinction between actor and situation quite definitely cannot be identified with the distinction in the biological sciences between organism and environment.[2]

In distinguishing actor from situation, Parsons evidently has in mind the actor's situation, not the observer's.

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1. Parsons, Talcott, The Structure of Social Actions, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1937, p. 43.
2. Ibid.

Does the term "situation" comprehend the "end" as Parsons uses the term? The end is defined as:

> . . . a future state of affairs to which action is oriented by virtue of the fact that it is deemed desirable by the actor(s) but which differs in important respects from the state which they would expect to supervene by merely allowing the predictable trends of the situation to take their course without active intervention.[1]

The end, then, is a certain relationship of desire, means, and conditions--(presumably one in which the desire is satisfied by employment of the means and overcoming of the conditions). Insofar as the means and conditions constitute the situation, the end is to be considered as a part of the actor's situation, Insofar as the desire is a part of the actor, the end is an aspect of his action. It appears that the term "end" is open to the same ambiguities as the terms "value" and "goal"; viz., whether they apply to empirical things toward which action is directed, or to a desired type of action, or to a relationship between action and the empirical thing.

At first blush, "means" and "conditions" appear to be equivalent to "positive" and "negative" value-objects. However, as Parsons defines his terms, the criterion of means and conditions is the criterion of whether or not the actor can control them. This is not the same as the criterion for positive and negative value, which is whether or not the elements promise satisfaction or frustration of the tendency. It is easy enough to conceive of

1. Ibid., p. 75.

situations where things over which the actor has no control are yet means to the satisfaction of his desire. This would be the case, for example, if one's mortal enemy were to slip on the wet grass during a duel, thus enabling one to dispatch him. Either the terms are not equivalent, or the criteria for means and conditions are not correctly stated, and should be the same as for positive and negative value-objects. Both pairs of terms are functionally descriptive, and cannot be applied unequivocally to single empirical objects. Znaniecki points out that positive value-objects may be qualified negatively (and vice versa); while Parsons points out that "practically all the concrete things in the situation are part conditions, part means."[1] If the two pairs of terms are not equivalent, they are at least closely related.[2]

Parsons' conception of the normative orientation of action implies that the actor is motivated by a "sentiment" which is equivalent to the "interest", "purpose", "attitude", or "tendency" already encountered in the other accounts. The phrase "normative orientation" appears to be equivalent to "definition of the situation":

> . . . the term normative will be used as applicable to an aspect, part or element of a system of action if, and only in so far as, it may be held to <u>manifest</u> <u>or</u> <u>otherwise</u> <u>involve</u> <u>a</u> <u>sentiment</u> attributable to one or more actors that something is an end in itself--regardless of its status as a means to any other end (1) for the members of a collectivity, (2) for some portion of the members of a collectivity, or (3) for the collectivity as a unit.[3]

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1. <u>Ibid.</u>, pp. 43 ff.
2. <u>Cf.</u> Chapter IV this thesis.
3. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 75. (Italics are mine)

So conceived, a "norm" has its origin in the desires or sentiments of the actor or actors, and the concept "normative" involves both the person's and group's "definition of the situation", although Parsons apparently has in mind the group's definition:

> A norm is a verbal description of the concrete course of action . . . regarded as desirable, combined with an injunction to make certain future actions conform to this course. An instance of a norm is the statement: 'Soldiers should obey their commanding officers.'[1]

Although Parsons does not use the phrase "definition of the situation", if we accept the fact that the situation is defined in terms of desires, and that desires have their origins in persons, and that norms manifest these desires, then the conclusion that the "normative orientation" of action is equivalent to the "definition of the situation" (both personal and social) seems to follow.

XI. George A. Lundberg

Although George Lundberg has been regarded as one of the most behavioristic of the sociologists, in his latest book, Foundations of Sociology,[2] he praises J. F. Brown for his applications of field theory to sociological material and makes a strong appeal for field theory in sociology on his own behalf.[3] The "situation"[4] or field, according to Lundberg, consists of:

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1. Ibid.
2. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1939.
3. Although he holds that the gestaltists have shown a "tendency to make fallacious assumptions regarding the nature of the situation as a whole". (Cf. Ibid., note 13, p. 130.)
4. Lundberg credits Thomas with original emphasis on the term, ibid., pp. 170-130.

> . . . the responding entity and its total environment regarded as a closed system not influenced from the outside. . . . The field of force is here, as in other sciences, defined as that segment of the universe which for given purposes of study, with the sensory and symbolic apparatus we command at present, we find it convenient or relevant to define as the situation.[1]

It is possible to abstract a situation as a closed system from the universe of data, because both the actor and the observer respond selectively to only a part of their world, by reasons of the limitations of the sense organs and the adjustment problem immediately faced. Lundberg emphasizes that the sociological field, or the situation, is to be regarded as a frame of reference, a construct, which may include purely "sociological" regions that may or may not have definite geographic boundaries.[2] Thus the past and the future are symbolically represented and are responded to by the actor, along with other symbolic representations like gods, demons, taboos, beliefs and ideologies, regardless of any physical existence in their own right. They are to be included as part of the field.[3]

Behavior is to be regarded as a manifestation of energy within a field of force, and is to be explained mainly in terms of the structure of the field in which it takes place, rather than in terms of the individual characteristics of the behaving entity.[4] As a system of energy passing from one form to another within the field of

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1. Ibid., p. 103.
2. Ibid., p. 107.
3. Ibid., pp. 121-122.
4. Ibid., pp. 103-104. Cf. Brown and Lewin on structure of the field, Chapter IV, section 4, this thesis.

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force, behavior is determined by attractions and repulsion--imbalances caused by similarities of differences of any kind: status, age, sex, economic, or any others. Behavior is a reciprocal process--that is, interaction.

Like Parsons, Lundberg emphasizes the conceptual nature of the term situation, as over against the view that there is some definitely delimited portion of concrete existence which should be called a situation. That portion of concrete existence to be included within the situation is determined by the adjustment problem of either the actor or the observer. This selective response is the process of defining the situation, and it takes place with reference to the future and any other things which can be represented symbolically. Lundberg prefers to speak of "tension" rather than "desire", "interest", or some other more common term, and makes it clear that "value" is not the cause of an action, but is used simply as a symbol to designate that toward which people behave so as to retain or increase their possession of it, or so as to decrease or avoid possession of it. The former is called positive value, the latter negative.[1]

Aside from his insistence on the essentially symbolic nature of the terms situation, value, tension, future, Lundberg's account agrees very well with the foregoing accounts. Although Lundberg does not make it explicit, means, conditions or barriers and ends, or goals, are accounted for in field theory.[2]

1. Ibid., p. 272.
2. Cf. Chapter IV, section 4, this thesis.

XII. Summary

The development of the concept situation has been traced from its origin in common usage through the contributions of a number of sociologists and closely allied social scientists. It has become clear that the term is a symbol standing for a construct[1] or frame of reference in terms of which one can think about social behavior. It is not a symbol which applies definitely to a specifically portion of reality which can be recognized as "a situation" if one knows what to look for, as one can recognize "a dog", if he knows what to look for. There is little trouble in deciding how much of reality is the dog and how much is not, but the amount of concrete reality to be included in a situation depends upon the particular problem facing the actor or observer.

As a construct of the observer, the situation involves, at the very minimum: (1) the actor (2) in an environment (3) which he defines with reference to (4) the act by which he proposes to satisfy his desires. In its simplest form, the situation-construct is a combination of the constructs "actor and environment" and "stimulus and response".

In the course of the discussion the terms "subjective" and "objective" have been singled out for later critical treatment,

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1. Webster defines a "construct" as "an intellectual construction; an object of thought which arises by a synthesis or ordering of terms, elements, or factors; as, every sense perception is a construct". Cf. Webster's New International Dictionary of the English Language (Second edition, unabridged), Springfield: G. & C. Merriam Company, 1935, p. 572.

and the phrases "actor's situation", "observer's situation", "within the actor" and "outside the actor" have been adopted for the purpose of this study.

Major problems centering around each of the constituents of the situation-construct have been suggested for consideration in the appropriate chapters to follow.

CHAPTER III

THE SELF IN THE SOCIAL SITUATION

In the comparatively short period in which social psychology has been attempting to deal with problems lying between the more traditional fields of sociology and psychology there has been considerable interest in the origin, development and morphology of the "self" in relation to the social situation. William James, J. M. Baldwin, Josiah Royce, Charles H. Cooley, George H. Mead, Sigmund Freud, R. E. Park, E. W. Burgess, L. S. Cottrell, Florian Znaniecki, and Earle Eubank, to mention only a few, have made important contributions bearing directly on this relationship. It is the purpose of this chapter to examine and compare these contributions as they may throw light on the central problem of this thesis: the significance of the concept situation as a tool in the understanding of sociological phenomena.

I. Organism and Environment

A "situation" always involves an actor in an environment. From the observer's point of view, these two factors may seem to be perfectly distinct. He sees an organism, alive and struggling in an environment which is composed of the inert physical world and other organisms. The moment an analysis of the organism is begun, however, either of its morphological structure or of its characteristic behavior, it is seen that the two factors must be

studied in conjunction. The organism modifies its environment, and the environment modifies the organism--a dialectical process which is the very fabric of the life process. The relative importance of "heredity" and "environment" has been a long standing problem in the biological sciences, and a subject of so much controversy that it can only be mentioned here as essentially the same problem on another level of description as that to be discussed in this chapter. It may be noted, however, that embryological studies by C. M. Child,[1] G. E. Coghill,[2] and others, have emphasized the extremely close interdependence between the living cell or organism and its immediate environment, until it seems that the older question as to which is the more important is based on an assumption of independence between the two which cannot be made.[3]

II. William James

William James' now famous chapter on "The Consciousness of Self" appeared in his Principles of Psychology in 1890.[4] The first thing James points out is that the boundary of the self does not coincide with the boundary of the body or organism. A man's fame, his children, his works--all may be much dearer to him than his own body, and are called "mine" as if they were a part of him. In contrast to this, men have disowned "their very bodies . . . as prisons

1. Cf. "The Individual and Environment from a Physiological Viewpoint", in The Child, The Clinic, and the Court, pp. 127-155. Cf. also Child, C. M., Physiological Foundations of Behavior.
2. Cf. Anatomy and the Problem of Behavior, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1924.
3. Cf. Brown, J. F., Psychology and the Social Order, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1936, pp. 67-68, 260-273.
4. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1890, Vol. I, pp. 291-401.

of clay from which they should some day be glad to escape."[1] The self is thus a fluctuating material.

> In its widest possible sense, however, a man's Self is the sum total of all that he CAN call his, not only his body and his psychic powers, but his clothes and his house, his wife and children, his ancestors and friends, his reputation and works, his lands and horses, and yacht and bank-account.[2]

The constituents of this widest possible self, according to James, may be divided into two classes: the first appearing as the material self, the social self, and the spiritual self; and the second class known as the "pure ego".

The Material Self includes the body, the clothes, the father, mother, wife, and children; the home and all those other material things which in varying degrees are capable of being called "mine".

A man's Social Self is "the recognition which he gets from his mates".[3] Man is a gregarious animal, holds James, who likes to be in the sight of his fellows and who has an innate propensity to get himself favorably noticed by his kind. To deprive a man of all notice would be the most "fiendish punishment (that) could be devised, were such a thing physically possible".[4]

> Properly speaking, a man has as many social selves as there are individuals who recognize him and carry an image of him in their mind. To wound any one of these images is to wound him. But as the individuals

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1. Ibid., p. 291.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., p. 293.
4. Ibid.

> who carry the images fall naturally into classes, we may practically say that he has as many different social selves as there are distinct groups of persons about whose opinion he cares. He generally shows a different side of himself to each of these different groups.[1]

Because a man does show a different self to every different group to which he may belong, his social self may show a division into several selves, which may or may not be in harmony with each other. James mentions the possible social etiology of split personality in this connection.

By the Spiritual Self[2] James does not refer to anything mystical or detached from the body. The spiritual self is "a man's inner or subjective being, his psychic faculties or dispositions, taken concretely". Thus the ability to argue and discriminate, the possession of a "moral sensibility and conscience" or an "indomitable will", are all manifestations of the spiritual self and bring feelings of pride or shame. The spiritual self is "the active element in all consciousness"; it is what "welcomes or rejects" the feelings coming from the outer world and the body.

> It is the home of interest--not the pleasant or the painful, not even pleasure or pain, as such, but that within us to which pleasure and pain, the pleasant and the painful, speak. It is the source of effort and attention, and the place from which appear to emanate the fiats of the will.[3]

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1. Ibid., p. 294.
2. It should be recalled that James wrote in the 1880's, when the word "spiritual" was perhaps more acceptable than now in a scientific treatise. The reader would do well to disregard any special feeling he may have for the word.
3. Ibid., p. 298.

The "spiritual self", as the seat of interest and action, not to be identified with the organism as a whole, apparently answers the qualifications of the "ego" or "actor" in the analytical sense of which Parsons speaks.[1]

The Pure Ego[2] is the sense of personal identity from moment to moment and day to day, a phenomenon more difficult to explain than would appear on the surface.[3] For the purposes of this chapter, the "spiritual self" and the "pure ego" may be considered as practically the same thing.

While James does not use the term "situation", his treatment of the self is certainly situationally oriented. The pure ego and the spiritual self have their seat entirely within the actor; the material self extends over a number of things in the environment, empirically quite outside the actor; while the social self does not even exist without other individuals who carry an image of the actor in their minds. The social environment is thus a sine qua non of the social self and parts of the material self. Furthermore, the social self changes from group to group, or indeed from person to person. "Self feeling" is projected into the environment, and the social environment in turn projects itself into the actor in the

1. Cf. former quotation, II, p. 28.
2. "Ego" is the Greek and Latin word for "I", and appears in many accounts of the self in a different sense from the meaning which the Freudian school has given it. This should be kept in mind in the accounts to follow.
3. The problem of the "Pure Ego" is deeply involved in philosophical issues which James discusses, but which would lead much too far afield for more than passing recognition here.

form of the social self. There are no clear-cut boundaries between the self and the environment, either physical or social.

III. James Mark Baldwin

Four years after the appearance of William James' Principles, James Mark Baldwin's Mental Development in The Child and The Race[1] was published. Baldwin's account of the self was enlarged and extended in his Social and Ethical Interpretations in Mental Development[2] three years later. The central core of Baldwin's theory, as it appears in the latter work, is "the dialectic of personal growth". This is an account of the developmental stages in the origin of the social self.

The Projective[3] stage is first in order of development. In this stage the child has a tendency to recognize differences in the personalities of those about him and to adapt himself to these personal differences. There is a strong sense of uncertainty in his dealings with persons because they stand for a group of experiences unknown to him and unpredictable in their effect upon him.

The Subjective stage is ushered in when the child begins to imitate persons about him. His acts of imitation are accompanied by feelings within his body--stresses, strains, resistances, pains, the feeling of effort, etc. By the assimilation of these subjective

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1. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1894.
2. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1897.
3. Not "projection" in the sense used by the Freudian school. Baldwin's meaning is nearer that of "interojection" in the Freudian sense. Baldwin's term "ejection" has some similarities to the Freudian term "projection".

experiences to his actions in imitation of others, the child becomes aware of his own body and self as differentiated from others and their acts.

<u>The Ejective stage</u> naturally follows when the child attributes the same subjective feelings to others in the performance of their actions as accompany his own. The former "projects" are now "lighted up", "clothed on with the raiment of selfhood, by analogy with the subjective".[1] The child realizes that others also have "me's", he "ejects" the properties of himself into his social environment, and thus acquires a social self.

By attributing selves to others, the child learns that he is a self in their eyes. "The 'ego' and the 'alter' are thus born together," both "essentially social; each is a <u>socius</u> and each is an imitative creation".[2] The ego and the alter are two poles of the same thought, and it is impossible to think of the self without thinking of the other. Not only because they are twin-born, but because by imitation the self is constantly transforming the abilities and attributes of the other into the self, alter and ego are inseparably connected in thought.

> So the dialectic may be read thus: my thought of self is in the main, as to its character as a personal self, filled up with my thought of others, distributed variously as individuals; and my thought of others, as persons, is mainly filled up with myself. In other words, but for certain minor distinctions in the filling, and for certain compelling distinctions between that which is immediate and that which is objective; <u>the ego and the alter are to our thought one and the same thing</u>.[3]

1. <u>Social and Ethical Interpretations in Mental Development</u>, p.14.
2. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 15.
3. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 18.

As alter and ego are both present in each social self, the one which manifests itself in overt action depends upon the other persons involved. If they present "uncertain, ominous, dominating, instructive features, or novel imitative features, then the self is 'subject' over against what is 'projective'.[1] The child adapts himself, he imitates, he serves and learns. If the other persons are felt to be thoroughly known, however, and nothing new is expected from them, if, for example, they are younger brothers and sisters whose total content can be supplied out of the actor's own ego, he supplies that content by "ejecting" or reading a personality into them. In this action the actor's "alter" of a previous time has become the "ego" of the present situation.

> The growing child is able to think of self in varying terms as varying social situations impress themselves upon him; so these varying thoughts of self, when made real in the persons of others, call out, by the regular process of motor discharge, each of its own appropriate attitude.[2]

Ego and alter are inextricably interwoven, present together in thought, present together in interaction, now one receiving overt expression, now the other, but developing together. In the dialectical process there is a growing sense of self which includes both terms, ". . . in short, the real self is the bipolar self, the social self, the socius".[3]

Not only the self, but the actual wants are "in every case the outcome of the social situation", a "function of the situation as a whole".[4] Baldwin says "it is absurd to endeavour to express the

1. Ibid., p. 24.
2. Ibid., p. 30.
3. Ibid., p. 30.
4. Ibid., p. 31.

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entire body of his (the actor's) wants as a fixed quantity under such a term of description as 'selfish' or 'generous', or other, which has reference to one class only of the varied situations of his life".[1] The self which actively manifests itself in any situation is a union of these socially conditioned wants or interests and the social suggestions operating in the present situation. Moreover, the self which manifests itself in a given situation is just as truly a part of the self as any other, whether it comes from "habit" or "suggestion".

Baldwin proceeds to give the name "habitual self" to the "solidified mass of personal material" which has grown out of past experience of both poles--the ego and the alter--and which the actor has "worked into a systematic whole by his series of acts". This habit series has clustered around the ego pole, as it were. When the self finds itself in a situation where an unknown alter is at the other pole, it is for the moment in the "projective stage", and the actions it then exhibits are called the "accomodating self".[2]

But the self is not yet complete, and does not become so until the child is placed in situations where he is forced to obey against his will. In this case, neither his habitual self nor his accomodating self is adequate to the situation. When this new dominating alter is taken into the self the child becomes a moral,

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1. Ibid., p. 31. (A statement like this in the heydey of instinct theory is notable indeed.)
2. Ibid., p. 40.

ethical being. In the absence of the father or others who coerce him, the child asks himself how they would do and hesitates to act as either his habitual self or accomodating self would dictate.

> . . . he begins to grow accustomed to the presence of something in him which represents his father, mother, or in general the lawgiving personality. . . . The socius becomes more and more intimate as a law-abiding self of his own.[1]

This new self is the "conscience",[2] it represents the "ought" as a moral command of the social environment and the weight of tradition. It is a part of the self, and like the other parts, is ejected into the environment so that the actor expects others also to act according to moral imperatives similar to his own.

> The 'ought' comes right up out of the 'must'. Transfer the self to be obeyed from the environment to the inner throne, make it an ego instead of an alter, and its authority is not a whit changed in nature.[3]

And so the self is complete and autonomous, including both the ego and alter, arising out of the dialectical process of "projection", "subjective filling out", and "ejection", and manifesting itself in three principal ways: either as the "habitual self", the "accomodating self", or the "dominant, lawgiving, moral self".

Comparing Baldwin's account with that of James, it may be noted that both emphasize the process of "ejection", to use Baldwin's term--that is, the self and its attributes are extended to persons and things in the environment. The reciprocal process,

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1. Ibid., p. 55.
2. Supra, p. 57.
3. Supra, p. 58.

that is, the internalization of things empirically in the environment, by imitation or a like process, is not emphasized by James, although his account of the social self implies that the judgments of others are made one's own judgments.

What James calls the "spiritual self" may be equated to the "ego pole" as Baldwin describes it, as they are both embodied in organic feelings most closely connected with the processes of wanting, straining, desiring, putting forth effort. The "accomodating self" postulated by Baldwin may be directed toward either persons or physical objects, and so may embody parts of both the "material and social selves" as described by James. Baldwin's distinction is one of function. James' distinction is one of content. Baldwin says, amplifying James' account of the social self, that the persons who occupy the alter position "divide roughly into two classes: those from whom he learns, and those on whom he practices."[1] By implication, it may be supposed that the material objects could be divided in the same way. The two accounts thus supplement each other.

Baldwin is one of the first to emphasize what seems to the writer to be a most important idea: that the self is contantly transforming the abilities and attributes of the alter into the self. The self thus becomes like the alter, and the different alters with which he comes in contact will thus be reflected in the make-up of the self. If the formal make-up or structure of the situation (or totality of alters) can be characterized, it

1. Ibid., p. 23.

would seem that it might be postulated that in time, the formal structure of the self, or its "morphology" would come to approximate the structure of the situation. That hypothesis is the burden of this chapter, and the following material adds weight to it.

IV. Josiah Royce

One of James' colleagues at Harvard University was Josiah Royce, whose book The World and the Individual[1] appeared the same year as Baldwin's Mental Development in The Child and The Race. Royce's interests were primarily philosophical and ethical, but in certain respects his treatment of the self agrees quite closely with that of James and Baldwin.[2] After a discussion of the traditional division of the self into the "higher and the lower" selves, Royce concludes that the so-called "higher" self is something which comes from without the individual:

> We all of us know, or ought to recognize, how powerless we are, or should have been, to win any higher selfhood, unless influences from without--whether you know them as mother love, or conceive them as the promptings of the divine Spirit, or view them as the influences of friends and of country--have brought into us a truth and an ideality that is in no ordinary sense our own private creation.[3]

Moreover, Royce recognizes "many various selves, all clustered together in what we call the life of a single individual":

1. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1894, Lecture VI, "The Human Self," pp. 245-277.

2. Royce says: "My friend, Professor Baldwin of Princeton University, has independently worked out a theory of the psychological origin of Self Consciousness, and a doctrine about the evolution of the reactions of Ego and Alter--a theory which I am on the whole prepared to accept, and which agrees with the considerations that I myself have been led to develop." Op. cit., p. 261.

3. Ibid., p. 252.

> (We) have in some sense, as many selves as we have decidedly various offices, duties, types of training and of intellectual activity, or momentous variations of mood and conditions.[1]

There is a "certain totality" of facts, holds Royce, which one views as more or less a part of himself as distinguished from the rest of the world of Being--one's countenance, his physical needs, his body, and his clothing--change in any of which materially changes one's view of himself. In addition to this external or corporeal Self which is empirically accessible, there is an equally empirical and phenomenal Self" of the inner life, "the series of states of consciousness, the feelings, the thoughts, desires, memories, emotions, moods".[2] But the Self and not-Self are not always the same. On occasion one may dramtically address himself as if he were another, criticize and condemn himself, or observe himself in a relatively impersonal fashion, as if he were a wholly alien personality.

The vascillation between the Self and the non-Self are to be explained by the fact that the distinction between the two has a Social origin.[3] The ability to distinguish either the Self or the not-Self depends upon a memory or imagination of the literal social relations in which one has engaged. Self-consciousness arises under the persistent influence of one's social fellows. By imitation and "feeding upon social models" the self grows, always with consciousness of the alter a step in advance of consciousness

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1. Ibid., p. 253.
2. Ibid., p. 257.
3. Ibid., p. 261.

of the Ego. By questioning, learning, and practicing upon others the things he sees about him, the self, composed of both Ego and Alter, is developed.

> In any literal social situation, namely, one is aware of ideas, designs, interests, beliefs, or judgments, whose expression is observed in the form of acts, words, looks, and the like, belonging to the perceived organisms of one's fellow-men. In strong contrast, both in the way in which they appear in the field of our sense-perceptions, and in the current interests and feelings with which they are accompanied and blended, are the acts, words, and other expressions, of our own organism, together with the ideas, designs, and beliefs which accompany these acts.[1]

Both Alter and Ego are embodied in any social relation, therefore, and find their place as two masses of mental contents, empirically given in experience. Attached to the experience of the Ego are all the "warm and enduring organic sensations" coming from one's own body, and strengthening the contrast between Ego and Alter, in spite of the fact that the Alter is given in experience.

One carries these literal social situations into his inner life, and "lives in the company of imaginary persons," epitomizing, abstracting, idealizing, reorganizing them in countless ways:

> Hereby the contrast between Ego and Alter, no longer confined to the relations between my literal neighbor and myself, can be refined into the conscious contrasts between present and past Self, between my self-critical and my naive Self, between my higher and lower Self, or between my Conscience and my impulses.[2]

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1. Ibid., pp. 262-263.
2. Ibid., p. 265.

As directed toward the outer world, however, the Self is primarily a matter of purpose. Consciousness thus has its "Internal Meaning". A purpose seeks expression in other objects, however, and thus has its "External Meaning".[1]

> Primarily, then, the contrast of Self and not-Self comes to us as the contrast between the Internal and the External meaning of this present moment's purpose. In the narrowest sense, the Self is just your own present imperfectly expressed pulsation of meaning and purpose--this striving, this love, this hate, this hope, this fear, this inquiry, this inner speech of the instant's will, this thought, this deed, this desire--in brief, this idea taken as an Internal Meaning. In the widest sense, the not-Self is all the rest of the divine whole of conscious life--the Other, the outer World of expressed meaning taken as in contract with what, just at this instant of our human form of consciousness, is observed, and, relatively speaking, possessed.[2]

Although Royce's treatment of the self is deeply submerged in ethical considerations (most of which have been omitted here) it is surprisingly sociological in its interpretation. Royce and James were closely connected in their academic life at Harvard. It is now known to what extent one might have influenced the other, but their accounts of the self are highly similar in their recognition of the inner self which is the seat of desires, etc., the "material self", and the many "social selves".

Royce's account is similar to that of Baldwin in the emphasis on the taking of the alter into the self and making it a part of the personality. The "naive", "lower", "impulsive" self is thus added to and controlled by the "self-critical", "higher" "conscience".

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1. Supra, p. 270.
2. Supra, p. 272.

The self which is built up by "feeding on social models" will include those models who afford outlet for the purposes and desires of the impulsive self, no doubt, as well as those alters who dominate, suppress and prohibit. The "ego pole of the habitual self", the "dominating self", and the "accomodating self" postulated by Baldwin thus find their counterparts in Royce's "naive, lower, impulsive" self, the "higher, self-critical, conscience", and the part of the alter models who afford an outlet to the desiring self (not explicitly distinguished by Royce)..

V. Charles Horton Cooley

Cooley's account of the self, appearing in his Human Nature and the Social Order,[1] is easily equated to the foregoing accounts. Cooley uses the term "I" in much the same sense that James uses "spiritual self", Baldwin "ego pole of habitual self", and Royce "lower, impulsive, naive self".

> 'I' means primarily self-feeling, or its expression, and not the body, clothes, treasures, ambition, honors, and the like, with which this feeling may be connected. . . . it refers chiefly to opinions, purposes, desires, claims, and the like, concerning matters that involve no thought of the body. I think or feel so and so; I wish or intend so and so; I want this or that; are typical uses, the self-feeling being associated with the view, purpose, or object mentioned.[2]

However, the "I" is only one part of the self:

> It should also be remembered that 'my' and 'mine' are as much the names of the self as 'I', and these, of course, commonly refer to miscellaneous possession.[3]

1. New York: Charles Scrinber's Sons, 1902.
2. Ibid., pp. 140-145.
3. Supra, p. 145.

Cooley's most distinctive contribution to the theory of the self is his account of the "looking-glass self":

> In a very large and interesting class of cases the social reference takes the form of a somewhat definite imagination of how one's self--that is any idea he appropriates--appears in a particular mind, and the kind of self-feeling one has is determined by the attitude toward this attributed to that other mind. A social self of this sort might be called the reflected or looking-glass self: 'Each to each other a looking glass, Reflects the other that doth pass.'[1]

This self, which is seen by the actor in the reactions of other persons, has three principal elements, according to Cooley. The first is the actor's imagination of his appearance to the other person; the second is the actor's imagination of the judgment which the other person passes upon him; and the third is the actor's self-feeling resulting from that imagined judgment. This self-feeling may be pride or mortification at appearing so to the other person.

Cooley emphasizes that it is only <u>within</u> the general life that the social self is possible, for it arises in the process of communication between persons and can find its scope only in a social environment:

> That the 'I' of common speech has a meaning which includes some sort of reference to other persons is involved in the very fact that the word and the ideas it stands for are phenomena of language and the communicative life. . . . Where there is no communication there can be no nomenclature and no developed thought. What we call 'me', 'mine', or 'myself' is, then, not something separate from the general life but the most interesting part of it, a part whose interest arises from the very fact that it is both general and individual.[2]

1. Supra, pp. 151-152.
2. Ibid., p. 149.

The logical, processual, developmental relation between the self and the environment is thus emphasized by Cooley as it was by Baldwin.

Cooley's "I" has the same characteristics as the "spiritual self" posited by James, the "ego pole" posited by Baldwin, and the "ego" posited by Royce. It is the motive aspect of the self--that part concerned with feelings of effort, of desire, of striving. It drives and impels to action. The parts of the self expressed by "my" and "mine" are to be equated to the "material self" as James described it, and the "looking-glass self" corresponds to James' "social self".

That the self-feeling aroused by the social reflection may be one of pride, hence superiority, or one of mortification, hence inferiority, indicates that Cooley's reflected social self, like the material self may be classed either the "dominating self" or the "accomodating self" as described by Baldwin. When the social looking-glass tells one that he is superior, or may be proud of himself, it may be supposed that the "dominating self" may tend to impose or "eject" the moral rules for the behavior of those inferior to him, to use Baldwin's terminology. When the looking-glass tells one that he is inferior and should be ashamed of himself, the "accomodating self" is shown. Cooley's account of the self is thus in these respects quite compatible with those of James, Baldwin, and Royce.

VI. George Herbert Mead

Because Mead was not a systematic writer, his works, with the exception of a few journal articles, did not appear in published form until after his death,[1] but he was a contemporary of James, Baldwin, and Cooley. The central contention in all of Mead's work is that the social act is absolutely primary in the genetic sense: organisms acting together come first, and out of this social process meaning, value, self, mind and consciousness arise as products. Mead criticizes Darwin for assuming a consciousness in an organism prior to the social act,[2] and also Cooley and James for failing to account for the origin of the self.[3]

The self is by no means the same as the physiological organism, according to Mead, although of course it would not exist without an organism. An organism may, and does, act in a very intelligent fashion before the self appears. The organism, before the appearance of the self, may react to parts of its body as stimuli, but insofar as it does, they are regarded as parts of the environment in general.

> The individual organism does not set itself as a whole over against the environment; it does not as a whole become an object to itself (and hence is not self-conscious); it is not a whole a stimulus to which it reacts.[4]

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1. Two volumes, Mind, Self, and Society, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1934, and The Philosophy of the Act, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1938, were gathered together from Mead's miscellaneous papers and student's notes of his lectures by his colleagues in the Philosophy Department at the University of Chicago. The material included here is from these two volumes.

2. Mind, Self and Society, p. 18.

3. Ibid., pp. 173, 224.

4. Ibid., p. 136.

Until there is the ability to be an object to one's self, there is no self. How does the self then arise?

The self arises in the social process, according to Mead. By "taking the role of the other", that is, by responding to one's actions as another would respond to them, the individual is enabled to gain a perspective, as it were, from which he can look back upon himself. He has become an object to himself and sees himself as others see him. There are really no new factors in the equation, that is, there are no elements that were not present in the interaction between the two organisms. Both roles are played overtly in the concrete situation. The difference is that this situation, containing two organisms who were objects to each other, whose actions had meaning for each other, who each reacted to the future action of the other and so regulated the progress of the present action--this social situation has become <u>internalized in one organism</u>, who is able to take the roles of both. "Mind is nothing but the importation of this external process into the conduct of the individual so as to meet the problems that arise."[1]

> The organization of the self is simply the organization, by the individual organism, of the set of attitudes toward its social environment, or as a functioning element in the process of social experience and behavior constituting that environment--which it is able to take.[2]

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1. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 188.
2. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 91.

The ability to take the role of the other is limited at first. In his play activities, the child takes first one role and then another, and is in succession the fireman, the fire engine, the fire horse, the bear, the Indian, the policeman, and so on through the repertoire of "others" with which he is acquainted. When he begins to engage in organized games, however, like baseball, he is forced to take the role of not only one other at a time, but of all the others upon whom his actions depend for their effectiveness. The process of "generalizing the other" has begun. This process of incorporation of roles and generalization of the roles does not stop until it encompasses the organized community or social group within which the individual lives, and may even be extended to the world at large by a process of religious identification with all others, and extended to the material world by treating the objects of nature as social beings, as does the poet.[1] So far as the "generalized other" is organized and consistent in its activity, the individual personality will be organized, unified and consistent. The self is the individual reflection of the general systematic pattern of social or group behavior in which it and all the others are involved. The structure of the self is the structure of the situation--the structure of the social process as a whole.

Mead divides the self into the "I" and the "me". The "Me" is the part of the self which is composed of the roles of all the "others" which one himself takes. The "Me" is the social situation

1. Ibid., pp. 279-280.

mirrored in the individual. As Mead puts it, the "Me" "determines the sort of expression which can take place, sets the stage, and gives the cue."[1] The "Me" is the set of social controls within the person, in terms of which he criticizes himself and controls his impulsive activity.

The "I" is the act of the self which takes place on the stage set by the "Me". It is the response issuing out of the life process of the present moment, and is always to some degree uncertain and unpredictable. The "I" is never brought into direct experience, but always appears a moment later as a memory image, and by this time is already a part of the "Me". Mead says:

> The sensitivity of the organism brings parts of itself into the environment. It does not, however, bring the life-process itself into the environment, and the complete imaginative presentation of the organism is unable to present the living of the organism. It can conceivably present the conditions under which living takes place, but not the unitary life-process.[2]

The "I" is thus the more or less unknown, impulsive, and unpredictable response to the set of controls represented by the "Me". Together, the two are a process which constitutes the self. Without the first there would be nothing novel in experience; without the second, there would be no conscious responsibility.

The fact that every self in the situation is a reflection of it, or is constituted in terms of it, is not at all incompatible with or destructive of individuality.[3] For every self has a

1. Ibid., p. 210.
2. Ibid., pp. 174-175.
3. Ibid., p. 201.

peculiar place and standpoint in that organized structure, and so reflects a particular and unique aspect of it.

Mead holds that a multiple personality is in a certain sense normal, for while the larger community to which one belongs may remain more or less the same, and so preserve the unity of the personality, still the self does not express itself in full in every particular situation.

> We carry on a whole series of different relationships to different people. We are one thing to one man and another thing to another. There are parts of the self which exist only for the self in relationship to itself. We divide ourselves up in all sorts of different selves with reference to our acquaintances. We discuss politics with one and religion with another.[1]

It will be readily seen that Mead's "I" corresponds closely to the "spiritual self" of James, to the "ego pole of the habitual self" of Baldwin, to the "naive, impulsive self" of Baldwin, and to the "I" of Cooley. Mead explicitly compares the "Me" to the Freudian "censor",[2] or as it later came to be known, the "Super-Ego", although he takes issue with Freud as to the nature of the "Id" or "I". Mead holds that the Freudians confine their attention to the sexual life and self assertion in its violent form, whereas in the normal situation, the "I" may not be a sexual response at all. As the "I" is simply the present life process it has many points in common with the Freudian "Id", but is much more inclusive in the type of behavior it manifests. The "Me" includes the roles of both persons and things, and so is comparable to James'

1. Ibid., p. 143.
2. Ibid., pp. 210-211, 255.

"material and social selves" and to the broader self of Cooley, which includes the "mine" and the "looking-glass self". Mead's "Me" is also to be equated with Baldwin's "accomodating and dominating selves" inasmuch as the "Me" includes those aspects in the situation which further the action as well as those which are conditions to it.

VII. Sigmund Freud

Freud describes the personality in terms of a dynamic system in which every action, trivial, banal, or pathological, is fully determined by factors which may or may not be recognized by the individual. That is, part of the determining factors are conscious while a great number of them are unconscious, and hence less subject to rational control. The energy of the system is derived from two inherited instincts, Eros, the love and life urge, and the Death urge.[1] Both of these primal, unsweeping urges comprise the Id system. The Id is the unconscious source of blind, hedonistic wishes and desires. The Id knows only one law--that of gratification. The tendency of the individual to satisfy the Id desires is called the Pleasure Principle.

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1. Freud, S., Civilization and Its Discontents, (trans. by Joan Riviere), New York: De Vinne-Hallenbeck Company, 1930, p. 97. Also, Freud, S., The Future of an Illusion, Edinburgh: Horace Liveright and the Institute of Psychoanalysis, 1928, p. 11. Also, Freud, S., Reflections on War and Death, (trans. by A. A. Brill and Alfred B.Kuttner), New York: Moffat, Yard and Company, 1918, pp. 60-61. For an exposition of Freud's theories in short compas, cf. Hendricks, Ives, Facts and Theories of Psychoanalysis, New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

The child, born with this original equipment, is not permitted gratification of his desires for long. He satisfies both food desires and infantile sexual desires at the mother's breast, both of which are denied free gratification when he is weaned. With this outlet for the Id tensions blocked, the child finds another outlet in anal gratification, but the enforcement of regular toilet habits by the parents, he is again frustrated. The dynamic Id tensions now center about the genitals and gratification is obtained by masturbation, but this practice is also forbidden by the parents. The Id tensions are finally blocked in and the child passes into the "latency period" at about the age of five or six years, not to manifest conspicuous sexuality again until the period of Adolescence.

In the process of coming into contact with frustrating agencies, the self has been differentiated from the environment, and another dynamic system has been built up--the Ego. The function of the Ego is to mediate between the blind urges of the Id and the demands of reality, providing the urges with gratification whenever possible, and blocking their expression when that expression would cause pain. Thus, the Ego is said to be governed by the Reality Principle.

While still in the period of Infant Sexuality, the male child is supposed to form a sexual attachment to the mother and an intense hatred for his father, whom he blames for his frustration.[1]

1. The Œdipus Complex. The corresponding attachment of the female child for the father and hatred for the mother is known as the Electra Complex. The process is somewhat more complicated in the case of the female than in the case of the male.

At the same time the father is feared for the vengeance he might take if the hatred is shown. In order to control the expression of hate, the child takes the father image into his own personality in the form of the Super-Ego. Hate of the father is accompanied by a love for him at the same time, however, a phenomena called "ambivalence"; and this love of the father facilitates the identification with him necessary to the formation of the Super-Ego in his image. It is the formation of the Super-Ego which makes the transition from the period of Infant Sexuality to the period of Latency possible. The Super-Ego represents the social controls as symbolized by the father within the personality structure.

In spite of the aura of sexuality surrounding Freud's account, which is entirely missing from the previous accounts, it is not hard to see certain close resemblances. The self grows out of the situation (a word which Freud does not use) and this accomplished by the internalization of factors in the situation with which the organism is forced to contend. Freud emphasizes the frustrative aspects of the environment almost to the exclusion of other aspects, but this is perhaps partly explained by the fact that he was primarily interested in pathology which arose from the frustrative aspects of Victorian, middle class, nineteenth century Viennese society.[1] In spite of a radically different type

1. Cf. Horney, Karen, New Ways in Psychoanalysis, New York: W. W. Norton Company, 1939, for an introduction to the ways in which psychoanalytic theory is being modified and incorporated into the more pedestrian type of social psychology and psychiatry.

of approach, Freud arrived at a theory of the structure of the personality which is recognizably similar to those which have been reviewed.

Baldwin, the writer believes, has given a brilliant anticipation of the Freudian theory of personality structure, and one closely corresponding to it.[1] The similarity is strongest between what Baldwin calls the "dominating, lawgiving self" and the Freudian "Super-Ego". Both are modeled after the father image, both take their content from cultural prohibitions, and both exercise a restraint upon the other functions of the personality. The "accomodating self" performs practically the same functions as the Freudian "Ego"--a function of providing means of protection and expression to the more primitive original self--the part of the self which consists of adaptive techniques. The "habitual self" does not correspond quite so closely to the Freudian "Id". The difference, however, is one of content and not of function. The former includes both original and socially conditioned wants, desires, and assertive tendencies of all kinds, whereas the "Id" is conceived by Freud as a sort of welling reservoir of original, non-moral, desires and urges, largely sexual in nature, and expressing love and hate in their most primitive unbridled form.

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1. The possibility of cross fertilization of ideas between Freud and Baldwin seems to be most meager. In 1897 Freud was still thinking primarily in terms of the "conscious" and "unconscious" rather than in terms of "Id", "Ego", and "Super-Ego". Moreover, very little was known of Freud in the United States until about 1909 when he lectured here, and shortly after when Dr. A. A. Brill began to translate and champion Freud's works in this country. Whether Freud was influenced by Baldwin is not known, but again, this does not seem likely.

However, both the "habitual self" (especially in its earliest form) and the Id are most closely centered around the self-pole and embody the dynamic motive aspect of the self. The "Ego" or "accomodating self" and the Super-Ego or "dominating self" have originally the nature of the alter, and become functioning parts of the self only by a process of internalizing actions, techniques, characteristics and attitudes of persons in the environment.

Paradoxical as it may sound, James' "spiritual self" bears a good deal of resemblance to the Freudian "Id" and in its functional, if not in its "moral" aspect. Both the "Id" and the "Spiritual Self" are the "home of interest", the "source of activity", the innermost part of the self which carries with it the feeling of assertion, wanting, or willing, and form the part of the self "to which pleasure and pain speak".[1] And as James' "spiritual self" may be equated to Baldwin's "ego pole", Royce's "naive, impulsive self" or "Ego"[2], and Cooley's and Mead's "I", so also may the Freudian "Id" be equated to them in its functional character.

James', Royce's, and Cooley's distinction between the "material" and "social" selves is based upon a different criterion from the distinctions drawn by Baldwin and Freud, and hence do not correspond to either the "accomodating self" and "dominating self", or to the "Ego" and "Super-Ego". The basis of the former

1. Cf. previous quotation from James.

2. The reader should recall that "Ego" is as bread a word as "I", or self. The similarities pointed out between these accounts is not based upon the name given but upon the way the postulated portion of the personality functions. It should cause no confusion that Royce's "Ego" does not correspond with the Freudian "Ego".

distinction is whether or not the parts of the self taken over from or identified with things in the environment have a material or a social content primarily. The basis of Baldwin's and Freud's distinction is a functional one: whether or not these material and social things aid or hinder the expression of the desires represented by the "ego-pole" or the "Id". The content of the Freudian "Ego" or "accomodating self" might thus be both material and social, while the same holds true for the "Super-Ego" or "dominating self". The distinctions complement each other. They are not contradictory.

VIII. Robert E. Park and Ernest W. Burgess

In their Introduction to the Science of Sociology,[1] Park and Burgess distinguish between the "individual" and the "person". Every individual who comes into the world as a biological organism acquires a position in society which is his "status". When the individual acquires status, he becomes a person. The term "person" is taken from the Latin *persona*, referring to a player in a drama. The players in the early dramas wore masks to designate their personality, and played a number of different roles by assuming different masks.[2] In society, every person more or less consciously plays a role, according to the expectations of others, and according to

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1. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1921 (Seventh Impression, July, 1930), p. 55.
2. *Cf.* Park, R. E., "Behind Our Masks," *Survey*, LVI (May, 1926), 135-139. Also, Jameson, S. H., *Introduction to Social Interaction*, Eugene: University of Oregon Mimeograph (unpublished), 1937, pp. 30-41. Also, Linton, E. Lynn, "Masks," *The Gentleman's Magazine*, CCXLII (January-June, 1877), 186-195.

his own desire to maintain or raise his status in their eyes. In the end, the masks one wears, the roles one plays, become a permanent part of the personality.[1] Masks thus do not always involve duplicity, although they are often used for the purpose of concealing one's true feelings or abilities. One's conception of his role in society is his "self", according to Park and Burgess, and is an essential part of personality, although not the whole of it.

As the conception of the self is based upon the person's status in the social groups of which he is a member, "it follows that an individual may have many 'selves' according to the groups to which he belongs and the extent to which each of these groups is isolated from the others".[2] The individual is not, moreover, influenced in the same degree by every group to which he belongs.

If the personality is to be conceived as including both individual aspects and "person" aspects, the analysis of Park and Burgess does not differ radically from the previous accounts. The emphasis on the status assigning aspect of the social environment stresses the evaluation placed upon the reflected self as Cooley expresses it. The particular "self-feeling" which the reflected self arouses depends upon the status assigned the actor by those in his social environment. What we have called the "structure of the self" does not receive explicit treatment from Park and Burgess, but their account supplements those already examined.

1. Park, op. cit., p. 137.
2. Park and Burgess, op. cit., p. 55.

IX. Florian Znaniecki

According to Znaniecki, the social agent in the social situation is not only a subject of action directed toward others as social objects, but is also an object of their action as subjects. When the actor realizes this, he is said to be "self-conscious", and his own personality, as he imagines it viewed by others, thereupon enters into his social situation. His own person, as it appears to others, becomes one of the factors upon which the satisfaction of his social tendency in the expected reactions of others depends. Znaniecki adopts Cooley's term: "the reflected Self" to refer to the self viewed as an object, but adds that it applies as well to a group as to a person, as Park and Burgess also indicate.

The reflected self of a human being or a collectivity has been constructed out of past experience in which there has been a realization that the self is an object of others, and its content is thus chiefly social. In spite of certain factors, such as a name, a particular origin, etc., the reflected self tends to fall into a type classification or into a combination of them, based upon the group to which the person belongs, or the type of functions or qualities which he exhibits. The same holds true of collectivities. Znaniecki also emphasizes that "in a particular action only a certain aspect of the reflected self comes into consideration--the aspect which is supposed to have a bearing

upon the expected reaction of the social object."[1] Since the situation, according to Znaniecki, is coterminous with the extent of the action, it may be said that the self manifested differs with each situation. Znaniecki holds that there is a tendency for this particular aspect of the self to persist throughout the action. It is only with difficulty that the subject can take a different view of himself, once a particular view has been taken for the purposes of the action. The reflected self, like all other elements in the situation, is subject to evaluation. It usually has a positive value before the action, says Znaniecki, except in relatively rare cases of voluntary self abasement, or in the case of active subordination to the will of a superior.

Znaniecki's treatment is so similar to Cooley's and Park and Burgess' that little comment is needed. It is incomplete when compared with the foregoing treatments, but quite agrees with them. Questions might be raised to the statement that the self usually has a positive value before the action, in view of the fact that there are many social situations in which the actor plays a subordinate role, perhaps with even a strong feeling of inferiority or shame, and in fact is largely motivated by the desire to regain or establish a higher status. Reflected selves, as Cooley points out, may evoke either a feeling of pride, or a feeling of shame.

1. "The Social Situation" in The Laws of Social Psychology, pp. 79-95.

X. Earle E. Eubank

In his Concepts of Sociology,[1] Eubank proposes a view of the "single human being" in some ways quite similar to that of James. The single human being can be viewed as a "hierarchy of selves", according to Eubank, first the physical, biological self which is called the "biohom", second the social self, called the "socius" after Giddings,[2] and third, the "personality", corresponding to James' "spiritual self". Eubank's "biohom" is not so inclusive as James' "material self", as it includes only the biological body and not the things called "mine". The term "personality" is used in quite a different sense from that in which Park and Burgess use it, and is not so satisfactorily defined as is James' "spiritual self" to which it corresponds. It is referred to as the "distilled essence" of the single human being.

This "ascending hierarchy of selves" composes the single human being, but he is also divided "vertically, so to speak, by the succession of events, experiences, and situations in which he participates".[3] The side of the self which is shown in a particular situation is called a "person" or a "situation-Self", corresponding to the meaning Park and Burgess give to the term "person". The biohom, the socius, and the personality are all involved and express themselves to some degree in any given situation self. Eubank believes that the term "situation-self" is to be preferred to "group-self" as more inclusive, since there are situations

1. New York: D. C. Heath and Company, 1932, pp. 106-110.
2. Cf. Giddings, F. H., Inductive Sociology, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1901, pp. 9-10.
3. Eubank, op. cit., p. 106.

in which a self may be manifested which are not primarily group situations.

> The true unit of any group is not the socius which can never appear in his entirety at any one time; nor the psycho-physical biohom, that individual which is the self stripped of his social accretions.[1]

The situation self is the "true societary unit . . . the lowest common denominator when we undertake sociological analysis of any group".

Eubank calls attention to the way in which the "person" reflects the situation. A letter written to a maiden aunt will be sober and formal, while one written to a bosom friend will be intimate and self-abandoned. The self which appears in church is a different self from that which appears at the Saturday night "stag". Moreover, these "situation-selves" are relatively constant for that type of situation. This is explained by the fact that "each situation, by its very nature, provides a characteristic and fairly constant set of stimuli, hence the evoked responses will also be characteristic of that situation and fairly constant to it".

Although these situation selves may differ diametrically from each other, this is not to be interpreted as *prima facie* evidence of insincere "mask" behavior, for each represents only the particular elements in the personality brought out by this particular situation, and "each is authentic within its context and situation".[2]

1. *Ibid.*, pp. 108-109.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 109. Eubank goes so far as to hold that "No true person that the socius may present in any situation is a mask." (p. 109) This contention is intended as a flat rejection

Eubank would surely not deny that there are many cases where the actor intends to deceive, and in this sense at least "wears a mask". If it is assumed that he would admit that there are such cases, then his statement: "No true person that the socius may present in any situation is a mask" demands an explanation. It must mean either that the socius may present some persons that are not "true" persons, or that the action of deceiving should not be called a "mask". The first alternative is rejected, as the entire tone of Eubank's argument is that all the persons a socius may present, no matter how inconsistent, are still "authentic" . . . "true persons". "Each one is a veritable and bona fide self, even when in diametric opposition to some other self."[1] The action of deceiving in a given situation must then be a "true self" in that situation.[2]

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of the implication of the etymology of the term "person". Eubank says: "The word person is derived from the Latin persona, the name of the mask worn by performers upon the stage. The implication of this etymology would be that each person as defined above is but a mask for the true self behind the mask." (p.109) As a matter of fact the etymology of the term does not necessarily have this implication. In the Greek dramas where masks were employed, all of the players wore masks, and there was no implication that they were attempting to hide anything. The theatres were large, and large masks with mouths fashioned like megaphones were employed to make it possible for those in the back rows to see and hear. The masks were thus a means of indentifying and expressing the character. Within the context of the play, the "persona" were the real players. The masks were not used to show that one character was deceiving another character. Neither the etymology of "person" nor that of "mask" necessarily implies duplicity. If "wearing masks" applies equally to behavior expressing the personality in the situation and behavior concealing certain desires, then Eubank's statement would appear to be unjustified, and on the contrary, it may be said that all "persons" are masks, including behavior sometimes called "natural", "maskless" or "frank".

1. Ibid., p. 109.
2. Cf. Baldwin, this chapter.

This confusion of words, like others which have been noted in this study, is traceable in part to the failure to state the point of view. If the actor were to express himself, he might say that in some situations he is his "true self", while in other situations he wears "a mask". To the scientific observer, this means simply that some situations affect the actor's behavior in one way, some in another. From the viewpoint of the scientific observer, one self is as "true" as another, for each appears in a given type of situation, and by "true" the scientific observer understands "that which exists under given conditions", if, indeed, he uses the term at all. If, under given conditions, the actor "wears a mask", then that action is also included in the actor's "true self", according to the scientific observer. It is the actor's "true self" to wear a mask in that particular situation.

XI. E. W. Burgess and Leonard S. Cottrell

Burgess and Cottrell utilize the concept of "role" in much the same way that Mead uses it, but with a more specific, experimentally verified content.[1] A role is described as a pre-established reaction pattern with accompanying expectations of complementary roles to be played by others. These reaction patterns and expectations are conceived to be "complex integrations of wishes and attitudes appropriate to a given role in a given field of social interaction, such as the response reaction".[2]

1. Predicting the Success or Failure in Marriage, New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1939, pp. 174-177.
2. Ibid., p. 174.

According to the authors, every person has a repertoire of roles which have been taken over, more or less unconsciously, from the early social environment, particularly the family, and made more or less permanent. They may conform to cultural stereotypes, or may be highly individual. In any given situation a role may be manifested in composite form, or even in a form antithetical to that the actor manifested in the situation from which the role was taken.

A role appears to have the nature of a well defined, more or less permanent "situation-self". In some ways the term "role" is to be preferred to the term "situation-self", however, because it places emphasis on the way the individual acts directly rather than on what he "is". In order to describe what a situation self "is", one must describe the action, and the term "role" implies directly that a "situation-self" is nothing more or less than a way of acting.

It is to be noted that persons have a repertoire of roles, some of which are antithetical to those usually overtly played. If the person "takes the role of the other", as Mead holds, it is to be expected that in time these "other" roles, which may be antithetical, also become a part of the personality, and appear in situations where they are appropriate.

XII. Summary

On the basis of the foregoing treatments of the self, some of which have been speculatively derived and some of which have

grown out of intensive observation and case work, it is suggested that a personality can be regarded as a totality of ways of acting, which can be divided into three major habit systems with regard to the way in which they manifest themselves:

(1) The system of motives which arise out of the physiological functioning of the self as an organism, felt as desires, needs, stresses, impulses, stirrings to action of all kinds.

(2) The system of means-roles which are taken over from persons in the social situation and consist of ways or techniques of satisfying and expressing the motives which provide their dynamic beginnings. These roles may be directed toward either persons or material objects in the situation, and involve expectations of complementary roles.

(3) The system of barrier-roles which are taken over from persons in the social situation and consist of ways of acting which inhibit or bar the expression of the stirring motives. These roles may be directed against the self in order to control impulsive action, or, in situations where it is possible, may be directed outward toward other persons or objects.

It is postulated that the roles taken over by the actor, and later manifested overtly, will depend upon the structure of the situation, how the actor defines the situation, or has it defined for him by others. The following chapter is devoted to the definition and structure of the situation.

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CHAPTER IV

THE DEFINITION OF THE SITUATION

The purpose of this chapter is not to present a definition of the term "situation" for the reader, but rather to inquire into the nature of the activity by which the actor "defines" the situation in which he acts.

I. The Situation as a Field of Stimuli

In psychology the term situation has been widely used to designate the total mass of stimuli acting upon an organism at any given moment.[1] The term stimulus itself is not unambiguous in its reference. It may be used to designate (1) the actual energy-source outside the organism, such as a lighted electric bulb, (2) the form of energy as it impinges upon the receptor, such as "green light of 505 millicrons wave length", (3) an energy-source within the organism, such as a hunger spasm of the stomach muscles. The term "situation" may be used in corresponding ways and when used to designate the total set of circumstances in the outside world and in the body of the organism is usually called the "total situation".[2]

1. Cf. Watson, J. B., Psychology from the Standpoint of the Behaviorist, Philadelphia and London: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1919, pp. 10-12; Thorndike, E. L., The Elements of Psychology, New York: A. G. Seiler, 1905 (1911), p. 17; Boring, E. G., "Psycholgy for Eclectics," Psychologies of 1930, Edited by Carl Murchison, Worcester: Clark University Press, 1930, p. 121; Allport, F. H., "Notes on Political Definition and Method," American Political Science Review, XXI (August, 1927), 613; English, H. B., A Student's Dictionary of Psychological Terms, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1934 (Fourth Edition), under "stimulus" and "situation".

2. Cf. Thorndike and Allport, op. cit. Cf. note under section VI, this chapter, for criticism of the term "total situation".

II. Concrete and Conceptual Situation

As embodied in concrete energy-sources within and without the body, the situation changes with every moment of time. Is it possible, then, ever to speak of a situation as "being", when it is constantly changing, "becoming"?[1] In order to answer this question a distinction must be made between the concrete situation and the conceptual situation.[2] The actual empirical elements in the situation which are the sources of sensation and stimulation may be said to comprise the concrete situation. A future act which the actor intends to perform is thus not a part of his concrete situation. As yet, it is only hypothetical, intended, hoped for. The thought of future action, however, undeniably influences the actor's behavior in the present, as he symbolically represents it to himself.[3] The future is a part of the

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1. Eubank recognizes this problem in presenting his concept of the "situation self" (The Concepts of Sociology, New York: D. C. Heath and Company, 1932, p. 107) and answers that recognizable elements persist and may be identified despite the change. The problem eventually boils down to the philosophic paradox of "being and becoming" which has vexed thinkers ever since the time of Heraclitus and Parmenides. There is no attempt to solve the problem here.

2. This distinction corresponds rather closely with that made by Koffka between the geographical and behavioral environment. The behavior of the actor as it appears to the observer is called apparent behavior by Koffka, while the actor's behavior as it appears to himself is called phenomenal behavior. (Cf. Principles of Gestalt Psychology, New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1935, pp. 27 ff.)

3. As Lundberg holds (Foundations of Sociology, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1939, p. 314.) Likewise, gods, demons, taboos, beliefs and ideologies are reacted to as symbols, and hence must be included as part of the field or situation. (Ibid., pp. 121-122.)

conceptual situation--the situation which the actor constructs. The situation as a concept or a construct in the mind of the actor embraces a span of time and action which is greater than the present "given moment".

The concrete situation as defined by the actor becomes his conceptual situation. What span of time does the conceptual situation embrace? Lündberg says: "The nature of the adjustment problem which confronts us determines our definition of the situation."[1] The span of action which comprises the conceptual situation extends from the moment an adjustment problem presents itself until the problem is solved. This unit of action as the actor defines it has been recognized by Parsons as the "unit act";[2] by Mead and by Thurstone as the "act";[3] by Muenzinger as the "start-to-end-phase unit;"[4] by Tolman as the "behavior act";[5] by Dewey as the "problem situation;"[6] by the Gestaltists as "temporal or dynamic gestalts;"[7] and probably by many others under similar or different names.

1. Ibid., p. 217.

2. Parsons, Talcott, The Structure of Social Actions, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1937, p. 733.

3. Mead, G. H., Mind, Self, and Society, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1938, p. ix ff. Also, The Philosophy of the Act, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1938. Mead builds his whole philosophy with the "social act" as a frame of reference. Thurstone, L. L., "The Anticipatory Aspect of Consciousness," Journal of Philosophy, XVI (1919), 561-569. Cf. English, H. B., A Student's Dictionary of Psychological Terms, "act", p. 3.

4. Muenzinger, Karl, Psychology, The Science of Behavior, Denver: The World Press, Inc., 1939. Muenzinger gives credit to G. H. Mead and E. C. Tolman as strong influences in his thinking (p.11).

5. Tolman, E. C., Purposive Behavior of Animals and Men, New York: The Century Company, 1932. Cf. "Glossary of Terms".

6. Dewey, John, How We Think, New York: D. C. Heath and Company, 1933, pp. 14-15, 100-101.

7. Koffka, K., The Growth of the Mind, New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1928, pp. 70 ff., 94, 108. Cf. Helson, Harry, "The Psychology of Gestalt," The American Journal of Psychology, XXXVII (1926) 44-45; Kohler, W., The Mentality of Apes, New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1927, pp. 99-100, 189-190, etc.

The essence of all these accounts is that while behavior is a continuous, on-going stream on the concrete level, it is possible to analytically extract units of behavior from this stream for description. In spite of the fact that the action units are conceptually abstracted from the on-going stream of behavior, this does not mean that there is nothing in the behavior which corresponds to the abstract unit. An act on the concrete level proceeds from the arousal of desire or motivation in the actor, through a stage in which the situation is defined in terms of the objects or conditions which will have to be dealt with, proceeds to the manipulation or utilization of the necessary objects and is consummated in attaining an object or state in which the desire is satisfied. In the more intelligent animals the whole act may be present in incipient stages at a given moment near its beginning, so that the latter stages of the purposed act enter into control and direct present action. The whole span of action is thus brought into the actor's conceptual situation.

How long is a situation? The concrete situation is an affair of the moment, or even less. It is impossible to make the moments short enough to evade the paradox of being and becoming. The conceptual situation, however, may be as long as the actor makes it. Some organisms act only to satisfy immediate desires. Their conceptual situation may be bounded by a hunger spasm at one end, and by a full stomach at the other. Other organisms, notably man, may organize their present activities with reference to events planned years in the future, or even toward a happy life after death.

As a frame of reference within which the actor organizes and directs his action, the situation is likewise a frame of reference within which the observer may conceptualize and interpret the behavior of the actor. As an observer's tool for the analysis of action, the concept "situation" is flexible, and will apply from the least to the greatest action span. Anthropomorphism consists not in attributing a forward reference of action to organisms, for it can be pragmatically proven that such organization of action does take place;[1] it consists in failing to adopt for the purposes of interpretation that span of action which actually does affect the present action of the actor.[2] The task of the observer is to discover what the actor's effective conceptual situation is (as well as his effective concrete situation), and to make his interpretations within _this_ framework, not his own.

Action, then, not time, is the more immediate frame of reference in terms of which the actor delimits his situation. The unit is a _context_ within which objects, persons, and all that is concrete or symbolic, gain meaning and value.

III. The Structure of the Meaning-Situation

Meaning is always a complex fact, that is, involves a number of terms in relation to each other. G. W. Cunningham[3] uses the term

1. _Cf._ Tolman, E. C., _op. cit._ "Docility" is the criteria of molar, goal-directed behavior and consists in the fact that such behavior will show modification if at first it is unsuccessful as a means to the goal. If disrupted by a change in the situation, it will show modification also and will tend toward the shortest and easiest route to the goal (p. 443). _Cf._ Kohler, W., _op. cit._, pp. 99-100, 189-190.

2. _Cf._ Koffka, Kurt, _Principles of Gestalt Psychology_, New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1935, p. 39 ff.

3. Cunningham, G. W., _Problems of Philosophy_, New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1924.

"meaning-situation" to designate this complex of terms. He points out that wherever meaning is present, analysis will disclose that it is made up of four distinguishable terms in relation to each other:

> In such a situation, there are: (1) that which means; (2) that which is meant; (3) a point of view or 'perspective' in respect of which, or 'for' which, the one means the other; and (4) some sort of context on the basis of which, or 'because of' which, the one means the other.[1]

Cunningham is concerned with the purely logical structure of meaning, but the meaning-situation is illustrated in concrete terms wherever a motivated actor surveys his situation. The actor himself provides the point of view, and the projected act, from the stirring desire, through the utilization of means to the anticipated satisfaction is the context. The object in the situation which promises satisfaction is "that which is meant", and the objects and actions utilized to obtain it constitute "that which means".

Tolman calls this complex of relationships a "sign-gestalt"[2] which consists of a sign-object (that which "means" the goal), a signified object (the goal) and a signified means-end relationship between the two. The environment of the actor thus appears to him as a "means-end-field"[3] in which commerce with means-objects and subordinate goal-objects will get him to, or from, some relatively final goal-object. Tolman emphasizes that in addition to

1. Ibid., p. 102.
2. Tolman, op. cit., p. 453.
3. Ibid., p. 450. "Means-end-manifold," Means-end-hierarchy", "Means-end-succession," "Tool-succession", etc. are used practically synonomously.

providing stimuli, the environment supplies the "behavior supports"[1] necessary to the act. Behavior can only take place by having "commerce with"[2] certain features of the environment; it cannot go off in vacuo.

In speaking of the "structure of the situation", Kohler[3] means the relationships of the objective (goal), the obstacle, and the "roundabout way" which characterized the problem situations he set for his chimpanzees. "Intelligent behavior", Kohler holds, "corresponded to the structure of the situation as a whole, for the apes characteristically looked around carefully with something like an inventory of the situation"[4] before they broke sharply into action. It can only be assumed that the whole act was influencing present action, Kohler says, for the intervening parts of the act, the taking of indirect, roundabout routes, often involved movement away from the goal, the performance of tasks which were irrelevant and meaningless unless regarded in relation to the whole course of the solution.[5]

Mead also holds that objects in the environment are approached according to their relationship to the projected act. A "field" or "landscape" of these objects is built up, organized with reference to the way in which they can be successively utilized in satisfying the impulse. They are viewed as means to a goal. This organization

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1. Ibid., p. 439.
2. Ibid., p. 440.
3. The Mentality of Apes, pp. 3-4, 99-100, 189-190, et. al.
4. Ibid., p. 190.
5. Ibid., pp. 99-100.

of the field occurs not only with reference to objects, but also with reference to the acts involved in their manipulation. One performs a more distant consummatory act by means of precedent manipulatory acts.[1]

There is perhaps no animal on the whole scale of life which is not able to utilize the action of its own body as a means to or from objects immediately given in its environment. From this elementary ability up to the extremely complicated meaningful behavior of man there are all possible variations, but wherever there is an acting subject capable of employing some means to an object separated from it, the elementary structure of meaning is embodied in concrete elements. This structure may not be grasped in its entirety by the actor, but the structural elements are all present.

When the situation becomes a social situation, that is, one in which there are at least two actors, meaning takes another step in its evolution, as Mead has shown.[2] Acts then become social acts, that is, they are directed toward and modified by other actors as social objects. An "observer" has been added to the situation, as it were. Each actor is able to regard the act of the other in its whole extension, and is able to react to the "gestures" or beginning stages of the other's acts as symbols of the other's completed act. A dog, for example, may react to another dog's show of teeth as he would react to the bite which the show of teeth means. The

1. Mind, Self, and Society, pp. 277-278.
2. Ibid., pp. 75-82.

show of teeth is a symbol of the bite to come. The act as a context within which meaning appears is shown externally to the actor in the act of another. (1) The gesture of the other is that which means (the symbol), (2) the completed act of the other is that which is meant (the referent), (3) the actor who sees and responds to this meaning relationship represents the point of view, and (4) the unit act of the other is the context within which, and because of which, the gesture means the completed act.

The evolution of meaning is not complete, however, until the actor himself, from his own point of view, is able to regard his own act as a context in terms of which his own gestures have meaning for him before he completes his act. Perhaps it is only in man that meaning reaches this state of development, and yet it depends upon the same type of social situation found among many other animals. It is not a matter of adding new elements; they are all present in the social situation before this final development appears, and depend only upon a final internalization in one actor so that his own gestures become symbols for him. This internalization is made possible by the fact that there is another person to respond to the actor's gestures as if they were completed acts. The response of the other organism indicates to the first organism the meaning which his own gestures have. For the response of the other organism is in itself the beginning of that organism's act to which the first actor must in turn respond. When the first actor does make this response he is responding to the

reflection of his own gesture, as it were. He is now "taking the attitude of the other" toward his own gesture, and by responding as the other responds, he learns the meaning of his own gestures.

The unconscious "conversation of gestures" may now become a deliberate process of communication in which one employs gestures for the specific purpose of signifying one's own meaning. The symbols one deliberately uses in this fashion are called "significant symbols" by Mead.[1]

John Dewey points out that

> . . . things gain meaning when they are used as means to bring about consequences, or as a means to prevent the occurrence of undesired consequences, or as standing for consequences for which we have to discover means.[2]

The last point is important. Although meaning grows out of situations in which all the structural elements of a meaning-situation are embodied in concrete elements, in particular situations, meaning may exist when the concrete elements are too rudimentary to support action. Or meaning may exist when obstacles or barriers rather than utilizable "means" intervene between the beginning and goal of the act.

IV. The Structure of the Value-Situation

Value, like meaning, is a complex fact involving: (1) the value object, (2) the satisfaction (or dissatisfaction) which the

1. Ibid., pp. 75-82.
2. Dewey, John, How We Think, p. 146.

object will give, (3) the organism or actor for which the object has value, and (4) some sort of context on the basis of which, or because of which the object means satisfaction (or dissatisfaction). The structure of value-situations is thus very similar to that of meaning-situations, and every concrete situation embodies both meaning and value.

The context within which value arises is again the unit act, this time, however, with reference to the "feeling quality" or "emotional" aspect of the act rather than to its purely formal structure. The intended act can be conceived as moving from the unpleasantness of unsatisfied desire to the pleasantness of consummation. Concrete acts may vary greatly in the extent to which they embody definite feeling components--that is, some may be very strongly motivated, others very weakly. Concrete acts also vary greatly in the degree to which they actually accomplish a passage from a state of negative value to a state of positive value. One of the characteristics of purposive action is its fallibility, and the actor may actually move into states more unpleasant to him than those he experienced previously. This does not invalidate the assumption, however, that the intended or conceptual act is structured by the actor in such a way as to enable him to reach objects of supposed positive value.

Value appears in the universe when life appears, according to Ralph Barton Perry.[1] According to Perry, the world of inorganic

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1. The Moral Economy, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909, p. 11.

nature, for all its changes, transformations, and gigantic range of temporal and spatial distance is a world utterly devoid of value[1] because there is no life to introduce a bias, no object acting in its own behalf and for its own preservation. But with the appearance of life, "even the least particle of it, the rudest bit of protoplasm that ever made the venture", the world of nature becomes an environment. "The mark of life is partiality for itself", and in its struggle to keep itself intact and bring itself to maturity, the environment is divided into the good-for and the bad-for. The organism acts for its own preservation, it embodies an interest, appropriating what it needs, and avoiding or destroying what threatens it with injury.[2]

Perry goes to great length to establish with psychological evidence the existence of "governing propensities", "sets", "drives", "interests", which are definitely directed toward goals, and which are the source of persistent activity that may utilize any number of different means to an ultimate satisfaction.[3] The arguments need not be repeated here. Moreover, in the more intelligent animals, at least, this activity is not blind or random, but is selected on the basis of its "promise" of satisfactory results. The anticipatory stages of the act enter into the present stages, and direct the future reference of the act. The following conclusion, well buttressed with evidence, is reached:

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1. The reader may disagree with this if he wishes to contend that we have no knowledge of whether or not inanimate things strive in their own behalf.
2. Perry, op. cit., p. 11.
3. General Theory of Value, New York: Longmans, Green & Company, 1926, pp. 186 ff.

> Interested or purposive action is action adopted because the anticipatory responses which it arouses coincide with the unfulfilled or implicit phase of a governing propensity. . . interested or purposive action must be actively selective, tentative, instrumental, prospective, and fallible.[1]

Value is "the peculiar relation between any interest and its object; or that special character of an object which consists in the fact that interest is taken in it."[2] Interests of all kinds are characterized by a polarity of duality, that is, they are for or against. A given object may be regarded with desire or aversion, liking or disliking, favor or disfavor. The values assigned to objects may thus be divided into positive values and negative values. The criterion of value is not whether the actor approaches or withdraws from the object, for one may approach an object of negative value in order to destroy it, or one may withdraw from an object of positive value in order to lure it closer. Neither are the actual results of the object upon the actor in the consummated act an adequate criterion of value, for the judgment of the actor is open to fallibility. The criterion of value is whether or not the object under consideration is expected to gratify the interest insofar as this expectation of future gratification or frustration enters in as a determinant of the present performance.[3]

1. Ibid., p. 209. (Italics are Professor Perry's.)

2. Ibid., p. 124. (It is thus not strictly proper to speak of an object or condition as a value in the substantive sense, as do Professors Thomas and Znaniecki. It should be said that objects have value, as they are said to have meaning. "Value-object" is suggested as a substantive term. Znaniecki calls the positive or negative character of a value-object (a "value" in his terminology) its "axiological significance". Cf. The Method of Sociology.

3. Ibid., pp. 239-240. Other modalities of interest, hence of value, posited by Perry are: inherited or acquired, recurrent or

Professor C. M. Case, working more or less independently of Professor Perry, came to the conclusion that

> values are the selected objects of living things, approved, rejected, or ignored according to their bearing upon the drives, purposes, or ideals of the living beings.[1]

Case agrees with Perry in every respect.

Mead says that value is "the future character of the object insofar as it determines your action to it".[2] Values are the contribution of the individual to the situation. They would not exist without him or apart from the situation. Objects exist independently of the actor in the physical sense, of course, but as value-objects they are constituted by the actor. The degree to which the physical things in the environment become value-objects for the actor depends upon his ability to manipulate them. The hands of the human being, Mead says, are most important in the constitution of objects or the building of an environment, for mediating between the beginning and of the act as they so often do, they give rise to the recognition of a great number of objects which

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progressive, real or playful, aggressive or submissive, subjective or objective. (p. 304) The term "interest" is not new to sociologists, and there seems to be general agreement as to its meaning. Cf. Lindeman, E. C., Social Discovery, New York: Republic Publishing Company, 1924, pp. 211-216 for a review of some of the sociological, legalistic, political and economic usages of the term. Definitions by Ratzenhofer, Small, Ward, and MacIver, among others, are quoted.

1. "The Value Concept in Sociology and Related Fields," Sociology and Social Research, XXIII (May-June, 1939), 411. Case traces the development of the concept of value in philosophy and in sociology. It appears that before Professor Perry's and Professor Urban's analysis, "value" had an almost exclusively "positive" connotation in philosophy and economics, whereas the sociological usage has been in terms of both "positive" and "negative" value almost from the first.

2. Mind, Self, and Society, p. 5.

would be inaccessible, unusable, and hence unknown to an organism who had no means of manipulating them.

Freeman makes a contribution to value theory in his concept of "detours".[1] He says:

> Humans and even animals are capable of making a detour and of provisionally accepting negative values which must mediate in the achievement of some desirable result with a positive value. But since the end result or value is necessary, the means by which it is attained are considered likewise necessary and indistinguishable from the value itself. Because strong emotions are attached to the end they also become associated with the means.[2]

This is particularly important on the social level. Ways of acting which once were adopted on a quite utilitarian basis are in the course of time invested with the end value which they mediate --hence the emotional value attached to the folkways and mores of the social group. If the old ways of acting are valued and retained even after more economical or straightforward means are available, they become detours, but individuals are forced to employ the old means nevertheless, and a certain approbrium or imputation of immorality attaches to the employment of new unaccustomed means. It is true of course that because of the intertwining of values an inefficient means to an original end may in some cases find justification in its mediation to other end-values, but in other cases the valuation of the traditional hurdles seems quite arbitrary from the viewpoint of the outsider.

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1. Perhaps this concept is to be traced to Kohler's "umwege" or "roundabout" problems. The idea is not applied to value theory by Kohler, however, and no implications for social theory are pointed out by him.

2. Social Psychology, New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1936, p. 125 ff.

Freeman, like Perry and Case and Mead, indicates that the organism picks out, articulates, selects, those things in the environment which are functionally significant in their relationship to past experience, organic needs, interests, habits, and attitudes. Values are both positive and negative.

Cooley says that the essential things in the conception of value are three: an organism, a situation, and an object.[1] The organism, according to Cooley, may be anything which lives and grows: a plant, an animal, a person, a group, an institution, a doctrine; but an organism of some kind is necessary, for an object must be valuable to something. Anything which lives and grows gives rise to a special system of values, and consciousness of the motivating values (which are "real powers in life") is not at all necessary. The situation is "the immediate occasion for action" presenting a number of values which the organism surveys with reference to his action and out of which he selects those things which promote his growth. "Valuation is only another name for tentative organic process."[2] Objects are chosen because they have instrumental value, because they "fit the situation", because they "work".

Although the objection might be raised that Cooley's use of the term "organic" places him in a class with Spencer and the biological sociologists,[3] the conclusions he draws are believed to be sound:

1. Ibid., pp. 284-285.
2. Social Process, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1922, p. 284.
3. The writer believes that such an objection could be overcome. Cooley's use of the term "organic" is for the most part very

> Because of this organic character, values vary with the time, the group, and the special situation. . . no one aspect can be explained except by reference to the whole out of which it grows. You can hardly understand how a man feels about religion, for example, unless you understand also how he feels about his industrial position and about other matters in which he is deeply concerned . . . unless you grasp also the social medium in which he lives. Any searching study of any sort of values must be the study of an organic social life.[1]

Cooley's approach to value is "situational" in every sense of the term.

With regard to the "definition of the situation" or "valuation", as he calls it, Cooley holds that the process is usually subconscious, both on the individual level and especially in the "larger phases which related to the development of complex impersonal wholes".[2] Throughout the course of time institutional values may appear, impel men in paths no one foresaw, and wax stronger by their unwitting participation. In defining the situation, values are compared, generalized, and synthesized.

> Conduct is a matter of the total or synthetic behavior of the living whole in view of a situation: it implies the integration of all the motives bearing on the situation. Accordingly, when a crisis in conduct arises the values relating to it, no matter how incommensurable they may seem, are in some way brought to a common measure, weighed against one another.[3]

There is no suggestion as to how this takes place psychologically,[4] but Cooley holds that money is a medium in terms of which many values are compared and weighed.

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similar to the gestaltist's use of it. Moreover, the term is coming back into favor. Cf. Lundberg, G., Foundations of Sociology, pp. 168-170.

1. Ibid., pp. 284-285.
2. Ibid., pp. 290-291.
3. Supra, pp. 329-330.
4. Woodworth, "Situation-and-Goal-Set," in Psychological

In order to represent the structure of the situation, the field theorists, Kurt Lewin and J. F. Brown have resorted to the device of ordering all of the functionally significant factors in the situation or "life space" to a "topological construct".[1] The whole situation is delimited by discovering what is real or what has effects for the actor,[2] and its most important characteristics consist of the possible and the not-possible.[3] The situation is represented as a limited region which may be either bounded or unbounded.[4] Within this region other regions may be delimited in as great a number as needed to represent all the concrete data which have functional significance for the person. The degree to which the life-space or psychological field is divided into other distinguishable spaces is its degree of structure. The life-space may thus be simply or highly structured.

Issues (selected papers), New York: Columbia University Press, 1939, pp. 149-160, suggests that ". . . each new perception leaves behind in the nervous system a temporary adjustment to the feature observed, until the whole situation becomes--not clearly mirrored in any one moment of consciousness--but dynamically represented by the sum or resultant of these partial adjustments. If he (the person or organism) then thinks of some change that he can make in the situation and decides to make it . . . the intention to act (as another partial adjustment, is 'built into the preexisting framework of adjustment to the total situation')."

1. Topology is a mathematical discipline dealing with spaces in their most general form, with regard to their positional relationships, connectedness, boundedness, etc. Space in the topological sense does not refer to physical space alone, but to all possible relationships and to all simultaneously existing facts which can be represented by logically constructed spaces. Thus physical facts, social facts, conceptual facts, the possible and the not possible of both present and future as of a given moment can be ordered to regions, boundaries, and proper relational positions. Cf. Brown, Psychology and the Social Order, pp. 44-45 ff; and Lewin, Principles of Topological Psychology, New York: McGraw-Hill Company, 1936 (entire).

2. Lewin, op. cit., p. 19.

3. Supra, pp. 14-16.

4. Lewin, K., A Dynamic Theory of Personality, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1936, pp. 77-79.

The objects in the life-space: quasi-physical, -social, and -conceptual, are not neutral, but have positive or negative "valence", that is, they seem to command, to summon, to request. They have a "demand value" or Aufforderungscharaktere which renders them attractive or repulsive in accordance with the needs of the organism. Valence is the result of the fact that objects have functional possibilities in terms of needs, desires, and tensions.[1]

Goals thus have positive valence and are ordered to specific regions. Barriers have negative valence and are ordered to the boundaries between regions. The person himself is ordered to a region within the life space, and his relationships to the goal and to the intervening regions and barriers is shown topologically by the relationships of connectedness, separateness, inclusiveness, etc., of the spaces. In order to reach a goal it is necessary for the person to make a "locomotion" through the intervening regions in order to reach the goal. A locomotion is a change in topological position[2] and involves a passage through regions, which have the character of "mediums",[3] that is, spaces through which one can move. Until a region has been reached, it often has the character of a "thing"--that is, a sort of unstructured solid character.[4]

1. Ibid.
2. Brown, op. cit., p. 51.
3. Lewin, Principles of Topological Psychology, pp. 115-117.
4. Ibid. It is believed by the writer that Lewin has been led into some unwarranted physical-spacial thinking in making this distinction. The essential characteristic of a region which is called the "medium" character is the fact that it serves as a "means" --a term which Lewin does not use. "Things" may just as surely be "means" as may rooms, bodies of water, air, the interior of buckets, etc., all of which Lewin uses to illustrate his point. "Means" is

Regions as mediums are characterized by some degree of "fluidity",[1] that is, they may afford easy or difficult locomotion. Barriers, in a similar fashion, have degrees of "permeability" affecting the ease with which locomotions are executed through them.[2] Degrees of freedom of locomotion depend upon the number and fluidity of accessible regions and the number and permeability of barriers.

All activity, behavior, or locomotion is held to arise from tensions in the psychological field.[3] These forces activating locomotion are ordered to "vectors" in the field, which have given direction, strength, and points of application.[4] Vector is thus the generalized topological term for definitely directed drives, interests, or other motivating factors. However, as vectors always arise out of the position of the actor and the goal in the psychological field, they change with any movement, and so are considered to be field determined and not of the nature of "entelechies". They are directed toward positive valences and away from negative valences.

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suggested as a more suitable term than "medium", which has an unfortunate physical-spacial connotation, although it may also be translated "means".

1. Brown, ibid., p. 57. This term again has physical-space connotations. If "medium" is the equivalent of "means", and if "fluidity" refers to the ease of utilizing these means, then in strict logic one would be forced to speak of the "fluidity" of a hammer, for example, or some other means-tool. Translating data into topological constructs has some very definite disadvantages, at least in terms of linguistic clarity.

2. Ibid., p. 59. A criticism similar to those above might be made.

3. Ibid., pp. 282-283.

4. Ibid., p. 59. Cf. Lewin, A Dynamic Theory of Personality, pp. 80-81.

Although the topological account of the structure of the situation gives emphasis to the barrier and goals elements, the terminology has tended to obscure the "means" element. The term "valence" gives recognition to both positive and negative value objects.[1] In spite of the differences in terminology the topologists give an account of the structure of the situation which supports the foregoing accounts.

V. Individual and Group Definitions of the Situation

In the sense that the person is a product of the situations he has gone through, and insofar as the definition of social situations is a social process, personal definitions of the situation are always in some degree social as well. It is true, however, that in any given situation each actor will define his own situation a little differently, partly because of his particular position in the concrete situation and partly because of the different apperceptive mass of meanings and values which he brings from previous situations.

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1. No single term yet encountered serves to distinguish satisfactorily those objects which have a negative character simply because they stand as barriers between the actor and the goal, and those which have a negative character because in themselves they are dangerous to or threaten the actor. Tolman has used the term "negative goal" to indicate the latter type of object. Apparently there is no word in English with the precise meaning of "meant object of negative value". "Threat-object" is a possibility, but there is a need for a single term. The term "goad" has almost the desired connotation, and with a little usage would seem to be an acceptable antonym of goal. Both suggest impelling action, the goad unpleasantly, with a desire to get away; the goal pleasantly, with a desire to reach it. The term "goad" will be used in this study in the sense suggested: to fill an obvious linguistic gap. Both goads and barriers will be conceived as having negative value or valence.

John Dollard, in his Criteria for the Life History,[1] distinguishes between the "private" and the "cultural" definition of the situation. The first is the situation to which the person actually reacts, colored with all his past experiences, his fantasies, phobias and all the special meanings which he assigns to objects and acts. The cultural definition of the situation is "an objective view or a sort of average of what others would recognize in it".[2]

> . . . the difference between our official or average or cultural expectation of action in a 'situation' and the actual conduct of the person indicates the presence of a private interpretation. Where the private version equals the official one we have normal conduct.[3]

Dollard maintains that the scientific observer must keep in mind both the actor's "private" definition and the "cultural" definition as he makes his study.

In his book The Unadjusted Girl[4] Thomas gives a great wealth of concrete illustration of the way in which the family and the

1. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1935, pp. 29-33.
2. Although Dollard does not distinguish between the two, the "objective" situation is not the equivalent of the "observer's situation". The observer's situation is just as private as anyone else's, and just as likely to be a special, distorted view. The "objective" situation would have to include the actor's private situation, the group's cultural definition, and the observer's private situation. As such, the objective situation can never be experienced--it must be constructed, built up, inferred, by putting together all points of view. For a further discussion of this point, cf. Chapter V, this thesis.
3. Dollard, op. cit.
4. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1923.

community define the situation for the members--by winks, shrugs, nudges, laughter, sneers, coldness, gossip, epithet, law, public opinion, etc. He also shows the conflict between the definitions of the group and the spontaneous definitions of individuals:

> The individual tends to a hedonistic selection of activity, pleasure first; and society to a utilitarian selection, safety first. Society wishes its members to be laborious, dependable, regular, sober, orderly, self-sacrificing; while the individual wishes less of this and more of new experience.[1]

When the "primary defining agencies"--the family and the community--begin to break down and become less personal, individual behavior begins to show abberrations and departures from the established ways. Social disorganization as the breakdown of group control over the behavior of the members is essentially a multiplication of individual definitions of the situation over a common social definition.

In Primitive Behavior Thomas has gathered a great mass of anthropological material illustrating the astonishing diversity of ways in which even simple behavior patterns or natural events are defined in different culture groups.[2] On the personal level, definitions of situations are represented by judgments of the things within them as to their harmful or helpful nature and a decision of a course of action. On the social level these definitions and the patterns they initiate are represented by:

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1. Ibid., pp. 42-43.
2. Cf. Benedict, Ruth, "Configurations of Culture in North America," American Anthropologist, XXXIV (1932), 1-27.

> . . . moral and legal codes, political policies, organizations, institutions, etc.; they originate in adjustive reactions, are developed through language, gossip, argument, and conflict; there appear special definers of situations--medicine men, prophets, lawgivers, judges, politicians, scientists; culture epochs and mass conversions . . . are inaugurated by the propaganda of definitions of situations.[1]

In short, the whole mass of cultural values of a group represents their definition of all the situations with which they are familiar.

Situations may be vaguely or clearly defined by the individual. He may or may not have a pat and prepared definition to apply to them. The child is constantly finding for himself in situations which he has never met before elements which remain merely "things" until he has defined these elements.[2] When a "thing" is placed in relationship to known objects and to the interests and desires, it gains meaning, value and functional significance. It is then called an "object", for it has a definite relationship to the "subject"--the actor.

Persons in the actor's situation are assigned value and meaning by the actor in the same way as are other things. They become social objects and are assigned value.[3] On the basis of the way

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1. Primitive Behavior, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1937, pp. 8-9 ff.

2. The distinction between "things" and "objects" is made by Znaniecki, The Method of Sociology, pp. 41-42; by Kreuger and Reckless, Social Psychology, New York: Longmans, Green & Company, 1931, pp. 90-91; by Dewey, How We Think, pp. 136-137; and perhaps by others. Kurt Lewin distinguishes between "thing" and "medium" in practically the same way in Principles of Topological Psychology, pp. 115-117.

3. Cf. Znaniecki, Florian, The Method of Sociology, pp. 131-1322.

persons act toward the actor, that is, in terms of their functional significance for him, they are evaluated and assigned "status". If he can manipulate them to gain his ends, they assume the role of social means-objects. If they bar his way and thwart his desires, they become social barrier-objects. If they have abilities he desires, or qualities he admires, they assume the role of goals. Social objects, however, perhaps even more than physical objects, are seldom entirely unambiguous in their meaning and value to the actor.

The distinction between physical objects and social objects is not always clearly drawn. Some persons are able to treat other persons quite coldly and calculatingly, as they would physical tools. There is no more stinging social slight than to be treated as a mere physical thing when one feels he should be recognized as a person. Conversely, physical objects are not always treated as such, but may be personalized or personified.[1] Children and primitives show this tendency clearly. Mead calls attention to the way in which small objects tend to call out a parental response.[2] Personal objects may de depersonalized and physical objects may be personalized. The tendency to react socially is carried over into situations which are not strictly social situations.

The child is able to transform "things" into "objects" for himself, of course, but in a large number of cases things are defined for him by adults, who characterize them as "good" or "bad", "pretty"or "ugly", etc. In this way the group definitions become

1. Kreuger and Reckless, op. cit., pp. 111-114.
2. Mind, Self and Society, p. 183.

the individual's definitions in the most subtle and all-pervading manner. Objects gain a fixity of meaning and value which depends hardly at all upon their intrinsic utility to the actor in a given situation. If this were not true, communication itself, which takes place in terms of symbols of more or less fixed meaning, would be impossible. The ability to fix and manipulate symbols makes it possible to deal with situations implicitly before overt action begins and to carry fixed definitions over from one situation to another.

This ability, or tendency, does not always work to the advantage of the actor. Because both the symbol and the meant object are parts of a more inclusive configuration (the act), a fixed association between the two appears, due to conditioning, association, habit, or some similar process.[1] There is not only a fixed association, but a sort of welding together by an overflow of meaning something like the overflowing of value previously discussed. Thus the name is thought of as a part of the object. Among children and primitives this identification is especially notable. There is a tendency to believe that by manipulating words (calling names, cursing, etc.) one can manipulate or produce affects on the objects.

Tolman has noted a similar phenomenon in his studies of rats, which he calls "sign-magic".[2] If the rat cannot reach the end-object, he may treat the means-object (sign) in the same way he desires to treat the end object. Alfred Korzybsky[3] and his associates

1. Cf. Freeman, Ellis, Social Psychology, New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1936, p. 112.

2. Purposive Behavior of Animals and Men, New York: The Century Company, 1932, p. 454.

3. Science and Sanity, New York: Science Press Publishing Company, 1933.

have been especially concerned with the tendency of human beings to assume that because they have a word or a symbol there must be necessarily be a referent--a tendency which, Korzybsky believes, leads not only to confusion of thought but also to personality derangements. The study of semantics seems to be utterly remote from the study of human behavior until it is understood that one reacts to meanings and that it is possible for meaning to become detached from its original matrix of concrete objects. If the concrete objects cannot be manipulated or changed in order to bring about adjustment of the actor, then the symbols are manipulated. A re-definition of the situation takes place. The psychoanalytic mechanisms of symbolization, transferrence, projection, isolation, displacement, condensation, identification, introjection, and perhaps others, are examples of the manipulation of symbols to bring about adjustment when manipulation of the concrete objects is impossible.

Special types of situations give rise to special meanings and special values. This is why the life historical approach is so vital in sociological understanding of both persons and culture groups. Moreover, the inability to "subdivide the act" as Mead puts it, in order to understand that symbols are not the same as the things they mean, leads to fixed meanings and fixed values which are carried into other situations in which they result in "bizarre" and ill-adapted behavior. The lack of adaptation may be so severe as to result in the social or biological demolition of the individual or group.

Up to this time there has been no consideration of concrete situations which were not fairly clear cut and unambiguous in their possible solution. Most of the situations with which the actor has to deal, however, are not clear cut--at least not to begin with. In the first place, none of the concrete objects in the situation is entirely positive or negative in value. In spite of its present negative quality, the desire or interest of the actor has a certain positive value insofar as it makes possible a keener satisfaction in the future. Sharpening the desire by a certain amount of delay is a well-known technique for sharpening satisfaction. The means are positive insofar as they mediate the ends, but they also take on a certain negative value because by their very mediation they separate or bar the actor from immediate satisfaction. The means are thus to some extent barriers.

The goals especially may be ambiguous. It is a rare situation where there is only one goal. There may be only one concrete goal, but if it is realized in the course of action toward it that the present goal is incompatible with one which stands further in the future, psychological conflict is the result. Znaniecki traces all psychological conflict from the interference of _present_ action with some future or _virtual_ action which is also desired.[1] The obstacle in such a situation is not a mere technical difficulty of finding adequate means to a single goal, but an _axiological obstacle_ which involves the sacrifice of one goal as the price of attaining

1. _The Laws of Social Psychology_, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1925, pp. 199 ff.

another. In such cases the situation must be symbolically re-defined. The meanings of the objects must somehow be changed.

Whether psychological conflict is present or not, the concrete objects in the situation undergo a constant re-definition as the action progresses. Once a means has been employed it loses its means-character, hence its positive value. The ease with which men forget or spurn those who have served them is a well-worn literary theme. The goal once reached is no longer a goal. The incurable "wanting-ness" and insatiable ambition of men are also well known. The concrete objects in the situation are always gaining and losing their value character, but the conceptual situation of the actor has a peculiar permanency. The actor, so long as he is alive, is always plagued by some desire, is always working toward some goal. His barriers are never entirely overcome and his means are never entirely adequate.

Individuals define situations in an attempt to reach their goals and satisfy their desires, but the process is never done. Day after day, year after year, individuals are forced to define their situations, consciously and unconsciously; implicitly in their thinking and overtly in their actions. Habitual modes of definition grow into personality organization,[1] depending upon the kinds of situations with which the individual has to deal and upon his native energies and capacities. The habitual types of definition which grow up show the greatest diversity in quality and permanency. To the paranoid all situations are threatening; to the schizophrene all

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1. Cf. James, Principles of Psychology, New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1909, "The Ethical Implications of Habit," pp. 120-127.

situations are overwhelming. The paranoid struggles in spite of the threat, the schizophrene draws into himself and refuses to deal with his situation actively at all. Business men view situations as possible markets, scientists view situations as laboratory material; to the young actress all the world is a stage. The enthusiast sees every moment as a new and exciting adventure; the cynic sees the whole of life as an endless repetition of the same weary tale.

Groups define situations as well as individuals, and by much the same process. Group definitions appear as folkways, mores, religions, philosophies, and world views. Sumner says, "The first task of life is to live. Men begin with acts, not with thoughts."[1] Out of men's imperative needs, guided on the one side by pleasure and on the other by pain, expedient ways of doing things are adopted and developed through habit, routine and skill. Men live in groups, however, and profit by each other's experience, hence there is a concurrence toward the most expedient and all adopt the same way for the same purpose. In this way the folkways arise.[2] They become a uniform, universal in the group, imperative and invariable.

The folkways are ways of satisfying needs, according to Sumner, and they show "a strain of improvement towards better adaptation of means to ends so long as the adaptation is so imperfect that pain is produced".[3] They are also subject to "a strain of consistency with each other, because they all answer their several purposes with

1. Folkways, New York: Ginn and Company, 1906, p. 2.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., pp. 5-6.

less friction and antagonism when they cooperate and support each other".[1] Sumner does not say whether the readjustments to these strains takes place by the interactions of persons with each other, so that they gradually come to act more alike, or whether there is a strain within each person toward better adaptation and consistency of his own roles. It is to be presumed that the strain manifests itself both between persons and within persons.

Types of individual definitions, the writer suggests, have their rough counterparts in types of group definitions. Some groups, like the paranoid, define all other groups as threatening. Other groups, like the schizophrene, find their situation overwhelming. The Buddhist definition of the situation is a denial of all desire except a desire for Nirvana, a state of non-desire. The Christian group defines the entire life on earth as a mere means to the final blessed state in which fulfillment will be reached. The pessimistic philosophies reduce everything in the situation to a dead level of evil, while the optimistic philosophies define everything for the best. So the roster of philosophies might be examined--and the folkways, the mores, institutions and the laws. Each attempts to provide some kind of a solution to a recurring problem, and each is a relatively stable and enduring group definition of a situation.

VI. Summary

The definition of the situation is a process of bounding the situation in terms of what is relevant to the adjustment problem

1. *Ibid.*

and the purposed action.[1] Within this context, values, as well as meanings, are assigned to physical, social, and conceptual facts. On the basis of meaning, the conceptual situation may be said to be divided into the meaning-objects and the meant-objects. On the basis of value, it is divided into positive value-objects and negative value-objects. The actor defines his situation in terms of (1) means and (2) goals on the positive side, and into (3) barriers and (4) goads on the negative side.[2] The relationships of these formal elements constitute the structure of the situation.

Defining the situation is a process of reacting to the objects in the situation. It is the reaction to them that constitutes their meaning and value. As a process of activity, definition of the

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1. If this is true, it is perhaps misleading to speak of the "total situation" as influencing behavior. In the most ultimate sense, it no doubt does, to some degree, but for purposes of psychological and sociological analysis an attempt to describe any "total" situation would be an un-ending and probably useless task. The analyst of behavior should focus his attention upon what might be called the practically relevant situation--the situation which the actor himself selects, organizes, and conceptualizes. The structure of the meaning-and-value-situation, as presented here, forms the skeleton schedule for such an analysis. Failure to find and specify the concrete embodiments for any of these formal structural elements would be a serious omission. On the other hand, there is much concrete data to be found in a given situation which may be ignored if it has little relevance for the action. The various structural elements of the functionally significant situation form a "whole situation" which is not by any means the total of all the observer might see and describe. Cf. Follett, M. P., Creative Experience, New York: Longmans, Green & Company, 1924, p. 109. Also Koffka, Principles of Gestalt Psychology, pp. 158-159. Also Parsons, The Structure of Social Actions, pp. 29, 589, 753.

2. The conceptual schemes of Tolman and Lewin, it may be noted, have grown primarily out of experimental work, and their accounts agree with and supplement those which have been speculatively derived.

situation may be made in advance of the overt act, or it may be a tentative process proceeding through the action.[1] It may be conscious or largely unconscious.[2] It may be an individual process, or a social process. Social situations are defined by social interaction between the participants, in which each, by his own actions, reveals his own purposes and significance for the other. It is only in social situations that the actor learns to include the meaning of his own actions and himself as the actor as part of his private definition of the situation. If there is any one process broad and fundamental enough to be called "the social process", it is the process of defining the situation--that process out of which meaning, value, communication, personality, and perhaps even social structure grow.

Values, like meanings, may be a function only of the particular situation, or they may become more or less fixed in the course of time.

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1. Thomas, it is believed, unduly restricts the meaning of the phrase. He says: "Preliminary to any self-determined act of behavior there is always a stage of examination and deliberation which we may call the definition of the situation." (The Unadjusted Girl, pp. 41 ff.) There does not seem to be any particular warrant for reserving the term "definition" to only that activity which takes place before the overt act begins. The exploratory behavior of the rat, the definition of the situation through the social process, valuation of various kinds may take place as a more or less tentative process of overt action. Neither is there any reason to restrict the term to the "more or less conscious, reflective" aspects of the process. (Cf. Chapter II of this thesis for quotation). In his Laws of Social Psychology, pp. 79 ff., Znaniecki takes a position [illegible] more similar to the view urged here. Sumner claims (Folkways, p. 60) that the folkways are adopted unconsciously, and that the mores in their period of greatest influence are unconscious and unquestioned. Cooley (Social Process, pp. 290-291) holds that valuation is usually subconscious. The psychoanalysts have attempted to show that unconscious valuation and symbolization takes place quite commonly.

2. Ibid.

Deriving their properties by their position within the context of the act, value- and meaning-objects are not always regarded in terms of their actual utilitarian possibilities, but by the "overflow" of meaning and value, are sometimes regarded as valuable or meaningful when their original functional significance is either gone or has never justified such regard. The meanings and values which become fixed and stabilized develop into roles on the individual level, and into folkways, mores, and institutions on the group level. Cultural objects, material and non-material are simply objects which have gained a more or less fixed meaning and value through the activities of the group.

The thesis suggested, to be examined in the next chapter, is that the fundamental structure of the situation as postulated in this chapter can be discovered embodied in more or less fixed and permanent form in the structure of personalities, groups, and institutions.

CHAPTER V

CERTAIN THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

In the previous chapters a conceptual framework has been built up in terms of the "structure of the situation". The particular framework proposed for the conceptualization of sociological data has been suggested by an examination of some sociological treatments of the concept situation, by a comparison of some of the classical treatments of the self as related to the situation, and by an inquiry into the nature of the process by which the situation is defined. It is the purpose of this chapter to indicate some of the hypotheses suggested by the foregoing material.

I. The Person in the Situation

It has been repeatedly implied and even explicitly stated by the writers cited in Chapter III that in the process of learning to adjust to the situation, the person "takes over", "internalizes", "mirrors", "dynamically represents", "models himself after" the situations in which he finds himself.[1]

1. According to Baldwin, the person transforms the abilities and attributes of the alter into the ego by imitation and the dialectic of personal growth. According to Royce, the self "feeds upon social models" and "carries literal social situations into his inner life". According to Cooley, the social self is a self which gains its characteristics by the reflection from the social situation. According to Mead, the situation is internalized and mirrored in the individual. The structure of the self is the structure of the situation. According to Freud, the Super-Ego is modeled after the father image. According to Park and Burgess socially prescribed roles become

If the situation is structured in terms of objects, persons, and ideas which play the roles of (1) means, (2) goals, (3) barriers, and (4) goads with relation to the actor's motives, and if the person "internalizes" this situation, the implication is that the structure of the personality will correspond to the structure of the situation. The conclusion drawn from a comparison of the treatments of the self review in Chapter III supports this thesis. It was there held that the personality could be regarded as a totality of ways of acting which could be divided into three systems: (1) a motive system, (2) a system of means-roles taken over from the situation, and (3) a system of barrier-roles taken over from the situation.

In order to adjust to the situation, the individual must somehow represent it within his own organization. This representation may presumably vary all the way from momentary muscular adjustments made to concrete objects in the present concrete situation[1] to highly organized and more or less permanent roles modeled after the roles of others in stable, long-time situations.[2] In man, at least, the actions necessary for dealing with objects, persons, and ideas in the situation are prepared, or started implicitly, before overt action begins. In order to avoid barriers and goads

permanent parts of the personality. According to Znaniecki the content of the reflected self is chiefly social. According to Eubank the person reflects the situation. According to Burgess and Cottrell, the repertoire of roles is taken over from the social environment, chiefly the family. According to Woodworth, the person, by defining the situation, comes to "dynamically represent" the whole situation as the resultant of partial adjustments. Cf. previous quotations in Chapters III and IV.

1. As postulated by Woodworth as a "situation-and-goal-set". Cf. Woodworth, R. S., "Situation-and-Goal Set", op. cit., pp. 149-160.

2. As postulated by Burgess and Cottrell, op. cit., pp. 174-177.

without coming into actual contact with them, some sort of surrogate for them in the form of inhibition must be present in the neural and muscular apparatus. In a like manner surrogates for the goals and means in the form of facilitation perhaps, must also be present in the neural and muscular organization of the person. Given an impulse to action two things may logically happen: (1) it may issue unhampered to consummation and perhaps be facilitated, (2) it may be blocked or inhibited. It is suggested that the dynamic mechanisms basic to the different types of roles are laid down in the neural and physiological organization.

The goads and goals postulated as parts of the structure of situations have not yet been oriented to personality structure. Goal-roles, it is suggested, are quite the same as means-roles in their dynamic significance with relation to the motives, but are responses to objects of different concrete content. Goad-roles are correspondingly dynamically similar to barrier-roles but are enacted toward objects of different concrete content. In a sense the concrete objects which represent goals and the concrete objects which represent means are both <u>means</u> to the desired satisfaction: the consummation of the act. The concrete objects representing barriers and goads are likewise in the ultimate sense, both <u>barriers</u> to satisfaction of the desire. The taking of means-roles is a process of learning and developing ways of acting which satisfy the desires, motives, or what you will. The taking of barrier-roles is a process of learning to inhibit, to suppress, to deny the impulsive action which would lead to painful results rather than to satisfaction if allowed to become overt.

The self, or personality, taken over and modeled after the roles exhibited in social situations,requires social situations of certain kinds for expression. If roles are complex integrations of wishes and attitudes--tendencies to act--as Burgess and Cottrell hold, they are dynamic, they seek expression. They are dispositions to treat other persons in given ways, and they involve expectations that other persons will respond in a complementary way which supports the role. Koffka holds that:

> . . . the Ego, which itself is a product of organization, is an incomplete organization, a structure under stress, unless the total field fulfils certain conditions, viz., that it contains objects with definite dynamic characters. The Ego (is) 'incomplete' without a number of social relationships. . . (it) must contain stresses which can be relieved only by its inclusion in various kinds of (behavioural) groups.[1]

To use Tolman's language, the roles of other persons are the "behavior supports" without which it is impossible to play one's own role. One cannot play the role of the spoiled child, for example, without someone to play the role of the indulgent parent. One cannot play a dominating, belligerent role without someone to play the subordinate, accomodating role. The self apart from its habitual type of situation is partial and unexpressed.

It is presumed that not all of the habitual roles which go to make up the personality are of equal strength or make equal demands for expression. The differences in the situations in which the roles are made habitual would seem to assure this. If the father, for example, plays a strong barrier role toward the child,

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1. Koffka, Principles of Gestalt Psychology, pp. 662-663.

it seems reasonable to suppose that if this role is taken into the child's repertoire he will tend to play this role, either toward himself in exaggerated form in order to suppress his own desires, or he will perhaps seek situations where the role may be turned outward toward others. If the barrier role is weakly developed in his personality he may tend to seek situations where someone else will play the barrier role for him, thus allowing him to bolster his self-control with external surrogates or behavior supports.

The presumption is, that after the structure of the situation has molded the structure of the personality into habitual modes of action, there is not only a propensity to seek out situations which will supply the roles which a person lacks in his own habit structure, but also a propensity to symbolize, to read into the roles of others, to construct, or erect concrete surrogates or behavior supports for the totality of one's own roles. Baldwin says:

> . . . as the socius expands in the mind of the child, there is a constant tendency to make it real--to eject it--in some concrete form in the social group . . . as the child finds one man or woman inadequate to the growing complications of the case, other concrete selves are erected in the same way. The popular voice, the literature of the period, the king, the state, the church --all these are choice repositories of the ejected ethical self.[1]

The person presumably not only needs objects and persons to supply the roles he lacks, but also persons and objects which relieve him

1. Baldwin, J. M., Social and Ethical Interpretations in Mental Development, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1897, p. 58.

of the necessity of play overtly all his habitual roles. In order to play one role satisfactorily, the person must be relieved of the task of playing the complementary role himself, even if it is a part of his habitual structure.

Professor Lasswell[1] has suggested that person-to-person relationships, person-to-institution relationships, and person-to-occasion relationships are greatly influenced by the specialized appeal which certain types of people, social objects, and occasions have for the portions of the personality: the Id (impulse), the Ego (reason), and the Super-Ego (conscience). Men tend to choose their friends and their close business associates to supplement their personalities, Lasswell holds. Carefree impulsive persons tend to appeal to the Id, and one can gain vicarious release through friends of this kind. Meticulous, straight-laced persons appeal to the Super-Ego and may be chosen to ease guilt feelings by the punishment which they represent. Colorless and thoroughly efficient persons may be chosen because of their appeal to reason, or the Ego.

Regarding the specialized appeal of institutions, Lasswell suggests that the economic, political, scientific, and technological institutions make their primary appeal to expediency or reason; that the appeal to conscience is that of religion and fundamental law; while the appeal to natural impulse is that of art and sociability.[2] Occasions of mob violence, carnivals, war, appeal to impulse;

1. "The Triple-Appeal Principle: A Contribution of Psychoanalysis to Political and Social Science," The American Journal of Sociology, XXXVII (January, 1932) 523-538.
2. Ibid., pp. 533-534.

elections, patriotic holidays, church attendance appeal to conscience; while business conferences, scientific conclaves appeal to reason. Lasswell does not hold that any of these present an exclusive appeal to one or another part of the personality, but rather that in spite of a plurality of appeals in each case, they still show something of specialization or emphasis.

If persons-and-preferred-situations are taken as the unit of analysis, the writer suggests that it would be possible to discover concrete surrogates for each of the structural elements which have been suggested (means, goals, barriers, goads), either in the roles of the person or in the roles played or assigned to objects in his situation. It is suggested that this complex of factors tends to hang together, that the person tends to structure all of his situations in this way, and that where some factor is missing in concrete form, it tends to be supplied.[1] Although analysis has not gone far enough to enable anyone to say exactly what types of situations develop what types of roles, and what types of personality cause persons to seek given other types of persons or situations, it is believed that this orientation shows promise as a research hypothesis. It promises to be useful in the analysis of groups which seek conflict with other groups in order to promote inner solidarity, as well as types of groups which show an inner differentiation--a cohesion and solidarity which cannot be explained

1. The study of persons and the types of situations they protest or reject is quite as promising, but the hypothesis would have to be differently formed on the basis of some concrete cases.

on the basis of similarity between the members, by consciousness of kind, or by the pressure of circumstances without the group.

II. The Group in the Situation

It has been held that the group, for some purposes, can be considered the actor, and it is believed that if group-and-situation is taken as the unit of analysis a structure of the whole situation similar to that posited for the person as an actor can be recognized. Certain similarities between the person and the group have been called to the attention of sociologists. Park and Burgess, comparing the group and the person, say:

> Every smaller group, likewise, has a status in some larger group of which it is a part and this is determined by its relation to all the other members of the larger group.[1]

The logical conclusion has been pointed out by Professor Jameson who posits an "organizational personality".[2] The thesis is advanced that organizations or groups can be considered as manifesting personality as units, for an organization acts as a unit in a status-assigning environment in order to maintain or improve its status in terms of the roles it plays. Moreover, an organization manifests a different side of itself in every situation, Professor Jameson holds, just as do individual persons.

In some short-lived groups like the mob and the crowd, inner differentiation is very limited. Such groups are "situation groups"

1. Introduction to the Science of Sociology, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1921, p. 55.

2. Jameson, S. H., "The Concept of Organizational Personality," Sociology and Social Research, XVI (May-June, 1932), 417-426.

in an even truer sense than a self is a "situation self", for they are products of a single dominant situation and do not persist beyond the single situation. There is little opportunity to develop an enduring inner structure of the group during the duration of that group corresponding to the inner structure of the person, although the enduring effects may be carried by the persons into succeeding, more permanent groups . The structural elements in such a case are present in the <u>whole situation</u>, but the goads, the barriers, and the goals are all present <u>external</u> to the group, leaving only motive system and the means roles to be manifested within the group. The leader, perhaps, may be considered to play a goal-role, if he is idealized by the crowd, but in many crowd and mob situations the leader simply articulate the means-roles for the members. The lack of barrier-roles as they might be played by persons within the group toward others within the group means that there is no social control within the group which operates to stay their impulsive action. There is no restraining tradition, no authority symbols which the members consider as binding upon their own expression. The barriers and goads, to the contrary, are sharply separated from the group.. Mead means essentially this when he says that in a mob situation the social structure itself has undergone a "degradation" which so simplifies the structure of the "Me" that the door for the "I" is opened for self expression.[1] Franz Alexander and Hugo Staub point out the release of impulsive action

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1. <u>Mind, Self, and Society</u>, pp. 213 ff.

which follows the breakdown of Super-Ego surrogates in a social structure. Revolution is usually presaged by the corruption and discrediting of the courts, the law, and the pillars of the community and church.[1]

It is suggested that groups which persist over longer periods of time than the crowd[2] and the mob, do develop inner differentiation, just as the person develops inner differentiation by passing through a series of situations. In order for social control of impulsive action to operate within a group in the direction of suppression there must be barrier surrogates within the group structure itself. Sumner says:

> The exigencies of war with outsiders are what make peace inside, lest internal discord should weaken the we-group for war. *These exigencies also make government and law in the in-group*, in order to prevent quarrels and enforce discipline. . . . The closer the neighbors, and the stronger they are, the intenser is the warfare, and then *the intenser is the internal organization and discipline of each*.[3]

With regard to the taboos, which consist of those things which the group itself says must not be done, Sumner adds:

> The primitive taboos correspond to the fact that the life of man is *environed* by perils. . . . In part these are dictated *by mystic* dread of ghosts who might be offended by certain acts, but they also include such acts as have been found by experience to produce unwelcome results, especially in the food quest, in war, in health, or in increase or decrease of population.[4]

The thesis suggested is that the internal structure of groups as well as the internal structure of persons tends to reflect and approximate the structure of the situation.

1. Alexander and Staub, The Criminal, the Judge, and the Public, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1931, pp. 3-4, 46 ff.
2. Cf. Follett, Creative Experience, for a novel interpretation of the crowd.
3. Sumner, Folkways, p. 12. (Italics are mine.)
4. Ibid., pp. 30-31. (Italics are mine)

Group definitions of situations become clearer and more articulate as the group persists, and behavior supports for the direction and control of the members are erected in concrete form, both in common ways of acting and in the specialized roles which given members are assigned. Law and government presume certain functionaries who symbolize and enforce them. Certain members of the group take over a restraining or barrier-role which they play toward the rest. They emphasize the moral imperative, they "view with alarm", they castigate those who transgress and goad the others into the unpleasant action which is considered necessary for the protection of the group. Others, perhaps the same persons, become leaders. They epitomize the strivings and desires of the group. They are assigned a high status, idealized and emulated. Other members of the group take over more pedestrian means-roles. They perform the useful work. They are the technicians, the providers, the ever-necessary committee members.

The players of the barrier and goad roles hold a more or less anomalous position. If these roles are also played by other groups or threatening forces against which the group must protect itself, the players of these roles within the group are tolerated, even venerated and loved. It often happens, however, as everyone knows, that scapegoats are singled out among those nominally members of the group, persecution and defamation of whom heightens the unity of the rest. It not infrequently happens that these very scapegoats are those who have previously played the barrier roles considered necessary. In cases of revolution, this is most usual. Frazer reports many cases

in which the scapegoat is given extraordinary power and authority, even to the personification of a god before he is sacrificed, driven out, or defamed.[1]

Although the analysis presented here is admittedly sketchy and needs refinement, it is offered as a hypothesis which may lead to profitable research. The full complement of dynamic factors (means, goals, barriers, goads), it should be remembered, is postulated of the whole situation--the group and its situation as a unit, and not of any given group in itself, or any given person in himself.

III. The Structure of Institutions

Up to this point our analysis has been concerned primarily with the way in which the formal structure postulated of the situation is embodied in social relationships. It is suggested that when the same analysis is applied to the more fixed meanings and values which are attached to ways of acting, objects, and ideas (in short, culture), an even clearer differentiation is shown.

The folkways and customs, mores and institutions are first and essentially ways of acting which have been assigned meaning and value because they are believed to mediate certain recurring and persistently desired ends, or to avoid certain other ends or goads considered undesirable. They are crystallized definitions of familiar situations. As ways of acting, they give rise to more or less definite behavior supports in the way of objects of action which are assigned social meaning and value corresponding to the type of action which they support.

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1. Cf. Frazer, Sir James, The Golden Bough, London: The Macmillan Company, Ltd., 1933, Part VI, "The Scapegoat," pp. 218-223, 227, 275-305.

As a simple example of the structure of the situation embodied in concrete behavior supports, one of our common folk-ways, the playing of golf, may be considered. Corresponding to the goals are the nine holes and the low score; corresponding to the means are the fairway, the greens, the clubs, tees, balls, etc.; corresponding to the barriers are the sand traps, the roughs, the rolling terrain, the trees; and corresponding to the goads are high scores and the town or office one escapes. Concrete behavior supports for each of the roles are erected and maintained. It would probably be possible to go through the entire list of games and sports and make such an analysis of each. Perhaps the chief charm of games and sports is that they reproduce all of the dynamic essentials of a serious life situation--including the goad and barrier elements--on a "playful" level without serious consequences.[1]

The same structure may be illustrated by a religions institution. There are symbolic and ideational cues, or behavior supports especially designed to awaken and strengthen the motives--the doctrine of the original sin, the casting of Adam and Eve out of the garden, the Devil, Hell, Sin, and all of the other undesirable elements which goad the members to action and symbolize the barriers which they must overcome. There are other symbols which stand as the goals of action: Heaven, forgiveness, union with God, everlasting life, receiving the Holy Spirit. Representing and providing support for the means-roles are "Christ--the way", the confession, the cross, the altar, the baptism, the communion, the prescribed way of life.

1. Perry, R. B., General Theory of Value, pp. 256-259 on "real" and "playful" interests.

It is suggested that an institution is an extraordinarily clear and persistent social definition of a situation, distinguished by the imperativeness of the need satisfied and by a high degree of external symbolization of the means, goals, barriers and goads which serve as stimuli and behavior supports for the equally clear-cut ways of acting.

There is nothing essentially new in this account of institutions. Chapin has given the most clear-cut approximation, although he fails to specify the symbolization of the negative aspects --the goads and barriers, while recognizing the "symbolic values in material substances . . . charged with emotional and sentimental meaning" and the "utilitarian values in material substances . . . the means. . . ."[1] In other partial aspects the writer's definition agrees very well with the accounts of Allport,[2] Judd,[3] Sumner,[4] Mead,[5] and Freeman,[6] to mention only a few. If there is a contribution of the present analysis, it is to point out the nature of the "configuration"[7] or pattern of an institution in terms of its

1. Chapin, S. F., Contemporary American Institutions, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1935, pp. 14-18.

2. Allport, Floyd H., "The Nature of Institutions," Social Forces, VI (December, 1927), 167-179. Also: Institutional Behavior, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1933, pp. 4-5.

3. Judd, C. H., The Psychology of Social Institutions, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1926.

4. Sumner, W. G., Folkways, pp. 53 ff.

5. Mead, G. H., Mind, Self, and Society, pp. 211, 242, 261, 270.

6. Freeman, Ellis, Social Psychology, pp. 123-124.

7. Cf. Gillin, John, "The Configuration Problem in Culture," American Sociological Review, I (June, 1936), 373-386. Chapin, op. cit., holds that institutions present a "configuration".

articulated value and meaning structure--the barriers and goads, as well as the means and goals.

James W. Woodard,[1] turning his attention to the total configuration of culture rather than to its constituent institutions, maintains that there is a striking similarity between the total structure of the personality and the total structure of culture. He accepts the Id, Ego, and Super-Ego division of the personality and points out that there is an "aesthetic-expressive" portion of culture corresponding to the Id, a rational "inductive" culture corresponding to the Ego, and a "control" culture corresponding to the Super-Ego. In the interaction of institutions epitomizing these different portions, Woodard sees mechanisms similar to the personality mechanisms at work.[2]

This hypothesis fits in admirably with the point of view maintained in this thesis and agrees with statements by Cooley, Mead and Baldwin, none of whom drew ideas from Freud. Cooley writes:

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1. Woodard, James W., "The Relation of Personality Structure to the Structure of Culture," American Sociological Review, III, (October, 1938), 637-651.

2. The implication that similar mechanisms operate on the social and personal levels need not rest on any hypothesis of the "group mind". The postulated portions of the personality are simply habitual ways of acting, as institutions are ways of acting on the collective level. Moreover, the present writer would like to suggest that a number of the psychoanalytic mechanisms are taken directly over from social processes. Freud, whether he realized it or not, was essentially a sociological psychologist. Such mechanisms as repression, isolation, dissociation, aggression, sadism (dominance), masochism (submissiveness) and perhaps others, express social processes as well as personality mechanisms. Sumner's term "conventionalization" (Folkways, pp. 69-70), corresponds closely to Freud's "isolation", and is a process which takes place on the social level as well as the personal. The writer suggests that a thoroughgoing comparison of the social processes and psychoanalytic mechanisms would not only integrate material which has remained more or less unrelated, but would throw additional light on both.

> . . . wherever we find a system of values there is always a mental or social organization of some kind corresponding to it. Thus, in the simpler provinces of the mind there are taste-values, touch-values . . . corresponding to our physiological organization. . . . So in the larger or societal phase of life we see that each organizing tendency, the prevailing fashion, the dominant church or state, a school of literature or painting. . .. involves a corresponding system of values.[1]

Mead states:

> The institutions of society, such as libraries, systems of transportation, the complex interrelationship of individuals reached in political organizations, are nothing but ways of throwing on the social screen, so to speak, in enlarged fashion the complexities existing inside of the central nervous system, and they must, of course, express functionally the operation of this system.[2]

Baldwin's statement of the person's tendency to "eject" his "selves" in concrete form[3] expresses the same thing in another way.

Summary. There has been an attempt to show, in a very preliminary way, that the phenomena in which the sociologist is interested--persons, groups, and their culture--develop in a situational matrix, and that the basic meaning and value structure discovered on simpler levels tends to be articulated and stabilized in the structure of the personality, the group, and in institutional complexes of both material and non-material culture. The full structure, however, is not supposed always to be articulated within a person or group in itself, but in the whole situation. Whatever generalities may issue from research based on this hypothesis will be generalities holding true of the whole situation as a unit.

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1. Cooley, Social Process, pp. 329-330.
2. Mead, Mind, Self, and Society, p. 242.
3. Cf. previous quotation, Section I, this chapter.

IV. The Situation as a Conceptual Framework

As a basic conceptual frame of reference, the concept situation includes all of the major sociological concepts as proposed by Eubank: (1) the single human being, (2) the human plurel, (3) societary force, (4) societary control, (5) societary action, (6) societary relationship, and (7) societary products.[1] Either persons or groups can be considered as actors (1)-(2), who are motivated (3), to action (5). On the basis of this action other persons, groups, objects, ideas, in the actor's situation assume relationships (as means, goals, barriers, goads) (6) to the actor, and exert control (4) upon his action. Out of the relationships of the actors to each other and to objects, social meanings and values--culture--arise as products (7).

A word should be said about the types of relationships posited by this analysis and those posited by Eubank.[2] Isolation and association refer roughly to the relationship of exclusion from or inclusion within the situation. If one person has no functional significance for another person, then he will not be within the latter person's situation at all, no matter how geographically close he may be or what possibilities of communication there may be. On the other hand, if the former person is within the realm of functional significance for the latter person, the two are not isolated in the strictest sense, although one may ignore the other.

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1. Eubank, E. E., The Concepts of Sociology, p. 78 ff.
2. Ibid., p. 332.

In Eubank's analysis, the types of action parallel the types of relationships. That is, opposition, for example, may be considered as either an action or a relationship, and the same holds true for the other categories. This is true also of barriers and goads, means, and goals. They are both roles or actions and relationships.[1]

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1. In order to illustrate the parallel between actions and relationships as proposed by Eubank, and the categories derived as a result of this study, the following analysis is offered:

The two types of opposition according to Eubank are conflict and competition. When two persons play goad roles to each other, that is, when they, in themselves, each constitute a threat to the other, then the relationship is one of conflict. When two persons play barrier roles toward each other, that is, when they assume, individually, a negative character for the other simply because each stands as a barrier for the other to the attainment of a goal valued by both, the relationship is one of competition.

The two types of accomodation, according to Eubank, are combination and fusion. When two persons play means roles to each other, that is, when they each aid the other to the attainment of a goal valued by both, the relationship is one of combination. When two persons play goal roles to each other, that is, when each wishes to obtain or unite with the other for his personal qualities, the relationship is one of fusion.

Approach and Withdrawal as proposed by Eubank are the two types of action appropriate to means-goals and barrier-goads, respectively, although conflict and competition may enter in to complicate the matter.

Ordination, that is, superordination-subordination, refers to the degree and kind of value assigned, whether highest positive (goals), mediate positive (means), mediate negative (barriers), highest negative (goads). It must be kept in mind that values are always relative to the point of view of a given actor. In social structures, the scale of values which prevails and by which the actors are assigned status by those who accept the prevailing scale, is usually dictated or imposed by the person or group who holds the power. From the point of view of <u>this</u> person or group the status scale will follow the order proposed, although from the point of view of others, the superordinate person may have the highest negative value. The <u>fixed</u> values enforced by the dominant element will often not agree with the privately-held values of the subordinate group. The terms used to express this difference by Eubank are "formal" and "natural" vertical social distance. (*Cf.* Eubank, *op. cit.*, pp. 78- ff.)

It is not our purpose to attempt a thoroughgoing restatement of even the major sociological concepts in terms of the meaning and value categories proposed. It is enough to have suggested that such a translation is feasible and that there is nothing incompatible between the framework here offered and that proposed by Eubank. The two are complementary; they represent the "inner" and "outer" aspect as it were, of social phenomena.

MacIver says:

> . . . the categories of social causation are different from those which serve in the study of physical causation. Since social phenomena are all mediated by the consciousness of the group which creates or sustains them, we have surely to think in terms of the relation of an inner order or complex to an outer order. . . . Wherever social being meets social being or wherever group relates itself to environment, what we may call a value-field is created. The study of the various systems of dynamic value-fields which characterize social groups or social situations is full fo fascinating possibilities for the future of sociology. It is to the development of this somewhat neglected study that I look for the next advance in our science.[1]

The categories developing out of this study are meaning and value categories, stemming directly from the category of <u>action</u> which Talcott Parsons and Florian Znaniecki and George Mead, as well as others, have held is basic to sociology. The writer does not suggest that they are final or complete, but they do represent the epitome of a good deal of recent thought. To establish or disprove their adequacy is a task of major theoretical and methodological importance.

1. MacIver, <u>op. cit</u>.

V. The Observer in the Situation

According to the point of view maintained throughout this study, behavior always takes place within a situation. If this is true, does it not also apply to the behavior of the scientific observer? A theory of human behavior which does not also apply to the behavior of the theorist who makes it is a poor theory indeed. If one explains the behavior of others, he must *mutatis mutandis* explain his own behavior by the same criterion.[1] Is there any reason to suppose that, while everybody else acts within a situation which he views from his own position and in relation to which all the objects and actors in the situation gain a value and meaning, the scientific observer alone takes no position, is perfectly disinterested, and makes no value-judgments?

Dewey observes that "a standpoint which is nowhere in particular and from which things are not seen at a special angle is an absurdity".[2] The term "observer's situation" as used in this study is intended to acknowledge this fact. The observer, just

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1. The mechanist and vitalist positions afford examples of the *reductio ad adsurdum* which can result from a faithful application of this requirements. One who holds a strict deterministic view can hardly claim any independent validity for his theory, for that must have been determined also. If he posits a freedom from determinism for himself, he must also posit it for others and so forfeits the possibility of strict prediction. Woodworth has subjected the Freudian psychologists to a psychoanalysis, with rather amusing results. (Woodworth, R. S., "Some Criticisms of the Freudian Psychology," *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, XII, (1917), 174-194).

2. Dewey, John, "Context and Thought," in *Philosophy*, XII, No. 3 (1931), 203-224, p. 216.

like the other actors, acts within a situation and sees things from a special point of view. In quite the same sense that the actor has only "subjective" knowledge of the things in his situation, the observer has only subjective knowledge of the things which *he* sees, although within this subjectively given field the other actors in their concrete and conceptual situations appear to the observer as "objects" exterior to himself. Contrary to the impression the behaviorists give, the meanings and values which appear to the actor are as "objective" with reference to the observer as the actor's overt acts, though not so easily apprehended. To illustrate, everything, including the concrete actor, the actor's concrete situation, and the meanings and values which the actor assigns--all of these come to the observer as a subjectively given field. This is not meant to deny that there is an "objective situation"--that is, a totality of facts which really exist apart from the observer and apart from the conceptualization of any actor. Such a reality must be *assumed* to exist, even though it can never be apprehended except from a subjective point of view. The point is that the "objective situation" can never be directly *experienced* from any *one* point of view; it is not *given*. It must be *constructed*, implied, built up, from subjectively given data, obtained always from a *plurality of points of view*.

The conceptual situation which every actor builds up is a real part of the "objective situation", insofar as it is a factor influencing the events which occur within that given social situation. The scientific observer is interested in knowing not only

the concrete objects and actors within the social situation he is scrutinizing, but also in knowing the conception which each actor has of these same concrete objects. In order to discover this, the observer must vicariously, or actually, put himself in the place of every one of the actors to see if he can subjectively experience the same meanings and values as the particular actor whose role he is taking. When he understands how the situation appears to this actor, then he must take the role of another, and so on, until he has constructed a picture of the whole situation as it appears from all points of view, including his own. That totality is perhaps as near as he can come to an apprehension of the "objective situation" as it exists concretely and conceptually, and influences the action of the participants.

This is what Cooley meant when he held that the distinctive trait of social knowledge is that it is "dramatic" whereas the distinctive trait of spatial knowledge is that it is "mensurative".[1] One cannot understand social situations by weighing the actors, measuring their heights, calculating the number of feet separating them, although all of these things may be relevant if they have a meaning and value to the actor which we can understand by "taking their role", as Mead puts it. Cooley distinguishes spatial or material knowledge from personal, dramatic, or social knowledge. "Human life," says Cooley, must be known "Outwardly

1. Cooley, C. H., "The Roots of Social Knowledge," "American Journal of Sociology, XXXII (July, 1926), 59-79. Also printed in Cooley's book of selected papers: Sociological Theory and Social Research, New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1930, p. 294.

and inwardly at the same time". MacIver has emphasized the same point.[1] W. I. Thomas and Dorothy Swain Thomas,[2] John Dollard,[3] Curt Rosenow,[4] Howard E. Jensen,[5] Charles A. Ellwood,[6] C. M. Case,[7] Karl Mannheim,[8] Louis Wirth,[9] and many others have expressed like views.

The method of "participant observation",[10] in the sense of an attempt to apprehend meanings and values, is thus not one to be adopted because "more objective methods" fail, but because it is the only type of observation which will allow the observer to construct the objective situation in the fullness necessary for the understanding of social situations. There is no implication

1. "Is Sociology a Natural Science?", Publications of the American Sociological Society, XXV, (December, 1930), 25-35.

2. The Child in America, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1928, p. 572.

3. Criteria for the Life History, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1935, pp. 29-33.

4. "The Problem of Meaning in Behaviorism," The American Journal of Psychology, XXXVI (April, 1925), 233-248.

5. "Introduction" to Ellwood, Charles A., Methods in Sociology, Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1933, pp. xvii, xix-xx.

6. Ibid., pp. 19-21.

7. "Toward Gestalt Sociology," Sociology and Social Research, XV (September-October, 1930) 13-14, 25, 26-27.

8. "Ideology and Utopia, New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1936, pp. 39-40.

9. Ibid., Preface, pp. xix-xx, xxii-xxiv.

10. Lindeman , E. C., Social Discovery, New York: Republic Publishing Company, 1924. Cf. also: Hader, John J., and Lindeman, E. C., Dynamic Social Research, New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1933, pp. 101-110.

here that concrete data which can be gathered by counting or checking, descriptions of overt action, etc., should not be used or is disparaged. This information is indispensable. The implication is that until these data are supplemented by a knowledge of what the facts mean to the actors, part of the objective situation has been ignored.

If the objective situation cannot be constructed without including meanings, values, and subjective interpretations of the actors, is it not implied that the objective situation must also include the values, meanings, and subjective interpretations of the observer, who is himself an actor? It can scarcely be held that the observer does not assign value and meaning of <u>some kind</u> to his data. As Louis Wirth points out:

> In our choice of areas for research, in our selection of data, in our method of investigation, in our organization of materials, not to speak of the formulation of our hypotheses and conclusions, there is always manifest some more or less clear, explicit or implicit assumption or scheme of evaluation.[1]

The crucial point, which the champions of objectivity have been right in emphasizing, is that the observer has not performed his duty of description if he passes a value judgment upon the objects in the actor's situation <u>from one point of view only</u>. From the observer's point of view, all of the actors and concrete objects in the situation have a positive value, insofar as they constitute material which is useful to him and engages his interest and curiosity as a scientific observer. In his role as a scientific observer he does not make a <u>differential</u> judgment in the sense of

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1. Preface ot Mannheim, <u>Ideology and Utopia</u>,p. xxii.

saying that the actor is making a wise or unwise choice, or that certain practices of the actor are good or bad.[1] Such a procedure is "unscientific"--that is, "bad" from the point of view of the scientific observer.

It was earlier held, however, that in order to understand the action of the participants, the observer was forced to "take their role" and experience the situation in terms of negative and positive value as the actors do. This is very true, but the observer does not stop with evaluating the situation from <u>one</u> actor's point of view. He proceeds to make judgments from the point of view of each of the participants.[2] By so doing, the observer is enabled to look at <u>himself</u> from another point of view, and so obtain a better assessment of the values and interests he brings into the situation himself. By taking the role of the others, the observer can, to some extent, avoid carelessly identifying himself with one or another of the participants and so smuggling in judgments of the situation not strictly suited to his role as a scientific observer.

Such an observer will admit, with Dewey, that it is not bias that is objectionable in scientific research, but only certain kinds of bias--bias which is unrecognized, or a bias which gives a much

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1. <u>Cf.</u> Sumner, <u>Folkways</u>, pp. 58-59.

2. Insofar as the group acts as a group, it may for some purposes be sufficient to take apoint of view representative of one member of the group to stand for them all. In such cases, the group will be considered the actor, and the point of view of all the actors will be taken.

less inclusive view of the situation than would some other. Dewey says that "bias for impartiality is as much a bias as is partisan prejudice, though it is a radically different quality of bias".[1] It is a bias for impartiality, a desire to take all factors into consideration, an interest in seeing his own biases, that should characterize the scientific observer--not a vain hope that bias can be escaped, or that there is some one viewpoint which will allow him to see things "objectively", or a belief that he is entirely disinterested in his material. With such a recognition of the inevitability of bias, it may be made a tool of "positive cognitive importance"[2] in the apprehension of meanings and values existing for actors in the situations which the social scientist is interested in analyzing.

Hader and Lindeman[3] summarize aptly the argument of this section in a contrast they make between the "older conception" and the "newer conception" of social research. The older conception, they say, holds that (1) the research agent must be free from social and personal purpose, (2) that he should cultivate the habit of detachment and disinterestedness, (3) that he should, insofar as possible, keep himself external to the research situation, and (4) insofar as possible, exclude his sense of values. In point to point contrast with this, the newer conception is that (1) the research agent must accept the fact of his purposes and proceed to their clarification, (2) he should cultivate those

1. Dewey, op. cit., p. 216
2. Wirth, op. cit., pp. xix-xx.
3. Hader, John J., and Lindemand, Eduard C., Dynamic Social Research, New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1933, p. 108.

qualities of self-awareness which will allow him to take his interests into account, (3) he should acquire the capacity to "live into" the research situation, and (4) he should candidly include his values, as well as values found in the research situation.[1]

According to the implications to be drawn from this study, "objectivity" is a construct, not a quality of the observer. It is reached (if at all) by inclusion of all relevant factors, inner and outer, affecting the actors (of whom the observer is one), rather than by exclusion of the inner factors affecting the actors and by ignoring the subjectivity of the observer.

VI. The Situation as a Research Unit

If there has been any validity to the foregoing analysis, i.e., that meaning and value arise and have their structure only in situations, that the self or personality has its characteristics by reason of inclusion within situations, that the group likewise acts and to some degree derives its characteristics by reason of its inclusion within situations, and that institutions are situational complexes, the conclusion follows that whole situations, not persons, groups, or institutions shorn of their context, are the units of investigation toward which the sociologist should bend his research.

This idea has been expressed over and over again in sociological literature. An attempt to document it would lead to citation of nearly all of those whose contributions have been examined

1. Hader and Lindeman, op. cit., p. 108.

in this thesis and more. It might even be said that the situational emphasis is the sociological emphasis par excellence. This does not mean that all sociologists have been aware of all the terms implied or that it has always affected their thinking to the extent that it might have. Nor does it mean that other fields, such as physiology, psychology or philosophy, have not been forced to employ it. It does mean that sociologists have long been aware of the relativity of values, from person to person, group to group, and culture to culture. It means, moreover, that the very fact that the sociologist is interested in the influence of persons and groups upon each other has led him, whether he would or not, to study social situations.

There are, however, different ways of cutting up the raw material of social life in order to get units small enough to be analyzed and studied for generalization. One can, for example, go to the South to study the negroes; and by convincing himself of the necessity of delimiting his field, may avoid studying much else. Dollard did not find this possible. He says:

> Negroe life histories refer at every point to a total situation, i.e., to Southerntown itself, the surrounding country, the southeastern culture area, and in a strict sense the whole region which is bound to American cotton economy. This observation came as a very unwelcome perception, since it necessitated getting a perspective on the community and the county, and informing myself incidentally on many apparently remote matters. . . .[1]

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1. Dollard, John, Caste and Class in a Southern Town, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1937, pp. 1-2.

It is possible to gather a good deal of information on "social problems" without taking a situational point of view. Thomas and Znaniecki protest the study of "artificial, abstractly formed groups of facts such as 'prostitution', 'crime', 'education', 'war', etc.," on the ground that they cannot be "treated theoretically and practically in an arbitrary isolation from the rest of the life of the given society".[1] The separating of the normal from the abnormal is objected to on the same account.[2] "The facts must first be taken in connection with the whole to which they belong",[3] is the procedure recommended by Thomas and Znaniecki, and the gestaltists and field theorists make the same recommendation.[4]

It is possible to make the same abstracting approach to problems of motivation and to posit a number of motives, as did McDougall, with rather nonplussing results. If, for example, it is posited that there is an "instinct of self-abasement" and an "instinct of self-assertion", little in the way of prediction is gained unless it is specified in what types of situations these motivations will express themselves. One can always come along after the behavior has taken place and explain it ad hoc by pointing to the motivation that would account for such behavior, but this is hardly the aim of science. The argument applies with equal force to the more currently used concept "attitude". There is good reason to believe, on the

1. Thomas and Znaniecki, The Polish Peasant in Europe and America, pp. 11.
2. Ibid., p. 9.
3. Ibid., p. 12.
4. Cf. Lewin, K., A Dynamic Theory of Personality, Chapter I. Cf. also: Brown, J. F., Psychology and the Social Order, pp. 33-34.

grounds of extensive research[1], that attitudes expressed in verbal test situations (or "opinions" as they are sometimes called) do not accurately indicate what the attitude in another situation will be, and perhaps should not be expected to. Attitudes are a function of the situation in every case, and as the situation changes, the attitude also changes. There is probably no one, stable, unitary attitude toward a given object which, if only known, would in itself allow prediction in any type of situation.

MacIver emphasizes the necessity of explaining in terms of "whole situations" with the following concrete example:

> It is not enough to explain a phenomenon like the gang as due to the desire of the adolescent for companionship and adventure, since these general desires, to bring the phenomenon into being, are directed, modified, and made specific by the ethos of the group and by the opportunities or hindrances to its expression. Nor, turning to the outer system, can we adequately explain the phenomenon as the consequence of poverty and deteriorated neighborhoods, since these factors may equally be adduced to explain other social phenomena such as ignorance, crime, desertion, alcoholism, drug addiction, prostitution, etc., and since, in any event, these factors may be present in a greater or less degree, without involving a greater or less development of the phenomenon.[2]

There is probably little quarrel with the point of view expressed--that "whole situations" and not abstracted segments should be the sociologist's object of study, and that valid generalizations and predictions will have to be made in terms

1. Cf. Kiepe, op. cit., in particular the conclusions on pp. 237-238 concerning the "arbitrary dichotomy which separates the concept of attitude from the concept of value".

2. "Is Sociology a Natural Science?", Publications of the American Sociological Society, XXV (December, 1930, 25-35.

of "whole situations" and not by a knowledge of one or two factors alone--and yet such a concession raises a disturbing question. If this is true, is it ever possible to cut out a research problem and delimit it, or is it necessary to keep extending the research to the context until there is danger of losing sight of the original problem altogether? It should be recalled that a "whole situation" is to be distinguished from a "total situation". To study a "whole situation" means to take into account all the dynamic factors involved: the motives, the means, the goals, the barriers and the goads. The main consideration is to neglect none of these structural elements. The degree of thoroughness with which they are to be articulated by the gathering of more and more concrete data will depend upon the particular demands of the investigator.

Lewin calls this approach, which proceeds from the fundamental structure of the whole situation to differentiation by more specific data, the method of "gradual approximation".[1] He points out that with such a procedure, even the first approximations are of value in their own right and are usable no matter at what point research is discontinued.

On the assumption that the pattern of the total field is generally more important than the size, the field theorists have proposed that it is possible to study fundamental social constellations experimentally by "transposing" them into an appropriate group size while retaining the essential structure.[2] Experiments have

1. Lewin, K., Principles of Topological Psychology, p. 17.

2. Cf. Lewin, K., "Field Theory and Experiment in Social Psychology; Concepts and Methods," American Journal of Sociology, XLIV (May, 1939), 868-896.

been performed[1] and are now under way based upon this hypothesis. The results of these experiments will be of the greatest interest to sociologists who are interested in a laboratory approach to social phenomena.

In conclusion, it may not be amiss to indicate some of the fields of research which, in the opinion of the writer, show particular promise in the clarification and stabilization of the situation concept as a sociological tool, especially with reference to the hypotheses presented in this study.

(1) Further studies of a-typical persons, such as the juvenile delinquent, neurotic and psychopathic individuals, the habitual criminal, the hobo, the prostitute, and others, <u>in connection with the situation</u> in which their personalities developed promise to throw light on the types of roles which grow out of types of situations. In their cases, certain factors are apt to be exaggerated, and hence more easily detected.

(2) The study of internally coherent groups, such as the family, small friendship groups, spontaneously formed and maintained groups of "kindred souls" who nevertheless appear to be very different, show promise as data which will throw further light on the interlocking and supplementing of role patterns and personality structures. Such a group in itself is a situation for each of the acting members.

(3) There is a need for more life historical studies of sects, gangs, cliques, minority groups, schismatic and other conflict groups which arise, gain unity, develop inner differentiation

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1. <u>Cf.</u> Lippitt, Ronald, "Field Theory and Experiment in Social Psychology," <u>American Journal of Sociology</u>, XLV (July, 1939), 26-49.

and dissolve under situational pressures. The lead furnished by the concept of organizational personality has not been exploited as yet.

(4) The interlocking and supplementary roles of functional groups within larger configurations such as the community has hardly been touched as a field for research. The growing field of rural social psychology promises to provide sociologists with data of this kind, relating closely to the way in which organizational personalities combine into larger coherent groups.

(5) Finally, the study of cultural elements, both material and non-material, in terms of their symbolic and dynamic significance for the group in connection with the special type of situation in which the group has its being, has not yet yielded its full share of potential insights. The recent trend toward collaboration of sociologists, anthropologists, psychologists and psychiatrists in the study of culture groups promises to be most fruitful.[1]

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1. The Institute of Human Relations at Yale University represents such a collaboration. John Dollard's recent book, Caste and Class in a Southern Town, is an example of the sort of orientation which appears to be dominant there. At Columbia University the collaboration of a group of social anthropologists and psychologists, including Ralph Linton, Ruth Benedict, Ruth Bunzel, Cora DuBois, Abram Kardiner and others, has resulted in the examination of a number of culture groups including the Trobriand, Kwakiutl, Zuni, Chuckee, Eskimo, Tanala, and Marquesan. The preliminary results are embodied in a recent book by Kardiner and Linton: The Individual and His Society (The Psychodynamics of Primitive Social Organization (New York: Columbia University Press, 1939). The concept of a "basic personality structure" of a culture group, which has grown out of these seminars, is very similar to the sort of approach suggested by the present study.

Chapter VI

GENERAL SUMMARY

An examination of the sociological treatments of the term situation has revealed that it refers to a construct, that is, a conceptual framework in terms of which the actor or the observer may order the data involved in the solution of a given problem. The term "actor's situation" has been chosen to designate the complex of factors, both concrete and conceptual, with which the actor must deal, while the term "observer's situation" has been chosen to designate this same complex of factors from the observer's point of view. The observer's concrete situation refers to the actual data he observes--actor and actor's environment. The observer's conceptual situation, as used in this study, is the construct in terms of which he interprets the action he observes. It is in this sense, and from this point of view, that the concept situation is a sociological tool.

As a sociological tool, the concept situation is a construct involving (1) an actor (2) in an environment (3) which he defines with reference to (4) the act by which he proposes to satisfy his desire. When the environment of the given actor is composed of other persons, the situation is called a social situation. Social situations can be understood in their entirity only by knowing how each of the persons defines the situation, and how each of the actors affects the others' definition by his actions. The totality

of such definitions, including the observer's, plus the concrete situation, has been called the "objective situation". It is this totality of relevant facts that the sociological observer should attempt to construct.

The proposed "act" of the actor, from its beginning in an aroused motive to its end in a satisfactory adjustment, is the context within which the objects in the environment are assigned meaning and value. These objects may be inert physical things, other actors, or concepts and ideas. The actor's conceptual situation includes this whole unit of action within its scope, and is to be distinguished from the actor's concrete situation, which changes from moment to moment. In terms of their functional significance the objects in the environment may be said to be defined as (1) means, (2) goals, (3) barriers, and (4) goads. Means and barriers derive their character by reason of intervening between the beginning of the act and its end. Goals and goads derive their character by reason of certain qualities of the objects themselves which promise consummation of the act, or constitute an active threat or danger to the actor. The means and goals have positive value, the barriers and goads have negative value with relationship to the actor's motive and his proposed act.

On the assumption that the actor's situation tends to be structured in the above manner, and on the strength of repeated statements by certain authors that the self internalizes or takes over the situation, the deduction is made that if this is true, the self should

a structure similar to that of the situation. The treatments of the self examined, coming from widely differing backgrounds, in part confirm, and are compatible with this thesis. On the basis of these treatments of the self it was held that the personality could be regarded as a totality of ways of acting which could be divided into three systems: (1) a motive system, (2) a system of means-roles and (3) a system of barrier-roles taken over from the situation. Means and goals roles are considered as one system in the personality, since they both have the same dynamic significance with reference to the motives. Barriers and goads roles are considered as another single system for the same reason.

Groups, like persons, are held to develop an inner differentiation by passing through a series of situations. It is further suggested that this inner differentiation tends to reflect and approximate the structure of the situation in which the group finds itself. It is possible to distinguish means-roles, goal-roles, barrier-roles, and goad-roles, played either by persons in the group, or by persons or other groups in the social situation.

Institutions, as ways of acting, give rise to behavior supports. It is suggested that the material culture which gains meaning and value in this way, can profitably be classified according to its dynamic significance, in terms of means-supports, goal-supports, barrier-supports, and goad-supports. The non-material, ideational, essentially symbolic elements which also provide behavior supports are amenable to the same type of classification.

The situation is a sociological tool in the sense that it is a basic conceptual frame of reference in terms of which sociological data can be ordered. It is suggested that the meaning and value categories offered in this study (means, goals, barriers, and goads) are supplementary to the present sociological categories and that they represent the "inner" aspect of which so many sociologists have spoken.

The necessity of dealing with meanings and values, both from his own point of view and from that of the actors, confronts the sociological researcher with special problems which he must frankly meet and provide for in his methodology. "Objectivity" in the sense of an account of the total number of relevant factors, the "inner" as well as the "outer" is a kind of objectivity impossible in the physical sciences. The physical scientist must take account of his own subjectivity, as the social scientist must, but he can never get the intimate knowledge of his objects of study that the social scientist can get because he is essentially unlike them, whereas the social scientist is, to a large extent, like his objects of study. The fact that the social scientist is like the actors he observes, and is able to react as they do, at least to some degree, by putting himself in their place, gives him a tool for the direct understanding of his data that the physical scientist can never have. There is a possibility of turning what have been called the special difficulties of the social scientists into special advantages.

The concept situation as a sociological tool serves to em-

phasize the fact that sociological phenomena are always related to their context, and that generalization and prediction must take place in terms of stating the relationship between given phenomena and given contexts. The situation as a construct including both actor and environment, the value and meaning elements as well as the concrete outward elements, forms in a way a schedule or list of factors which must be specified in a complete sociological study aimed at generalization and prediction. The situation as a conceptual framework thus delimits a research unit, and has implications for research and methodology, as every concept worthy of attention must have.

In conclusion, some fields of research which show special promise as proving grounds for the hypotheses advanced in this study have been suggested.

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