

Sociology has been accused on one hand of lacking a "social consciousness" and on the other hand of being a "humanity and not a science" and on both counts it has to be stated that the criticism is not unjust. We, as sociologists, have been struggling to define sociology since its inception and as soon as one position is stated it is attacked by those in the discipline holding the opposite view. I, of course, do not intend to solve the problem by pompously giving my opinion in an editorial preface, however hopefully the articles selected for publication in this issue of the KANSAS JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY offer some insight into the usefulness of sociology both as a "humanity" and a "science."

First, Sal Restivo's article discusses how history and the study of historical incidents will give the sociologist clues to patterns in today's society. The next two articles by Francesco Cordasco and Douglas Dean are an extension of Restivo's article by depicting how social values of the dominant culture remain constant over a historical span. The articles concern American schools as social institutions which are not used as centers of learning but instead as means of social control in molding minority children to become part of the dominant mass culture totally disregarding individuality and education. The articles both point to the existence of this common factor of American education over a historical period of 70 years and establish an obvious point in evaluating the American educational system. Thus, we can distinguish the value of sociology in understanding a social problem and possibly pointing toward corrections.

The final article by Lawrence Pettit and Paul Shaw deals with the development of black paramilitary organizations. Again in this paper we find constructive hints in understanding the development of a social situation which forces a minority to resort to extreme activities because of its threatened feelings. Thus, the Pettit and Shaw article extend the thinking that a science and a humanity do not have to be mutually exclusive categories.

I only hope that this issue of the KANSAS JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY can throw light in a few areas of knowledge and open many creaky doors of intellectual curiosity.

Kenneth Anderson

SOCIOLOGY AND HISTORY: NOTES ON RAPPROCHEMENT*

by

SAL P. RESTIVO
Wellesley College

The bases for distinguishing between sociology and history are examined and found to be insupportable insofar as the subject matter of the two disciplines coincides. The distinctions between (1) ideographic and nomothetic science, (2) art and science, and (3) humanism and science have been used to justify separating historical from sociological inquiry; in fact, these distinctions are not logically relevant to identifying fields of inquiry. This argument is supported by considering the logic of inquiry, as well as by studying the research activities of historians and sociologists. Rapprochement between history and sociology is urged to erase logical contradictions, and to wed humanistic and artistic concerns with the "science" of sociological inquiry.

The emergence of sociology as a "super-history" (Collingwood, 1956: 12B) in Comte's positive philosophy invited historians to put aside their methods for those of the positivists. The rejection of this invitation followed from a growing sense of autonomy among historians. Philological criticism provided them with what they considered to be a unique method for a unique task - discovering and stating the facts of history (Collingwood, 1956: 126-133). The nature of the relationship between sociology and history is still confused by the idea of a unique "historical method." Even contemporary scholars who urge rapprochement take for granted that sociology and history are "mutually dependent and yet...separated with respect to their immediate aim." (Mandelbaum, 1967; see e.g. Cahnman and Boskoff, 1964: 1-18; Lipset, 1968: 23ff.)

In challenging the relevance of systematic generalization and cumulative theory for history, historians have argued that historical methods cannot be assimilated by scientific methods (Collingwood, 1956: 133). By contrast, the historical perspective central to nineteenth and early twentieth century sociology has gradually faded from the core of modern sociology. The result is that the study of social facts has been theoretically impotent and historically impoverished.

In supporting those scholars who consider sociology and history mutually dependent we shall argue the stronger thesis that insofar as their subject matters coincide the two "disciplines" cannot be meaningfully separated.¹

The Axiom of Uniqueness²

Wilhelm Windelband's (1915: 136-160) distinction between nomothetic and ideographic inquiry has influenced generations of scholars.³ It has generated a mystique of uniqueness which continues to permeate the philosophy of historical inquiry. As a basis for separating history and sociology this mystique is, at times, manifested in the unreasonable rhetoric of anti-sociology:

History stands in grimly majestic contrast to the puny weapons of the sociologist for measuring and classifying these facts; a Himalaya of iron and granite defying a few feeble pick-axes (Nevins, 1962: 333).

More often the mystique is manifested in the timidity with which historians tread in the shadow of physical scientists capable of deducing "causal laws of general application." For example, in Clio, A Muse Trevelyan cautioned that

It is the business of the historian to generalize and to guess as to cause and effect, but he should do it modestly, and not call it science... (1913: vi).

One even finds distinguished scholars like Raymond Aron (1961: 233) arguing that history is the study of "facts...foreign to any rule."

How facts can be organized and interpreted "modestly," as Trevelyan suggests, is a mystery. Even more mysterious are the directives which would have us view the facts of history as subject to no rules.

Every "fact" is in some sense unique. If the axiom of uniqueness is accepted, generalizations will not be anticipated; concepts will not be designed to reveal patterns and regularities. Inevitably, the historian armed with such concepts will conclude that history is "a chain of unique phenomena," (Mannheim, 1936: 201). But uniqueness does not preclude order. To study facts is to interpret the "chaotic diversity of our sense experience" in terms of a "logically uniform system of thought" which coordinates singularities with a theoretical structure (Einstein, 1946: 443).

It is not entirely unreasonable that history and the social studies in general have been plagued by a distrust of generalizations and of science. Such sentiments are understandably nourished by the individual's consciousness of "uniqueness" and "freedom."

If we are to avoid the absurd consequences of accepting the axiom of uniqueness, personal consciousness must be transcended. Tolstoy (1957: 1443-4) offers a simple but instructive model in the closing paragraphs of War and Peace:

As with astronomy the difficulty in the way of recognizing that the earth moves consisted in having to rid oneself of the immediate sensation that the earth was stationary accompanied by a similar sense of planets' motion, so in history the obstacle in the way of recognizing the subjection of the individual to

the laws of space and time and causality lies in the difficulty of renouncing one's personal impression of being independent of those laws. But as in astronomy the new view said: "True, we are not conscious of the movement of the earth but if we were to allow that it is stationary we should arrive at an absurdity, whereas if we admit the motion (which we do not feel) we arrive at laws," likewise in history the new theory says: "True, we are not conscious of our dependence but if we were to allow that we are free we arrive at an absurdity, whereas by admitting our dependence on the external world, on time and on causality, we arrive at laws.

Modesty in inquiry readily degenerates into a defense of unsystematic interpretation and "the adequacy of rule-of-thumb and common-sense methods." Indeed, even rules-of-thumb and common-sense methods must be based on the assumption of an underlying and discoverable order in nature (Barnes, 1963: 361). Historians cannot defend their descriptions and interpretations and at the same time deny that human activity is determined. Where determinism in science becomes distorted by the ideologies and dogmas of positivism and scientism its denial is defensible; otherwise it stands as the fundamental and necessary "faith" of all scientists.

Art, Science, and Inquiry

Windelband, in challenging the conception of history as a science, reduced it to a method for intuiting the value of the individual, "an activity on the whole akin to that of the artist" (Collingwood, 1956: 165-8). Art and science are not, however, "two separate and logically incompatible paths to understanding" (Hughes, 1960: 20). Art in inquiry refers to the intuitive and imaginative aspects of (1) selecting and formulating problems and (2) organizing, presenting, and interpreting data. These aspects of inquiry defy systematic and rigorous classification. They are what Kaplan (1964: 3-11) classifies as logics-in-use, implicit cognitive styles which are more or less logical, and are as much a part of inquiry as those practices explicitly formulated in a logical, idealized manner, i.e., reconstructed logics. Indeed, for some scientists, inquiry proceeds in the "'wildness of logic' where reason is the handmaiden and not the master" (Morse, 1959: 58).

If we consider the traditional role of the historian as the narrator of man's past, it is evident that his narration does not reconstruct history wie es eigentlich gewesen (von Ranke, 1956: 57; see Collingwood, 1956: 130-1). "Imaginative reconstruction," a "re-creative or interpretive art"⁴ identical to the creation of a work of art, bridges the gap between "history-as-actuality" and "knowable history" (Gottscholk, 1963: vi). This artistic act has as its aim the construction of a coherent past which "conveys an inner conviction" (Hughes, 1964: 47). It does not therefore differ in kind from the act of "science," which involves coordinating facts with theoretical structures "in such a way that the resulting coordination is complete and convincing" (Einstein, 1946: 443). Every reconstruction or interpretation is organized around a set of axioms or assumptions, definitions, and hypotheses which are more or less systematic, more or less personal. The process of inquiry - which, it should be stressed, is ultimately a collective search for knowledge and not the work of isolated individuals - involves making these more explicit, more systematic, and less personal. Unless we are prepared to defend the "art" of this process as arbitrary, projective, entirely subjective and not subject to systematic refinement, it must be conceived as an integral part of theory construction.

History and the World View of Sociology

Comte, Weber, Simmel and others in the classic tradition of sociology recognized the relevance of history. The historical dimension which was an integral part of their perspective faded with the emergence of a methodologically inhibited sociology during the post-World War I years. In spite of the influence of such heirs to the

classic tradition as Mills, Bendix, and Eisenstadt, sociology especially in America, remains vulnerable to criticism as parochial, oriented to contemporary events, and characterized by a tendency to individualize social facts. The validity of the perspectives of modern sociologists are not categorically defined; but clearly they have failed to fulfill the promise of the classic tradition (Mills, 1959; Stein and Vidich, 1963; Horowitz, 1965). Part of their failure rests on a neglect of the social facts of history.

In the context of sociological inquiry, history is the record of man's past organized as social facts. This set of social facts can be viewed as a source and a testing ground for hypotheses, theories, and laws.⁵ It also forms a necessary part of the domain of inquiry in a discipline concerned with social change.⁶ By definition, sociology entails a view of man's history as a set of invariant processes and sequences. To ignore this implication precludes not merely understanding and explaining historical phenomena but understanding and explaining the present and future as history.⁷

It is not implied that such understanding and explanation will follow immediately upon the sociologist's turning his attention to history. The gap between history-as-actuality and knowable history poses formidable methodological and epistemological difficulties. The gap will never be narrowed unless the social facts of history are subjected to cumulative study. It is important to emphasize the functions of "theorizing" for revealing structures in history. As a process, theorizing ideally can provide (1) closer and closer approximation to the facts of history "as they really were" - one consequence of this process for the study of history is that data which are not available empirically can be supplied logically; (2) closer and closer approximation to a coherent and convincing interpretation of history. To realize these ends, the social facts of history must be subject (1) to continuous interplay between theory and data and (2) to continuous logical refinement of theory (see Cochran, 1964: 35).

The Classic Tradition: A Model for Unity

Sociology and history cannot be logically distinguished as disciplines.⁸ Historians, however, often rely on their literary and humanistic traditions as sufficient defense of their autonomy. The literary tradition in history assumes a different quality once we have admitted without qualification that historical social facts can be studied "scientifically." Verbal statements about social facts in the common language are minimally abstract and systematic. The process of inquiry involves the transformation of these statements into increasingly precise statements, and ultimately into symbolic (e.g., mathematical) statements.

The humanistic tradition retains its significance when we communicate the description and interpretation of social facts to laymen. This in fact is one of the moral imperatives entailed in the humanistic tradition. The humanistic tradition, by any measure, is stronger in history than in sociology. It is by no means universally evident in the work of historians. They have not escaped the criticisms leveled at sociologists for making social analysis remote, irrelevant, and useless.⁹

Only if humanism is used as an excuse for shoddy methods and non-cumulative research can it be defined as a distinguishing characteristic of history or, for that matter, of any discipline.

There is no need to search for a new and exotic organization of sociological inquiry to integrate our arguments for rapprochement. If we are courageous enough

to ignore Whitehead's apothegm (1959: 162) that "a science which hesitates to forget its founders is lost," historians and sociologists alike can, following Mills, cultivate the vision of classic social analysis. In the biographies of Marx, Weber, Durkheim, and others in the classic tradition, sociological inquiry exhibits a concern for "historical social structures" and a focus on problems directly relevant "to urgent public issues and insistent human troubles" (Mills, 1959: 21). Weber (1947: 109) in particular integrates these various virtues: a concern for historical social structures as a logical means to understanding man's present and future conditions, uncompromising analyses, and choice of subject matter guided always by a "profound personal commitment to the cause of reason and freedom" (Bendix, 1960: 30f).

The new generation of historians and sociologists is being exposed to a "strategy in social sciences" (Moore, 1963: 66-95) rooted in these biographies. This strategy defines a sociological inquiry based on a history informed by theory, a sociology informed by history, and a social science informed by humanism.

Conclusion

Two major texts in history and sociology have appeared during the past several years; Sylvia Thrupp, as editor of Comparative Studies in Society and History, has pioneered a forum for social history and historical sociology. These are among many indications that sociologists and historians are at least becoming more aware of a mutual dependence. These trends are not so general that we can easily discern or take for granted their directions and outcomes. In urging a radical rapprochement it is not intended that the reality of the distinct academic traditions of sociology and history be ignored. It is inconceivable, however, that continuity can be built into the study of social facts as long as historians and sociologists remain committed to an untenable separation of aims, and blind to their common task.

Footnotes

¹This conclusion follows from the arguments for a theoretical history and for rapprochement between sociology and history. In addition to works cited in the text the following works are especially relevant: Eliot, 1922: 628-636; Thrupp, 1957: 11; "What History and Sociology Can Learn from Each Other," *Sociology and Social Research*, 41 (1957), pp. 434-438; Hofstadter, 1956: 365f; Dilthey, 1962; Berr, 1956: 250-255; Carr, 1963: 84; Popper, 1961. Our focus on "social facts" should not obscure the general implications of our argument for the relationships between history and the other social sciences.

²This phrase is Fritz Wagner's, cited in Anderle, 1965: 36.

³Nagle's treatment of this issue is especially lucid and includes exemplary illustrations from the natural sciences: Ernest Nagel, 1961: 547ff. See also Anderle's critique of the axiom of uniqueness in Anderle, 1965: 36ff, and Carl G. Hempel, "The Function of General Laws in History," (1965: 231-242).

⁴Louis Gottschalk, 1963: vi. Croce argued that history is not a science; it is an art, and it is more than art. The historian must state what he sees as the artist does; but the historian, unlike the artist, must assure himself that what

he sees is truth (Collingwood, 1956: 190-4). Droysen included history among the sciences, but argued that it was the only science which was also required to be an art; John Droysen, "Art and Method," an essay published as an appendix to the first regular edition of the Outline of the Principles of History (1968), reprinted in Stern (1965: 139). Wedgwood, following Trevelyan, considers history an art guided by "imaginative insight": See C. V. Wedgwood's essay in "Historical Writing" (1965). The debate on this issue has been less critical in sociology; but see Robert A. Nisbet, 1962: 67-74.

⁵For an illustration of the type of research this concept of history entails, see the monograph by Leo Lowenthal and Marjorie Fiske, "The Debate Over Art and Popular Culture in Eighteenth Century England," (1957: 33-112). The authors "approached the historical materials of eighteenth century England with categories, questions, and hypotheses derived from the contemporary study of mass media of communication (Komarovsky, 23f.).

⁶See, for example, the argument for the sociological analysis of social - i.e., historical - change, by S. D. Clark, 1959: 389-400. A paradigm for this approach to social change in Crane Brinton, 1965: esp. 3-26.

⁷Mills (1959: 146) quotes Paul Sweezy in defining historical sociology as "an attempt to write 'the present as history.'" On the future of history, Heilbroner's ideas (1960) are compatible with Mills': "When we estrange ourselves from history we do not enlarge, we diminish ourselves, even as individuals....We cannot help living history. We can only fail to be aware of it."

⁸Unless the fallacy of autonomy is recognized - both in terms of the preceding arguments and the discussion which follows - the strategy of philosophical arguments concerning the nature of historical explanation is of dubious value. This is especially true when such arguments become detached from the problems we have focused on. The Popper-Hempel "theory of historical explanation," for example, does little to clarify issues that will stimulate the meaningful study of social facts, and is more likely to prompt anti-positivist critiques (such as Alan Donagan, "Historical Explanation: The Popper-Hempel Theory Reconsidered," 1965: esp. 24-25.

⁹See, for example, the essays by C. V. Wedgwood, and Geoffrey Barraclough (1965). See also Anderle's comments on the "new pragmatic attitude" in history; which is in many respects analogous to the "new sociology."

References

*This paper was written in conjunction with the author's studies in historiography while a graduate student in the Department of Sociology at Michigan State University, 1968-1969. The helpful criticisms of an earlier version of this paper by Professor Richard E. Sullivan (History Department), and Professor William A. Faunce (Sociology Department) are gratefully acknowledged.

Anderle, Othmar F.

1965 "A Plea for Theoretical History." History and Theory 4.

Aron, Raymond

1961 Introduction to the Philosophy of History. Boston: Beacon Press.

Barnes, Harry Elmer

1963 The History of Historical Writing. New York: Dover Publications.

Bendix, Reinhard

1960 Max Weber, An Intellectual Portrait. New York: Doubleday.

Berr, Henri

1956 "About our Program." Pp. 250-5 in The Varieties of History, Fritz Stern (ed.). New York: Meridian Books.

Brinton, Crane

1965 The Anatomy of Revolution. New York: Vintage Books.

Cahnman, Werner J. and Alvin Boskoff

1964 "Sociology and History: Reunion and Rapprochement." In Sociology and History, Cahnman and Boskoff (eds.). New York: Free Press of Glencoe.

Carr, E. H.

1963 What Is History? New York: St. Martin's Press.

Clark, S. D.

1959 "Sociology, History, and the Problems of Social Change." Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science 25:389-400.

Cochran, Thomas

1964 The Inner Revolution. New York: Harper and Row.

Collingwood, R. G.

1956 The Idea of History. New York: Oxford University Press.

Dilthey, Wilhelm

1962 In Pattern and Meaning in History, H. P. Rickman (ed.). New York: Harper.

Donagan, Alan

1965 "Historical Explanation: The Popper-Hempel Theory Reconsidered." History and Theory 4.

Droysen, John

1956 "Art and Method." In Fritz Stern (ed.). op. cit.

Einstein, Albert

1946 In The Meeting of East and West, F.C.S. Northrop. New York.

Eliot, Thomas D.

1922 "The Use of History for Research in Theoretical Sociology." American Journal of Sociology 27:628-36.

Gottschalk, Louis

1963 "Forward." In Generalization in the Writing of History, Gottschalk (ed.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

- Heilbroner, Robert L.
1959- The Future as History. New York: Harper.
1960
- Hempel, Carl G.
1965 "The Function of General Laws in History." Pp. 231-42 in Aspects of Scientific Explanation, Hempel (ed.). New York: Free Press.
- Hofstadter, Richard
1956 "History and the Social Sciences." In Fritz Stern (ed.), op. cit.
- Horowitz, Irving L. (ed.)
1965 The New Sociology. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Hughes, H. Stuart
1960 "The Historian and The Social Scientist." American Historical Review 66.
1964 History as Art and as Science. New York: Harper and Row.
- Kaplan, Abraham
1964 The Conduct of Inquiry. San Francisco: Chandler.
- Lipset, S. M.
1968 "History and Sociology: Some Methodological Considerations."
In Sociology and History: Methods, Lipset and Richard Hofstadter (eds.). New York: Basic Books.
- Lowenthal, Leo and Marjorie Fiske
1957 "The Debate Over Art and Popular Culture in Eighteenth Century England."
In Common Frontiers of the Social Sciences, Mirra Komarovsky (ed.).
Glencoe, Illinois: Free Press.
- Mandelbaum, Maurice
1967 The Problem of Historical Knowledge. New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation.
- Mannheim, Karl
1936 Ideology and Utopia. New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Co.
- Mills, C. Wright
1959 The Sociological Imagination. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Moore, Barrington
1963 "Strategy in Social Science." In Sociology on Trial, Maurice Stein and Arthur Vidich (eds.). New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.
- Morse, Marston
1959 "Mathematics and the Arts." Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists 15.
- Nagel, Ernest
1961 The Structure of Science. New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World.
- Nevins, Allan
1962 The Gateway to History. New York: D.C. Heath and Company.
- Nisbet, Robert A.
1962 "Sociology as an Art Form." Pacific Sociological Review 5:67-74.
- Popper, Karl
1961 The Poverty of Historicism. London: Routledge and K. Paul.
- Stein, Maurice and Arthur Vidich (eds.)
1963 Sociology on Trial. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

Thrupp, Sylvia

1957a "History and Sociology, New Opportunities for Cooperation." *American Journal of Sociology* 62.

1957b "What History and Sociology Can Learn from Each Other." *Sociology and Social Research* 41:434-8.

Tolstoy, L.N.

1957 *War and Peace*. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books.

Trevelyn, G.M.

1913 "Clio a Muse." In Fritz Stern (ed.), op. cit.

von Ranke, Leopold

1913 "Preface," *Histories of the Latin and Germanic Nations from 1494-1514*. Reprinted in Fritz Stern (ed.), op. cit.

Weber, Max

1947 *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, Trans. Ed. A.M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons. London: W. Hodge.

Wedgwood, C.V. and Geoffrey Barraclough

1963 "Historical Writing." *The Times Literary Supplement* (London), (Jan.6).

Whitehead, Alfred North

1959 *The Aims of Education and Other Essays*. New York: Macmillan.

Windelband, Wilhelm

1915 "Geschichte und Naturewissenschaft." Vol. II, pp. 136-60 in *Präludien, Windelband* (ed.). Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (P. Siebeck).