

Jonathan H. Turner

**Theoretical  
Principles of  
Sociology** Vol. 1

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**Macrodynamics**

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 Springer

# Theoretical Principles of Sociology, Volume 1



Jonathan H. Turner

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Macrodynamics



Springer

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*To the Memory of Robin M. Williams, Jr.,  
my mentor at Cornell University who  
first exposed me (as a rapid symbolic  
interactionist) to the wonders of the  
macrodynamic realm*



# Preface

It is unfashionable these days to offer “a grand theory” on the dynamics of human social organization. For many, this is the kind of activity that failed scholars like Herbert Spencer or Vilfredo Pareto once did, although sociology still continues to worship Karl Marx, Max Weber, and Émile Durkheim who also offered encompassing theoretical schemes. More recent general theories such as Talcott Parsons’ efforts to develop a general theory of action are often held up as exemplars as to what can go wrong when theorists think “too big.” Postmodernism has not helped with its criticism of all “grand narratives,” even as postmodernists themselves have proceeded to offer such narratives. Another roadblock to general theorizing has been the overspecialization of sociology, not just in the arena of empirical research but also in theorizing. Good theories are testable, and it is presumed (incorrectly), testable theories must be narrow or even “middle range.” The result is the partitioning of theories into various camps and theoretical research programs. Even rather general theories on cultural dynamics, conflict, exchange, symbolic interaction, and human ecology, to name a few, remain rather insulated from each other, with little cross fertilization. There are, then, many obstacles to developing a grand theory in sociology today.

The problems with grand theorizing are not so much that they are (or were) “grand” and seek (sought) to explain a large part, if not all, of human social organization; rather, the problem has been their execution. Both Spencer and Pareto, for example, are actually quite formal in their presentations, and yet, their theories still seem rather vague. Talcott Parsons’ approach produced a large category system in which to push and shove empirical reality, but it offered few laws on the dynamics of reality denoted by this category system. And postmodernists, like all critical approaches, have been so busy critiquing science and its presumed pretensions that their own pretentious assertions go untested because to do so would be to invoke the standards of a “failed epistemology.” And so, most sociologists today



believe that grand theorizing is one of those mistakes of the past and, moreover, that sociology has moved beyond such theoretical blunders by positing more manageable and testable (and narrow) theories. Thus, the intellectual climate is not right for yet another effort to present a grand theory, and perhaps the iconoclast in me has chosen just this moment to break with current conventions and propose a general theory of human social organization.

In my view, theoretical sociology has developed a large body of explanatory principles and models that have yet to be fully integrated. We know a great deal more about how and why the social universe operates than we did when I entered the field over 4 decades ago, but we fail to appreciate this fact because this knowledge is fragmented and lodged within narrower theoretical and research traditions. And, because of incessant epistemological criticism of any effort to develop general theories, most theorists have been content to stay within their own supportive networks and not venture out into this world of carnivorous critics. It is time, I think, to ignore these critics and see just how far general theorizing can take us; in this way, we will have a much better sense of where sociology stands as an explanatory science. The classical theorists, especially Marx, Weber, Spencer, Durkheim, Simmel, and even Mead (who was not a sociologist) gave us many theoretical principles, and this is why we still read and reread their works today. More contemporary figures have also sought to do the same, but to less acclaim because, for reasons that are not clear to me, principles by the classical figures are acceptable whereas the same effort by contemporary figures is “naïve” or “inappropriate.” I have deliberately titled this and the other two volumes in the spirit of Herbert Spencer’s *Principles of Sociology* (probably not a wise move, given sociology’s unfair prejudices against Spencer), but others like Walter Wallace in his *Principles of Scientific Sociology* (1983) have traveled this same, rather bumpy, road. The point is that, if sociology continues to reject efforts to develop the laws of human social organization, then we are lost as a discipline; we become another kind of discipline that, in my view, is not much good to anyone – certainly not to a world filled with problems in how to organize large numbers of people in macro societies.

What I propose, then, is to bring together theorizing from very diverse traditions into a general theory. As I will argue, the social universe unfolds at the macro, meso, and micro levels; and although these are analytical distinctions, they denote how the social world is actually structured. A grand theory must, therefore, (1) develop general concepts that denote the key properties of these three levels of human social organization, (2) articulate principles that explain the operative dynamics of these properties, and,

thereby, (3) provide a general explanation of social reality at all levels of social organization. This is a tall order, but in fact, much of the heavy lifting has already been done by others. What is now necessary is to bring this work together into a set of relatively few abstract principles and models on the operative dynamics of the social universe. The theory is grand, to be sure, but it is also explicit and testable.

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Like everything that I have written over the last decades, the manuscript has been typed by my typist of 41 years, Clara Dean. I continue to be amazed at how she catches the many small errors that I consistently make when writing.

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Finally, I must also acknowledge those scholars whose work continues to influence my thinking on macrodynamics: Talcott Parsons, Neil Smelser, especially Smelser’s and Parsons’ *Economy and Society*, Niklaus Luhmann, Emile Durkheim, Karl Marx, Max Weber, Georg Simmel, and finally, Herbert Spencer who has been unfairly maligned by contemporary sociology. Spencer’s brilliance needs to be more fully acknowledged by sociologists, and they would do so, if they would only read his works rather than pass on what is, in essence, a verbal tradition of criticizing works that most sociologists have never read. Indeed, the title of this book obviously owes its inspiration to his *The Principles of Sociology*. Moreover, is no coincidence that many in this list of scholars are identified with functionalism, a theoretical approach that is very problematic, to be sure. Yet, functionalism asked the key question for all macro-level theoretical analysis: What dynamics drive the formation of societies as they grow and become more complex? This is still the central question for macro-level theorizing.

This question must be supplement by other lines of inquiry in different theoretical perspectives, as will be evident through this book, but concern with the dynamics revolving around population growth and differentiation of social structure and culture is where we should begin developing principles on macro realm of the social universe.

# Contents

<b>1 First Steps in Developing a General Sociological Theory .....</b>	<b>1</b>
A Return to Grand Theory .....	1
Taking a Stand on Basic Issues in Sociological Theorizing .....	5
Keeping Theories Simple .....	5
What Nomothetic Theories Can and Cannot Do.....	9
A Simple Conceptual Scheme .....	12
Macro-level Social Reality .....	12
Meso-level Social Reality .....	14
Micro-level Social Reality .....	16
The Simplified Conceptual Scheme.....	17
Conclusion.....	20
<b>2 Selection Pressures and the Evolution of the Macrodynamic Realm .....</b>	<b>21</b>
Where Functionalism went Wrong.....	22
The Dynamics of Selection .....	23
The Relevance of Herbert Spencer’s Early Insights.....	23
Durkheimian and Spencerian Selection .....	24
Forces and Selection Dynamics .....	27
Forces, Selection, and Differentiation .....	31
The Constitution of Macro Social Reality .....	37
<b>3 The Forces of the Macrodynamic Realm.....</b>	<b>41</b>
Population as a Social Force.....	42
Malthus’ Analysis of Population Growth and the “Four Horsemen” .....	44
Herbert Spencer’s Model of Population Dynamics.....	46
Émile Durkheim’s Model of Population Dynamics .....	47
A Synthetic Model of Population Dynamics .....	51

An Elementary Principle on Population Dynamics .....	55
Production Dynamics .....	57
Elements of Production .....	57
An Elementary Principle on Production Dynamics .....	66
Distribution as a Macrodynamic Force .....	67
Distributive Infrastructures.....	67
Markets and Exchange Dynamics as Driving Forces.....	70
The Rise and Expansion of Dynamic Markets.....	76
A General Model of Distributive Exchange Dynamics.....	79
An Elementary Principle on Distribution Dynamics .....	82
Regulation as a Macrodynamic Force .....	84
The Consolidation of Power.....	84
The Centralization of Power .....	89
Modeling the Dynamics of Consolidation and Centralization of Power .....	91
The Cultural Basis of Regulation.....	94
An Elementary Principle of Regulation as a Macrodynamic Force .....	98
Reproduction as a Macrodynamic Force .....	99
The Nature of Reproduction in Human Societies .....	99
The Shifting Institutional Basis of Reproduction .....	100
An Elementary Principle on Reproduction as a Macrodynamic Force .....	101
Conclusion.....	102
<b>4 The Dynamics of Institutional Domains .....</b>	<b>105</b>
The Emergence and Evolution of Institutional Domains .....	106
Inter-Institutional Differentiation.....	106
Intra-Institutional Differentiation.....	111
Mechanisms of Integration Within Institutional Domains .....	115
Cultural Mechanisms of Integration.....	116
Structural Mechanisms of Institutional Integration.....	125
Varying Patterns in the Integrative Bases of Institutional Domains.....	139
Intra-Institutional Integration .....	142
Inter-Institutional Integration .....	143
Elementary Principles on Institutional Dynamics .....	146
Conclusion.....	149

<b>5</b>	<b>The Dynamics of Stratification Systems</b> .....	153
	Fundamental Properties of Stratification Systems .....	154
	The Unequal Distribution of Valued Resources.....	154
	The Formation of Classes.....	166
	The Rank-Ordering of Classes .....	174
	Mobility Across Classes.....	181
	Integrative Dynamics of Stratification Systems .....	184
	Institutional Differentiation and Stratification .....	184
	Stratification and Integration.....	186
	Stratification and Disintegration.....	192
	Stratification and Polity Breakdown .....	192
	Elementary Principles of Stratification Dynamics .....	208
	Conclusion .....	212
<b>6</b>	<b>The Dynamics of Societal Systems</b> .....	215
	The Properties of Societal Systems .....	215
	Elements of Societal Dynamics.....	216
	Institutional Domains and Societal Dynamics .....	217
	Institutional Differentiation.....	217
	Institutional Integration.....	223
	The Institutional Basis of Societal Dynamics .....	237
	Stratification and Societal Dynamics .....	243
	The Structure of Societal Stratification and the Shifting Basis of Integration.....	243
	Integration of Stratification Systems and Societal Dynamics .....	247
	Stratification and Its Integration During Societal Evolution .....	255
	Systems of Communities and Societal Dynamics .....	269
	The Evolution of Systems of Communities .....	270
	Structural Integration of Communities.....	275
	Cultural Integration of Communities .....	280
	Elementary Principles on Societal Dynamics.....	282
	Conclusion .....	285
<b>7</b>	<b>The Dynamics of Inter-Societal Systems</b> .....	289
	Geo-Political Inter-Societal Systems.....	291
	Variations in Geo-Political Formations.....	291
	Conditions of Geo-Political Mobilization.....	293



Conditions of Territorial Expansion.....	298
Conditions Increasing the Size of Geo-Political Formations.....	301
Conditions of Geo-Political Collapse .....	304
Elementary Principles of Geo-Political Formations .....	305
Geo-Economic Inter-Societal Systems.....	309
The Dynamics of Dependency Geo-Economic Systems .....	312
The Dynamics of Free-Market Geo-Economic Inter-Societal Systems.....	314
Elementary Principles of Geo-economic Formations .....	318
Conclusion.....	321
<b>8 Principles of Macrodynamics .....</b>	<b>323</b>
Principles of Macrodynamics.....	324
An Elementary Principle on Population Dynamics .....	324
An Elementary Principle on Production Dynamics .....	325
An Elementary Principle on Distribution Dynamics .....	326
An Elementary Principle of Regulation as a Macrodynamic Force .....	327
An Elementary Principle on Reproduction as a Macrodynamic Force .....	328
Elementary Principles of Institutional Differentiation and Integration .....	328
Elementary Principles of Stratification .....	332
Elementary Principles of Societal Dynamics.....	336
Elementary Principles of Inter-Societal Systems.....	338
Conclusion.....	344
<b>References.....</b>	<b>347</b>
<b>Author Index.....</b>	<b>357</b>
<b>Subject Index.....</b>	<b>361</b>

# List of Figures

<b>Fig. 1.1</b>	A simple conceptual scheme .....	18
<b>Fig. 2.1</b>	Durkheimian and Spencerian selection .....	28
<b>Fig. 2.2</b>	Macrodynamic forces, selection pressures, institutional differentiation, and stratification .....	33
<b>Fig. 3.1</b>	Population and other macrodynamic forces .....	43
<b>Fig. 3.2</b>	Malthus' implicit model of population dynamics .....	45
<b>Fig. 3.3</b>	Spencer's model of population dynamics.....	48
<b>Fig. 3.4</b>	Durkheim's implicit model of population dynamics.....	50
<b>Fig. 3.5</b>	Direct, indirect, and reverse causal processes revolving around population as a macrodynamic force.....	52
<b>Fig. 3.6</b>	The dynamics of production.....	59
<b>Fig. 3.7</b>	The dynamics of distributive infrastructures .....	68
<b>Fig. 3.8</b>	Weber's analysis of money and markets.....	71
<b>Fig. 3.9</b>	Simmel's analysis of the effects of money and markets on social relations.....	73
<b>Fig. 3.10</b>	Braudel's analysis of markets and macrodynamics.....	77
<b>Fig. 3.11</b>	Randall Collins on markets and meta-markets.....	80
<b>Fig. 3.12</b>	Dynamics of exchange distribution .....	81
<b>Fig. 3.13</b>	The dynamics of power .....	92
<b>Fig. 3.14</b>	The cultural basis of regulation .....	96
<b>Fig. 4.1</b>	The emergence of new institutional domains and/or their transformation.....	108
<b>Fig. 5.1</b>	Unequal distribution of valued resources .....	165
<b>Fig. 5.2</b>	Structural dynamics and the formation of social classes .....	171
<b>Fig. 5.3</b>	Processes affecting the rank-ordering of classes .....	179
<b>Fig. 5.4</b>	Processes increasing or decreasing rates of inter-class mobility.....	183

<b>Fig. 5.5</b>	Stratification and integration .....	188
<b>Fig. 5.6</b>	Stratification, conflict, and state breakdown.....	195
<b>Fig. 5.7</b>	Prominent stages in the conflict initiated by lower classes .....	200
<b>Fig. 7.1</b>	Population growth, production, polity, and territorial expansion .....	295
<b>Fig. 7.2</b>	External and internal threat and the mobilization for territorial expansion .....	297
<b>Fig. 7.3</b>	Conditions affecting the size of geo-political empires .....	300

# List of Tables

<b>Table 1.1</b>	Sociocultural formations at the macro-level of social reality .....	13
<b>Table 1.2</b>	Macrodynamic forces .....	14
<b>Table 1.3</b>	Meso-level sociocultural formations .....	15
<b>Table 1.4</b>	Microdynamic forces.....	17
<b>Table 4.1</b>	Generalized symbolic media of institutional domains .....	118
<b>Table 4.2</b>	Selection pressures, modes of integration, and paths of disintegration among corporate units in the genesis of institutional domains.....	140
<b>Table 6.1</b>	Inter- and intra-institutional differentiation in basic societal formations .....	218
<b>Table 6.2</b>	Structural bases of integration in types of societal systems .....	224
<b>Table 6.3</b>	Cultural bases of integration in types of social systems.....	231
<b>Table 6.4</b>	Basic dimensions of stratification affecting societal dynamics.....	244
<b>Table 6.5</b>	Bases of integration in societies with high levels of stratification.....	248
<b>Table 6.6</b>	Bases of integration in less stratified societies .....	249
<b>Table 6.7</b>	Stratification in types of human societal systems.....	256
<b>Table 6.8</b>	Bases of structural and cultural integration in types of stratified societies .....	260



# Chapter 1

## First Steps in Developing a General Sociological Theory

### A Return to Grand Theory

If there was a “Big-Bang” in the evolution of the social universe, it occurred when individuals abandoned their nomadic ways in small bands of hunter-gatherers and settled down in more permanent communities, forcing humans to create new kinds of sociocultural formations, or die. Much like the “Big Bang” that initiated the physical universe as we know it, population growth increased the scale of the social universe; and as size and complexity of societies increased, the forces driving the formation of social reality became ever-more evident. These forces had always been present, but their valences were low in the simple societies in which humans had lived for well over 95% of their time on earth.

At times, however, these forces emerged much earlier, as was the case when small-scale hunting and gathering populations came into contact and competed for resources, when they would form more permanent encampments, usually near water, or when environmental degradation or ecological disaster forced members of hunting and gathering bands to migrate to new territories where they would often be met with hostility. These were, in essence, “little bangs” that offered a harbinger of transformations to come as a larger proportion of pre-literate peoples settled down into more permanent communities, grew, and came into conflict over territory and resources. With population growth, migrations, settlements, resource scarcity, and conflict, the forces of the macrodynamic realm suddenly began to increase in intensity and to push actors to forge new kinds of sociocultural formations, although for most of human history, these formations did not spread or even persist as members of populations slipped back into nomadic hunting and gathering bands. But these episodes of macrodynamic forces suddenly pushing on individual and corporate actors to change their patterns of social organization, or die, would begin to transform human societies at an accelerating rate. With more

widespread settlement patterns among larger numbers of people and with all that such settlements generate – increased production, political leadership, environmental degradation, migrations, internal conflict, and external warfare – this bigger bang began to force human societies on new evolutionary paths.

As the evolution of societies hurdled forward, much like the universe after its big bang, the new sociocultural systems that emerged allowed for larger populations to become organized. There were perhaps as many as 6.5 million people during the 150,000–180,000 years of hunting and gathering as the basic mode of human adaptation to the environment; now there are 6.5 billion people inhabiting the planet. Population growth was not always linear, as Malthusian corrections often stopped and even reversed growth, but over the long run, populations have continued to grow at an accelerating rate. The new structural and cultural formations that humans were forced to create in the face of growth were inevitably larger and more complex, creating macro societies. Other species, mostly insects, live in macro societies (Machalek 1992), but unlike insects, human macro societies are not natural to us because hominids and then humans did not evolve in large-scale and complex systems. Humans lived for most of their existence in a micro-level world of interpersonal contact among relatively small numbers of individuals in hunting and gathering bands; and at best, their actions were circumscribed by meso-level structures such as nuclear families, bands, and at times, inter-band social formations.

The micro-level forces that guide and direct face-to-face interaction have always been clearly evident; the more macro-level forces that now drive large scale societies and inter-societal systems were more recessive but, like those driving interaction, they too were present even in the decidedly micro-scale of the first human societies. As societies became larger, these macro-level forces pushed humans to create new sociocultural formations under intense selection pressures to discover new ways to cope with population growth that, in turn, required new modes of production, new means for coordination and control through the consolidation of power, new systems for distribution of resources, and new systems of reproduction of individuals and sociocultural formations essential to survival.

Sociology was born as an explicit mode of inquiry in response to the evolution of complexity, where changes brought by early industrialism were transforming societies. People have, no doubt, always thought about the nature of the social world, and many in philosophy and other early academic pursuits began to think about the fundamental nature of humans and societies before sociology or the social sciences in general became distinctive disciplines. What drove early thinkers to ponder the nature of society is still what inspires

general theories. Sociological theory emerged to offer scientific explanations about the operative dynamics of the social universe that was being transformed, and many early sociologists believed that it would be possible to understand the nature of the social world in the same manner as scientists studying the biotic and physical universes (e.g., Comte 1830; Spencer 1862 [1898], 1874–1896; Durkheim 1895; Pareto 1916/1935). Change almost always generates reflection because individuals and collective actors are under pressures to adapt to new circumstances; and as industrialism and rapid urbanization pushed actors to adjust to the new social world, early sociologists believed that the epistemology of science was essential to understanding the fundamental forces driving social change. As had been the case for the biotic and physical universes, general laws could be articulated to explain the operation of the forces driving the social universe.

Of course, others felt that such pretensions were just that – pretensions. The social world was somehow different. Yet, for the first 100 years that sociology could be called a distinct discipline – say, 1830–1930 – early sociologists developed general theories about the nature of the social order; and even those like Karl Marx (1876/1967) and Max Weber (1922/1968), who had doubts about the scientific pretensions of sociology, provided sociology with some of its most central laws of social organization. The theories of these early founders were “grand” in the sense that they sought to explain large domains of the social universe – all of the micro interpersonal reality for George Herbert Mead (1934) and various dimensions of macro reality for Comte, Marx, Weber, Simmel, Durkheim, and Pareto. In somewhat different ways, each sought to understand the nature of what is fundamental to human social organization, and this is still the impulse that drives theorizing in general – even theorizing that rejects the notion of a natural science of society.

What I have found curious is that the grand theories of the early classical thinkers – at least Marx, Weber, Durkheim, and Mead – are still worshiped for their brilliance, whereas similar efforts among contemporary theorists to develop “grand theories” are viewed with a certain skepticism, if not outright derision. A new age of skepticism about the scientific prospects of sociology now pervades the discipline, often bordering on a smug cynicism. Moreover, even those committed to the epistemology of science are, to say the least, suspicious of general theories. For those adopting the epistemology of science, a new age of specialization and middle range theorizing has replaced the impetus to think big and to ponder the nature and dynamics of *all* social reality. Indeed, grand theorizing has become a pejorative label in sociology, and from my perspective, this new cynicism has kept sociology from realizing its promise as the social science that could unlock the mysteries of the social universe.



What is sociology about, if it is not to increase understanding of how the social universe operates? There are many ways to seek understanding, but one of them must be general theories that explain the social world as it has unfolded over the last 200 millennia. The physical and biotic universes, as we now know them, did not always exist; and human societies are, at most, only 200,000 years old. But all of these universes, as they formed and expanded, did so as a few invariant forces drove their formation and constant transformation. It is only when thinkers get close to home – themselves and the societies they live in – that skepticism emerges. This skepticism about social science is, perhaps, a variant of the Heisenberg principle. From my perspective, however, there is nothing unique about the social universe. It emerged and expanded; and it did so and continues to do so because there are a few fundamental and invariant forces pushing on individual and collective actors to build and transform the structures and cultures in which they must live. The social universe is not different from other domains of reality; it can be explained by a relatively small set of laws or abstract principles.

The epistemological critique of anti-science skeptics is easy to ignore, but ironically, many of these critics have actually provided key insights into the nature of the social universe, and so, I freely borrow from them – despite their skepticism (I forgive them). Similarly, even though much scientific theorizing is too focused, and hemmed in by scope conditions, these focused theoretical-research programs have advanced understanding of the social universe; once again, I do not hesitate to remove the scope conditions and to see how far these theories can be extended in explaining the dynamics of the social world. My goal is to take sociology not so much on a new track, but instead, to reinvigorate an approach that is as old as the discipline: grand theory. If we do not fight these skeptics who say scientific sociology is an illusion, we will be caught in a vortex of relativism, solipsism, and cynicism; and sociology will become just another genre in the humanities. And, if we do not seek to determine how more specialized theories fit together to explain the larger social universe, theoretical sociology will become a series of disconnected theories that thwart the full potential of the discipline.

What I present in these three volumes, then, is a grand theory that not only stands on the shoulders of the classical theorists, but also an approach that incorporates the theoretical research programs that have emerged over the last 50 years as well as some insights from those who see scientific sociology as a pretentious activity. What I propose is not a challenge to these programs but, rather, a view that they all are part of a “grand” vision of what sociology can be. Like any natural science, we now know the basic forces that drive the social universe – albeit by many different labels in

diverse theoretical orientations. My goal is to cut through the apparent disagreements, intellectual competition, and outright skepticism to pull together what theoretical sociology knows. We know far more than is commonly recognized even by theorists committed to cumulative knowledge. My goal is to assemble the many diverse theories into a general theory of human social organization. To be sure, I certainly do not have it all right, but by proposing a general theory, debate can be focused on what is right, what is wrong, and what is needed to make sociology an explanatory science of *all dimensions* of the social world.

Where, then, do we begin? First, we need to exorcise critiques of scientific sociology, while avoiding the mistakes of earlier grand theorists. There are some basic issues that divide the discipline, and a general theory needs to take a clear stand on these in order to set the stage for an integrative theory of the social universe.

## **Taking a Stand on Basic Issues in Sociological Theorizing**

### ***Keeping Theories Simple***

History has not treated Talcott Parsons fairly, but on one score, his lifelong effort to develop a general theory of action is instructive: the reliance on an overly complex conceptual edifice. Parsons was a Weberian to the extreme because he generated conceptual schemes on top of conceptual schemes – much as Weber (1922) had done with “ideal types.” But unlike Weber who kept his ideal types simple and focused, Parsons sought to develop a scheme that captured not only all of social reality but the entire human condition (Parsons 1978). I have always found it ironic that Parsons (1937: 3) opened his first great work with a paraphrased quote from Crane Brinton (1933: 226–227) on Spencer:

Who now reads Spencer? It is difficult for us to realize how great a stir he made in the world... He was the intimate confidant of a strange and rather unsatisfactory God, whom he called Evolution.

Apparently, Parsons had read Spencer because for the next 50 years he produced a theoretical scheme that was almost as grand as Spencer’s Synthetic Philosophy; and, in fact, Parsons incorporated most of Spencer’s key insights employing a Weberian methodology of classification. The big difference between Spencer and Parsons, then, was neither the breadth nor substance of their respective theories; what distinguished them is that Spencer presented principles whereas Parsons offered categories.

When the category system is used to denote and explain the properties of the universe it becomes increasingly complex. From the relatively simple scheme outlined in *Towards a General Theory of Action* (1937) to the complex scheme in *The Social System* (1951) through the final effort in *The Human Condition* (1978), Parsons' system of categories and linkages among categories became increasingly complex. I once asked Parsons directly if explanation should focus on finding the place in a conceptual scheme of an empirical regularity. He answered affirmatively, and I went on to query further: Do you mean that when you can place an empirical regularity inside the action framework, this placement per se constitutes an explanation of this empirical regularity? Again, he answered affirmatively. To construct a conceptual scheme that is both abstract and, yet, still isomorphic ever-more dimensions of the social universe (plus, as was the case with Parsons, the biological, physico-chemical, and telic dimensions for good measure) inevitably leads the scheme-builder to keep adding elements to the category system. The whole exercise is like adding rooms to a house in order to provide shelter for more people; the house keeps getting bigger and more complex.

The dilemma here is that one needs a conceptual scheme to at least denote the critical properties of the social universe, but how to keep from producing Parsonian-like web of concepts? The answer is to keep the conceptual scheme simple and let the complexity of the theory reside in abstract models and principles. In this way, the scheme remains the same – as a general outline of what phenomena are to be theorized – while the theory itself can become more robust through modeling of specific processes and through statements of key relationships in abstract laws. Explanation thus becomes one of explaining empirical regularities with general theoretical principles; and while the conceptual scheme laying out the domains to be theorized remains simple, the number of general laws can be expanded as ever-more phenomena are explained.

This approach is, obviously, a covering law or “nomothetic” view of explanation, but it is not the nomothetic theory of philosophers of sciences. For, I relax the notion that nomothetic theory relies upon logical deductions from a covering law to an empirical case; and I reject the presumption that nomothetic theory must be axiomatic and reveal deductive rigor. In most sciences, save perhaps for physics, deductions from general principles are “folk deductions.” They involve an eyeballing of an empirical regularity, seeing it as a manifestation of a more general process that is expressed in a theoretical principle. The “logic” of the deduction is as much intuitive as formal; and the “calculus” of the deduction is a sense that a theoretical principle or several principles are relevant to an explanation. This view of

deduction keeps the theory simple because we no longer need to dress an explanation up in a pseudo-deductive exercise when, in fact, the actual thought processes involved in making a connection between the dynamics outlined in abstract principles and the particulars of an empirical case are more intuitive than logical or formal.

Another way to keep the inventory of theoretical principles simple is to maintain a high level of abstraction. The ultimate criterion for good theoretical principles is this: does it denote the dynamics of some property of the universe that is always present when humans interact and organize? Theories are about what is generic and universal to the social universe rather than empirical regularities that are constantly changing. If we tried to develop theories to account for, say, differences in feudal and capitalist modes of production, theories soon become complex because they are, in essence, empirical descriptions rather than theories; instead, we need one, or a set, of principles outlining the dynamics of production in all times and all places. If we keep theory at this level of abstraction, the theories will not become overly complex because there is a relatively small number of basic forces driving an equally small set of basic generic types of sociocultural formations. There are many more variants and empirical manifestations of these forces and basic sociocultural formations that they generate, but these are *not* to be part of the theory; rather, a wide variety of empirical regularities are the subject matter – or *explicandum* in “nomothetic talk” – to be explained by a small set of abstract principles. The key in generating an explanation is to see empirical structures and processes as instances of more generic types of sociocultural formations that are driven by a small set of basic forces. For example, the evolution of human societies has seen many types of economic formations – hunting and gathering, pastoral, horticultural, agrarian, industrial, post-industrial – but these are only manifestations of a more general structural formation – the institution of economy – which can be explained by a few generic forces revolving around production and distribution. The theory is not about hunting and gathering or industrialism, nor is it even about the economy, but rather the explanatory principles are about the dynamics of production and distribution that are universal and, hence, can be part of a grand theory of human social organization. The principles on production and distribution can, therefore, explain all past and future modes of economic organization. By developing theories at this level of abstraction, then, they will remain comparatively simple because we are not trying to develop a “theory of” each and every type of economy.

Another way of simplifying theoretical principles is provided by the nature of the forces driving social reality: the same forces keep reappearing

in the theoretical principles. For instance, the dynamics of power are, to some extent, dependent upon the dynamics of production (and other forces). Hence, an equation (if we chose to formulate one) on the dynamics of power would include on the right side of the equation a term for production as a variable force having effects on the consolidation of power. Conversely, the dynamics of production are, to some extent, shaped by the dynamics of power; and hence, power will be a variable in the right side of an equation on production. To offer a more micro example, conceptions of self and emotional arousal are two fundamental forces of the micro realm, and any explanation of one will involve the other – thereby simplifying the number of forces and principles in play in developing microdynamic explanations. This interconnectedness of forces driving generic sociocultural properties in the social universe assures that theoretical principles will not become too complex, although some complexity will be added in trying to specify basic conditions under which the forces specified in these principles vary in intensity.

Yet another way to keep sets of theoretical principles simple is to recognize that, despite the interconnections among generic forces, the principles do not have to constitute an integrated system of principles. The principles do not have to be ordered in some larger metatheoretical system, but instead, each principle can stand alone and, indeed, should stand alone because once efforts to build a logical system of principles is undertaken, complexity becomes exponential. The image that I have of theory is the opposite of a coherent axiomatic scheme or even a set of principles whose connections are outlined by additional principles; rather, I view a general theory of human social organization as a pile of perhaps a few dozen abstract principles that can be scooped up and put loosely into a bag of principles and then pulled from this bag in an ad hoc manner to explain some empirical regularity. Explanations *are assembled* as theorists and researchers come to believe that an empirical case is a manifestation of several generic forces and variable sociocultural properties of the social universe. When this connection is made, the relevant theoretical principles are pulled from the bag of principles, used to explain the empirical case, and then thrown back into the bag for future use in explaining another empirical regularity. It is important, I believe, to avoid preassembling principles into new theories; it is far better to recognize that in generating an explanation “some assembly is required.” A preassembled theory will become very much like a category system; new elements will be added to take account of each new variation in the empirical world, and as a consequence, the preassembled set of principles will come to look very much like Parsons’ web of categories.

## *What Nomothetic Theories Can and Cannot Do*

General theorizing, as I see it, represents only one mode of explanation. There are several ways to explain events. One is, of course, the categorizing approach of Parsons whereby the place in the conceptual scheme of an empirical event is discovered and hence “explained” by the other categories that intersect with this location of an empirical case in the scheme. As emphasized above, this approach leads to ever-more complexity in category systems; and if theory is anything, it should be parsimonious. Moreover, to know the place of an empirical regularity in the category scheme does not satisfy me as an explanation; I want to know how variations in the empirical world are explained by the variable and dynamic interplay among more general forces driving the social universe. Category schemes, whether complex ones like that developed by Parsons or more minimalist ones such as that offered by Anthony Giddens (1984), allow for events to be *interpreted* by the scheme, just as Weber’s idea types allowed for a description of empirical events in more analytical terms. For some, from symbolic interactionists (e.g., Blumer 1969) through structuration theorists (Giddens 1984) to functionalists (Parsons 1951), the use of a conceptual scheme to interpret events (with the categories of the scheme) represents a legitimate form of explanation. And in fact, for many contemporary theorists, discursive use of a conceptual scheme is the *only* form of explanation that is possible in sociology (Giddens 1984, 1993). This conclusion is typically reached by those who believe that there are *no* universal properties of the social universe; for these skeptics, the fundamental nature of the social universe is constantly changing, thus obviating laws about its invariant properties and processes. As a consequence, it is only possible to develop loose categories to describe variations in empirical reality; as the universe changes its very nature, new categories are developed as a heuristic device to sustain an analytical handle on the ebb and flow of empirical events. While I find considerable fault with this epistemology, I have learned a great deal from those who have followed this approach because, despite their protestations, they have denoted universal and generic properties of the social universe and offered insightful ideas about dynamics that can be incorporated into the “loose nomothetic” theorizing that I am advocating.

Another mode of explanation is historical in which the sequence of empirical events causing some outcome of interest is described. Inevitably, such explanations are heavily infused with empirical content. For example, analyses of revolutions (e.g., Skocpol 1979; Goldstone 1990) are often historical, outlining the empirical events that lead to a revolutionary outcome.

This kind of explanation is certainly legitimate, but it is not what I propose in these volumes. Historical explanations provide empirical details as events unfold; in contrast, a nomothetic explanation sees the outcome as the result of the operation of more generic and universal forces whose dynamics are articulated in covering laws. Both modes of explanation are proper but they are very different. If interest is in the flow of empirical events, then an historical explanation is to be preferred; conversely, if seeing an empirical outcome as one (of many) manifestation of more general forces and forms in the social universe, then a nomothetic explanation is more appropriate.

Those who describe empirical events in terms of categories in a conceptual scheme and who prefer tracing sequences of events over time typically find the kind of theorizing that I advocate as short on empirical details. Nomothetic explanations do not add empirical content; rather, they strip empirical details away in order to discover that part of the empirical flow that represents a manifestation of more general social forces and forms. The result is explanations that are not intellectually and, I suspect, atheistically pleasing to those who find joy in empirical data.

There is, of course, nothing inherently problematic in scholars pursuing different modes of explanation, but unfortunately, those who like to view events in the empirical/historical context often go beyond stating their preference. They often make the assertion that there are *no* generic forces driving the social universe; all is historical, contextual, and contingent, with the result that nomothetic explanation is not appropriate in the social sciences. What I see as an understandable matter of diverging preferences and intellectual priorities now becomes epistemological and ontological dogmatism that inhibits the development of sociology as a science. For example, Anthony Giddens (1993) is one of many who argue that the fundamental nature of the social world is always changing, and hence, it is impossible to have timeless laws about a universe whose fundamentals are always in flux. Like so many others, Giddens conflates empirical regularities with the generic and universal. For instance, the empirical manifestations of power that have unfolded in history are very different on the surface, and they will continue to change over time. However, this empirical fact does not mean that power, as a force in the social universe, has fundamentally changed. Power is a universal force whose basic dynamics can explain the many ways that power has been institutionalized in empirical social systems; the fundamentals of power have not changed, just the structural manifestations of power in the empirical world.

There are variants of this strong historicism. The most prominent emphasizes humans' capacity for agency to change the fundamental nature of the universe. Indeed, if there are laws on operative dynamics of social formations



at a given point in time, agents can obviate these laws by using their capacities to restructure the fundamental nature of their social world. My reply to this argument is that agents soon learn that some things cannot be changed, no matter how hard they try. The reason for this failure is that they are bumping into social formations driven by generic forces, and these forces simply cannot be reconstituted, willy nilly, by wanting it so. Most critical theories suffer from this problem, typically advocating utopian social conditions that, given the power of the forces in play, are not reachable. Critical theorists, in essence, advocate jumping off the top of a building with the expectation that gravity as a social force will not be operative. A more viable strategy is to recognize the power of gravity and then counteract it by applying other laws on forces revolving around aerodynamics which, to continue to metaphor, would put the person in a hang glider before leaping from the top of a building. Knowing the forces that drive the formation of all empirical cases in history can thus be used to change the world, but only *within the limits imposed* by the operation of generic forces and the basic structural formations that these forces have generated.

The theoretical arguments in these volumes will not, therefore, be appealing to those who prefer to view events in their robust empirical/historical context. The principles that I offer will be devoid of time-bound empirical content. Nor will these principles be of interest to those who simply do not believe that the social universe is governed by the operation of forces whose dynamics can be articulated in abstract laws. They will want to continue celebrating human agency and free will; and what I propose puts a damper on this celebration. Similarly, those who want to change the world in terms of some ideological vision of “what is good” will not find appealing my view that social forces impose limits on what can be done to remake the world. I believe that it is far better to know how forces driving the social universe operate so that they can be used in social engineering applications to produce desired outcomes, but the range of outcomes will not be infinite but limited by the dynamics of these forces (Turner 1995, 1998, 2003).

Thus, the kind of theorizing that I propose in these three volumes will not be every one’s cup of tea. Yet, a simple difference in preferences in intellectual activity should not be turned into epistemological and ontological dogma. Just because nomothetic theorizing is not appealing to some does not mean that it cannot be done in the same manner as most natural sciences. A grand theory on the social universe can be, as I will hope to demonstrate, relatively simple and comprehensive. It will lack the very empirical details that fascinate historians, but that is the nature of abstract theory. The goal is to explain these empirical details, or at least regularities in their operation with a few general principles. This is the theorizing of the



natural sciences, and there is nothing in the nature of the social universe that prevents sociologists from developing such theories. Too often, I have heard that the epistemology of science has “failed” because sociological theory has not developed general, timeless, and universal laws. I find this assertion to be empirically wrong; many theories in sociology today contain general laws about fundamental dynamics that are timeless and universal. I propose to bring them together in these volumes and thus demonstrate that, in Radcliffe-Brown’s (1957) words, “a natural science of society” is indeed possible.

## **A Simple Conceptual Scheme**

As I noted in the Preface to this volume, the social world unfolds at three levels: macro, meso, and micro. A conceptual scheme outlining the basic properties of the social universe will, therefore, need to denote the basic social formations at each level of reality, and the forces driving the operation of these formations. We need not be highly detailed at this point; our conceptual scheme is simple but, as will become evident, it allows for more complexity as abstract principles are developed on the forces and formations that are fundamental to the operation of the social universe. Thus, for the present, let me only outline in general terms the elements of the scheme that will guide my efforts in these three volumes.

### ***Macro-level Social Reality***

The macro level of social reality is composed of (a) institutional domains such as economy, polity, law, religion, kinship, education, science, and other institutions that have differentiated over the course of societal evolution, (b) stratification systems composed of subpopulations receiving varying levels and types of resources and revealing behavioral and organizational similarities, (c) whole societies occupying a territory, and (d) inter-societal systems composed of relations among societies, typically through their respective institutional domains. An institutional domain constitutes sets of corporate units engaged in activities that resolve problems of adaptation facing a population; and like all structures that have evolved as adaptive responses, they represent efforts to deal with selection pressures on populations (Turner 1972, 1997, 2003). Stratification systems arise from the unequal distribution of valued resources that, to varying degrees, produce subpopulations that share similar shares of resources and that, as a consequence, become distinctive

**Table 1.1** Sociocultural formations at the macro-level of social reality

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1. Institutional domains: Culturally regulated congeries and systems of corporate units dealing with selection pressures generated by macrodynamic forces of population, production, distribution, regulation, and reproduction
  2. Stratification systems: Identifiable subpopulations created by the unequal distribution of valued resources by institutional domains in a society
  3. Societies: The organization of a population by institutional domains and stratification systems in geographical space, regulated by centers of power to define and defend this space
  4. Systems of societies: Relations between two or more societies that are created and sustained by actors in various institutional domains or locations in the stratification system
- 

categories of persons marked by common cultural, organizational, and behavioral characteristics (Turner 1984b). Societies are structural formations that organize and regulate a population within geographical space and that define as well as defend the boundaries of this space from other societies. Inter-societal systems are created when actors within institutional domains (e.g., economy, polity, kinship, religion) in two or more societies form social relationships; these relationships can take many forms such as economic exchange, political domination through coercion, or migration of kin across societal borders (Table 1.1).

This first of three volumes on a general theory of human organization will focus on the forces driving the formation of these four basic types of sociocultural formations. As I will argue, macro-level structures are ultimately formed as individual and collective actors respond to selection pressures from five fundamental forces: population, production, distribution, regulation, and reproduction. These forces are, I believe, very much like the forces operating in other spheres of the universe. For example, the force of gravity pushes physical matter to form particular types of physical structures – e.g., planets, solar systems and galaxies. Or, natural selection in the biotic universe is a force that, at least partially, determines the structure of ecosystems and the distribution of species within these ecosystems. We can consider population, production, distribution, regulation, and reproduction in a similar way, viewing them as forces that push individual and collective actors to behave in certain ways; and as actors respond to these pressures they create institutional systems that, in turn, generate stratification systems that, together, form societies and inter-societal systems. The details of how these forces lead actors to create the social formations of the macro realm is, of course, the topic of this book; and so, at this point, I will not provide the needed elaboration of these very general points (Table 1.2).

**Table 1.2** Macrodynamic forces

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1. Population: The absolute number, rate of growth, composition, and distribution of members of a society
  2. Production: The gathering of resources from the environment, the conversion of these resources into commodities, the creation of services to facilitate gathering and conversion
  3. Distribution: The infrastructures for moving resources, information, and people about a territory as well as the exchange systems for distributing commodities and services among members of a society and, potentially, members of other societies
  4. Regulation: The consolidation and centralization of power around four bases of power (coercion, administration, material incentive, and symbolic) and the creation of cultural systems to coordinate and control actors within institutional domains and stratification systems
  5. Reproduction: The procreation of new members of a population and the transmission of culture to these members as well as the creation and maintenance structural formations sustaining life and social order
- 

### ***Meso-level Social Reality***

The meso level of reality is composed of two basic types of sociocultural formations (Hawley 1986): (a) *corporate units* that reveal a division of labor in pursuit of ends or goals [however vaguely or precisely defined] and (b) *categoric units* that revolve around social distinctions that mark individuals as belonging to particular categories which, in turn, lead to differential expectations for, and treatment of, people placed into these categories.<sup>1</sup> There are three basic types of corporate units: groups, organizations, and communities.

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<sup>1</sup>My view of categoric units converges with Peter Blau's (1977, 1994) analysis of *parameters*. In his analysis of macrostructures, Blau argued that individuals are distributed across what he termed nominal and graduated parameters. Nominal parameters are categories that people are either in or out, such as gender, ethnicity, or religious affiliation; graduated parameters are scaled, with individuals being categorized by how much or how little of some parameter like income, years of education, or age they reveal. To some extent the distinction breaks down because graduated parameters are often converted into nominal-like distinction such as poor and rich, educated and uneducated, young and old. As will become evident, I draw a great deal from Blau's analysis, but I conceptualize both nominal and graduated parameters as the basis for categoric unit formation, although categoric units created by nominal parameters such as gender, color of skin, or social class membership tend to be more powerful in their effects on microdynamics, mesodynamics, and macrodynamics.

**Table 1.3** Meso-level sociocultural formations

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1. Corporate units: Structural units revealing a division of labor for realizing (variously defined) goals. There are only three basic types of corporate units: groups, organizations and communities
  2. Categorical units: Structural units created by members of a population making distinctions among individuals presumed to have identifying characteristic that categorize them as distinctive and, on the basis of these distinctions, engaging in differential evaluation and treatment of these individuals
- 

There can be many types of categoric units, but the most prominent are those formed around differences in sex/gender, age, ethnicity, social class, and any other difference that becomes the basis for placing people into a distinctive category. Meso-level units are the building blocks of institutional domains and stratification systems and, by extension, of societies and inter-societal systems. It is corporate units and individuals in them that respond to selection pressures; and as they act to address problems of adaptation, they form institutional domains that, in turn, generate stratification systems that are built from the unequal distribution of resources among members of different categoric units. For example, selection pressures emanating from production as a force will lead actors to create (or change) the economic institutional domain; in turn, this domain distributes both material and symbolic resources unequally to members of categoric units – say, by social class, gender, or ethnicity. In so doing, the economic domain can also create new categoric units such as social classes (e.g. a “blue-collar class” with the rise of industrialism). Alternatively, the economic domain can differentially place members of existing categoric units, such as those revolving around gender and ethnicity, in particular roles within the division of labor in economic corporate units and, in so doing, refine or reinforce categoric unit differences. In either case, the ultimate force driving these macro-level sociocultural formations is production (and, as we will see, other forces as well) (Table 1.3).

As institutional domains and stratification systems emerge, they operate as constraining environments on corporate and categoric units. Even though institutional domains are built from corporate units and stratification systems from categoric units, once these macrostructures exist, they circumscribe what actors at the meso-level can do. Thus, embedding of mesostructures within macrostructures becomes an important dynamic in both meso-level and macro-level theorizing, although our focus in this volume will be on the macro level of reality; mesodynamics will be examined in Vol.3.

## *Micro-level Social Reality*

The micro level of reality is composed of (a) focused and (b) unfocused encounters (Goffman 1961, 1967, 1971, 1983). Focused encounters involve episodes of face-to-face interaction, whereas unfocused encounters are episodes of mutual awareness and navigation in space among individuals without direct face-to-face interaction. Like the macro realm, I see encounters as driven by forces, including emotions, motivations, roles, status, symbols, and demography/ecology. Like my view of forces operating in the macro realm, it may seem a bit unconventional to conceptualize the familiar topics of micro sociology as forces, but a moments reflection reveals, I think, that these are indeed forces because they push individuals to behave and interact in particular ways. The formation of encounters is thus very much driven by the relative strength and interactions among the forces of micro social reality: emotions, need-states and motivations, roles, statuses, cultural symbols, and demography/ecology. In all encounters, these forces operate to structure the flow of the interaction, but just as meso structures are constrained by macro-institutional domains and stratification systems, so encounters are constrained by the corporate and categoric units in which they are embedded. Encounters are almost always lodged within corporate units and framed by categoric units which, in turn, load the relative strengths of the forces in play and the ways in which individuals can respond to these forces in an encounter (Turner 2002, 2007). These dynamics will be examined in Vol. 2 on microdynamics (Table 1.4).

The forces driving encounters can often place pressures on corporate and categoric units. Individuals in encounters embedded within corporate units and categoric units thus can potentially change the structure of these meso-level units. For example, frustrations with the division of labor in a corporate unit can lead to mobilizations by subordinates that force those in authority to change the way a corporate unit is structured; or, definitions about the characteristics of members of categoric units – say, gender or ethnicity – can change as individuals refuse to abide by existing stereotypes about the characteristics of people in these categoric units. Yet, as I will emphasize, embedding typically imposes constraints on the range of options available to individuals in encounters. Indeed, the structure and culture of corporate and categoric units typically pushes actors more than they push back on these sociocultural formations. Part of the reason for this power of meso-level units over encounters is that meso units are embedded within macro-level structures driven by forces that constrain the actions of corporate and members of categoric units; and this embedding of the micro-level social universe exerts, on a day to day basis, more influence on the flow of

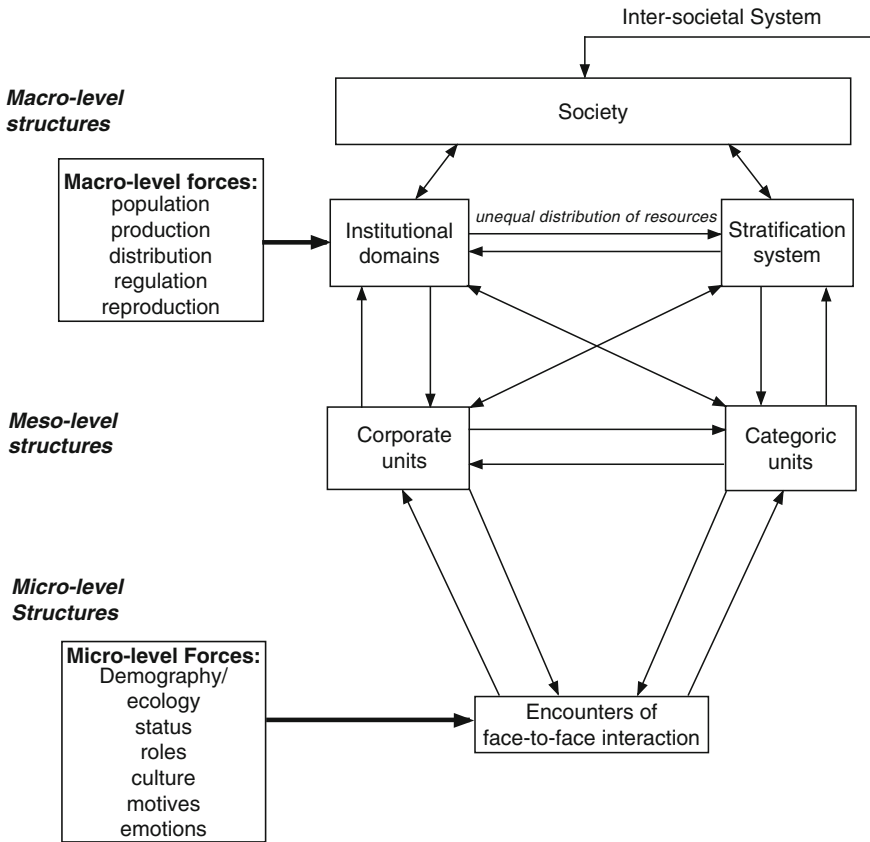
**Table 1.4** Microdynamic forces

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1. Emotions: The arousal of affective states revolving around variants and combinations of fear, anger, sadness, and happiness
  2. Motivations: Need states for the confirmation of self, for positive exchange payoffs, for a sense of group inclusion, for a sense of trust and predictability, and for a sense that situations are as they seem
  3. Culture: The production of expectations (normalization) with respect to (a) the categories of people present, (b) the nature of the situation (c) forms of communication, (d) frames about what is to be included and excluded, (e) rituals to be enacted, and (f) emotions to be felt and displayed
  4. Roles: The presentations of sequences of gestures to mark predictable courses of action (role-making) and the reading of gestures to understand others' courses of action (role-taking)
  5. Status: The placement and evaluation of individuals in positions vis-à-vis other positions and the creation of expectation states for how individuals in diverse and differentially evaluated positions should behave
  6. Demographic: The number and categories of people co-present, their density, and their movements as well as the meanings assigned to number, category, density, and movement
  7. Ecology: The boundaries, partitions, and props of spaces along with the associated meanings of boundaries, partitions, and props
- 

encounters than an encounter or set of iterated encounters on the structure and culture of meso- and macro-level sociocultural formations. Still, because meso units are ultimately constructed by iterated encounters and because powerful forces like emotions and basic need-states push on individuals in encounters, there is always potential for change inherent in embedded encounters, and in Vol.2, I will explore this potential in more detail. Indeed, the meso realm is caught in a vice of micro-level forces pushing from below and macro-level forces pushing from above; and hence, it should not be surprising that mesodynamics can be volatile and, hence, can be a source of change in patterns of human social organization.

### *The Simplified Conceptual Scheme*

Figure 1.1 outlines the simple conceptual scheme that divides my general theory into manageable sets of principles that correspond to unfolding of the social universe into macro, meso, and micro levels. This volume on macrodynamics will develop principles on how the forces of population, production, distribution, regulation, and reproduction drive the formation of institutional systems that, in turn, generate stratification systems which



**Fig. 1.1** A simple conceptual scheme

coalesce into societies and inter-societal systems. These same forces also push on meso-level corporate units and, thus indirectly, constrain microdynamics, but these effects of the macro realm on the meso and micro will not be pursued in this portion of the theory. Volumes 2 and 3 will develop additional principles on these effects.

As the arrow from forces to macro-level sociocultural formations in Fig.1.1 emphasizes, population, production, distribution, regulation, and reproduction exert pressures on individual and collective actors to create, sustain, and change the sociocultural formations of this realm – that is, institutional domains, stratification systems, societies, and systems of societies. A theory of macrodynamics will, therefore, need to specify the ways in which forces forge these dynamic connections among these macro-level structures and their respective cultures. As the arrows also indicate, the meso

and macro realms exert mutual effects on each other; and while I will trace some of these as they bear on macrodynamics, Vol. 3 on mesodynamics will outline the dynamics in detail denoted by the causal arrows flowing between macro- and meso-level structures.

I should note at this point that Vol. 3 on mesodynamics is last because, in order to understand the middle level of social reality, we first must have theories of macrodynamics *and* microdynamics. The meso level stands between forces of the macro and meso realms, and as a consequence, the meso realm is caught between two sets of highly dynamic forces. In fact, the sociocultural formations of the meso-level – that is, corporate and categoric units – arise as a consequence of individuals' and collective actors' responses to the forces driving the micro and macro realms of the social universe. Thus, to theorize the dynamics of corporate and categoric units, it is best to have at our disposal principles of macrodynamics and microdynamics as these come into play on corporate and categoric units. For example, one dynamic evident at the meso level of reality is the formation of social-movement organizations to change the resources received by members of categoric units, such as gender and ethnicity. These movements are responses to constraints imposed by institutional domains and stratification systems, and they are fueled by highly charged emotional and motivational states among individuals in the encounters within social movement organizations. To have a useful theory of social movements, then, requires that we understand how the forces of the macro and micro realms impinge upon actors in ways that lead them to build a social-movement organization. And as we outline the dynamics of such organizations, we will be able to explore in more detail the conditions under which they develop the power to change institutional domains and stratification systems at the macro level and the dynamics of encounters at the micro level.

The conceptual scheme in Fig. 1.1 is about as minimal as we can get and still capture the fundamental dimensions of the social universe. The scheme is simple, but it opens up possibilities to explore the complexity of the social dynamics, while at the same time giving us a road map about how we should proceed. I begin with the macrodynamic realm because, as noted earlier, the dynamics of this realm impose constraints on mesodynamics and microdynamics to a greater extent than mesodynamics and microdynamics push on the macro realm. The macro realm is thus the sociocultural context for almost everything else that occurs in society and, hence, is a good place to begin theorizing. Some would argue for beginning with microdynamics, and I could also begin at this level of reality. But, as I hope will become evident, it is better to begin



with macrodynamics, then move to microdynamics, and finally explore the middle realm as actors respond to pressures from both micro-level and macro-level social forces.

## Conclusion

I left much unsaid about the nature of social reality, but my goal in this chapter is simply to lay out the roadmap for theorizing. The conceptual scheme will not be more complex than Fig. 1.1; instead, complexity will be added by developing abstract laws about the dynamics of the forces pushing on the sociocultural formations of the macro realm, the dynamics of sociocultural formations themselves, and the relations among these formations. As I noted in the Preface, the problem with much grand theorizing is not so much that it is grand but that it often is not very theoretical in the sense of developing testable laws about the dynamics of social reality. Elaborating category systems and using them to describe empirical events can be useful for seeing events in more analytical terms, but it is not a good way to build a general theory because the categories are not testable – indeed, they are simply ontological assertions – and the connections enumerated among the categories are generally not testable as well. Category systems often make for interesting philosophy but not particularly good theory, unless they are simple and used to develop general laws on basic social processes.

A grand theory must be, well, “grand.” It must encompass all dimensions of social reality. I have perhaps arbitrarily cut the bottom level of reality off by viewing encounters as the most basic unit of sociological inquiry. In many other places, I have been quite willing to theorize about behavior and biology, but if we conceive of sociology as the science of human social organization, the encounter is not an unreasonable place to begin because it is the unit in which interaction among people is initiated; and as interactions in encounters are iterated, they become the ultimate building blocks of human societies. True, I could add another level to the analytic – the person and behavior – because encounters are interactions among behaving persons, but then to understand behavior in its most robust sense, I would have to add the level of biology (which, again, I have done in much of my work); and soon, my conceptual scheme would begin to look like those developed by Herbert Spencer and Talcott Parsons. Thus, for the present, I will limit the theory to the dimensions of the social universe outlined in Fig. 1.1. Let us see how far this scheme takes us, and then we can reconsider pushing its boundaries down to persons, behaviors, and even the biology of persons and their behaviors.

## Chapter 2

# Selection Pressures and the Evolution of the Macrodynamic Realm

In the first human societies, the only institutional domain was kinship, with the division of labor in nuclear families providing the structural template for economic and religious activities. Inequalities did not exist, and in fact, nomadic hunter-gatherers worked very hard to make sure that no one could gain power or even too much prestige (Boehm 1993, 1999). Hunting and gathering proved to be a highly adaptive form of social organization; and as long as populations remained small, there were few selection pressures on individuals to elaborate and differentiate new institutional domains from kinship and to increase inequalities as a result of institutional differentiation. Two corporate units – nuclear family and band – were sufficient to organize the fifty or so individuals. There were, no doubt, larger structures composed of relationships among bands sharing a language and elements of culture, such as values, religious beliefs, technologies, and common traditions; and in these inter-band systems, hints of a more macro social formations can be found (Chase-Dunn and Mann 1998). But, as I emphasized in the last chapter, it was not until bands began to settle down that selection pressures arising from population growth set into motion the evolution of the macro social realm. At first, settlements were few in number and often only temporary, but even then, pressures were placed upon the members of these settlements to find new forms of production, new modes of political regulation, new means for protecting their territories, and other macrodynamic forces that force people to develop more complex sociocultural formations, or die. And, as settlements eventually began to spread some 10,000–12,000 years ago, the power of these forces became that much greater.

Thus, human social evolution has been driven by selection pressures that could be set off by settlements and population growth, conflict with neighboring populations, degradation of the environment, or ecological changes. Just which of these sources of selection pressures was paramount at a given

moment in history must have varied, although population growth would inevitably set all macrodynamics forces into play, and so in the end, social evolution has been driven by individual and corporate actors' efforts to deal with these pressures, or suffer the disintegrative consequences. Since selection is such an important dynamic of sociocultural evolution, especially in the elaboration and differentiation of institutional domains and stratification systems that, in turn, are the building blocks of macro societies and inter-societal systems, it is wise to outline the nature of sociocultural selection pressures and how they formed macro-level social reality.

## **Where Functionalism Went Wrong**

There have been many deserved, as well as patently unfair, criticisms of sociological functionalism (see Turner and Maryanski 1979, for a review), and even though this approach no longer dominates sociological theory, it has not gone away. Why should this be so, especially in light of the stigma that comes to any theorist who claims to be a "functionalist"? Functionalism has not disappeared because it always asked an interesting question: What must occur if a population is to survive and sustain itself in both its biophysical and sociocultural environments? Unfortunately, functional sociology's answer to this interesting question took a short-cut by positing a list of functional needs or requisites for survival and then categorizing social structures by the particular needs that they met. In biology, especially in medicine, it is quite common to employ functional analysis in describing the functions of various organs and systems; in these functional statements, a structure or system is described in terms of what it does for maintaining the body in its environment.

Early sociology borrowed this logic but failed to understand what medical functionalism leaves implicit: selection. Biotic structures are the outcome of what are often termed the "forces of evolution," one of which is natural selection (the others being mutation, gene flow, and genetic drift). Variations in the structures of life forms are the product of "selection" and other evolutionary forces as they worked on phenotypes and the underlying genotype of life forms, with those traits that enhance fitness (i.e., the capacity to reproduce) being selected over those that do not increase or even reduce fitness in resource niches within a habitat. Over time, these forces of evolution could produce the wide variety of life forms that constitute the biotic world. Sociological functionalism rarely made the argument about the process of evolution as ultimately driven by a few forces that increase the variations on which selection could work; rather, analysis moved

immediately to a kind of cross-tabulation between structures and functional needs. As a result, functional theories did not conceptualize social dynamics, or the forces generating sociocultural formations.

Still, functionalism had the basics of an important idea: there are fundamental properties of the social universe that push actors to create structures as adaptive responses to the environment. The strategy that I propose takes what made functionalism so interesting and recasts it into a more explicitly evolutionary approach that can generate explanatory principles rather than typologies listing functional needs and social structures meeting these needs. The first redirection that I propose is to abandon notions of “needs or requisites” in favor of the concept of *forces*. Forces are properties of the social universe that drive the formation of sociocultural reality; and they are very much like those in biology. Thus, as I emphasized in Chap. 1, the forces of population, production, distribution, regulation, and reproduction put pressure on actors to create new sociocultural phenotypes on which future selection can work. The missing ingredient in functionalism, then, was an analysis of *selection*. Indeed, not just functionalism but sociologists in general have also undertheorized selection as an engine driving sociocultural evolution, although a few sociologists have been emphasizing selection processes for some time (e.g., Runciman 1997, 1998, 2009; Sanderson 1999a, b, 2005a; Turner 1995; Turner and Maryanski 2008a, b). In fact, as I will emphasize shortly, selection was a prominent part of early sociologists’ conception of societal evolution, as can be seen by even a cursory reading of Herbert Spencer (1874–1896) and Emile Durkheim (1893/1963). A slightly revised conception of selection will, I believe, allow theorizing to get around the well-documented failings of functional analysis as well as the less recognized problems in much macrostructural analysis.

## The Dynamics of Selection

### *The Relevance of Herbert Spencer’s Early Insights*

The forces of the macro social universe generate what I will call *selection pressures*. Herbert Spencer (1874–1896) was far more insightful than subsequent functionalists on this score. For Spencer, the history of human societies had been, as he phrased the matter, “survival of the fittest” (a phrase uttered almost a decade before Darwin published his great treatise on natural selection). In his view, societies respond to certain fundamental problems or pressures. These are: *operation* (problems of production and reproduction),

*regulation* (control and coordination through the mobilization of power), and *distribution* (movement of people, information, and resources about a population). If a population could differentiate new structures in response to these pressures, it would survive; if it could not, disintegration or conquest by another, better-organized society would ensue. Spencer was a functionalist, to be sure, but he avoided the tendency of later functionalism to cross-tabulate structures with needs, without explaining the selection pressures that these needs generate; and unlike modern functionalists, he recognized that populations often fail to respond effectively to these pressures with the result that they, in his words, “dissolve,” or are conquered by a better organized population. For Spencer (1862), societal evolution was a halting movement from simple to more complex formations; war was a critical process in this movement because better-organized societies generally won wars by conquering the less organized – thereby ratcheting up the level of societal complexity.

### ***Durkheimian and Spencerian Selection***

What emerges from Spencer’s sociology is a view of two types of selection. One is Darwinian and emphasizes that as populations grow, density increases among individuals and social units organizing individual activities; and as density increases in resource niches, competition for resources escalates. From this competition, the more fit actors survive by securing resources that allow them to reproduce their structures, while the less fit either die out or migrate to another resource niche. The other type of selection is what I have called “functional selection” (Turner 1995), but in deference to Spencer, I will term this type of selection *Spencerian selection*. Spencerian selection occurs when actors face new problems of adaptation that require the creation of *new sociocultural formations* in the absence of existing adaptive structures. This kind of selection does not revolve around competition among actors in dense niches; instead, it is a pressure on individual and corporate actors to find solutions to new problems, or face the consequences. There is, then, a type of selection pressure that comes from the absence of adaptive structures (rather than competition among structures), forcing actors to develop new sociocultural formations in order to survive in an environment.

Spencer himself invoked both types of selection, whereas Émile Durkheim (1893) emphasized Darwinian selection. For Durkheim, population growth

increases density in resource niches, and out of the competition for resources comes “social speciation” or increased “specialization” in the division of labor. In adopting Darwin’s argument, however, Durkheim underemphasized the potential “death” of those actors that could not secure resources in a niche; instead Durkheim (1893: 266–267) concluded:

Thus, Darwin says that in a small area, opened to immigration, and where, consequently, the conflict of individuals must be acute, there is always to be seen a very great diversity in the species inhabiting it.... Men submit to the same law. In the same city, different occupations can co-exist without being obliged mutually to destroy one another, for they pursue different objects.

For Durkheim, then, selection does not cause “death” but instead pushes actors to seek new niches in which they can secure resources. Actors who cannot successfully compete in one niche will find new niches. There is also an important argument in Durkheim’s view that, unlike Darwinian selection where phenotypes are unchangeable because they are under genetic control, social selection does not need to wipe out unfit phenotypes (and the underlying genotype) because individual and collective actors have the capacity to change their sociocultural phenotype or move to a new niche – thereby avoiding “death” by natural selection. In deference to Durkheim’s insight, I will term this type of selection *Durkheimian selection*.

Spencer’s version of Darwinian or Durkheimian selection also recognized that competition or conflict within and between societies causes differentiation of new sociocultural formations as they seek to find niches in which they can survive, but he went further and argued that differentiation is more often a response to the pressures on populations from the fundamental needs for operation, (production and reproduction), regulation (consolidation of power), and distribution (infrastructures for movement of people, resources and information as well as market systems for exchange of goods and services). And, this recognition led to another critical insight: the selection pressures generated by operation, regulation, and distribution do not always arise from competition with other sociocultural formations in a niche, but instead put pressures on actors to find new kinds of structures where none exist. Again, this kind of selection does not revolve around competition for resources under conditions of density among actors; rather, there is a vacuum or lack of adaptive structures that can address selection pressures, and actors within a society are under intense pressure to create new sociocultural formations that can reduce these selection pressures. This is not Darwinian selection but functional selection or, as noted above, *Spencerian selection*. Spencerian selection is, therefore, just the opposite of Darwinian or *Durkheimian selection*; and it represents a response to

selection pressures generated by the fundamental forces of the macro realm of human social organization. (Consult Table 1.4 for a list of these forces that will be examined in more detail in the next chapter).

As Spencer recognized, Darwinian or Durkheimian selection can set into motion Spencerian selection pressures, above and beyond those arising from competition in resource niches. For example, when one population is invaded by another, the resulting war can be seen as Durkheimian selection over resources. But this conflict also raises the valences of key forces and, hence, activates Spencerian selection pressures. Production as a force increases in intensity because the population must find a way to grow economic activity to support a larger military; regulation as a force increases and pushes political actors seek ways to centralize power and mobilize resources for conflict; and distribution increases as a force and places pressure on actors to find ways to move resources about a territory. This same connection between Durkheimian and Spencerian selection can occur within a society as well. For example, ethnic conflict over access to valued resources is, on the one hand, Durkheimian and, on the other hand, Spencerian because it places heavy selection pressures emanating from regulation as a force, and, thereby, pushes actors in polity and law to find ways to reduce ethnic tensions. Internal Spencerian pressures can also emerge without Durkheimian competition. As societies become more complex, much of the environment for any one institutional domain and the corporate units in that domain is composed of other institutional domains and the stratification system. For instance, differentiation generates new kinds of Spencerian selection pressures from regulation as a social force that pushes actors to consolidate power in polity or law in order to enhance capacities for coordination and control among actors in diverse institutional systems and at different places in the stratification system; or to illustrate further, Spencerian selection pressures may arise from distribution as a force because differentiation increases the problems associated with moving resources among increased numbers of diverse actors which, in turn, lead to the emergence of markets and distributive infrastructures.

The emphasis on Spencerian selection also draws attention to the obvious fact that human social evolution is Lamarckian. Durkheimian selection puts actors under pressures to change their structure in order to better compete with other structures under conditions of niche density, whereas Spencerian selection pushes development of new adaptive structures (where none currently exist) under pressure from the forces of the macro realm. Under either Durkheimian or Spencerian selection pressures, humans have the capacity for agency and can create new structures that are then passed down to subsequent generations. If actors can alter or develop sociocultural



formations that allow them to compete effectively for resources within resource niches or to manage Spencerian selection pressures, these “acquired characteristics” will enhance fitness and be retained.

Yet, even though they can feed off each other, Durkheimian and Spencerian selection are fundamentally different, in this sense: Durkheimian selection works on *existing* sociocultural formations seeking to sustain themselves with resource niches; and these Darwinian pressures can select out those sociocultural phenotypes that are less fit, select those existing sociocultural phenotypes that are more fit, or select on entirely new sociocultural formations that agents create in order to be more fit in competition with other formations. In contrast, Spencerian selection draws attention to macrodynamic forces that are pushing on actors to innovate and build new institutional structures that can reduce selection pressures from these forces. Figure 2.1 compares the differences between Durkheimian and Spencerian selection.

Darwinian selection is, as Durkheim (1893: 266–267 [1963]) recognized, a force behind the division of labor or, more generally, differentiation among corporate and categoric units. Resources are almost always scarce, relative to demand, thus initiating competition among individual and collective actors. When Darwinian selection is external, as is the case with war or with economic competition, it almost always turns into Spencerian selection because new kinds of social structures are needed to cope with pressures emanating from increased valences of production, regulation, and distribution as social forces. In the macrodynamic realm of human societies, then, Spencerian selection is a more pervasive process than Durkheimian selection. Durkheimian selection operates more at the meso level, sorting out relations among corporate units and categories of persons; and as noted above, this competition can, if it evolves into conflict, generate intense Spencerian selection emanating from regulation as a force, demanding that actors find ways to control the threat that internal conflict always poses for the viability of a society.

### *Forces and Selection Dynamics*

It is now just a short step to make this kind of ecologically inspired theorizing of early functionalist argument more useful in developing a theory of macrodynamics. As I noted earlier, what functionalists often saw as needs is what I reconceptualize as macro-level forces. These forces generate selection pressures on a population, and these pressures will vary depending upon the relative valence for each force. If, for example, pressures come



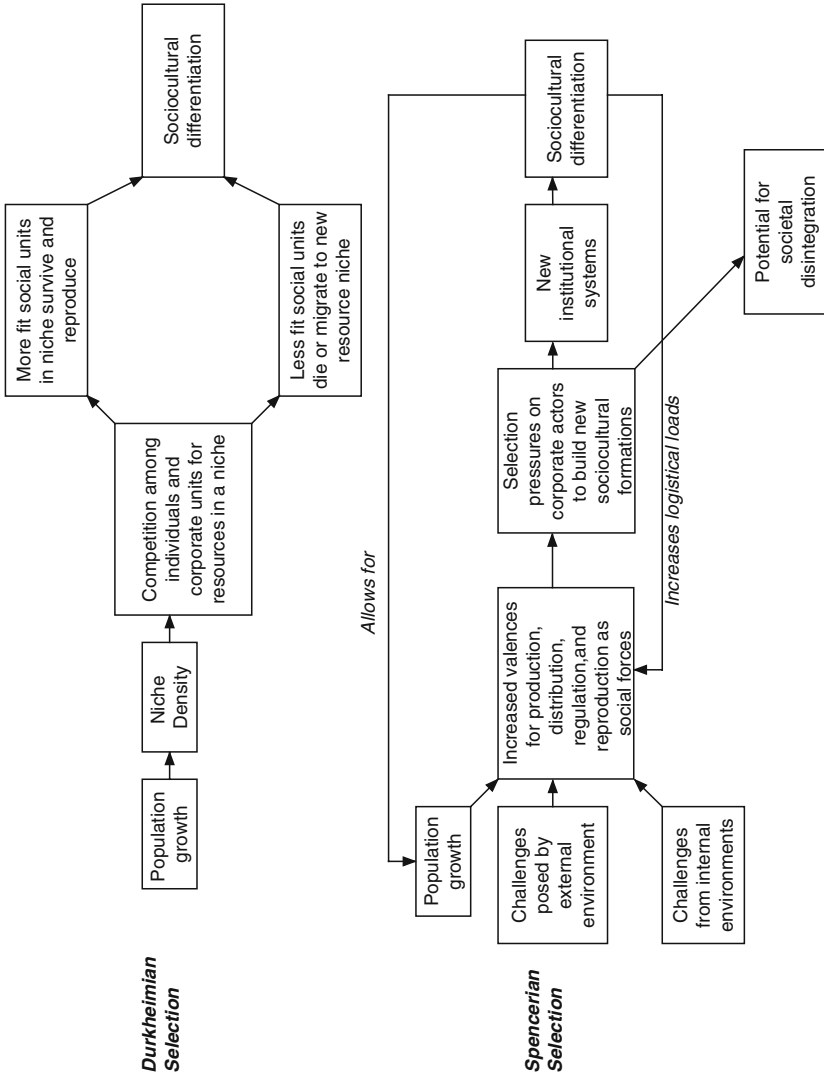


Fig. 2.1 Durkheimian and Spencerian selection

from regulation (i.e., coordination and control), individual and corporate actors will generally seek to develop new structures that mobilize and consolidate power; and if these new sociocultural formations increase control, they will be retained or “institutionalized” because they enhance fitness. If, however, these formations do not increase control, then the population and the society organizing this population will likely disintegrate or, alternatively, be vulnerable to conquest by another society. Darwinian selection can also generate selection pressures to develop new sociocultural formations that can more successfully compete with other sociocultural formations. If these new formations or alternations in the structure of existing formations result in the ability to compete successfully and secure resources from the environment, they too will become part of the “sociocultural phenotype” contained in a society’s institutional domains.

Is this still a functional mode of analysis? The answer to this question is perhaps less important than what is accomplished by recasting of older functional arguments. We retain the interesting part of functionalism: the implicit view that there are certain universal pressures (i.e., need states or requisites in functionalism). But, these are now seen as forces that can *vary* in their intensity and exert selection pressures on actors. Thus, instead of becoming ontological categories, need states or requisites become driving forces that can vary, that can generate selection pressures, and that can push actors to discover solutions to these pressures, sometimes successfully but, in the case of all known societies, eventually unsuccessfully.

We now have a more ecological model, somewhat in tune with biological theorizing, but with important differences. One difference is that there are two types of selection, Durkheimian and Spencerian. Macrodynamics are set into motion by both, but Spencerian selection is more likely to cause institutional innovation. Second, we can specify the forces *inherent in the organization* of populations or, in Spencer’s (1874) words, “superorganic” organisms. And third, we can recognize that the analogy to Darwinian theory breaks down; not only is there a new kind of selection – Spencerian – but also sociocultural evolution is heavily Lamarckian. Through their capacities for agency, individual and corporate actors can create new sociocultural formations; they do not have to wait for forces like mutation, gene flow, and genetic drift to generate new variations on which natural selection can work. Instead, when existing variations do not promote fitness or when adaptive structures do not exist, agents can respond to the selection pressures and, potentially, create new sociocultural formations. The history of human societies has certainly been driven by this dynamic as actors responded to selection pressures and created institutional domains that, for a time, promoted fitness. Whether what I propose here is functionalism,

then, is not so critical as recasting of functionalist arguments into more precise and parsimonious theorizing that brings evolutionary concepts to the fore.

Another critical difference between sociocultural and biological evolution revolves around considerations of *reproductive fitness*. In narrow Darwinian approaches, fitness is the capacity of an organism to survive and pass on its genes to offspring. Sociocultural formations evidence Darwinian-like elements in that structures are passed down to next generations of incumbents, but even here, the analogy to Darwinian processes breaks down. There is no equivalent to “genotype” in sociocultural formations. True, structural units have cultural codes that circumscribe and direct the formation of social structures (and the behaviors of incumbents in these structures); and it is also true that these structures and the culture inhering in them can be subject to selection. Still, it is hard to find the analogue for reproductive fitness in sociocultural systems that fully correspond to this dynamic in the biotic world. Organizations can, of course, produce “offspring,” as is the case with franchising in capitalist economies, but this is a special rather than general case. Fitness is more accurately defined in sociology as the ability of sociocultural units to *sustain themselves in their environments*; and the longer they can do so, the more fit they are. In surviving, structural formations may undergo considerable cultural and structural change as actors respond to selection pressures, both Durkheimian and Spencerian, but this definition of fitness underemphasizes what modern biology emphasizes: passing genotypes on to generations of *entirely new* biological entities. Thus, in drawing from evolutionary theorizing and applying it to sociology, we need to remain aware that there are large differences. One is, of course, Spencerian selection which does not exist in the biotic universe; another is the capacity of agents to remake sociocultural formations or invent new ones, thereby making most sociocultural evolution Lamarckian; still another difference to biological theory is that the units subject to selection are generally *collective actors* rather than individual actors; and finally, fitness cannot be defined solely by persistence of a genotype across generations but, instead, is best conceptualized as persistence of a sociocultural formation across time. This last consideration about fitness, I would suggest, may not even be relevant to sociocultural evolution. Fitness has a very specific meaning in biology (proportion of genes remaining in the gene pool across generations), and the phenomenon that this concept denotes are not so central in sociological analyses of evolution. For example notions of “mimesis and meme pools” (Dawkins 1976) do not capture what is central to sociological analysis of culture; indeed, they represent a large gloss of the dynamics of importance in the analysis of cultural evolution.

Analogizing to biological dynamics, then, can only go so far; we need to develop a distinctive body of concepts denoting the unique nature of socio-cultural evolution compared to biological evolution.

While it could be argued that I am creating a new form of evolutionary analysis for sociology, I do not want to abandon the imagery of physics in my arguments about macrodynamic forces. Just as gravity is a fundamental force inherent in the very nature of the physical universe, so are the forces that I propose. They push actors in a population to organize in certain ways; and depending upon the relative valences of forces in play, the emergence of sociocultural formations will vary. And so, if we are to theorize about institutional and stratification dynamics, as well as societal and inter-societal dynamics, we must specify the forces of the macrodynamic realm and the conditions that increase or decrease the valences of each force (see next chapter). For in the end, the macro-level of social reality is a universe driven by a small set of forces that set into motion selection pressures which, in turn, push actors to construct new kinds of corporate units that alter the structure and culture of institutional domains. In turn, as institutional domains are restructured, they alter the stratification system; and as institutional domains and stratifications are restructured, so are societal and inter-societal systems.

## **Forces, Selection, and Differentiation**

At any given time, almost any configuration of forces can exert selection pressure on a population. Yet, in the history of societal evolution, population as a force has operated to increase the valences of other forces, all of which increase Spencerian selection pressures. As the size and diversity of the population increases, the valences of other forces intensify, with the result that individual and collective actors will be under pressure to elaborate, at a minimum, the economy. As the economy grows in response to population growth, problems of coordination and control from regulation as a force will increase, putting pressure on actors to find new ways to consolidate power or to codify culture in order to coordinate and control the activities of the larger population and the relations between the economy and other emerging institutional domains. Distribution will also become more problematic and put pressure on actors to develop new infrastructures for moving people, information, and resources about a territory and to find new ways to circulate commodities and services through exchange systems; and as new sociocultural formations elaborate and differentiate, selection pressures from reproduction will increase and exert pressure on actors.

The result is for this configuration of forces to generate intense selection pressures on actors to develop new kinds of corporate units and relations among these corporate units; and in so doing, new institutional domains are differentiated and older ones are changed. If changes in institutional domains reduce selection pressures, they are more likely to be retained whereas, if they do not reduce the pressures, then they will either collapse or be further transformed.

As Fig. 2.2 delineates, population growth, coupled with population diversity, historically initiated the process of institutional elaboration and differentiation. I do not want to posit population as a prime mover of societal evolution because, once populations grow, the valences of the other forces and the interactions among these forces are often difficult to predict because of unique empirical and historical circumstances. For example, population growth in one society may raise the values for regulation as a force, whereas for another population, production and distribution may increase pressure on actors. The outcome would be somewhat different patterns of institutional innovation, with one society developing new sociocultural formations for consolidating power in polity and with the other society creating new economic formations for enhancing productivity. In the end, however, these forces will play off on each other because expanded production will increase economic surplus that can support a more complex polity, whereas polity will always exert influence on economic production. Except for population, I have not aligned sequences among the other forces in Fig. 2.2; once population increases in valence, the values for the other forces will also increase leading actors to seek new modes of production, new ways to consolidate power, new capacities to distribute resources, and new mechanisms for reproduction of actors and the corporate units in which they play roles. The exact sequence is, as Weber would have appreciated, contingent on empirical circumstances and, hence, is not easily theorized. Yet, a general theory can specify the condition under which any force will increase in intensity and exert selection pressures on actors for institutional innovations; and as we will see, many of the conditions increasing the valences for one force are, in fact, the other forces.

As the valences for macrodynamic forces escalate, selection pressures also increase, putting pressures on individual and collective actors to respond to these pressures, or face the disintegrative consequences. I have at times labeled these initial increases in valences from macrodynamic forces as *first-order logistical loads* because they are the first wave of selection pressures on individuals and corporate actors as the first cluster of institutional domains emerges as population growth pushes on actors to form new kinds of corporate units. Most of these pressures are Spencerian in nature because they put pressure on actors to find new ways to coordinate

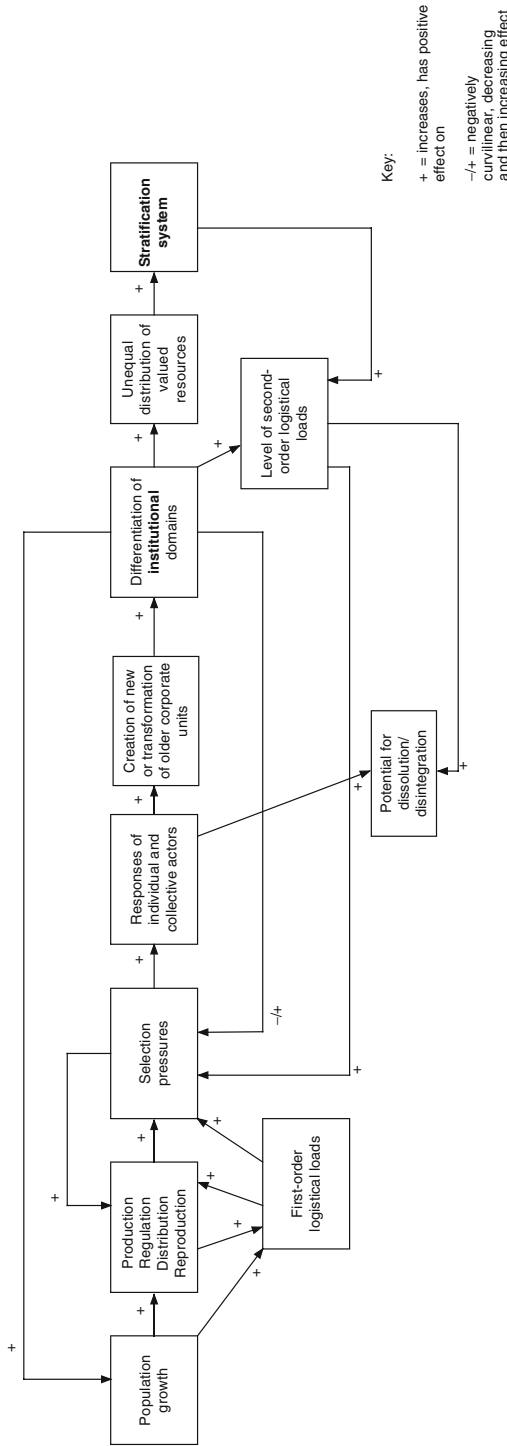


Fig. 2.2 Macrodynamic forces, selection pressures, institutional differentiation, and stratification

and control a larger population, new ways to increase production, new ways to distribute resources, and new ways to reproduce individuals as incumbents in the expanding status-role structures of the expanding diversity of corporate units. As these new types of corporate units respond to these first-order logistical loads, they become integrated into ever-more distinctive institutional domains, thereby causing the first wave of institutional differentiation in human societies. This differentiation revolves around the emergence and elaboration of religion, economy, polity and law from kinship. It is at this point that populations can disintegrate or dissolve if actors cannot innovate and build new corporate structures and cultures that reduce selection pressures arising from these first-order logistical loads. Differentiation of these first new institutional domains has generally reduced selection pressures arising from first-order logistical loads, but as differentiation and elaboration of these first domains continues, the diversity of corporate units within domains increases, thus increasing the complexity of social structure and culture in a society. And, as new institutional domains begin to differentiate and elaborate, the complexity of societies increases even more. This growing complexity generates what I term *second-order logistical* loads, and this second-round (and subsequent rounds) of logistical loads increases both Spencerian and Durkheimian selection pressures. I distinguish these second-order logistical loads from first-order loads because they are logistical loads generated by the growing internal complexity of societies themselves as institutional domains and stratification systems differentiate. Early functional theorists such as Émile Durkheim (1893 [1963]) and A. R. Radcliffe-Brown (1952) conceptualized these logistical loads as a “need” or “requisite” for integration, but I see these second-order logistical loads as increasing the valences of key macrodynamic forces, especially regulation as a force. For, as complexity increases, power is consolidate into polity and then law as institutional domains that can potentially coordinate and control increasing differentiation among and within other institutional domains (Luhmann 1982; Parsons 1966). Yet, the very differentiation of polity and law from other institutional domains sets into motion additional second-order selection pressures to coordinate the relations of actors in these and other differentiating institutional domains. And so, as societies become more complex, there is rarely an equilibrium point among institutional differentiation, stratification systems, valences of macrodynamic forces, and selection pressures.

Thus, when differentiation of institutional domains begins, it systematically generates second-order logistical loads and escalated selection pressures that, in turn, drive actors to elaborate and differentiate corporate units in existing institutional domains and to create new kinds of corporate units

that will evolve into new institutional domains. Differentiation of institutional domains and stratification systems thus increases the valences of macrodynamic forces, especially regulation. As pressures for regulation lead actors to elaborate and differentiate law and polity, as well as to codify new cultural systems, the values of other forces increase. For example, an expanding polity and legal system requires increased production that can be taxed to support individual and corporate actors making up these domains; and as the division of labor in corporate units in these domains becomes more complex and professionalized, the valence for reproduction as a force increases and causes the differentiation of education as a distinctive domain. And, as the economy and education expand, pressures from distribution may increase and generate new kinds of markets (e.g., for labor and services), all of which ratchet up the level of societal complexity which, in turn, increases selection pressure for regulation and, eventually, for all other forces. Differentiation can, as both Durkheim and Spencer understood, become a self-escalating machine, with one level of differentiation generating selection pressures for further differentiation. Of course, at some point, rising logistical loads and selection pressures can overwhelm the capacity of actors to make adaptive responses, with the result that a society and system of societies may de-evolve or disintegrate, as has happened persistently in human history.

Figure 2.2 obscures an important fact of sociocultural evolution: selection pressures are often on corporate actors, and increasingly so with institutional differentiation and the emergence of stratification. Initial first-order logistical loads may put selection pressures on individuals as actors and, even with second-order logistical loads, individuals may experience these pressures and, through entrepreneurial activities, create corporate units that either mitigate or exacerbate selection pressures. Institutional domains thus evolve as corporate units emerge to deal with selection pressures, and once they exist, selection is increasingly on corporate units rather than individuals. And, to the degree that individual decisions and actions are involved, they are responses of individuals within the divisions of labor of corporate units. Thus, in contrast to Darwinian selection where selection is on the phenotype of the individual life form (and the underlying genotype) and where the population of life forms evolves, sociocultural evolution is driven by “group selection,” but not the kind of group selection posited and debated by biologists and philosophers of biology (e.g., Wynne-Edwards 1962; Sober 1984; Sober and Wilson 1998; Okasha 2006). Instead, selection is on corporate units – groups, organizations, and communities – and it is populations *organized into societies and inter-societal systems* that evolve. Selection is on the corporate units of societies and inter-societal systems



because individual human life forms are almost always responding to constraints imposed by their incumbency in corporate units and, equally significant, by their membership in categoric units. But categoric units cannot act on their environments, unless their members become organized into a corporate units. Thus, the meso-level of social reality is where much of the action of human societies occurs, as I will explore in some detail in Volume 3 on mesodynamics. From a macro perspective, then, it is the actions of corporate units as they address selection pressures that institutional domains are constructed and transformed.

Just as categoric units cannot act, so institutional domains do not act. Rather, it is corporate units or networks of such units that act, and in so doing, they create, sustain, or change institutional domains, stratification systems, societies, or inter-societal systems. Societies “act” through the decisions of leaders within corporate units within institutional domains. For example, when a society goes to war, it is from decisions of leaders in key corporate units within polity, and perhaps other domains such as religion or economy. A whole society can be mobilized and thus act in concert, but it is through the coordinated actions of many diverse corporate units across institutional domains that societal-level action is conducted. To take another example, members of a particular social class within the stratification system act to change this system through the formation of a social- movement organization (a corporate unit) which then acts to mobilize other segments of the population and key corporate units in institutional domains to alter the existing pattern of resource distribution.

Yet, despite the fact that it is corporate units within institutional domains or within sectors of the stratification system that act, I am not making a strong reductionist argument. Institutional domains are very real, and they cannot be understood as simply the sum total of their respective corporate actors. Indeed, when an institutional domain has evolved from other domains, it reveals a culture – ideologies, norms, and generalized symbolic media – that is unique to that domain, and it evidences a structure regulated by this emergent culture as well as a system of relations among its constituent corporate units. This emergent sociocultural formation not only constrains its constituent corporate units; it is the environment to which such units must adapt. The New Institutionalism (e.g., Powell and DiMaggio 1991) emphasizes this point, but it does so by focusing on organizations (as one form of corporate unit) and giving short-shrift to institutional domains and their respective cultures that order and constrain the relations among corporate units.

Similarly, the stratification of various subpopulations or “classes” receiving similar shares of resources cannot be fully understood by meso-level analysis.

True, the valued resources that are unequally distributed occur in corporate units within institutional domains, but the subpopulations are created by their respective shares of various resources will reveal emergent properties that cannot be understood only by reference to corporate units distributing resources or even categoric units at the meso level of social reality. For once these subpopulations are evident and ranked as classes in a stratification system, they constitute a new level of social reality that requires its own explanation by macrodynamic principles.

## The Constitution of Macro Social Reality

The macro level of social reality is thus driven by selection pressures on populations of individuals, as and corporate actors respond to these pressures, they create institutional domains that develop varying levels of autonomy and differentiation from each other. In the beginning, it may have been an individual or few individuals who took the first steps to create the first human institution: kinship. But, once in place, this system regulating relations among age and sex categories represented an emergent property, revealing its own dynamics. The same may be true of all other institutions: innovators and entrepreneurs responded to selection pressures and began to create a new institutional domain, revealing new types of corporate units, distinctive patterns of relations among corporate units, and new cultural systems. Those corporate units, their patterns of integration, and their cultures that reduced selection pressures were most likely to be retained by a population, whereas those emerging corporate units and their cultures that did not reduce selection pressures were eventually selected out of the socio-cultural phenotype of a society. The more an institutional domain could become autonomous from the structure, culture, and modes of integration among corporate units in other institutional domains, the more differentiated was the societal system.

Stratification systems emerge from institutional elaboration and differentiation. As domains develop varying levels of autonomy from each other, they also produce a distinctive culture revolving around the use of *generalized symbolic media of exchange* for conducting transactions and for thematicizing discourse and texts (Luhmann 1982). These generalized symbolic media not only facilitate transactions within and between domains, they are also the valued resources that are distributed unequally. For example, *money* as a generalized symbolic media of exchange in the economy becomes more than a medium; it is also a valued resource that is distributed

unequally by corporate units in the economy. Similarly, *power* as the medium of polity becomes a valued resource distributed unequally to members of a society. The same is true for other generalized media in other institutional domains, such as *love/loyalty* in the family, *sacredness/piety* in religion, *learning* in education, *health* in medicine, *knowledge* in science, and so on for all autonomous domains. As we will see in Chaps. 4 and 5, some generalized symbolic media are able to penetrate more than one domain. Such is particularly the case with *money* and *power*; and as these resources move into other institutional domains, the latter distribute not only their own distinctive medium unequally but also *money* and *power* unequally. Institutional domains also generate their own distinctive ideologies that represent standards of how actors should conduct themselves in a domain. To a great extent, ideologies are built up from generalized symbolic media, but once domains develop their distinctive ideologies, these become standards of worth and operate to evaluate differently those receiving different shares of resources; and in so doing, they set up criteria for rank-ordering of social classes typified by their respective shares of resources. Thus, the dynamics of stratification are an outcome of the structure and culture of institutional domains.

Societies are composed of institutional domains and stratification systems (and the corporate and categorical units from which they are built which, in turn, are built from, and sustained by individuals in micro-level encounters). Societies are also geopolitical units that are regulated by institutional domains, particularly polity and law, within a defined territory. As we will see, the structure of a society is very much related to which institutional domains have become differentiated and to the linearity and clarity in the rank-ordering of social classes. The culture of a society is generated from the symbolic media, texts, ideologies, and norms generated in institutional domains and the symbols from these domains that are used to legitimate or challenge the unequal distribution of resources. Of particular importance is technology (or knowledge about how to manipulate the environment), values (or abstract standards of good and bad, right and wrong), and meta-ideologies (or syntheses among the ideologies of institutional domains). Even though societies emerge from their respective institutional domains and stratification systems, their structure and culture become an emergent property that requires its own theoretical principles, beyond those about a society's constituent institutional domains and stratification systems.

Societies are also structured by their position in systems of societies, and this position is determined by institutional domains, especially economy and polity but potentially other domains like religion and kinship. Moreover, relations between societies – whether integrative or disintegrative – are typically

relations between the institutional domains of two or more societies and, at times, their stratification systems. Yet, like societies, inter-societal systems constitute an emergent system that reveals dynamics not fully explicable by the dynamics of each society (Chase-Dunn and Grimes 1995; Chase-Dunn and Hall 1997).

Stated at this level of generality, the above seems vague but the goal of the next chapters is to fill in this general portrayal of macro social reality with specific principles about the operative dynamics of institutional domains, stratification systems, societies, and inter-societal systems. To realize this goal, we first must develop some elementary principles accounting for variations in the social forces – population, production, reproduction, distribution, and regulation – that drive the formation of macro-level social structures and their respective cultures. The macro realm evolves under selection pressures from these forces, and so, we need to begin by understanding the dynamic properties of forces. Then, we can develop additional principles on the dynamics of institutional domains, stratification systems, societies, and inter-societal systems.



## Chapter 3

# The Forces of the Macrodynamic Realm

For most of human history, bands of 50 or so individuals organized into nuclear families of parents and offspring wandered a defined territory to secure food from gathering and hunting activities. Bands revealed no real inequalities. Economic activity was organized by the division of labor in kinship, with women gathering and men hunting. Religious rituals were conducted by individuals within the family, although at times a shaman or religious specialist could be found who served non-kin members of the band. Political activity did not exist because no individual had the power to tell others what to do. Education was mostly informal with children simply observing or helping parents and, in so doing, learning what was necessary.

Once nomadic hunter-gatherers settled near water, however, populations began to grow from a few dozens to a few hundred and, at times, several thousand individuals. As I noted in the last chapter, if there was the socio-cultural equivalent of the “Big Bang” in the social universe, was this seemingly small step to settle near lakes, rivers, and oceans where a more plentiful supply of fish could support a larger population; and as populations grew, they soon exhausted the landscape of easily gathered food and hunted out a territory of its stock of game. Thus, population growth initiated the process of sociocultural evolution toward more complex societies as selection pressures from production and regulation escalated. As I have also emphasized, there were, no doubt, smaller bangs generated by selection pressures on populations of hunter-gatherers throughout human existence as they responded to conflict, environmental degradation, ecological changes, and other forces, but these did not constitute dramatic transformation of human evolution until larger proportions of the human population began to settle permanently and grow – thus, setting of the Big Bang of evolution in the social universe.

## Population as a Social Force

With population growth, then, pressures on individual and collective actors to find ways to produce more food, to coordinate and control the larger social mass, and to distribute (often unequally) the productive outputs all increased. Thus, population can be seen as the force that started the differentiation and elaboration of distinctive institutional domains of economy, polity, and religion; and with differentiation of these institutional domains outside of kinship, inequalities in the distribution of resources led to the formation of the first stratification systems.

Once new institutional domains began to differentiate from kinship, the forces driving their formation increased in intensity. Equally important, the elaboration of new institutional domains allowed the population to grow even more, thus setting off another round of selection pressures on actors. Thus, the differentiation of new institutional domains was a double-edged sword because, on the one hand, these new domains resolved selection pressures but, on the other, they created new second-order pressures on a population to find new ways to cope with the increased complexity of societal systems, especially as the unequal distribution of resources led to the formation of stratification systems. These second-order selection pressures – both Durkheimian and Spencerian – came from the internal environment of a society as much as the external biophysical environment. Tensions and potential conflict increase when power is concentrated (in polity), when both material and prestige goods are distributed unequally (stratification), when productive surplus is taxed by political and religious leaders, and when populations become more densely settled in delimited territories.

Figure 3.1<sup>1</sup> outlines this relationship among population, other macrodynamic forces, institutional differentiation, and stratification. As populations grow, they increase the intensity of other forces for production, reproduction, regulation and distribution; and as the valences for these forces increase, Spencerian and Durkheimian selection pressures also escalate. As actors respond to these pressures, they begin to create new kinds of corporate units engaged in productive, regulatory, distributive, and reproductive activities, all of which lead to the differentiation of new institutional domains out of

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<sup>1</sup>In Fig. 3.1, I introduce signs on the arrows to specify the pattern of the causal relation. +, a positive relationship; –, a negative relationship. Other potential relations include: +/-, positively curvilinear; -/+, negatively curvilinear; =/+ and =/–, respectively, lagged positive and negative relations; +/= or –/=, respectively, denote positive or negative relationships that level off.

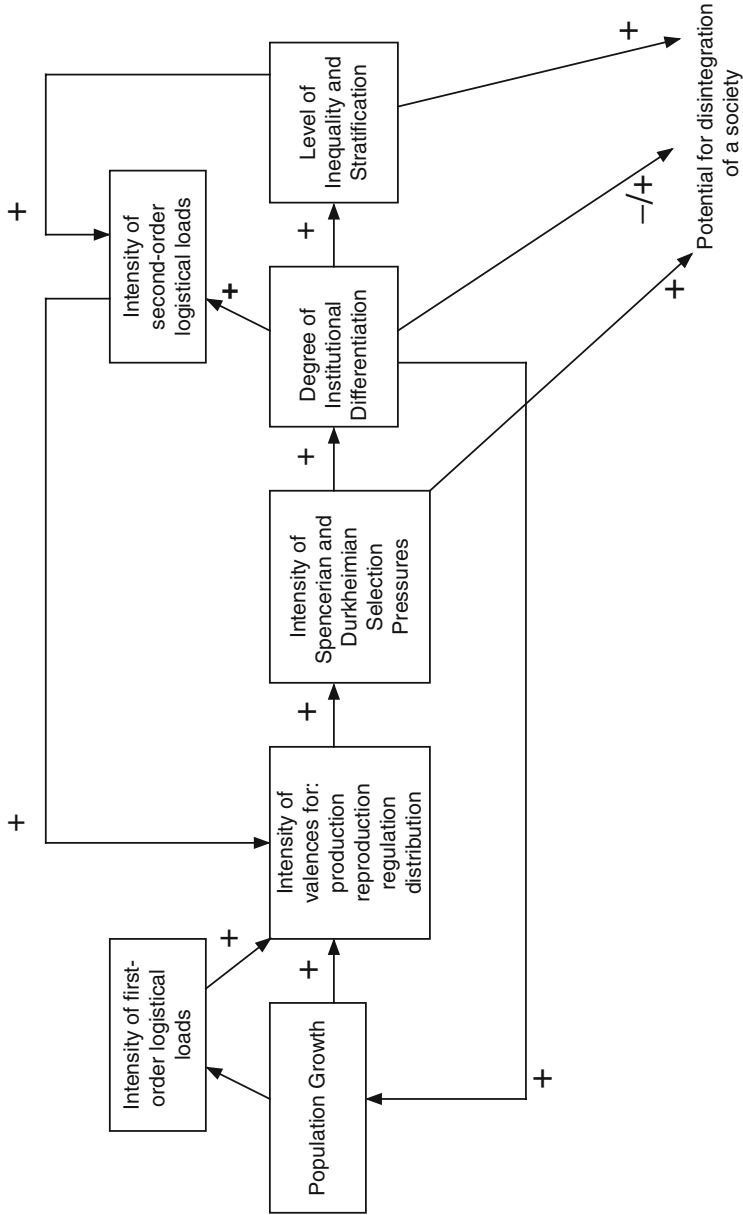


Fig. 3.1 Population and other macrodynamic forces



kinship. And, since institutional domains distribute resources unequally, they cause the formation of stratification systems. Both institutional differentiation and stratification have reverse causal effects on valences of macrodynamic forces, thus setting off a new round of selection pressures leading to more institutional differentiation and new patterns of inequality. Moreover, institutional differentiation allows a society to support a larger population that, in turn, increases the valences of other macrodynamic forces. As these cycles continue, the complexity of a society is ratcheted up to the point where it degrades the biophysical environment (Chase-Dunn and Hall 1997), becomes incapable of responding to selection pressures (Turner 1995), or loses wars with neighboring populations (Collins 1986). Thus, as Fig. 3.1 emphasizes, the potential for dissolution and disintegration of a population is built into the recursive dynamics that drive societal differentiation to the point of societal collapse.

These dynamic processes were fully recognized long before sociology emerged as a discipline. Thomas Malthus (1789) was one of the first to conceptualize the dynamism of population growth and the potential for societal disintegration, and he influenced the first sociologists studying the relationship between population and sociocultural differentiation. Let me thus pause to outline Malthus' key ideas and then turn to the models presented by Herbert Spencer and Émile Durkheim.

### ***Malthus' Analysis of Population Growth and the "Four Horsemen"***

In his famous essay on population, Malthus (1798 [1926]) outlined the fundamental relationship between population growth and production as a social force. He argued that population growth can be exponential, while the productive capacity to support this population is more often arithmetic and, hence, cannot keep up with population growth. The result is an increase in death rates until population size and productive capacity come in equilibrium. Over-population would, as he famously stated, cause one or more of the "four horsemen" – war, disease, pestilence, and famine – to ride across a society. These horsemen are a dramatic way to express what I have called selection pressures, mostly Spencerian but also Durkheimian as people compete for inadequate food supplies and other necessities of living.

Population growth thus raises the intensity of production as a force because people need to find new ways to re-organize economic activity, and as they do so, the economy differentiates from other institutional domains.

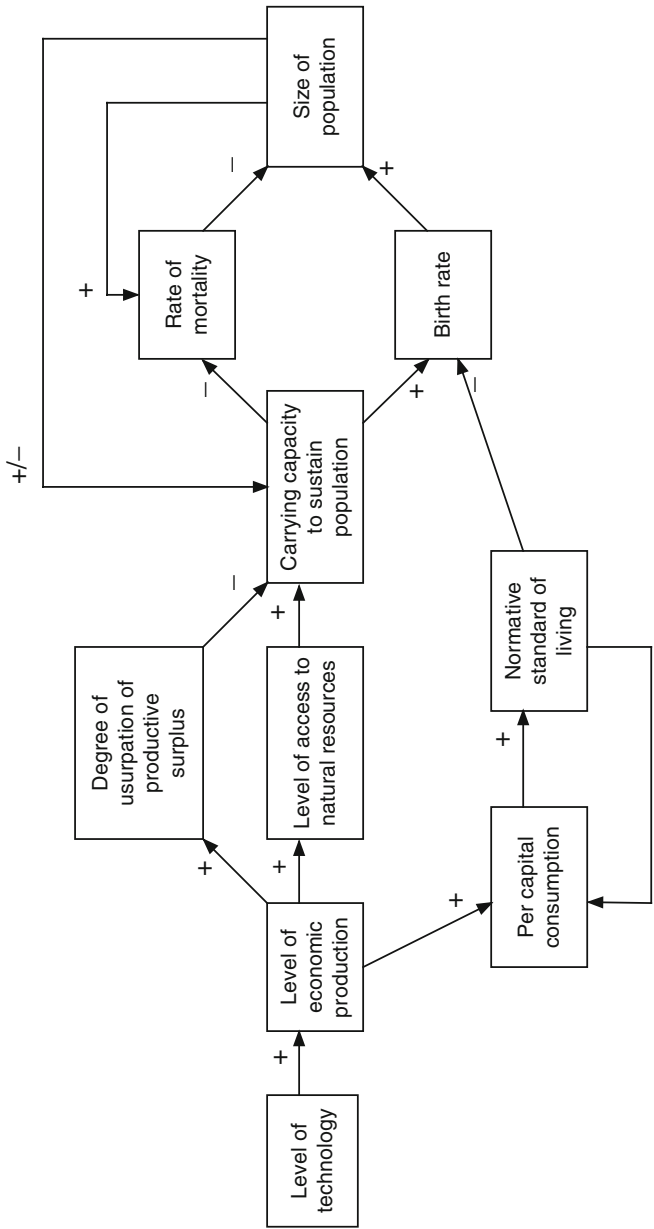


Fig. 3.2 Malthus' implicit model of population dynamics

Production, Malthus asserted, was a function of a number of intersecting conditions and processes, including level of technology, distribution capacities, efficiency of divisions of labor, and availability of resources.

As a political theorist, Malthus implicitly argued that population growth also creates selection pressures stemming from regulation (consolidation and centralization of power), leading to the differentiation of polity. Moreover, with increasing production, the economic surplus can be usurped by the emerging polity, but Malthus also emphasized that usurpation of this surplus lowered the carrying capacity of the economy to support a population. This line of argument is consistent with my view that as institutions differentiate and generate inequalities, these outcomes of population pressures generate new kinds of second-order selection pressures associated with internal tensions over inequalities that arise with polity as a distinctive institutional domain.

Malthus added another interesting and contemporary idea consistent with what today is termed the “demographic transition.” He argued that with rising productivity, normative standards of living increase as per-capital consumption grows. Over time, as individuals enjoy new levels of consumption, they procreate less in order to, in essence, save more resources for themselves, with the result that the birth rate declines, eventually leveling off population growth and, potentially, decreasing the size of the population. As the level of production, consumption, birth rate, and population size approach equilibrium, the four horsemen are less likely to ride. Figure 3.2 summarizes the basics of Malthus’ argument. There have been more recent refinements of Malthus’ analysis (e.g., Lee 1986; Boserup 1965, 1981; Turner 1995), but the essentials of Malthus’ insights remain intact.

### ***Herbert Spencer’s Model of Population Dynamics***

Herbert Spencer (1874–1896) was very much influenced by Malthus, and so it should not be surprising that his general theory of evolution has a powerful demographic component. For Spencer, increases in population size and diversity raise *logistical loads*. These loads revolve around problems of (1) maintaining and reproducing the population and (2) regulating (coordinating and controlling) the larger, more diverse population. As I have emphasized, these logistical loads put selection pressures on actors, and if they cannot be met, the disintegrative potential of a society increases. As I outlined in the last chapter, Spencer emphasized that, as actors try to respond to the challenges posed by these selection pressures, they create new kinds of structures along three (really four) axes of social differentiation: (1) an operative axis revolving

around (a) increased production and (b) new structures for reproduction; (2) a regulatory axis revolving around the consolidation of power for coordination and control; and (3) a distributive axis of infrastructures and exchange systems for moving people, information, and resources about a territory.

Thus, for Spencer population growth set into motion intense pressures for the differentiation of new institutional domains along these distinct axes. With differentiation, logistical loads could be managed, thereby reducing selection pressures which, in turn, would allow the population to grow and, ironically, set off yet another round of increased logistical loads, escalated selection pressures (both Darwinian and Spencerian), and increased differentiation of institutional domains devoted to what I see as the forces of production, reproduction, regulation, and distribution.

Spencer also saw what Malthus implicitly perceived: institutional differentiation generates new kinds of selection pressures. For example, once polity differentiates, stratification emerges which, in turn, escalates internal threats that intensify selection pressures from regulation; and if polity engages in military conquest, it not only sets into motion Durkheimian pressures of selection among societies, but also new Durkheimian and Spencerian pressures within a society to produce and distribute resources, while at the same time generating pressures to manage the tensions arising from stratification. Thus, as population growth pushes actors to create new institutional systems, selection pressures from all of the macrodynamic forces escalate and feed off of one another. Spencer's implicit model of population dynamics is outlined in Fig. 3.3.<sup>2</sup>

### *Émile Durkheim's Model of Population Dynamics*

Émile Durkheim (1893 [1963]) borrowed from Darwin the notion of selection to account for the division of labor in societies – as I noted in the last chapter. Like Spencer, he saw population growth as increasing material density (degree of concentration of people in space) which, in turn, increases moral density (rates of interaction and competition) and, thereby, escalates selection pressures on actors as they compete for resources. But, as I emphasized in the last chapter, unlike Darwin or Spencer who often recognized that selection could cause the “death” of a species or social units competing for resources, Durkheim felt that selection would drive those unable to compete in one niche

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<sup>2</sup>In many places, I have modeled Spencer's theory. See, for examples, Turner (1984a, b, 1985, 1994a, b) and Turner and Maryanski (2008a).

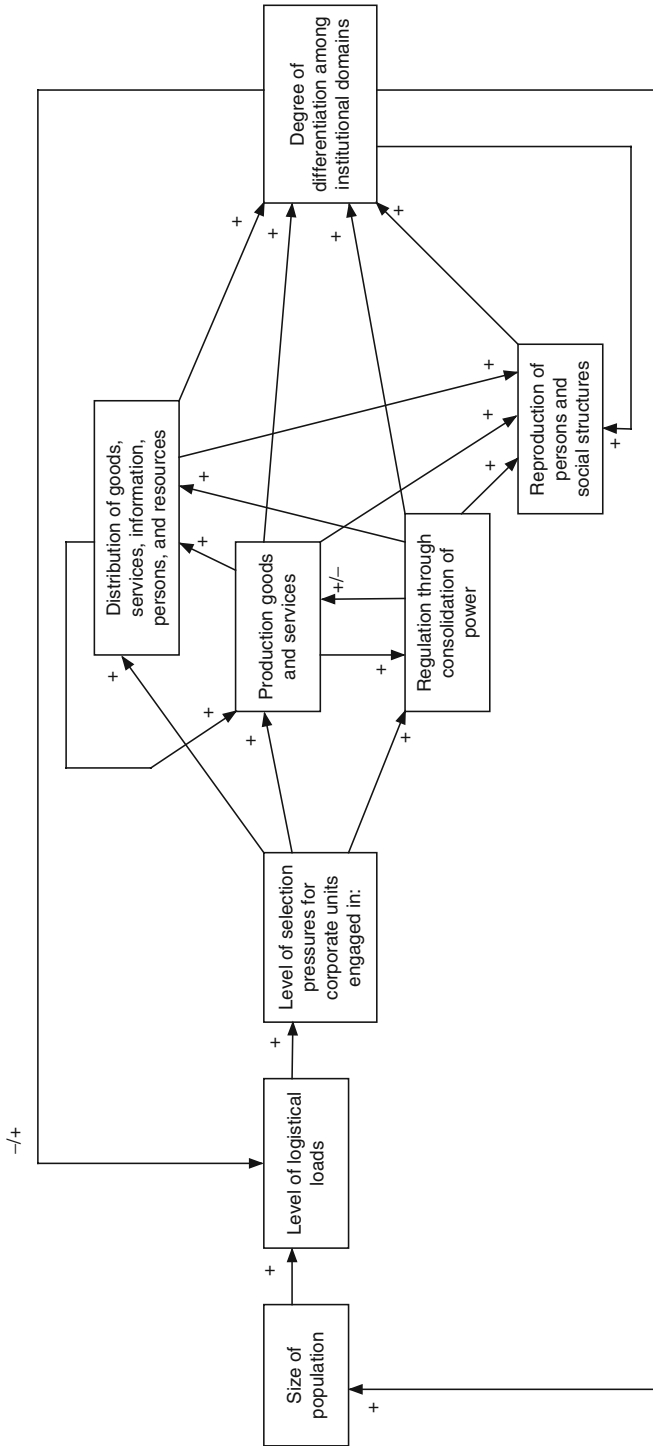


Fig. 3.3 Spencer's model of population dynamics

to create a new resource niche or move to a different niche, thereby increasing the division of labor without selecting individuals out of the society.

Durkheim's model is basically a theory of human ecology, emphasizing that competition leads to social speciation, or specialization and the division of labor. Durkheim's analysis is mostly about selection within a society, and it is mostly Darwinian because the emphasis is on resource niches, density of actors in a niche, competition for resources, and the resulting "speciation" of new roles, social categories, and corporate units. As a result, it is more about meso-level dynamics as we will explore in Vol. 3.

Yet, there is an implicit macro-level analysis in Durkheim's work that is important: institutional differentiation (and the resulting division of labor in a society) generates resource niches within which actors – both corporate and individual – compete for resources; and this competition can often generate Spencerian selection pressures for actors to find solutions to competition and to create new kinds of structures to sustain themselves in resource niches. The pressures that actors experience from Darwinian competition thus become more Spencerian as selection pressures from regulation push actors to create not only new integrative structures but new cultural systems as well. As Durkheim (1893 [1963]) recognized more than Spencer, regulation is achieved not just through the consolidation of power and coordination of corporate units but also through selection pressures emanating from "abnormal forms" in the division of labor – i.e., egoism, lack of coordination, anomie, and forced division of labor. New kinds of corporate units within polity and economy, coupled with a more complex system of cultural symbols, become essential to sustaining and integrating differentiated societies. In particular, symbol systems must go in two directions. Values must become more abstract in order to include actors at diverse locations in the differentiated institutional domains and in the stratified class system, but as this process ensues, the risk of anomie increases, creating selection pressures on actors to create new layers of symbol systems that can "fill in" between the highly generalized value premises of a differentiated society and the location of specific actors within corporate units embedded within particular institutional domains. Thus, ideologies across an institutional domain must translate general values into evaluative codes regulating corporate and individual actors in each domain; in turn, these ideologies provide moral premises for normative codes for corporate actors. Durkheim never took these insights very far, but as I will argue later, Spencerian selection pressures work on more than just social structures; they also put pressure on actors to create new kinds of cultural systems that are as differentiated as the institutional domains and corporate units in these domains and as diverse as the categoric units that make up a stratification system in a society.

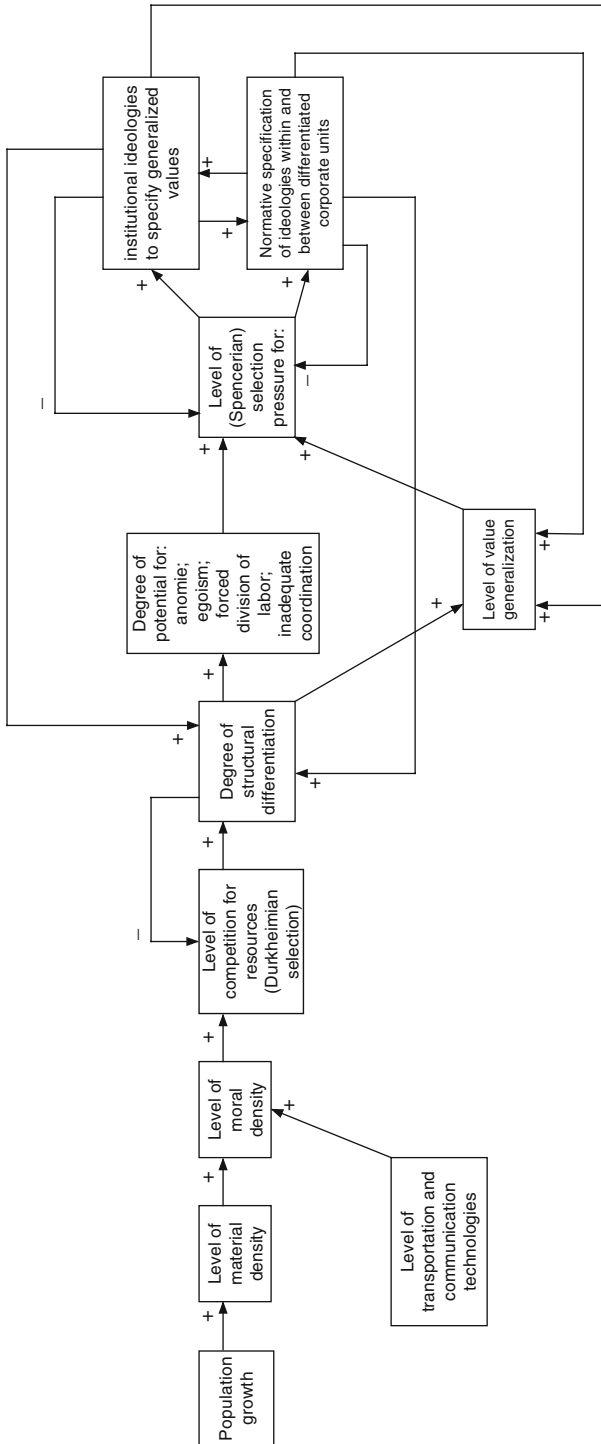


Fig. 3.4 Durkheim's implicit model of population dynamics

These selection pressures come primarily from regulation as a social force, as valences from population as a force generate selection pressures for coordination and control of the larger population. Figure 3.4 outlines the key elements of Durkheim's model.<sup>3</sup>

### *A Synthetic Model of Population Dynamics*

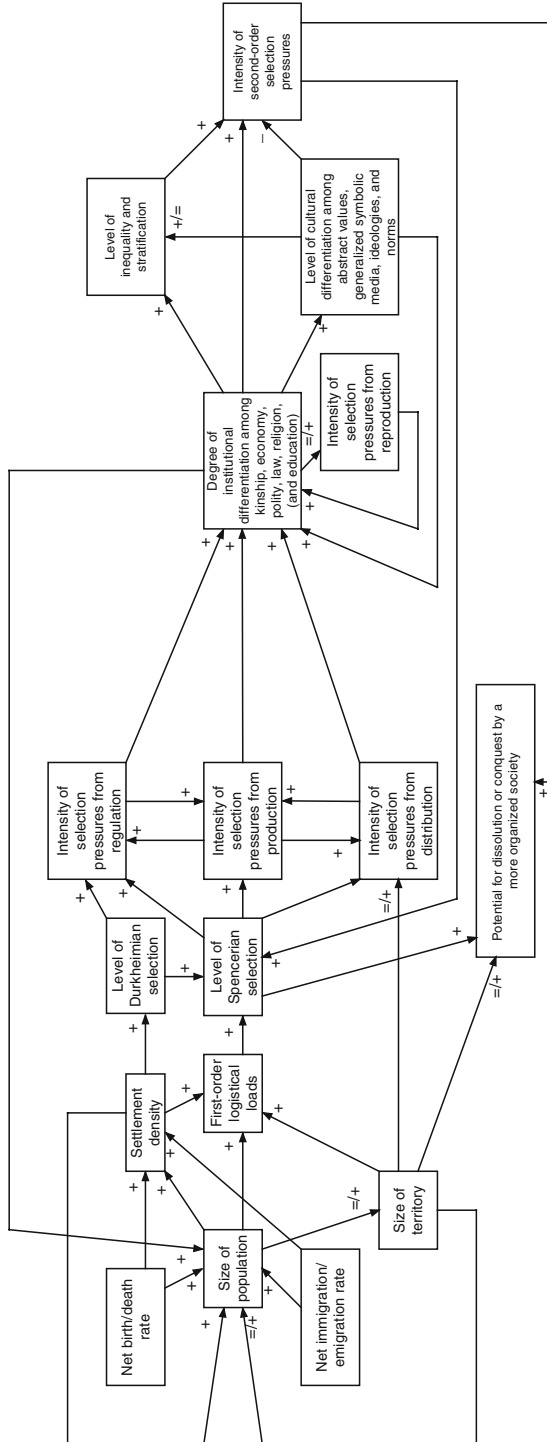
Figure 3.5 synthesizes the elements in Malthus', Spencer's and Durkheim's respective models. This model is obviously more complex, but provides a sense for the robust direct, indirect, and reverse causal effects among those forces revolving around population as a macrodynamic force. A model like that in Fig. 3.5 allows us to see that population growth is not just related to obvious demographic variables like birth rates and migration patterns, although these are obviously critical. But, as I have emphasized, initial population growth raises the valences of the other macrodynamic forces that, along with population growth, per se, increase selection pressures; and as actors respond to these pressures, they forge new institutional domains that have reverse causal effects on population growth. As Spencer emphasized long ago, a larger population can only be sustained by a more complex structural skeleton of differentiated institutional domains. Hence, as population growth raises the valences of production, regulation, distribution, and eventually, reproduction as forces, selection pressures lead actors to develop new institutional domains – e.g., religion, polity, economy, law and education – that have reverse causal effects on population growth.

As Durkheim recognized, however, a more complex structural skeleton is insufficient to sustain a larger population because regulation – or coordination and control of a differentiated population – cannot be achieved solely by the consolidation of power in polity (and law). Nor can regulation be achieved solely by distributive dynamics revolving around markets and infrastructures (as Adam Smith had posited with his notion of “the invisible hand of order”). Smith (1776 [1805]) and a long line of French thinkers before Durkheim recognized that “common” or “collective” sentiments are necessary to bind individuals to social structures and to regulate relations among individuals and collective actors in diverse institutional domains. Durkheim understood that in differentiated social systems, culture must operate at several basic levels: (1) general values that contain abstract codes

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<sup>3</sup>More approvingly than my efforts for Spencer I have modeled Durkheim's theory. See, for examples, Turner (1981, 1984a, b, 1994a, b, 1995, 2008).





**Fig. 3.5** Direct, indirect, and reverse causal processes revolving around population as a macrodynamic force

about good-bad, right-wrong, appropriate-inappropriate, (2) translations of these generalized values into more specific ideologies about how actors should act within differentiated institutional domains, (3) sets of generalized institutional norms regulating conduct within an institutional domain, and (4) sets of rules ordering relations among actors in different institutional domains. Durkheim did not phrase his argument in quite these terms, but (1)–(4) represents his answer to the problems of anomie, or a lack of cultural regulation in a society.<sup>4</sup> From my perspective, potential or actual anomie sets into motion selection pressures for actors to build up culture along the lines outlined in (1)–(4) above.

I would add another notion – generalized symbolic media of exchange<sup>5</sup> – not developed by Durkheim but addressed by his contemporary, Georg Simmel (1907 [1978]), and further developed by the functionals of the twentieth century who followed Durkheim's lead (Parsons 1963a, b, 1970; Luhmann 1982, 1995). Actors in institutional domains develop a generalized symbolic medium for conducting transactions within a domain and between domains, for thematicizing outlooks and orientations of actors, and for articulating ideologies of a domain. There is, then, a fifth cultural element in resolving regulatory pressures – or in Durkheim's terms, problems of integration – in societal systems. These five levels of culture make institutional domains and relations among them viable, and in so doing, they provide the cultural scaffold that, when coupled with structural differentiation, allows for population growth.

If we trace the key causal processes across the model, populations grow when birth rates exceed those for mortality and when immigration is greater than emigration – both fairly obvious variables. Size of territory and density of settlements are both an effect and a cause of population growth, as is indicated by the direct and reverse causal arrows connecting size of territory, density of settlements, and size of a population. The size of a population, especially its rate of growth, generates first-order logistical loads that, in turn, increase Spencerian selection pressures from regulation (coordination and control of the larger population), production (securing sufficient resources to support the larger population), and distribution (of resources to the population). Size of territory can increase these logistical loads, as can density of settlements. Settlement densities also increase Durkheimian selection pressures as competition for resources within a delimited space intensifies; and as competition escalates, it sets into motion Spencerian selection as actors try to

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<sup>4</sup>See Niklas Luhmann (1982) for a more recent recasting of Durkheim's argument.

<sup>5</sup>See Table 4.1 for a list of media.

create new structures to mitigate competition or to institutionalize competition so that it does not escalate regulatory selection pressures. All of these selection pressures, but especially Spencerian pressures, lead to the differentiation of institutional domains; and as these domains differentiate, they generate distinctive cultures composed of generalized symbolic media, ideologies, and institutional norms that anchor generalized values within institutional domains. Differentiation of institutional domains increases when each domain develops a distinct culture revolving around generalized symbolic media, ideologies, and institutional norms. With differentiation of institutional domains and their cultures, selection pressures from reproduction eventually lead actors to create education as a distinctive domain which, in turn, often institutionalizes the thematization of generalized symbolic media within all domains.

Differentiation of institutional domains revealing distinctive cultures establishes a structural base for further population growth, although as Malthus emphasized, higher levels of production may work against population growth as normative standards of living rise (causing the “demographic transition”). At the same time, institutional differentiation also sets into motion forces that can increase the potential for dissolution of the population. With differentiation, ever-more resources are distributed unequally; and together institutional differentiation and stratification increase the intensity of second-order logistical loads or those loads generated by the very structure of a society itself. These second-order loads increase Spencerian selection pressures on regulation, production, and distribution, but as the arrow in Fig. 3.5 to dissolution underscores, actors’ efforts may prove unsuccessful in reducing these selection pressures. The arrow from cultural differentiation emphasizes that, at times, culture can mitigate against these second-order selection pressures by regularizing relations within and between institutional domains and by providing legitimating ideologies for stratification that, for a time, cause actors to accept their place in the class system. And to the extent that culture does so, it provides a cultural base to institutional domains that can support a larger and even more diverse population.

Figure 3.5 obviously takes the analysis of population as a macrodynamic force beyond simple demographic variables on the proximate causes of population growth. Because population sets into motion the Spencerian and Durkheimian selection pressures that cause institutional differentiation and elaboration, which in turn cause stratification, these new sociocultural formations have reverse causal effects on population as a macrodynamic force. Thus, as institutional domains and stratification become an integral part of all macro societies, they also become part of the explanation for why populations grow, diversify, decline, and degenerate. But, how can these complex causal effects outlined in Fig. 3.5 be

stated more parsimoniously? The answer is by developing an elementary principle which loses some of the robustness of Fig. 3.5 but which states the fundamental relationships between population growth and other generic social forces and processes in human societies.

### *An Elementary Principle on Population Dynamics*<sup>6</sup>

1. The size of a population is:
  - A. A positive function of birth and immigration rates
  - B. A negative function of mortality and emigration rates
  - C. A positive function of the size of territory, size of settlements, and density of settlements
  - D. A positive function of the level of material surplus to support members of a population, which in turn, is a positive and multiplicative function of:
    1. The level of production
    2. The level of distribution
    3. The rate of redistribution from centers of consolidated power
  - E. A lagged negative function of the normative standard of living which, in turn, is a positive function of the conditions listed under D-1, D-2, and D-3 above
  - F. A positive function of the degree of institutional differentiation and the formation of distinctive cultures to regulate relations among actors within and between institutional domains
  - G. A negative function of the potential for societal dissolution and disintegration which, in turn, is a positive function of:
    1. The level of first-order logistical loads which, in turn, are a positive and additive function of:
      - a. The absolute size of the population
      - b. The rate of growth of the population
      - c. The level of diversity of the population
      - d. The level of Durkheimian selection
      - e. The potential for a Malthusian correction which, in turn, is a negative function of the level of production and consolidated power

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<sup>6</sup>The proposition on population dynamics is, in a number of ways, the first principle of macrodynamics. This principle, then, is number (1) of the 23 principles, summarized in Chap. 8.

2. The level of second-order logistical loads which, in turn, are a positive function of
  - a. The level of inequality across social classes in the stratification system
  - b. The level of institutional differentiation without a corresponding development of structural and cultural integrative mechanisms to regulate relations among actors within and between institutional domains

This principle is not very parsimonious, nor is it exactly startling. Yet, we should not be snobs about basic sociological principles if they seem familiar and, perhaps, even obvious. Certainly, the more demographic and ecological portions of the principle (A–D) are obvious, and the next statement (E) on the demographic transition is so well known that it also seems obvious. Statement (F) brings more sociology from Spencer and Durkheim into the principle. For Spencer, structural differentiation provides the necessary skeletal structure to support, as he phrased the matter, “the larger social mass,” but Durkheim recognized that differentiation generates its own pressures or, as he phrased the issue, potential “abnormal forms,” which he thought would disappear (somewhat naively) with a combination of generalization of values and then their specification within institutional domains by ideologies and rules (and, as I added, generalized symbolic media). Differentiation of structure, per se, increases second-order logistical loads, but structures with coherent cultures that can regulate relations will reduce second-order logistical loads. Culture decreases logistical loads not only within institutional spheres, but it legitimates inequalities in the distribution of resources. The resources distributed unequally in institutional domains are also the generalized media (that is, *money, power, love, sacredness, learning, knowledge*, and the like); and since they are also the symbols used to develop institutional ideologies, they establish criteria of worth and, together, they often coalesce into a meta-ideology that combines each of the distinctive institutional ideologies into a standard by which members of classes are seen as worthy and unworthy. In so doing, these composite ideologies often are quite successful in legitimating the stratification system, thereby reducing the intensity of second-order logistical loads.

The final elements in the elementary principle emphasizes that there is a fundamental relationship among (1) potential for societal disintegration, (2) rate of population growth and population size as they generate first-order logistical loads, and (3) institutional differentiation, along with inequality/stratification, as they intensify second-order logistical loads. When the efforts of actors responding to Spencerian selection are unsuccessful in institution-building, in developing coherent sets of cultural systems for

regulating relations among actors within and between institutional domains, and in building ideologies legitimating inequalities, the potential for disintegration of the populations increases dramatically. There is also reference to structural bases of integration, which for Spencer and Malthus consisted of the consolidation of power and structured independencies, whereas for Durkheim, the key structural mechanism was (normatively regulated) interdependence among individuals and collective actors in the division of labor. I have not elaborated on these mechanisms because these will be discussed in more detail in later chapters and delineated in subsequent principles. For a preview of structural mechanisms, which have not been examined in as much detail as cultural mechanisms, consult Table 4.2 and principles 8 and 14 in Chap. 8. See also Fig. 3.14 and surrounding discussion for more on the cultural basis of regulation and integration.

As modest as this principle on population dynamics seems, it is only the first one to be developed, and so, it is wise to hold off judgment until all principles explaining the macro social universe have been presented. Indeed, the seeming simplicity of this one principle will have vanished amid a much larger inventory of sociological laws (see Chap. 8 for the full list), but the centrality of population processes to understanding macrodynamics will nonetheless remain.

## **Production Dynamics**

Production is the process of gathering resources from the environment and converting them into usable resources that can sustain individuals and corporate units, and then distributing these resources to actors in a population. Production and distribution are thus related, and together they are the forces that lead actors to create the institutional domain of economy. Since I separate distribution from production as a macrodynamic force, emphasis here will be on the gathering and conversion of resources but, as will be evident, these processes are very much influenced by the level of development of distributive infrastructures and market systems.

### ***Elements of Production***

There are five basic elements that are critical to understanding production (Turner 1972, 1995, 1997, 2003): (1) technology, (2) physical capital, (3) human capital, (4) property systems, and (5) entrepreneurial mechanisms.

Technology is simply knowledge about how to manipulate the environment. Physical capital is the tools and forms of liquid capital like money that can be used to purchase the tools for gathering resources and converting them into resources that can be consumed by actors. Human capital is the skill levels along with other characteristics such as motivations of human labor in the productive process. Property systems are definitions of rights to possess objects of value. And, entrepreneurial mechanisms are all those structures and processes involved in organizing technology, physical and human capital, and property systems for productive and distributive activities. Together, the values for these elements have large effects on the level of production in a society.

### **Level of Technology**

As noted above, technology is knowledge about how to manipulate biophysical and sociocultural environments. The greater is the level of knowledge about how to regulate the environment, the higher will be the level of production (Lenski 1966, 2005). This relationship between production and technology is, however, mediated by the complex causal relations of technology with other elements of production and, as we will see, elements driving distribution, reproduction, and regulation as social forces.

Figure 3.6 outlines the direct, indirect, and reverse causal relationships for all of the elements of production, and we can begin here to analyze the dynamic relations among the elements of production as they affect the level of technology evident in a population. The level of technology determines the knowledge of human capital or labor in productive processes, the nature of physical capital or tools used in production, the entrepreneurial mechanisms for organizing elements of production, and the amount and diversity of property. At any point in time the level of technology places an upper limit on the tools, labor skills, property systems, and entrepreneurial mechanisms. Over time, however, as actors work at capital formation, as labor has experience and experiments with how to use technology and tools, as actors explore new ways to organize economic activity, and as new kinds of property systems are developed, the overall stock of technology increases (Nolan and Lenski 2008) – as is denoted by the reverse causal arrows leading into the level of technology. For most of human existence, this dynamic effect was not evident; indeed, there appeared to be a stable equilibrium among the elements of production because, for most of human history, nomadic hunting and gathering was the dominant mode of production. Hunter and gatherers did, however, possess knowledge of seeds and planting; and it is clear that some bands cast

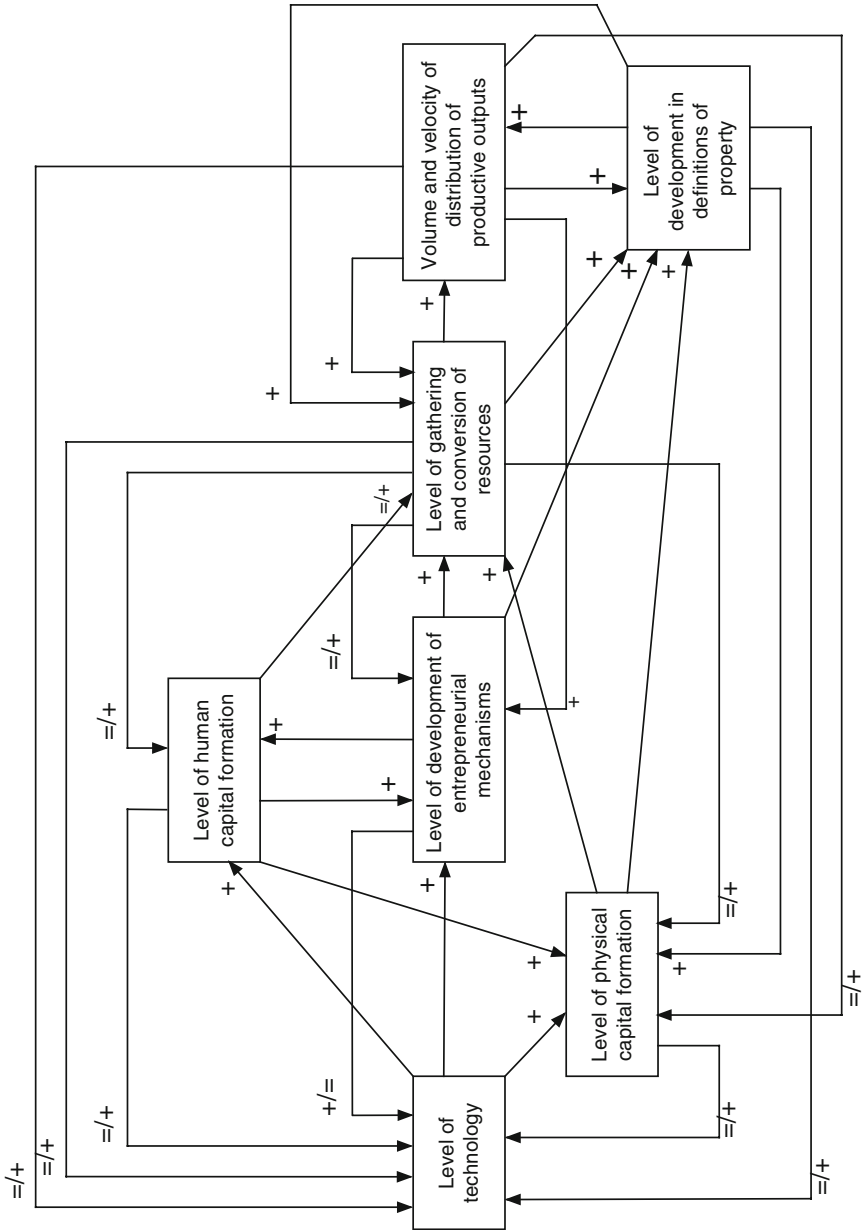


Fig. 3.6 The dynamics of production



seeds when leaving an encampment with the hope of having an easy harvest when returning at the later date. Also, hunter-gatherers learned to fish, and eventually some settled down and initiated the Big Bang of societal evolution. Still, knowledge about how to hunt animals and gather plant life, and the forces that affected the availability of these resources, constituted the basic store of productive technology for humans for most of their history. As a result, the level of capital formation for nomadic bands was limited; the labor skills were rudimentary and revolved around gathering, hunting, and at times, crafts and arts; the entrepreneurial mechanisms were the division of labor in the nuclear family; and given the nomadic existence of hunter-gatherers, definitions of property were limited to what individuals could carry and, perhaps, to their home range as collective property.

This equilibrium among the elements of production was broken with population growth that, in all likelihood, occurred as hunter-gatherers settled down, forcing them to use existing knowledge and to acquire new knowledge about gardening, fishing, and perhaps domesticating animals where possible (Diamond 1997, 2005). Once this step was taken, new forms of physical capital, new labor skills, new entrepreneurial mechanisms to coordinate technology, capital, and property developed, and new definitions of property began to emerge. At this point, the reverse causal arrows flowing into technology began to increase the stocks of knowledge that, in turn, fed forward and caused actors to (a) expand the pools of physical and human capital, (b) develop mechanisms for coordinating productive elements, and (c) expand rights to property.

These processes accelerated over the last 5,000 years and, as is evident, dramatically over the last 200 years. The reason for this accelerating increase in productive activity is the result of actors responding to selection pressures from not only production but also other macrodynamic forces. As production rose, populations grew, placing additional selection pressures on actors to increase production; as population and production grew, new means for distributing resources, such as markets and infrastructures (roads, ports, land transports, and ships) were developed to move resources about a population and territory. As selection pressures from regulation for coordinating and controlling ever-more individuals and corporate actors engaged in diverse activities escalated, power was consolidated and, to varying degrees, centralized. And, eventually, as the knowledge required for at least some economic activities increased, selection pressures from reproduction escalated and led actors to develop new kinds of structures for training human capital, and eventually, for expanding the knowledge base of a society.

As actors respond to these selection pressures from other macrodynamic forces, the values for each of the elements outlined in Fig. 3.6

increased, with the result that the level of production increased. Let me outline some of the key effects of these other macrodynamic forces. One critical breakthrough was the emergence of markets for exchanging the outputs of production. As long as production could only be distributed within kinship, band, or village, existing structures could accomplish the needed entrepreneurship for production and distribution of productive outputs. Markets represent a kind of entrepreneurial mechanism, allowing actors to exchange productive outputs. Eventually, markets expand to distribute all elements of an economy: technology, physical capital, human capital, and property over large expanses of territory. As we will see shortly, markets driven by profit-motives (and using money and credit) “commodify” all elements of an economy as property that can be bought and sold. For all of the pathologies of this kind of entrepreneurial system, it is highly dynamic and leads to rapid growth in production, often punctuated by periodic collapses.

Another key entrepreneurial mechanism is the eventual rise of the state as the house of regulative control. The state supports itself by taxing economic outputs, thereby regulating the availability of physical capital that can circulate in a society (Lenski 1966). It also uses law to define property rights. Moreover, the state eventually manages the flow of money and use of credit, thus regulating markets and the availability of physical capital for production. The state also engages in infrastructural projects, most of which have consequences for the movement of commodities, people, and information across a territory. The institutionalization of polity, then, has very large effects on all of the elements in Fig. 3.6 as they feed back and affect the level of technology.

Finally, as institutions differentiate, selection pressures from reproduction rise and eventually lead to the institutionalization of education to train individuals in necessary skills and, in this process, to expand the breadth and depth of knowledge that can be transformed into technology. And eventually as institutional differentiation continues, science as an institutional domain emerges – initially by fits and starts, receding for a time in conflicts with other institutional domains like religion or polity, only to re-emerge and become a large force in systematically increasing knowledge about all dimensions of the biophysical and sociocultural universes. The consequence is for knowledge production to become evermore institutionalized, and coupled with competitive markets for distributing technology (for a profit), the rate of technological growth continually expands, as is evident in the present era. Of course, markets and polities often collapse; and thus, even a dynamic system of knowledge production can stagnate, at least for a time.

## Physical Capital

Physical capital is the tools (and implements) used in gathering resources from the environment and their conversion into commodities. Physical capital also includes the physical space (land) and structures necessary to engage in gathering and production. And most importantly, with the growth of dynamic markets, capital increasingly revolves around money, credit, and other financial instruments available to purchase space, tools, structures, and access to markets. Physical capital is initially limited by technology, but markets can create incentives to increase the scale, nature, and efficiency of physical capital; and in so doing, markets work indirectly to increase the level of physical capital; and as new forms of physical capital emerge, they often are defined as property through legal instruments such as patents, thereby making them one more commodity in markets driven by motives for profit.

As noted above, the institutionalization of polity determines how much capital can flow in the society since the state will eventually use its powers for coinage and taxation, as well as its control over laws defining rights to property, to determine how much and what kind of physical capital can be formed and used in production. Moreover, by its power to regulate money and credit, the polity is able to influence overall demand in markets to purchase capital goods to be used in production. Thus, the formation of physical capital is greatly limited by the policies of actors who hold political power in a society (Parsons and Smelser 1956); and as a consequence, polity's regulation of capital has large effects on the overall level of production in a society.

## Human Capital

The size of the labor pool, its skills, and its motivations have obvious effects on the level of production. The skill levels, and particularly the ability of human capital to be innovative, determines the level of technology and its efficient transformation into forms of physical capital. As physical capital becomes concentrated into structures like factories or buildings devoted to the production of services, these manifestations of capital operate as entrepreneurial mechanisms for organizing the energy expended by human capital – often creating tensions between labor and owners of physical capital as Marx so clearly predicted. As the skill levels required of human capital increase, however, their credentialing by reproductive structures like schools and professions often increases the power of human capital vis-à-vis the owners of physical capital – an outcome that Marx did not predict. Moreover, to the degree that human capital is needed for innovations, it often gains the upper hand in the conflict between actors organizing physical and human capital.

The expansion of markets, and particularly labor markets, transforms human capital. Indeed, for most of human history, labor markets were non-existent or, at least, minimal. But, as markets differentiate and production increases, labor markets also expand. When human capital is relatively unskilled and in large supply, as it was in early industrialism, the labor market works to the disadvantage of human capital and decreases the likelihood that labor will be innovative. Corporate actors like unions organizing human capital may, however, become politically active and bring polity into regulating owners of physical capital in their relations with human capital. And, as noted above, when human capital is highly skilled and in short supply, labor markets work to its advantage; and the more human capital is to be innovative, the greater this advantage in labor markets.

One long-term evolutionary trend is the obvious decline of coupling human capital to machine physical capital. Information technologies, coupled with dynamics in world labor markets, often dramatically reduce this coupling within high-technology societies. Indeed, the very definition of post-industrial societies emphasizes the decline in the proportion of human capital working with machine-based, physical capital in factories. Moreover, increasingly human capital is able to control and, indeed, even own much of physical capital necessary for higher skilled labor – thereby giving human capital entrepreneurial functions in bringing technology, physical capital, and property to productive outputs.

## Property

For most of human evolutionary history, definitions of property were very limited, including a few individual items that could be carried and perhaps a collective sense among band members of “owning” a home range. Two other forces begin to change definitions of property: (1) the emergence of polity and law as institutional domains and (2) the development of markets. Once power becomes concentrated, this power is used to define property that belongs to those with power. Moreover, taxation denotes objects of value that can be taxed to support elites in the polity; and as polity develops into a state, taxation of property (employing definitions of what constitutes property) firmly establishes property as a key economic element. Moreover, as law as an institutional domain begins to differentiate, it codifies in enforceable legal codes the property rights of individuals and corporate actors.

Markets accelerate this process of defining property because what is exchanged in a market is an object that is given a value by its price (even if price is determined by the barter of non-monetary objects). As markets increasingly use money as the generalized medium of exchange and, by

extension, credit as well, this medium becomes the basis for assessing value. Moreover, free markets driven by profit-motives inevitably expand to meet individualized demand, thus increasing the number and variety of valuable objects and, hence, the definitions of property. Indeed, production becomes increasingly geared to generating objects that can be defined as property. Moreover, ever-more economic elements themselves become property. Physical capital is an obvious form of property, but as proprietary laws emerge, technology also becomes property, especially when profit-oriented markets exist. Human capital, however, goes in the opposite direction. True, slavery involved the conversion of labor power into property rights of slave holders; and other forms of servitude did much the same thing, but over time labor has become less likely to be defined as property, at least legally. And, in highly dynamic capitalist systems, about the only objects *not* defined as property that can be bought and sold in markets, are human beings – although, quasi-servitude relationships still exist all over the world that, in essence, make human labor property. Moreover, labor still must “sell itself” in a market as a “commodity,” often a great disadvantage; and so, labor power becomes a kind of property right for those who employ human capital.

For all the potential abuses of “property rights,” they are essential for a dynamic economy. When property is owned by the state and conflated with power – as in most state managed economies of the old Eastern Block and as is now occurring in some Latin American countries as they “nationalize” capital – this situation can decrease economic dynamism. Even in oil-rich nations, the ownership of this valued resource by political elites has often decreased productive activity in non-oil sectors. When property can be controlled by one set of corporate political actors, it tends to be used for privilege rather than for investment in production. Thus, expansion of the range of objects that can be defined as property, the number of actors that can hold property, and the exchange of property in markets all work to proliferate definitions of property and, in most cases unless other forces intervene, to increase the dynamism of production and distribution in a society.

### **Entrepreneurial Mechanism**

Any sociocultural system that affects the organization of technology, physical and human capital, and property systems is entrepreneurial (Parsons and Smelser 1956). Corporate bodies, cartels, tort laws, regulatory agencies, labor unions, courts, kinship norms, markets, credit systems, banks, roadways, communication networks are all entrepreneurial as long as they organize two or more elements of production. This broader conception is at odds

with how entrepreneurship is generally conceived, but the basic idea is the same: Entrepreneurs organize elements of production; and if we view corporate units (villages, families, kinship system, or profit-oriented businesses), laws, and monetary systems as entrepreneurial, then we gain better purchase on what really occurs in production.

Entrepreneurial processes operate at several different levels. One is at the structural level, in which corporate units organize gathering, producing, and distributing of resources, commodities, and services. Another is at the level of mediating relations among these productive units, as is done by markets, laws, and agencies within polity. And, a third is between productive units and other non-productive actors, as is the case with consumer markets and governmental taxing agencies. Let me review these three levels of entrepreneurship.

The nature of the structural units organizing production reflects the level of technology, capital formation, human capital, and property relations, but at the same time, these structural units place limits on these elements. For example, if bands, kin groups, or feudal estates are the major organizing units of production, each places a limit on the level of technological innovation, the amount of capital formation, the nature of human capital and its place in production, and the kinds of property systems that are available for production and, by extension, distribution. In contrast, if the structural units are profit-making companies, then there are fewer constraints and, indeed, incentives are created for technological innovation, accumulation of new forms of physical capital, new market-mediated labor relations, and ever-expanding definitions of property. Thus, some kinds of structural units tend to lock populations into productive regimes that change, if at all, only very slowly, but once markets mediate relations among economic and non-economic units, structural units are more likely to be self-transforming and, hence, more productive.

A second level of entrepreneurial mechanisms is the ways in which relations among productive units are organized. If productive units consume rather than exchange their outputs, this fact places limits on the types of relations that can exist. For instance, if a kin unit or feudal manner consumes all of its productive outputs, production will generally remain steady and not develop new technologies, expand physical capital, alter relations between physical and human capital, or re-define property systems. If, however, productive units exchange commodities and eventually services, new entrepreneurial mechanisms emerge under Spencerian selection pressures to regularize exchange relations. Tort laws, administrative agencies attached to polity, symbolic media like *money* and its extension into credit systems, and most importantly, markets have all evolved to facilitate exchanges among productive units. And once this capacity for mediating relations is in

place, it becomes the basis for its own expansion and development, thus setting into motion further increases in the level of production.

The third level of entrepreneurial mechanisms involves the relationship between productive units and members of the population. The relations among economic units, law, adjudicative and administrative agencies tied to polity, money, credit, and markets all operate to increase the volume and varieties of exchanges between productive and non-productive units. In so doing, the number of resource niches for innovation expands as actors have regularized avenues (via markets) to express preferences and, thereby, generate ever-more differentiated demands for new kinds of productive outputs.

### *An Elementary Principle on Production Dynamics*

2. The level of production in a society is a positive and multiplicative function of
  - A. The size of a population
  - B. The level of natural resources and access to these resources, with the latter being a positive territorial size, political control of this territory, and the conditions listed in C below
  - C. The multiplicative relationship among (1) the level of technology, (2) the level of physical capital formation, (3) the level of skill of human capital, (4) the diversity of property systems, and (5) the degree to which entrepreneurial mechanisms revolve around (a) productive units that exchange their outputs with other productive and non-productive units and individuals, (b) exchanges among units are regulated by tort law, adjudicative agencies of the law, and administrative agencies of polity, and (c) open and profit-oriented markets mediate exchanges through *money* as a generalized symbolic medium among all corporate units and between these units and individuals
  - D. The degree of consolidation of power in polity to (1) regulate the coinage and supply of money, (2) direct legal system responses to new entrepreneurial demands, (3) tax physical capital without depleting investment in economic activity, and (4) mediate between actors controlling physical capital and human capital

Production is thus related to the absolute size of a population, the level and degree of access to natural resources, and the interaction effects among the basic elements of production (technology, physical capital, human capital, property systems, and entrepreneurial mechanism). These interaction effects increase production and hence access to a wider variety of natural



resources when entrepreneurial mechanisms evidences the pattern summarized in 2-C(5a), 2-C(5b), and 2-C(5c). Finally, whether the dynamic potential in entrepreneurial mechanisms is unleashed depends upon the organization of power in the institutional domain of polity.

Without consolidation of the bases of power (coercive, administrative, incentive, and symbolic), there is insufficient power to coordinate and regulate activities within an economy. Yet, if polity is too centralized, it tends to over-regulate production through restrictive administrative structures that tax productive outputs to sustain elite privilege and that lower the autonomy of law to regulate social relations. The result is that polity depletes the level of physical capital (and directs it to elite privilege), creates disincentives for new technologies, and constrains the inherent dynamism in free markets. For example, feudalism operated for many centuries as a form of polity that restricted production; similarly, after an initial burst of increased productivity in its early years, the old Soviet Union began to stagnate as it choked off incentives for technological innovation (outside of the military) and transformed markets into distribution depots selling inferior goods from corporate units owned by the state. Thus, the profile in the bases of power that are consolidated and the level of centralization of power around these bases have large effects on the level of production in a society.

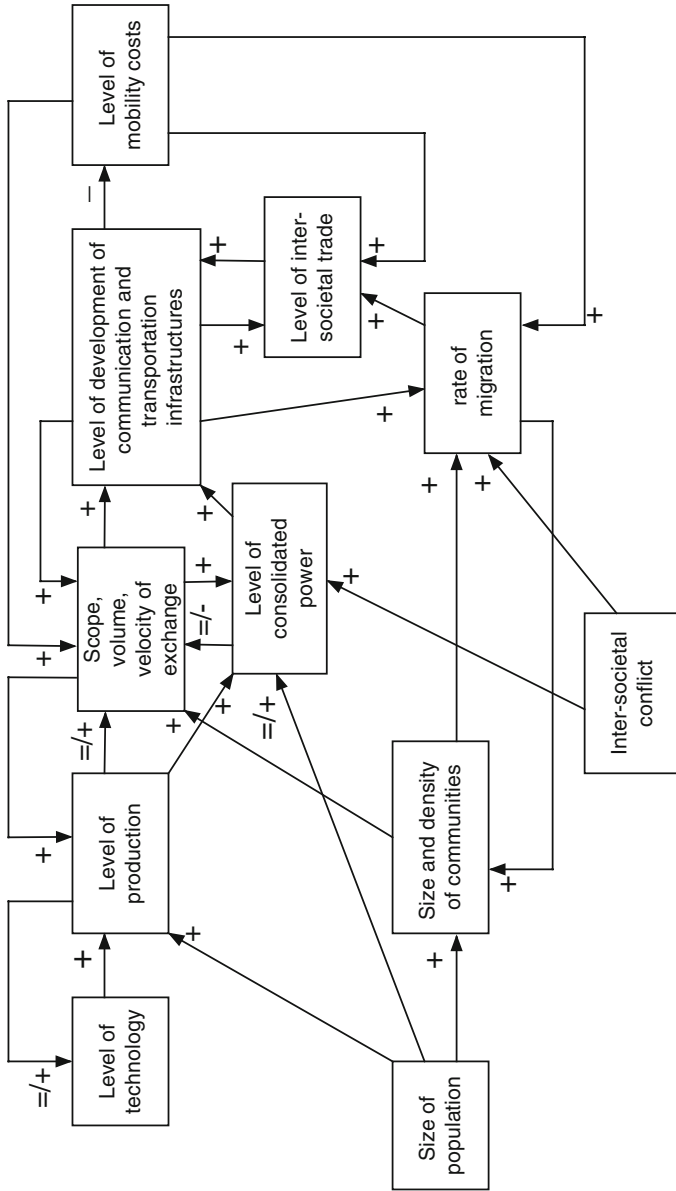
## **Distribution as a Macrodynamic Force**

Distribution is a force that is under-theorized in sociology. This situation is rather surprising because, among early sociological theorists, Karl Marx, Herbert Spencer, Max Weber, Vilfredo Pareto, and Georg Simmel all theorized about market dynamics as they interact with sociocultural formations. Moreover, Spencer provided a broader view of distribution in his analysis of infrastructures as well as markets. Thus, following Spencer, the two elements of distribution as a macrodynamic force are (1) exchanges of commodities and services in markets and (2) movement of resources, commodities, people, and information across infrastructures. Let me first examine infrastructures.

### ***Distributive Infrastructures***

Figure 3.7 outlines the dynamics of distributive infrastructures. The direct and indirect arrows flowing into the level of development of communication and transportation infrastructures are key variables. One causal path is the





**Fig. 3.7** The dynamics of distributive infrastructures

cascading effects of increasing production and expanding scope, volume, and velocity of exchange (in markets) as these place pressure on actors to expand infrastructures to accommodate new levels of exchange. As these infrastructures are built, they have a reverse causal effect on exchange, which, in turn, feeds back to increase production; and once this cycle of causal effects is initiated, it continues until market oscillations or external geopolitical events intervene in market dynamics and infrastructural development. The result of the interplay between markets and infrastructural development is a reduction in mobility costs for moving resources, goods, people, and information about a territory (Hawley 1986); and as these costs come down, they too increase the scope, volume, and velocity of exchanges. Technology has a direct effect on mobility costs; and once a threshold level of market growth and infrastructural development exists, selection pressures for new communications and transportation technologies are generated, leading actors to develop new technologies and physical capital to build more efficient infrastructures.

There are other causal sequences outside the economy proper that also increase infrastructural development. One is external trade (Braudel 1979 [1982]). Trade will always increase selection pressures on actors in markets; and external trade also extends the reach of markets, adding to the volume of exchanges within a society. As infrastructures are built in response to demands for the import and export of not only finished goods but also material resources, they encourage even more external trade and, hence, infrastructural development.

Another set of causal influences on infrastructural development is demographic. As populations grow, the size and density in communities increase; and as communities become larger and more dense, rates of exchange within and between communities expand, thereby putting pressure to build new infrastructures. In fact, as urban-rural differentiation occurs, and as urban populations grow, markets and infrastructure for moving goods into urban areas expand, and once in place, they encourage further urbanization. And, if population growth and urbanization increase, often to the point of requiring external trade with other societies to sustain these urban populations, infrastructural development will accelerate.

Power as it becomes institutionalized in polity also has large effects on infrastructural development. One causal sequence comes from external conflict in which polity develops infrastructures to better mobilize resources to meet the challenges posed by potential or actual conflict with external enemies. Moreover, as polity mobilizes resources, it often places increased demands on production that, in turn, increase market exchanges which create additional pressures to expand infrastructures. But, this relationship is curvilinear because

if polity seeks to control production for purely military ends, production is skewed away from domestic sectors, with the result that less pressure is put on markets and market-related infrastructures. External conflict also can affect rates of migration among societies at war, with the consequence that pressures are put on infrastructures for movement of people across territories or, alternatively, to limiting their movements into a territory.

In sum, then, distributive infrastructures are a response to selection pressures from other macrodynamic forces. Distributive infrastructures are constructed by actors responding to selection pressures from population, production, distribution, and regulation; and as actors innovate and build out communication and transportation infrastructures that reduce mobility costs, these infrastructures have reverse causal effects not only on distribution through market exchanges but also on demographic forces (population growth and migration), power, and production. Yet, compared the dynamism of markets, infrastructures are not as transformational, as I outline below.

### ***Markets and Exchange Dynamics as Driving Forces***

Randall Collins (1990) has argued that “markets are the engine of historical change,” echoing Fernand Braudel’s (1979 [1982]) view that trade and commerce transformed European societies. Earlier, Max Weber and Georg Simmel provided important leads for contemporary theorizing on how money, as it becomes the generalized medium of markets, has transformational effects on societies and inter-societal systems. Let me pause to outline their models, and then return to Collins’ and Braudel’s more recent work.

#### **Weber’s Model on Markets, Money, and Exchange**

Figure 3.8 delineates Weber’s analysis in *Economy and Society* (1922 [1968]) on the “logical categories of economic action.” Contained in this analysis is a surprisingly dynamic model on money as a “rational” medium of exchange (compared to non-rational media such as “tradition”) and as a force in the transformations of markets and broader patterns of social organization (Turner 1991). As money penetrates exchanges, it encourages the development of credit, which, along with money itself, increases the capacity for calculations of utilities. Credit, money, and calculation of utilities increase the velocity and volume of market transactions, which, in turn, change the ratio of rationally oriented (for profit) to non-rational productive units. As ever-more productive units calculate costs and potential profits in

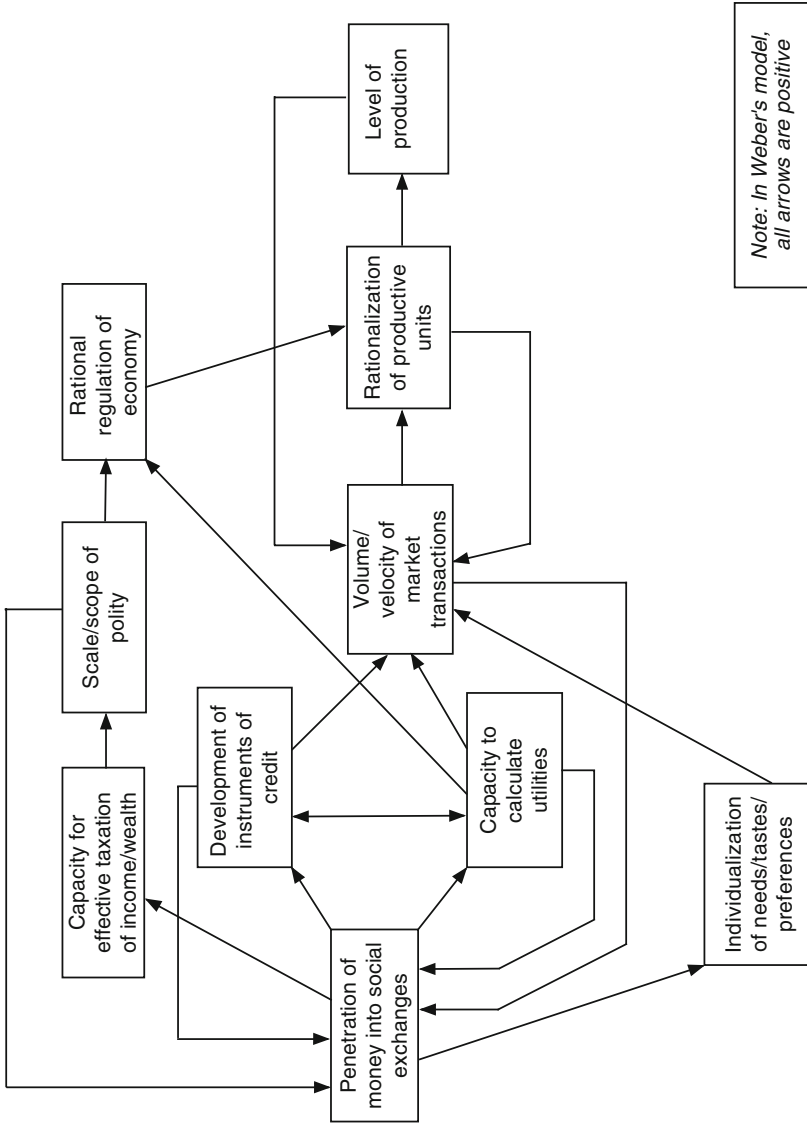


Fig. 3.8 Weber's analysis of money and markets

markets, the overall level of production increases and has a reverse causal effect on the volume and velocity of market exchanges. This line of argument is, of course, fairly obvious, but there are some additional ideas that are critical to understanding exchange dynamics.

One important causal path runs from the penetration of money into markets to the individualization of demand. As long as individuals and corporate actors were restricted by barter of one good for another, exchange was slow and cumbersome, but once actors possess a generalized symbolic medium like *money* to express their preferences without the restrictions of barter, market demand becomes increasingly differentiated, and exchanges can now occur much more rapidly. The result is a market revolution where money and eventually credit increase the scale of exchange that, in turn, increases production that feeds forward to accelerate exchanges in markets. Thus, money creates a new kind of orientation among actors that has dramatic effects on exchange distribution and production.

Another critical outcome of the penetration of money into exchanges is how money transforms the basis of power. With money, taxation becomes more effective and efficient which then increases the scale and scope of polity; and as polity comes to rely on money to finance its operations, it too becomes more rational in its regulation of economic activity. As polity does so, its actions increase the overall ratio of rational to non-rational productive units; for now polity has a vested interest in taxing productive units oriented to profits calculated by the measuring stick provided by money. All of the arrows in the model outlined in Fig. 3.8 are positive, thus emphasizing that once money is coined and widely used in transactions, it has the capacity to change not only market distribution but also the orientations of actors and the actions of polity.

### **Simmel's Model of Money and Social Transformation**

Figure 3.9 extracts key insights into the dynamics of markets from Simmel's analysis in *The Philosophy of Money* (1907 [1978]) where he outlines the consequences of money-based exchanges on the form of social relations and, indirectly, on the macrostructure of a society. Like many theorists of the classical period, Simmel was concerned with the changing nature of individuals' attachments to groups in the face of increasing size, rationalization, differentiation, and urbanization of "modern" societies. He approached the question of change by recognizing that standards of discourse and media of exchange had become more "impersonal." Money, intellect, logic, and law were all being inserted into social relations during modernization; and

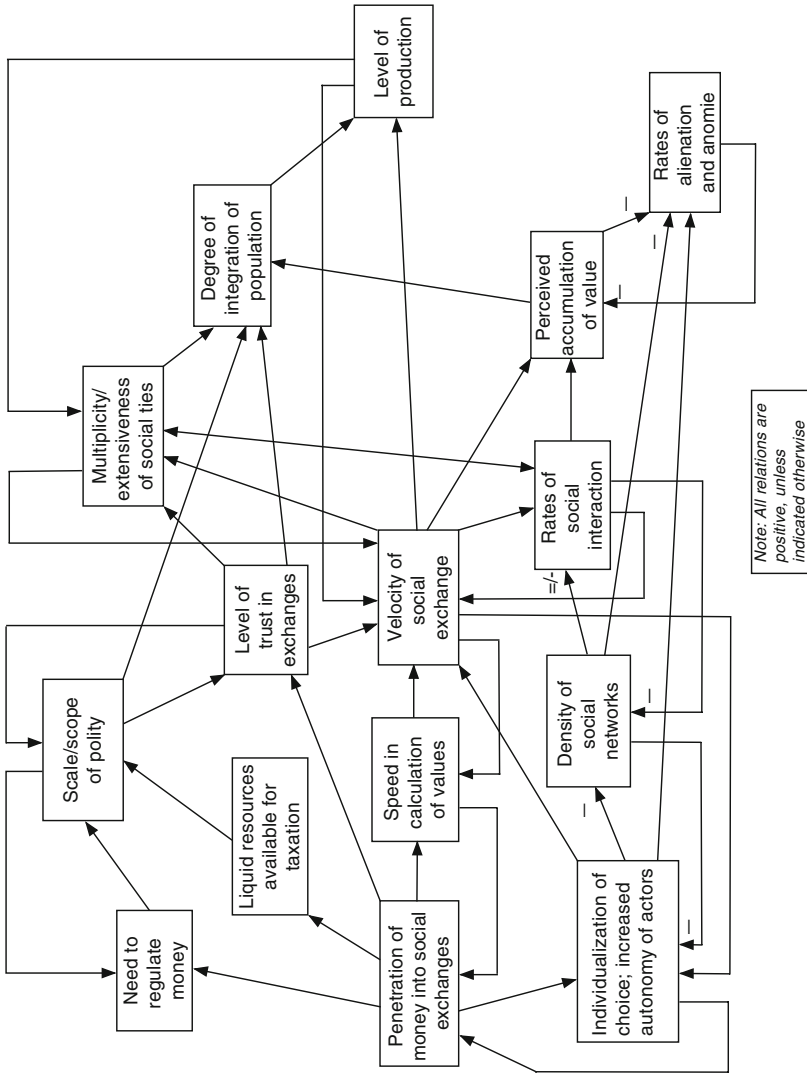


Fig. 3.9 Simmel's analysis of the effects of money and markets on social relations

while these increase personal freedom and autonomy, they diminish the more enduring attachments provided by tradition, religion, custom, habit, and emotional bonds that had been the hallmark of pre-modern societies. Like others of his generation, Simmel tended to romanticize traditional societies, but like Weber, he recognized that the widespread use of money changes individual and corporate actors' orientations and behaviors. Money allows for rational calculations, devoid of the emotions and attachments provided by cohesive groups, longstanding traditions, and particularistic cultures. Yet, to counter Marx's predictions of revolution by the urban proletariat and Weber's dreary portrayal of the steel cage of rationality, Simmel emphasized that the penetration of money into social relations can have positive consequences for individuals and societies.

Like Weber, Simmel argued that the widespread use of money in exchange increases the liquid resources available for taxation by polity, but he adds an important dynamic: polity's interest in securing a stable influx of resources leads polity to consolidate power so as to maintain the value of money, causing an inevitable increase in the use of power to mint money and regulate its use (Simmel 1907 [1978]). In so doing, polity becomes ever-more engaged in integrative activities in a society. In fact, the regulation of money creates a new basis of trust. If the purchasing power of money is sustained over time – that is, inflation is avoided through monetary policies of polity – a diffuse sense of trust in polity emerges, thereby giving it a new basis of legitimization; and as polity's basis of legitimization relies increasingly on monetary policy, actors in government regulate money and exchange processes. Conversely, inflation de-legitimizes polity and undermines the diffuse sense of trust created when the value of money is maintained.

Money also increases the potential range of social ties that individuals and corporate units can have. With money as the medium by which exchanges occur or as the basis for establishing social relations (through dues and fees), older criteria of membership – ethnicity, religion, tradition, and the like – are subverted, giving actors more options to form more ties. These ties will not be as strong as those based upon more particularistic media and criteria of membership, but money still gives individual an increased range of options. Moreover, when actors are linked together in many weak but cross-cutting ties in diverse and overlapping networks, a new basis of societal integration is created – an argument that anticipated Mark Granovetter's (1973) famous analysis of “the strength of weak ties.”

These integrative dynamics are accelerated by increases in the volume and velocity of exchanges made possible by money. Not only can actors expand the range of resources exchanged by the use of money, they can also

use markets to purchase access to networks of actors where they can secure additional resources of value. And once access to networks can be gained through markets, ever-more social units use markets to secure members. Thus, markets become increasingly involved in the distribution of services and opportunities to form affiliations (for a fee).

Like Weber, Simmel also emphasized that the penetration of money in social relations causes individualization of tastes and preferences because, over time, markets will expand and differentiate to meet demands generated by individual preferences. And, as markets respond to these demands, they encourage individualism. At the same time, individualization also gives individuals freedom, choice, and personal autonomy, although at the price of breaking down dense networks. With the breakdown of many dense and often restrictive networks limiting options for individuals, rates of interaction increase; and to the degree that these interactions are rewarding, individuals' sense of accumulated value increases. Markets have these same value-enhancing effects because, as individuals give up money to purchase goods, services, and memberships in markets, they generally procure objects and services that are valuable and rewarding. And, as markets cater to differentiated preferences, individuals are consistently able to use their money to realize a sense of value – which, in turn, increases their attachments to market systems and society.

Simmel recognized, however, that individualism, choice, and freedom coupled with decreasing density of social networks could all increase alienation and anomie, but he also stressed that the accumulating sense of aggregate value from multiple relations of choice and from securing individualized preferences in market can mitigate, if not eliminate, these potential pathologies. Still, removing self from dense networks revolving around non-monetary symbolic media and particularistic cultures allows individuals to purchase objects of self expression that are too easily bought, sold, or discarded; and as post-modern theorists were to emphasize later in the twentieth century, this instability or fragmentation of self and the objects defining self can be alienating.

In the end, however, Simmel saw markets and money as liberating and, hence, as a positive outcome for individual and corporate actors. Money offers more options and freedoms to realize preferences, and it opens up new opportunities for self expression, while providing a new, more universalistic basis of trust in the value of money and its purchasing power. Moreover, the symbolic basis of power of polity increasingly comes to rely on the purchasing power of money, and thus, polity becomes more likely to act in ways that maintain this new basis of legitimacy; and, in so doing, polity promotes individual choice, freedom, and well being that can come with the ability to chose how money is spent.



## *The Rise and Expansion of Dynamic Markets*

### **Fernand Braudel on Commerce in Early Modern Europe**

In his history of the material life of Europe, Fernand Braudel (1977, 1979 [1982]) outlined the transforming effects of markets. Braudel argued that markets evolve from lower to ever-higher levels. *Lower-level markets* are successively structured around (a) person-to-person barter, (b) person-to-person exchanges using money, (c) peddlers making goods sold for money and, at times, on credit, and (d) shopkeepers selling goods that they did not make for money and on credit. *Higher-level markets* are successively structured around (a) fairs or relatively stable places where higher volumes of goods could be bought and sold with money and on credit by large numbers of sellers, (b) trade centers where brokers and bourgeoisie sell goods, credit, and other financial instruments, and (c) private markets where merchants engage in high-risk and high-profit trade involving long chains of exchange between producers and buyers.

As markets have historically evolved toward their highest level of formation – that is, private high-risk trade among long chains of buyers and sellers – market collapse becomes more likely. Collapse of higher-order markets would then reverberates down the hierarchy of markets. The more money and financial instruments are employed in high-risk exchange, the more likely are speculative markets to collapse, and the more extensive will the collapse become – as has been all too evident, for example, in recent years with the collapse of the markets for home mortgages (and all those other equities connected to mortgages) in the United States. For Braudel, financial instruments encourage speculation in the search for high profits, increasing the probability of higher-level market collapse but also increasing the likelihood of collapse that reverberates across the economy.

Markets could not develop to their highest level, Braudel believed, without a polity that had (1) consolidated control of territories and markets in these territories into a coherent system of trade, (2) facilitated trade with other societies through its own geopolitical activities, and (3) resisted the temptation to usurp surplus capital for its own political needs, interests, and privilege. For Braudel, the first polity to meet these three conditions was that of the English in the early 1800s – thereby jump-starting modern-day industrial capitalism.

There is a broader sociological model of market dynamics contained in Braudel's historical descriptions, as is outlined in Fig. 3.10. I have added causal chains to Braudel's explicit descriptions, but I think that these additions follow from his intent and are implied in his more historical accounts

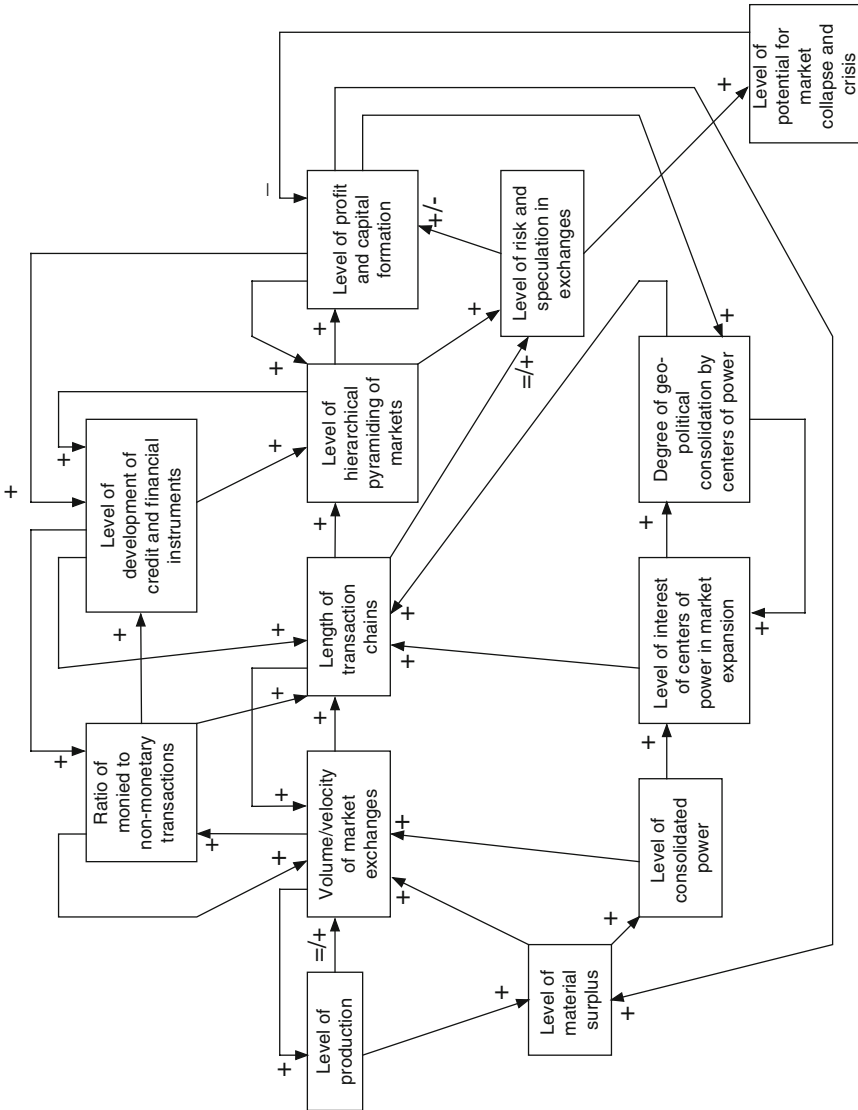


Fig. 3.10 Braudel's analysis of markets and macrodynamics

of commerce in early modern Europe. There is the basic causal chain across the middle of the figure, beginning with production that set into motion increased market volume and velocity, length of transaction chains mediated by markets, hierarchical pyramiding of markets involved in ever-more high-risk speculation, and high levels of profit and capital formation. As this causal chains unfolds, money is increasingly introduced into market transactions, as are credit and other financial instruments for pooling capital. These instruments are then commodified in higher-order markets; and as markets become hierarchical, these instruments become speculative, with the result that collapse and crisis become ever-more likely. Moreover, increased production and profit in high-level markets also generate the material surplus to support polity as an autonomous institutional domain; and as power is consolidated and used in geopolitical activities, the length of transaction chains grows and systems of high-order markets can stretch across long reaches of territory.

Actors in polity thus come to have a vested interest in high-profit markets but this interest is tempered by the potential for collapse from high-risk speculation. Depending upon how the state responds to these risks, collapse of markets can be accelerated, mitigated, or prevented. For example, if the state creates a coercive wing, like that in Venice, to sustain long-distance trade, market collapse is less likely; or if the state engages in conquest of its trading partners, while not taxing too extensively those who have been conquered, long-distance trade can be stabilized for considerable periods of time. But, if the state allows private markets using speculative instruments to operate without regulation, then collapse is inevitable as markets extend across territories and where untaxed profits encourage ever-more speculative activity – as has been evident in the world markets over the last few years.

Yet, these dynamics tend to be not only self-escalating to the point of collapse but also self-resurrecting, although as the collapse works its way down to the chain of lower-level markets, it may take considerable time for higher-level markets to re-emerge. Such was the case for early modern Europe and the “Dark Ages” after the breakdown of the Roman Empire, and it is certainly has been the case in the modern world of the twenty-first century, where market collapse on a more global scale is, perhaps, just a matter of time.

### **Randall Collins on Meta-Markets and Change**

Randall Collins (1990) has followed Braudel’s lead but placed extra emphasis on the emergence of meta-markets, which are markets that trade the medium of exchange in lower-order markets. For example, if money is the

medium of exchange in lower-level markets, money becomes the commodity exchanged in highly speculative international money markets. As markets come to distribute ever-more goods and services, they expand laterally and differentiate into many types of markets. As this horizontal differentiation occurs, there is also a tendency for markets to differentiate vertically, with the result that the media of exchange in various types of markets – whether these media are money, mortgages, insurance, futures, options, bonds, or stocks – become the commodity exchanged in meta-markets. These meta-markets are inevitably more speculative, and particularly so in what is now called “derivatives” where speculative investments in diverse meta-markets are co-mingled – thereby compounding the level of speculation and risk. Still, as markets differentiate horizontally and vertically, they become engines for social transformation, along several dimensions.

First, production is increasingly directed by market activity, compared to early market differentiation that was driven by expansion of production. Second, polity is always implicated in market activity not only because it depends upon the incomes and wealth created by markets for its tax base to finance its operations, but also because polity is inevitably pulled into markets to regulate potential abuses of meta-markets from over-speculation. Collins’ implicit model is outlined in Fig. 3.11.

### ***A General Model of Distributive Exchange Dynamics***

We can now splice together the ideas of Weber, Simmel, Braudel, and Collins into a more robust – though rather complicated – composite model of exchange dynamics. Figure 3.12 outlines the direct, indirect, and reverse causal chains affecting the level of market differentiation and exchange within markets using generalized media and financial instruments. The causal chain begins with increases in production under population pressure that, in turn, leads actors to develop new technologies, forms of capital, labor skills, and property systems. As production expands, new kinds of corporate units are created, but more importantly, markets begin to use money and to differentiate, first horizontally and then vertically as money and financial instruments for raising capital for production become subject to speculation in meta-markets. Expansion of markets allows for individualization of demand, and vice versa, in an escalating cycle. Markets generate income and profits that can be taxed to sustain polity which, through law, expands definitions of property that, in turn, can be marketed and taxed. All of these processes alter cultural beliefs around “classical liberalism” emphasizing that markets should be allowed to operate without undo governmental



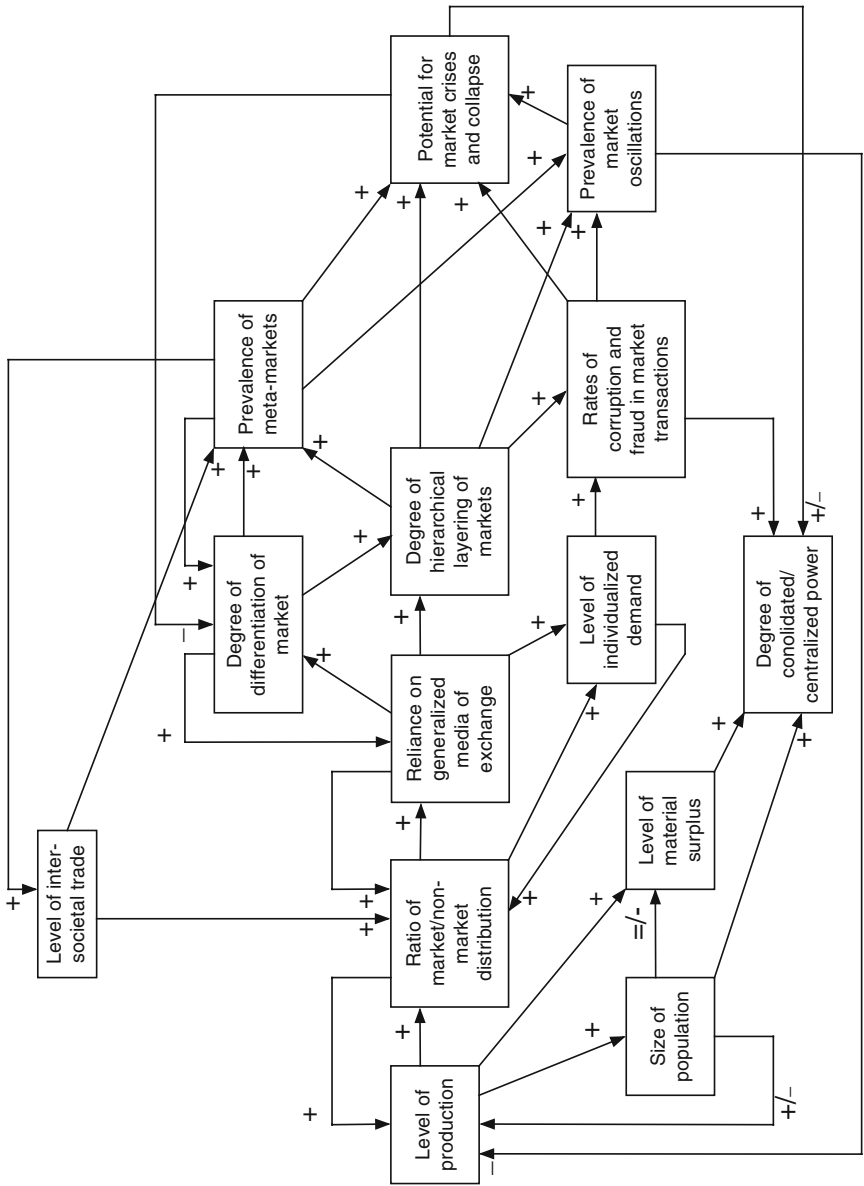


Fig. 3.12 Dynamics of exchange distribution

regulation. Yet, the threat or actual collapse of meta-markets almost always causes polity to enter markets in order to regulate the money supply and the use of overly speculative instruments, to curtail abuses of labor, to contain fraud and corruption, and to control other deceptive market practices. When polity does not effectively intervene, market collapse becomes more likely, thereby eroding its tax base and legitimacy.

Thus, exchange distribution becomes an increasingly powerful macrodynamic force in human societies. In the present era, where markets and money are constantly thematicized in media and elsewhere, it is easy to forget that this centrality of markets is relatively recent. For most of human history, markets did not exist or were at the lowest level of person-to-person barter, and even as they expanded beyond this simple base, other macrodynamic forces directed the formation of institutional domains, stratification systems, societies, and even inter-societal systems (where warfare was more common than trade). The key breakthrough was the coinage of a stable money supply protected by the state, and then the extension of credit, so that markets could expand, differentiate, and thereby increase the volume and velocity of exchange. Once this threshold was crossed and sustained, distribution became an ever-more important force in the differentiation of institutional domains and formation of classes in the stratification system. Inter-societal trade could increase, transforming inter-societal systems from those evolving around political alliances and shifting patterns of warfare to systems built from markets allowing for high volume trade across ever-longer distances (see Chap. 8). Domestic and international systems of trade could not, however, have grown without infrastructural development; and so, market growth creates selection pressures for new investments of technology and capital in distributive infrastructures. Contained in this complex web of interrelated causal connections resides a relatively simple principle of distribution as a macrodynamic force.

### *An Elementary Principle on Distribution Dynamics*

3. The level of distribution in a society is a positive and multiplicative function of
  - A. The level of development of distributive infrastructures which, in turn, is a positive and additive function of
    1. Size of a population
    2. Size of territory inhabited by a population
    3. Level of urbanization of a population in dense settlements
    4. Level of production
    5. Rates of domestic and inter-societal migrations

6. Level of external exchange with other societies
  7. Degree to which consolidated power is devoted to using taxes as capital for infrastructural development and for control of domestic territories
- B. The scale, volume, and velocity of exchange which, in turn, is a multiplicative and positive function of
1. Size of the population
  2. Degree of urbanization of the population
  3. Level of production
  4. Degree to which money, credit, and financial instruments are used in market transactions
  5. Degree to which preferences among actors become individualized
  6. Degree of horizontal and vertical differentiation of markets
  7. Level of inter-societal exchange
  8. Level of consolidated power and degree to which polity regulates the supply of money and the potential of over-extension of credit and over-speculative use of financial instruments in market transactions

As is evident in this simple principle, the development of infrastructures and level of exchange transactions are multiplicatively related: increase in one accelerates the expansion of the other, and vice versa, in increasing the overall level of distribution in a society. Such is particularly likely to be the case when basic communication and transportation infrastructures are in place and when markets use money, credit, and financial instruments. From these two bases, the interaction effects between infrastructures and market exchanges accelerate, up to the point where markets collapse occurs or capital is not available to build additional infrastructures.

For infrastructures, large populations in extended territories generate demands for distributive infrastructures; and the more urbanized a population becomes, the greater is this demand since resources must be moved from rural to urban areas. Production alone, or in conjunction with population growth, will increase urbanization and force the development of infrastructure to move the greater volume of goods, resources, and people across a territory; and as urbanization increases, markets selling a wide variety of goods and services to urban dwellers dramatically increases the level of production that, in turn, leads to further development of infrastructures. If there are high rates of immigration, urban centers often become magnets for new migrants, thus creating selection pressures to move immigrants across territories or to keep them from immigrating in the first place. Trade with other societies has an even greater effect on infrastructural development to move imports and exports across territory, and in fact, migration often increases only if the new infrastructures for inter-societal trade create conduits across societal borders to urban areas.



Critical to infrastructural development is the pattern of consolidated power in a society. If power is sufficiently consolidated and used to implement a taxing system that is then devoted to expenditures on public works, as opposed to elite privilege or monument-building, infrastructures are likely to grow. Similarly, whether in the context of external threat or simple control of borders and activities within these borders, polity will generally use tax revenues to build out infrastructures that will allow for control of its territories. However, if chronic warfare exists, infrastructural development will be devoted to mobilizing and moving military resources across this infrastructure; and over time, these structures will prove less useful in distribution of commodities and services in domestic markets – thereby reducing the multiplicative relationship between infrastructural development and market exchanges.

## **Regulation as a Macrodynamic Force**

Regulation revolves around coordination and control of actors in a society and, at times, relations between societies. Regulation always revolves around power, or the capacity of one or more actors to dictate and constrain the actions of other actors. Regulation also depends upon the differentiation of symbol systems or culture along several key dimensions. Let me begin with the power dimension.

There are, I believe, two fundamental dimensions of power: (1) consolidation of its four bases and (2) centralization of these bases (Turner 1995, 2003). These are separate but interconnected dimensions of power; and as selection pressures for greater coordination and control emerge, actors find themselves under pressure to mobilize various bases of power and to concentrate decision-making power in the hands of a smaller set of agents. As these pressures mount and as actors are able to consolidate at least some of the bases of power, an increasingly autonomous polity as an institutional domain begins to differentiate from kinship and, later, from other domains. To understand the dynamics of regulation, then, it is useful to begin by outlining consolidation and, then, centralization of power.

### ***The Consolidation of Power***

Drawing from a variety of conceptualizations (Etzioni 1961; Collins 1975; Mann 1986; Blalock 1989; Turner 1995), four bases of power eventually appear in human societies as they evolve: (1) coercive, (2) administrative, (3) material incentives, and (4) symbolic. Each of these bases is examined below.

## **The Coercive Base of Power**

This base of power relies upon the capacity of one actor to physically force another to engage in particular actions. Actual physical force may not actually be used; often the mere threat of coercion pushes actors to behave in certain ways. But, if threats cannot be backed up by physical force, then the coercive base of power is not strong. One response to selection pressures from regulation is for some actors to mobilize their coercive capacities to control the actions of others, but if the latter can mobilize counter-coercion, then, again, the coercive base of power is not strong. For coercion to be effective as a regulatory force, it must be concentrated and centralized in the hands of relatively few actors who, under the highest level of coercive power, have a monopoly on its use (Weber 1922 [1968]). As long as other actors can also mobilize counter-coercive power, this base of power does not effectively operate to meet selection pressures from regulation.

As power is institutionalized in polity as an emerging institutional domain, actors in polity seek to gain a monopoly on the legitimate use of coercion, although acts of non-governmental coercion among individuals and even corporate units generally persist. And the more widespread the distribution of coercive capacities in non-governmental actors across a population, the more tenuous is the basis of coercive power. When polity relies exclusively on its coercive base, however, resentments build among those subject to its use; and even where polity has a decisive coercive advantage, counter-power is often mobilized. Moreover, the reliance on a coercive base of power is costly in terms monitoring conformity to demands and for bringing coercive sanctions to bear on those not conforming to dictates from centers of political power. Coercion is most effective when it is rarely used, when it is available if needed, but nonetheless is used only episodically and strategically. Indeed, a polity relying on heavy use of coercion typically has only a tenuous hold on power in the long run.

## **The Administrative Base of Power**

Power must be administered through corporate units that implement the decisions of those holding power. This administrative base must also monitor conformity to directives and sanction those actors that do not abide by decisions. Because power regulates and coordinates through an administrative structure, this structure inevitably becomes more than an instrument for implementation of decisions by political elites; administration becomes, itself, a base of power, often regulating and controlling beyond, or even in violation of, decisions made by political leaders. Depending upon the internal

structure of administrative units – that is, their pervasiveness across territories, their patterns of articulation with each other, their incumbents' training, their efficiency, their reach and functions, and their culture – the administration of power will vary, as will the degree to which this administrative system constitutes an independent base of power.

All power depends upon this administrative base, and depending upon the degree of consolidation of the other bases – that is, coercive, incentive, and symbolic – the structure and culture of this base will vary. For example, when the coercive base of power is high, the administrative base tends to be hierarchical and engaged in wide ranging monitoring and sanctioning activities, whereas when the material incentive base is high, administrative structures are less hierarchical, less extensive, and less likely to engage in direct monitoring and sanctioning.

### **The Material Incentive Base of Power**

Actors with power are often able to use material incentives to reward conformity or punish non-conformity to dictates. The material incentive base of power depends upon the capacities of polity to tax material wealth and, then, use wealth as incentives to encourage or discourage various lines of conduct. Typically, the material incentive base of power is greatest in societies with differentiated markets and rational taxation systems. Yet, in coercive-administrative structures of power, such as feudal political systems or state dictatorships, patronage is often employed as a material incentive base of power to control the actions of key actors in a society. Even in pre-literate societies, where the leader was required to engage in gift-giving of the resources that he (and it was typically a he) usurped from the population operated as a kind of incentive system to keep members of the population loyal to, and willing to follow the directives of, political leaders (Johnson and Earle 2000). The most effective use of material incentives comes when polity regulates without the need for coercion and tight administration but, instead, generates a series of incentives that reward actors for desired actions which, if successful, typically lead to actors' attachments to the symbols legitimating polity and, if highly successful, the more general values and other institutional ideologies of a society.

### **The Symbolic Base of Power**

When individual and collective actors are committed to common symbols that also legitimate centers of power, this symbolic base increases the likelihood that actors will follow decisions and abide by mandates by those holding other bases of power. By making appeals to the moral codes contained in

values and institutional ideologies, actors can be “persuaded” to engage in and/or avoid particular types of activities. Without a symbolic base of power, where there is consensus over values, meta-ideologies, and ideologies, power will tend to rely more on the coercive and administrative bases and less on the material incentive base. However, when cultural symbols are highly restrictive and demand very high levels of conformity, the need to monitor and enforce conformity to cultural codes will generally lead to a close coupling of coercive, administrative, and symbolic bases of power – as is often the case in theocracies. When the material incentive base of power is high, with a corresponding decrease in reliance on the coercive and administrative bases, consensus over symbols and the symbolic base of power becomes all the more important to centers of power seeking to control and regulate the actions of individual and corporate actors.

Reliance on symbols, however, is a double-edge sword because evaluative symbols carry moral expectations not only on those subject to power but also on those wielding power. When centers of power violate the very symbols to which non-political actors are committed, legitimacy is eroded when actors in polity do not abide by these symbols. Over time, counter movements against polity may emerge and force centers of power to rely upon coercive and administrative bases of power. Failure to live up to the ideals of legitimating symbols, then, is always a volatile source of delegitimization of holders of power, thereby decreasing their capacity to coordinate and control other actors or, alternatively, forcing them to rely upon the coercive and administrative bases of power.

For the consolidation of power to be effective in responding to selection pressures from regulation, all four bases of power must be consolidated to some degree. The nature of the selection pressures also has a large effect of on *which* bases are mobilized. For example, if internal threats from segments of a population or external conflicts with another society are the sources of selection pressures from regulation, then the coercive base will be consolidated to a greater degree than other bases, although unifying symbols from the symbolic base, administration of coercion, and incentives for coercive mobilization to engage in conflict would all make the coercive base that much more effective. Conversely, if selection pressures come from market crises, then the administrative base coupled with the use of material incentives are more likely to be consolidated, although, once again, the other bases revolving around unifying moral codes and coercion for those who violate them in markets would increase the capacity of centers of power to coordinate and control actors in markets. In the end, the most effective consolidation of power is when coercion remains in the background and is only strategically used, when administration is efficient, moderate and non-corrupt, when there is consensus over evaluative cultural symbols, and when incentives

extend across the entire population and are equally distributed to relevant classes of actors.

The consolidation of power generally comes from moderately intense selection pressures emanating from population, production, distribution, and reproduction. As the population grows, demands for coordination and control increase; and as actors respond to these demands, they begin to mobilize different bases of power. Just which bases are mobilized first and which come to dominate other bases depends upon the empirical conditions of population growth. When growth comes from conquest or migrations, coercion and administration will generally be more prominent bases than material incentives or symbols. When growth occurs among homogeneous populations revealing consensus over cultural symbols, then the symbolic base will become prominent and, if possible, used to legitimate the mobilization and coercive bases of power. But, whatever the exact historical conditions of population growth, it forces actors to create new mechanisms for regulation and these almost always involve the consolidation of several bases of power.

Population activates selection pressures for increased production and distribution, thereby having an indirect effect on the consolidation of power in response to demands for coordination and control of new productive and distributive structures and social relations generated by these structures. As production increases, the economic surplus can be taxed to support coercive and administrative bases of power, while potentially being used for material incentives or patronage. These incentives and the coercive-administrative bases of power meting them out are often legitimated by symbols, but these symbols may come from the culture of other institutional domains, such as religion, and hence not prove stable or effective in the long run.

As escalating production generates selection pressures from distribution as a force, leading to the growth and differentiation of markets using money, credit, and financial instruments, the resulting rise in surplus wealth can support all bases of power. Yet, much of this wealth is often squandered on patronage to elites and on military adventurism, both of which expand the administrative and coercive bases of power, which in turn, limit the use of material incentives to elite sectors of the population, while eroding the symbolic base of power as inequalities increase and, especially so, when material wealth is hoarded by elites or used to finance external military engagements. Still, at some point during societal evolution, market expansion and differentiation create pressures on centers of power to regulate market crises and abuses through the administrative base of power, often through law as an emerging institutional domain, backed up by potential coercion of those violating administrative and/or legal rules.

Moreover, once free, profit-oriented markets become widespread, the material incentive base of power can expand beyond patronage to elites. At first, select actors in key sectors of the market, such those involved in the production of capital goods and involved in finance, are favored, but over time, subsidies can be extended to larger segments of the population. Sometimes these subsidies are issued through the tax systems as credits and deductions that place more money in individuals' hands and that enrich the financial capabilities of corporate actors. As this money is spent, often in targeted sectors of differentiated markets, polity can indirectly subsidize key activities in a society. As the coercive and administrative bases are increasingly supplemented by the material incentive base, the legitimating symbols of power rely less on ideologies from external institutional domains like religion and more on the ideologies of law or highly secular ideologies revolving around maintaining the value of money and around a civic culture extolling the virtues of polity as the guardian of "well being" for individual and collective actors. Even when power is built around coercive and administrative bases of power, it is often possible to use material incentives when there is great wealth, as was the case, for example, in the United Emirates in the late 1990s and early years of the new century. Furthermore, when these material incentives to stimulate economic growth are legitimated by more secular symbols emphasizing the beneficence of political elites, this combination of material incentives and secular symbols can provide a very strong base of power, unless material incentives have created "market bubbles," as was also the case for the United Emirates.

With the expansion of markets globally, the material incentive and symbolic bases of power become more prominent compared to early forms of market expansion. Indeed, early market differentiation was often controlled by the administrative base of power and protected by the coercive base; and such is still the case, but at the same time, there is more balance among the four bases of power in advanced market-oriented post-industrial societies. And, with globalization, there are pressures to "liberalize" the polity away from over-use of coercion although, as is the situation with China or Singapore today, the coercive-administrative bases of power may persist – at least for the present.

### ***The Centralization of Power***

As power is consolidated on any base, and particularly on its coercive and administrative bases, some degree of centralization of power occurs. For example, legitimating symbols are often focused on higher-ranking political

figures and offices; coherent and effective administration of power demands hierarchies of authority that link up with elite decision-makers; manipulation of material incentives needs central figures to do the manipulation and distribution of incentives; and coercion is always organized into a hierarchy of authority with central leaders giving orders down chains of command. The converse is also true: lack of consensus over symbols erodes power of any central political actor; inability of central actors to manipulate of incentives opens the door to other actors to use material incentives and mobilize bases of potential counter-power; inefficient and chaotic administrative structures allow non-governmental organizations to construct systems of authority that can yield widespread control of actions in a society; and inability to maintain a monopoly on coercive power increases the chances of internal societal conflict. In the history of human societies, the inability to centralize power leads to a system of warlords who control regions of territory and consolidate independent bases of power.

Despite this relationship between consolidation and centralization of power, however, these axes of power remain somewhat independent. Centralization of power generally comes when there are very intense selection pressures for coordination and control, either from internal or external sources. Very rapid population growth, for example, will place immediate and strong pressures to control conflict and competition for limited resources. Rapid and large-scale migrations will force actors in polity to extend administrative and coercive control over its territorial borders, to control the actions of those who have penetrated those borders, and perhaps to re-socialize those who succeed in immigrating to a society. Internal conflict arising from inequalities will force centralization of power to control uprisings. Similarly, war with external enemies will also lead to centralization of power along the coercive and administrative axes, often accompanied by efforts to mobilize symbolic power (e.g., nationalism) to legitimate the concentration of power. Market collapse, especially meta-market collapse, immediately pulls the administrative base of power into the chaos of market implosions, while at the same time, centralizing the use of material incentives to stabilize markets and centralizing the coercive base to enforce decisions dealing with market crises.

At times, centers of power manufacture crises and threats to justify centralization of power. To initiate a war, while proclaiming the need to protect the “motherland,” provides a legitimating ideology for centralizing power; or to target subpopulations such as visible ethnic groups as “threats to society” can similarly work to legitimate centralizing administrative and coercive bases of power for repressive control of a population. Or, as is happening in some parts of Latin America today, power can be used to nationalize productive



enterprises (which is, essentially, the use of power to grab capital investments from private actors); and this concentration of administrative and coercive power can typically be legitimated by the avowed threats that such enterprises pose, especially if they are foreign owned. Thus, power can be used to increase the perception of selection pressures that may or may not actually exist; and as this perception is propagated and disseminated, it is real in its consequences for centralizing power.

The centralization of political power is, therefore, primarily a function of threats – whether real, imagined, or manufactured. These can be internal threats that come with rising inequality and stratification or with immigrations into a society, or they can be external emerging from conflict with other societies. As the population and key actors in polity feel threatened by internal events, they will often use cultural symbols revolving around “nationalism” to legitimate further consolidation and centralization of the coercive and administrative bases of power. Similarly, external threats arising from warfare, or potential warfare, and economic competition will generally lead to the same pattern of consolidating and centralizing power. If the competition is economic, then material incentive bases of power will often be used to encourage actors in the productive sectors of a society to meet this competition. If warfare leads to territorial expansions, the high logistical loads for controlling larger territories composed of more diverse and restive inhabitants will generally force consolidation and centralization of coercive and administrative bases of power. However, if a more cooptive strategy is used to control territory, where the existing polity and economy of the conquered are left intact and only moderately taxed, then centralization of power will be less extensive.

### ***Modeling the Dynamics of Consolidation and Centralization of Power***

Figure 3.13 outlines in robust form – perhaps too robust – the direct, indirect, and reverse causal connections among forces, processes, and structures that increase or decrease the degree of consolidation of the bases of power and the centralization of power. Shortly, we can reduce this causal complexity with an elementary principle on regulation; yet, it is still useful to examine the dynamics of power in their full complexity. If we break the model down into blocks of causal connections, it becomes much easier to follow the argument. Starting at the center, left of the model, population size increases first-order logistical loads, increasing selection pressures for





production, regulation (and the consolidation of power), and distribution. If actors can build productive, distributive, and regulative structures, first-order logistical loads are reduced and potential dissolution of a society is averted. However, as the box containing logistical loads highlights, differentiation of structures devoted to production, regulation, and distribution, as well as the new social formations that these structures generate, such as inequality and stratification as well as external war and conflict with other societies, will increase second-order logistical loads, which in turn, will sustain selection pressures on actors. The reverse causal arrows flowing into logistical loads are almost all positive, highlighting the effects of structural differentiation among corporate units in increasingly autonomous institutional domains. The only negative reverse causal arrow comes from the consolidation of power, emphasizing that dissolution can only be avoided by some degree of consolidation along all four bases of power.

Power alone and differentiation of markets, however, also generate new second-order logistical loads at the same time as they resolve first-order and previous second-order loads. Differentiated markets always generate inequality and stratification which can lead to conflict, while at the same time eroding the symbolic base of power used to legitimate the consolidation and centralization of power. Similarly, as noted earlier, the consolidation of power, *per se*, causes some degree of centralization of power; and as power becomes more centralized, it is used to tax and unequally distribute resources, thereby creating conditions that can potentially de-legitimate its symbolic base. Moreover, centralizing bases of power as they begin to form into an autonomous polity inevitably leads the emerging polity to engage in geo-economic and geo-political competition with other societies, thereby causing even more centralization of power to deal with the new external threats created by geo-political and geo-economic engagements. And, as polity centralizes around its coercive base, war becomes more likely, driving up the selection pressures to centralize even more power to deal with the threat posed by war. As long as polity is successful in wars, this success can enhance the symbolic base of power and legitimate polity, which in turn, allows for the further consolidation and centralization of coercive-administrative power. But, as Max Weber (1922 [1968]) proposed and as Theda Skocpol (1979) has documented, losing a war can rapidly erode legitimacy and lead disaffected classes in the stratification system or even elites in this system to challenge centers of power – thereby ratcheting up logistical loads and the potential for societal disintegration. And, the more geo-political conflicts are pursued by polity and the larger its territories become, the greater are the logistical loads on polity in controlling this territory; and under these pressures, the administrative base of power is also expanded along with the

coercive, thereby increasing fiscal pressures on the state and its long-term capacity to control and coordinate the larger, more diverse, and increasingly restive population (Spencer 1874–1896; Goldstone 1990). As logistical loads increase from military adventurism and empire-building, actors in polity may not be able to respond to these pressures, thus hastening disintegration of the empire and, perhaps, the core society that created the empire.

This disintegrative potential increases to the degree that production and distribution in markets have been biased toward sustaining the coercive and administrative branches of power for dealing with internal and external threats. If incentives for production and market distribution have been eroded by heavy tax burdens to support polity or have been used as incentives for military production to sustain coercive power and to support the administration of this power, then inequalities increase domestically and raise the level of internal threat. And, as Jack Goldstone (1990) and others have documented, centers of power, as they invest resources in non-productive military and administrative structures to deal with external threats, will eventually run out of money – thus creating a fiscal crisis that further erodes the already tenuous basis of symbolic power. When the state can no longer function, societies rapidly disintegrate because rarely are non-governmental corporate actors able to respond adequately to selection pressures from regulation. Indeed, there are often competing actors whose competition for control accelerates the disintegration of collapsing centers of power.

Yet, even as complex as these dynamic processes seem, especially when presented in a robust analytical model, there are relatively few forces and sets of processes in play: (1) population growth, (2) first-order and second-order logistical loads, (3) potential for dissolution or disintegration, (4) selection pressures for increased production, distribution, and consolidation as well as centralization of power in response to rising regulative pressures, (5) inequality and stratification, (6) empire-building from geopolitics and geoeconomics, (7) internal and external threats arising from actual or potential conflict. What is complex is the way in which these forces and processes play off each other in paths of direct, indirect, and reverse causal effects on the consolidation and centralization of power.

### ***The Cultural Basis of Regulation***

Culture is a system of symbols that facilitates social action, while regulating the behaviors and patterns of relations among individual and corporate actors. At some point in late hominid evolution, natural selection favored enlarging the primate neocortex so that the immediate ancestors of humans

could communicate using symbols. Indeed, the great apes can use symbols to communicate in their natural settings but, equally significant, they can learn human language up to the level of a 3-year old child (see Turner 2000; Turner and Maryanski 2008a, b; Maryanski and Turner 1992). There was, then, a built-neurological capacity on which natural selection could go to work enhancing the capacity for language, although recent data suggest that spoken language may be purely a human phenomenon (Enard 2002a, b; Gibbons 2002). The key point is that once the neocortex expanded to allow for spoken language, culture could be elaborated into technologies, texts, values, ideologies, and norms – all of which regulate behaviors and social relations. These elements of culture are, to a degree, an artifact of a larger brain that can store and retrieve larger amounts of information, but there are also Spencerian selection pressures operating to channel these cognitive capacities toward particular types of symbol systems; and most of these selection pressures come from regulation as a social force.

As Durkheim (1893 [1963]) recognized and as Adam Smith (1776 [1805]) emphasized even earlier, human societies are regulated by common sentiments or, in Durkheim's terms, the "collective conscience." With very low levels of structural differentiation in simple human societies, cultural systems were not highly differentiated constituting in Durkheim's words a "mechanical" basis of solidarity. Once new institutional systems begin to differentiate from kinship and, as a consequence, to distribute resources unequally, Spencerian selection pressures push on actors to develop, as Durkheim stressed, varying layers of culture. Societal values become highly generalized and abstract in order to have relevance for actors in diverse locations; at the same time, there are selection pressures to specify values within emerging institutional domains and corporate units in these domains so that behavior and action can be regulated within a domain and between domains. What emerges is, as I emphasized in Chap. 2, differentiation of culture along several lines: (1) distinctive generalized symbolic media for each emerging institutional domain, (2) ideologies built from the symbolic media that apply abstract societal values to an institutional domain, (3) general institutional norms about appropriate and inappropriate actions within an institutional domain, (4) specialized norms for relations within and between corporate units in domains and between actors in different domains, and (5) meta-ideologies that combine the institutional ideologies into a more general set of moral codes that, in turn, feed into values and that legitimate patterns of inequality and stratification. Figure 3.14 outlines the dynamic relations among these patterns of cultural differentiation.

Institutional differentiation leads to the use of a distinctive generalized medium of exchange within each domain – e.g., *money, power, love, loyalty,*

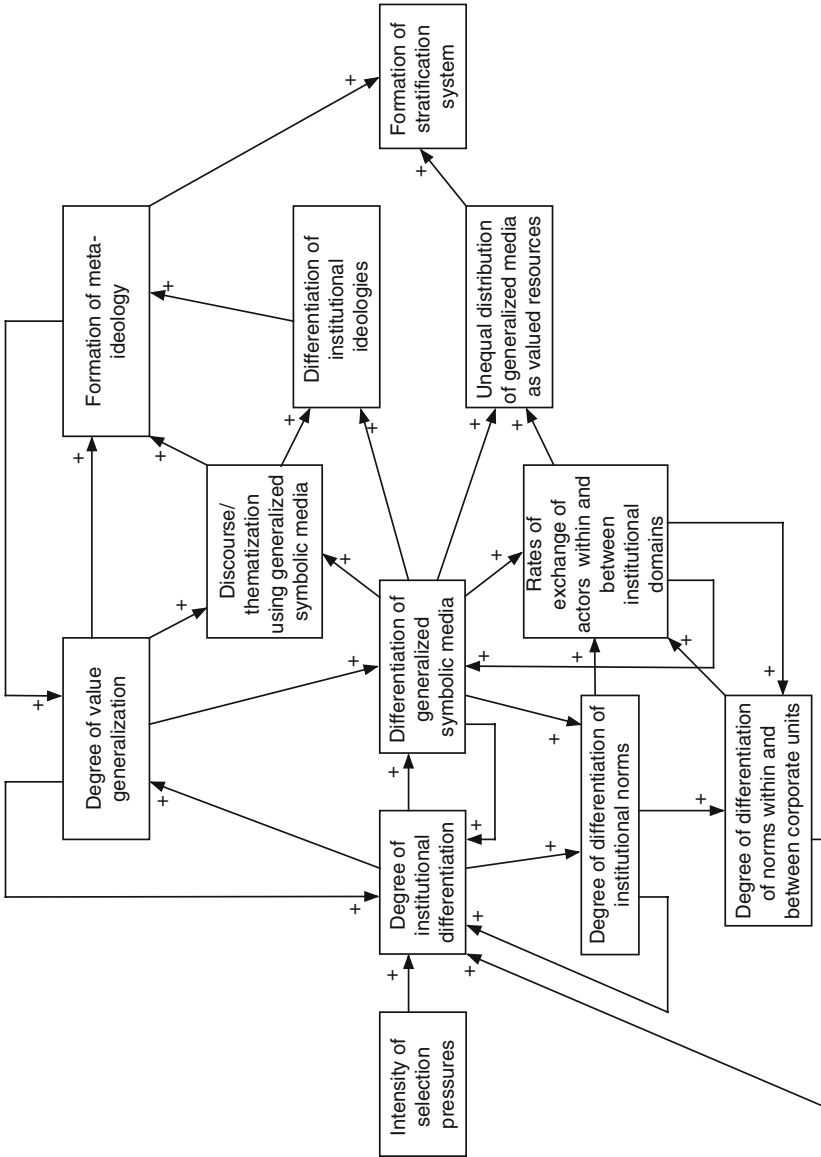


Fig. 3.14 The cultural basis of regulation

*knowledge, sacredness, influence, health*, and the like (see Table 4.1 for definitions of generalized symbolic media for each institutional domain). Moreover, these media are often involved in exchanges between institutional domains. For example, money in the economy is exchanged for loyalty from family members who work in the economy for wages. As generalized symbolic media regulate exchanges and transactions within and between institutional domains, they reduce selection pressures from regulation as a social force.

A generalized symbolic medium within an institutional domain also becomes the valued resource – e.g., *money, power, love, knowledge, health*, etc. – that is unequally distributed in this domain, thus setting up patterns of inequality and stratification in a society (see Chap. 5). Institutional differentiation also creates selection pressures for value-generalization so that values can be relevant for diversely positioned actors in each domain (Durkheim 1893 [1963]; Parsons 1966). Generalized symbolic media also provide the basis for thematization and discourse about a domain, and it is out of this thematization that institutional ideologies are built to fill in the cultural vacuum left by value-generalization (Luhmann 1982). In essence, ideologies specify how value premises are to be realized within a given institutional domain.

As the ideologies in each domain emerge, they are combined into a meta-ideology; and depending on which set of generalized symbolic media dominate, this meta-ideology feeds into and biases abstract values. For example, if *sacredness* as the media of religion is dominant over other generalized media, values will be biased toward the moral components in religion; alternatively, if *money* is the dominant generalized medium, as it is in capitalism, the meta-ideology will be biased in this direction (towards accumulation of wealth) and, in turn, so will generalized values. Moreover, the meta-ideology will also serve as a legitimating ideology for the entire stratification system because it combines the generalized symbolic media of each institutional domain into a large set of moral standards; and again, depending upon which media are dominant in this meta-ideology, the symbolic basis for legitimization of stratification will vary. For instance, if *money* is the generalized medium that dominates the meta-ideology, then it will be the criterion for evaluation of those with varying levels of money; the meta-ideology will stigmatize those without money and valorize those with money.

As power is consolidated and centralized, the institutional ideology of polity becomes part of its symbolic base of power; and as meta-ideologies are articulated, they too legitimate polity, thereby increasing the regulatory capacities of polity by adding to its symbolic base of power. Generalized symbolic media as they generate ideologies also provide the moral basis for institutional norms within a domain and for the norms governing relations among corporate units embedded in different domains.

This coupling of the resources that are distributed unequally and the ideologies used to legitimate this distribution gives ideologies a special power to legitimate inequalities and those institutional domains generating inequalities. The generalized symbolic media as they form ideologies are also the moral commands implicit in norms regulating relations within and between domains, and these norms lead to exchange relations among actors within and between domains as well as the unequal distribution of symbolic media as valued resources. The outcome is for exchange relations and inequalities to be legitimated by ideologies and meta-ideologies. Indeed, with the generalized symbolic media being the basis for (a) exchange and (b) unequal distribution of valued resources as well as the basis for (c) thematization and (d) ideological formation justifying inequalities, a concerted and multilayered force of symbolic social control is unleashed.

I will have much more to say about this cultural dimension of regulation in the next two chapters, but for the present, it is only necessary to emphasize that regulation as a social force generates Spencerian selection pressures for systems of symbols that can regulate relations among actors within and between domains, while also providing polity with its symbolic base of power and legitimating cover for unequal distribution of symbolic media as valued resources. To the degree that values do not generalize or to the extent that generalized values are not filled in by generalized symbolic media, ideologies, and norms, regulation will be problematic. Moreover, polity will become more reliant on coercion and administration without a differentiated cultural basis for regulation.

### ***An Elementary Principle of Regulation as a Macrodynamic Force***

4. The level of regulation in a society is a positive and additive function of
  - A. The degree of consolidation of the four bases of power which, in turn, is a positive and multiplicative function of:
    1. The size of the population
    2. The level of production and material surplus from production
    3. The level of exchange in markets using money and credit
  - B. The degree of centralization of the four bases of power which, in turn, is a positive and additive function of
    1. The level of internal threat which, in turn, is a positive and additive function of
      - a. The level of inequality and stratification
      - b. The rate and scale of immigration

2. The level of external threat stemming from conflict with other populations which, in turn, is an additive function of
  - a. The level of warfare with other societies
  - b. The level of economic competition with other societies
  - c. The extent of territorial expansion and empire building through conquest of other societies
  - d. The rate and scale of immigration
- C. The degree of cultural differentiation among
  1. Generalized value-premises
  2. Ideologies and norms of differentiated institutional domains which, in turn, is a function of differentiation of distinctive generalized symbolic media of exchange for each domain
  3. Meta-ideologies legitimating inequalities and stratification, while biasing generalized value premises
- D. The degree to which cultural differentiation leads to
  1. The ideology of polity (as an institutional domain) serving as one element in its symbolic base of power
  2. The meta-ideology combining all institutional ideologies serving as another element in polity's symbolic base of power

## **Reproduction as a Macrodynamic Force**

### *The Nature of Reproduction in Human Societies*

Reproduction operates at two levels. One is reproduction of the biological entities – human beings and their genome – that make societies possible. For an animal using culture to organize social life, however, a second level of reproduction revolves around (1) socialization of individuals into the symbol systems necessary for participation in social structures and, as I have just emphasized, (2) regulation of social relations within and between institutional domains. Social structures cannot be reproduced unless their “memes,” as Richard Dawkins (1976) termed cultural information, are passed on to individuals who ultimately interact in ways that create and sustain the social structures and cultures regulating these structures. As individuals learn relevant cultural information, they also learn how to use this information when behaving and interacting in a wide variety of situations – as well as explored in detail in Vol.2 on microdynamics.

It should not be surprising that the first institution in human societies was kinship, which was created by actors seeking to reproduce the species and its



genome as well as the cultural stores of knowledge needed to organize human activity. Indeed, the selection pressures generated by all macrodynamic forces pushed humans to construct a structure that is very unnatural for an evolved ape: the nuclear family composed of father, mother, and children (Turner and Maryanski 2008a, b). None of the great apes reveals kinships in the human measure; the closest that a great ape gets to something like the family is the tie that sometimes emerges between lead silverback male gorillas and females with children. This relationship does not endure beyond the female's need for (baby-sitting) support in raising children, and it does not assure that the female's children were fathered by the lead male. Humans' closest relative, chimpanzees, are highly promiscuous with paternity never being known and with no stable relationships between adult males and females (Maryanski and Turner 1992). Thus, only under intense selection pressures did early humans – who share 99% of their genes with common chimpanzees (slightly less for bonobo chimpanzees) – create a new and very unnatural social structure for an ape: the family. This structure emerged not only under pressures from reproduction as a social force, but family also was created to meet selection pressures from production, regulation, and distribution. For, within the family is the economic division of labor, the means for distributing productive outputs, and for coordinating and controlling activities without the need to consolidate power.

### ***The Shifting Institutional Basis of Reproduction***

As institutional domains differentiated from kinship under selection pressures from population, production, distribution, and regulation, kinship was released from the burden of meeting selection pressures from all macrodynamic forces. For as long as it was viable, however, kinship was elaborated to respond to population growth as this growth increased the valences for all macrodynamic forces (Turner 2003). But, by the time agrarian societies appeared in human evolutionary history, some 5,000–8,000 years ago, kinship began its evolution back to nuclear families typical of hunter-gatherers and increasingly became the institutional domain for reproduction.

However, as the number and variety of corporate units and their respective cultures differentiated, social reproduction became ever-more complex, requiring that each generation learn more than could be taught within kinship. At times, knowledge was imparted within distinctive corporate units of differentiating domains such as economy, polity, and religion. Yet, selection pressures continued to push on actors to forge new structures for socializing individuals into the cultural storehouses of highly differentiated institutional domains and distinctive types of corporate units within these domains.

Under these pressures, education as an institutional domain began to evolve; and over the last 200 years, this domain differentiated internally, while gaining increased autonomy from other institutional domains. Thus, the conditions that increase the valences for reproduction as a social force are clear: differentiation of institutional domains and the corporate units in these domains. As differentiation ensues, new reproductive structures within each domain emerge as does a more autonomous educational domain, differentiated into varying types of “school” structures.

### ***An Elementary Principle on Reproduction as a Macrodynamic Force***

5. The level of reproduction in a society is a positive and multiplicative function of:
  - A. The level of differentiation among institutional domains which, in turn, is a multiplicative function of:
    1. Population size and rate of growth
    2. The level of production, especially as the level of technology increases
    3. The level of distribution, especially as markets using money and credit differentiate
    4. The level of regulation, especially as polity and law differentiate
  - B. The level of differentiation of corporate units within institutional domains
  - C. The level of cultural differentiation among (1) institutional domains and (2) corporate units within these domains

Population size and its rate of growth cause an escalation of logistical loads that increase the valences for production, distribution, regulation; and as economy, religion, and polity differentiate from kinship in response to these rising selection pressures, valences for reproduction also begin to rise. Initially, population growth pushes actors to find new modes of production and regulation, which eventually cause the differentiation of economy and polity. Later, distribution further differentiates economy and polity from kinship and religion. And as polity differentiates, law begins to emerge as an institutional domain. With this structural base – that is, differentiation among kinship, economy, polity, law, and religion – institutional domains continue to differentiate internally, creating more diverse types of corporate units. And, as additional institutional domains differentiate from this core – especially institutions like medicine and science which require highly trained incumbents – selection pressures from reproduction increase even more.

The differentiation of institutional domains dramatically increases the level of knowledge required of incumbents in these domains but also the diversity of ideologies, generalized symbolic media, and norms that individuals must learn; and as corporate units diversify within each domain, the differentiation of corporate-unit cultures increases demands for learning. Eventually, education begins to differentiate and provide the core of learning for all domains and, then at higher levels of education, for technical training necessary for participation in higher-skill positions in corporate units of differentiated domains. Moreover, once education becomes more autonomous, it generates another level of selection pressures to reproduce itself, above and beyond what reproductive effects it has for other institutional domains.

In a very real sense, reproduction was the most intense force driving the formation of the first societies built around kinship and band; and in these simple societies composed of small populations, kinship proved highly effective in meeting selection pressures from all macrodynamic forces. As populations grew, however, selection pressures from production, distribution, and regulation, escalated, causing differentiation of institutional domains and the corporate units in these domains. With structural differentiation came cultural differentiation that increased selection pressures from reproduction, leading to the emergence of education as a distinct institutional domain. And with education, institutional domains revolving around knowledge production, such as science, and applications of knowledge in an increasingly large array of social contexts began to develop, thereby increasing selection pressures from reproduction. Moreover, with profit-oriented markets and constant competition, technology as property (to be marketed) constantly expanded and, thus, escalated pressures on reproductive structures to expand and differentiate in order to disseminate this knowledge.

## **Conclusion**

This rather long chapter outlines some elementary principles on the conditions that increase or decrease valences for each of the macrodynamic forces. As is evident, many of these conditions for one force are the other forces, thus reducing dramatically the number of conditions in play for any one force. Perhaps these principles are so simple and elementary that they do not need to be articulated, but my view is that sociology has not adequately conceptualized the macro-level realm of the social universe. Most approaches are too narrow, even in the case of world systems analysis that studies the largest unit of the macro realm. Macrosociology is often broken down into

analyses of a specific aspect of the world system, or a particular institutional domain, or a narrow dimension of a stratification system. The result is a failure to see the big picture, or how all of the elements of the macro realm – institutions, stratification, society, and inter-societal systems – fit together. Moreover, much seemingly macro analysis is, in reality, meso-level analysis, with the result that the two are often conflated. Indeed, even with labels like “The New Institutionalism,” the actual theorizing is decidedly meso-level, focusing on organizations (or type of corporate unit) and their “environments.”

Thus, in this chapter, I wanted to lay out the forces that are driving the macro-level of social reality. These forces are what push on individual and, more often, corporate actors to create new kinds of structures that evolve into institutional domains, revealing distinctive cultures that, in turn, feed back into societal and inter-societal cultures. As we will see, institutional domains begin to evolve by developing some degree of autonomy; and as they do so, they create networks of structures and cultures that distribute resources unequally, thereby generating stratification systems. Together, institutions and stratification are constituent structures of societies and, as we will come to appreciate, inter-societal systems as well. For inter-societal systems are not typically relations among whole societies but, instead, connections between specific institutional domains, such as economy and polity, and at times, different points in the stratification systems of two or more societies. But, we should not forget that there are just five basic forces driving these macro-level formations. As we will see in Vol. 2, individuals are also driven by micro-level forces and provide much of the energy leading to the creation of corporate units and categoric units that, respectively, are the building blocks of the macro realm. Later, I will try to document how the macro, micro, and meso realms all fit together, but when our focus is on macrodynamics, we need to recognize that forces generating selection pressures work on corporate actors as the basic unit of sociocultural selection, but it is institutions, stratification systems, societies, and inter-societal systems that evolve.

As is evident in the elementary principles enumerated in this chapter, these macrodynamic forces can be conceptualized in relatively simple terms. The rest of my analysis of macrodynamics is devoted to understanding the ways that these forces build up institutional domains, stratification systems, societies, and inter-societal systems. To understand these dynamics, however, more theoretical principles will be introduced and, as will be clear, these are often more complex than the ones outlined in these pages. We are, then, just beginning to develop principles of sociology; each element of the macro realm will require additional principles to understand the specific dynamics operating during the evolution of institutional domains, stratification systems, societies, and inter-societal systems.



## Chapter 4

# The Dynamics of Institutional Domains

The dynamics of institutional domains inhere in the processes of inter- and intra-institutional differentiation and the structural and cultural mechanisms by which these nodes of differentiation are integrated. To phrase the matter in a way that takes us back to older functionalist theories (Spencer 1874–1896; Durkheim 1893 [1963]), the evolution of human societies has involved increasing complexity, with much of this complexity the result of institutional differentiation. For all of the problems with these functional theories, they were on the right track in trying to understand how institutions operate. The first human society contained only one institution – kinship – with all other institutional activities folded into the division of labor of nuclear families in hunting and gathering bands. From the initial institutional base, economy, polity, and religion differentiated; and then from this base, additional domains such as law, education, science, medicine, sport, and art began to evolve.

Differentiation occurs in response to selection pressures from macrodynamic forces, but differentiation itself generates second-order logistical loads and, in so doing, new selection pressures from regulation and other forces that lead to further inter- and intra-institutional differentiation. As Émile Durkheim (1893 [1963]) emphasized, differentiation generates needs for new modes of integration; and if we translate Durkheim’s functional notion of “needs” into the concept of selection pressures, his analysis is essentially correct, though incomplete in critical details. As we will see in Chap. 6, the degree and pattern of institutional differentiation have large effects on societal dynamics, but for the present, my goal is to examine, at a very abstract level, what I see as the key dynamics of institutional differentiation and integration. Let me begin with differentiation.

## The Emergence and Evolution of Institutional Domains

### *Inter-Institutional Differentiation*

When institutional domains differentiate from existing domains, they do so because individual and collective actors must respond to new levels and types of selection pressures or face the disintegrative consequences. These responses almost always involve the mobilization of resources to build new kinds of corporate units and systems of culture that, it is hoped, will reduce selection pressures.

For each domain, there is typically a core set of corporate actors that not only forge the structural template for elaboration of new types of corporate units but also the symbols – generalized symbolic media, ideologies, and norms – that regulate actions and transactions within a domain. There is almost always an entrepreneurial quality to the actions of these core actors as they seek to control material resources and, thereby, build new corporate units and symbol systems that allow for some degree of autonomy from the corporate units and the culture of other institutional domains (Abrutyn 2009a, b).

Institutional autonomy increases when there are sufficient resources for segmentation of, and differentiation among, distinctive types of structural units operating with a common cultural core (Abrutyn 2009a). For instance, in an emerging economy, there will be both a proliferation of similar types of corporate units engaged in gathering, production, and distribution as well as some degree of differentiation among these units. The key to institutional differentiation and autonomy is the mechanisms by which corporate units are integrated into sets of interrelations that, in turn, create boundaries that mark off corporate units in one domain from those in another. As boundaries form and as autonomy increases, differentiation of an institutional domain from other domains also increases, as does the rate of internal differentiation of corporate units within this domain. For example, the corporate units and the culture regulating transactions within and between units in a capitalist economy distinguish them from corporate units in other institutional domains, such as kinship or religion. Moreover, as the economy grows, especially a market-driven economy, internal differentiation occurs under pressures from Durkheimian selection. True, as I will emphasize shortly, the flow of such generalized symbolic media as *money* from economy and *power* as authority from polity to other domains in a market-driven capitalist economy will cause some convergence in the cultures and structures of corporate units in differentiated domains, but still, the autonomy of a domain

using *money* and other highly generalized symbolic media like *power* and *knowledge* is retained because this domain continues to use the symbolic medium unique to this domain.

Figure 4.1 summarizes these dynamic processes. The figure emphasizes the formation of a new domain, but the same processes ensue when a domain is undergoing transformation to a new form. For instance, the model could describe the first economies that differentiated from kinship when hunter-gatherers began to settle down some 12,000 years ago, and it also can denote the key dynamics when the economy, once differentiated, evolves into a new mode of production during the transition from horticulture to agrarianism and then from agrarianism to industrialism and post-industrialism.

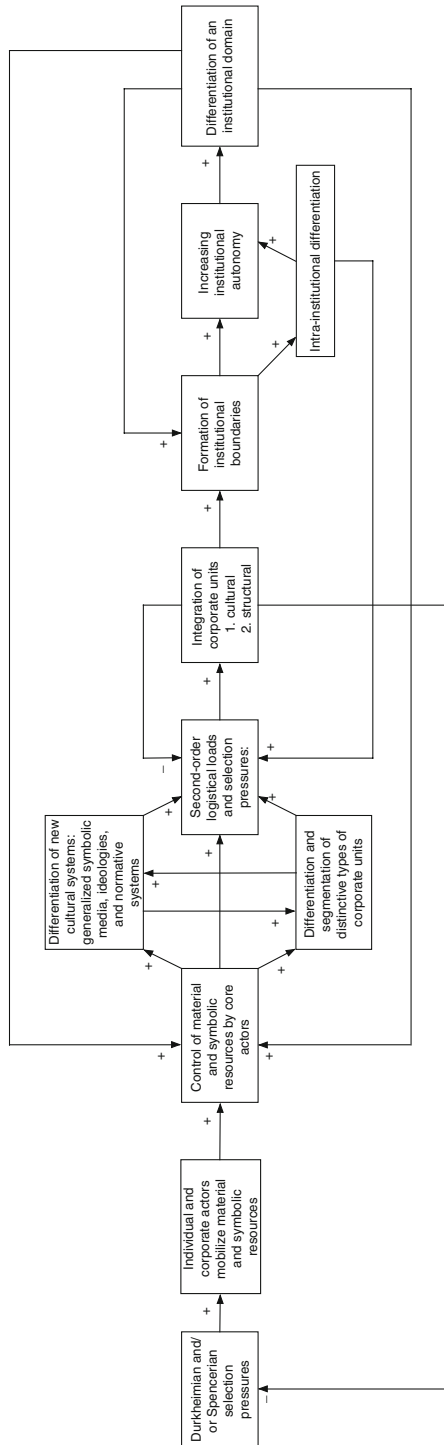
The emergence of a new institutional domain or the transformation of an existing domain begins with actors responding to Durkheimian and Spencerian selection pressures. When a new institution first emerges, it may be individuals who mobilize resources to deal with these pressures, but soon, their efforts lead to the formation of new types of corporate units and cultural systems. The same is true when actors respond to selection pressures within an existing institutional domain; new kinds of corporate actors begin to emerge in order to mobilize resources, and as they do so, they transform the culture regulating corporate actors in a domain.

Differentiation of new forms of corporate-unit organization and culture feed off of one another. Actors develop new generalized symbolic media<sup>1</sup> or alter existing media to forge, through thematization, ideologies and normative systems appropriate to the structure of new corporate units (Luhmann 1982); and as symbolic media, ideologies, and norms prove successful coordinating the division of labor within corporate units and in facilitating transactions between these units, this culture is more likely to be adopted as segmentation of new corporate units ensues. And as segmentation proceeds, the resulting increase in the number of corporate units within an emerging institutional domain or within an existing domain legitimates the new cultural systems, thus encouraging segmental proliferation of even more corporate units (Hannan and Freeman 1977). However, differentiation almost always accompanies this segmentation, and especially so as second-order logistical loads increase. Segmentation can only go so far because the growing number of corporate units in a domain generally increases selection pressures from regulation as a force, which in turn, leads to the development

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<sup>1</sup> See Table 4.1 *Generalized symbolic media* are markers of value that are both the medium by which exchanges occur among actors as well as the valued resources that are unequally distributed by corporate units in a domain.





**Fig. 4.1** The emergence of new institutional domains and/or their transformation

of new types of corporate units to meet these selection pressures from regulation. Moreover, as the number of corporate units within a domain increases, new resource niches emerge, causing differentiation of corporate units seeking resources in these diverse niches. During this process of segmentation and differentiation, the culture of a domain is generally retained but modified to fit the structure of the expanded range of corporate units and the new mechanisms for integrating relations among these units. And, as the generalized symbolic media and ideologies prove successful in integrating the division of labor within corporate units and the transactions between these units, these cultural elements become institutionalized across a domain, with variations in the culture of units occurring at the level of their respective normative systems.

The corporate units of institutional domains are located in physical space, most typically within communities as a type of corporate unit. This structural inclusion within communities can operate as a cause of further differentiation between institutional domains (Hawley 1981, 1986). If communities themselves are differentiated, the configuration of institutional domains that they house will vary; and as corporate units within a domain segment and differentiate further within a community, they become differentiated from the corporate units in other communities. For example, the institutional domains embedded in rural vs. urban communities will vary, with fewer domains in small, rural villages compared to those in a large, urban capital city, thereby increasing differentiation between urban and rural areas. In a large capital city, polity and religion will become more differentiated as each elaborates its structural and cultural base, whereas within a smaller village, religious and political leaders may not be highly differentiated. Similarly, in a moderate-sized market town, the economy will become more differentiated from kinship and polity compared to the level of differentiation between these domains in a smaller, rural community. Conversely, if community structures are not differentiated, but rather are segments of each other, and hence are basically the same in terms of their size, layouts, and basic functions, then this convergence of community formations also leads to convergence of those institutional domains that they house. The result is that the pattern of differentiation in domains within one community is replicated in other communities, thereby reducing the effects of community as a force behind institutional differentiation. Indeed, community becomes a conservative force and limits institutional differentiation, while providing cultural and structural equivalences in the nature of domains across communities. But once communities grow and begin to differentiate functionally around economic, political, and religious activities, they operate as a powerful force of institutional differentiation.

Even if communities remain relatively small, they can cause differentiation if their members engage in varying types of activities. For example, a small mining town and a small market city can be approximately the same size, but given their diverse economic bases, they not only facilitate internal differentiation of the economy but they increase the degree of differentiation between economy and other domains. The same is true if communities engage in other kinds of key functions, such as serving as centers for religious rituals or as garrisons for the coercive base of political power. And, once this mutual causal connection between community and institutional differentiation is initiated, the causal effects accelerate and ratchet up both community and institutional differentiation.

An institutional domain cannot be clearly differentiated from other domains without a pattern of integration among corporate units. As corporate units emerge, segment, and differentiate, the relations among units within a domain and between units in different domains will be structured by both cultural and structural mechanisms of integration. As integration by these mechanisms occurs, an emerging institutional domain will develop a boundary, or if transformation of an older domain is under way and new modes of integration emerge to coordinate relations among corporate units, these changes often cause boundaries with other domains to be redrawn. The result is that a domain increases its autonomy from other domains, and as it does so, it gains greater control of resources needed to sustain corporate units (Abrutyn 2009a, b). Yet, as we will come to appreciate, autonomy is a variable because all institutional domains in a differentiating society will eventually be subject to the movement of generalized symbolic media from other domains, particularly *money* (economy), *power* (polity), and *influence* (law) in response to second-order logistical loads and selection pressures from regulation as a force.

Institutional differentiation is thus a process of setting up institutional boundaries between the culture regulating congeries of corporate units in one domain from the culture and sets of corporate units in another domain. Some of this boundary-formation occurs at the level of culture – that is, generalized symbolic media, ideologies, and norms. Other elements of the boundary are established by the unique structures of corporate units – as the case, for example, in the differences in the respective corporate unit structures of the kinship, religious, and economic domains. And, as I will outline shortly, the final and most critical element in boundary formation resides in the cultural and structural mechanisms integrating units within a domain which, in turn, determines the dynamics of transactions between corporate units in different domains.

### *Intra-Institutional Differentiation*

As institutional differentiation proceeds, with distinct institutional domains developing autonomy and boundaries, the corporate units in these domains not only segment; they also differentiate. As more corporate units evolve within a domain, logistical loads increase under both Spencerian and Durkheimian selection pressures, pushing actors to develop new corporate-unit forms using diverse symbolic media and drawing from different resource niches in a domain. There are several conditions that increase the likelihood that intra-institutional differentiation will occur, once a certain level of inter-institutional differentiation is evident.

One cause of intra-institutional differentiation is the circulation of symbolic media, themes, and ideologies from other domains. Under these conditions, corporate units will adopt these cultural elements from other domains *to varying degrees*, thereby differentiating them from each other. And, the more diversity in the symbolic media circulating, the more likely are corporate units to blend somewhat different mixes of these media with the dominant media of a domain. For example, if the domain is education, specific types of school structures may blend marrying amounts of *money*, *authority*, *competitiveness*, *sacredness/piety*, *knowledge*, and *aesthetics* with the dominant medium of education, *learning*. The end result is diverse kinds of corporate units.

Such is particularly likely to be the case if the population reveals diverse categoric unit memberships and inequalities in resource distributions; under these conditions, corporate units differentiate within a domain to accommodate this diversity in categoric unit memberships. Moreover, the larger a population is, the more likely that it will reveal other patterns of diversity that become resource niches for corporate units, thereby causing these units to specialize and, hence, differentiate.

The above processes work to increase the diversity of resource niches in a domain; and the more resource niches possible in a domain, the more internally differentiated it is likely to become (Hawley 1986). If, however, resource niches are more homogeneous, segmentation is the more likely response of actors creating new corporate units. Since the resources available are similar for all units, it is easier and strategically more adaptive to copy organizational models that have proven adept at securing these resources (Hannan and Freeman 1977). However, if density in these niches increases, Durkheimian selection may push some actors to try new organizational models to secure resources, thereby increasing the level of differentiation in a domain even as many corporate units are selected out of the niche or move to a new niche (McPherson 1983a, 1988). For example, religion in the

United States has differentiated dramatically over the last century, even though the resource niche – individuals seeking spirituality through Christian beliefs and rituals – is somewhat homogeneous, although obvious class and categoric distinctions exist. Evangelical churches have been highly successful in recruiting new members, thereby differentiating themselves from traditional Protestant and Catholic churches; and their success has often prompted some of the traditional churches in both Protestantism and Catholicism to adopt some of these evangelical elements (such as “Christian rock” music, amplified instrumentations, and singing in a contemporary mode). The end result is a considerable increase in the level of corporate unit differentiation in the religious domain in the United States over the last century.

Not only does Durkheimian selection in resource niches increase intra-institutional differentiation, so does Spencerian selection pressures. At the level of first-order logistical loads, population growth puts pressures on actors to find new ways to produce and distribute resources as well as to regulate the larger population; and as these first-order logistical loads mount, they place ever-more pressure on individual and collective actors to create new kinds of corporate units to meet these pressures. As these corporate units differentiate in response to new selection pressures, they become the initial core for new institutional domains such as economy, polity, and religion. For example, settled hunter-gatherers immediately differentiated polity from kinship in the form of a Big Man, or horticulturalists generated new kinds of kin units, new economic units, new forms of religious cult structures, and new political units (often lodged within the expanded unilineal kinship system) to cope with increased selection pressures from population growth and, as was often the case, geo-political conflict with neighboring populations. Second-order selection pressures arise with differentiation among, and increasing complexity of, the institutional order as well as with the emergence of stratification; and as new types of corporate units emerge to deal with these escalating second-order logistical loads, differentiation within and between institutional domains increases beyond that evident with only first-order logistical loads. Such is particularly likely to be the case if culture proves ineffective in dealing with exchanges between corporate units in a domain; then, new kinds of corporate units will emerge to facilitate this exchange. For example, new types of corporate units dealing with market transactions emerge when direct exchanges between corporate actors in the economy become more complex and require mediating structures (Braudel 1979 [1982], 1977).

A related cause of intra-institutional differentiation is the diversity of corporate units in other domains with which corporate units within any domain must exchange. The greater is the number and the diversity of external

corporate units in other domains, the more likely are corporate units within a domain to differentiate as they establish different configurations of relations with these external units and as mediating corporate units evolve to facilitate exchanges. For instance, if corporate units in law or polity must have transactions with diverse corporate units in numerous institutional domains, law and polity will not only grow in scale but also in their respective levels of internal differentiation. Indeed, differentiation of any sort within a society generates selection pressures from regulation for the growth, elaboration, and differentiation of polity and law; and to the extent that differentiation requires new kinds of productive outputs and specialized skills among incumbents, then additional selection pressures from production and distribution as well as reproduction are added to those from regulation – thereby increasing the overall level of differentiation within and between institutional domains. For example, if selection pressures from reproduction lead to the differentiation of education as a distinct domain, with its symbolic medium of *learning* circulating in other domains, inter-institutional differentiation occurs between education and other domains, while intra-institutional differentiation increases because corporate units require varying levels of skill of human capital.

Although Spencerian selection is, in my view, the driving force in socio-cultural evolution, Durkheimian selection also leads to differentiation among corporate units. If segmentation increases niche density and the level of competition for resources among these units in a niche, some will alter their structure and, to a lesser extent, their culture in order to move to new niches within an institutional domain (McPherson 1988). Durkheimian pressures are most likely under the dual conditions of population growth and circumscription limiting movement to new geographical locations where resources would be more plentiful (Carneiro 1967, 1970; Chase-Dunn and Hall 1997). These same conditions can also increase, at a minimum, Spencerian selection pressures for polity and law to regulate the conflict over resources among corporate actors in institutional domains. Thus, whether directly through competition and movement to new niches, or indirectly through escalating conflicts over resources, Durkheimian selection pressures cause differentiation among corporate units within at least some institutional domains.

The communities within which institutional domains are embedded cause not only inter-institutional differentiation, but intra-institutional differentiation as well. Larger communities can support more corporate units, thereby increasing rates of exchange among corporate units while also providing a larger and more diverse set of resource niches where corporate units within a domain can secure resources. The result

is that corporate units can differentiate, which in turn increases the degree of intra-institutional differentiation. Moreover, if communities are differentiated by size and location, they are often differentiated by the institutional domains that organize activities; and once this initial differentiation among communities exists, it becomes the structural and cultural basis for further differentiation (Abu-Lughod 1989; Boserup 1965). For example, if a city is primarily a place for performing religious worship, the number and diversity of corporate units will generally rise within this community; and even if this elaboration of religion is not replicated in other communities, the level of intra-institutional differentiation has nonetheless increased. Over time, as other communities grow, some portion of this higher level of differentiation of religious centers will diffuse to these new communities, thereby spreading the internal differentiation of religion across communities which, in turn, may create a base for further internal differentiation of religion. The same would be true of a market center where distribution of goods and services dominates community activity. Such centers have historically pulled buyers and sellers to markets, setting off a process of urbanization; at the same time, the growing size and volume of transactions in markets cause differentiation of the economy. And, over time, the innovations of early market towns will tend to filter across networks among communities, leading once again to the spread of new types of corporate units that first emerged in market towns. And to the degree that each community to which innovations spread is differentiated, the potential for further differentiation within the economy exists as actors tailor activities to the population and resource niches of a particular community; and as these communities become connected through exchange networks as well as by migrations, new nodes of differentiation spread. The result is for a kind of urban entropy in which urban communities become ever-more alike, but at the same time that entropy may exist for communities, the spread of differentiated corporate units to additional communities causes the internal differentiation of institutional domains.

As a general rule, the greater is the extent and degree of inter-institutional and intra-institutional differentiation, the more intense are selection pressures from all macrodynamic forces. As these pressures intensify, they promote further differentiation, which increases second-order logistical loads that ratchet up selection pressures and, as a result, cause further differentiation up to the point where resources supporting corporate units are depleted and/or integrative problems prohibit further differentiation. As the functional theorists were the first to emphasize, differentiation among and within

institutional domains is a master process in the evolution of societies; and societies that continue to differentiate reveal different dynamics from those that do not. For, as differentiation continually escalates logistical loads and selection pressures from all macrodynamic forces, as well as Durkheim selection dynamics in key niches within institutional domains, the structure of the institutional order reveals certain common properties, with the result that the pattern of societal evolution also evidences convergent dynamics.

Differentiation always generates selection pressures from regulation as a social force and, potentially, additional pressures from other macrodynamic forces as well. These selection pressures from regulation revolve around what early functionalists like Durkheim saw as “problems of integration.” Integration is a general label and includes more than responses to regulation as a force because it can involve producing and distributing resources to support and connect corporate units, as well as selection pressures from reproduction or even population. Thus despite the somewhat problematic history of the concept of integration in functional theorizing, it captures a set of selection pressures from potentially all macrodynamic forces that, in the end, focus on how to regularize the connections among corporate units within and between institutional domains, and as we will see in the next chapter, that do the same for stratification systems.

## **Mechanisms of Integration Within Institutional Domains**

Inherent in the differentiation of cultural systems and new corporate units are mechanisms that operate to integrate relations among corporate units and set them off from corporate units in other domains. For example, as I explore below, a common culture within a domain operates to integrate relations within and between corporate units—as Durkheim (1893 [1963]) recognized a century ago. Or, segmentation of like structural units generates patterns of structural equivalence that operate as integrative mechanisms. Thus, in the very process of creating culture and in proliferating corporate units, integrative dynamics are also unleashed. These integrating processes inhering in culture and segmentation of corporate units can, for a time, manage selection pressures from second-order logistical loads. Yet, as both Durkheim (1893 [1963]) and Spencer (1874–1896) recognized, these integrative mechanisms inevitably must be supplemented by new mechanisms in response to selection pressures from regulation that inevitably arise as cultural and structural differentiation within and between domains occurs. Below, I first examine the integrative basis of



culture, followed by a review of the structural mechanisms of integration that accompany segmentation. Then, I will review additional mechanisms of integration that emerge in response to second-order logistical loads that increase with differentiation between and within institutional domains.

## *Cultural Mechanisms of Integration*

### **Institutional Cultures**

As I have emphasized above and in earlier chapters, there are three aspects of intra-institutional culture that are important for a theory of macrodynamics: (1) ideologies, (2) generalized symbolic media, and (3) normative systems. Let me enumerate here their effects on integration of structures within an institutional domain.

(1) *Ideologies* are evaluative beliefs that translate general value premises of a society into moral prescriptions and proscriptions within an institutional domain (Luhmann 1982). Ideologies thus set standards of proper and improper conduct for individuals and corporate units within a domain. As Durkheim (1893 [1963]) recognized, differentiation causes the “collective conscience” to become more abstract and “enfeebled” in its capacity to regulate diversely situated actors; and thus, selection pressures from regulation push corporate actors to translate societal-level values into moral codes in more specific situations and context (Luhmann 1982). Without ideologies, moral anomie would exist, and so as corporate actors respond to selection pressures, they begin to articulate ideologies, drawing from more general value premises and specifying how these premises are to be realized within an institutional domain. As corporate actors in each institutional domain translate value premises into ideologies, cultural differentiation across domains increases. Yet, because these ideologies typically draw from the common stock of generalized moral premises of a society, such as values<sup>2</sup> and meta-ideologies,<sup>3</sup> potential conflict among ideologies is mitigated. For example, if a general value of a society emphasizes “achievement,” then the respective ideologies in the culture of economy, polity, kinship, religion, science, education and other domains will all have a moral yardstick for

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<sup>2</sup>*Values* are generalized standards of what is right and proper, good and bad.

<sup>3</sup>*Meta-ideologies* are composites of all institutional ideologies, with some ideologies more dominant than others.

judging achievement, but just *how* achievement is to occur will be specific for a domain. Thus, achievement in the educational domain will revolve around grades and movement through the hierarchy of schools; achievement in a capitalist economy will be defined by how much wealth and income can be garnered; achievement in sports will revolve around winning in competition; achievement in religion will specify success in piety; achievement in kinship will revolve around what constitutes good parenting; and so on for all distinctive institutional domains.

As these ideologies are articulated, they provide common moral premises for corporate actors as well as categoric units created by institutional differentiation. Once ideologies have taken hold, they become part of the more general culture of an institutional domain and constrain the actions of corporate units and members of categoric units. Moreover, with a common ideology, an important basis of integration within and between corporate units exists in an institutional domain and serves as a mechanism for regulating structural relations among corporate units.

(2) *Generalized symbolic media of exchange* are symbol systems that organize discourse and interaction, that structure ideologies, that provide a basis for exchanges, and that become the valued resources unequally distributed by corporate units within institutional domains (Turner 2010a,b). Table 4.1 offers a list of generalized symbolic media for prominent institutional domains; and while the notion of generalized media remains somewhat vague, I believe that these media are an important element of the culture regulating actions within an institutional domain. Until corporate units begin to use a common symbolic medium, an institutional domain cannot become elaborated and differentiated. The symbolic medium orders relations within and between corporate units of an institutional domain, while providing the key moral symbols for codifying an ideology. Since Georg Simmel's (1907 [1978]) analysis of money, functional sociologists like Talcott Parsons (1963a, b) and Niklas Luhmann (1982, 1985) have sought to develop a more robust theory of symbolic media, but unfortunately, the notion of symbolic media remains undertheorized, if not elusive. Still, without such media, relations among corporate units within a domain cannot be fully integrated, nor can an institutional domain be fully differentiated from other domains employing a different medium (Parsons and Smelser 1956). Table 4.1 represents my best judgment of symbolic media for prominent institutional domains.

However, as Jurgen Habermas (1973 [1976]) has emphasized, some media have the power to "invade" all institutional domains. For example, *money* and *power* operate within virtually all domains; and in a capitalist system, *money* can "invade" a domain and partially displace the other

**Table 4.1** Generalized symbolic media of institutional domains

Kinship	<i>Loveloyalty</i> , or the use of intense positive affective states to forge and mark commitments to others and groups of others
Economy	<i>Money</i> , or the denotation of exchange value for objects, actions, and services by the metrics inhering in money
Polity	<i>Power</i> , or the capacity to control the actions of other actors
Influence	<i>Influence</i> , or the capacity to adjudicate social relations and render judgments about justice, fairness, and appropriateness of actions
Religion	<i>Sacredness/piety</i> , or the commitment to beliefs about forces and entities inhabiting a non-observable supernatural realm and the propensity to explain events and conditions by references to these sacred forces and beings
Education	<i>Learning</i> , or the commitment to acquiring and passing on knowledge
Science	<i>Knowledge</i> , or the invocation of standards for gaining verified knowledge about all dimensions of the social, biotic, and physico-chemical universes
Medicine	<i>Health</i> , or the concern about and commitment to sustaining the normal functioning of the human body
Sport	<i>Competitiveness</i> , or the definition of games that produce winners and losers by virtue of the respective efforts of players
Arts	<i>Aesthetics</i> , or the commitment to make and evaluate objects and performances by standards of beauty and pleasure that they give observers

*Note:* These and other generalized symbolic media are employed in discourse among actors, in articulating themes, and in developing ideologies about what should and ought to transpire in an institutional domain. They tend to circulate within a domain, but all of the symbolic media can circulate in other domains, although some media are more likely to do so than others

symbolic medium in this domain. Similarly, in an authoritarian political system, *power* penetrates all domains and displaces, to a degree, other media. Still, these “cooler” symbolic media do not completely replace the unique medium of a domain, and indeed, there is always a tension between the core medium used to articulate ideologies of a domain and the “invading” symbolic medium and the ideology built from this outside medium. For example, parents who seek to “buy” (with money) their children’s love

and loyalty are often stigmatized (by the moral premises in the kinship ideology) because they have not used the appropriate symbolic medium (*loveloyalty*); and moreover, the use of money in kinship is often ineffective and, in fact, counterproductive in cementing family relations and in providing a basis for discourse and exchange. Thus, there are limits as to *how far* an outside medium can penetrate institutional domains built around alternative media.

Media from one institutional domain generally enter another domain and supplement the existing medium under intense selection pressures – most often from regulation as a social force. Money dramatically simplifies exchanges between corporate actors in two different domains – as is the case when family members become loyal workers in the economy in exchange for wages and salary (Parsons and Smelser 1956). At other times, media enter a domain to resolve internal integrative problems generating selection pressures. For instance, power from polity becomes the basis for authority<sup>4</sup> in large corporate units with complex divisions of labor; without a system of authority, the scale of corporate units would be limited. Still, at other times, symbolic media enter new institutional domains in efforts to dominate actors in that domain, as has historically been the case, for instance, when core religious actors have brought the symbolic medium of *sacredness/piety* and the ideologies of religion to familial, political, legal, and economic institutions.

Symbolic media and the ideologies that emerge are thus generally introduced by core and entrepreneurial actors in an emerging institutional domain or by actors who challenge the core in an existing domain (Abrutyn 2009a, b). When culture emerges or is transformed in a domain, core actors have typically been effective in mobilizing resources and creating new types of corporate units; and in so doing, they will have mobilized symbolic resources to legitimate their control of the material resources used to build new corporate units. When effective, these actors will have created a

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<sup>4</sup>One way to visual authority in corporate units within domains is as an “allocation” by polity. As the center of consolidated power for a society, polity allows other units to mobilize certain levels and kinds of power, mostly as authority within corporate units within institutional domains. Such allocation is necessary as corporate units become large, and as segmentation and differentiation of corporate units within a domain increases, some corporate units in non-political domains are often allowed to possess more power than others. However, when this allocation of power goes against the interests of centers of polity, the allocation of power can be pulled back, if polity still has sufficient power to do so.

symbolic medium for discourse and for articulating an ideology for an emerging domain (or, if transforming an existing domain, they will have altered its symbolic medium and ideology). When cooler symbolic media such as *money* and *power* are brought into an extant institutional domain to supplement an older medium, it is entrepreneurial actors that initiate this process. Over time, they may form new kinds of corporate units and new mechanisms for integrating these units, but to do so, they also need to use the imported media to change the existing culture of a domain. The imported media carry with them ideologies and normative expectations; and effective actors can blend these with extant symbolic media, ideologies, and norms of a domain. When this initial blending is successful, segmentation and differentiation of new units and mechanisms for integrating these units can produce a new culture that goes beyond blending. For instance, when money and market forces began to supplant older ideologies legitimating traditional bonds among actors on manorial estates during the feudal agrarian era, this change was initiated by a few key actors who “commercialized” their estates by using models of templates of corporate unit organization and integration (by market forces) evident among the emerging bourgeoisie. As they did so, they shifted the symbolic medium to *money* (away from feudal loyalty) and employed this medium to thematize the new economic order and to legitimate their actions with an ideology emphasizing virtues of profit motives in free markets.

Without a generalized symbolic medium of exchange within a domain, then, institutional ideologies would be much more difficult to formulate, whereas with a symbolic medium, the tenets of an ideology can be more readily articulated because a symbolic medium provides a language for both discourse and thematization, and hence, for the formation of moral codes. If, for example, money is the medium of a capitalist economy, this symbolic medium is the basis for discourse within the economy; and as this discourse produces themes such as “making money” or “accumulating wealth,” this thematization will be combined with other themes arising from other sources of discourse, thereby producing a range of moral codes that can become part of an economic ideology. The same would be true of kinship, as love and loyalty are subject to constant discourse and produce the range of moral premises that can be woven together into a kinship ideology. Moreover, exchanges between actors in kinship and economy can be more regularized with symbolic media, with corporate units in the economy providing money in exchange for employee loyalty for work performed in an economic corporate unit (Parsons and Smelser 1956). Moreover, since this exchange involves symbolic media that have been thematized and worked into institutional ideologies, the exchange of

money for loyalty is automatically legitimized by the respective ideologies of economy and kinship.<sup>5</sup>

An important integrative effect of the “cooler” media in the differentiation of institutional domains is that they provide a basis for inter-institutional coordination and control in response to second-order selection pressures from regulation and distribution. Without the circulation of these media, the more particularistic media of domains can impose barriers between corporate units in different domains, but if each uses authority and money, they will come to have some degree of structural and cultural equivalence, enabling their incumbents to hold elements of a common culture associated with money and power. By sharing symbolic media, coupled with patterns of equivalence, transactions between actors in different domains can occur. For example, leaders of a university can more readily negotiate contracts with leaders in a business when both money and power (in their respective corporate units) allow them to make “business” and “educational” decisions that forge relations and thus integrate the two domains. Perhaps this all is so obvious as to seem unimportant, but without the circulation of more universalistic symbolic media like *money* and *power*, institutional elaboration and differentiation would be limited.

Another effect of these highly generalized media like *money* and *power* is that, as Simmel (1907 [1978]) noted for money, they generate trust and predictability which increase their value. When money can be relied upon to bring value (through purchases) or when authority can effectively coordinate necessary actions, the predictability of actions increases, generating a diffuse sense of trust among actors. With trust, actors become willing to commit more resources to establishing and sustaining intra- and inter-corporate unit relations within and between institutional domains.

(3) *Institutional norms* are generalized expectations for how individual and collective actors are to behave. They are usually well known by all members of a society and certainly all those operating within a particular institutional domain. Institutional norms almost always carry a moral component provided by the ideology of a domain (Turner 1972, 1997, 2003). Some of these broader institutional norms offer guidelines for more specific norms within corporate units of a domain, while others indicate how transactions among actors within a domain are to occur, and at times, how transactions with actors in

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<sup>5</sup>It is this legitimization of exchange relations inhering in the ideologies forged from symbolic media that makes these exchanges resistant to change and to mobilization by actors espousing counter ideologies. Only when exchanges begin to violate basal notions of fairness will actors be receptive to mobilization by counter ideologies.

other domains are to transpire. Yet, as a system of norms becomes distinctive within a particular domain, differentiation among corporate units within and between domains will generate second-order selection pressures from regulation as a social force. As differentiation escalates, new pressures are placed on corporate actors to find new bases of integration. The result of these pressures is for corporate actors to develop new forms of structural relations (examined below) and for corporate actors in polity to consolidate power and allocate some of this power to the legal system to manage the complexity of social relations within and between institutional domains. Normative systems are thus increasingly regulated by laws, mediating agencies (e.g., courts), and enforcement agents of polity.

In sum then, selection pressures push corporate actors to develop ideologies, symbolic media, and norms as they respond to these pressures. Out of these responses comes an intra-institutional culture that allows for further institutional elaboration (i.e., emergence of new types of corporate units sharing a common culture and structurally integrated to meet selection pressures), and as these structures become more integrated and culture becomes more codified into a system of ideological precepts, the symbolic media and norms of a domain become more differentiated from other domains. On the one hand, the formation of an institutional culture allowing for differentiation reduces the selection pressures that first pushed actors to form an institution, but on the other hand, high levels of differentiation among many different domains generate second-order logistical loads and selection pressures from regulation and, potentially, from the other macrodynamic forces, particularly production, reproduction, and distribution. At a minimum, polity and law elaborate to meet these pressures from regulation, and as pressures from production (for resources to sustain differentiated actors), from reproduction (to train and sustain incumbents in corporate structures), and distribution (to distribute resources and people to diverse corporate units in differentiated domains), further elaboration and differentiation of economy, education, and religion are likely to occur. Once this next round of elaboration and differentiation is completed, selection pressures are initially reduced but, over time, a new round of second-order pressures pushes actors to transform existing institutional domains and, episodically, to differentiate new domains. Thus, there is no stable or long-term equilibrium point between selection pressures and institutional differentiation in human societies because one level of differentiation solves one set of problems only to generate new sets of second-order selection pressures. Population as a force may get this dynamo started, but once differentiation of institutional domains begins, it

tends to be self-escalating, at least up to the point where actors become incapable of responding to second-order selection pressures.

### **Embedding of Culture**

As corporate actors respond to Spencerian selection pressures from one or more macrodynamic forces or from more Durkheimian competition in resource niches, their actions are constrained by the culture of the more inclusive societal and, at times, inter-societal formations in which corporate units are embedded. These constraints are imposed by (1) the level of technology or knowledge about how to manipulate the environment, (2) texts or general narratives that are part of a society's historical traditions, (3) meta-ideologies that combine specific domain ideologies into a societal-level set of evaluative beliefs, and (4) abstract value premises about right and wrong. Obviously, societal-level culture is far more robust than this simple listing, but these dimensions of societal culture are the most relevant symbolic environment for any corporate unit as it responds to selection pressures.

As corporate units act to reduce selection pressures, they create new symbol systems or modify existing ones, and in so doing, they contribute to the development of an intra-institutional culture, which, in turn, allows for the elaboration and differentiation of an institutional domain. Yet, the emerging culture of a domain or the transformation of the culture in an existing domain is generally constrained by existing values and meta-ideologies at the societal and, at times, by the culture of inter-societal level formations. Still, as new institutional domains differentiate and/or existing ones change in significant ways, the emerging ideologies of these domains produce a new meta-ideology that alters societal-level values. And, as these values are transformed, the altered moral codes exert new constraints on the ideologies and norms in institutional domains. For example, if the ideology of capitalism emerges within the economy, it alters the meta-ideology that had consolidated the ideologies of other domains; and in so doing, it begins to shift values at the societal level of social organization. And, as values are altered, so is the nature of the constraints that they place on the culture of each institutional domain. Similarly, if the emergence of new institutional domains or the transformation of an existing domain significantly alters the technological storehouse of a society, then these new levels of technology impose new constraints, or open new opportunities, within each institutional domain (Lenski 1966; White 1959). Cultural texts that provide bases for discourse are also augmented by these ideologies as they are incorporated into how people



think about and discuss a society's traditions. Moreover, symbolic media for discourse and for exchanges within and between institutional domains also alter the broader societal culture. The moral premises implied by these media become yet one more dimension to value premises, while providing the symbols for cultural texts. The end result is that societies become more culturally integrated as texts and value premises are re-assembled to incorporate intra-institutional cultures. Similarly, institutional norms, which almost always carry both instructions for action and moral precepts are re-integrated into texts and value premises, allowing individual and corporate actors to hold a broader range of moral codes and texts in common.

Thus, the processes of institutional differentiation and institutional transformation are, on the one hand, constrained by societal-level culture, but on the other hand, they will also change societal-level culture. Such change is especially likely to occur when new institutional domains emerge or extant domains are transformed in response to Spencerian selection pressures that place demands on actors for creating new cultures and new kinds of corporate units. Under these conditions, new technologies, generalized symbolic media, ideologies, and normative systems are created and, once in place, feed back into the societal level culture, altering texts, values, and knowledge used to manipulate the environment. As a consequence, societal-level culture is reworked so as to be compatible with emerging cultures at the level of institutional differentiation and transformation, thereby increasing the integrative effects of culture. Still, there is often a time lag and, hence, conflict between older and newer cultures of institutional domains – for example, between traditional religious ideologies and new political and economic ideologies – which works against cultural integration because of inconsistencies in the ideologies of domains and contradictions in the moral codes of meta-ideology and cultural texts of the society as a whole. Under these conditions, the potential for disintegration of the culture and structure of a society increases.

The embedding of culture is also constrained by the types of community formations in which institutional domains are located. Communities provide physical space for corporate units, while also coordinating their actions through infrastructures (e.g., roads, walls, ports, market arenas and other zoning practices). When communities are segmental – that is, they are similar in size and basic structure – they are generally similar in the configuration of institutional domains that they house and, hence, the culture – symbolic media, ideologies, meta-ideologies, and norms – that allows actors in a domain to operate in a coordinated manner. Communities

become, in essence, structurally equivalent; and from this structural equivalence comes institutional equivalence, including cultural equivalence of the societal-level cultural elements filtering to communities (i.e., texts, technologies, and values) as well as the symbolic media in play, the ideologies and meta-ideologies formed from these media, and the institutional domains regulating actions of corporate units within and between domains. Even when communities are differentiated, they provide a mechanism of cultural integration within the community by creating structural and cultural equivalences within communities of a given type. For example, while a suburban community in a post-industrial society is very different than an industrial town or rural farm community, suburban communities tend to be very similar in their structure and culture because they evidence a similar pattern of infrastructural development for community activities and a similar convergence of corporate units from institutional domains; and with this convergence of the structural elements of institutional domains comes cultural convergence, with individuals and corporate units experiencing equivalence over the symbolic media they employ, the ideologies and meta-ideologies they adopt, and the normative expectations they use in regulating conduct. This structural and cultural equivalence among types of differentiated communities thus provides a basis for both societal-level and institutional integration.

### ***Structural Mechanisms of Institutional Integration***

Organizations and groups within an institutional domain will not only share cultural elements, such as ideologies, generalized symbolic media, and norms. They will also evidence similar patterns in their divisions of labor. Communities, as the third basic form of corporate units, will reveal a similar pattern of spatial ecology of their constituent organizational units that corresponds to functions performed by these units within institutional domains – e.g., specific places where government, economic, religious, medical, educational, kinship, and sport activities are conducted. This structural equivalence among corporate units contributes to a common culture, while reproducing this culture through the activities of individuals in encounters lodged in groups embedded in organizations that operate within a differentiated institutional domain. Transactions within groups inside organizational units located within functional zones of communities will be conducted in terms of the generalized medium of an institutional domain and, in larger-scale societies, through the medium of polity (*power*), law (*influence*), and

economy (*money*) which, in turn, will provide the evaluative tenets for ideologies and normative agreements that can be used in all domains.

Institutional domains are thus built up from the transactions that use and reproduce a common culture within a domain, but out of the actions of corporate units, a more purely structural as opposed to cultural basis of integration emerges. There are eight basic modes of integration that have emerged in the evolution of institutional domains in human societies (Turner 1996; Turner and Boyns 2001): (1) structural segmentation, (2) structural differentiation, (3) structural interdependence, (4) structural inclusion, (5) structural overlap, (6) structural mobility, (7) structural segregation, and (8) structural domination. Each of these is examined below.

### **Structural Segmentation**

As I noted earlier, segmentation has historically been the first response to selection pressures imposed on corporate units by population growth. It is the easiest integrative process because it simply involves reproduction of similar units to accommodate a growing population. What makes this process relatively easy is the fact that the cultural and structural template for creating additional structures already exists; actors simply carve out another kin unit such as a lineage, another village, another band, or any corporate unit that has, in the past, reduced selection pressures. By replicating similar positions and relations among these positions and by using existing cultural symbols – ideologies, generalized symbolic media, and normative agreements – the problems of attaching individuals to corporate units and controlling their actions are simplified because of structural equivalence and because of the traditions associated with a particular mode of corporate unit organization (Sailer 1978). Structural equivalence generally produces convergent behaviors and orientations among incumbents;<sup>6</sup> and this fact enables actors to understand each other within a unit and across units.

The emphasis on “institutional isomorphism” by the “New Institutionalism” (DiMaggio and Powell 1983) is, in its essence, an argument on segmentation of structures as they respond to their “fields.” For example, capitalist

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<sup>6</sup>Unless there is high intersection of parameters marking categoric unit memberships and corporate unit positions (Friedkin n.d.). When the incumbents of a position are from diverse categoric units and when their status-sets (in diverse corporate units) vary, the power of structural equivalence to produce common beliefs and outlooks declines.

structural units will tend to be structured in roughly equivalent ways because they are responding to similar environments and, at the same time, copying what has been successful in the past. Similarly, as Harrison White (1981, 1988) has argued, market forces often promote segmentation as successful competitors in markets are emulated by other organizational units within an institutional sector, but long before markets emerged, individual and collective actors could see what worked and what did not, especially as they faced intense selection pressures.

Segmentation can promote integration not just within institutional domains but also between corporate units in different domains. If the corporate units in different domains reveal similar structures – say, a division of labor organized by wage incentives and a vertical system of authority – they reveal a broad equivalence in structure, goals, and perhaps elements of culture that facilitate and regularize relations. For instance, if corporate units like universities or churches become structured more like business corporations – whether this is desirable is debatable – transactions among businesses, churches, and universities are simplified. And, when relations among corporate units across institutional domains are regularized, the overall integration of a society is increased. Thus, as generalized media like *money* and *power* circulate across domains, they tend to promote structural and cultural equivalencies among corporate units; and from this equivalence comes some degree of integration.

Yet, there are limits to the integrative effects of segmentation; and it is surely the case that many societies of the past and, potentially in the future, have been selected out because their members could not create new kinds of structures beyond segmental copies of existing units. For, if segmentation imposes barriers to structural differentiation of new kinds of corporate units in an institutional domain or across domains, the adaptive capacity of this society is likely to be reduced because it will not be able to respond adequately to selection pressures. Thus, segmentation can operate as a conservative force because of homologies and equivalences that resist transformations that come with differentiation and adaptive upgrading of a society (Parsons 1966). Whether through the inability to respond to Spencerian selection pressures (e.g., differentiate new economic, political, or legal corporate units) or Durkheimian selection pressures (e.g., differentiate new corporate units to meet competition), the viability of key sectors within an institutional domain decreases when segmentation poses barriers to differentiation, often putting pressures on other domains in what can become a cascading collapse of a society's institutional core.

## Structural Differentiation

The differentiation of corporate units within an institutional domain is the next integrative response after segmentation proves ineffective in dealing with selection pressures. Differentiation is the formation of new kinds of corporate units, revealing new patterns in divisions of labor, new cultural elements, and varying goals. Differentiation between institutional domains has historically been evident as actors sought to deal with selection pressures from increased valences of macrodynamic forces. For example, if problems of regulation and production increase, it is likely that the corporate units within economy and polity will become differentiated at some point, after segmentation proves to be an ineffective response to these two points of selection pressure. Within an institutional domain, increases in Spencerian selection pressures from macrodynamic forces and, at times, Durkheimian selection from increased competition among corporate units will also send corporate actors scrambling to find new ways to deal with these pressures. Out of their efforts come structural and cultural differentiation among units within a particular domain. For older functional theorists (e.g., Spencer 1874–94; Durkheim 1893 [1963]), differentiation was the master evolutionary trend and, in broad strokes, this point of emphasis was not wholly misplaced. For the evolution of human societies has been, by fits and starts punctuated by periods of de-differentiation and de-evolution, a process of building up societal complexity. When a new structure is created and proves effective in dealing with selection pressures, it is copied and then readjusted; and so, once differentiation proves an effective adaptive response, it is more likely to be employed when new pressures or more intense pressures are encountered by corporate units.

However, as Adam Smith (1776 [1805]) queried long ago: What is to hold the differentiated units together? Smith argued for common sentiments or morality and for an “invisible hand of order” that (mysteriously) converted self-interested actions into patterns of structural interdependence. Smith’s answer was understandably inadequate for generations of sociologists. For, even if differentiation allows a population to respond to immediate selection pressures, it creates second-order selection pressures of how to integrate the differentiated units within and between institutional domains. There are many potential points of disintegrative pressure, including (a) mounting conflicts of interests among units whose goals are at cross purposes, (b) hardening of boundaries between corporate units revealing different goals, divisions of labor, and more particularistic cultures, (c) escalating inequalities arising from the capacity of some units to hoard resources and hence deny them to other units, (d) increasing inequality and stratification

as some units reward their members more than others, and (e) rising incapacity to control and regulate the actions and interactions of diverse units such that the viability of a domain or whole society to deal with selection pressures is reduced. Once the structural equivalence and common cultures of segmenting units decrease with differentiation, then, integrative problems increase dramatically and generate selection pressures for new patterns of structural interdependence among corporate units with and between institutional domains.

### **Structural Interdependence**

Rising valences from regulation and distribution as macrodynamic forces increasingly push actors to develop mechanisms for connecting differentiated units. As units differentiate, one response to rising valences from regulation is for corporate units to enter exchange relations with other corporate units to secure needed resources. The exchange relations can be intra- or inter-institutional, as would be the case when one corporate unit within the economy provides money in exchange for commodities or services from another economic unit (intra-institutional exchange) or as is the case when family members exchange their labor power and loyalty (to come to work) for money with which to purchase what is needed to sustain family members (inter-institutional exchange). As the level of differentiation within and between institutional domains increases, distribution as a force also increases selection pressures to find ways to move people, resources, and information from one unit to another.

Markets represent one response to these selection pressures; and markets depend upon expanded infrastructures for moving resources about a territory and use of money and credit as generalized symbolic media (Braudel 1982; Collins 1990; Turner 1995, 2003; Turner and Maryanski 2008a, b). Moreover, markets generate their own second-order selection pressures from regulation, typically leading to the expansion of law as an institutional domain to regulate exchanges and to designate legitimate corporate actors in polity to enforce terms of exchange and to control the supply of money.

Markets not only help manage differentiation, they are also a major force behind further differentiation. When preferences can be individualized and expressed as demand in markets, corporate units will adjust their productive outputs to meet this demand; and once corporate units and individuals can express their preferences in markets with the expectation that corporate units will rise to meet these preferences, corporate units become more differentiated by their goals and demands for resources in markets. There is,

then, a tipping point when markets become a driving force in the evolution of societies (Collins 1990a). As markets spread, they not only link corporate units through exchange relations; they also expand the spread of money as a medium of exchange across domains. As money enters other institutional domains, it supplements (but rarely supplants) the particularized generalized symbolic medium of each institution. And, as money is interwoven into the goals, culture, and transactions of corporate units in all domains, it promotes convergence in the structure and culture of corporate units in diverse domains, thereby creating a kind of partial segmentation that can operate to meet selection pressures from regulation. Moreover, money breaks down barriers that more particularized media can impose, thus decreasing the intensity of the ideologies and endogamy of transactions imposed by the use of only one symbolic medium of exchange. In so doing, all corporate units become more cosmopolitan and, additionally, more capable of conducting transactions with all other corporate units with one common symbolic medium. True, this “colonization” by money changes the cultures of corporate units and, more broadly, the culture of an entire institutional domain (Habermas 1972), but it also allows for corporate units and individuals in these units to establish structural equivalences and interdependencies within and between institutional domains. Without this capacity of money and exchange to create structural interdependencies, differentiation will generate intense second-order selection pressures from regulation and distribution that lead to disintegration. With money and markets, the possibility of sustaining structural interdependencies reducing selection pressures from regulation and distribution increases.

Of course, markets and money (and, by extension, credit) generate their own disintegrative dynamics, revolving around (a) oscillations in the “business cycle” that always exist with markets using money and credit (with the potential of market oscillations turning into a depression), (b) fraud, corruption, misrepresentation that increase tensions between buyers and sellers in markets, (c) systematic exploitation of the disadvantaged actors in markets (Marx and Engels 1848 [1978]), and (d) market over-speculation, especially with the media of exchange in one market becoming the thing exchanged in a metamarket (Braudel 1977; Collins 1990). Thus, even as markets promote integration by extending structural interdependencies among corporate actors, markets always contain the seeds of conflict-producing inequalities or potential collapse from over-speculation, fraud, misrepresentation, and extreme oscillations. The very dynamism of free markets, then, often causes disintegration among corporate units and, hence, increased selection pressures from regulation and distribution as macrodynamic forces and, potentially, other forces as well.



Still, markets become an essential mechanism for integrating large numbers of corporate units in diverse institutional domains; and they inevitably lead to the spread of money as a symbolic medium of exchange to all other institutional domains. And, because markets also pose potential for collapse and other pathologies, they encourage the spread of power and influence from, respectively, polity and law to other institutional domains. In so doing, markets set off a cascade of integrative processes within and between institutional domains.

Alongside of markets using money and credit are what can be called “quasi-markets” that distribute resources and promote interdependencies. These quasi-markets reveal market-like properties, and hence structural equivalences to markets using money and credit, because they all involve exchanges of valued resources. But the exchanges are of non-material resources and, to a degree, are governed by the “law” of supply and demand. For instance, “marriage markets” involve actors seeking a non-monetary resource such as love under conditions of supply (indeed, internet match-making services only increase the dynamism of this quasi-market by, in essence, marketing access to this quasi-market); similarly, markets for religion include worshippers seeking sacredness which is exchanged for membership in churches, although in the case of religion there are pressures to exchange money (“offerings”) for sacredness provided by churches. Markets for educational credentials exist in industrial and post-industrial societies, with universities competing for top talent and students competing for admission to better schools, although once again there is also money involved in these transactions (sometimes from student to university and, at other times, from university to student). Markets structured for exchanges within the economy can thus provide a template for less explicitly monetary exchanges among individuals and corporate units, thereby creating structural interdependencies and equivalences among units that promote integration within and between corporate units in differentiated institutional domains.

### **Structural Inclusion**

Embedding of one structure within another, larger structure is yet another kind of response to selection pressures from regulation and distribution. With differentiation can come the emergence of corporate units of varying size and goals, often leading to the embedding of smaller within larger corporate units. Structural inclusion generates broader patterns of embeddedness in which congeries of corporate units are lodged inside of each other and, in turn, inside the broader institutional domain. Differentiation of corporate



units increases complexity but structural inclusion is a mechanism for reducing complexity by providing a common culture and location for smaller structures within a larger corporate structure. Indeed, embedding tends to increase the fractal properties in the scales of smaller to higher units which, in turn, increases the structural equivalences despite differences in size and scale. In market-driven systems, embedding represents one way to get around competition and conflict that can make corporate units vulnerable to disintegration; for, by being lodged inside of larger corporate units, smaller units can bypass competitive markets in making exchanges with the larger corporate unit.

Yet, structural inclusion among corporate units also generates disintegrative pressures. One problem is that inclusive corporate units within institutional domains can develop rigidities and be less able to respond to changes in their environments and the selection pressures – both Durkheimian and Spencerian – arising from these changes. When units share a common culture and reveal patterns of structural articulation and hierarchies of authority, the larger social unit may indeed integrate a set of corporate units but often at the cost of an incapacity to act rapidly in response to new selection pressures – thus, decreasing the fitness of an entire institutional domain. For example, the American automobile industry once evidenced even more structural inclusion than exists today, with financial service functions and suppliers of parts being part of the larger corporate structure. But, as competition from leaner and more efficient carmakers increased, American companies have been slow to respond because of the complex patterns of structural inclusion that promoted structural rigidities that decreased their fitness to sustain themselves in a resource niche (Hannan and Freeman 1977). This kind of rigidity could pose far-reaching disintegrative pressures on the American economy (and other institutional domains such as kinship and polity) should these large companies all go out of business which, at this writing, is a real possibility.

Patterns of structural inclusion of corporate units within an institutional domain can have these integrative and disintegrative effects. Similarly, structural inclusion of the corporate units of institutional domains within communities provides a powerful force of structural integration of institutions and, as I will outline in Chap. 6, societal-level integration as well. When community formations are segmental and basically the same, they will include similar configurations of corporate units in diverse domains; and in so doing, they set up structural and cultural equivalences that integrate institutional domains. When economy, kinship, religion, and polity are much the same across community structures, inclusion increases equivalences and, hence, institutional integration. Even as communities differentiate

by size, location, and activities, embedding of institutional domains within each type of community still increase integration among the corporate units of domains. Communities provide both political regulation and infrastructural development for housing the corporate units of diverse institutional domains and also for channeling interactions of actors within and between domains. Corporate units become distributed in space (e.g., neighborhoods for kinship, districts for various kinds of economic activity, locations for churches, courthouses and schools, playing fields for sports), with additional infrastructures and rules for connecting corporate units in geo-graphical space. This kind of structural equivalence, even in different types of communities, generates cultural equivalence; and as communities become increasingly similar, as they do in industrial and post-industrial societies, this structural entropy and equivalence promotes diffusion of similar cultures across communities, including the cultures of institutional domains. The result is that individuals and collective actors are plugged into, understand the salience of, and know when to employ generalized symbolic media, ideologies and meta-ideologies, and norms generated by similar configurations of institutional domains in each community.

### **Structural Overlaps**

Another response to selection pressures from regulation is the merger between parts of two or more corporate units. There can be other patterns of structural overlap among corporate units within and between institutional domains. For example, members of boards of directors of diverse firms often overlap in different corporate units within the economy or between representatives of corporate units in other domains, such as education, medicine, or religion. At times, portions of corporate units overlap, as is the case when research within universities occurs in facilities provided by corporate units in the economy; indeed, there has been a strong movement in American research universities for “research parks” near universities that share personnel and facilities. Similarly, diverse economic corporate units can share research and development facilities for key components to be marketed separately by each unit – as is often the case today with development of new fuel systems for automobiles. Or, companies can even share productive facilities, as was the case for Toyota and General Motors at their once shared production lines in Fremont, California. Increasingly, companies in capitalist economies “buy into” or form “strategic partnerships with” each other in order to spread risks, to develop new technologies, or to share expenses. Similarly, in more state managed systems, there is considerable

overlap between productive and political corporate units. With overlap comes exchanges of resources and mobility of personnel; and from these come convergences in culture and structural equivalences – all of which promote integration within and between institutional domains.

Another type of structural overlap in differentiating societies is between membership in categoric units and positions in the divisions of labor of corporate units. To the degree that the correlation between categoric unit membership and location in the divisions of labor of corporate units is low, parameters<sup>7</sup> defining categoric units will not be consolidated with divisions of labor. In particular, a low correlation between nominal parameters marking categoric unit membership – e.g., gender, race/ethnicity, religious affiliation – and positions in the divisions of labor of corporate units promotes integration because it assures that there will be intersections among categoric units in diverse corporate units in various institutional domains – e.g., economy, education, science, medicine, sports, law, and polity. As Peter Blau (1977, 1994) argued, intersection of parameters marking categoric unit membership promotes high rates of interaction, mutual understandings and acceptance of differences, and formation of common meanings by virtue of playing similar roles in corporate units.

Moreover, since corporate units distribute resources unequally, a low correlation between positions in corporate units distributing unequal shares of resource and categoric unit memberships will reduce consolidation of categoric unit memberships with class locations in the broader stratification system. In this case, structural overlap dramatically reduces the disintegrative potential that comes with high levels of inequality and formation of discrete classes that are disproportionately populated by members of a particular categoric unit. As long as nominal parameters are distributed across all levels in the divisions of labor in corporate units in all institutional domains (a rare situation in the history of human societies), this form of structural overlap decreases disintegrative potential in a society.

Yet, differentiation within and between corporate units and differentiation of categoric units, especially ones based upon nominal parameters,<sup>8</sup> also poses the potential for consolidation of parameters. Humans notice differences, and they often discriminate on the basis of differences, with the result that consolidation of parameters often occurs. To the extent that place in the

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<sup>7</sup>*Parameters* are the criteria used to classify individuals as “different” and, thereby, to place them in distinctive categoric units. See Blau (1977, 1994).

<sup>8</sup>*Nominal parameters* place individuals into discrete categories like gender and ethnicity.

divisions of labor of corporate units in each institutional domain is correlated with membership in a categoric unit, corporate units generate class formation and inequalities between classes. The result is tension and potential conflict within corporate units and, more generally, across institutional domains. In particular, if access to high-level positions in corporate units within economic, educational, and political institutional domains is correlated with categoric unit memberships, especially those based upon nominal parameters like skin color, the disintegrative potential increases. Members of categoric units will experience discrimination and will resent the unequal distribution of resources in corporate units. Moreover, since the resources distributed in economy, polity, and education determine access to the valued resources in all other institutional domains, there is a cascading effect of a high correlation of categoric unit membership with positions in the divisions of labor of corporate units in economy, polity, and education.

### **Structural Mobility**

The movement of incumbents through ranks within corporate units and across corporate units within and between domains has some of the same effects as structural overlap. Differentiation, per se, promotes mobility by creating new positions, and as individuals move into these positions, vacancy chains emerge that promote even more mobility (White 1970; Blau 1994). Market dynamics dramatically increase structural mobility not only by generating new kinds of corporate units that seek incumbents but also by creating labor markets for distributing labor in terms of specialized skills often tied to movement through the system of educational (corporate) units.

Mobility increases integration in a number of different ways. One is that individuals who move through the division of labor in a corporate unit acquire the culture of that unit and, hence, have common worldviews and understandings of others at different points in the division of labor. Similarly, mobility across different corporate units within and between institutional domains increases the common experiences of individuals. Moreover, mobility per se tends to break down consolidation of parameters marking categoric units, thereby lowering the correlation between nominal categoric unit membership and social class position and, hence, the tensions associated with high levels of stratification. In fact, if inter-corporate unit mobility is high, then the vacancy chains generated allow for greater mobility across social class (via resource-giving positions in corporate units), thus decreasing the tensions along social class boundaries. Mobility also has the effect of

breaking down the salience of categoric unit membership by increasing rates of interaction between members of different categoric units; for, as individuals in different categoric units interact over time in positions within diverse corporate units, the salience of the parameters marking categoric unit membership decreases (Turner 2002), thereby reducing potential tensions and conflicts.

Mobility is, however, not wholly integrative. In societies with high rates of mobility within and between corporate units in diverse institutional domains, those who cannot be mobile suffer an escalated sense of relative deprivation (Merton 1968: 281), leading to the arousal of anger that, if correlated with categoric unit membership, can lead to inter-categoric unit conflict. This anger can be aggravated by the stigma imposed by the moral yardstick of ideologies within domains and the meta-ideologies that emerge across domains to justify inequalities in the stratification system, with the consequence that those who have not been mobile must suffer the shame of not measuring up to moral codes. Since shame often transmutes into anger (Turner 2007), more volatile points of conflict in a society may emerge.

### **Structural Segregation**

The separation in time and space of corporate units with diverging goals is yet another response to selection pressures from regulation. Differentiation always creates some degree of structural segregation among corporate units in diverse institutional domains, often providing clear guidelines through what Niklas Luhmann (1982) has termed “entrance and exit” rules specifying when and where individuals are to be engaged by the structure and culture of a corporate unit. Segregation of family from work, for example, allows for integration of these two corporate units in time and place, marking *when* the culture and structure of one is more relevant than the other (Parsons 1951: 302). The same would be true for family members who go to schools or church. Thus, structural segregation is often critical to regularizing the transitions that individuals must make as they move across corporate units within and between differentiated institutional spheres; and typically there are rules and ideologies governing when, where, and how individuals are to cross corporate unit boundaries.

At times, segregation is more complete and separates corporate units that might come into conflict in pursuing their respective goals or in the moral codes of their diverging ideologies. As part of a legal system or as places for dumping insurgents by the polity, prisons are one example of segregation.

Ethnic ghettoization within communities is often a way to partition a society by separating members of a categoric unit and the corporate units organizing their activities, as was certainly the case for whites and African Americans for the whole of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century.

Structural segregation arising from institutional differentiation always generates some tensions because of the incompatible or at least different goals of diverse corporate units which, if placing obligations on individuals at the same time and place, would create intra- and inter-personal conflicts that could evolve into corporate unit conflicts. When segregation of categoric unit members occurs, particularly those marked by a nominal parameter like skin color, it almost always is consolidated with other parameters and limits access to corporate units and positions in these corporate units, thereby contributing to a hardening of social class boundaries and to the respective shares of resources for individuals in different social classes. In so doing, segregation increases the disintegrative potential in a society.

Structural segregation can also insulate corporate units from each other to the point where they develop divergent cultures. If the ideologies, use of symbolic media, and norms of corporate units within an institutional domain vary too much, segregation may not be sufficient to inhibit conflict. Moreover, if these divergent cultures are associated inequalities in resources or consolidated with categoric unit memberships and become a part of the class system, then conflict becomes more likely, exerting intense selection pressures on a society.

### **Structural Domination**

The consolidation of power always becomes necessary with population growth, segmentation, and differentiation. Once power is consolidated, domination as a property of societies become evident (Weber 1922 [1968]); and depending upon the configuration of the four basic bases of power within polity, the patterns of domination will vary. If polity has a relative monopoly on coercive power and if polity uses material incentives issued through a moderately centralized administrative structure that is more co-optive than coercive, then the actions of political actors are likely to be integrative. Moreover, domination by this form of polity is most likely to cause the evolution of an autonomous legal system, which, in turn, greatly expands the capacity for coordination and control of individuals and the units organizing their activities. This form of domination by polity and law generally emerges in highly differentiated societies in which resources are distributed through markets. For, when markets are

highly dynamic, polity will increasingly rely upon the material incentive base of power. Yet, if resentments eventually emerge over who is getting how much subsidy from polity, then polity often morphs into one where the administrative and coercive bases of power are increasingly used, thereby ratcheting up the resentments against the overuse of power.

Other configurations of the bases of power can, for a time, effectively control and coordinate actions of individuals and corporate units, but they tend to be counter-productive in the long run and, in fact, systematically generate disintegrative pressure. If the coercive and administrative bases of power dominate, tight control and use of force will, as noted above, generate resentments that can lead to conflict. Also, the administrative costs of coercion and monitoring are always high, thus eroding the resources available for other kinds of productive, distributive, and reproductive activities. If the symbolic base of power dominates, the moral ideals of the ideologies will eventually come into conflict with the realities of administering power; and as this inconsistency between ideals and reality increases, the coercive and administrative bases of power are increasingly consolidated. As Weber (1922 [1968]) noted, the “routinization of charisma” after a successful revolution generally leads a new regime of traditional domination that sets the stage for future conflict. A purely symbolic base of power is thus very unstable and, in the end, transmutes into a coercive-administrative base of power, which, in turn, will generate tensions. These tensions come from at least two outcomes of this base of power. One arises from the resentments of being constantly monitored by administrative structures and threatened by the potential use of coercive power; the other emerges as inequalities increase as those with power usurp resources from individuals and corporate units.

Structural domination can also occur outside of polity when corporate units or oligopolies of corporate units control the resources available to subordinate units. This kind of domination – whether economic, kin-based, religious, or educational – can generate integration for a time because the dominant units control the flow of resources and the nature of transactions. They also establish the cultural and organizational template for subordinate corporate units, thereby standardizing organizational structures to some degree, imposing normative agreements and dictating the generalized symbolic media, and hence, the terms of exchange. Yet, domination inevitably generates resentments, and if oligarchs are too strong, they will often threaten the power of polity or the independence of the legal systems. As a consequence, unless oligarchs are backed by polity and legitimated by law and meta-ideologies of institutional domains, they are generally a short-term solution to selection pressures from regulation.



These mechanisms of integration arise from the efforts of actors responding to selection pressures, primarily from regulation but also the other forces. By innovation, borrowing and diffusion, or trial and error experimentation, corporate actors build up connections with each other, and in so doing, they make an institutional domain distinctive, both structurally and culturally. In Table 4.2, I have summarized briefly the integrative effects of these mechanisms, but as the third column in Table 4.2 emphasizes, these efforts to build up institutional structures can also fail and raise the disintegrative potential within and between institutional domains. Institutions as they emerge from these halting integrative efforts by corporate actors are always a precarious and temporary accomplishment since the elaboration and differentiation of institutional domains generate second-order selection pressures, which inevitably increase the disintegrative potential of a society.

## **Varying Patterns in the Integrative Bases of Institutional Domains**

To some degree, all mechanisms of integration are used by all institutional domains, but there are variations in the relative use of these mechanisms. Indeed, the culture and structure of an institutional domain, as well as its boundaries, will reflect varying mixes among the cultural and structural mechanisms of integration reviewed above. One key difference in the mix of integrative mechanisms is between those mechanisms that generate intra-institutional integration and those that facilitate inter-institutional integration. Indeed, the processes promoting intra-institutional integration often work at cross purposes against those that promote inter-institutional integration, and vice-versa. Intra-institutional mechanisms generally promote increased autonomy of an institution and, hence, its differentiation from other institutions, but in so doing, the boundaries created often work to decrease inter-institutional relations. Indeed, as institutions become more autonomous, selection pressures from regulation and distribution increase, causing actors to develop inter-institutional mechanisms. These mechanisms promoting inter-institutional relations decrease institutional autonomy and the boundaries between institutions; and while these inter-institutional mechanisms may decrease, to a degree, intra-institutional integration, they raise the adaptive potential of a society by forging structural ties and common cultures across institutional domains. Let me first examine the key integrative mechanisms for intra-institutional integration, and then turn to the inter-institutional mechanisms.



**Table 4.2** Selection pressures, modes of integration, and paths of disintegration among corporate units in the genesis of institutional domains

Integrative mechanism	Operation	Disintegrative potential
1. Segmentation	Reproduction of similar corporate units, revealing structural equivalence and common cultures	Creates structural and cultural resistance to differentiation of new corporate units to respond to new and more intense selection pressures
2. Structural differentiation	Creation of new types of corporate units with distinctive divisions of labor, cultures, and goals within and between institutional domains	Generates problems of how to manage relations among differentiated units, especially problems of conflicts of interest, hardening boundaries and divergences of cultures, increasing inequalities, and patterns of domination among differentiated corporate units
3. Structural interdependence	Formation of regularized relations among corporate units within and between institutional domains, primarily by expansion of markets using money and credit to exchange resources by development of distributive infrastructures for moving people, resources, and information across territories	Inherent in all markets using money and credit, and particularly in market systems that reveal metamarkets in which medium of exchange becomes a commodity in speculative exchange, are disintegrative potentials from market oscillations, fraud and corruption, exploitation of disadvantaged, and over-speculation in metamarkets
4. Structural inclusion	Embedding of smaller corporate units inside larger units within differentiated institutional domains, thereby integrating the structures, cultures, symbolic media, norms, and exchanges across congeries of corporate units	Can create rigidities across embedded corporate units that reduce capacity of large sectors of an institutional domain from responding to selection pressures
5. Structural overlap	Promotes intersection of parameters and locations in the divisions of labor in corporate units within and among institutional domains, thereby increases rates of interaction that reduce salience of categoric units and social classes	Creates the potential for consolidation of categoric units defined by nominal parameters with locations on the hierarchical divisions of labor of corporate units, thereby correlating inequalities in resources with categoric unit membership in ways that increase social class stratification

(continued)

**Table 4.2** (continued)

Integrative mechanism	Operation	Disintegrative potential
6. Structural mobility	Leads to movement within and between corporate units in diverse institutional domains, thus increasing rates of interaction that create common cultures, reduce the salience of parameters marking categoric units, and weaken class boundaries	Increases the relative deprivation among those who are not mobile, often stigmatizing them in terms of the morality of ideologies for each institutional domain and, as a result, arousing conflict generating negative emotions against those who have been mobile
7. Structural segregation	Separates in time and space through entrance and exit rules incumbency in corporate units with varying goals using different symbolic media and imposing potentially conflicting cultural expectations	Promotes divergence in cultures of segregated units, often to the point of generating conflict, and if segregation of corporate units is correlated with inequalities in resources and consolidated with categoric unit membership, the resulting class system will generate even more potential for conflict
8. Structural domination	Consolidation of power to regulate and control actions of other corporate units; and when consolidation is consolidated in polity, the evolution of law increases the capacity to coordinate and regulate relations among corporate units. When corporate units within institutional domains are able to mobilize power, they provide the cultural and structural template for the organization of subordinate corporate units, coordinating the actions and regulating transaction among units	When consolidation of power revolves around its coercive and administrative bases, it generates resentments against tight monitoring and enforcement of corporate units by polity, while inevitably increasing inequalities through resource usurpation which, in turn, increases class tensions and potential for conflict. Similarly, when corporate units or alliances among corporate units within an institutional domain possess power, this power can generate resentments among subordinate units

## ***Intra-Institutional Integration***

### **Bases of Cultural Integration**

As core actors within an institutional domain mobilize resources and create a distinctive symbolic medium for discourse, thematization, exchange, and distribution, they promote integration *within* an institutional domain. At the cultural level, a symbolic medium gives individual and collective actors not only a resource for exchange but a medium for discourse and thematization that, in turn, can become the basis for (a) an institutional ideology imposing constraints on the goals of corporate units, (b) a system of the normative rules for governing the behaviors of actors in the divisions of labor with corporate units, and (c) a medium of value for exchanges between corporate units. And, the more pervasive is this institutional culture and the more it can exclude media from other institutional domains, the more internally cohesive will an institutional domain become. Yet, at the same time, as this culture dominates, it reduces the likelihood of exchanges between corporate units in different domains, or it can lead corporate units within one domain to launch an invasion of the culture and structural patterns of integration of other domains, as is the case, for example, when polity or religion seek to control the culture and structure of other institutional domains.

### **Bases of Structural Integration**

At a more structural level, segmentation promotes intra-institutional integration by producing patterns of structural equivalence among corporate units and their divisions of labor, while at the same time, promoting a common culture across corporate units. Other structural mechanisms can augment segmentation. For example, high rates of mobility across segmented units, structural overlaps among segmented units, embedding or inclusions of smaller units within larger versions of segmented units, and association of categoric unit membership with place in the division of labor of segmented corporate units all work to promote intra-institutional integration. Kinship has often revealed this kind of structural integration. For example, the nuclear family was the structural core of hunting and gathering bands, with the segmentation of more such units accommodating initial population growth. With the proliferation of nuclear families, structural equivalence and common culture could integrate bands across a larger regional population.

Mobility across families (through marriage), overlaps when families merged for a time, and association of categoric units such as sex and age with places in the division of families could all be integrative in segmented systems like the nuclear kinship structure in hunting and gathering bands, or today in post-industrial societies. At times, there may have been domination by central nuclear units – say, for example, nuclear units of the elderly – in the minimal sense of using the honor of their position to influence others to form similar units and to maintain the culture of the family and band. Indeed, for most of human history, segmentation, structural equivalence, common culture, association of age and gender with roles in the division of labor in kinship, mobility across like-nuclear units, occasional overlaps among nuclear units, and disproportionate influence of nuclear units composed of categoric units like age and gender were all that was needed to integrate these simple societies. Émile Durkheim’s (1893 [1963]) portrayal of this level of integration as “mechanical” solidarity was accurate, at least in broad strokes.

### ***Inter-Institutional Integration***

As populations grow and are under selection pressures to differentiate, however, new kinds of corporate units emerge, and institutional domains begin to differentiate. As a result, new patterns of cultural and structural integration are likely to arise. If they cannot emerge in a society under selection pressures from population, production, distribution, and regulation, then disintegration and/or conquest by another population becomes ever more likely.

### **New Bases of Cultural Integration**

Differentiation of new institutional domains increases the number of symbolic media being used for discourse, thematization, ideological formation, and distribution as scarce resources. Moreover, differentiation of an autonomous economy will increase the level of technology, slowly at first but, eventually, at an ever-accelerating rate of innovation; and as the store of knowledge about how to manipulate the environment grows, it has effects not only on the economy but also on all other institutional domains as well. As diverse ideologies from differentiating domains are merged into meta-ideologies, values generalize and begin to reflect the moral standards of the dominant institutional ideologies. And, as different symbolic media are

being used to thematize and create new intra-institutional texts, the body of texts of a society expands and becomes increasingly differentiated. Thus, institutional differentiation dramatically alters the society-level culture and, hence, the cultural codes guiding activities of corporate actors and individuals in a society. And, with differentiation among domains, corporate units segment and differentiate, thereby adding new cultural texts, moral codes, and technologies to the general culture of a society.

Differentiation among and within institutional domains generates selection pressures for structural integration across institutional domains. Some symbolic media begin to circulate across domains, and such is especially likely to be the case for *money* as markets emerge in response to selection pressures for distribution and regulation. As these media circulate, they break the hold of a single medium within a domain. Similarly, power from polity begins to circulate in all domains as systems of authority within and between differentiated corporate units are used to coordinate divisions of labor. Eventually, influence from law circulates and regulates relations among corporate units with and between domains. Later, as science emerges and expands with ideologies and norms built from discourse over knowledge-production, this medium also circulates among a larger set of institutional domains. Similarly, as selection pressures cause the differentiation of education, *learning* as a general symbolic medium circulates through corporate units in diverse domains. The greater is the number of generalized symbolic media in circulation, the greater is the reach of each medium across institutional domains; and the greater is the number of institutional domains penetrated by diverse symbolic media, the more likely are the cultures of diverse domains to converge, allowing for exchanges using diverse symbolic media, discourse and thematization in terms of several media, text production using multiple media, and meta-ideologies containing the moral codes of varying institutional spheres. These trans-institutional cultures are not as well integrated as those mechanical cultures of undifferentiated societies composed of a few segmented structures; indeed, there is often conflict and contradiction among elements of the hybrid cultures of diverse domains, and some cultures like those in kinship and religion often resist penetration by external symbolic media, texts, and ideologies. Yet, without the circulation of symbolic media and institutional ideologies that, to a degree, break down the narrow and particularistic cultures of each domain, society-wide and inter-societal integration becomes difficult. Indeed, without the formation of meta-ideologies built up by blending ideologies of diverse domains, without the movement of values to a higher level of abstraction and inclusion, and without the incorporation of key moral tenets of meta-ideologies, cultural integration of a differentiated society is difficult.

## New Bases of Structural Integration

Structural differentiation and integration are greatly facilitated by the cultural changes outlined above. Indeed, on the one hand, changes in culture represent responses to differentiation of new kinds of corporate units in emerging institutional domains, or in the transformation of existing domains. On the other hand, alterations of culture facilitate differentiation and integration among corporate units by providing meta-ideologies and highly generalized value premises that can be interpreted and applied by diverse corporate units in different institutional domains.

At the same time, as differentiation accelerates, other structural mechanisms increasingly come into play. Corporate units in different institutional domains become able to exchange their respective symbolic media; and they often employ the same media, such as *money*, *power* and *influence*, to structure their divisions of labor. As a consequence, the structural equivalence among differentiated corporate units in diverse domains increases. Moreover, rates of mobility within corporate units of a domain and across corporate units in different domains also increases awareness of cultures across a larger array of domains. This mobility and convergence of experiences are facilitated by the development of institutional norms that are learned by all individuals in a society, with the result that they can understand the culture and expectations of key roles in virtually all domains of differentiated societies. Mass media of all types greatly extends learning of roles in diverse domains.

Other structural mechanisms such as structural overlaps become much more likely with differentiation and markets distributing resources, people, and information. Structural inclusion of smaller in larger corporate units increases as some units become larger and more central within a domain. And external domination by centers of power in polity using market incentives more than coercion and tight administration allow for domination that does not produce the same tensions and potential for conflict as domination by a polity organized around its coercive and administrative bases of power. And, when polity is less coercive and dominates by manipulating material incentives, it typically encourages the autonomy of a legal domain in which law enactment, adjudication, and enforcement all work to increase coordination among individual and corporate actors in diverse domains. And, to the degree that mobility of individuals within and between corporate units breaks the consolidation of categorical units with locations in the divisions of labor of resource-distributing corporate units, higher rates of interaction among members of diverse categorical

units in a wider array of corporate units will promote integration by reducing the salience of categoric units (Turner 2002), and particularly as patterns of class formation are not correlated with nominal parameters defining members of categoric units.

The resulting integration is “messy” and often chaotic, but built into such chaotic relations among diverse corporate units in differentiated institutional domains is flexibility and adaptability of not only individuals in corporate units and corporate units in resource niches, but also of the broader society and, potentially, the inter-societal systems in which a society, or more accurately, some of its key institutions are embedded. Thus, the configuration of integrative mechanisms of integration that emerges under selection pressures has a very large effect on the viability of a society, as will be explored in Chap. 6.

It is, of course, difficult to address the issue of integration and avoid normative or ideological biasing of arguments. If, however, we maintain an evolutionary definition of integration as those patterns of relationships among corporate and categoric units that increase the capacity of a society to sustain itself over long periods of time in an environment, perhaps some of this biasing can be mitigated. Another way to limit biases is to formulate the discursive generalizations outlined above into a more formal set of principles on institutional dynamics.

## Elementary Principles on Institutional Dynamics

6. The degree of *inter*-institutional differentiation and the level of autonomy among institutional domains in a society are a positive and additive function of
  - A. The level of selection pressures which, in turn, is a positive function of
    1. The number of macrodynamic forces exerting pressure
    2. The intensity of the valences of these forces
  - B. The availability of entrepreneurial actors to mobilize material and symbolic resources in response to selection pressures
  - C. The ability of entrepreneurial actors to use symbolic resources to develop a distinctive culture which, in turn, is a positive and multiplicative function of
    1. The capacity to develop a generalized symbolic medium of exchange, discourse, and thematization
    2. The ability to use the generalized symbolic medium to articulate a coherent institutional ideology

3. The ability to develop institutional norms for regulating conduct within and between corporate units in a domain

D. The ability of entrepreneurial actors to use material and symbolic resources to create new kinds of corporate units

E. The ability of entrepreneurial actors and those following the lead of these actors to forge a cultural and structural boundary marking off an institutional domain which, in turn, is a positive and additive function of

1. The conditions listed under 6-B–6-D above

2. The level of cultural integration among corporate units in a domain which, in turn, is a positive and additive function of

a. The degree to which one generalized symbolic medium dominates discourse and exchanges within and between corporate units in a domain

b. The distinctiveness of, and consensus among actors over, the ideology constructed from the symbolic medium

c. The degree to which norms regulating relations among corporate units reinforce the ideology of a domain

3. The ratio of segmented to differentiated corporate units in a domain

4. The level of structural integration among corporate units within a domain which, in turn, is a negative function of (a) the degree of structural interdependencies created by markets and (b) the penetration symbolic media from other institutional domains into discourse, exchanges, and ideological formation in the culture of a domain, while being a positive and additive function of

a. The rate of intra-institutional exchange using the generalized symbolic medium unique to an institutional domain

b. The rate of mobility of individuals across corporate units within a domain

c. The level of structural overlap among corporate units in a domain

d. The degree of structural inclusion and embedding of corporate units in a domain

e. The degree of structural segregation in time and place of corporate units in a domain from those in other domains

f. The degree to which central corporate units in a domain dominate other corporate units in a domain

g. The degree to which key positions and roles in corporate units in a domain also define categoric unit memberships of their incumbents



7. The degree of *intra*-institutional differentiation in a society is a positive and multiplicative function of
  - A. The degree of inter-institutional differentiation which, in turn, is a function of the conditions listed under 6-A–6-D above
  - B. The rate and extent of circulation of diverse generalized symbolic media across institutional domains
  - C. The degree of differentiation of categoric units among members of a population
  - D. The size of a population
  - E. The diversity of resource niches within an institutional domain
  - F. The level of competition within any resource niche within an institutional domain
  - G. The rate and extent of exchange of corporate units in one domain with corporate units in other domains
  - H. The intensity of Spencerian selection pressures from each of the macrodynamic forces
  - I. The level of cultural and structural integration across differentiated institutional domains which is a function of the conditions listed under 8 below
  
8. The degree of *inter*-institutional integration across differentiated institutional domains is a positive and additive function of
  - A. The level of consensus among individual and corporate units over societal-level values and meta-ideologies
  - B. The extent to which the generalized symbolic medium of each differentiated domain circulates among corporate units in other domains
  - C. The degree to which markets using money and quasi-markets distribute resources among corporate units within and between domains
  - D. The degree to which the consolidation of power revolves around the use of material incentives in markets, secular cultural symbols, moderate levels of administration, and only strategic use of coercion
  - E. The degree to which polity sustains an autonomous legal system capable of developing universalistic laws for regulating relations among individuals and corporate units, for adjudicating disputes among both individual and corporate actors, and for enforcement of laws and adjudicative decisions
  - F. The degree to which membership in categoric units, positions in corporate units within institutional domains, and shares of valued resources are uncorrelated with each other
  - G. The overall rate of mobility of individuals across corporate units within and between institutional domains which, in turn, is a negative

- function of the level of stratification in a society, while being a positive function of 8-F above
- H. The ratio of segmentation to differentiation among basic types of community corporate units and, thereby, the degree of structural and cultural equivalence among communities
9. The degree of integration within an institutional domain is an inverse function of the degree of structural differentiation in this domain, while being a positive and additive function of
- A. The extent to which the conditions listed in 8-A and 8-H exist
- B. The degree to which a generalized symbolic medium emerges within a domain to direct discourse, thematization, and ideological formation within a domain
- C. The degree to which a generalized symbolic medium and the ideology built from this medium are incorporated in the norms regulating conduct of actors within and between corporate units in a domain
- D. The degree to which symbolic media from other institutional domains, and the ideologies and normative expectations from these outside domains, do not conflict with the culture of a domain as described in 9-A–9-C above
- E. The degree to which the culture and structure of a domain is dominant over that of other domains
- F. The degree to which the same types of corporate units within a domain are structurally embedded within segmented community corporate units
- G. The degree to which a domain evidences boundaries vis-à-vis other institutional domains which, in turn, is an inverse function of the rates of exchange of corporate actors in a domain with actors in other domains and the rates of circulation of other symbolic media, ideologies, and norms from outside a domain, while being a positive and additive function of
1. The degree of structural inclusion of corporate units within a domain
  2. The degree of structural overlap among corporate units within a domain
  3. The rates of mobility among individuals across corporate units within a domain

## Conclusion

These two principles are long but, still, relatively simple. Much of what occurs in empirical cases is historically contingent and, hence, not amenable to formal theorizing. A general theory can only state the basic conditions

under which institutional differentiation and autonomy occur – that is, under selection pressures and under conditions where entrepreneurial actors are able to mobilize resources and initiate the process of building the culture and the corporate units of an emerging or transforming domain. Statements of the conditions causing institutional differentiation and integration also imply their opposite: the failure of institutions to develop autonomy and differentiate. Similarly, the statements on the integration of an institutional domain also imply their opposite: the inability to integrate with culture and with segmentation of the corporate units of an emerging domain. The same is true of the selection pressures from regulation and distribution that increase as domains differentiate from each other; if these cultural and structural mechanisms of integration across domains cannot be put into place because of on-the-ground historical conditions, then the disintegrative potential of a society increases, at least in the long run.

In many ways, both early and later functional theories understood the dynamics of institutional domains better than other general theories in sociology. Indeed, there has been either a specialization of institutional analysis into middle range theories about economy, family, education, religion, science, law, and so on, or a conflation of organizational analysis (a type of corporate unit) with institutions. What is needed, I believe, is a distinctive theory of institutional dynamics; and for all of their warts and blemishes, functional theories provide us with the best leads. I have tried to take these leads and convert them into theoretical principles that by-pass the well-documented problems with sociological functionalism (see Turner and Maryanski 1979). These principles do not explain the whole of the macro-level social universe, only the dynamics of institutions as they evolve, differentiate, and integrate.

As I emphasized in Chap. 1, the corporate units of institutional domains distribute valued resources, and hence, stratification systems in a society are created within institutional domains. Each corporate unit within an institutional domain distributes the valued resource inherent in its symbolic medium – whether this medium be *money, love, power, influence, learning, knowledge, competitiveness, or piety/sacredness*. At the same time, corporate units often distribute other media circulating across domains, most typically *money, influence, power, learning, and knowledge*, with the result that there can be multiple resources distributed unequally by any given corporate unit. As resources are distributed unequally, stratification systems are formed; and while institutional differentiation gets these stratifying dynamics going, once in place, they reveal dynamics of their own.

Functional theorists were often criticized for ignoring conflict – a criticism that was only partially true – and then for proceeding to outline rather

narrow views of stratification as tied to economy and polity as institutional domains (distributing money and power) and, perhaps, education (as the domain distributing prestige). The result was for stratification analysis to become strangely separated from the full range of institutional domains evident in complex societies. The consequence of this failure was that theoretical predictions on the dynamics of stratification have often proved to be inaccurate. This same problem exists with non-functional theories of stratification; they typically focus on just a few institutional systems as they distribute resources unequally, but in fact, all institutional domains distribute unequally their own symbolic medium and often that of other domains, making systems of stratification in differentiated societies much more complex and dynamic than current variants of stratification theory argue. Moreover, the institutional ideologies and meta-ideologies that legitimate unequal distribution are much more than “superstructure” imposed by those with power; they are part of the process of institutional differentiation itself and, thus, are far more important in the dynamics of legitimating stratification systems than most theories of stratification recognize.

At the very least, these are the conclusions that point me in a somewhat different direction as I move into the analysis of stratification systems. These systems are more complex than typically conceptualized by sociologists because they are built from institutional dynamics that, as societies evolve, distribute symbolic media as valued resources and then use these same symbolic media to articulate ideologies legitimating the emergent system of stratification. Let us see, then, where a somewhat different perspective takes us in reformulating theories of stratification.



## Chapter 5

# The Dynamics of Stratification Systems

The first human societies were not stratified. Nomadic bands of hunter-gatherers worked very hard to minimize inequalities of power and prestige (Boehm 1993, 1999; Turner and Maryanski 2008a, b). Material inequality was easy to manage because possessions had to be carried by hand from camp to camp, thereby restricting a person's ability to accumulate material wealth. The fact that studied nomadic hunter-gatherers impose both subtle and obvious negative sanctions on those who would seek to claim power or too much honor suggests previous experiences with the disruptive effects of inequality on band cohesion. Inequalities always generate tension and increase the potential for conflict; and in early hunting and gathering bands, individuals soon learned that internal tension and conflict reduced the fitness of the band. And so, a normative system limiting claims to honor, power, and prestige was put into place and passed down across generations for millennia.

When members of bands began to settle down near sources of water, however, inequality appeared. Selection pressures from production, distribution, and regulation all led to the consolidation of power, the production of surplus wealth, and to status differences among individuals in settlements. Thus, the Big Bang of sociocultural evolution that came with larger, more settled populations not only caused institutional differentiation but also a dramatic rise in inequality. Stratification became a permanent feature of human societies (Lenski 1966; Turner 1984b); and inevitably, the dynamics driving stratification are often volatile and escalate the level of internal conflict within societies.

A stratification system consists of four basic properties (Turner 1984a, b): (1) the unequal distribution of valued resources to members of a population; (2) formation of subpopulations or *classes* sharing similar levels and profiles of resources and, as a result, homogeneity in spending patterns, behaviors, affiliations, cultures, and lifestyles; (3) rank-ordering of these subpopulations on a scale of relative worth; and (4) mobility of individuals across class

boundaries. The empirical valences for each of these fundamental properties define the stratification system in a society. A society is highly stratified when it reveals very high levels of inequality, distinct classes marked by similar resource shares and homogeneity among members of each class, linear rankings of classes on a scale of perceived worth, and low rates of inter-class mobility. Conversely, a society is not highly stratified when it displays lower levels of inequality in the distribution of resources, heterogeneous subpopulations evidencing varying levels and profiles of resources that make classes difficult to discern, unclear rank-orderings of classes on a scale of worth, and high rates of inter-class mobility. Each of these fundamental elements and their relations to each other constitute variable properties, and so, our goal in developing some principles of stratification in human societies is to denote the conditions and forces that increase or decrease the values for inequality, class formation, ranking-ordering of classes, and inter-class mobility.

Stratification systems vary not only by these fundamental properties – that is, their degree of inequality, class formation, linearity in ranking of classes, and mobility – but also by their level of integration and conflict potential. Stratification is a tension- and conflict-generating machine, with the likelihood and intensity of conflict related to the properties of a stratification system and the mechanisms by which it is integrated. Integrated does not mean that a stratification system is pleasant or functional in any sense; integrated only denotes the degree to which the structural properties of the system and the culture legitimating this system operate to sustain the system over time – for better or worse in terms of the human misery or prosperity. Integration is thus a value-neutral term that does not denote what is good or bad, but simply how inequalities in what people value are sustained over time or, alternatively, how inequalities cause disintegration of the system and perhaps the larger society as well. Thus, after reviewing the properties and dynamics inherent in these properties of stratification, I will turn to the mechanism by which such systems are integrated and, then, to the conditions in stratification causing conflict, disintegration, and social change.

## **Fundamental Properties of Stratification Systems**

### ***The Unequal Distribution of Valued Resources***

Stratification of a population in a society begins with the unequal distribution of valued resources. As I have emphasized, the resources distributed are

also the generalized symbolic media of exchange, discourse, and ideological formation within differentiated institutional domains. With some justification, sociology has historically emphasized *money* or *material wealth*, *power*, and *prestige* as the key resources that are unequally distributed, but as societies differentiate, many more resources come into play. Yet, inequalities in the distribution of *material wealth* and *power* are the most important resources in stratification systems because *money* and *power* generally facilitate access to all other resources.

### **Inequalities in Material Wealth**

Inequality in the distribution of material wealth – objects of value and the money to buy them – is obviously related to the level of economic surplus (Lenski 1966; Turner 1984a, b). Thus, inequality begins when selection pressures from production as a force lead actors to develop and use new technologies to gather more resources, to convert these into goods and services, and distribute these outputs to members of a population. As societies shifted from hunting and gathering as a mode of production to horticulture and variants of horticulture such as fishing and herding, and then to agriculture using the plow and non-human sources of power, the level of material inequality increased dramatically. The greater was the economic surplus, the more unequal was its distribution (Lenski 1966).

The key force determining the level of inequality is the consolidation and centralization of power. As the level of economic surplus generated in a society increased, so did the size of the population; and as populations grow, selection pressures from regulation escalate and put pressure on actors to begin forming polity as an institutional domain. With economic surplus, it becomes possible to finance corporate units within polity; and as power is consolidated and centralized in polity, this power is used to usurp economic surplus. When polity is dominated by elite classes, the taxation of economic surplus not only allows for segmentation and differentiation of corporate units within the differentiating institutional domain of polity, this surplus also goes to elite classes to sustain their privilege at the expense of other social classes.

With industrialism, however, polity begins to democratize to the extent that non-elites can exert pressures on political leaders to redistribute resources to a broader set of classes. Some of this redistribution is indirect through financing of institutional activities – educational, economic, scientific, religious, medical – that create incomes for non-elites; at other times, the redistribution is direct with taxed wealth and income being given to specific sectors of the population. And the more polity democratizes through open elections, the



more likely is redistribution to reduce material inequality. Yet, even with democratization, this reduction is only moderate, but still significant when compared to levels of inequality in agrarian societies. Among industrial and post-industrial societies there is a wide range of inequality in material wealth, but even those societies like the United States revealing high levels of inequality, inequality is considerably less than in agrarian societies.

Related to these dynamics revolving around the production of economic surplus and the consolidation of power are other processes that have large effects on the degree of material inequality in a society. One is institutional differentiation, *per se*. The more differentiated are institutional domains, the more diversity in the valued resources distributed within each domain. Each generalized symbolic medium within a domain becomes yet another valued resource distributed to incumbents in the divisions of labor of corporate units within an institutional domain. Moreover, to the extent that incumbents in corporate units are recruited through market processes, these incumbents receive varying amounts of money and authority as valued resources. Thus, the more differentiated are institutional domains and the greater is the rate of segmentation and differentiation of corporate units within each domain, the greater will be the diversity of resources distributed to members of a society; and to the degree that money and power (as authority in corporate units) also circulate across domains, the dispersion in the distribution of material wealth and power will be that much greater.

Thus, initial responses to selection pressures from production, distribution, and regulation will dramatically increase inequality, but as institutional domains differentiate and as the number and diversity of corporate units in domains increase, inequality in the distribution of valued resources levels off and begins to decline – at least to some degree. Coupled with selection pressures from regulation that often cause some redistribution of taxed resources by polity, and especially so if polity is democratized, this decline in inequality will accelerate.

Market processes intervene in these dynamics in complex ways. As markets using money and credit emerge, they accelerate economic growth, increasing the surplus that can be used to finance polity and, later, law as an institutional domain. Historically, markets erode the wealth of agrarian elites and generate a new basis of elite privilege through profits by those actors engaged in entrepreneurial activities organizing technology, capital, labor, and property. The accumulated wealth from market processes creates new elite classes and, during early industrialization, leads to vast inequalities in material wealth. But, industrialization also concentrates *human* capital in ways that make it more politically effective than was the case in agrarian societies; and as human capital exerts pressures on polity, some redistribution

of wealth produced by markets occurs. Moreover, markets are a kind of differentiating machine because they allow diverse preferences of actors to be translated into demands that lead to the formation of new kinds of corporate units to meet this varied demand. As differentiation of corporate units occurs, labor markets distribute human capital to these units, and depending upon incumbents' place in the divisions of labor of these units, they will receive varying amounts of valued resources. As money and power circulate across differentiated domains, these human capital markets continue to place individuals in corporate units distributing not only money and authority but also the symbolic medium (as a valued resource in its own right) within each domain.

As the level of technology in economic activity and as the skills needed for incumbency in more diverse corporate units in differentiated domains increase, selection pressures from reproduction as a macrodynamic force lead to the expansion of education as an institutional domain which, in turn, allows for the continued differentiation of knowledge-dependent domains like science and medicine (to say nothing of education itself). Furthermore, as the complexity of tasks in all domains increase, and particularly in the economy and polity, knowledge and learning become ever more important criteria for placement in divisions of labor, thus creating highly differentiated labor markets in terms of skill requirements and placement of individuals at positions in divisions of labor in corporate units where valued resources are distributed unequally based upon knowledge, learning, and other sources of human capital. Inequalities increase within an institutional domain and across domains when money and power are circulating in all domains, but still, the dispersion of material wealth across individuals and families is greater in market-driven industrial societies than in agrarian societies. Also, those who have high levels of human capital (knowledge and learning) can typically command high incomes, with the result that upper middle classes expand in industrial and post-industrial societies.

Some of this dispersion is a simple function of the larger number of positions in segmenting and differentiating corporate units. Another part of this dispersion comes from polity's use of material incentives and application of redistribution policies in ways that expand the pool of recipients of wealth from polity. Still another part comes from polity's investments in education, expanding access to learning and, hence, pools of skilled human capital. These skilled individuals can, in turn, secure high wages and even ownership stakes (through stock options) of corporate units. The end result is a decrease in inequality over what is evident in agrarian societies.

Market dynamics operating as part of inter-societal systems can intervene in these processes as well. Capital can flow rapidly across the globe, with

the consequence that physical capital can move away from higher-priced labor markets to lower-priced pools of human capital. The result is that many positions in corporate units within the economy and other institutional domains like science, medicine, and education can be outsourced, reducing the material well being of even skilled human capital. But, the effect is even greater on lower skilled labor because in a world of 6.5 billion people, many of whom live at the margins of survival, capital investments will seek lower priced unskilled labor. Inequalities can thus increase in post-industrial societies between the skilled and unskilled sectors of the labor force. As a consequence, tensions that always come with inequality increase and, thereby, escalate selection pressures from regulation as a macrodynamic force. Just how these processes play out in the present world system can not be precisely known, although Chap. 7 will offer some general predictions.

### **Inequalities of Power**

The consolidation of the four bases of power – coercive, administrative, symbolic, and material incentive – occurs under selection pressures from regulation but is made possible by economic surplus, as I emphasized above. As power is consolidated in an autonomous polity and, later, as influence in a legal system, the taxing and redistribution activities of polity have large effects on inequalities, along several dimensions. One is, of course, the distribution of material wealth directly (as incentives or welfare) to targeted actors. Another is distribution more indirectly through the use of material incentives to encourage institutional differentiation and elaboration of key domains such as economy, education, law, science, and medicine. As segmentation and differentiation in these domains increase, *money*, *authority*, and symbolic media as valued resources are distributed unequally. As a general rule, the more polity finances directly or indirectly the differentiation and expansion of institutional domains where *power* (as authority), *money*, and other symbolic media are distributed, the greater will be the number of individuals and families securing at least some valued resources which, in turn, will increase the number of middle classes in a society that stand between the extremes of wealth and power at the upper and lower ends of the stratification system.

To the extent that polity centralizes along its coercive and administrative bases of power, economic surplus will be used to finance these bases of power and the elites who control them, thereby increasing inequality in a society. Moreover, to the extent that centralization of power erodes the material-incentive base of power, differentiation and elaboration of other

institutional domains will be arrested, thus decreasing the number of positions in corporate units where individuals and families can secure resources. And, if power is used to control markets, these effects will be even greater. The end result will be an ever higher correlation or consolidation of material wealth and power in a society, even an industrial society.

Thus, centralization of power will increase stratification by (1) consolidating bases of power and material wealth, (2) slowing the process of institutional differentiation and elaboration that leads to dispersion of resource distribution, and (3) dampening the power of free markets to create wealth to (a) differentiate institutional domains and resource-distributing corporate units in domains and (b) expand the circulation of money and power across domains. As I emphasized in Chap.3 on regulation as a macrodynamic force, power is centralized under conditions of external and internal threats. When external enemies exist or are manufactured by political elites, power is concentrated in order to mobilize resources to deal with the threat. Similarly, when threats are internal, as is the case with ethnic or class conflict and financial collapse of speculative meta-markets, power will be concentrated to deal with these sources of threats. And, if internal and external threats are seen as related, then even more concentration of power will ensue, which in turn leads to more inequality.

With decreased external or internal threat and with selection pressures from high volumes of internal transactions (made possible by free markets) and high levels of productivity, the consolidation of power will involve less centralization, especially consolidation around its material incentive base coupled with moderate administrative control, strategic use of coercion, and unifying ideologies. Under these conditions, sufficient wealth is generated to subsidize directly and indirectly (through taxing policies) the differentiation and elaboration of institutional domains and corporate units in these domains. This differentiation among and within domains will, in turn, generate more material wealth that can be taxed and used as material incentives through markets to expand further not only the activities of corporate units in the economy but also the number and diversity of corporate units in other institutional domains. Corporate units in these diverse domains are given the right to consolidate power within their respective divisions of labor. Moreover, some power is also ceded to corporate units as a whole, with these corporate units often behaving as political actors in the arena of politics. These actors are not given a coercive base of power, although at times they may use their resources to mobilize coercive activities, but they are typically given sufficient freedom to mobilize material incentives and domain-specific ideologies that, respectively, give them material incentive and symbolic bases of power in addition to authority in their bureaucratically

organized corporate structures (that are, in essence, the franchising by polity of administrative base of power to corporate units outside of polity). For example, the Catholic Church in feudal Europe possessed all bases of power and could effectively operate as a political actor, with the state and church hording power as a valued resource and, then, using this power to enhance inequalities of wealth and other valued resources such as sacredness/piety and prestige. Less dramatically, large corporations in capitalist systems can exert considerable power through their material incentive, administrative, and symbolic bases of power; and while the state may maintain a monopoly on the coercive base, these other bases can allow non-state corporate units and individuals in these units to exert disproportionate political influence and to horde material wealth. The result is, on the one hand, increasing concentration of power and wealth among leaders of corporate units, but at the same time, there is also a distribution of wealth (as salaries) and power (as authority) to incumbents within corporate units that disperses, to a degree, these valued resources to a larger number of individuals and families.

### **The Unequal Distribution of Prestige**

The capacity to receive honor or prestige, is a highly valued resource. It is also a generalized resource that circulates in all institutional domains. In fact, the more of any generalized symbolic media received by individuals, the more likely they are to be given prestige. *Money* and *power* thus entitle those having these resources be honored, but access to other resources such as *knowledge*, *learning*, *sacredness/piety*, *lovelloyalty*, *competitiveness*, or *health* can allow a person to gain some degree of prestige. Yet, prestige is bestowed only when resources are scarce, and so, it is not the possession of a given resource, per se, that gives individuals prestige but the possession of valued resources that are *not* widely distributed to all members of a population (Turner 1984a, b). Prestige comes when the proportion of individuals holding a prestige-giving resource is low, and the fewer those individuals as a proportion of all members of a society holding a valued resource, the more prestige, honor, and deference they can claim. And hence, the more unequal is the distribution of honor and prestige.

Thus, inequality in the distribution of all symbolic media as valued resources influences the distribution of prestige. If relatively few hold high levels of *power*, *wealth*, *knowledge*, or *sacredness/piety*, then the distribution of prestige will reveal high levels of inequality. If, on the other hand, most or all persons possess resources, such as *sacredness/piety*, *lovelloyalty*, *health*, or any resource, the possession of these resources will not be

unique and, thus, not as prestige-giving. For this reason, the distribution of prestige is generally correlated only with those resources that are distributed unequally. High levels of money, power, learning, and knowledge are all distributed unequally in differentiated societies, and so, holders of these resources will be given the most prestige. Similarly, if sacredness/piety as a marker of a special degree of access to the supernatural is held by a few, as is often the case with religions, those with this access will be given prestige; or knowledge of sacred texts can carry prestige when most do not have such knowledge. Individuals who are successful in corporate units within the institutional domain of sports are presumed to have a valued resource such as competitiveness and, in societies where sports are highly valued, individuals possessing exceptional amounts of competitiveness are given prestige.

### **The Unequal Distribution of Other Generalized Media**

Corporate units within institutional domains are the vehicle by which resources are unequally distributed. By virtue of the structure of a corporate unit within an institutional domain and an individual's location in the division of labor of this unit, this person will receive more or less of the resources distributed within a domain. As a general rule, the more hierarchical the division of labor of a corporate unit, the more unequal is the distribution of resources across the division of labor. For example, the salaries and wages of workers in a factory revealing a linear hierarchy will reveal more inequality in the distribution of money to workers than in a corporate unit with a truncated hierarchy and more horizontal division of labor. Moreover, since power (as authority) in the hierarchy is also being distributed, both money and authority will be more unequally distributed in a hierarchical division of labor than in one that is more horizontal. Similarly, a patriarchal family structure will distribute love/loyalty more unequally than would be the case with one organized in a more egalitarian way.

Another factor determining inequality in resource distributions is the degree of access that individuals have to corporate units within key institutional domains. For instance, if a person cannot find a job in the economy or in another institutional domain that distributes money, this person will not receive either money or any of the non-economic resources, such as authority and prestige, in this institutional domain. Thus, the more individuals in a society who cannot gain access to corporate units in specific institutional domains, and the greater is the number of domains excluding individuals, the greater will be the level of inequality at the societal level.

The overall level of inequality in a society is, therefore, very much related to the number of differentiated institutional domains, the hierarchy of structure of the corporate units in these domains, the number of distinctive symbolic media in play within these domains, the rate of circulation of media across institutional domains, and the proportion of individuals in a society who have access to resource-giving positions in corporate units within all institutional domains. With high degrees of institutional differentiation, there are more resources available to members of a society; and if people can gain access to all corporate units in all institutional domains, inequality will be much less than is the case where access to critical corporate units – e.g., economic, educational, political, medical – within institutional domains is denied. Even with access to all domains, the hierarchical structure of corporate units in these domains may limit access to valued resources, especially if their structures concentrate most incumbents at the bottom of their respective divisions of labor. Moreover, if several symbolic media are circulating across institutional domains, then failure to gain access to a domain where several media (e.g., *money* and *authority*) are circulating compounds the level of inequality, as does a disproportionate distribution of incumbents in corporate units to the bottom of the pay scales and systems of authority in the divisions of labor of corporate units in institutional domains.

As I emphasized in the last chapter, *money* and *power* are the symbolic media most likely to be circulating across institutional domains; and in societies responding to selection pressures for reproduction, learning and knowledge can also circulate widely across domains. As markets become the principle mechanism for distributing money, this medium becomes a key resource in all corporate units where incumbents are compensated for their participation in the divisions of labor of these units. Similarly, as corporate units organize larger numbers of individuals in a division of labor, bureaucratization is inevitable and, with bureaucratization, power is mobilized as authority, thereby leading to the unequal distribution of power. Similarly, *knowledge* and *learning* as symbolic media also circulate across institutional boundaries, allowing persons to augment their knowledge and learning with additional resources like money and authority, while being able to claim prestige and honor. Thus, even though the number of media circulating across domains can decrease inequality, it is often the case that as they circulate, they become consolidated with individuals possessing one medium holding large shares of other media. The result is to increase the inequality within a society.

Still, there are media in other institutional domains, such as kinship (*love/loyalty*) and religion (*sacredness/piety*), that are highly rewarding and not as



easily usurped by those with money and power. Similarly, *knowledge* and *learning* can often be acquired by those without money or power, at least in more advanced industrial and post-industrial societies. These kinds of symbolic media can often be attained at a high level and compensate for individuals' lack of access to money and power; and they often allow people to claim a highly valued resource like prestige for being pious or having knowledge and learning. Thus, a broader view of stratification as revolving around the unequal distribution of symbolic media from differentiated institutional domains alerts us to the fact that more than money and power are being distributed. Indeed, if money and power were the only resources being distributed unequally, Karl Marx's (1867 [1967]) portrayal of stratification and his predictions about its transforming effects on societies would have been more accurate.

### **The Unequal Distribution of Emotions**

There is another highly valued resource that is distributed unequally in societies: positive and negative emotions (Turner 2010a; Collins 1975; Barbalet 1998). When individuals gain access to resources of an institutional domain, they generally experience positive emotions that, in turn, often give them the confidence to seek more resources. And if possession of resources allows them to claim prestige, they experience more intense positive emotions and reveal additional levels of confidence. There is, then, an emotional stratification system that typically correlates with the distribution of other valued resources, but at times, emotions can compensate for the lack of money or power and, at other times, compound the unequal distribution of other resources. For example, a person who has experienced love in a family will also have experienced high levels of positive emotions that, to a degree, can compensate for a lack of money or power. On the other hand, a person who has not received love but, instead, has experienced shame, anger, frustrations, and other negative emotions in the family may feel even more deprived when unable to gain access to money or power, thus dramatically increasing the potential volatility inherent in any unequal distribution of valued resources. Similarly, a person can experience piety and sacredness from active participation in a religious corporate unit; and high levels of this valued resource can compensate for a lack of power or money. Indeed, it should not be surprising that the poor, when religious, are drawn to evangelical churches that reveal high levels of piety/sacredness and positive emotional arousal. While Marx saw religion as the "opiate of the masses," for this very reason the symbolic medium of religion is a powerful source of positive



reinforcement, and moreover, it generates positive emotions that can further compensate a person for lack of money or power.

### **Modeling the Unequal Distribution of Valued Resources**

The robust nature of resources distributed unequally – beyond money, power, and prestige that have been emphasized in most sociological theories – provides a different picture of stratification in societies with some degree of institutional differentiation. Moreover, distributions of resources are not so highly consolidated (or correlated with each other), once the number of resources and structural locations where they can be received expands. Sociology has focused on the big three – *money*, *power*, and *prestige* – to the exclusion of other symbolic media that are highly valued. The result is that conceptualizations of stratification systems are, in my view, too narrow. Yet, it is also true that there is often a correlation among those holding high or low levels of resources, including positive and negative emotions; but, this correlation is a variable, not a constant or as inevitable as so much sociology since Marx has tended to argue.

Figure 5.1 outlines the basic causal argument presented above. Initial differentiation of institutional domains increases actors' access to generalized symbolic media, but with high levels of differentiation, not all actors can secure positions in corporate units of some domains that distribute valued resources (hence, the +/- sign on the relationship between institutional differentiation and actors' access to resources distributed by corporate units in those domains). At the bottom of Fig. 5.1, corporate units within domains will become more hierarchical, especially as they bureaucratize to cope with organizing larger numbers of incumbents; and as they do so, resources are distributed unequally across positions in the divisions of labor, thereby increasing overall inequality in a society. Combined with decreased access to corporate units within differentiated domains, such as health care, higher education, sports, arts, and science, restrictions on the resources available in the divisions of labor of corporate units work to increase societal-level inequality. Moreover, as money is distributed through markets, it is distributed unequally, as is power in the authority structures of corporate units. Again, the result is growing inequality, especially as *money* and *power* become dominant symbolic media circulating through most institutional domains.

Yet, there are some processes that reduce inequality. When there is a larger range of symbolic media available to actors and when these circulate across institutional domains, inequality is reduced. For example, if *loveloyalty*, *piety/sacredness*, *knowledge*, *learning*, *competitiveness*, *health*, and others are



available to actors, the distribution of these resources can, at times, compensate for lack of access to power and money, thus decreasing inequality by the very broad definition that I am employing. Furthermore, with access to symbolic media, individuals experience positive emotional arousal that gives them confidence to seek more resources within and across institutional domains (Collins 1991). Generalized media that circulate across domains – media such as *money*, *power*, *prestige*, *learning*, and *knowledge* – are most likely to have this confidence-producing effect. Still, as markets differentiate and as corporate units develop systems of authority, the media of *money* and *power* become more prominent in a society; and as they do so, they are increasingly distributed unequally, thereby increasing society-level inequality.

When actors have access to symbolic media as valued resources, they experience positive emotions; and the greater the level of access to all media, the more they will experience positive emotions and evidence the confidence to seek more resources. However, as the access to resources becomes more limited, those denied access will experience negative emotions such as alienation, sadness, anger, frustration, and shame, that decrease even more their access to resources, unless they channel negative emotions like anger into aggressive actions to secure resources. But, even these efforts will generally fail, thereby compounding a person's level of negative emotional arousal.

## ***The Formation of Classes***

### **Homogeneity and Class Boundaries**

As its structural core, a stratification system is composed of subpopulations that possess convergent shares of valued resources and, by virtue of this convergence, tend to reveal similar behaviors, cultural characteristics, group affiliations, spending patterns, living arrangements, and lifestyles. Convergence of shares comes from individuals having similar degrees of access to particular types of corporate units within institutional domains and occupying similar positions in these corporate units. Shares of resources from corporate units in institutional domains place individuals along a *graduated parameter*, and when location on sets of graduated parameters are consolidated or, correlate with each other, individuals with similar consolidated locations are structurally equivalent. Structural equivalence generally leads to similar perceptions and worldviews (Sailer 1978), while increasing the likelihood that persons will interact in similar groups and develop distinctive cultural characteristics

(Blau 1977, 1994). The power of structural equivalence to shape beliefs, behaviors, and lifestyles increases dramatically with consolidation of parameters, as is explored below.

### **Consolidation of Graduated with Nominal Parameters**

When locations on graduated parameters are consolidated with nominal parameters, such as ethnicity and gender, these effects of equivalence are that much greater.<sup>1</sup> Nominal parameters are generally more “visible” to others; and with a clear and visible marker of a person’s place along a set of consolidated parameters, differential evaluation and treatment of this person becomes that much easier. For example, if being black in American society is consolidated with low levels of income, education, and power, it is easy “to know” this person’s place in the stratification system, especially with the tendency to over-generalize and over-apply the tenets of meta-ideologies legitimating stratification.

Consolidation of parameters and the resulting homogeneity of a sub-population makes individuals easier targets of discriminatory treatment because memberships in categoric units are correlated and, in essence, produce a kind of meta-categoric unit that defines the class position for all those who share a particular configuration of categoric unit memberships. If a particular profile of consolidation – say, low income, low education, and visible ethnicity – is devalued in a society, individuals become even more susceptible to discrimination. Discrimination causes further consolidation of memberships in categoric with a variety of corporate units. When membership in a categoric unit defined by a nominal parameter like ethnicity makes people subject to discrimination, they will often live in the same neighborhoods of community corporate units, affiliate with the same religious corporate unit, attend the same school corporate unit, and hold jobs at equivalent places in the divisions of labor of similar types of economic corporate units. Consolidation of corporate-unit incumbency with categoric unit membership constrains membership in additional corporate units and, indeed, often activates discrimination. To take an extreme example, to be a slave on the American plantation system (a corporate unit) was not just a location in a division of labor of this system; this location also defined the nominal category of “colored.” As a consequence,

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<sup>1</sup>That is, the locations on graduated parameters correlate with nominal parameters marking categoric unit membership.

the combined effect activated intense discrimination against “colored” slaves; and this consolidation of a categoric with a corporate unit prevented slaves from having access to corporate units in other institutional spheres, thereby compounding the consolidation of “colored” with lack of resources from corporate units in other domains, at times even the kinship domain. Thus, this consolidation of parameters dramatically increased the degree of stratification in the anti-bellum south. Less dramatically, peasantry in feudal systems was more than a place in the division of labor on manorial estates; it was also a nominal parameter denoting a social category of persons that established a place in the larger class system of feudal societies. Even in more contemporary societies, these dynamics are at work. For example, the position of secretary (in the division of labor of a corporation) was at one time almost exclusively occupied by women (a nominal parameter), as was the position of nurses in hospitals and teachers in elementary schools. The correlation of gender/sex with positions in corporate units increased the salience of the nominal parameter (women), while providing a (devalued) basis for evaluating women for the resources to be gained from being a secretary, nurse, or teacher. Because woman as categoric unit or as a “diffuse status characteristic” (Berger and Zelditch 1985; Berger et al. 1972, 1977, 1992) was less valued than the categoric unit of man, the positions in corporate units held by women received less income and prestige. Women could thus be placed in class positions in the stratification system and, indeed, superimposing a gendered pattern of stratification on top of class stratification. The result of this kind of consolidation of a nominal parameter with positions in corporate units circumscribed the resource shares of women and constrained their ability to secure positions that were defined as the province of males; and together these processes confined women to a limited range of class locations in the larger stratification system. To take another example, a person who works with machines in a factory system is defined as “blue collar” and this label marks membership in nominal or categoric unit and places a person at a place in the stratification system, along with all other “blue collar” workers who form “the working class” and who are evaluated by virtue of this designated location. At the other end of the scale, upper management in a business corporation is sometimes employed as a nominal parameter (consolidated with graduated parameters like levels of income and authority) that places them in a particular class in the stratification system.

This combination of consolidation and successive penetration of consolidated parameters across corporate units eventually creates distinctive social classes whose members are relatively homogeneous and subject to similar evaluations by the meta-ideologies that emerge from combining institutional ideologies. These classes can be rank-ordered by the relative shares

of resources held by their members, and especially so if *money* is the dominant symbolic medium in a society and has a disproportionate place in the meta-ideology that can be used to establish the “worth” of individuals with different amounts of money.

### **Intersection of Parameters and Class Formation**

The opposite outcomes occur when parameters are mostly graduated and when parameters intersect rather than consolidate (Blau 1977, 1994). Intersection exists when graduated and nominal parameters reveal very low or zero correlation with each other, with the consequence that place on one parameter does not predict place on another. Under these conditions, positions in the divisions of labor among corporate units are held by members of many different categoric units defined by nominal and graduated parameters. For example, over the last decades, the position of elementary teachers in schools can be held by males and females, young and old, members of many diverse ethnic subpopulations, adherents to diverse religions, and other types of categoric units. The result is for categoric memberships to lose salience when they intersect with positions in the division of labor; and if this pattern of intersection is repeated in all corporate units within all institutional domains, and across all types of corporate units (e.g., work places, churches, communities, clubs), then the salience of categoric membership as a marker of class declines, with the only clear marker being levels of income and its purchasing power.

### **Institutional Differentiation and Class Formation**

Differentiation among domains and differentiation of corporate units within institutional domains increase the likelihood that parameters will intersect. Individuals will possess different mixes of resources from their participation in diverse corporate units, with the consequence that their structural equivalence will decline and, thereby, generate higher levels of heterogeneity in a population. For, when individuals can have diverse shares of different resources, can occupy different positions in corporate units of differentiated institutional domains, can live in “mixed” neighborhoods in communities, and can have eclectic webs of group affiliations, they will have high rates of interaction with individuals in different categoric units, with the result that the salience of the categoric units themselves and their cultures declines and exerts less influence on the behaviors and life-chances

of individuals. The end result is for homogeneity of members in classes to decline and for linear rank-orderings of classes in terms of worth to become less definitive, especially in the middle ranks of the stratification system.

## Modeling Class Formation

Figure 5.2 delineates what I see as the critical processes that increase or decrease the level of class formation. I have added the other properties of stratification systems to be examined shortly – that is, rank-ordering of classes and mobility across classes – to highlight how these have causal effects on homogeneity among class members. Classes are ultimately built from inequalities in the distribution of resources and their consolidation or correlation (that is, those receiving high, medium, or low levels of one resource are likely to reveal the same level of access to other resources). The core set of dynamics are (1) the number and diversity of corporate units in any given institutional domain, but especially economy, (2) the ratio of graduated to nominal parameters generated by resource shares that are distributed within institutional domains, and (3) the degree of intersection or consolidation of parameters marking categoric unit memberships. Diversity of corporate units generally increases the ratio of graduated to nominal parameters because differences among individuals are created by their places in the division of labor rather than their “diffuse status characteristics” or membership in nominal categories.

As is evident in Fig. 5.2, however, discrimination can decrease the number of categoric units generated by graduated parameters because memberships in a nominal category determines place in the divisions of labor of corporate units, with the result that the salience of nominal membership increases (e.g., women are secretaries which increases the salience of gender as a nominal category; or African-origin populations are excluded from mainstream economic organizations and, when included, occupy only low positions, thereby increasing the salience of dark-skin as a nominal category). Yet, with a high proportion of graduated parameters, it is less likely that place on one parameter is correlated with another, and this effect increases when society-wide patterns of discrimination are low. For example, low wages do not lead to discrimination against individuals seeking access to shares of resources from corporate units in non-economic domains, such as religion, kinship, education, and sports, because membership in a categoric unit based on a graduated parameter like income is less visible than membership in a nominal categoric unit like ethnicity or gender, with the result that discrimination is less likely as individuals seek resource shares from corporate units in other institutional domains.

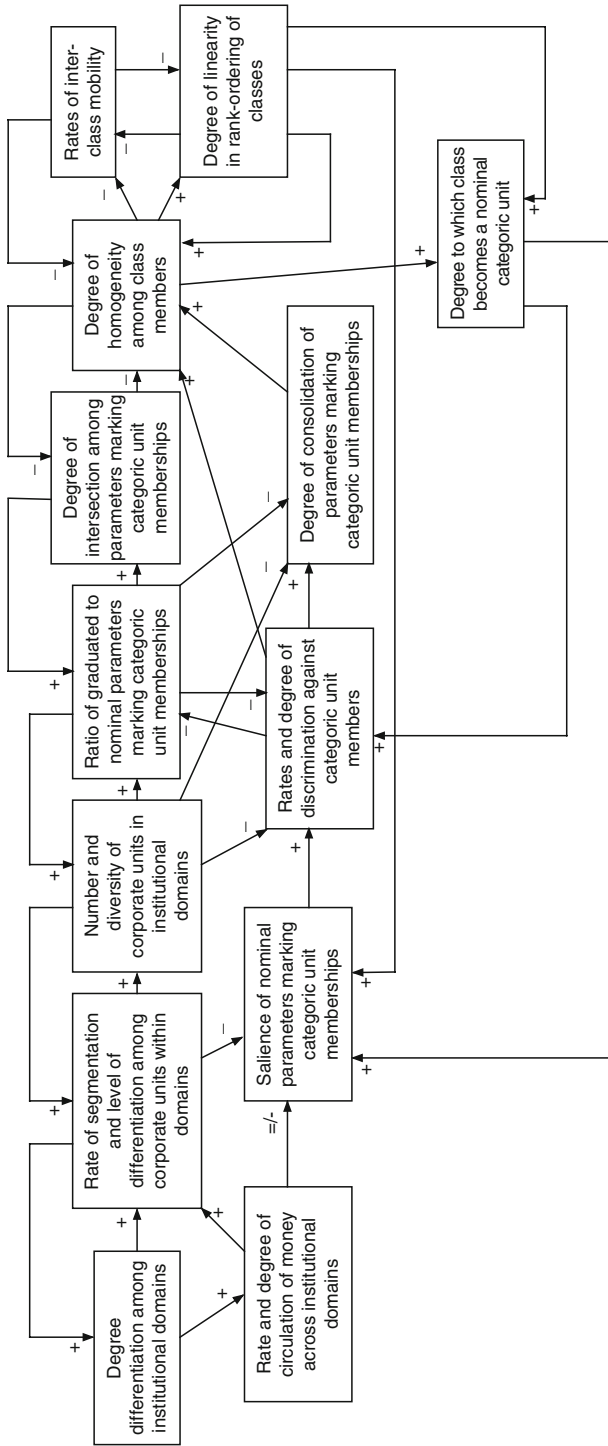


Fig. 5.2 Structural dynamics and the formation of social classes



With the intersection of parameters, the salience of categoric unit membership on any parameter is reduced, and as a consequence, it becomes very difficult to identify individuals within and among institutional domains as belonging to a specific social class whose members share a culture, behavioral patterns, organizational and group affiliations, and lifestyles. In contrast, when parameters are consolidated, membership in one categoric unit is correlated with membership in other categoric units, and typically this consolidation cuts across community corporate units, with those having one configuration of resource shares more likely to live in the same neighborhoods, to have high rates of interaction, to inter-marry, and to inter-breed, thereby increasing their homogeneity and visibility as members of a particular social class. And once members of an identifiable class can be seen and labeled, class becomes yet another nominal parameter (defining a categoric unit) that invites discrimination from members of higher social classes. Moreover, since class as a nominal parameter is the outcome of the consolidation of other graduated parameters, class becomes particularly salient in how individuals treat and evaluate each other by the moral yardstick of the meta-ideologies legitimating the system of stratification in a society.

Intersection of parameters works against this consolidation of parameters into distinct social classes (that, in essence, become yet another categoric unit). For example, a worker who earns little money may suffer some stigma from low position on this graduated parameter, but this same person may realize positive evaluations for higher locations on other graduated parameters. This lack of consolidated parameters also mixes up the evaluative ideologies and beliefs that always accompany membership in a categoric unit; and the inability to use ideologies to construct a *unified scale of social worth* works against the linear rank-ordering of classes. Only when subpopulations are viewed as similar in terms of their consolidated shares of resources can beliefs about worth and desirability be sufficiently coherent to reinforce the perception that a distinct social class exists.

Consolidation of parameters will thus increase homogeneity which, in turn, will allow individuals to construct beliefs about the desirability or undesirability of people in particular social classes. This process can create a rank-ordering of desirability for all social classes, as was the case in the old Indian caste systems, or it can operate only on particular social classes. As I have mentioned for modern capitalist societies, consolidation can be found at the very top, where “the rich” becomes a nominal class category through the consolidation of graduated parameters evolving around shares of money, power, education and prestige (often further consolidated with

nominal parameters like ethnicity and gender); consolidation can be found at the very bottom where “the poor” becomes a nominal category as a consequence of consolidation along several graduated parameters, such as income and years of schooling, with nominal parameters like ethnicity. When parameters are consolidated at the upper and lower ends of the class continuum, standards of moral worth can be developed and used to value or devalue members of the end points in the distribution of resources, thereby furthering class formation. Furthermore, this consolidation of graduated parameters increases the salience and visibility of membership in a class, which in turn increases rates of discrimination against lower-class individuals; these rates will only increase, however, if class membership is correlated with membership in devalued ethnic categories. As a consequence of discrimination, lower class persons are likely to live in the same neighborhoods, go to the same schools, belong to the same groups and, hence, have high rates of interaction, inter-marriage and inter-breeding, all of which perpetuate their class membership.

Yet, as Marxists have struggled to explain (e.g., Wright 1978, 1989, 1997), the intersection of graduated parameters in contemporary societies decreases the ability to construct a linear rank-ordering of classes, especially in the large space between the top and bottom of stratification systems in capitalist societies. Intersections of parameters marking categoric units generate a larger number of combinations and configurations of class markers and, hence, make it difficult to define and determine the boundaries marking class. Such is especially the case when there is sufficient overlap in corporate unit affiliations of individuals with different combinations of resource shares. For example, even if individuals earn very different levels of income and possess different amounts of authority, they may overlap in school or church memberships or live in the same neighborhoods, with the result that their behaviors converge and make it *unlikely* that there are large differences in their respective behaviors. Thus, intersection reduces homogeneity of subpopulations with different shares of one set of resources (say, money) when they receive similar shares of other resources (say, *sacredness/piety* and *competitiveness*) from other institutional domains. Without consolidation of parameters that increase homogeneity, class boundaries become indistinct, making a standard of moral worth for rank-ordering of all classes difficult to apply. The outcome of these dynamics is for a set of amorphous “middle classes” to emerge and be subject to positive evaluations along a number of graduated parameters; and it thus should not be surprising that individuals in capitalist societies typically see themselves, when asked, as “middle class” and, hence, as morally worthy.

## *The Rank-Ordering of Classes*

### **Ideological Formation and Rank-Ordering of Classes**

To varying degrees, classes are rank-ordered in terms of their members' perceived worth and value. As is evident from the above discussion about class formation, rank-ordering is a variable rather than a constant. At times, the ranking is only partly linear, as is the case in post-industrial societies revealing a large and amorphous set of middle classes between the upper and lower classes. The rank-ordering of classes in terms of their relative worth is an outcome of using generalized symbolic media in discourse, and from discourse come (a) ideological formations within institutional domains and, then, (b) meta-ideological formation across domains that, in turn, imposes constraints of societal-level value premises.

Symbolic media always reveal an evaluative element about what *should* and *ought* to occur within the corporate units of institutional domains. For example, if *money* is the symbolic medium, the evaluative element will emphasize its accumulation through work; if *power* is the medium, gaining power or using it to control others is valued; if *loveloyalty* is the medium, then giving and receiving love and being loyal are valued; if *knowledge* is the medium, then accumulating knowledge and expanding the knowledge base are prized; and so on for other institutional domains. Thus, inherent in the symbolic medium that allow for discourse and thematization in an institutional domain are the basic evaluative tenets of the ideology that emerges within this institutional domain (Luhmann 1982; Parsons 1951); and since this medium is also the valued resource that is unequally distributed, there is inevitably an evaluation of those who receive more or less of this resource. Thus, those who cannot secure money in the economy, or any other domain where money also circulates, will be devaluated compared to those who can secure money; the same is true for *power*, *knowledge*, *learning*, *piety*, and all of the other media that typify the institutional domains of complex societies.

The ideologies of each domain will be subject to further discourse and reflection; and over time, discourse will cause the formation of a composite ideology or meta-ideology that is used to legitimate the overall stratification system. This meta-ideology is often dominated by media of one or two key institutional domains. For example, if *sacredness* and *piety* from religion dominate, then the distribution of resources in a society will be legitimated as the will of supernatural forces or beings, with those receiving high levels of money, power, and other valued resources seen as deserving of this wealth and with those not receiving these resources being devalued for their presumed lack of piety and for their disfavor with the beings of the supernatural

realm. If *money* is the dominate medium in a society, as it is for capitalism, then those who do not have money will be devalued, while those who possess wealth will be valorized.

When the ideologies of diverse domains are blended together, a small subset of media typically dominate and become the prominent tenets of this meta-ideology. For example, in American society, those who acquire wealth and power are highly valued, indicating that *money* and *power* as symbolic media exert a disproportionate influence on the formation of the meta-ideology used to legitimate stratification. Thus, to be poor and powerless in American society is to be stigmatized as less worthy than the wealthy and powerful. Other generalized symbolic media in such a system are then viewed through the prism of power and wealth, with those possessing these other media being “entitled” to more money, power, and prestige than those without these media. For instance, knowledge and learning are valued in their own right, and in capitalist societies, those who have both will be seen as more worthy than those who do not have knowledge or learning. Indeed, to be ignorant is highly stigmatizing. Moreover, those with knowledge and learning are also entitled to more money and power than the ignorant. Similarly, the highly pious are allowed to exert great authority over their “flock” and, in the cases of media-centered evangelists, it is acceptable to accumulate wealth as a reward for their piety and their ability to make contact with the sacred. The same is true for athletes who have the skills to garner competitive advantages in sports; they too are “entitled” to more money.

### **Meta-Ideologies, Values, and Rank-Ordering of Classes**

As meta-ideologies form, they feed back and constrain the value premises of a society. These value premises then feed forward and constrain how symbolic media are used in discourse, thematization, and ideological formation. Thus, as new institutional domains emerge or older ones are transformed, the new media and ideologies that emerge reshuffle the tenets of the meta-ideology in ways that transform values. Meta-ideologies and value premises are, therefore, constantly subject to change during periods of institutional differentiation and transformation. The key point, however, is that the meta-ideology and altered value premises become the moral yardstick for not only evaluating conduct of individual and collective actors in institutional domains but also for evaluating the worth of members of various social classes. Depending upon their shares of the symbolic media that dominate the meta-ideology, different levels of moral worth will be given to individuals. Such is always most noticeable for those at the high and low ends of the distribution

of valued resources, whereas those in the middle “classes” typically present a mix of evaluative standards. For instance, when merchants began to emerge during feudalism, they were devalued; and their worth only increased as market-driven capitalism began to transform the economy of feudal societies. Similarly, the middle classes in a post-industrial society cannot be clearly rank-ordered because different media are used to establish moral worth. For example, blue-collar workers who earn a great deal of money are valued for access to this medium, but often devalued for their perceived or actual lack of learning and knowledge, whereas middle class members who possess knowledge and learning gain prestige and honor but suffer some devaluation for their lack of wealth. They end up in the middle between very rich and highly affluent on the top end and the less affluent and poor at the bottom end of the distribution of resources. Again, it should not be surprising, then, that most Americans will see themselves as middle class since, without obvious wealth and power, it is the most honorable and valuable place to be.

Thus, even as the rank-ordering becomes a bit messy in the middle, there is almost always a linearity in moral worth, as divined by the evaluative tenets of the meta-ideology. As the profile of symbolic media in this meta-ideology becomes part of more general value premises, the moral evaluation of members of different classes becomes even more institutionalized. But, as noted above, as institutions emerge or are transformed, the mix of symbolic media and ideologies that they spawn is reshuffled in the meta-ideology; and as this reshuffling occurs, the moral evaluation and rank-ordering of classes changes as the new moral order falls into place. Institutional change will thus always transform not only the distribution of valued resources as new symbolic media come into play, but such change will also re-order the relative rankings of social classes in a society.

### **Consolidation of Parameters and Rank-Ordering of Classes**

For classes to be rank-ordered, they must be identifiable. The more class formation is evident, with distinctive classes revealing high degrees of homogeneity among their members, the more likely are classes to be rank-ordered by their worth, as defined by ideologies and meta-ideologies, and the more linear will this rank-ordering be. Conversely, if classes do not reveal homogeneity and clear boundaries, applying standards of worth contained in ideologies and values will be more difficult, and the linear ranking of classes will evidence many gaps and overlaps.

The consolidation of graduated with nominal parameters can increase intra-class homogeneity and hence class boundaries when low or high position

on one or more graduated parameters is correlated with valued and devalued nominal parameters marking categoric units. For example, if poverty and lack of education (the graduated parameters) are correlated with a devalued ethnic categoric unit (the nominal parameter), status beliefs about members of devalued categoric units reinforce ideologies that stigmatize those who do not have either money or learning. The outcome is for this consolidation of parameters to highlight a lower class or segment of this lower class as, say, an “underclass.” Consolidation of graduated and nominal parameters will, therefore, increase the homogeneity of individuals in classes, the visibility of members, and the convergence of status beliefs about members of categoric units with ideologies and meta-ideologies. The result is that a class or segment within a class is more readily identifiable and, hence, an easier target of discrimination. This deadly combination of (a) consolidating low place along graduated parameters with devalued nominal parameters, (b) stigmatizing those caught in this consolidation through status beliefs, ideologies, meta-ideologies, and general values, and (c) discrimination against those who have been stigmatized will increase penetration of the consolidation across corporate units – workplaces, neighborhoods, schools, clubs, and the like – and hence increase rates of interaction, inter-marriage, and inter-breeding among members of a class. As a consequence, homogeneity and boundaries marking a class are perpetuated which, in turn, increases the ease with which this class can be rank-ordered.

### **The Intersection of Parameters and Rank-Ordering**

The intersection of graduated parameters invokes moral standards from diverse institutional domains and hence multiple standards – e.g., income, *authority*, *sacredness*, emotional, *knowledge*, and other generalized media of institutional domains – for the evaluation of individuals. With multiple standards of desirability and worth in play, it is often difficult to create an overall linear ranking that reconciles the scales of worth for each separate parameter. For instance, how would the following intersections be averaged to produce a unified scale of worth: one person with high education (knowledge) and low income (money); another with high income (money), little education (general learning); and a third with high income and high education? These three individuals are all high on one parameter, two are low on one, and a third is high on both. The latter person might be ranked higher, but how would the other two be ranked? Perhaps the ranking would depend upon whether money was more valued than knowledge, or vice versa. In any case, it is unlikely that consensus on this issue would exist; and, hence,

it would be difficult to construct a linear rank-order of worth among individuals possessing these three profiles of resource shares.

Intersections of parameters thus work against clear boundaries to classes because intersection increases heterogeneity in a society, and without some degree of homogeneity among members of a subpopulation, evaluative standards of worth are difficult to apply. Intersection thus generates multiple and moving targets for evaluation among members of subpopulations and, thereby, makes the linear rank-orderings of these subpopulations on a scale of worth very difficult to formulate and apply. Even when meta-ideologies are somewhat integrated to produce consensus over evaluative beliefs, the diverse profiles of resource shares of individuals and the intersection of shares with nominal parameters marking categoric units reduce the power of this consensus to label individuals as members of a distinctive social class. When parameters become conflated, then, they lose much of their power to denote categoric-unit memberships; and as categoric unit memberships become less salient, the linearity of rank-ordering, especially in the middle, breaks down. Only at those points in what Miller McPherson has termed “Blau-space” where parameters consolidate can consensus over evaluative standards be used to rank individuals (McPherson and Ranger-Moore 1991). And, as I have emphasized, in contemporary capitalist systems, consolidation is most likely to occur at the top and bottom classes, with the set of middle classes (where intersection of parameters is most likely to exist) difficult to rank beyond their position between the upper and lower classes.

### **Modeling the Rank-Ordering of Classes**

Figure 5.3 outlines the key processes increasing or decreasing the degree of linearity in the rank-ordering of classes in terms of their moral worth. Institutional differentiation and circulation of symbolic media within and across domains initially increases inequality, but as the mix of resource shares increases with differentiation, the degree of inequality levels off. Inequality sets into motion the processes at the top of the model that generate ideologies, meta-ideologies, and value premises that provide the standards of moral worth used to evaluate classes. These standards cause ranking-ordering of classes only when class formation exists – that is, members of subpopulations with different shares of resources are homogeneous. Unequal distribution of resources, per se, can work to increase class formation, and especially so as inequality promotes the consolidation of graduated and nominal parameters marking categoric unit memberships.

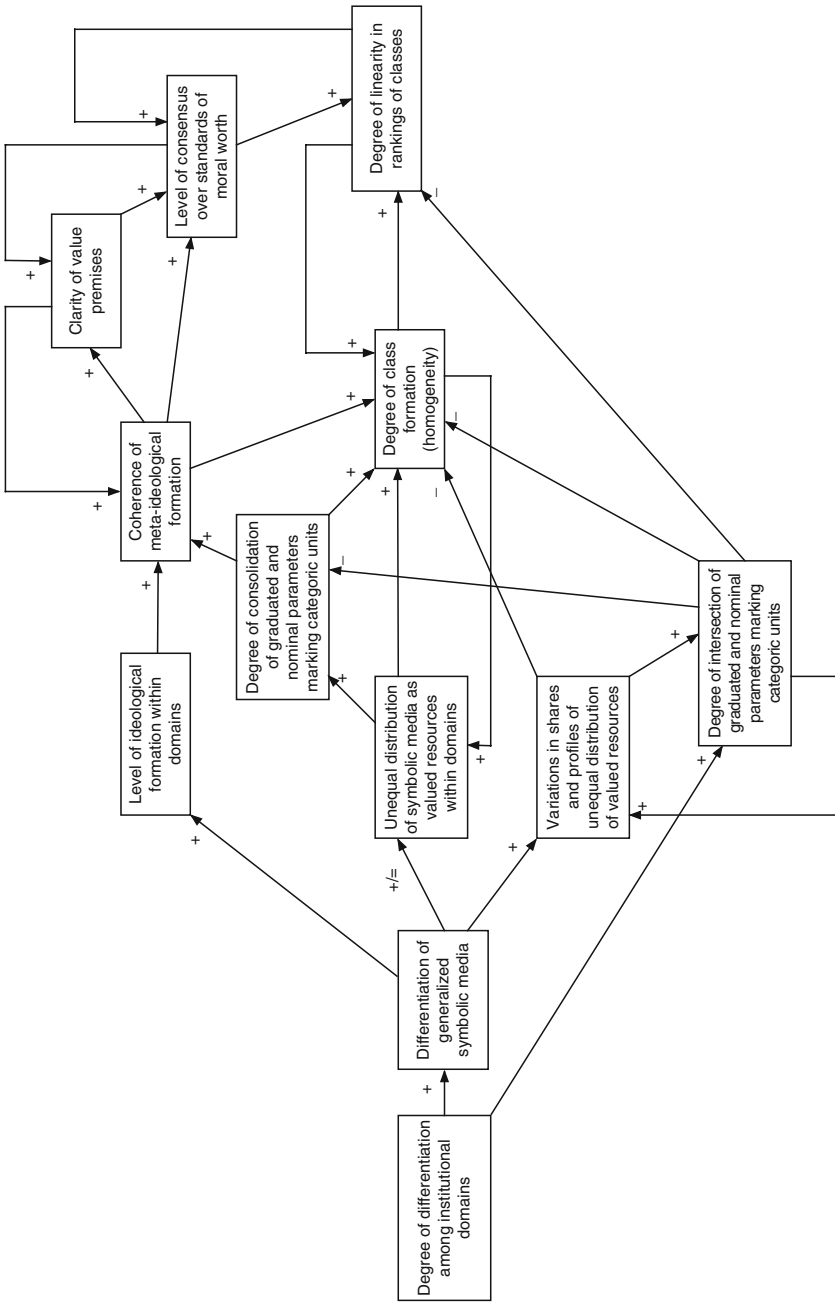


Fig. 5.3 Processes affecting the rank-ordering of classes



Differentiation of institutional domains increases variations in the shares of resources that individuals are likely to hold by expanding the number of symbolic media in play. As more symbolic media are distributed as valued resources, variations in the shares and profiles of these shares increase, with the result that the degree of homogeneity of subpopulations declines, especially in the middle classes. Once class formation becomes ambiguous, low values for this process lower the linearity rank-ordering because, without coherent boundaries among classes, it is difficult to rank-order them. Moreover, institutional differentiation increases the intersection of parameters marking categoric unit memberships, thus having a negative effect on the consolidation of nominal and graduated parameters; and when consolidation is low, homogeneity of class membership declines and decreases the clarity of class formation so necessary for rank-ordering. The end result is moral worth for social classes that reveal high levels of all symbolic media as valued resources and low moral worth for lower classes that possess few valued resources. The middle classes are able to enjoy relatively high moral worth because they have moderate levels of all resources and perhaps high levels of some resources (such as learning or knowledge), albeit in different mixes. These classes do not form a clear linear ranking, but as a set, they occupy the middle between upper and lower classes, thus enjoying a relatively high sense of moral worth, especially compared to those at the bottom of the resource distribution system.

Much of the stability of societies revealing this pattern is maintained, I would hypothesize, by the large set of middle classes, and it is for this reason that Marx's predictions (based upon the "polarization" of classes) have never been accurate for capitalist class relations. Members of these middle classes typically constitute a majority of the population in a society revealing this pattern, with the result that their members see themselves as morally worthy even though they hold different profiles of valued resources. They compare their affluence primarily against the less worthy poor and lower classes in a society rather than the much more resource-endowed upper classes that are rather small and isolated from the daily life of the middle classes. Indeed, the middle classes tend to focus on the poor who are often perceived to possess resource shares (from redistribution policies of polity) that are not deserved when standards of moral worth are invoked, especially the standard in capitalist societies that "money should come from work." If there is an opiate for the middle classes, it is the application of standards of moral worth to the lower classes (rather than the upper classes whose members often do not work for their wealth). This standard is not born in religion, although the symbolic medium of religion is often involved in meta-ideological formation. Still, the composite of the evaluative codes

contained in all symbolic media of the emergent meta-ideology informs value premises, and together, these values and meta-ideologies are used to judge fellow middle class members as morally worthy and to stigmatize the visible poor. Whatever the fairness of such a system, it does promote stability since the vast majority of the population in such societies is not restive, as Marx would have predicted.

## ***Mobility Across Classes***

### **Structural and Cultural Conditions of Mobility**

Mobility is the movement of individuals and family units from one social class to another, with the degree of mobility defined as (a) the proportion of individuals and families in a society who are mobile and (b) the distances from class-of-origin to class-of-destination. Properties of a stratification system have large effects on rates of mobility. When the distribution of resources is unequal and consolidated (that is, shares of one resource predict proportionate shares of other resources), when classes reveal homogeneity among their members, and when classes evidence a linear rank-ordering, rates of mobility will decrease. When, however, the distribution of valued resources does not consolidate, when classes evidence heterogeneity in their memberships, and when rank-orderings are not highly linear, considerable mobility is likely to occur, particularly in middle classes of a society where barriers to mobility are the least restrictive.

Other structural conditions within institutional spheres also influence mobility. If the institutional domain of economy is changing and adding new corporate units engaged in gathering, producing, and distributing, then rates of mobility will increase as individuals seek positions in the divisions of labor of these new units. The same is true for other institutional domains that must hire incumbents in their divisions of labor; as the number and diversity of corporate units increase within all institutional spheres (e.g., government, education, religion, science, medicine, law, etc.), rates of mobility will increase, and dramatically so when labor markets rather than traditional means of ascription become the principle mechanism for allocating human capital. And as mobility increases, vacancy chains are generated that pull individuals to these empty positions, thereby increasing the overall rate of mobility in a society (White 1970).

These same conditions can work in reverse. When the economy is stagnant and when, as a consequence, other institutional domains are not expanding

the division of labor in a society, rates of mobility will be lower, and particularly if ascription rather than free labor markets are the primary means for assigning individuals to positions in corporate units. Moreover, if there is active discrimination against members of particular categoric units, such as an ethnic subpopulation or social class, those in these targeted categoric units will not be mobile; and if membership in one or more categoric units is also correlated with low shares of resources, then rates of mobility will be even lower.

Mobility will generally break down intersections of parameters marking categoric unit memberships, while increasing the diversity of individuals and families in those social classes where mobility occurs. Moreover, since mobile individuals often sustain ties with members of their class-of-origin, even as they develop new ties with members in their class-of-destination, rates of interaction among individuals from diverse categoric units and classes increase, thereby decreasing the salience of categoric units and the parameters marking these units (Blau 1977, 1994). As the salience of categoric unit memberships declines, discrimination decreases, thereby removing one barrier to mobility among members of categoric units that had previously been devalued. There are, then, forces increasing and decreasing rates of mobility in a society; and the profile of the stratification system partial function of rates of mobility. Low mobility will maintain existing patterns of class formation and rank-ordering of classes, while high rates of mobility will tend to decrease homogeneity of members within classes, and at times, alter the structure of the class system itself. These processes can be modeled, as is done in Fig. 5.4.

### **Modeling Processes of Class Inter-Mobility**

At the top half of Fig. 5.4 are the processes decreasing rates of inter-class mobility, whereas at the bottom half are those processes increasing rates of mobility. In turn, rates of mobility have reverse causal effects on those processes affecting mobility rates. Low rates of mobility sustain class formation, inequality, rank-ordering of classes, and consolidation of parameters marking categoric unit memberships; high rates of inter-class mobility promote intersection of parameters marking categoric unit membership as well as the institutional changes that open opportunities for mobility by accelerating institutional differentiation as well as segmentation and differentiation of corporate units within institutional domains that generate new positions to which persons can be mobile.

The two sets of direct, indirect, and reverse causal chains feeding into rates of mobility underscore that without institutional differentiation,



for this decline of class formation and rank-ordering, thus increasing rates of mobility. Thus, high levels of institutional differentiation reduce class formation, rank-ordering of classes, and consolidation of parameters marking categoric unit memberships, thereby increasing rates of mobility.

More directly, institutional differentiation sets into motion the elaboration of corporate units within domains which, in turn, causes further institutional change. In so doing, rates of mobility increase as does the intersection of parameters marking categoric unit memberships. And, once higher rates of mobility exist, mobility has reverse causal effects on increasing intersection of parameters and rates of institutional change.

## **Integrative Dynamics of Stratification Systems**

Stratification is a tension-generating machine because it determines individuals life's chances and their ability to receive the resources that members of a society value. The more stratified is a society, the greater is the potential for tensions between classes; and the more likely is class-based conflict to erupt. Just how these conflict dynamics unfold is not just a function of the level of stratification but also the level of differentiation within and between institutional domains as this differentiation affects the distribution of resources and the configuration of categoric units, above and beyond those generated by social class position. Moreover, the configuration of both structural and cultural mechanisms of integration among institutional domains also influences the volatility of the stratification and the potential for societal disintegration. Let me examine each of these elements separately before putting them back together.

### ***Institutional Differentiation and Stratification***

As I have emphasized, corporate units in each institutional domain distribute symbolic media that are also valued resources. Thus, when individuals do not have access to corporate units in institutional domains, they are less likely to receive the valued resources distributed in this domain; and the fewer the institutional domains to which individuals have access, the greater will be the level of stratification. Moreover, the more hierarchical are corporate units within a domain, the more these resources are distributed unequally in corporate units and, hence, the more likely is a society to

evidence high levels of stratification – unless other forces intervene to mitigate class formation around unequal shares of resources.

Thus, when resources are distributed unequally by corporate units within each institutional domain and when access to some institutional domains is limited, the level of stratification will increase. The inability to gain access to resources in some domains has larger effects on stratification than does resource distribution from other domains. In particular, the inability to secure money through employment will obviously limit opportunities to secure positions in corporate units in other domains such as education, medicine, law, and polity. Money is a generalized symbolic medium that circulates across most domains in differentiated societies, and the lack of income and money will limit persons' and families' capacity to secure symbolic media in other domains. The result is greater degrees of stratification. *Power* is the symbolic medium of polity, and when individuals cannot gain power (authority) in any domain, save perhaps for their families, they cannot use this medium to leverage political processes; indeed, a lack of money and power increases the likelihood that leaders in polity will make decisions that do not benefit the lower classes in a society – even if polity is nominally democratic. Only if the lower classes pose threats to polity will it respond, but such responses are likely to revolve more around a heavy dose of coercive power rather than programs designed to expand access to valued resources in a greater number of institutional domains. There is, then, a kind of compounding of inequality once individuals and corporate units like family do not have the ability to secure either money or power (as authority) in institutional domains; without money or power, only a relatively few domains remain open – domains such as kinship, religion, and perhaps sports.

Stratification declines with the ability to secure symbolic media in positions in the divisions of labor of corporate units and with the capacity to gain access to all differentiated domains. Since money and power (as authority) circulate across all domains, these valued resources can be secured outside the economy and polity proper. Moreover, in highly differentiated societies, the ability to learn (in education) and to acquire knowledge (education and technical training using the media of science) can be leveraged to gain access to other domains and, then, to move into higher positions in the divisions of labor of corporate units in these domains. And, if family structures provide *loyalty/love*, religion *sacredness/piety*, and sports *competition*, then individuals receive a much fuller basket of valued resources, which will generally decrease the level of stratification. Thus, the openness of domains to individuals will significantly reduce stratification and, in so doing, societal-level tensions and conflicts that inevitably accompany higher levels of stratification.

## *Stratification and Integration*

There is both a structural and cultural basis of integration of a societal system under conditions of stratification. The structural basis revolves around not just the degree of stratification – that is, levels of inequality, class formation, linearity of classes by standards of worth, and rates of mobility that come from access to resources of institutional domains – but also the degree of consolidation of membership in categoric units with class position. As I emphasize above, the cultural basis of integration comes from the degree of consensus over meta-ideologies and value premises that are used to legitimate, or delegitimate, stratification and, by extension, the institutional domains generating stratification. Let me begin with the structural basis of integration.

### **Structural Bases of Integration**

When inequalities are high, when classes are homogeneous, when rank-ordering of classes is linear, and when rates of mobility are low, stratification is high and, ironically, has integrative effects at the societal level. Such is particularly likely to be the case where lower classes accept meta-ideologies used to stigmatize them, while legitimizing incumbents in middle and upper classes. Such a system is integrated in that it can endure for a long time and order social relations among individuals and the corporate units organizing their activities. But, there are always discontents among those in lower classes, especially if they can see others enjoying much greater access to valued resources. Indeed, if emotions are also stratified, with those in the lower classes more likely to experience negative emotions, then the volatility of the stratification system increases. Moreover, if consensus over meta-ideologies is moderate to low, and especially if tenets of the ideology are contradicted by the reality of high levels of stratification, then the sense of relative deprivation among those in the lower classes (and even their allies in middle and upper classes) serves to arouse individuals' emotions and, potentially, lead them to become organized as a corporate unit. For example, the value premises of equality and freedom stood in sharp contrast to the realities of slavery in the United States, eventually (over many decades) leading to an abolitionist movement and civil war that began the long process of increasing equality that, to this day, is far from complete in the United States. As long as there was consensus in the American south over the "inferiority" of African-origin population who were seen as "not fully human," the conflict with core values could be ignored; and the structural rigidity of the stratification systems of the south could remain integrated for

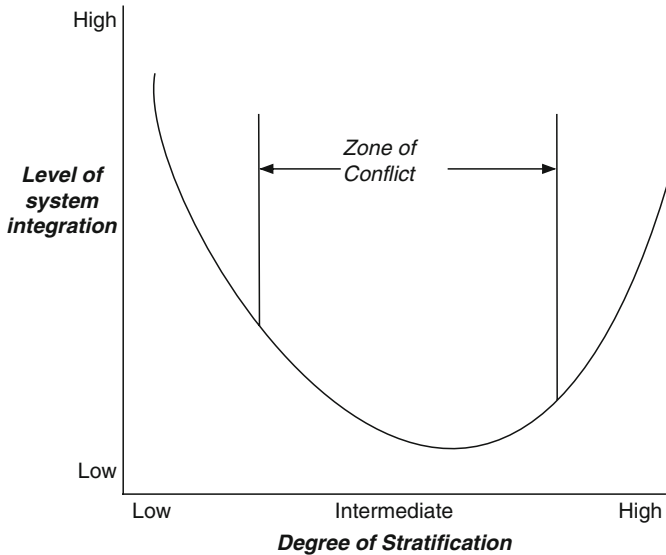
over a century (Turner and Singleton 1978). The periodic slave revolts and the underground railroad to the north make it clear that slaves did not universally accept their enslavement. Still, the stratification system could persist – until abolitionists in the north began to challenge its moral foundations and to demand emancipation.

The integration of a stratification system is built into the very structure of this system as its extremes. The system in the American south up to the Civil War or the Indian Caste system in south Asia indicate that such systems can be sustained for long periods of time. However, most stratification systems are not this extreme, and once inequalities are not tied to categoric units (including class), once classes are not homogeneous, once rank-ordering of classes in terms of their worth is not wholly linear, and once some mobility across classes can occur, the integrative power of high levels of stratification declines and opens the doors to social movements and conflict that can change the system.

The other extreme of stratification – where inequalities are not correlated with categoric units and where members of a population receive diverse configurations of valued resources, where classes are not homogeneous, where linearity is difficult to determine except at the very upper and lower ends, and where rates of mobility across classes are high – is also highly integrated for the opposite reasons of a rigid system. As long as inequalities are not the result of discrimination but differences in ability and achievement and as long as these inequalities are not correlated with membership in categoric units, individuals will generally accept stratification as legitimate, especially if meta-ideologies and value premises about equality of opportunity are not perceived to be violated by the fact that some people live better than others. This open system has not, of course, ever been achieved any more than a completely closed and rigid system, but the extremes of stratification provide alternative bases of integration that allow this system to endure for long periods of time (whether they are morally desirable is another question; integration only means that the system persists without high levels of conflict and change).

Figure 5.5 displays the curvilinear nature of integration of stratification systems. Very high levels of stratification partition a society into classes, with this partitioning legitimated by powerful meta-ideologies and value premises that are backed up by high levels of coercive and administrative power. Such a system can be sustained for long periods of time, as often occurred in advanced horticultural and agrarian systems. There are, to be sure, high levels of tension in such systems, but their structure and culture enable them to persist. Yet, because of the tensions inhering in high levels of inequality, highly stratified systems are not as integrated as more open





**Fig. 5.5** Stratification and integration

systems where inequalities are much lower and, equally important, where individuals have access to many other symbolic media as resources beyond money and power, where homogeneity of classes is low because of mobility and intersection of class with other categoric units, where class cultures make class boundaries more open, where linear ranking is amorphous except for the very top and bottom of the system, and where rates of mobility are high.

As Fig. 5.5 emphasizes, there is a zone of conflict and disintegration in this curvilinear relationship between stratification and integration; intermediate levels of stratification are the least integrated because they impose inequalities and push individuals into increasingly homogeneous classes that are ever-more likely to be ranked and that begin to cut off mobility. Under these conditions individuals are not so constrained by meta-ideologies or power that they cannot begin to secure resources for conflict mobilization, and as we will see shortly, conflict is ever more likely when structural and cultural bases of integration are weak.

Most stratification systems fall between the extremes portrayed in Fig. 5.5, with the result that the consolidation of categoric units with class becomes critical in understanding its degree of integration. When corporate units within institutional domains remain open to individuals, it is more likely that class position will not become consolidated with categoric unit membership. For, as individuals can receive more types of symbolic media as valued

resources across a greater array of institutional domains, they are more likely to perceive the system to be legitimate, and especially if they believe that opportunities exist to increase shares of highly valued resources. Conversely, when discrimination against devalued members of categoric units denies them higher-level positions in corporate units within domains or even access to domains in the first place, then class-based stratification is consolidated with inequalities among categoric units. When members of devalued categoric units are pushed to the bottom portions of the class system and denied opportunities for mobility, the volatility of the stratification system in a society increases exponentially. Membership in particular kinds of corporate units makes stratification even more volatile. When members of a devalued categoric unit are also organized by sets of corporate units, such as family and religion, that sustain an identifiable culture (language, beliefs, ideologies, norms), then consolidation of a categoric unit with class position arouses negative emotions that are expressed and intensified in corporate units. Over time, these corporate units can provide organizational resources for conflict mobilization (McCarthy and Meyer 1977). Ethnicity as a categoric unit reveals these properties, and it is for this reason that a high correlation of ethnicity with class positions is highly volatile. The same would be true of categoric units based upon religious affiliation because corporate units organizing religious rituals can provide leadership and other resources that, potentially, can be used for conflict mobilization. When polity is democratic and when value premises emphasize equality of opportunities, subordinate classes and members of categoric units can more effectively organize and promote ideologies that can increase access to higher-level positions in corporate units across a wider array of institutional domains, thereby reducing the correlation of categoric unit membership and class position.

As I emphasized earlier, the more memberships in categoric units successively penetrate all positions in all corporate units in a society, the less salient are categoric unit memberships because, when individuals from different categoric units reveal high rates of interaction in diverse institutional contexts, they increasingly view others as individual persons rather than as representative of variously valued social categories. Furthermore, with high rates of interaction, individuals from different categoric units come to understand each other and become more tolerant of differences in the culture and behavioral demeanors of individuals. This lack of consolidation of categoric unit membership with positions in the division of labor also reduces the negative evaluation of formerly devalued categories, thereby removing some of the stigma that members of devalued categories may have had to endure in the past and that marked them as “undesirable” and, hence, as appropriate targets of discrimination.

Thus, when the parameters defining categoric unit memberships remain unconsolidated, the degree of stratification declines as do the tensions associated with inequalities. Individuals and families all have some valued resources and most have many diverse kinds of valued resources in different configurations. As a result, classes are not homogeneous, especially as parameters intersect across all types of corporate units (groups, organizations, and communities) and, hence, are not consolidated with any position or location in corporate units or any particular institutional domain. The linearity of classes is compromised because there is typically a large set of middle classes between upper and lower classes, thereby making it difficult to rank-order the classes in which the vast majority of the population is located. And, with higher rates of mobility across classes, individuals will tend to see their lack of mobility as their personal failing rather than as the consequence of oppression inhering the stratification system. Such a system becomes even more integrated when there is consensus over cultural symbols – ideologies, meta-ideologies, and values – used to legitimate the system; this consensus will typically force individuals to stigmatize themselves for their lack of mobility.

### **The Cultural Basis of Integration**

As institutional ideologies are built up from discourse and thematization within each institutional domain, they coalesce into a meta-ideology, typically organized by the tenets of one or a small set of ideologies of dominant institutional domains. This meta-ideology is constrained by existing values and other cultural elements such as texts and technologies, while at the same time, meta-ideologies reinforce and, potentially, change values and other cultural systems. For example, if the respective ideologies from a capitalist economy and a democratic polity are prominent, as they are in the United States, this prominence reflects certain American value premises, such as individualism, achievement, activism, and progress (Williams 1970: 438–500); conversely ideologies and meta-ideologies highlight these value premises in American society and give them more power. Together the emphasis on particular value premises by the meta-ideology is used to legitimate the culture and structure of not only the economy and polity but most other institutional domains as well. And most importantly for my purposes, the meta-ideology and values legitimate the stratification system. For instance, those who have not “measured up” to the tenets of capitalist economic ideology (e.g., hard

work, competition, and accumulation of wealth) and democratic political ideology (e.g., voting and civic engagement) will be seen as deserving of their lower class position.

The key to legitimacy, however, is what proportion of the members of a population accepts these moral codes. If only the affluent believe in these moral codes, then ideology and meta-ideologies can polarize a population, with the lower classes feeling deprived and, potentially, ready to engage in conflict with the corporate units organizing the affluent. But, if a majority of the less affluent in lower classes also accept the premises of values and meta-ideologies, then culture (for better or worse in terms of some “higher morality”) legitimates the stratification system and (again for better or worse) integrates this system often to the point where those at its bottom class positions stigmatize themselves for their lack of mobility.

Symbolic media and ideologies also work to integrate a stratification system by giving individuals at least some media that, in essence, “buy them off” or has them mentally “sign off on” a system that also denies them other resources. For example, if individuals are unable to accumulate money and wealth or power and authority as valued resources, they may still have access to other valued resources – *learning, love/loyalty, sacredness/piety, competition, health* – that provide compensation for lower levels of money and power. Indeed, highly differentiated institutional systems generally open doors for individuals to acquire many types of resources, with the result that even those who do not have much money or power may still buy into the meta-ideology legitimating the stratification system. Karl Marx emphasized that religion is “an opiate” of the masses, and it may be that symbolic media such as *learning, competition, health* (care), *sacredness/piety*, and *love/loyalty* are also opiates, but the latter give people an emotional “high” and, thereby, make them less willing to challenge the system of resource distribution. Sociologists have had the tendency to under-emphasize how valuable non-economic and non-power symbolic media are to people. If, however, individuals cannot even get access to corporate units where these alternative media are distributed or, if they gain access, can only secure small amounts of these resources, then the integrative effect of these media works against integration. People feel not only deprived for their lack of money and power but also for their inability to secure other valued resources. And, if there is some consolidation of parameters linking categoric unit membership with class position, this sense of deprivation will only escalate and, eventually, set into motion disintegrative pressures on not only stratification but also on the institutional order generating stratification.

## Stratification and Disintegration

### *Stratification and Polity Breakdown*

Because stratification revolves around the distribution of valued resources that determine people's well being, it is not surprising that conflict inheres in any system of stratification. Nomadic hunting and gathering societies had low levels of internal conflict because they did not have stratification, but as soon as hunter-gatherers settled down, the emerging Big Man form of polity produced tensions and conflict, and particularly in fights over his successor. Nomadic hunter-gatherers sometimes had conflict, but this was rarely conflict over the distribution of resources; and the conflict was resolved by splitting the band or, if conflict occurred from the mental pathologies of individuals, the latter were often killed or banished from the band (Boehm 1993, 1999).

But, once polity emerges in human societies, stratification also arises because those with power can usurp resources for their own benefit. In Big Man systems and even simple horticultural societies, stratification was not highly pronounced because many valued resources could not be hoarded, and, as was often the case, political elites gained prestige by redistributing the very resources that they usurped, thereby increasing inequalities over prestige more than material well being. For example, if yams will spoil, and the leader imposes "taxes" on yams, the leader would have to redistribute the yams because he or his allies cannot consume them before they rot (Malinowski 1922); and so, by "giving them away," the leader affirms his right (and it was a "he" in virtually all horticultural societies) to hold power and gains prestige and honor for acts of "generosity." The famous Potlatch among northwest aboriginal populations – essentially Big Man systems of settled hunter-gatherers – is another example of leaders hoarding resources and then giving them away in prestige competitions with other leaders. In so doing, the increase in the leader's prestige operated as a symbolic base of power to accompany his coercive and administrative (through alliances) bases of power (Aldona 1991; Atleo 2005; Seguin 1986). For in exhibiting displays of generosity in the name of the totems symbolizing a population, the prestige garnered by the Big Man and his allies represents an affirmation of (a) the symbols marking members of a society and (b) the right of the leaders to hold power by virtue of their respect for these symbols.

With advanced horticulture and agrarianism, polity was transformed into a state, with heavy taxation of economic surplus to support the privilege of elites and the administrative, coercive, and to a more limited extent, the

material-incentive bases of power. Inequality increased, reaching its peak in advanced agrarian societies (Lenski 1966); and as inequality escalated and the class system hardened, forms of conflict-like revolt and banditry increased. As Weber (1922 [1968]) and later Skocpol (1979) argued, a state's place and success in inter-societal systems can have large effects on its ability to sustain a symbolic base of power under conditions of high inequality and class formation. Agrarian states often found themselves in fiscal difficulty due to inefficient taxation systems, patronage bestowed on fellow elites by political leaders, concentrations of wealth in the corporate units of religion, lavish spending by elites on luxury goods and projects, and military adventurism in the inter-societal system. A loss of prestige (Weber 1922 [1968]) or a defeat in war (Skocpol 1979) in the inter-societal system would cause rapid de-legitimization of polity (and its symbolic base of power) and, as a consequence, the collapse of the state, especially one in fiscal crisis. The collapse could come from above through rebellion by fellow elites, from below as peasant revolts spread, from urban revolts by peasants who had migrated to urban areas, or from new emerging classes such as the bourgeoisie. Thus, a critical set of variables in understanding how stratification leads to conflict is the strength of polity along its four bases of consolidated power. The potential for state breakdown increases when the symbolic base erodes from excessive taxation and failings in the inter-societal system, when the coercive base of power is employed in abusive repression and/or in military actions in the inter-societal system that fail, when the administrative base of power is inefficient and corrupt, and when material incentives cannot keep pace with demands from traditional and upwardly mobile elites.

A second set of variables revolves around mobilization for conflict by those in the lower classes of the stratification system. Those who have not received large shares of valued resources often experience sufficient deprivation to mobilize for conflict; and while full-scale revolutions from below are rather rare in human history, conflict with the state and elites is not. There are, as we will see, certain conditions that increase the likelihood that class conflict from below will occur in a society. The paths of conflict generated by stratification are delineated across the bottom of Fig. 5.6.

### **The Dynamics of Polity and State Breakdown**

When the actions of corporate actors within polity erode their four bases of power, some elite sectors are more likely to mobilize against polity, increasing the likelihood of conflict. Even if conflict initially fails and polity prevails,

the potential for state breakdown has increased because polity will have expended material resources, mobilized counter-coercive power (at high costs), purged its administrative base of dissidents, and lost some, if not all, of its symbolic base of power. It may take several iterations of the processes outlined at the top of Fig. 5.6 for the state to become sufficiently weakened for conflict to produce significant social change in the institutional order. If polity has engaged at external geo-economic and geo-political actions, the potential for state breakdown increases because polity will have taxed both elites and the general population to support its coercive and administrative bases of power in the inter-societal system. And, if polity loses prestige in the inter-societal system, loses a war in geo-political arena, or is unsuccessful in securing additional sources of material resources to finance its activities and to meet demands for patronage by elites, its legitimacy and symbolic base of power will quickly erode and increase the likelihood of revolt from one or more class locations.

These processes are most likely to occur in agrarian societies where a coherent state structure exists, but they can also play out in Big Man systems, chiefdoms, and kin-based political systems. They are less likely to occur in industrial and post-industrial societies, especially democratic societies, because elites and non-elites have mechanisms for addressing grievances and for changing political leaders, but still, elites can often take state power through alliances with the leaders of the state's coercive arm, especially when democracy is not well institutionalized. One way to conceptualize the pressures on polity is to examine several blocks of variables as they increase or decrease the capacity of the state to sustain its bases of power and to regulate members of a population within its borders. Let me label these: (1) the demographic block, (2) the logistical loads block, (3) the economic block, (4) the stratification block, and (5) the symbolic block.

(1) *The demographic block.* The size of a population puts selection pressures from regulation on actors to expand polity, and in so doing, population growth also increases the potential for state breakdown, along a number of fronts (Goldstone 1990). One is simple social control; regulation of larger populations takes more developed and differentiated (and costly) corporate units within polity; and when the rate of population growth is high, there may not be sufficient time for these new types of social control structures to emerge. Another is the age distribution; rapid population growth assures that the age distribution of the population will increasingly be biased, at least in the initial short and intermediate term, toward younger age cohorts. Younger individuals are more likely to challenge traditions, to migrate from rural to urban areas, and to question the social control practices of the polity, thereby to increase selection pressures from regulation on polity. Still

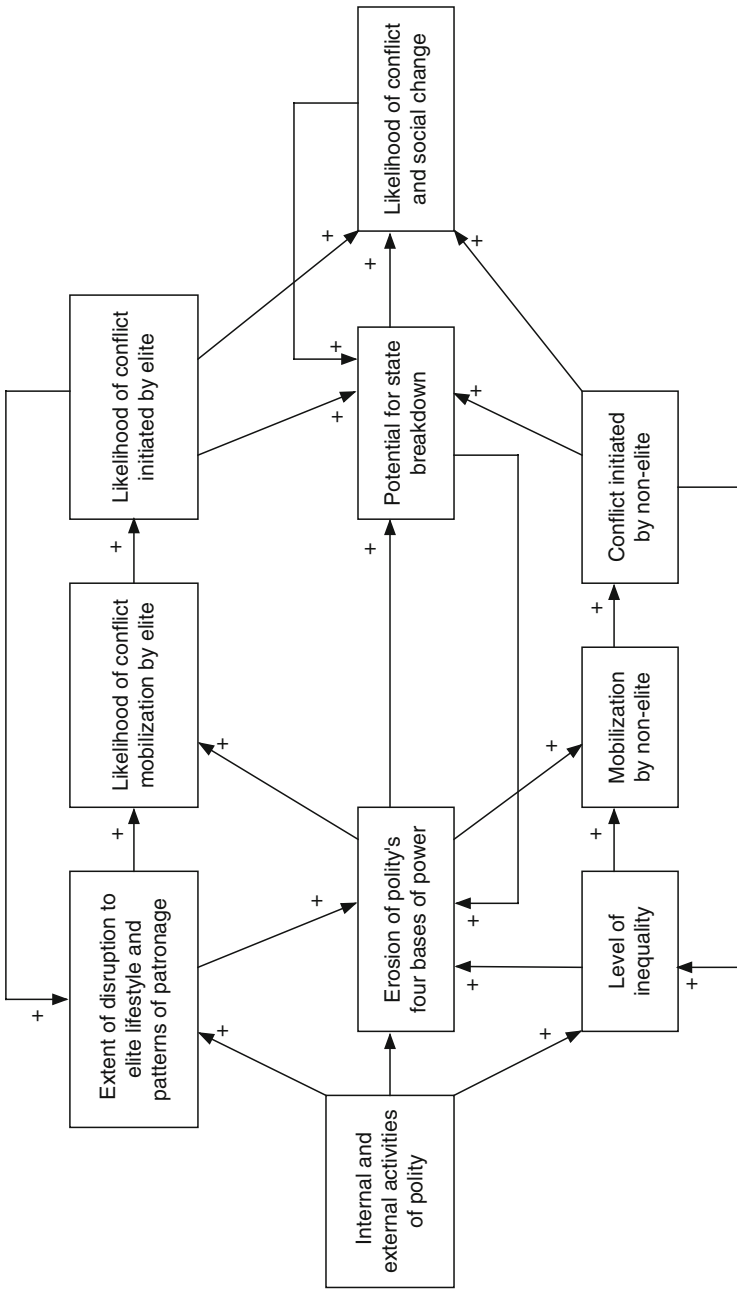


Fig. 5.6 Stratification, conflict, and state breakdown



another front is urbanization of the population as it grows; larger populations will generally migrate toward urban centers, particularly as opportunities in rural areas decline. As noted above, these migrants are also likely to be members of younger age cohorts (Goldstone 1990), and hence more restive if they cannot find a means to support themselves, thus again placing heavy pressures on polity. Yet another demographic front revolves around the differentiation of the population into subcultures; larger populations are less likely to be homogeneous, with the result that cultural differences among them, especially over ethnicity and religious affiliation, will put further pressures on polity for social control. These pressures are intensified if a large proportion of the population is in lower classes and must compete for access to the economy and other institutional domains.

(2) *The logistical loads block.* Population growth and differentiation by culture and class, coupled with differentiation along a rural-urban continuum, all increase logistical loads, as noted above, on polity to coordinate and control members of a society. These logistical loads increase dramatically when polity is engaged in either geo-political or geo-economic activities. Geo-political activities often lead to efforts at conquest and control of larger territories; and the further the borders of a society or inter-societal system dominated by one polity extend beyond its capital city, the greater are the logistical loads on polity to maintain order in these territories and to distribute information, resources, and military personnel and weaponry across a territory (Collins 1986: 145–212). As territories get larger, they also become culturally diverse; and when diverse sets of conquered subpopulations must submit to social control by a conquering polity, they are typically restive and increase significantly the costs of social control on polity as it builds up its administrative and coercive bases of power. Geo-economic inter-societal relations are less burdensome on polity, as long as distributive infrastructures are developed and markets are institutionalized within the economy. However, if polity must use its bases of power to control these markets and infrastructures, then the logistical loads on polity increase.

As logistical loads escalate, polity must consolidate ever-more power in its administrative and coercive bases; and as these bases of power grow and differentiate, second-order logistical loads emerge. If the administrative structure is efficient and rational, it will recruit and promote incumbents based upon knowledge and expertise, but if the administrative base of power is used as a part of the patronage system, then it will be inefficient and, moreover, will engender resentment, thereby increasing pressures from regulation as a social force. If the coercive base of power is used for both conquest and control of the homeland and conquered territories, the efficiency and rationalization of coercive forces become critical variables.

If the size and organizational structure of coercive forces are rational and efficient, then social control of territories is easier than when the positions in coercive forces are part of the patronage system. Moreover, the loyalty of coercive forces to political elites is always a problem in polities that are under pressure; and if sources of counter-coercive power exist, coercive control becomes that much more difficult and expensive. Yet, even if the implementation of social control is rational and efficient, it is always costly, and so, polity must be able to secure resources to support its administrative and coercive bases of power.

(3) *The economic block.* The level of productive surplus determines how developed and differentiated polity can become; and the consolidation and centralization of the bases of power generally increase the level of stratification and, hence, logistical loads on polity (see below). Productive surplus is used by polity to sustain its bases of power; and the more resources must be devoted to patronage (as a major part of the material incentive base of power), the more likely is the polity to run short of resources in the longer term, and thus find itself in fiscal crisis. This crisis is accelerated by the expansion of the administrative and coercive bases of power for social control and for other critical activities such as tax collection. The efficiency and form of tax collection become critical because, ultimately, all bases of power are sustained by money. If tax collection is inefficient, polity typically does not secure sufficient resources and, eventually, must turn to borrowing which only delays the fiscal crisis. This crisis is more likely when tax collection is franchised to non-state actors (often as patronage), when formulas for taxes do not target those subpopulations where wealth, especially liquid wealth not tied up on land, and when the administration of tax collection is corrupt. When tax collection is inefficient and corrupt, it almost always is considered unfair by a significant proportion of the population; and if taxes are arbitrarily increased to support elite privilege, geo-political and geo-economic activities, and patronage, the symbolic base of power for polity will rapidly erode as individuals and corporate actors become increasingly resentful. And, if production declines, the surplus of productive outputs that form the tax base of polity also declines. The result is a rapid movement toward fiscal crisis, especially if polity begins to borrow money to make up for shortfalls generated by falling tax revenues to sustain bases of power used in social control and inter-societal engagements.

(4) *The stratification block.* As I will review shortly, high levels of stratification always generate tensions between upper and lower classes, and even more so when there are relatively few middle classes in-between those high and low in the stratification system. One constant pressure on polity is patronage, and the larger is the pool of elites in the upper classes, the greater

are the demands for patronage. Moreover, when high rates of mobility into and out of the elite classes occur, those moving downward and upward will make appeals for subsidies through patronage. In the end, the total net demand for patronage will rise, thereby hastening the fiscal crisis of the state. Also, when there is mobility among elites, splits and conflict within elite classes will emerge, increasing the chances that at least one faction will challenge the power of polity or, alternatively, their demands for patronage will be exchanged for loyalty to polity. For example, with the rise of commerce and capitalism, elites whose wealth resides on the land and upwardly mobile elites whose wealth comes from commerce and market activities have often come into conflict with each other and, thereby, increased logistical loads on polity; and their conflicts also resulted in increasing demands by both sides for patronage from polity, thus once again hastening fiscal crisis. The resentments of various sectors of elites toward each other and toward the polity puts the latter in the difficult position of reconciling conflicting demands from elites; and as polity attempts to meet these demands, it almost always does so by corrupting its administrative and coercive bases of power through patronage appointments and by borrowing money from elites in commercial sectors of the economy, both of which accelerate the movement toward fiscal crisis.

(5) *The symbolic block.* Polities under intense selection pressures from regulation, production, and distribution often seek to mobilize their symbolic base of power. When they engage in geo-economic and geo-political engagements with other populations and are successful in these efforts, they not only increase the level legitimization through their symbolic base of power, they also gain access to desperately needed resources to fund their coercive and administrative bases of power and to replenish their funding for material incentives (and capacities for patronage). Yet, inter-societal engagements are expensive and dangerous because, when they fail, the symbolic base of power erodes very rapidly and often initiates revolutionary action by either or both elites and non-elites. Once polity embarks on conquest and economic co-optation and control of other populations to maintain its bases of power, it becomes vulnerable to erosion of its bases of power, and especially the symbolic base, when it loses a war or fails to maintain its place in a geo-economic system.

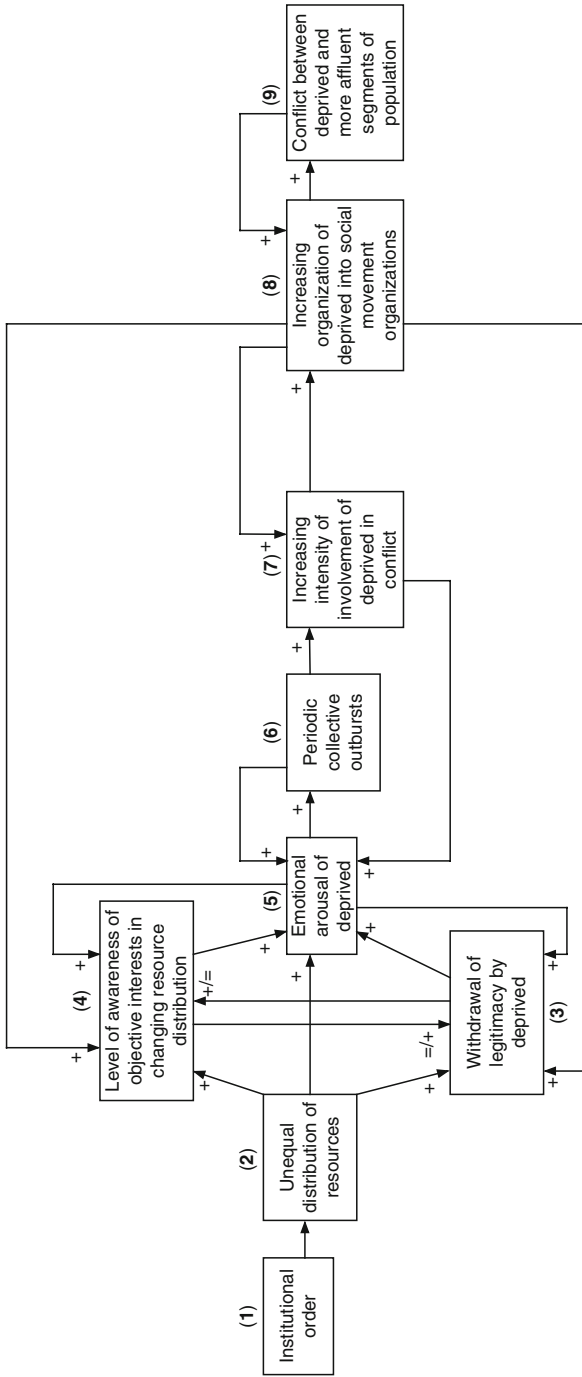
In sum, then, the activities of polity can increase the chances of state breakdown when they erode bases of power, and in so doing, cause the elite sectors of the stratification system to mobilize for conflict. And, as the actions of polity hasten both fiscal and legitimization crises when domestic and inter-societal actions are perceived to have failed, segments of the elite classes become even more likely to mobilize against key actors in polity.

At the same time, these very processes leading to the mobilization by elites also have effects on non-elite classes because conflict among elites typically increases inequality as the polity squanders resources on patronage, warfare, and privilege. Thus, there are both pressures from above and below that, if sufficiently intense, will cause conflict, state breakdown, and social change in not only the stratification system but also in many other institutional domains as well.

### **Polity, Stratification, and Mobilization of Non-Elite Classes**

In Fig. 5.7, I consolidate a variety of conflict theories into one model (Turner 1975a, b). These theories all seek to explain some of the processes summarized in each box in Fig. 5.7 and the direct as well as reversal causal connection among these processes, as is highlighted by the arrows. No theory fully explores all of these processes together, and so, it is perhaps a good time to begin doing so by splicing together the thrust of a wider array of theories into one theory (Turner 1973, 1975a, b). If we visualize time as moving from left to right in Fig. 5.7, conflict begins with the organization of an institutional order which, in turn, leads to the unequal distribution of valued resources by corporate units within this order. As a stratification system forms, those who receive low levels of resource shares begin to withdraw legitimacy, and as they do so, they become ever-more aware of their interests in altering the stratification system. The conflict process can cycle at this point – that is, between boxes 3 and 4 – for a while; and from this interplay negative emotions are increasingly aroused. At times, disorganized outbursts of collective action occur, which in turn, feedback and arouse emotions even more as agents of social control repress the actions of members in the lower classes. Again, the conflict process can cycle at this point (the processes described in boxes 5, 6, and 7); and as individual emotions are charged up, larger segments of the population become increasingly invested in conflict as a strategy for forcing the redistribution of resources. This emotional investment leads to the emergence of leaders and counter-ideologies to those legitimating polity and stratification or, alternatively to demands that the moral tenets of existing ideologies be put into practice by polity.

It is at this point that conflict can become either violent or organized as a social movement. Violence is most likely when individuals are emotionally aroused but not well organized (Turner 1973). When members of subordinate classes or categoric units become more organized, however, they become instrumental and set about mobilizing resources – organizational, material, symbolic, and political – to realize more clearly articulated goals.



**Fig. 5.7** Prominent stages in the conflict initiated by lower classes

Much depends upon the responses of polity and law. If initial emotional arousal and disorganized outbursts cause polity to over-use coercive force to repress dissent, the longer-term prospect is for even more violent protests, especially if the polity is weakened by the processes summarized earlier. If, however, polity seeks to address to the problems of the deprived, then less violent conflict will ensue, especially as subordinate subpopulations become organized and instrumental. Violent conflict will generate larger-scale changes than instrumental conflict, but violence almost always leads to the centralization of power around its coercive and administrative bases which, in the long run, fosters future conflict. Such is the process of conflict in broad strokes; now let me fill in some of the necessary details for eight stages in the conflict processes outlined in Fig. 5.7.

### The Structure of the Institutional Order

The potential for stratification to cause conflict and change in the social structure and culture of a societal system is related to several properties of the institutional order. One property is the degree of differentiation among institutional domains and the number of these differentiated domains. The more institutional domains differentiated, the more likely will individuals and corporate units have access to a larger number of valued resources contained in the distribution of symbolic media in these domains. A second property is the degree to which symbolic media circulate within and between domains. The more developed are symbolic media within each domain, and the more they circulate to other domains, and hence, the more likely are individuals and corporate units to gain access to a larger share of valued resources. A third property is the structure of corporate units within domains. The more hierarchical are units and the more they reveal linear authority systems, the more likely are corporate units to distribute the symbolic media of a domain and other valued resources like honor and prestige unequally. In so doing, corporate units also create an emotional stratification system with individuals low in the hierarchy experiencing negative emotions, with those at higher positions (where they receive larger shares of symbolic media) feeling positive emotions. The negative emotions of those receiving few resources can become the fuel for conflict, but most of the time, these negative emotions work against mobility up corporate-unit hierarchies. A fourth property is the degree to which the ideologies formed from discourse and thematization within a domain have tenets legitimating the unequal distribution of symbolic media and valued resources. The more coherent this ideology and the more it incorporates value premises in its

tenets, the greater is its power to legitimate inequalities, especially if those receiving fewer shares of resources buy into these tenets. A fifth and related property is the degree to which meta-ideologies legitimating the institutional order and the stratification system are dominated by symbolic media that are the most unequally distributed. For example, if money and power are the most unequally distributed of all media and if they dominate the formation of a meta-ideology, the meta-ideology will also legitimate the unequal distribution of other symbolic media as valued resources.

### Inequality in the Distribution of Resources

Conflict begins with high levels of inequality and with a high correlation among resource shares. If the distribution of resources meted out by corporate units of institutional domains is correlated – that is, those getting high, medium, or low levels of one resource receive the same proportionate share of the other resources – inequality will increase and become the basis for class formation. Moreover, if certain categories of individuals and corporate units organizing their activities (e.g., kinship, religion, gangs, clubs, etc.) are excluded from key institutional domains, inequality increases even more. And, as noted earlier, if highly salient categoric units such as ethnicity and religious affiliation are correlated with access to institutional domains and to the unequal distribution of symbolic media, inequality will not only increase but also evidence a highly volatile potential. Conversely, if individuals and corporate units have access to all domains, if the distribution of symbolic media by corporate units in diverse domains is not highly correlated, and if members of categoric units are distributed proportionate to their number across all positions in the divisions of labor of corporate units in all institutional domains, inequality will be less and reveal much less conflict potential.

### Withdrawal of Legitimacy from Institutional Domains

When individuals consistently receive low shares of resources, they are likely to begin withdrawing legitimacy from the meta-ideologies and even value premises that justify inequality and stratification. And, even if they maintain their allegiance to these cultural systems, they may withdraw legitimacy from polity and, if their access to economy has been difficult or marginal, from the economy as well. Certain conditions increase withdrawal of both diffuse commitments to meta-ideologies and to specific institutional domains. One is the lack of effective channels for upward mobility; the more individuals and family units perceive that they have little chance of

mobility, the greater will be their sense of alienation and, eventually, their commitment to culture and institutional domains. Ironically, even under conditions of higher mobility, those left behind will experience relative deprivation and the anger as well as frustration that goes with watching others move to better class locations (Merton 1968; Davies 1962). The negative emotions directed at a system that prevents mobility increases dramatically if class and categoric unit membership are correlated and if mobility occurs for members of one set of categoric units but not others. Another condition fostering the withdrawal of legitimacy is the lack of channels for redressing grievances against the system of inequality. If polity is not receptive to protests and/or unable to respond except with coercion, the polity will lose legitimacy; and if other institutional domains, such as law, are also seen as not responsive to grievances, then they too will lose legitimacy. A third condition decreasing legitimacy is a high correlation among the distributions of symbolic media as valued resources. If those receiving high, medium, and low of one valued resource are in the same relative position for the distribution of other valued resources, then the withdrawal of legitimacy by those at the bottom of the system will be more rapid and more pervasive across institutional domains.

Emotional arousal begins to kick in as legitimacy is withdrawn, and particularly so if there is an emotional stratification system that correlates with the class system. If members of lower classes must experience negative emotions – anger, frustration, distress, fear, sadness, shame, humiliation, for example – in diverse institutional domains, these negative emotions will eventually coalesce into a diffuse sense of alienation and anger at those domains that have denied them access to resources. This unequal distribution of emotions, with the middle and upper classes experiencing positive emotions and the lower classes negative emotions, is often a time bomb waiting for ignition. The rapid escalation of often seemingly minor incidents into riots and violence is testimony to the reserves of negative emotions that individuals in the lower classes; and under the right conditions these emotions can lead to rapid mobilization for conflict, as stages 5–9 in Fig. 5.7 document.

### Awareness of Objective Interest

As individuals withdraw legitimacy and become emotionally aroused, they do not immediately or fully perceive their objective interests. There is an initial awareness of these interests but until additional conditions are realized, individuals are more likely to be emotionally charged and less instrumental and focused on objective interests. One key condition focusing the lower classes on their objective interests is the emergence of leaders who



mobilize resources for conflict (Tilly 1978; Paige 1975). One of these resources is symbolic and revolves around an ideology that articulates the emotions, needs, and goals; here, leaders can frame the diffuse and still vague sense of frustration and anger into more concrete goals and means for achieving them (Smelser 1963; Snow and Benford 1988). Another resource is material, revolving around the ability of leaders to raise funds to mount effective protests and to communicate their message. Still another resource is organizational, revolving around the capacity to build social movement organizations (Zald and McCarthy 1977).

The success in organizing symbolic, material, and organizational resources depends upon the capacity to communicate, which is greatly facilitated by physical proximity of those mobilized in corporate units (communities and organizations), widespread literacy among those being mobilized, access to mass media by organizers and those being organized, and the ability to recruit members to social movement organizations. As these resource bases of social movement organizations are mobilized, interests are better articulated. But, the effect of resource mobilization is curvilinear in that initial organization of symbolic, material, and organizational resources arouses diffuse negative emotions, often without clear targets, with the result that early awareness can push emotions to the point of periodic outbreaks of riots and other sudden and volatile forms of collective behaviors. As the resource base is further consolidated, however, symbols focus on specific targets and goals; and material resources are sufficient to fund a social movement organization that begins to engage in highly strategic actions. As these resources are consolidated, out-of-control violence is more likely to decline.

### Emotional Arousal

Emotions are part of phases 1–4 in the conflict process, and so, it is somewhat arbitrary to put this force here in the middle stages of conflict outlined in Fig. 5.7. The reason for doing so is that emotional arousal is intensified as individuals begin to withdraw legitimacy, become initially aware of their interests, and begin mobilizing symbolic, material, and organizational resources. The emotions that have been simmering during early phases of the conflict process can cause periodic collective outbursts of varying degrees of violence, which feeds back and causes further withdrawal of legitimacy from polity, if not other institutional domains and their cultures as well.

Negative emotional arousal is very much influenced by mechanisms of social control. Socialization to repress negative emotions will reduce overt experiences of shame and frustration, but once repressed these emotions tend to transmute into a diffuse sense of anger without a clear target (Turner 2007;

Scheff and Retzinger 1991), except perhaps members of other categoric units or corporate units in various institutional domains. External social control by the coercive and administrative bases of polity also has large effects on overt emotional arousal. Massive coercion can maintain control; and coupled with high levels of administrative monitoring and sanctioning, restive subpopulations can be kept in check, at least for a time. But, as the coercive and administrative bases of power are used to suppress overt emotional action, they are also consuming resources that the polity may not have and, moreover, increasing the alienation of the lower classes and lessening their commitments to the polity and other institutional domains. Repression at the psychological level (through defense mechanism) and as the sociocultural level (through coercion by polity) only work in the shorter term because repression of any sort will generally heighten certain emotions such as diffuse anger, humiliated fury, and needs for vengeance. These are the emotions of collective outbursts that can challenge polity and other domains in the institutional order.

### Periodic Collective Outbursts

When counter-ideologies are just in formation, when leaders are emerging and often in competition or in open conflict with each other, and when social movement organizations are emerging (but, again, often in competition with each other), emotions are sufficiently aroused to cause individuals to forgo concerns about the potential costs of collective action, even violent and destructive collective action. These collective outbursts release accumulated negative emotions among those at the bottom of the emotional stratification system, and they signal withdrawal of legitimacy from key institutional domains and the cultural systems legitimating these domains.

### Increasing Intensity of Emotions and Involvement

Coercive actions by polity are almost always employed to repress outbursts of collective action, although at times, polity is too weak to successfully control these actions. But more typically, polity has sufficient coercive force to “put down” riots, as long as they remain local in relatively few communities. These repressive actions by polity only erode further its legitimacy, while at the same time forcing polity to expend resources maintaining order, thus hastening fiscal crisis and state breakdown. Moreover, even as overt expressions of negative emotions in riots decline, at least for a time, the intensity of emotions is increasing among those whose actions have been thwarted by the repressive arm of the state. As emotional intensity increases, efforts at building up organizational resources will accelerate.

### Further Efforts at Organization

The degree of organization in social movement organizations depends upon a number of conditions. One is an arena of politics within polity itself. If law allows and tolerates the political mobilization of corporate units, organizations can communicate with potential members, recruit them, and secure money to fund movement operations. The symbolic resources mobilized by this organization become critical to how it will operate in the arena of politics (Luhmann 1982). If the ideology of the organization emphasizes that meta-ideologies and core values of the society are indeed correct, but that their realization has been denied to segments of the population, the organization is much more likely to be tolerated and to secure funding and members from other social classes. If, however, the organization articulates an ideology that rejects values, meta-ideologies, key institutions, it will generally be subject to coercive use of force by polity, even a democratic polity.

In either case, as social movement organizations become more organized, they generally become more instrumental, even if excluded from the arena of politics. They become clear about their goals and, if able to enter and participate in the arena of politics, they can negotiate and compromise to meet goals. More ideologically driven organizations that reject both the culture and institutions of a society also become instrumental, but their goals threaten polity and corporate units in other institutional domains, with the result that they will be repressed. These movement organizations often articulate extreme ideologies and target (a) the symbols of corporate units in institutional domains and (b) the leaders of these corporate units who are viewed as personifications of evil. Only if polity is extremely weak and cannot consolidate sufficient coercive and administrative power can such organizations succeed. Typically, they must remain “underground” and make periodic strikes at the institutional order, with these strikes being very violent. Terrorists are often well organized but they must operate in hiding, periodically striking at those considered enemies to their cause. Such strikes can wear a weak polity down, or invite other political actors to grab control of leadership positions in polity.

### The Violence of Conflict

The violence of conflict and its capacity to cause disintegration and social change is related to the dynamics operating at earlier stages in the conflict-generating process. As a general rule, class-based conflict will become more violent when negative emotions run high and when the actions of members of a class are not fully coordinated by a social movement organization. This combination of high levels of emotion, withdrawal of legitimacy

from polity and other institutional domains (and their respective cultures), and emerging awareness of interests, incipient organization (by emerging leaders, developing counter-ideologies), early mobilization of material and organizational resources is the most likely to generate violent outbursts. Just how far these will go depends on the number of individuals and corporate units participating in the violence, the control capacities of polity and/or its facility in absorbing the conflict into the arena of politics. There have been relatively few full-scale revolutions in human history, which is why they are so intensely studied, because polity usually has more resources than those who revolt. At times, initial revolts are controlled, with the consequence that rioters retreat and become better organized to negotiate with polity or, as in the case of the American, Russian, and Chinese “revolutions,” to mount a full military campaign in a more prolonged civil war. The winner in this war will generally need to centralize power along its coercive and administrative bases to control potential counter-revolutionaries.

Less violent conflict occurs when emotions are intense but not volatile, when leadership has been effective in mobilizing symbolic, material, and organization resources to the point of being able to make explicit demands that do not challenge core values and ideologies but, instead, push for core values and ideologies to be realized in actual practice, when the arena of politics can absorb the conflict, and when agreements can be codified in law and, thereby, can be subject to normatively regulated adjudication in the future. Some kinds of conflict, however, occur when the conflict parties are well organized and have a clear ideology, but these tend *not* to be class-based but, instead, ethnic-based. For example, virtually all the efforts at violent genocide have been over ethnic and religious affiliations, as have most efforts at domestic and international terrorism. Here, individuals are organized into cells and, at times, full armies to pursue goals that involve killing off those who are considered “evil” (for a wide variety of historical reasons). In societies with a weak state, this kind of violent conflict can soon consume all members of a population because the polity does not have the resources to control well-organized armies or even guerrilla-like strikes, that eventually erode the bases of power of polity to the point that the one of the organized combatants can march on the capital city of a society.

Whatever form the violent conflict in a society takes, it changes the structure and culture of the society, and if this society had been part of a regional or global inter-societal system, violent conflict and the overthrow of an existing political regime will have effects on the inter-societal system. If revolutionary conflict or civil war removes a society from geo-political and/or geo-economic domination, then this society can often begin to re-develop its economy and polity in ways that improve its location in inter-societal systems.

The key to success is the capacity of the new polity to consolidate bases of power and move away from heavy reliance on its coercive and administrative bases and, alternatively, rely more on a new symbolic base of power and, with increases in production and efficiency of tax collection, on an expanded material incentive base of power as well. Yet, revolutions and civil wars always leave the losers in war ready to engage in counter-revolutions which, as Weber (1922 [1968]) emphasized, forces polity to over-use those bases of power that provide short term control but long term problems in maintaining legitimacy, promoting economic development, and reducing stratification.

## Elementary Principles of Stratification Dynamics

The more unequal is the distribution of valued resources, the more homogeneous are members of social classes, the more linear is the ranked-ordering of classes in terms of their perceived worth, and the lower are rates of inter-class mobility, then the more stratified is a society. Conversely, the less unequal is the distribution of resources, the more heterogeneous are sub-populations, the less linear is the evaluation of social classes, and the higher are rates of inter-class mobility, then the less stratified is a society. The six elementary principles of stratification listed below specify the conditions that increase or decrease these four properties of stratification systems – that is, inequalities in resource distribution, class formation, rank-ordering, and inter-class mobility as well as those conditions that increase integrative and disintegrative potential in a stratification system.

10. The degree of stratification in a society is a positive and additive function of:
  - A. The level of inequality in the distribution of valued resources which, in turn, is:
    1. A positive function of the level of economic surplus
    2. A positively curvilinear function of the degree of centralization of power
    3. A positive curvilinear function of the degree of institutional differentiation, the salience of distinctive symbolic media within each differentiated domain, and the number of symbolic media circulating across domains
    4. A positive curvilinear function of the number of differentiated corporate units within institutional domains, and a positive function of the number of hierarchical structures within corporate units of all institutional domains

5. A negative curvilinear function of the skill levels of human capital and the extent to which human capital is distributed by market mechanisms
  6. A positive function of the correlation among symbolic media distributed as valued resources and the correlation of this distribution with the distributions of prestige and positive emotions
- B. The level of class formation in a society which, in turn, is a positive function of the degree of homogeneity among members of subpopulations receiving converging shares and profiles of valued resources which, in turn, is:
1. A positive function of the level of inequality in the distribution of resources
  2. A positive function of the consolidation of shares on graduated parameters with nominal parameters marking categoric unit memberships
  3. A positive function of the degree of successive penetration of consolidated graduated and nominal parameters across types of corporate units
  4. A positive function of the correlation of positions in the divisions of labor of corporate units with specific categoric units defined by nominal parameters
  5. A positive function of the level of discrimination which is a positive function of B-1, B-2, and B-3 above
  6. A lagged negative function of the number and variety of the symbolic media as resources being distributed in a society which, in turn, is:
    - a. A Positive function of the degree of differentiation among institutional domains
    - b. A positive function of the degree of segmentation and differentiation of corporate units within institutional domains
    - c. A negative function of the degree of hierarchy of corporate units within institutional domains
- C. The linearity rank-ordering of classes on a scale of worth and worthiness in a society which, in turn, is:
1. A positive function of the degree of class formation which, in turn, is a positive function of B-1–B-5 above and a negative function of:
    - a. B-6(a) and B-6(b) above
    - b. The degree of intersection among all parameters marking categoric unit memberships
    - c. The degree of successive penetration of intersections of parameters marking categoric unit memberships across corporate units within institutional domains

2. A positive function of the degree of ideological formation within institutional domains and the formation of a meta-ideology from institutional ideologies that, in turn, determine value premises used to evaluate the worth of subpopulations and members of categoric units
  3. A positive function of the degree of consensus among members of a society over institutional ideologies, meta-ideologies, and value premises used to legitimate the system of stratification
- D. A negative function of the rate of inter-class mobility among individuals and family units which, in turn, is:
1. A positive and multiplicative function of:
    - a. The intersection of parameters marking categoric unit memberships
    - b. The rate of change in institutional domains, especially economy, but all other domains as well
    - c. The number and diversity of corporate units, and their rate of segmentation and differentiation within institutional domains
    - d. The use of markets as opposed to ascription for placement of human capital in positions of corporate units
  2. A negative function of 10-A, 10-B, 10-C above
11. The level of integration evident in a system of stratification is a positive function of:
- A. Very high degrees of stratification in a society which, in turn, is:
1. A positive and additive function of a high level of inequality in the distribution of resources, a high degree of homogeneity of members in social classes, and a high degree of linearity in the rank-ordering of classes
  2. A negative function of the rates of inter-class mobility
  3. A positive function of the degree of consensus over legitimating meta-ideologies and value premises legitimating the system of stratification
  4. A positive function of the level of polity's consolidation of its administrative and coercive bases of power over its material incentive bases of power
- B. Very low degrees of stratification which, in turn, is a negative function of the level of inequality in distribution of resources, the degree of homogeneity of members in social classes, and the degree of linearity in the rank-ordering of classes, while being a positive and multiplicative function of:

1. Rates of inter-class mobility
  2. Intersection, as opposed to consolidation, of class with categoric units
  3. Penetration of categoric unit memberships, including social class memberships, into the divisions of labor of diverse corporate units
  4. Diversity of resources distributed in corporate units across institutional domains
  5. Democratic forms of polity relying on its symbolic and material incentive bases as much as its administrative and coercive bases of power
  6. Consensus over egalitarian value premises, coupled with a meta-ideology revealing some tenets emphasizing equal opportunities for achievement and success
12. The level of disintegrative potential in a stratification system is a positive function of the intensity and violence of class-based conflict which, in turn, is a positive function of:
- A. The potential for breakdown of polity which, in turn, is a positive and additive function of:
1. Selection pressures from population on polity which increases with:
    - a. Population size and rate of growth
    - b. Proportion of younger age cohorts
    - c. Rate of urbanization
    - d. Cultural diversity among subpopulations
  2. Logistical loads with increase with:
    - a. Selection pressures from population, which increase with the conditions listed under 12-A(1) above
    - b. Rate and extent of geo-political activity
    - c. Use of power to sustain geo-economic activity
  3. Proportion of economic surplus used for patronage to elites
  4. Inefficiency and level of corruption in tax collection
  5. Increased demands by upwardly and downwardly elites for patronage
  6. Erosion of symbolic base of power which increases with:
    - a. Failure of geo-political and geo-economic activity by polity
    - b. Inability to secure sufficient resources to fund administrative and coercive bases of power by polity
- B. The potential for mobilization of lower classes for conflict against polity which, in turn, is a multiplicative function of:
1. Increased awareness of members of lower classes in their interest



2. Withdrawal of legitimacy and polity's symbolic base of power
  3. Emotional arousal among members of lower and, at times, middle classes
  4. Periodic outbursts by lower and middle classes
  5. Intensity of emotional arousal and commitments to conflict by class members
  6. Incipient organization of social movement and conflict corporate units
- C. The level of violence of class conflict and the potential for social change is a positive function of 12-B(1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6) above, while being a negative function of:
1. Higher levels of organization of social movement and conflict corporate units which, in turn, is a positive and additive function of leaders to articulate goals and secure resources (members, money, and symbols)
  2. An arena of politics in which competition and conflict is institutionalized which increases with:
    - a. Democratic election of political leaders
    - b. Rules and adjudicative mechanisms in law as a relatively autonomous institutional domain
    - c. Meta-ideologies with tenets emphasizing civil rights

## Conclusion

Systems of stratification are the outcome of institutional dynamics. The resources that are distributed unequally in these systems are, in essence, the generalized symbolic media of institutional domains, and thus, as the number of media increases with institutional differentiation and as some of these media such as *money*, *power*, *knowledge*, and *learning* circulate across most domains, the structure of stratification systems is changed. Moreover, the structure of corporate units within domains, especially their number, diversity, and divisions of labor determines individuals' level of access to the valued resources of a society. As is evident in the propositions presented above, a few basic conditions underlie the structure and dynamics of stratification.

Inequalities in the distribution of resources is a joint function of the level of economic surplus and the concentration of power. A surplus is necessary for material inequality to exist, and there must be centers of power to usurp this surplus. This latter process can occur at the societal level, when the

polity acts to tax and distribute resources to support privilege, but as power as authority circulates within the corporate units of each institutional domain, this delegation of power to corporate units creates an intra-institutional system for unequal distribution of symbolic media as valued resources. The initial institutional differentiation of domains such as polity, economy, and religion during societal evolution increases inequalities, either through the actions of polity or the policies of corporate units in these early institutional domains. But, as additional institutional domains differentiate, a larger number of resources is in circulation; and this increase in the diversity and volume of resources circulating reduces inequality, and especially as the corporate units in domains increase in number and diversity of structure. The more corporate units in a domain and the greater their diversity of structure, the greater are opportunities to secure resources, although these opportunities are reduced when these structures reveal hierarchies of authority. And, if the distribution of symbolic media correlate (that is those receiving more or less on one symbolic medium in one institutional domain receive the same proportionate share of media in other domains), then inequalities increase.

Inequality, per se, increases the likelihood that people's resource shares will converge and increase homogeneity among those receiving similar amounts of the same resources; and this homogeneity increases when graduated and nominal parameters marking categoric units are correlated. And, when this correlation is high, discrimination is more likely to occur because class becomes yet one more categoric unit that is differentially valued, with the result that those in devalued classes (and other devalued categoric units correlated with each other and with social classes) are subject to prejudicial beliefs and discrimination from those in more valued classes and categoric units. Again, the number of symbolic media in play can mitigate against this consolidation of parameters, and if parameters intersect and individuals receive different profiles and shares of resources, class formation is reduced.

When class formation is not high, especially in the middle classes between upper class elites and lower class "undesirables," it becomes difficult to rank-order classes, even if ideologies and meta-ideologies are clear and accepted by most actors. And, if linearity of ranking is weak, intersection of parameters is more prevalent, thus working against class formation and, thereby, against future linear rank-ordering of classes.

When classes are not clear and when there exists a large and "worthy" set of middle classes whose members are heterogeneous in terms of their memberships in categoric units, there will be fewer barriers to mobility. And if there is also change in key institutional domains, new opportunities for mobility become available and especially so if markets rather than traditional

criteria revolving around ascription are the mechanism for placing individuals in positions of corporate units of these changing domains.

All of these processes have worked to frustrate Marxist interpretations of the class structure of capitalism. Weber (1922 [1968]) was more accurate in his conceptualization of stratification, but even he did not fully recognize that, once many resources are circulating within and across domains, the class structure of industrial and post-industrial societies becomes complex and, except for the very top and bottom of the system, amorphous as well. This vagueness in the class system is, in many respects, an integrative force in societies because it allows most persons and families to see themselves as worthy by the ideologies, meta-ideologies, and value premises of a society. Moreover, this system generates opportunities for mobility, which only increases commitments to the ideologies, meta-ideologies, and value premises of a society. Indeed, the upwardly mobile tend to become the most committed to these evaluative cultural systems. In turn, these integrative effects of more open and amorphous stratification systems have large effects on the dynamics of societies as a whole, as I explore in the next chapter.

Yet, a Marxian analysis of stratification is not irrelevant because inequality always generates tensions between members of different classes and between members of classes and polity. Conflict is related to the degree of stratification and to the ratio of integrative to disintegrative pressures in the stratification system. Integration, or the capacity to reproduce the system over longer periods of time, is high at the extremes of stratification for entirely different reasons. High levels of stratification almost always are accompanied by a strong polity that is able to use its administrative and coercive capacities to sustain the system, whereas less stratified societies typically reveal more mobility across increasingly heterogeneous and weakly defined classes. When integration is high, conflict and dramatic institutional change are less likely, but between these extremes conflict mobilization is frequent. The success of conflict depends upon the strength of the state and the origins of the conflict from either elite or lower class members and, at times, both. Conflict mobilization manifests a series of recursive stages that cause members of classes to withdraw legitimacy as they become aware of their interests in changing the system of resource distribution, as they become aroused emotionally, and as they initiate organization into corporate units willing to engage in conflict with members of other classes and polity. Violent conflict is most likely to occur when all stages have been activated and feed into and back onto each other, but not to the point where organizations become highly instrumental.

# Chapter 6

## The Dynamics of Societal Systems

### The Properties of Societal Systems

A societal system is a *geo-political-cultural* unit that organizes the actions of, and transactions among, members of a population in space, and over time. The *geographical* element of a society is control of bounded territories within which the members of a population and corporate units act; and even when their activities involve geo-political and geo-economic forays into other societies, the territorial home base of the society of origin is still what defines the “place” of individuals and corporate actors. Another geographical element of society is the systems among communities that are built up within a society’s territorial boundaries and, at times, between communities of two or more societies. Like societies, communities are also geographical formations that organize the actions of individual and collective actors.

The *political* element of a society is the consolidation and centralization of power to regulate and coordinate individual and corporate units within and between territorial boundaries. The consolidation of power in polity is the key to defining and defending the geographical space in which a population operates. Even in nomadic hunting and gathering societies where there was no polity or actors with power, incursions of other bands into what was seen as the collective territory of a population of bands would invite conflict, and with such conflict political leaders rapidly emerged. Polity will, therefore, arise when populations feel threatened by incursion into areas where they conduct their activities.

The *cultural* element of a society is the texts, technologies, values, meta-ideologies, ideologies, and normative systems constraining and directing activities of individual and corporate actors. Those sharing a common culture will generally see the world in similar ways and will typically act in accordance with the moral codes and rules that emerge within and across institutional domains. Thus, culture roughly corresponds to the territorial space

occupied by a population and increases the sense of a collective identity among individuals as a distinctive society vis-à-vis other populations.

## Elements of Societal Dynamics

As I emphasized in Chap. 1, societies are built *structurally* from institutional domains and stratification systems and, potentially, from their patterns of geo-political and geo-economic actions in inter-societal systems. Moreover, corporate units and members of categoric units are situated in geographical space, or *communities*, which add yet one more structural element from which societies are constructed. The structure of a society, then, revolves around the differentiation of institutional domains and systems of stratification within communities and territorial boundaries, including inter-societal boundaries; and as these structural formations evolve, selection pressures push on actors to generate new mechanisms for integrating patterns of institutional differentiation, inequalities arising from stratification, and systems of communities.

*Culturally*, societies are built from (1) generalized symbolic media, themes, and ideologies generated by actors within institutional domains and, at times, in inter-societal formations, (2) unequal distributions of symbolic media to members of various categoric units (class, ethnicity, religion, gender, age, etc.), (3) the meta-ideologies built from consolidation of institutional ideologies and used to legitimate (a) dominant institutional domains like polity, economy, and religion, (b) stratification systems and differential evaluation of members of categoric units (from which stratification systems are constructed), (c) generalized value premises, (d) technologies and their application, and (e) varieties of texts. These cultural elements of a society are integral to institutional differentiation, stratification, and community development.

Depending upon the pattern of differentiation of institutional domains and their modes of cultural and structural integration, the formation of stratification systems and their modes of cultural and structural integration, the configuration of communities and their integration, and the nature of inter-societal engagement and its integration, the dynamics of a societal system will vary. The interplay among these elements is obviously complex, and thus, the goal of theory is to cut through much of this complexity and highlight those variables that have the largest effects on these societal dynamics.

As will become all too evident, my plan is to review the dynamics of institutional differentiation and stratification with an eye to how they affect societal-level dynamics. Much of this chapter is a review of key differentiating and integrating processes as they determine the capacity of a society to

sustain its territory and to adapt to its environment through the differentiation and integration of its constituent parts: corporate units organized into institutional domains, classes causing the formation of stratification systems, and systems of communities where institutional activities occur and where members of categoric units forming stratification systems reside and gain access to resource-distributing corporate units. Perhaps there will be too much redundancy with previous chapters on institutional and stratification dynamics, but a review of key points in previous chapters might prove useful at this point, especially since societal dynamics follow from the operation of institutional domains and stratification systems. Moreover, as noted above, I am adding to the analysis of society-level processes the differentiation and integration of communities within and between societies.

Societal dynamics also are influenced by inter-societal systems which, typically, are built from actors within the economy and/or polity to form geo-economic and geo-political inter-societal formations; and in examining these, I will anticipate a more detailed analysis of Chap. 7 on inter-societal systems. This chapter thus pulls together and expands upon themes developed in other chapters, and in developing principles of societal dynamics, I will draw from new material presented here, ideas developed in previous chapters, and ideas drawn from the next chapter on geo-economic and geo-political inter-societal systems.

## **Institutional Domains and Societal Dynamics**

### ***Institutional Differentiation***

For all of the problems with early functional theorizing in sociology (see Turner and Maryanski 1979, for a review), theorists like Herbert Spencer (1874–1896) and Émile Durkheim (1893 [1963]) had something right: the view that long-term evolution of human societies involves increasing complexity and mechanisms to integrate this complexity. Later, more contemporary functionalists like A.R. Radcliffe Brown (1952), Bronislaw Malinowski (1944), Talcott Parsons (1966, 1971) and Niklas Luhmann (1982) carried forward this line of argument, adding needed refinements. Early sociological functionalists recognized that the evolution of societies was initiated by population growth, which generates intense selection pressures from regulation and production as social forces. As actors work to reduce these pressures, distinctly political and economic activities emerge, even if they are initially not fully differentiated from kinship and, in some cases, from religion. Table 6.1 summarizes (1) *inter*-institutional differentiation among more autonomous

**Table 6.1** Inter- and intra-institutional differentiation in basic societal formations

	<i>Nomadic hunting and gathering societies</i>	<i>Settled hunting and gathering societies</i>
<b><i>Inter-institutional differentiation:</i></b>	Kinship and band organize most activities. Religious activity tends to be individualistic (animism), although the beginnings of religious differentiation are evident if a shaman leads religious rituals.	“Big Man” and allies represent clear differentiation of polity. If shaman is consistently employed, some religious differentiation is evident. Most economic activity still occurs within kinship. Institutional activities are carried out in relatively stable communities which, if sufficiently large, allow for institutional differentiation.
<b><i>Intra-institutional differentiation:</i></b>	Within kinship, economic activities structured by the division of labor of kinship. Religious activities tend toward individualistic rituals, sometimes led by a shaman.	Within polity, legal and religious specialists may emerge. Within kinship, some members may become religious specialists. Economic differentiation may arise within and outside of kinship, with the latter marking the emergence of economy as a differentiating institutional domain. As institutional domains are structurally included within larger communities, further differentiation within polity, kinship, economy, and religion may occur.

	<i>Simple horticultural societies (and pastoral variants)</i>	<i>Advanced horticultural societies</i>
<b><i>Inter-institutional differentiation:</i></b>	<p>Polity, religion, law, and economy are organized within unilineal kinship and small communities. Political leadership, religious rituals, adjudication of disputes, and gardening (economic) activities are structured by the division of labor in households and by the system of lineages, clans and, at times, moieties. Local geo-political warfare is often chronic, causing elaboration of polity. Some geo-economic exchange among villages and kin groups occurs within and between populations. As differentiation among communities increases, further differentiation of institutional activities becomes likely.</p>	<p>Polity, law, religion, economy, and kinship are differentiated and, to varying degrees, autonomous. Medicine, science, education, art, and sport differentiate but are not autonomous. Larger city-states emerge, allowing for differentiation among polity, religion, law, and kinship. At times, geo-political conflict among city-states emerges, causing the elaboration of polity and religion (as polity's symbolic base of power). Geo-economic exchanges of goods are frequent, often involving long-distance exchange networks that further differentiate the economy. Geo-political conquest often leads to forms of tribute to dominant city state.</p>
<b><i>Intra-institutional differentiation:</i></b>	<p>Within polity, paramount chiefs may be differentiated from other kin leaders. Legal specialists may also become differentiated within kin-based polity. Religious specialization often occurs within kinship. Chronic geo-political engagement leads to differentiation of military specialists in polity. If there is geo-economic activity, specialized trading activities may be differentiated within kinship/polity. As communities become larger, they allow for increased differentiation of institutional activities.</p>	<p>In larger city-states, the four bases of power are differentiated within polity. Legal specialists differentiate within polity and, at times, religion. Hierarchies of religious offices and structures emerge. Considerable economic specialization is evident, especially as markets expand within and between communities. Increasing differentiation among artisans. Kinship begins to de-differentiate back toward the nuclear family, although extended and patrimonial family formations also emerge. As communities grow, internal differentiation of institutional domains increases.</p>



	<i>Simple agrarian societies</i>	<i>Advanced agrarian societies</i>
<b><i>Inter-institutional differentiation:</i></b>	Economy, religion, and kinship are differentiated and autonomous. Polity and law still overlap. Science, medicine, and education, art, and sport continue to differentiate. Geo-political conflict and alliances are common, as are smaller geo-political empires. Geo-economic exchanges are frequent, and if part of a geo-political formation, tribute may be paid to the dominant society. Virtually all institutional activity occurs within villages, towns, and larger cities, with larger communities allowing for increased autonomy among institutions.	Economy, religion, kinship, and polity are differentiated and relatively autonomous. Law, education, science, medicine, sport, and art become more differentiated. Larger capital cities house centers of political and religious activity, thereby increasing their autonomy. System of communities of varying sizes for economic activity, plus geo-economic exchanges, increase autonomy of economy. Geo-political conflict is chronic, often leading to empire building.
<b><i>Intra-institutional differentiation:</i></b>	All institutional domains, even those still not autonomous, differentiate internally, except for kinship which continues its de-evolution back to nuclear forms (although patrimonial families are frequent). Polity, law, religion, and economy differentiate the most; and as markets expand, these accelerate differentiation within the economy, while providing resources for the differentiation of other institutional domains, particularly religion. As communities grow, they allow for further intra-institutional differentiation.	Except for kinship, all other institutional domains continue to differentiate new kinds of corporate units. These units both cause and reflect differentiation of communities, ranging from villages through trade centers to large urban complexes, which in turn increase intra-institutional differentiation. Geo-political activity leads to rapid differentiation of polity around its four bases of power. Geo-economic activity causes market expansion which, in turn, causes differentiation in all institutional domains.

	<i>Industrial and post-industrial societies</i>
<b><i>Inter-institutional differentiation:</i></b>	<p>All institutional domains are clearly differentiated and relatively autonomous with post-industrialism, but during industrialization and even into post-industrialism, some institutional domains can still overlap and/or be dominated by other domains. Widespread circulation of generalized symbolic media from economy, polity, law, education, and science can lower autonomy.</p>
<b><i>Intra-institutional differentiation:</i></b>	<p>Except for kinship, where segmentation is the dominant process, all other institutional domains differentiate internally as the scale of activities increases, especially polity, law, and economy. The expansion of markets using money and credit causes rapid differentiation within most domains, and with markets comes a dramatic increase in the circulation of diverse generalized symbolic media, which further differentiates corporate units within institutional domains, although media like <i>power/authority</i> cause some de-differentiation by creating structurally equivalent hierarchies among corporate units. The growing size of community allows for institutional elaboration and differentiation.</p>

institutional domains and (2) *intra*-institutional differentiation of new types of corporate units within domains. By reading across Table 6.1, it is possible to visualize the patterns of inter- and intra-institutional differentiation over the long-term of societal evolution.

There have been, I believe, several distinct phases of inter- and intra-institutional differentiation during the course of societal evolution:

**Phase 1:** The differentiation of religion and polity from kinship, which occurs prematurely with settled hunter-gatherers or “Big Man societies,” only to recede back into kinship with simple horticulture. But among pastoralists or herding populations and simple horticultural societies, differentiation of polity in the form of chiefdoms attached to villages occurs, with various levels of chiefdoms often emerging (Turchin 2003; Turchin and Nefedov 2009; Turner 1972, 1997, 2003). Religion also begins to differentiate in the form of specialized shamans. With advanced horticulture, polity is more autonomous from kinship and religion, although tension between key actors in these domains is often evident. With advanced horticulture, phase 2 is initiated as economy differentiates from kinship and is somewhat autonomous from polity and religion

**Phase 2:** With movement from simple to advanced horticulture and, then, from simple to advanced agrarian societal formations, increasing differentiation among kinship, polity, religion, and economy is clearly evident, coupled with intra-institutional elaboration of emerging domains (except for kinship which continues to de-differentiate back to the more nuclear profile of nomadic hunter-gatherers). In this phase, law is within polity and, at times, religion, while new domains such as medicine, education, science, sport, and art all emerge, but like early law’s inclusion within polity (and earlier inclusion within kinship), these differentiating institutions are often nested inside kinship, polity, religion, and economy in somewhat varying patterns. Historically, societies have stayed at this phase of institutional differentiation for centuries because of several key bottlenecks. These bottlenecks, listed below, revolve around the inability to:

- a. Increase production and distribution to sustain larger numbers of diverse actors in differentiating domains
- b. Differentiate polity fully from religion, with religion still controlling polity’s symbolic base of power, even as polity successfully consolidates its other bases of power
- c. Differentiate an autonomous domain of positivistic law that can respond to selection pressures from regulation
- d. Differentiate higher-order markets revolving around money and credit

- e. Generalize value premises and differentiate new types of symbolic media, ideologies, meta-ideologies, and norms to regulate actions and transactions within the broad moral coding of value premises

These five bottlenecks are, to some extent, inter-connected, but each alone can inhibit inter- and intra-institutional differentiation. And, unless all five are overcome, at least to some degree, societies cannot enter phase 3.

**Phase 3:** The increasing differentiation of all institutional domains, with kinship evolving back to its original nuclear profile, with polity fully autonomous from religion and able to consolidate all bases of power, with an autonomous legal system capable of responding to new demands for regulation through law and adjudication of disputes, with the educational system meeting expanded reproductive demands for incumbents in positions (of corporate units) within diverse domains, and with an (industrial) economy capable of producing large numbers and varieties of goods and services as well as surplus income and wealth that can sustain inter- and intra-institutional differentiation

To a large extent, movement from phase 1 to phase 3 is dependent upon the mechanisms for integrating differentiating institutional domains. Moreover, as will be evident, the five bottlenecks potentially blocking movement from phase 2 to phase 3 can be either resolved or compounded by the configuration of integrative mechanisms that evolve during phase 2. Thus, we need to supplement to Table 6.1 with additional tables summarizing the *structural mechanism of integration* (Table 6.2) and *cultural mechanisms of integration* (Table 6.3). Let me begin with Table 6.2 reviewing the changing configuration of integrative mechanisms during societal evolution (see also Table 4.2 for an overview of structural mechanisms of integration).

## ***Institutional Integration***

### **Structural Bases of Institutional Integration**

There are several trends in the structural basis of institutional integration. One is the shift in basis of structural inclusion from kinship to communities and systems of communities which increasingly become the structural location of differentiating institutional domains. True, the hunting and gathering band is a kind of mobile community and, of course, villages among settled hunter-gatherers and horticulturalists are indeed the structural location of institutional activity, but these do not organize institutional activity to the

**Table 6.2** Structural bases of integration in types of societal systems

<i><b>Institutional integration</b></i>	<i><b>Nomadic hunting and gathering societies</b></i>	<i><b>Settled hunting and gathering societies</b></i>
<i><b>Structural:</b></i>	<p>Structural inclusion in kinship and band is one base of integration. Segmentation of kin units and bands generates structural equivalences that give individuals common world views and behavioral propensities. At times, small-scale geo-economic exchanges among bands creates more regional levels of integration through the formation of structural interdependencies.</p>	<p>Domination by polity (Big Man and his allies) is one form of integration. Structural inclusion of (a) economic activity within kinship, (b) law within polity, and (c) religion within kinship increases integration. Segmentation of kin units and communities generates structural equivalences within and across populations that promote integration across communities. Small-scale geo-economic and geo-political inter-societal systems can promote interdependencies through political and economic alliances. Inequalities in power can work against integration, as can conflict over succession to a new Big Man.</p>

<b><i>Institutional integration</i></b>	<b><i>Simple horticultural societies (and pastoral variants)</i></b>	<b><i>Advanced horticultural societies</i></b>
<b><i>Structural:</i></b>	<p>Structural inclusion of polity, law, economy, and religion within kinship provides one basis of integration. Segmentation of kin units and communities generate structural equivalences but the constraints of structural inclusion in kin units and small villages generates frequent and often intense conflict within unilineal descent system. At times, domination by particular kin units generates hierarchies of power and authority. Segmentation of kin units and village structures promotes structural equivalences across a population and, hence, common world views and behavioral propensities. Geo-political systems revolve around warfare, conquest, and tribute that, for a time, integrate populations across larger territories. Small-scale geo-economic systems promote structural interdependencies across villages and, at times, with villages of neighboring populations. Increasing stratification within and between populations generates disintegrative pressures.</p>	<p>Domination by a differentiated polity is one base of structural integration. Segmentation of kin units and villages creates structural equivalences leading to common world views and behavioral propensities. Structural inclusion of law within polity and, at times, religion within polity provides new bases of integration. Structural inclusion of education within religion, economy, or polity further integrates the population. Segmentation of communities housing institutional domains promotes structural equivalences and common world views and actions of individuals and corporate units. Diverse patterns of structural interdependencies among polity, economy, religion, kinship, art, sport, medicine, and education are increasingly mediated by markets. Small-scale and larger-scale geo-political systems revolving around warfare and conquest integrate territories through domination, at least for a time. Geo-economic systems generate interdependencies among communities within and between populations. Internal stratification and geo-political conquests increase disintegrative pressures within a society as well as within geo-political and geo-economic formations.</p>

<b><i>Institutional integration</i></b>	<b><i>Simple agrarian societies</i></b>	<b><i>Advanced agrarian societies</i></b>
<b><i>Structural:</i></b>	<p>Domination by polity and religion provides one base of integration, although conflicts between actors in polity and religion generate disintegrative pressures. Structural inclusion of (a) law within polity and, at times, within religion and (b) education within kinship, religion and economy promotes integration of these institutional activities. Structural overlap among corporate units in polity, law, religion, and economy promotes integration. Diverse patterns of interdependencies among polity, economy, religion, kinship, art, sport, medicine and education that are increasingly mediated by markets using <i>money</i> (and credit) and by law using <i>influence</i> all promote integration. Structural equivalences across communities, especially in the institutional domains that they house, promotes common world views and actions of individuals and corporate units. Both small-scale and larger-scale geo-political inter-societal systems revolving around war and conquest can, for a time, promote integration across populations, but over time, these generate disintegrative pressures. Geo-economic systems relying on markets expand the range of structural interdependencies. Meta-markets emerge for the first time in some geo-economic systems and extend the range and variety of interdependencies within and across populations, but at the same time, meta-markets increase levels of stratification can generate disintegrative pressures.</p>	<p>Domination by polity and religion and, increasingly, economic actors promotes integration, while also generating disintegrative pressures. Segmentation of kin units and community formations promotes structural equivalences, common world views, and behavioral propensities. Networks among communities expand distributive infrastructures and promote new forms of structural interdependence. Structural inclusion and overlap among corporate units in polity, economy, religion, and law all promote integration. Interdependencies among increasingly mediated by markets using money and credit as well as by influence from law integrate corporate units in differentiated domains. Larger geo-political inter-societal systems dominated by powerful hegemony engaged in war and conquest can integrate, for a time, larger and more diverse populations but, eventually, these increase disintegrative pressures. Geo-economic systems revolving around long-distance trade, markets, and meta-markets, often inter-woven with geo-political formations, generate expanded interdependencies that increase complexity and chances for competition and conflict within and between societies. High levels of stratification can generate powerful disintegrative pressures.</p>

<p><b><i>Institutional integration</i></b></p>	<p><b><i>Industrial and post-industrial societies</i></b></p>
<p><b><i>Structural:</i></b></p>	<p>Polity is increasingly democratic, relying less on its capacity for domination than its ability to regulate through law and manipulation of material incentives. Segmentation occurs within all institutional domains, with patterns of structural equivalence across as well as within domains. Structural inclusion occurs within corporate units of all domains, but competitive markets limit its extensiveness because of the structural rigidities built into large-scale inclusion. Structural overlap occurs among corporate units in most domains. Interdependencies exist among corporate units in all domains and are mediated by highly differentiated markets and sets of legal codes and adjudicative structures. Entropy among community formations provides structural equivalencies, common world views, and configurations of institutional domains. Decline in the level of stratification and increasing intersection and penetration of parameters to all corporate units promote integration. Both geo-political and geo-economic inter-societal systems exist, but the spread of free markets and meta-markets increases the scale of geo-economic systems, with geo-political systems declining in scale as a global geo-economic formation takes hold and as the costs of controlling territories with high-technology coercive forces increase. Dynamic geo-economic inter-societal systems cause a constant reshuffling of hegemonic powers in both the geo-political and geo-economic systems.</p>



same extent as the unilineal descent system of kinship. As kinship begins its de-evolution back to a more nuclear profile, however, the growth of communities and systems of communities is increasingly the principle form of structural inclusion for institutional activity. To the degree that early communities were products of segmentation, they evidence structural equivalence in the demographic characteristics of their respective populations, configurations of institutional domains, profiles of corporate units, and distributions of categorical units. Hence, both individuals and collective actors are likely to reveal structural equivalence that provides similar experiences and outlooks among members of a society. Even if there is differentiation among several types of communities (e.g., farming villages, market towns, and capital city), each type reveals structural equivalence, thus increasing integration among communities of a given type.

Another integrative trend is the increasing importance of domination through the consolidation and centralization of power and authority. Without the capacity to consolidate bases of power in polity or, at times, religion, differentiation is limited because there is not sufficient power to respond to selection pressures from regulation as a social force. Domination inevitably generates inequalities and stratification, and thus, it can serve as a disintegrative force in human societies, but domination is still an essential integrative mechanism as societies get larger and more institutionally differentiated. Domination comes from polity as it uses bases of power to coordinate and control actors in diverse domains and in the class system of a society. Polity also franchises domination to corporate units within institutional domains to construct their own hierarchies of authority that regulate actions within and between corporate units; and in this manner, polity does not need “micro manage” control at the corporate unit level. Instead, hierarchies of authority within and between corporate units can operate to integrate transactions among actors in diverse types of corporate units, allowing polity to avoid the high costs of direct monitoring and control.

A third trend is increasing structural interdependence among actors within and between institutional domains. Interdependence is facilitated by a number of structural formations, especially (a) distributive infrastructures within and between communities, (b) positivistic systems of law that can impose rules for transactions and adjudicate disputes in transactions, and (c) system of higher-order markets using money and credit. Interdependencies will typically involve transfers of generalized symbolic media as resources, as is the case with influence for law, money for economy, and power for polity. But, other generalized symbolic resources increasingly come into play, as I will emphasize below, but certain structural infrastructures need to

be in place before interdependencies revolving around the exchanges of resources can integrate actors in differentiated institutional domains.

Other structural mechanisms – structural overlap, mobility, segregation – can be important in integrating individual and corporate actors within institutional domains, but they are not as critical at the societal level as the evolution of (1) capacities to build larger-scale communities that can increasingly house differentiating domains and the individual and collective actors operating within these diverse domains, (2) capacities of polity to dominate other domains through the use and allocation of power (as influence) to law and (as authority) to corporate units within domains, and (3) capacities to increase the scale of interdependencies among individual and collective actors through (a) distributive infrastructures within communities and between inter-community networks, (b) positivistic law, and (c) higher-order markets.

Inter-societal dynamics have large effects on these three primary bases of integration. Geo-economic inter-societal systems typically create systems of communities engaged primarily in trade, thus producing structural and cultural equivalences across a larger territorial space. As these communities are successful in their distributive activities, they serve as structural prototypes for extending distributive infrastructures, thus integrating larger numbers of individuals and collective actors. If, however, geo-economic systems are exploitive, their structural equivalences decline as actors in communities of the dominant power exploit those in communities serving as transfer points for asymmetrical inter-societal trade. Geo-political processes intersect with geo-economic dynamics and increase the use of domination as mechanism of integration; and the more power is employed to regulate and control actors in other societies, the more asymmetrical will trade become. More significantly, use of administrative and coercive bases of power typically reduces co-optation and the flow of culture (and its internalization by actors) across a geo-political empire. Additionally, geo-political empires, especially when paired with geo-economic exploitation, increase inter-societal stratification. Yet, while inter-societal stratification may, for a time, prove highly integrative, it always contains the tension-generating seeds of its own demise as costs of domination for a hegemon increase and as the costs of revolt by those dominated decline. And, as domination increases, law is not extended to those being dominated or employed in a manner assuring that polity and its economic franchises will be allowed to engage in exploitive activities.

When geo-economic and geo-political inter-societal actions increase inter-societal stratification, an even more powerful disintegrative force than domestic stratification emerges. Inequalities that must be controlled over

large territories of conquered and/or economically exploited actors impose very high logistical loads and, hence, costs on polity. And, over time, these costs contribute to fiscal crises that erode not only the material resources of polity but also its ability to sustain its administrative and coercive bases of power in far-flung territories. As the power of polity weakens, revolt at the outer limits of territorial control may be initiated (Turchin 2003, 2006; Collins 1986); and equally often, polity in another marcher state may begin to make military (and economic) incursion into edges of the frontier of a declining empire – thus hastening disintegration of not only the larger territorial expanse but also the capacity of polity to control actors in its home base. When the home base of a hegemon is highly stratified and when polity is under fiscal stress, disintegration becomes ever more likely in this home base as a combination of elite and mass actors become mobilized and initiate domestic conflict (Goldstone 1990; Skocpol 1979), as principle 12 in Chap. 5 summarizes.

In contrast, if polity employs a more co-optive strategy of control, using the indigenous polity of conquered territories to extract taxes/tribute, it can sustain inter-societal integration for longer periods of time, while avoiding fiscal crisis at its home base that might begin to erode its material and symbolic bases of power and, hence, its capacity to sustain its administrative and coercive bases of power. Under these more co-optive patterns of inter-societal relations, stratification among the population of a hegemon at its home base can be regulated. Moreover, if lower levels of stratification already exist at the home base, then the inter-societal engagements will not have the same disintegrative potential, unless they increase fiscal strain on actors in the home base. Then, failure to be successful in the inter-societal system will erode very rapidly the symbolic base of power (Weber 1922 [1968]; Skocpol 1979).

### **Cultural Bases of Institutional Integration**

In Table 6.3, I summarize the shifts in the cultural mechanisms of integration during inter- and intra-institutional differentiation. As I have emphasized, differentiation involves, in Jeffrey Alexander's (2004) words, a "de-fusion" of what Durkheim (1893 [1963]) termed the "collective conscience." Texts, technologies, worldviews, values, ideologies, meta-ideologies, and various levels of norms are decoupled to provide integration among increasingly differentiated units within diverse institutional domains. Values must generalize and become highly abstract, with ideologies, meta-ideologies, and norms backfilling the anomic cultural space

**Table 6.3** Cultural bases of integration in types of social systems

<i>Basis of integration</i>	<i>Nomadic hunting and gathering societies</i>	<i>Settled hunting and gathering societies</i>
<i>Cultural</i>	<p>Texts (unwritten) and technologies generate common outlooks and behavioral responses. Common values and dominance of the generalized symbolic medium (<i>love/loyalty</i>) from kinship furthers common outlooks and behavioral responses, creating cultural equivalences to supplement structural equivalences in kinship and band. Strong ideology against inequalities eliminates tensions arising from stratification.</p>	<p>Texts (unwritten) and technologies generate common outlooks and behavioral responses. Common values provide moral basis for ideologies and norms. Generalized symbolic media of power, love/loyalty, and <i>sacred/piety</i> circulate through all corporate units, thus providing more complex but unifying cultural equivalency and a common meta-ideology that reinforces value premises. Redistributive actions of Big Man bring him prestige and, thereby provide an effective symbolic base to his power that reduces reliance on coercion and the tensions that always arise with use of coercive force.</p>

<b><i>Basis of integration</i></b>	<b><i>Simple horticultural societies (and pastoral variants)</i></b>	<b><i>Advanced horticultural societies</i></b>
<b><i>Cultural</i></b>	<p>Increased complexity of texts (unwritten) and, to a lesser extent, technologies reduce common outlooks and behavioral responses. Values still provide common moral code, especially if values are also the basis for religious belief systems. Generalized symbolic medium of love/loyalty and kin ideologies provide a common cultural orientation and resource base for activities since most institutional domains are embedded within kinship. Because of structural inclusion within kinship, other symbolic media like power, sacred/piety circulate within kinship and produce integrated meta-ideologies dominated by kinship ideologies, thereby producing cultural equivalences that can mitigate against the inevitable tensions of unilineal descent kinship systems and rising stratification within and between kin units.</p>	<p>Further increases in complexity of text (particularly when written) and technologies, coupled with unequal access to texts and technologies, reduces common outlooks and behavioral responses, especially as differentiation among corporate units increases. Value premises become increasingly abstract and less able to regulate specific actions in more complex divisions of labor in differentiating domains. Symbolic media increasingly involved in exchanges between corporate units in diverse domains, thereby their circulating across kinship, religion, and polity and, as a consequence, promoting a meta-ideology that forms part of polity's symbolic base of power and religion, while reinforcing value premises. New symbolic media – <i>aesthetics, health, knowledge, competitiveness</i> – from emerging institutional domains increase complexity of culture and, at times, increase subcultures that integrate subsets of a population but that may also create points of division and conflict. Meta-ideologies provide symbols for legitimating stratification, but never with complete success.</p>

<i>Basis of integration</i>	<i>Advanced agrarian societies</i>	<i>Advanced agrarian societies</i>
<b>Cultural</b>	<p>Written texts dramatically, new technologies, abstract core values, and circulation of symbolic media in differentiated corporate units all reduce common world views, but emergence of meta-ideologies dominated by the media of power, piety/sacredness, and love/loyalty, provide for some cultural unity. New symbolic media and ideologies from emerging domains like law, science, arts, sport, education, and medicine diversify cultural codes, and especially so when these become stratifying resources. Still, exchanges of diverse symbolic media, particularly as markets evolve, promote some degree of cultural equivalence. Moreover, as influence from a more autonomous legal system circulates, it increases the capacity to integrate members of a population and corporate units in diverse domains. Emerging meta-ideologies provide some legitimacy to stratification, but as class cultures differentiate and as institutional differentiation accelerates, cultural integration across corporate units in all classes and domains becomes increasingly problematic, although strong meta-ideologies backed up by core values can work against this trend. Geo-political conquests and geo-economic activities only increase cultural diversity, thereby increasing disintegrative pressures from stratification, domination, and cultural diversity.</p>	<p>Written texts and further technological advances coupled with increasing abstractness of core values, differentiation of symbolic media and the ideologies that they generate all work to diminish the capacity of culture to regulate conduct, unless meta-ideologies are dominated by ideologies of power and/or piety/sacredness. When these meta-ideologies reinforce core values and legitimate both dominant institutional domains and the overall stratification system, they promote both cultural and structural integration. The emergence of new symbolic media, however, increase the diversity of cultural codes regulating conduct, thereby creating subcultures that may hold contradictory ideological commitments that reduce the integration. If a more autonomous legal system continues to evolve, law and the symbolic medium of influence can increasingly regulate relations among diversely situated actors. As markets using money and credit differentiate, they facilitate the circulation of not only money but potentially other symbolic media across domains, thereby increasing cultural equivalence. Structural segmentation of community formations and/or interdependencies increase circulation of similar symbolic media and thereby generate cultural equivalences. With stratification reaching its zenith, class cultures become more differentiated, thus reducing some of the integrating effects of meta-ideologies, circulating symbolic media, cultural equivalences from segmentation/exchanges among communities, and influence from law. Geo-political activities may recharge meta-ideologies for a time but loss of wars will immediately reduce polity's symbolic base of power and, by extension, the capacity of law to exert influence in regulating social relations. Geo-economic activities increase cultural diversity as new codes are transported by trade networks and markets, although at times new unifying ideologies can spread across these networks and provide a new basis of cultural integration.</p>

<b><i>Basis of integration</i></b>	<b><i>Industrial and post-industrial societies</i></b>
<b><i>Cultural</i></b>	<p>Cultural texts, technologies, generalized symbolic media, and ideologies are highly differentiated, but if ideologies and meta-ideologies are consistent with core values and if there is consensus over these values, cultural integration increases. Widespread circulation of symbolic media across domains increases cultural equivalences, and particularly so as the degree of stratification is reduced. As communities become increasingly alike, displaying similar configurations in their institutional domains, they will promote cultural equivalences in symbolic media and meta-ideologies. With a more autonomous and positivistic legal system, law becomes increasingly able to regulate social relations among highly differentiated units. The differentiation and expansion of markets capable of commodifying cultural objects, including symbolic media and their derivative cultural codes, dramatically increases cultural equivalences among otherwise differentiated individual and collective actors. If meta-ideologies can legitimate the civic culture of polity, the sanctity of market relations in economy, the commodification of labor and its obligations to corporate units employing this labor, and the virtues of the more open stratification systems with a large and ambiguous set of middle classes, significant increases in cultural integration ensue. If actors in polity and/or in the economy can become hegemonic in inter-societal systems, both the ideologies of polity and economy as well as the meta-ideologies will be even more integrative. And, if ideologies, meta-ideologies, and highly abstract value premises are consistent and widely accepted cultural integration increases even more. If the consolidation among categoric unit-memberships, places in the divisions of labor in corporate units, and locations in the class system are low, meta-ideologies become more powerful, and subcultures associated with either categoric unit or class membership will be less differentiated and potentially divisive. In fact, these cultures will be more likely to line up with core values and meta-ideologies and increase the amount of culture held in common by members of a society.</p>

between highly generalized value premises and concrete actions of actors in diverse corporate units within and between differentiated institutional domains. The more values can be generalized and the more symbolic media can be created and used to order social actions and relations, the more integrated will be the transactions among individual and corporate actors within an institutional domain. Moreover, interdependencies within and between individual and corporate actors in different domains will involve both the use of the moral codes inhering in the symbolic medium of each domain and the exchange of one domain's respective symbolic medium as a resource for that of another domain (Parsons and Smelser 1956). Symbolic media have even more power to integrate because they are the media of discourse, thematization, and ideological formation (Luhmann 1982); and as ideologies form, they provide additional cultural integration. And, if they evolve into meta-ideologies that reinforce value premises within institutional domains, the degree of cultural integration across a society is that much greater. Moreover, ideologies specify the moral premises (contained in highly generalized value premises) for normalizing concrete situations (Turner 1988, 2002); and the more coherent are ideologies and meta-ideologies, the more likely are coherent sets of norms to regulate actions and transactions within and between actors in diverse institutional domains.

Another cultural force comes from structural equivalences that evolve with increased societal complexity. True, it is not possible to go back to the "fused" state described in Durkheim's portrayal of "segmental" divisions of labor (i.e., "mechanical solidarity") or in Alexander's analysis of "cultural pragmatics," where all actors were structurally equivalent, but as authority and money circulate within and between corporate units in different domains, they set up structural equivalences that, in turn, generate cultural equivalences of being guided by similar configurations of value premises, symbolic media, themes of discourse, ideologies, meta-ideologies, and norms. For example, individuals learn what the media of money and authority allow to occur, what they mean emotionally, and what moral imperatives are attached to these media in many different domains, thus allowing individuals to have common stocks of knowledge and worldviews (Schutz 1932). For example, teachers making money and responding to hierarchies in schools have similar experiences to workers in a business corporation – at least with respect to money and power. They may also share additional cultural equivalences as other media such as learning, knowledge, and competitiveness circulate across institutional domains.

Yet another kind of cultural equivalence comes from structural equivalences among communities. For all of human history, there have been broad



equivalences among most communities, including the band as a kind of “mobile community.” To be sure, there is increasing differentiation among communities, but within community types, individuals are exposed to, and guided by, the same symbolic media, ideologies, meta-ideologies, and institutional norms – all of which make them culturally equivalent and, hence, able to understand actors in other communities. The villages around a feudal estate were, for example, pretty much the same in structure and culture, as were early market towns and capital cities. Today, there is a certain amount of de-differentiation of industrial and post-industrial cities within and between societies; and these similarities in, for example, suburban communities across the globe are built from equivalent profiles of corporate units, which lead to cultural equivalences among their residents – thereby providing a powerful basis of cultural integration even in societies with highly differentiated institutional orders.

Stratification intersects with these dynamics revolving around structural and cultural equivalence. The more stratified a population is, the more likely will its class cultures vary and, indeed, stand in tension and potential conflict. And, if mechanisms of interdependence between elites and non-elites are exploitive, they operate to sustain class cultures, while increasing tensions between those who have and do not have resources. As these tensions increase, the conflict dynamics outlined in Chap.5 (proposition 12) are more likely to be activated.

Inter-societal dynamics always increase the degree of cultural differentiation across larger territorial spaces, while at the same time, often increasing levels of stratification in inter-societal systems. These dynamics will generally increase cultural diversity, unless a hegemon has the capacity to develop reproductive structures to re-socialize members of conquered populations. When societal cultures in territories vary and when inter-societal systems increase inequalities in resource distribution and, hence, class cultures, disintegrative pressures increase, although if domination can be used, an inter-societal system can persist for considerable time. Conversely, if inter-societal dynamics are less exploitive and use law as well as material incentives to sustain the system, the culture within this system may begin to converge, especially if use of coercive and administrative power is reduced or franchised out to indigenous political leaders and if distributive infrastructures and markets allow for more symmetrical and less exploitive exchange relations. Furthermore, the more developed are distributive infrastructures, the more likely are cultural ideologies – political, religious, and economic – to diffuse across extended territories, thereby increasing the level of cultural integration, as can be seen today with global capitalism.

## *The Institutional Basis of Societal Dynamics*

The dynamics of a society are partially determined by the phase of institutional differentiation evident within its territorial borders, the degree to which the roadblocks listed under phase 2 remain unresolved, and the nature of integration within and between institutional domains. The level of institutional differentiation within a society is ultimately a joint function of the (a) size of its population and (b) level of its productive outputs. Without the capacity to generate an economic surplus that can sustain actors in autonomous institutional domains, societies can only grow by segmentation, but with a productive surplus, a larger population can be supported and entrepreneurial activities of actors can begin to build the core of new institutional domains. Thus, as long as production depended upon simple horticultural technologies and levels of capital formation, only polity, religion, and economy could begin to differentiate from kinship; and even here, they often did so within the restrictions imposed by inclusion inside unilineal kinship systems. With these productive limits and inclusion of much institutional activity within kinship, population growth tended to be segmental, typically revolving around creating new villages within which the organizational framework of kinship allocated religious, political, and economic roles to individuals and kin units. Leaders or sometimes chiefs of communities tended to correspond to senior positions in the kinship system; religious practitioners could enjoy some autonomy but still were constrained by the structure of kinship; and different economic roles were allocated to family members. Geo-economic and geo-political activities could cause some differentiation of chiefs, with the chief of one village potentially becoming the paramount chief over other chiefs, thereby allowing for the integration of a larger number of villages across more territory (Turchin and Nefedov 2009). Such simple horticultural systems could, then, become larger without having to abandon the integration provided by segmentation because, except for the new powers of the paramount chief, the villages and kin units in which economic and religious practices occurred were structurally equivalent. Warfare and, to a lesser extent, trade were the most likely movers behind the consolidation of power beyond single villages to systems of villages under a paramount chief.

With advanced horticultural technologies, greater economic surplus is produced, thereby allowing for the support of more actors engaged in carving out new institutional domains. Coupled with the decline of kinship as the primary integrative structure of a society, selection pressures from regulation inevitably led to the differentiation and elaboration of polity and religion – both of which had bases of power. Again, geo-political and geo-economic inter-societal activities had large effects on how the contest for

power evolved in more advanced horticultural societies. Extended trade routes encouraged infrastructural development and trading centers in a network of communities, often dominated by a central capital city-state where both political and religious leaders conducted their respective activities. If polity was needed to protect trade routes or even to build them, then it would win out over religion in the contest for power, with religion having mostly ceremonial functions and providing to polity a good part of its symbolic basis of political power. Because capital and/or ceremonial cities had to be maintained by resources from more rural areas, they were highly vulnerable to any set of events that decreased levels of productive outputs or trade relations needed to support (a) religious temples and their administrators, (b) bases of political power, and (c) infrastructures of communities in which religious and political activity was conducted. Climate change, ecological disasters, and environmental degradation from over-population and over-cultivation were often as critical to collapse of advanced horticultural societies as were internal conflict and external warfare (Chase-Dunn and Hall 1997).

Simple agrarian societies confronted the same limitations as advanced horticultural; and often, these systems were even more segmented than advanced horticultural societies. But, with the plow attached to animal power and with better understanding of wind and water as sources of power and transportation, the potential to increase production and, hence, the scale of society inhered in all simple agrarian societies (Nolan and Lenski 2008). With successive technological innovations that allowed wind, water, and animal power to be connected to “agrarian machines” – e.g., plows, wagons, mills, or boats – the level of production could increase to the point that polity, religion, kinship, and economy could become more autonomous, with law, education, medicine, arts, and sport becoming increasingly differentiated. The tension between polity and religion persisted since religion could consolidate material, symbolic, and administrative power and, if needed, coercive power; and this potential for consolidation of power always poses a threat to polity. If polity could limit the power of religion to its symbolic base (ideologies about the supernatural that could be used to legitimate polity), power could be consolidated in polity and used to coordinate and control a population and to engage in geo-political activities. Consolidation of power in polity depended upon high levels of economic surplus and capacities to tax this surplus; and as more advanced agrarian societies emerged, the greater surplus could be used to sustain all basis of political power (Lenski 1966). Again, geo-political and geo-economic activities often determined how fast and how far polity could go in consolidating power. Success in war or in sponsorship of trade could bring wealth and prestige to

polity, which, in turn, could be used to expand polity's bases of power. Both war and trade expand distributive infrastructures, and to the extent that markets using money and credit could emerge and differentiate, a more liquid source of capital for economy and for taxation by polity led to further differentiation (Turner 1995). It is during this mix of changes that the roadblocks, enumerated earlier, to further institutional differentiation increasingly posed problems and selection pressures from regulation (and other forces) that could impede the evolution of integrative mechanisms that would allow a society to grow and differentiate further.

The biggest obstacle was the failure to differentiate an autonomous legal system (Parsons 1966, 1971; Turner 1974, 1980). Without the capacity to provide at least some elements of positivistic legal system, capable of creating new laws in response to new forms of social relations and adjudicating disputes arising from the increased volume of transactions among ever-more differentiated actors, an upper limit was placed on how complex a society could become – at about the level of an advanced agrarian society. If polity could not differentiate from religion, then a positivistic legal system was difficult to effect; and moreover, much of the legal system would be defined by canon or religious law, which is inherently conservative and not receptive to new forms of social relations among new kinds of corporate actors and individuals. An equally difficult problem inhered in the very high levels of stratification in agrarian societies (Lenski 1966). If generalized symbolic media (as resources) cannot circulate widely among diverse categories of individuals and the corporate units organizing their activities but, instead, are confined to elite exchange and consumption, the resulting system of stratification would consistently create internal threats that would cause polity to rely heavily on its coercive and administrative bases of power (Turner 1995). With the vast majority of the population in agrarian societies having very low levels of access to such media as money, power, health, knowledge, learning, competitiveness, and even sacredness/piety in some cases, high degrees of consolidation (correlation) among (a) resource shares, (b) access to resource-distributing corporate units, (c) locations in the divisions of labor of resource-giving corporate units, and (d) memberships in categoric units would ensue and generate a very rigid stratification system. This system could be highly integrative because of the isolation of many lower-class individuals on rural estates and, more importantly, by the use of coercive and administrative power by all levels of polity. As long as there was sufficient economic surplus and somewhat efficient system of usurpation/taxation to collect this surplus, a high level of stratification could be sustained. But, use of the coercive and administrative bases of power is costly, and often elites do not want to pay taxes or,

alternatively, the taxation system is so inefficient and corrupt that the central state cannot secure sufficient resources to support some or all of its bases of power.

Geo-political activities as well as geo-economic activities would only compound the growing fiscal crisis unless they allowed polity to extract large shares of resources from other populations, but at a cost of increasing inter-societal stratification that could be more volatile and difficult to control than domestic stratification. If polity taxed too heavily, it created disincentives among economic actors to increase production or to increase wealth through markets and meta-markets, thereby eroding not only the material base of political power but also the capacity to sustain the administrative and coercive bases of power (Turner 1995). Moreover, if polity could not gain full control of its symbolic base of power from religion, then meta-ideologies emphasizing the virtues of the state power coupled with wealth-generating economic activities could not fully evolve and, hence, provide the cultural legitimization for both political and economic actors. Weber's (1905 [1958]) great thesis about how Protestantism provided the cultural "tipping point" for the emergence of capitalism is probably overdrawn, but it does point to the fact that a more secular meta-ideology such as his portrayal of "worldly asceticism" is essential to giving actors in economy and polity high degrees of legitimacy vis-à-vis those in religion.

But Weber (1905 [1958]) as well as many others are correct in their view that urbanization, coinage of money, free labor, and open markets are the structural conditions necessary for capitalism and the transition to phase 3 of institutional differentiation. All of these processes could proceed – to a limited degree – without fully resolving the roadblocks inhering in the tensions between religion and polity as well as the difficulties of creating a more autonomous and positivistic legal system. Indeed, urbanization, free labor (migrating to urban areas), markets, and money reinforce one another; and once they pass a minimal threshold, they are self-escalating as long as economic surplus can support the divisions of labor in not only economy but other institutional domains as well. When urbanization, free labor, markets, money (and credit) are in place, they often force changes in religious ideologies or, as was the case in the Roman Empire, allow for the spread of a new religion more compatible with new economic realities (production for profit, markets, money, free labor, and credit), as was the case with the spread of Christianity across trade infrastructures (Mann 1986). Yet, as the "Dark Ages" amply attest, the collapse of an inter-societal polity (Rome) demonstrates that when religion comes to dominate, it is a highly conservative integrative force. Thus, the key is for religion to become increasingly compartmentalized, while polity encourages productive and distributive

activities that increase polity's tax base and the general resource base for institutional differentiation. As institutional domains responding to selection pressures from regulation, production, and distribution become differentiated and aligned and, indeed, mutually dependent upon each other, the third phase of differentiation will accelerate – at least up to the points of market collapse or state breakdown. This movement into the third phase of institutional differentiation is further accelerated by the decline in stratification which allows polity to rely less on its coercive and administrative bases of power and more on its material incentive base, with its new, more secular symbolic base<sup>1</sup> of power providing legitimization of stratification, economy, polity (and other institutional domains like education, science, sport, medicine).

As Herbert Spencer argued, however, geo-political dynamics often intervene in these processes. Spencer (1874–1896) believed that the evolution of complexity was partially driven by war, with the larger, more-complex, and better-organized society generally winning wars, thus selecting out the less fit society or, as has often been the case, incorporating defeated populations into larger and more complex empire or even mega-society. As geo-political actions extend the scale and size of societies, distributive infrastructures and markets eventually evolve to move people, information, and resources around the larger territories. Yet, geo-political formations will often work against the spread of dynamic forms of economic production and distribution because they often rely more on their coercive and administrative bases of power than their material incentive and symbolic bases of power. The result is over-regulation that creates disincentives, with the result that production and distribution stagnate. The Soviet Union is perhaps the best recent example of this tendency in the twentieth century, although Spencer was very concerned with what British colonialism would do to market dynamism as it increasingly relied upon threats of coercion and a crushing administrative (bureaucratic) base of power. Indeed, former colonies like India and Pakistan have yet to fully discard their complex administrative structures after the collapse of the British Empire. This collapse was predictable by Spencer's model, but not by Spencer himself; for, an empire spanning the globe with very long lines of logistics and controlled by a relatively small standing army could not last for long.

There are, then, a few generalizations that I will later formalize that we can draw from the above. The differentiation of polity from religion and the formation of an increasingly autonomous legal system are two critical

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<sup>1</sup>From a meta-ideology dominated by the ideology of capitalist modes of production and by the tenets of representative government.

conditions for institutional differentiation within a society. Without this differentiation and without polity-law becoming the dominant domains, all other processes increasing differentiation will be stalled. High levels of production and distribution are a second set of conditions; without an economic surplus coupled with dynamic markets, institutional differentiation cannot proceed. To the extent that population growth generates selection pressures from production and distribution and to the degree that entrepreneurial actors can indeed create new kinds of corporate units in response to these selection pressures, population growth can also be viewed as a key, though somewhat indirect, force behind institutional differentiation – as Spencer had argued. As polity-law become capable of coordinating actions and transactions, they encourage expansion of production and distribution that can cause further institutional differentiation.

As populations grow and as production and distribution increase, communities become larger and begin to differentiate but, at the same time, they differentiate into relatively few types with structural and cultural equivalences among residents of each type. As communities grow, they can house increasing numbers of individuals and corporate units across a broader range of differentiated institutional domains; and as they do so, a kind of entropy among community formations emerges because the pattern of differentiation within each community is similar and, thereby, generates structural and cultural equivalences, especially in industrial and post-industrial societies. As institutions differentiate and become part of all communities in roughly similar configurations, the circulation of symbolic media and the ideologies produced by these media increases, as do these media as valued resources. The wider is the circulation of symbolic media, the less will be the level of inequality, homogeneity in classes, and linear rank ordering of classes; and the higher will be rates of class mobility, and less will be the consolidation among (a) resource shares, (b) class and other categoric unit memberships, (c) and incumbency in corporate units in diverse domains.

As these interconnected processes come into play, they push societies into phase 3, and in so doing, generate societies capable of constant self-transformation and increased adaptability to changing conditions, despite the fact that they are often so large. They are, however, vulnerable to severe economic contractions through over-speculation in meta-markets; and these contractions can become truly world-wide because of the dramatic growth of geo-economic systems, infrastructures, and meta-markets spanning the globe. Ironically, world-level collapse of markets generates intense selection pressure from regulation as a force for world-level governments, but in reality, the outcome may be de-evolution back to more regional geo-economic and/or geo-political formations such as the European Union or a strengthened North American Federation. What is doubly ironic is that for the first time



in human history, there is increasing consensus over meta-ideologies dominated by the ideologies of capitalist modes of production and distribution with significant elements of ideologies from western educational institutions and, to an even lesser extent, western forms of political democracy. Thus, at a time of unprecedented cultural unification at the world level, disintegration of the world system is as likely an outcome of world-level economic crises as is the evolution of a world-level societal formation. The collapse of global markets as well as sharp conflicts in religious ideologies and, to a lesser extent, in ideologies about the best form of polity can generate selection pressures on populations to pull back from large inter-societal systems and integrate a more manageable inter-societal system.

The fragility of structural and cultural integration within the geo-economic realm is compounded by the difficulty of sustaining geo-political relations. Economic hegemony may still rise and fall – with the United States declining and, perhaps, former semi-periphery societies like China rising – but geo-political hegemony is becoming less likely to dominate beyond their local spheres of influence. One reason for drawing this conclusion is that geo-political formations built from use of coercive force are increasingly difficult to sustain because of the costs of high-technology militaries, the very great problems of logistics in supply chains and support personnel, and the often long distances that these must be maintained from a society's home base. Military forces and hardware can be moved rapidly around the globe on a scale not imaginable 200 years ago, but few if any societies can afford to do so for a sustained period of time without disrupting their domestic economies and, hence, the global geo-economic inter-societal system that, by fits and starts, has emerged during the latter part of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century. Many local geo-political actions still occur on a smaller (and often more deadly) scale along the frontiers and borders of less developed nations in which ethnic tensions from phases 1 and 2 of institutional differentiation continue to burn (often aggravated by past colonial activities of hegemony that forced hostile ethnic subpopulations to live in one society).

## **Stratification and Societal Dynamics**

### ***The Structure of Societal Stratification and the Shifting Basis of Integration***

The level of stratification in a society is determined by the degree of inequality in the distribution of valued resources, the level of homogeneity among members of social classes, the linearity of rank-ordering of classes



on a scale of worth, and the rate of inter-class mobility. As I have emphasized, generalized symbolic media are also the valued resources distributed by corporate units within institutional domains. In Table 6.4, I have listed these in rough order that they emerged during societal evolution and became resources that were distributed unequally. There are also more generalized reinforcers that are unequally distributed. One is prestige or the right to be given deference and honor by others; and in general, high levels of symbolic media allow individuals the right to claim prestige. Some symbolic media are more likely to bestow rights to claim prestige, particularly *material wealth*, power, sacredness/piety, learning, and knowledge. The other generalized reinforcer is *positive emotional energy* which increases with high

**Table 6.4** Basic dimensions of stratification affecting societal dynamics

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**(1) Resources that can be inequality distributed:**

***Generalized symbolic media:***

*Love/loyalty* (kinship)

*Power* (polity)

*Material wealth* (economy)

*Sacredness/piety* (religion)

*Influence* (law)

*Learning* (education)

*Aesthetics* (art)

*Knowledge* (education and science)

*Competitiveness* (sport)

*Health* (medicine)

***Generalized positive reinforcers:***

Prestige

Positive emotions

**(2) Class formation that increases with:**

Level of inequality

Correlation among resources unequally distributed

Correlation of resource distribution with categoric units

**(3) Linearity in rank-order of classes increases with:**

Consensus over meta-ideologies and values

Level of inequality

Homogeneity of class memberships

Consolidation of parameters marking class and categoric units

**(4) Inter-class rates of mobility increase with:**

High rates of institutional change from selection pressures

High levels of selection pressures from production and distribution

Intersection of parameters marking categoric unit memberships

Penetration of intersections to all types and levels of corporate units

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levels of all generalized symbolic media and prestige. Indeed, as I have stressed, those lacking in material wealth, power, and prestige can often gain positive emotional energy by having larger shares of other generalized media as resources, such as love/loyalty, sacredness/piety, health, competitiveness, knowledge, and learning. The converse situation is perhaps more important: the distribution of negative emotional energy – shame, humiliation, anger, sadness, fear, anxiety, and other negative emotions that arise when individuals cannot receive shares of valued resources (Turner 2010a, b). The fewer shares that individuals have across the full spectrum of resources – generalized symbolic media, prestige, and positive emotions – the greater will be the negative emotions experienced by individuals.

The dynamics of a society are very much influenced by the unequal distribution of valued resources. When individuals cannot secure higher positions in the divisions of labor of corporate units distributing valued resources and/or are blocked from moving up hierarchies within corporate units, they will also experience negative emotional energy that can have large effects on societal-level dynamics. And, when access to corporate units within institutional domains and to higher positions in the hierarchical divisions of labor is correlated with categoric unit memberships, especially ethnicity and religion, then this inequality can have even larger effects on societal dynamics.

In general, the larger is the subpopulations denied access to valued resources in a society, the greater is the conflict potential in that society. And, this potential will increase significantly when inequality in resource distribution is consolidated with nominal parameters marking categoric unit memberships, especially those categoric units like religious affiliation and ethnicity that are organized by corporate units and, hence, are capable of mobilizing members of categoric units for conflict.

Class formation institutionalizes inequalities. The greater is the inequality in the distribution of resources and the more distributions of valued resources correlate with each other and with categoric unit memberships, the more likely are members of social classes to be homogeneous. Linearity of rankings of classes follows from inequality and class formation; the greater is the degree of inequality and the more homogenous classes become, the more likely is the “worth” of each class to be rank-ordered and linear. Moreover, if class ranking correlated with the worth of members is differentially valued categoric units, then the linearity of the class rankings is more pronounced. Assessments of worth also inhere in the value of resources; those with more valued resources are considered more worthy people. Worth is also established by the degree of consensus over meta-ideologies (and the value premises that ideologies reinforce); the more consensus over these evaluative symbols, the more likely are they to be used to assess “worth” by

the respective shares of resources held by individuals in different classes. While homogeneity and linearity in rank-ordering of classes can operate as integrative mechanisms and sustain a stratification system for long periods of time (no matter the injustices and inequities involved), there is always an inherent tension built into highly institutionalized systems of inequality, class formation, and differential evaluations of people's worth, and this tension often has large effects on societal-level processes.

When rates of inter-class mobility are low, they reinforce patterns of inequality, class formation, and ranking of classes, whereas when they are high, they reduce inequalities, formation of homogeneous classes, and linear rank-orderings of these classes. Mobility increases with institutional change, and institutional change occurs under selection pressures from macrodynamic forces. Hence, the greater is the level of selection pressure from each macrodynamic force and the more forces that are involved in these selection pressures, the higher will be rates of change that, in turn, create opportunities for mobility. But, once some degree of institutional stability occurs, rates of mobility can decline and begin to reinforce other elements of stratification. Moreover, when selection pressures come primarily from regulation as a social force, actors will seek to consolidate power; and the more they consolidate coercive and administrative power, the more likely will this power be used to impose new and/or sustain existing inequalities – unless other forces such as production and distribution cause institutional changes that alter the configuration of bases of power used by polity.

Mobility will also increase when intersections of parameters marking categoric unit membership are high and when differences in categoric unit memberships penetrate corporate units in all domains, in community corporate units (such as neighborhoods), and in the divisions of labor within corporate units. Increasing production and distribution, coupled with growth of existing communities and creation of new community forms, all increase the likelihood that intersection of parameters will increase and, thereby, raise rates of mobility that, in turn, reduce the level of stratification. These mobility dynamics are not just an outcome of institutional and community changes, however; high and low rates of mobility have reverse causal effects on societal-level dynamics.

High rates of mobility, when coupled with intersection of parameters defining categoric unit memberships, promote societal integration because they increase rates of interaction among members of diverse categories (Blau 1977, 1994). When members of diverse categoric units interact, intermarry, and interbreed, prejudices association with categoric unit memberships decrease as individuals come to understand and know each other; and as these barriers are broken down, discrimination decreases, allowing for

mobility among all subpopulations in a society, which, in turn, works to reduce inequalities, class formation, and rank-ordering – thereby promoting integration of not only the stratification system but also the society as a whole. Let me now turn to these dynamics of integration.

### ***Integration of Stratification Systems and Societal Dynamics***

Societal processes are influenced by the mechanisms integrating the system of stratification. As I emphasized in Chap. 5, very high levels of stratification, per se, can be highly integrative, while conversely, comparatively low levels of stratification can also be highly integrative but for entirely different reasons.

#### **Dynamics of Highly Stratified Societies**

In Tables 6.5 and 6.6, I have outlined (a) the control mechanisms inherent in the structure of stratification, (b) the structural mechanisms of integration (see also Table 4.2), and (c) the cultural mechanisms of integration for societies revealing high- and lower-levels of stratification. In highly stratified societies, the structure of stratification controls a population by generating homogeneity classes that are rank-ordered and across which mobility is low; such a system denies individuals' and families' access to many valued resources, thereby making it difficult for members of lower classes to secure the necessary resources that would allow them to organize for conflict, while generating a society-wide system of hierarchies among classes where each class has an interest in guarding its resource shares from incursion from all classes lower in the hierarchy. This kind of system makes virtually every interaction (encounter) among members of diverse classes a ritual affirmation of the societal-level hierarchy, with the rituals in the Indian caste system being the most extreme manifestation of the way this kind of system operates (Milner 1994).

Control is thus maintained by domination as a more general structural mechanism, where there is high overlap between elites in the stratification system and holders of power in polity. When domination is high, structural interdependences are likely to be based upon dependence of lower classes on actors in higher social classes; and as Richard Emerson (1962) has emphasized, power inheres the dependence of one set of actors on another set. Furthermore, lower class members are likely to be segregated by neighborhoods in villages and towns, as well as by disproportionate residence in

**Table 6.5** Bases of integration in societies with high levels of stratification

<i>Control inherent in structure of stratification</i>	<i>Control inhering in structural integrative mechanisms</i>	<i>Control inhering in cultural mechanisms</i>
<p><b>Inequality:</b> High correlation among resources distributed unequally, leaving lower classes with few resources with which to mobilize for social change</p> <p><b>Class formation:</b> High levels of homogeneity among clearly defined classes, making class members easily identifiable and targets of discrimination and political control</p> <p><b>Rank-ordering of classes:</b> Highly linear with prestige, honor, and worth as well as most other resources held by elites, with each descending class considered less worthy than the one above it. Each class is more likely to exert control over the ones below it, thereby allowing elites to use non-elites to control the vast majority of the population</p> <p><b>Mobility:</b> Virtually no mobility from lower class because of social control measures by classes above it and because of lack of resources to use in efforts at mobility</p>	<p><b>Domination:</b> Very high degrees of power concentrated in polity and elite classes who are often part of polity in a system of hierarchy where each player has control over the next, with ultimate power given to elites of polity</p> <p><b>Structural Interdependence:</b> High levels of dependence of non-elites on elites for sustenance in system of inter-dependencies built along hierarchies, thereby giving high levels of power to elites and high-ranking positions in the societal hierarchy</p> <p><b>Structural segregation:</b> Separation of classes in residential areas within communities. Lower classes often isolated on estates in rural areas</p> <p><b>Structural inclusion:</b> Lower classes most likely nested in larger system of social hierarchies controlled by elites and in communities controlled by elites and their agents</p> <p><b>Structural Mobility:</b> Very little mobility from one kind of corporate unit to another, and even less up the social hierarchy and the corporate units sustaining the hierarchy</p>	<p>Value premises and meta-ideologies biased toward religious and political ideologies legitimating rights of actors in polity and religion to dominate other actors and to horde valued resources. These rights are seen as the will of sacred and supernatural beings who monitor and sanction non-conformity to their will and who determine relative worth of members of classes and categories</p> <p>Symbolic media of love/loyalty from kinship is exchanged for sacredness/piety from religion and authority (for use in families), thereby increasing commitments to meta-ideology built from religious and political ideologies that legitimate domination</p> <p>Use of influence from law and/or secular political ideologies to legitimate system of super-subordinate relations and worth between classes, especially as polity seeks to limit its dependence on religion and religious ideology for its symbolic base of power</p>

**Table 6.6** Bases of integration in less stratified societies

<i>Control inherent in the structure of stratification</i>	<i>Control inhering in structural integrative mechanisms</i>	<i>Control inhering in cultural mechanisms</i>
<p><b>Inequality:</b> Distribution of more varieties of resources to all individuals, increasing the aggregate sense of well being because of the positive emotional arousal associated with larger shares of diverse symbolic media and, in many cases, generalized reinforcers like prestige and honor.</p> <p><b>Class Formation:</b> Only upper and lower classes are homogeneous and clearly demarcated. Middle classes overlap and are ambiguous, with considerable heterogeneity in their memberships and rates of interaction.</p> <p><b>Rank-ordering of Classes:</b> Mostly non-linear, with a more horizontal profile among sets of middle classes, with those in the upper and middle classes defined as worthy by shares of symbolic media, prestige, and positive emotions.</p> <p><b>Mobility:</b> Higher rates of mobility, especially across middle classes, thereby giving individuals and families perceptions of opportunities to gain resources and, hence, sense of well being. Those mobile increase the rate of interaction among members of different classes by maintaining relationships with members of their class of origin and forming new relations with members of their class of destination.</p>	<p><b>Domination:</b> Power is more widely dispersed within polity, with elites in polity subject to election and evaluation in public arenas of politics. Authority is more widely distributed across many diverse types of corporate units in diverse institutional domains and reveals no clear society-wide hierarchy. Power of polity increasingly rests on its material incentive and symbolic bases.</p> <p><b>Structural Interdependence:</b> Lower levels of dependence of one class on another. Interdependencies are mediated by universalistic and positive law and open markets that give individuals and corporate units choices in forming social relations. These interdependencies are more confined to specific corporate units that are less related to classes.</p> <p><b>Structural Segregation:</b> Lower and upper classes are still segregated by location in all corporate units, but lower classes are much smaller than sets of middle classes that are less segregated from each other. Isolation in rural areas declines, with most of the population living in urban areas where movement within these areas is relatively easy, thereby increasing rates of interaction among members of diverse classes and categoric units.</p> <p><b>Structural Inclusion:</b> Individuals and families are structurally included in mostly urban community formations exerting weak control. Without pervasive, society-wide hierarchy and weak class boundaries, inclusion is less related to class than to corporate units within institutional domains.</p> <p><b>Structural mobility:</b> Rates of mobility among members of all categoric units to corporate units in all domains and in all communities increase, thereby increasing sense of opportunity and well being.</p>	<p>Circulation of symbolic media across institutional domains leads to implicit acceptance of ideology of each domain built from symbolic media and, hence, the inequalities of exchange within each institutional domain.</p> <p>Circulation of symbolic media and their coalition into meta-ideology legitimates system of inequality generating stratification.</p> <p>Meta-ideologies reinforce value-premise and, thereby, make legitimization of stratification moral. This system bestows moral worth on middle and upper classes, while forcing fewer classes to internalize their failure as their own fault for not “measuring up” to moral standards.</p> <p>Institutionalization of moral codes in political ideology and in law gives members of lower classes an arena of politics and system of courts by which to redress grievances, especially when moral codes and actual practices stand in conflict, thereby reducing potential for widespread and intense class-based conflict.</p>

rural areas where they cannot effectively communicate with each other or organize to pursue conflict. Individuals in classes are nested in communities controlled by elites, and all individuals and their families are embedded within a master society-wide hierarchy of material wealth and income that is correlated with hierarchies of power and prestige. Those high in the hierarchy enjoy prestige, worth, and rights while those low in the hierarchy have no prestige, little worth, and few rights. And, with very little mobility up the hierarchy possible, tight control of lower classes can be sustained by micro-level encounters – thereby integrating the stratification system.<sup>2</sup> Thus, more general mechanisms of institutional integration – that is, domination, structural interdependence, structural inclusion, and structural mobility (see Table 4.2) – also integrate the stratification system generated by inequality in the distribution of resources within institutional domains.

In addition to control by processes of integration inhering in stratification, per se, and in the more general structural mechanism of integration in societies, there are also cultural mechanisms. These are also listed on the right side of Table 6.5. Domination and pervasive social hierarchies cutting across all relations among individuals and corporate units in the society are only possible if they are legitimated by cultural symbols. Highly stratified systems are typically legitimated by value-premises and meta-ideologies dominated by religious and political ideologies. The system is seen as the will of beings and forces in the supernatural realm and, if polity has gained autonomy, as bestowing on elites in general and political elites in particular the rights to their power and privilege. In some societies, this meta-ideology is backed up by laws that are seen as commandments from the supernatural for “proper” behaviors and social relations, again legitimating the power and privilege of elites. When backed up by the presumed power of the supernatural to punish non-conformity (while offering incentives for conformity, such as a better existence in the afterlife), social control is easier to sustain, as long as there is consensus over these symbols laced with religious content.

The symbolic medium of sacredness/piety is often intermingled with the medium of love/loyalty in kinships to give political elites even more rights to hoard power as a resource. Piety and loyalty are both symbols pushing for conformity and allegiance to external powers – the beings and forces of the supernatural for religion and the network of kin relations for family. Indeed, the two media are often exchanged, with family members getting

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<sup>2</sup>Again, integration is a term denoting the stability of a sociocultural formation over time, not a normative statement of what is good, bad, just or unjust.

the “blessing” and protection of the supernatural in exchange for their loyalty to religious ideologies or beliefs and the structures organizing rituals directed at the supernatural. This exchange often poses a threat to polity because it divides loyalties away from political leaders toward religious and kin units; and thus, polity adopts religious symbols to transfer some of this loyalty from family in exchange for the right of key family members to use authority to regulate kindred without intervention from polity (Parsons and Smelser 1956; Turner 2003).

As polity and religion come increasingly into conflict, however, polity often seeks an alternative basis of legitimization. Polity does so at considerable risk because it may lose the support of supernatural beings and forces (who, previously, had the power to punish those not willing to submit to domination by polity). Increasingly domination by coercion and tight administration are used by polity, but often with a most tenuous basis of symbolic power. If polity can isolate religion to a limited range of “spiritual” activities, then it can sustain its symbolic base of power and, thereby, legitimate its other bases of power and the broader societal-level system of stratification with highly generalized religious symbols. As polity tries to wean itself from religion as its symbolic base, it will generally try to install a legal system, while searching for a more secular basis of legitimization revolving around a sense of “nationhood” or beliefs about the sanctity of society itself. Appeals to texts (both written and unwritten) about the history of a people are often used to construct an alternative basis of legitimacy, with varying degrees of success. In the end, polity still may have to retreat and embrace religion to sustain its symbolic base of power – as was the case with the later Roman Empire that, eventually, became the Holy Roman Empire (even with an advanced system of civil law) because it needed Christian symbols to legitimate the actions of polity. Thus, this vulnerability of polity to de-legitimization, especially when the actions of polity fail in inter-societal relations or when bases of counter-power outside polity and religion pose threats, assures that high levels of stratification are almost always legitimated by religious symbols.

### **Dynamics in Less Stratified Societies**

In contrast to societies revealing high levels of stratification, a society with lower levels of stratification operates in an entirely different way, both structurally and culturally, than a highly stratified system. Table 6.6 outlines the bases of integration in these less stratified societies.

Widespread distribution of many diverse symbolic media, even when inequalities in power and money are relatively high, allows individuals to



experience positive emotions for receiving these non-monetary and non-power media. Class formation among the “middle classes” is so weak that considerable mobility is possible; and this weakness in class boundaries makes establishing a linear hierarchy of worth among the vast majority of the population difficult to discern (except, perhaps, for the top and bottom classes in the system). The result is that most people are viewed as worthy members of “the middle classes.” This more open system also promotes intersection of parameters defining categoric unit memberships across classes and corporate units in virtually all institutional domains, thereby reducing the tensions that come with discrimination and consolidation of parameters.

The structural integrative mechanisms of less stratified societal systems shift dramatically away from domination: Power in polity rests more on the material incentive and symbolic bases of power; authority is widely distributed by polity and law to diverse corporate units within institutional domains; law gives individuals and corporate units the means to adjudicate grievances; and “arenas of politics” institutionalize conflict and provide for democratic election of political elites (Luhmann 1982). As domination recedes as a mechanism of integration, structural interdependencies increase; and once these are mediated by markets and regulated by laws, power-dependence dynamics (Emerson 1962) are reduced in several ways. One is that actors will generally have alternatives in competitive markets, thus reducing dependence and, hence, the power of actors holding desired resources over those who seek these resources. Another is the individualization of demands in societies that reveal money and credit. Individual and corporate units use money as a generalized medium of exchange to both express preferences and consummate exchanges; and as preferences come to vary widely, actors with money are able to draw upon credit and, hence, are in a more powerful position vis-à-vis those providing desired resources. Still another is that interdependencies are not class-based; rather individuals and corporate units form interdependences using money and credit that are regulated by law and, thus, are less likely to be part of a larger societal hierarchy. Furthermore, the interdependencies do not reinforce class boundaries because they are among individuals and corporate units operating as actors more than as members of classes. There is now a complex and cross-cutting network of exchange interdependencies among actors in diverse institutional domains, and these exchanges do not necessarily consolidate with classes or other parameters marking categoric unit membership. For example, interdependencies among actors in families, schools, churches, teams, art institutes, and corporations do not align with class memberships or even other categoric memberships, nor do they correlate with a general society-wide hierarchy. Instead, they are instrumental, strategic, ad hoc, and reflective of

diverse preferences of actors who can often take advantage of competition in markets to reduce the dependencies.

Structural segregation still operates in these societies with lower levels of stratification, especially among upper, middle, and lower classes, but because the lower classes are much smaller than in highly stratified systems, while the middle classes are more open and evidence higher rates of inter-class mobility, segregation is much less pronounced. Moreover, because a higher proportion of individuals lives in urban areas, rates of mobility within cities increases rates of interaction among members of different classes and categoric units.

Structural inclusion is a less prominent mechanism in sustaining class boundaries and relations; instead, most corporate units are embedded in a community structure that exerts weak control (save over such matters as zoning) and, thus, does not reproduce class relations as they do in more stratified societies. Other patterns of inclusion tend to be among specific sets of corporate units in domains; and again, these patterns are not designed to sustain class boundaries and rankings among classes within a larger societal-level hierarchy.

Finally, a considerable amount of structural mobility among members of classes and categoric units occurs, leading to high levels of intersection among parameters defining class and other categoric unit memberships. High rates of interaction promote integration by breaking down cultural barriers among members of diverse subcultures and categoric units.

Over the long course of societal evolution from hunting and gathering societal formations through horticulture and agrarianism to industrial and post-industrialism, stratification increased up to advanced agrarianism, where the dynamics of a highly stratified society could be seen (Lenski 1966). With the transition to industrialism, however, the level of stratification began to decline to its current profile in post-industrial societies. In recent decades, inequalities in income have actually increased in many post-industrial societies, but at the same time, the distribution of power (as authority) and all other symbolic media has become more equal, with the result that even with growing inequality in incomes between highly skilled and less skilled workers, the stratification system remains integrated.

As the structural mechanisms of integration change, so does the cultural basis of integration of societal stratification. One basis of cultural integration resides in the circulation of symbolic media. The more the media of institutional domains circulate, above and beyond *money* and *power*, the more these media are used in exchanges and, as a consequence, the more the ideologies built from these media will be accepted as legitimate. Since these ideologies legitimate each institutional domain distributing (unequally)

symbolic media as valued resources, the stratification system that emerges from this unequal distribution is legitimated by each of the ideologies built from these media. For example, if learning as a medium circulates (via job markets) and the ideology that learning is good also circulates, then individuals are more likely to accept the premise that those who gain learning through their efforts in the institutional domain of education are not only entitled to more prestige because of their learning but also they are deserving of greater shares of other symbolic media as resources that can be gained with learning – resources such as money and power (authority). Moreover, since the ideologies of each domain are collated into a meta-ideology, the widespread circulation of diverse symbolic media and the ideologies that they propagate assures that a large number of individuals will accept the meta-ideology that, in turn, legitimates the stratification system as a whole.

Since meta-ideologies both instantiate value premises in structural arrangements while being directed by the moral codes in these premises, values and meta-ideologies line up to legitimate stratification and the institutional domains producing stratification. Because values and meta-ideologies are moral codes that specify worth, they can be internalized as individual morality, even by those who are low in the system, thereby eroding the capacity of lower-class individuals to conduct moral crusades against the class system, polity, and other institutional domains that sustain stratification. Rather, these individuals will often internalize failure as “their own fault” for not measuring up to the moral standards of values and meta-ideologies by “working hard enough” to secure more symbolic media as valued resources. The negative emotions they experience will move from anger to alienation, shame, sadness, depression, and perhaps despair, thus depriving a social movement organization of angry members ready to pursue conflict.

Value premises and meta-ideologies will only have these effects if there is widespread consensus over, and commitments to, their moral commandments. Furthermore, if the premises of these cultural codes are blatantly violated in actual practices within domains, then the discontinuity between what is preached and practiced can invite anger that is mobilized into social movement or conflict organizations. For example, the existence of slavery and value premises (on equality and freedom) in the United States were increasingly viewed as a contradiction by individuals in northern states. The result was the abolitionist movement that led middle class individuals in the north to form social movement organizations that increasingly pushed polity to confront the issue of slavery.

Thus, contradiction between ideals and practice can generate high levels of anger that, in turn, motivate actors to incur the risks that come with conflict. Because such movements are viewed in moral terms, the intensity of

involvement for movement members and their willingness to pursue conflict with centers of power will increase. Indeed, leaders and members find it difficult to “compromise” on “moral wrongs” (Simmel 1956; Coser 1956). Yet, in most highly differentiated societies with lower levels of stratification, contradictions in moral codes and actions within institutional domains can be adjudicated in a positivistic legal system without the need by the aggrieved to mobilize for violent conflict to redress what they see as “unfair practices.” Acts of collective protest can be absorbed in the arena of politics and adjudicated in the legal system; and in this way, the conflict potential inhering in the stratification system can be accommodated short of full-scale conflict. And if, the legal system can produce legal rulings and new laws that redress what were perceived as moral wrongs, then the ideology of law (i.e., using law and abiding by its demands) that is built from the symbolic medium of influence becomes yet one more legitimating ideology for polity and the general institutional order.

### ***Stratification and Its Integration During Societal Evolution***

In Table 6.7, I have outlined the shifting structure of stratification through the basic societal types that have emerged during the course of societal evolution. Table 6.8 delineates the changes in the structural and cultural mechanisms integrating and sustaining stratification systems. The general pattern of stratification across basic types of human societies is relatively clear. From nomadic hunting and gathering, where no stratification exists, societies increasingly become stratified through advanced agrarianism and, then, there is a decrease in the level of stratification (Lenski 1966; Turner 1984b). As Gerhard Lenski (1966) emphasized, this decrease is not complete; and indeed, considerable stratification still exists in industrial and post-industrial societies. Such is certainly the case, but if we examine the distribution of other resources besides money, power, and prestige during the course of societal evolution, the decline in stratification is much greater when these other symbolic media beyond *power* and *money* (and the generalized resource of prestige) are viewed as part of the stratification system. As institutional domains differentiate and as individuals gain access to their resources, the distribution of love/loyalty, learning, knowledge, health, competitiveness, aesthetics, and other potential media becomes more equal and, as I have emphasized, compensates individuals and families for lower levels of money and power.

As long as sociologists only focus on the big three resources – that is, material well being, power, and prestige – industrial and post-industrial

**Table 6.7** Stratification in types of human societal systems

<i>Elements of stratification</i>	<i>Nomadic hunting and gathering societies</i>	<i>Settled hunting and gathering societies</i>
<b>Inequality in distribution of resources</b>	None	Power and surplus productivity are unequally distributed to Big Man, with obligation of the Big Man and his allies to redistribute material resources and, thereby, gain prestige and honor. Prestige is also given to religious practitioners, if any. At times, material surplus is bestowed on economic specialists.
<b>Class formation</b>	None	Big Man and allies constitute beginnings of upper class. Religious practitioners and economic specialists form, at times, an intermediate class. Otherwise, class distinctions are not highly pronounced.
<b>Ranking of classes</b>	None	Big Man and allies are considered more worthy than all others. Religious and economic specialists also ranked above the rest of the population.
<b>Mobility</b>	None, since there are no classes	Mobility is possible, and especially so when Big Man dies or loses prestige and a struggle for a successor ensues.

<i>Elements of stratification</i>	<i>Simple horticultural societies (and pastoral variants)</i>	<i>Advanced horticultural societies</i>
<b>Inequality in distribution of resources</b>	<p>Moderate inequality in material wealth to headman, religious specialists, kin heads, paramount chiefs, craft specialists, but with some expectations for redistribution. Power concentrated in head man and chiefs who, along with craft specialists, religious specialists, and exceptional warriors, also command prestige. With paramount chiefs, power and trappings of power become even more unequally distributed. Equal distribution of other generalized symbolic media.</p>	<p>High inequality in power, material wealth, and prestige, with chiefs and paramount chiefs, along with religious practitioners acquiring resources through taxation. In highly advanced systems, a king and court hold great power and wealth, along with prestige, as do high-ranking priests. Successfully craft and economic specialists can accumulate wealth, but little power, as can high ranking military specialists. Symbolic media as resources, especially knowledge, learning, health, and competitiveness, are increasingly distributed unequally, as are positive emotions.</p>
<b>Class formation</b>	<p>Clear differentiation of headman and chiefs into a higher class. The same is true for religious practitioners, craft specialists, and warriors. Yet, vast majority of population constitutes one class, with distinctions by kin group, gender, and age being more salient.</p>	<p>Clear formation of classes of elites (political leaders, high priests, and high-ranking military are all part of an upper class). Economic specialists begin the process of forming a middle class or classes. Most of the population forms a single lower-level class, with distinctions by gender and age marking subclasses. If slavery exists, an even lower class is evident.</p>
<b>Ranking of classes</b>	<p>Linear ranking of paramount chiefs, chiefs, and kin heads by material well being, power, and prestige. Prestige of religious practitioners, skilled craftsmen, and warriors provides another basis for ranking. Gender and age also provide a basis for ranking. Ranking of classes, however, is not prominent.</p>	<p>Linear ranking of upper, emerging middle, lower, and lowest classes.</p>
<b>Mobility</b>	<p>Kin heads can become chiefs and paramount chiefs. All males can potentially become specialists in craft or religion, while exceptional warriors can ascend to leadership positions, but generally rates of mobility are low because of the constraints imposed by the kinship system.</p>	<p>Low-levels of inter-class mobility, although military, religious, and economic specialists with high skill can, at times, be mobile to middle and lower levels of upper class.</p>

<i>Elements of stratification</i>	<i>Simple agrarian societies</i>	<i>Advanced agrarian societies</i>
<b>Inequality in distribution of resources</b>	<p>Very high levels of inequality in power, material wealth, prestige, and positive emotions. Nobility and religion control most valued resources, including most symbolic media as resources. Increasing material accumulation by economic specialists and by those with knowledge and learning. Most economic surplus usurped by state and religious elites. Vast majority of the population has few resources.</p>	<p>Much the same as simple agrarian societies, but altered by monarch's increased power to usurp all resources and expansion of trading, merchant, and servicing occupations, as well as artisans, educators, scientists, and physicians in the middle between elites and peasants. Except for love/loyalty, all other symbolic media are distributed unequally, with elites controlling most resources and with peasants having virtually no resources.</p>
<b>Class formation</b>	<p>Clear degrees of class formation between nobility religious, and military elites; vast majority of population are peasants on rural estates, with some defined as expendables and especially so if slaves. Emerging sets of urban middle classes in arts, crafts, and economic specialties, with some hording considerable wealth.</p>	<p>Classes are increasingly homogenous, divided among nobility and elites at the top, successful merchants and artisans at the upper middle, less successful ones in lower-middle classes, educators and scientists in the middle but at times moved to elite status, urban peasants and urban underclasses at the bottom, with slaves often constituting a distinct class.</p>
<b>Ranking of classes</b>	<p>Increasingly linearity of ranking of classes by worth among elites and nobility, sets of middle classes in urban areas, rural peasants, and expendables.</p>	<p>Linearity of ranking among classes increases and becomes part of a society-wide system of hierarchy that is reproduced at the micro level in interactions among members of different classes.</p>
<b>Mobility</b>	<p>Little mobility, except for rural to urban migrations typically creating urban underclass. Some mobility within economic and military spheres of activity.</p>	<p>Little mobility, but expanding merchant, artisan, scientific, educational, sport, military, and religious activities generates some, very limited, possibilities for upward mobility. Downward mobility of both elites and non-elites also increases.</p>

<i>Elements of stratification</i>	<i>Industrial and post-industrial societies</i>
<b>Inequality in distribution of resources</b>	<p>A significant decline in inequality of all resources occurs. Democracy and franchising of authority to corporate units decreases inequality of power, as does tax-redistribution policies of polity. All symbolic media as resources more equally distributed, allowing individuals and families to garner dignity, if not prestige, and to experience positive emotions. Still, to varying degrees many do not receive adequate shares of any resources and must experience negative emotions.</p>
<b>Class formation</b>	<p>Class formation is clear at the very top and bottom of the system, but middle classes become more ambiguous, especially with increasing intersection of parameters marking categoric unit memberships. Some internal division in middle classes between white and blue collar families, although their shares of resources often do not vary very much.</p>
<b>Ranking of classes</b>	<p>Linearity of classes declines and becomes difficult to determine among sets of middle classes between the upper and lower classes. Sense of worth is more widely distributed with members of middle classes, which constitute the majority of the population, receiving dignity, if not prestige, and experiencing positive emotions because of the larger shares of not only money and authority but also all other symbolic media. Intersection of parameters marking categoric unit memberships erodes clarity and linearity in standards of worth.</p>
<b>Mobility</b>	<p>Considerable mobility from rural to urban, and from cities to suburbs in post-industrial systems. Considerable upward mobility with learning from education becoming major sorting mechanism in labor markets. Mobility increases intersection of parameters marking categoric units. Entrepreneurial opportunities dramatically increase with markets, thereby increasing mobility.</p>



**Table 6.8** Bases of structural and cultural integration in types of stratified societies

<i>Bases of integration</i>	<i>Nomadic hunting and gathering societies</i>	<i>Settled hunting and gathering societies</i>
<b>Structural</b>	Since there is no inequality, integration of stratification system is unnecessary. Basic modes of integration are segmentation, inclusion, and interdependence, which provide organizational template for bands composed of nuclear kin units that divide resources equally. Lack of domination or consolidation of power assures that inequalities and stratification cannot emerge.	Consolidation of power by Big Man increases inequalities and initiates stratification which is integrated by strategic use of power but also by redistribution of material resources that have been extracted, thereby increasing prestige for Big Man but also decreasing material inequalities across the population.
<b>Cultural</b>	Strong egalitarian ethic works against inequality.	Strong ideology requiring Big Man to redistribute economic surplus limits material inequalities, but the prestige gained from such efforts legitimates inequalities in power and the rights of the Big Man to dominate many activities.

<i>Bases of integration</i>	<i>Simple horticultural societies (and pastoral variants)</i>	<i>Advanced horticultural societies</i>
<b>Structural</b>	<p>Descent rules of kinship system determine inheritance of property and distribution of authority. Kin leaders who become chiefs are able to dominate villages, to a limited degree, and thereby maintain their privileges. Paramount chiefs can dominate systems of villages and hence sustain privilege. Yet, the lack of a large economic surplus and the segmental structure of kin units and villages limits inequalities, although considerable tension exists within kin units when power provided by descent rule is used to control conduct of other kin members.</p>	<p>Domination becomes ever more evident as the primary mechanism for controlling inequalities. Patterns of structural inclusion of classes within a larger social hierarchy, with structural dependence of those lower in the hierarchy on those higher in hierarchy further increases domination. Yet, domination depends upon a constraint flow of resources to elites, and when production declines, patterns of domination break down. Some degree of structural mobility is possible, especially through warfare activities, but most members of the society have few opportunities. Rank-ordering of classes, per se, by standards of worth operates to legitimate the system of stratification and to sustain the society-wide and inter-societal hierarchy. Yet, the logistical loads involved in control of outlying areas from the capital city, coupled with resentments of efforts by elites to control and tax residents of these cities and the surrounding countryside makes for considerable instability in the system of stratification, and even more so when geo-economic or geo-political incursions from other societies intervene.</p>
<b>Cultural</b>	<p>Descent rules provide template for distribution of resources, thereby legitimating inequalities. Emergence of chiefs and paramount chiefs is legitimated by prestige, religious beliefs, and descent rules, but these bases of legitimization are not powerful and can pose problems of legitimacy for chiefs and paramount chiefs. Circulation of love/loyalty, sacredness/piety, and power/authority through kinship and village structures works to maintain control and justify inequalities.</p>	<p>Consolidation of power, sacredness/piety, and the loyalty portion of love/loyalty with elite classes provides a meta-ideology for legitimating inequalities. Influence from law, as it begins to emerge as an institutional domain, is also consolidated with elite control of power and privilege. Prestige of political and religious elites – often considered to be godlike – provides further legitimization of their control of resources. The lack of other symbolic media available to non-elites increases inequalities but also decreases the symbols that can be mobilized for resistance to domination.</p>

<i>Bases of integration</i>	<i>Simple agrarian societies</i>	<i>Advanced agrarian societies</i>
<b>Structural</b>	<p>As power is consolidated in a state, domination as an integrative mechanism increases. Influence from law, as an emerging domain, is highly biased toward interests of elites and facilitates domination. Classes are nested in a more encompassing society-wide hierarchy. Segregation of lower classes in rural areas reduces their capacity to mobilize for conflict, as does their dependence upon elites for their sustenance. Yet, actions of the state often cause mobilization for conflict by both elites and non-elites, with geo-economic and geo-political incursions into a society eroding the system of domination. Only if migrations to emerging urban areas increase the diversity of economic activities, the dynamism of markets, and the size of lower classes in concentrated spaces can the system of domination be significantly challenged, although banditry in rural areas and along infrastructures marks resistance to the system of domination. Yet, the lack of money, power, sacredness/piety, learning, and other symbolic media among most members of the population limits both mobility and options for organized conflict with elites.</p>	<p>As more power is consolidated in a monarchical state and feudal system, inequalities increase. Domination by polity and religion through a society-wide hierarchy sustains this inequality, especially since the vast majority of the population is segregated in rural communities as peasants and structurally nested in manoral estates that extend domination of elites. Structural interdependence is mostly dependence of non-elites, but the expansion of markets using money and credit begins to alter patterns of interdependence and to provide new opportunities for structural mobility. The expansion of urban areas and the emergence of new trade, retail, craft, artisan, educational, science, and medical corporate units in emerging (or elaborating) institutional domains increases not only opportunities for structural mobility, but also for the circulation of generalized symbolic media among non-elites. As urban areas grow and become differentiated, new opportunities to acquire resources and/or ferment revolt to the system of domination increase.</p>
<b>Cultural</b>	<p>Value premises and meta-ideologies are dominated by discourse controlled by elites over their rights to power and sacredness/piety, and perhaps the loyalty portion of love/loyalty from kinship, with the result that the privileged of elites is legitimated. The lack of learning, knowledge, money, and authority (in corporate units) circulating among non-elites provides few opportunities for mobilizing power, garnering prestige, or even for experiencing positive emotional energy.</p>	<p>Value-premises and meta-ideologies biased by elites control of discourse on right to power, money, sacredness/piety, influence, and loyalty, with additional doses of prestige from their knowledge and learning or their patronage of those using these media. Yet, as non-elites gain access to money, authority (in corporate units), learning, knowledge, and competitiveness with the expansion of classes between elites and peasants, and as they begin to use influence from law, this wider circulation of symbolic media allows non-elites to make claims and assert rights that, potentially, can break the society-wide hierarchy and the domination of elites, especially if elites begin to lose wealth and privilege.</p>

<i><b>Bases of integration</b></i>	<i><b>Industrial and post-industrial societies</b></i>
<b>Structural</b>	<p>Dramatic decline in inequality of all resources, accompanied by shift in mechanisms of structural integration. Society-wide domination is replaced by more democratic politics regulated by law, with much power franchised as authority to corporate units distributing virtually all generalized symbolic media, prestige, and positive emotions. High levels of structural interdependence among corporate units, with markets determining access to their divisions of labor. High degrees of intersection of parameters marking categoric unit memberships decreases segregation, while increasing mobility as an integrative force. Class divisions weak in the middle, only consolidating at the very top and bottom of the system, with mobility and intersection of parameters giving the majority of the population access to most symbolic media, dignity if not prestige, and positive emotional energy – all of which increase commitments to the system of stratification.</p>
<b>Cultural</b>	<p>Value-premises and meta-ideologies increasingly emphasize opportunities to gain access to all resources through education and “hard work.” All symbolic media circulate across institutional domains, thereby reinforcing value premises and meta-ideologies that legitimate the system of stratification. The dispersion and franchising of power (as authority), the spread of markets distributing money and the availability of influence from law in all transactions further legitimates the meta-ideology. With middle classes receiving shares of most resources and with lower classes having to internalize their failure to do so, conflict is less violent and typically fought in the arena of politics or in the legal system, thus reinforcing the meta-ideology.</p>

societies will be seen as more stratified than they actually are. This blind spot in sociological analysis of stratification is the result of the Marxian tradition's tendency to see all other institutional domains as "superstructures" to the economy. Moreover, as noted in Chap. 5, the Marxian tradition often tends to view symbolic media as "opiates" that distort awareness of people's "true interests." Yet, if receiving non-monetary and non-power resources is rewarding in itself and if the possession of such resources generates positive emotions, it may be an opiate but one that has integrative effects on societies and, indeed, helps account for why Marxian projections about class-based revolutions in industrial societies have never occurred.

The generalizations that emerge with a broader view of the resources being distributed over the course of societal evolution are relatively clear. Increasing institutional differentiation during the course of human evolution increases dramatically inequalities in material wealth (money) and power during the transition from nomadic to more settled community patterns, particularly in the movement from simple horticulture to agrarianism. Even as institutional domains differentiate during phase 2 of institutional differentiation (see earlier discussion), the symbolic media that emerge are unequally distributed. Not only are money, power, prestige, and positive emotions unequally distributed, but so are sacredness/piety (to religious elites who also have money, power, prestige and positive emotions), learning, knowledge, health, aesthetics, and just about all other resources. But, as institutional domains become increasingly autonomous and as other forces, such as changes in modes of production and community organization (see later discussion), come into play, these institutional changes begin to allow access of non-elites to some of these valued resources, including material well-being (money), but equally significant, sacredness/piety (with the spread of universal or "world" religions), learning (as needs for literacy increase), knowledge (as specialized human capital is needed), aesthetics (as access to arts for non-elites increases), health (as medicine and doctors become professionalized), knowledge (as science moves out of elite patronage patterns), influence (as law begins to specify individual rights), money (as paid labor and businesses expand), and power (as the first rumblings of democracy can be felt). All of these changes in the institutional structure of societies are clearly in place with advanced agrarianism, and with the shift to new modes of production (industrialism) and new modes of distribution (free markets using money and credit as well as meta-markets), individuals and collective actors have increasing access to valued resources. Thus, while it is certainly the case that *money* and *power* are very unequally distributed in advanced agrarian societies, other media are less so; and with the expansion of markets and trade, money can be used to purchase other

media – power, influence, aesthetics, health, learning, and knowledge. And, once free labor begins to earn wages that can support them beyond their subsistence needs and once polity begins to view education as a means to form a new basis of symbolic power (e.g., secular civics), a more equal distribution of symbolic media as valued resources ensues.

The result is that stratification declines, and domination as the primary integrative mechanisms is supplemented by interdependencies built from markets and quasi markets that increases the dependence part of the interdependence equation. Moreover, structural inclusion is less inside a society-wide hierarchy but, now, inside communities of various types where domination is less operative and inside sets of corporate units within institutional domains where, again, society-wide domination is of less concern that the local use of authority to coordinate and control activities in instrumental corporate units. Segregation as a mechanism still exists through segregation of members of categoric units in residential areas of communities and from certain positions in the divisions of labor, but these patterns decline with post-industrialism. Structural overlap is oriented to the instrumental needs of corporate units rather than efforts to sustain hierarchies. And, as structural mobility increases with changes in institutional domains, new kinds of corporate units create opportunities for mobility.

As these structural mechanisms of integration change from late agrarianism through post-industrialism, the salience of some categoric unit memberships begins to decline. Discrimination against members of particular categoric units generally lessens, thereby increasing the intersection of membership in categoric units with locations in the divisions of labor in corporate units and penetration of these intersections to all levels and types of corporate units in all institutional domains. To be sure, intersection and penetration is not complete in post-industrial societies, but where salience of categoric units, discrimination, and consolidation of categoric units with class position persist, these societies are often agrarian in many sectors of the economy, narrowly industrialized (e.g., oil production), or hardly industrialized at all. Large sectors of India (even as it modernizes), significant parts of the Middle East, post-colonial Africa, and southern portion of the old Soviet Union are all examples of societies where the salience of categoric unit memberships, the consolidation among parameters with classes, and the limited access of members of categoric units to positions in the divisions of labor of corporate units still exist – often sustaining society-wide hierarchies and, unfortunately, patterns of ethnic, class, and religious conflict. These are the societies where one would expect high rates of conflict because the integrative power of very high levels of stratification is weakened, while the integrative power of highly differentiated societies with

lower levels of stratification has not yet evolved. Thus, the more changes in the institutional domains and systems of community within highly stratified societies, the less control inhering in the stratification system, per se. As a result, domination and *interdependence* (with high levels of dependence of lower- on higher-class members) will lose much of their effectiveness as general mechanisms of societal integration. Thus, when stratification remains high and its bases of integration begin to erode, conflict and further change in a society is likely. These shifts in the structural mechanisms of integration across the course of societal evolution are listed at the top of Table 6.8.

As traditional systems of integration recede, the conflicts that emerge will generate selection pressures for new forms of regulation. The result is some initial democratization of polity and creation of an arena of politics; the elaboration of law and legal autonomy to define rights of actors (including citizens), to adjudicate disputes, and to define social relations; and the expansion of markets using money and credit, while institutionalizing contracts regulated by the legal system to create new kinds of limited and flexible interdependencies. Once these prove effective, the level of stratification begins to decline rapidly – especially if we use a broader conception of the resources distributed unequally—and the new modes of integration described above and in Table 6.8 for industrial and post-industrial societies begin to fall into place as actors respond to selection pressures from regulation as a social force. There is, of course, no certainty that such will be the case, as many historically contingent events can intervene. Yet, the pressures on actors to find new means of societal integration, especially when older forms of domination have eroded the resources of polity as it sought to use its coercive and administrative bases of power that, in turn, decreased incentives for innovations in production and distribution which, as a consequence, will reduce the effectiveness of all bases of power.

As these selection pressures from regulation, production, and distribution continue to exert pressure on actors within institutional domains and as new types of societal integration begin to emerge, so does the cultural means of integration begin to change. Values generalize; meta-ideologies become increasingly dominated by the ideologies of economy and polity, while reducing the influence of religion; a positivistic legal system increasingly spins out new normative controls; new forms of market exchanges push law to develop norms for regulating exchanges; and symbolic media from many more domains than economy and polity begin to circulate across domains, bringing with them (a) the implicit values that they reinforce, (b) the ideologies of new domains, and (c) the capacity to distribute more types of symbolic media as resources to a greater number of actors. And if polity moves

to articulating a secular civic culture in its ideology and in the ideology of law, democratization of polity and expansion of the arena of politics become more likely. With these political transformations, social movements as opposed to violent conflict are more likely to emerge, extending civil rights and eroding older bases for discrimination against devalued members of categoric units. And, as these movements prove successful, intersection and penetration parameters defining categoric units in the divisions of labor of all types of corporate units increase. If the economy relies upon market demand to stimulate productive outputs and markets using money, credit and (if needed) contracts from law to distribute these outputs, these political and broader social changes are more likely to occur. For once actors experience the capacity to express preferences in markets, it is not a great leap to demand the ability to select political leaders; and once leaders are chosen through votes, they become subject to political pressures from members of all classes – something that Marx did not fully appreciate. The result is a transformation of the ideologies in most institutional domains toward cultural beliefs emphasizing that individuals should have equal opportunities to gain access to all symbolic media as resources – money, power, learning, knowledge, love/loyalty, competitiveness, health, aesthetics, influence – as well as generalized resources like prestige and positive emotions, thereby changing the cultural basis of integration for not only the stratification system but for the society as a whole. Such a cultural system allows individuals to perceive that opportunities exist, with failure to garner resources being the result of their own inadequacies. These beliefs are, however, a double-edged sword in that they raise expectations for mobility, with the consequence that more volatile negative emotions like anger often ensue when individuals' expectations for success are not realized.

Structural differentiation, including differentiation of classes, thus generates selection pressures for new mechanisms of cultural integration – as Durkheim (1893 [1963]) emphasized. Values must become more generalized and backfilled by institutional ideologies and normative systems (Luhmann 1982). In this process of cultural differentiation, the basis of legitimization of stratification also changes. The meta-ideology of a society will combine more than just the ideologies of religion, polity, and dominant economic actors; influence, learning, competition, knowledge, health, aesthetics, and other symbolic media produce ideologies that are typically more egalitarian as polity becomes more democratic. Although the tenets of the ideology justifying capitalism may still be highly prominent in the meta-ideology (seeing wealth accumulation as a positive good), the ideologies legitimating polity and law will increasingly emphasize individuals' rights to certain basic “freedoms”; and these freedoms will emphasize access to the symbolic media of not only economy (through rights to hold a job and



earn money) and polity (to have at least the power of the vote), but other media such as learning (rights to an education), competition (in all institutional spheres), health (through national programs of health care), influence (through the right to petition polity and adjudicate disputes), sacredness/piety (from religious freedom), love/loyalty (in stable families), and so on. As this list of rights grows, it leads to the more equal distribution of generalized symbolic media as resources and, as a result, to the more equal distribution of at least “dignity” (if not prestige) and positive emotional energy. The meta-ideology legitimating the stratification system is thus likely to embrace a wider range of ideologies from diverse institutional domains; and as long as individuals and families can attain at least some access to the symbolic media from which these ideologies are built, the meta-ideology legitimates the privilege of the wealthy, the well-being of more heterogeneous sets of middle classes, and stigmatizes the poor for not measuring up to the broad tenets of the meta-ideology. The result is that the wealthy enjoy prestige and positive emotions, the middle classes experience dignity (at a minimum) and positive emotional energy, and the poor must internalize position in the system as “their own fault” for not living up to the moral codes of the meta-ideology. Such a system can be highly stable, as long as the lower classes are not large and as long inter-class mobility is not downward.

This system is also sustained by at least the appearance of a body of laws, especially those about “civil rights,” that give individuals and families the perception of opportunities to redress grievances, especially over discriminatory practices. Indeed, part of the meta-ideology of post-industrial societies is a set of “civil rights,” enshrined in the ideologies of polity and law, that allow individuals to perceive that they can alter their fate in the system of stratification. These tenets of the meta-ideology are not wholly illusionary because most post-industrial societies have enacted and enforced laws reducing discrimination against members of devalued categoric units, with the consequence that there is more intersection of parameters marking categoric unit membership than in late agrarianism and early industrialism.

Yet, this improvement in the situation of members of categoric units becomes part of the meta-ideology and, in general, over-estimates the degree to which the opportunity structure for members in these categories has improved. The ironic effect of these new beliefs that are added to the meta-ideology is to further stigmatize those who are perceived to not have taken advantage of the newly “leveled playing field” in the “sport of life” (the very imagery of competition and playing field demonstrates how much other media – in this case, the medium of sport – become part of the meta-ideology used to legitimate stratification and, in this case, to stigmatize the poor for not “playing hard enough” to “win” in the “fair competition” for resources).

Thus, once again, those at the bottom of the stratification system must internalize their own failure, which in turn not only forces them to live with stigma but also to experience a wide palate of negative emotional energy ranging from shame and humiliation through alienation to diffuse anger (without a clear target). Yet, as I have emphasized, this pattern of valorizing the virtues of the middle and upper classes and stigmatizing the lower classes only operates effectively when (a) lower classes are comparatively small, (b) lower-class membership is not correlated with memberships in devalued categorical units, and (c) upward inter-class mobility is possible. The civil rights movement in the United States was inevitable as the society moved toward post-industrialism because none of these conditions prevailed at the midpoint of the last century; and should downward mobility among middle class persons occur on a large scale, the potential for conflict mobilization will increase. A review of the proposition 12 in Chap.5 provides more detail for the conditions of class-based social movement and conflict organizations that can arise when the above conditions exist.

Yet, as long as a meta-ideology reflects and reinforces core values over which there is consensus in a society (and such is the case in the United States) and an overwhelming majority of the population perceives that the ideals contained in these ideologies are indeed implemented in practices of corporate units within institutional domains, this differentiated cultural system legitimates and sustains the stratification system of post-industrial societies. For, as values generalize and ideologies differentiate, this “de-fusion,” to use Alexander’s (2004) term, generates selection pressures for re-fusion of cultural beliefs in a meta-ideology that recombines ideologies and makes them relevant for episodes of more micro- and meso-level interaction among individuals seeking resources in corporate units of institutional domains. Without the meta-ideology, individuals could bring to bear somewhat unique configurations of institutional ideologies and use different symbolic media in their actions, with the result that the micro encounters would be strained, especially over the question of resource distribution. But, with the re-fusion of differentiated institutional ideologies into a meta-ideology, the macro-level system of stratification and its reproduction at the micro-level of face-to-face interaction are given support by moral codes.

## **Systems of Communities and Societal Dynamics**

Communities are one of the three basic types of corporate-units and, hence, are part of the meso-level of social reality, which will be examined in Vol.3 of *Theoretical Principles of Sociology*. Yet, societal dynamics are influ-

enced by the structure of communities because, in the end, the other types of corporate units from which institutional domains are built (i.e., groups and organizations) and the members of categoric units from which stratification systems (classes) are constructed are lodged inside of communities. Yet, this structural inclusion would still be a meso-level dynamic, as is explored in Vol. 3, but once communities form *networks of relations*, this system of relations becomes a macro-level phenomenon that is part of the dynamics of not only institutional domains and stratification systems but also societal and inter-societal dynamics. Of particular importance are systems of communities that emerge as societies become larger.

### ***The Evolution of Systems of Communities***

All institutional activities occur in geographical space, and even virtual reality must ultimately be based in a physical location (where the machines and people who run them reside). Among nomadic hunter-gatherers, the physical space in which institutional activity was lodged consisted of a territory. Members of a band moved in a semi-circular pattern about this territory, but with settled hunter-gatherers came the first true human communities in the form of small villages, typically near rivers, lakes, and oceans. With simple horticulture, villages evolved to accommodate gardening activities organized by the unilineal descent system of kinship and, at times, by paramount chiefs residing in one village but having some control of what would transpire in other villages. From this point on, systems of communities became the basic formation housing the corporate units in which institutional activities would be carried out.

Like so many macrodynamic processes, population growth was both a cause and effect of community evolution. Initial growth of populations forced humans to form settlements, simply because there were too many people to sustain nomadic life-ways. Once communities as a form of adaptation emerged, they would grow to the point where there were insufficient resources to maintain the population; and the result was typically segmentation of another community in geo-physical space where resources could be cultivated in new locations to support the members of the new community. Thus, through simple horticulture, the first stages of community evolution revolved around segmentation. With more advanced horticulture, however, differentiation of communities became increasingly evident. The most common axes of community differentiation were the locations of centers of power, beginning with the communities of paramount chiefs in simple horticultural societies and their variants (Nolan and Lenski 2008). Another axis of differentiation among communities was over religious activity, with

higher priests and temple structures increasingly lodged in one community, sometimes the same community that would house centers of political power. Another point of differentiation revolved around trade within and between populations. As the distributive infrastructure grew to allow trade, cities at different points in this trade – e.g., resource producers, re-supply stations or ports on (longer) trade routes, market locations for exchanging of resources and goods, and consumers of both bulk and prestige goods – became increasingly differentiated. Once community as a basic sociocultural formation evolved, it initially encouraged population growth from higher birth rates or from immigration by individuals and families in search of new opportunities; and as noted above, this growth of communities generated new kinds of selection pressures from regulation, production, distribution, and eventually reproduction.

With ever-more individuals living in larger communities, production had to increase in order to sustain residents who no longer could grow or hunt their own food; and once production ramped up to sustain larger numbers of individuals, the populations within communities could differentiate along many lines and begin to carve out new institutional domains. As long as sufficient resources could be secured from the countryside and beyond, communities continued to grow and differentiate, but the historical pattern was for communities to grow to the limits of their productive capacity relative to the size of the population, and then decline for a time (Chase-Dunn et al. 2009).

Emerging communities also generated selection pressures from distribution since many of the resources needed to support residents and their activities in a community had to come in from the outside. These pressures led to the development of distributive infrastructures – roads, ports, canals, and other facilities needed to move resources – and markets within communities as well as market towns devoted to exchanges of resources and finished goods. With these infrastructures, communities could grow further, as long as distributive structures could sustain a flow of resources to actors in urbanizing areas.

As these kinds of infrastructures developed, they would enable communities to become more specialized because residents could obtain needed resources and finished goods. Religious centers with elaborate temples could emerge because their residents could secure needed resources from distributive infrastructures. The same could be true for political, military, and market centers.

Responses to these selection pressures, then, cause differentiation among economy, polity, religion, and kinship as institutional domains. As these institutions differentiate, the size of communities can grow; and as

communities grow, they differentiate further, with new domains such as law, art, science, medicine, sport, and education emerging during the course of community and societal evolution. This growth and institutional differentiation generate second-order logistical loads for regulation and control as well as for production and distribution of resources to support actors in these differentiated domains. Differentiation of polity and religion also assures that inequalities will increase and extract much of the economic surplus; and as markets begin to emerge, elites in the productive and distributive sectors also extract profits that increase inequalities. Stratification always exacerbates second-order logistical loads from institutional differentiation, thereby increasing selection pressures from regulation for the consolidation of power to control the tensions that always come with increased inequality.

Differentiation of institutional domains inevitably causes growth in the size of communities because, as corporate units emerge, segment, and then differentiate, they house ever-more incumbents. As long as productive and distributive activities in the economy can support a larger population, the proliferation of corporate units allows for the organization of larger numbers of individuals. Only kinship, which begins and then completes its de-evolution back to the nuclear form, is an exception to this trend, but the structure of other corporate units assures that nuclear family members will be organized by increasing varieties of activities outside kinship. Thus, once processes of growth and differentiation of communities are initiated, they tend to continue until some combination of ecological, productive, distributive, geo-economic, or geo-political crises intervenes and works against growth.

As communities grow and as distributive infrastructures expand, *systems of communities* emerge within and between populations. These systems are driven by trade and/or political domination that can take a number of routes. One route is the expansion of trade to the point where distributive infrastructures extends across the entire society, connecting all communities in networks of exchange. For this expansion to occur, markets must differentiate and use money and credit. Otherwise, the system will only operate among a few large communities within a society, or at times, between two or more different societies. It is only with extended trade in free markets, culminating with advanced capitalism, that communities within and between societies have become connected by market forces on a global scale. Another route to systems of communities is political, with polity exerting administrative control over large sets of communities. Here communities are connected by patterns of domination through the mobilization of administrative, coercive, or material incentive bases of power that are

then used to regulate what occurs in communities outside of the capital city. Rarely is such domination complete because of the logistical problems of monitoring and sanctioning from remote centers of power; more typically, power is franchised by polity to state, regional, or city governmental bodies in exchange for shares of tax revenues.

Both the distributive and regulatory routes are often part of inter-societal dynamics. Geo-economic relations among societies are often built from exchange relations between central communities of two or more societies and the economic actors in these communities. Geo-political relations are much the same, most often between capital cities of two or more nations in a variety of patterns: (a) tributary (extraction of wealth by a hegemon in exchange for leaving indigenous institutions alone), (b) co-optive (use of indigenous institutions by a hegemon to regulate and control another population), (c) colonial (use of new administrative/coercive bureaucracy by hegemon), (d) colonial-cooptive (use of a new administrative/coercive bureaucracy with mostly indigenous incumbents but controlled at the top by the hegemon), or (e) militaristic (use of coercive/administrative bureaucracy of the hegemon to control members of another population).

Systems of communities within a society that are built up by distributive networks will tend to grow because economic activity attracts immigrants in search of opportunities and because markets oriented to profits generate (at least for a time) income and wealth that can be used to support more residents in new types of corporate units in institutional domains. Systems of communities constructed through patterns of domination, however, will tend to grow less rapidly, if they grow at all. Use of power does not attract immigrants (save for the coercive and administrative personnel of the state), nor does it generate dynamic economic forces that encourage actors to be entrepreneurial and create new kinds of corporate units.

In contrast, geo-economic inter-societal systems typically increase the size of all cities in the network of cities because they attract immigrants and because they generally increase the number of corporate units in economy, polity, religion, and kinship, while generating selection pressures and opportunities for new kinds of units, such as law, education, sport, and art, in emerging institutional domains. Moreover, geo-economic processes using distributive infrastructures and markets employing money and credit will tend to expand the network, pulling ever-more communities into a geo-economic system and causing them to grow.

Like intra-societal domination, geo-political domination often encourages individual and corporate actors to flee cities or, at a minimum, discourages immigration to urban centers. Moreover, since systems of domination are very expensive to implement and maintain, relying as they do on coercive and

administrative control, they often do not reach across the communities of the whole society but, instead, only strategic portions of its community system.

The above helps explain what Chase-Dunn et al. (2009) view as “rise and fall” of communities, societies, and inter-societal systems, punctuated by upward sweeps of community growth that may subsequently decline and even collapse. Both market-based and polity-based inter-societal systems of communities reveal dialectical tendencies. With respect to markets, they can collapse rapidly, especially from over-speculation in meta-markets (Braudel 1977, 1979 [1982]; Collins 1990; Turner 1995); markets can also collapse as environmental forces (climate change, resource depletion) disrupt the availability of resources in communities; or markets can collapse when a hegemon intervenes and imposes controls that decrease incentives to produce or distribute for profits. When these and other scenarios occur, cities may de-populate or even disappear completely because their residents can no longer be supported or because domination is so severe. Thus, a city or system of cities that grows for a prolonged period can decline, or even vanish as the archeological record makes so clear in every part of the globe.

With respect to polity-based inter-societal systems, domination can lead to the growth of key communities that are used to control other communities, as the administrative and coercive forces of a polity or a hegemon in an inter-societal system are built up. But, tight control of these urban areas is, as emphasized above, costly; and the costs continue to rise as this control is extended across a network of communities. The result is that the initial growth of centers for domination may be accompanied by emigration out of these centers and the network of communities that these centers seek to dominate. Emigration can be very rapid if, as was the case of the Mongols and other types of frontier invasions, extermination of populations is a military strategy for instilling fear and hence political control.

Conversely, despite their disintegrative potential, markets and distributive infrastructures generally operate to expand systems of communities within and between societies; and they also generate economic surplus that can be taxed by polity or used by non-political actors to innovate and create new kinds of corporate units in new institutional domains – up to the point that productivity and/or market oscillations reduce the economic surplus. In contrast, domination as the force behind systems of communities within and between societies will selectively and strategically connect only some communities because of the high costs of coercive and administrative bases of power. These costs tend to rise, with the result that the hold of polity or inter-societal hegemon on communities becomes increasingly difficult to sustain.



## *Structural Integration of Communities*

The above considerations draw attention to the mechanisms by which a system of communities is structurally and culturally integrated; in turn, the dynamics of integration of a community system have large effects of societal dynamics. Let me first focus on structural integration.

The pattern of domination or political control often determines the dynamics of a system of communities. The more a system of communities is part of a geo-political inter-societal system, the more likely is domination as a mechanism to be used to integrate the system. Conversely, the less the system is tied into a geo-political inter-societal system, the more likely is some power to be franchised to regional states, clusters of counties within a regional state, and town/city governments. Societies vary enormously in terms of the degree to which power is decentralized from the national state. In the United States, for example, there is considerable decentralization to states, counties, and cities, whereas in most European societies, more power and control resides in the national state. The size of a society has some effects on the amount of decentralization, although the old Soviet Union and contemporary China evidence large societies with highly centralized power and control lodged in the state. Still, more than is commonly realized, both the old Soviet Union and contemporary China have delegated many coordination control functions to regional and city governments, especially because of the ethnic diversity in their territories.

The more hierarchical is the system of power across a society, with the national government regulating institutional activities within and between communities, the greater is the cost of regulation; and in larger societies, the more inefficient is the system of domination. If the centralized administrative bureaucracy of the state (backed up by a centrally controlled coercive force) is used to integrate a system of communities, resources will tend to flow up the hierarchy of power to sustain the administrative and coercive bases of control (and corruption), and reliance on material incentive bases of control (outside of patronage and corruption) will decline. Control will generally extend across all institutional domains, resulting in a more hierarchical structure for corporate units in these domains. Markets using money and credit will be less dynamic because of tight administrative regulation that often discourages innovation and entrepreneurship. If, however, the system is only loosely governed by the state, differentiation among communities will increase, resources will circulate in regional networks of communities, and if markets using money exist, the system of communities will be more innovative, thereby generating more wealth and attracting immigrants in search of opportunities.



Structural inclusion is also an important form of structural integration. Communities are embedded in societies and inter-societal systems. There can be mediating geographical units, such as regional governments and states, in which communities are also nested. Large cities will be less influenced by these mediating levels of geo-political organization, whereas smaller communities will be more dependent upon the resources that mediating governmental agents can provide. Large urban areas are often in conflict with the central state because the latter usually seeks to use larger urban areas as sources of tax revenues and as means for realizing political goals, while the former attempt to sustain some autonomy from both the extractive and regulatory efforts of polity. The degree of success of large cities in their efforts is a dual function of their ability to control valued resources and the weakness of the central polity.

When a community or system of communities is also embedded in inter-societal systems, their dynamics are influenced by ratio of geo-economic to geo-political embeddedness. When cities or systems of cities are part of geo-economic inter-societal systems, they generally have more autonomy from their central governments; and if they are part of a system of “world cities,” they will evidence dynamic markets that generate both wealth and large inequalities. Moreover, these market forces will increase the likelihood that the system of communities will expand over time, as markets link ever-more communities together in patterns of trade. Furthermore, the distributive infrastructures maintaining the system can also become the conduits for migrations across societal borders to communities in the geo-economic system. In contrast, when cities or system of communities are part of a geo-political formation, their markets will be less dynamic; and the system will be less extensive because of the high costs and logistical loads on hegemon to control institutional activities in communities. Less wealth will be generated in communities, unless communities are built to extract raw and valuable resources destined toward the communities of the hegemon, but in all cases, a greater proportion of the wealth will be extracted by the hegemon.

In societies where regional geo-spatial formations are strong vis-à-vis the central government of a society, the tensions between the two levels of geographical structure in which communities are embedded can lead to efforts by regional governments to gain more autonomy and, in some cases, to dominate the central state through coercive activity, particularly if there is a high consolidation of memberships in categoric units like ethnicity and religion with residence in regional and community formations in a society. In such cases, then, the embedding works against integration and, in fact, increases the disintegrative pressures in a society.

Structural overlap of institutions and communities can also serve as an integrative force among communities. Society-wide institutional domains overlap with communities, which increase the likelihood that positions in corporate units will intersect with neighborhoods in communities and with memberships in categoric unit members. If communities carry a similar configuration of institutional domains and corporate units in these domains, this structural overlap will be repeated across communities, thereby increasing the level of intersection of parameters and rates of interaction by members of categoric units – thus providing an integrative basis for societal systems. For example, if schools, churches, workplaces, sport facilities, art museums, courthouses, cities halls, and other corporate units of institutional domains overlap with communities to the *same* degree, this overlap increases the likelihood that diverse categories of individuals will be incumbent in many of the same corporate units and will not only interact but also receive converging shares of the resources that these units distribute. This more equal distribution of valued resources and the higher rates of interaction among members of diverse categoric units will increase integration in societies. In contrast, if memberships in categoric units do not allow full participation in corporate units because of neighborhood segregation or because of discrimination in schools, churches, or sports facilities, then this pattern of overlap increases the disintegrative pressures in a society.

As emphasized above, interdependence based upon exchanges of resources as opposed to imposition of power is generally more integrative in the long run. Use of power can integrate a system of cities in the short run, but over time the logistical loads and costs of maintaining political control, especially control based upon the use of administrative and coercive bases of power, will cause the system to unravel. Although interdependencies built on exchange are always somewhat more chaotic, they will generally last longer than those built on domination. Moreover, as I have stressed, market forces will typically extend interdependencies across a larger set of communities, including communities in other societies, along several dimensions. One is the search for profits in new markets in additional communities. Another is the effort to extract additional resources from new communities. Still another is the mobility of individuals across communities via distributive infrastructure and labor markets. These kinds of market-driven bases of interdependence can generate tensions and conflicts in the short-run, but they also will build up networks of connections among a larger set of communities in the long-run, which then provide a more flexible and sustainable basis of integration among communities and the more inclusive society.

Structural mobility as an integrative mechanism or the movement of individuals, families, and corporate units across communities inevitably generates tensions. Those who come into a community will generally disrupt the bal-

ances of power, redistribute corporate units in several institutional domains (e.g., churches, businesses, families), and alter the distribution of individuals across categoric units (e.g., units based on ethnicity and religion). For example, Mexican immigration into the United States is highly threatening to European- and African-origin ethnics, but in the longer run, communities will evidence more intersection of parameters that increases rates of interaction among diverse members of categoric units in all positions within the divisions of labor in corporate units in ever-more institutional domains – all of which will provide a strong basis of integration at the societal level. If, however, migrations produce regional- or community-based enclaves for devalued members of categoric units, then structural mobility will produce disintegrative pressures in both the short- and long-run; and these pressures will grow if there is consolidation of parameters of immigrants with lower social class position and access to corporate units in many institutional domains. Thus, the key process is whether or not mobility across neighborhoods and corporate units within domains is possible after the initial migration into a community. If mobility increases intersections of corporate and categoric units, it will promote integration at the societal-level, whereas if mobility is arrested because of discrimination and leads to consolidation of categoric units with particular positions and places in corporate units, the resulting tensions and conflicts are more likely to erode societal-level integration.

Structural segregation can promote some degree of integration, if potentially hostile subpopulations are kept apart in different regions or in neighborhood ghettos. Over the long run, however, segregation will be maintained by discrimination against members of categoric units, thereby consolidating categoric unit parameters with those for class and with access to institutional domains and the resource-giving corporate units in these domains. Neighborhood ghettos can prove integrative if they give migrants a safe-haven upon their arrival, but again the key is the ability to be mobile after the initial period of adjustment to a new community and/or society. If ghettos are the end point of migration and persist across generations, they will consolidate parameters, reduce rates of intersection and interaction among diverse categoric units, and thereby generate tensions and points of conflict that will put disintegrative pressures on a society.

Segmentation is an important integrative mechanism among communities. When communities have segmented and are, in essence, carbon (or close to) copies of each other, they will reveal the similar distributions of differentiated institutional domains and corporate units in these domains, similar distributions of individuals in various categoric units and consolidations or intersections of members in these units, and similar distribution of resources as these lead to the formation of stratification systems. Whether the communities be village structures of horticulturalists or suburban communities

surrounding a core city in a post-industrial society, this convergence of structure gives individuals similar experiences, world views, and as I suggest shortly, cultures. As a result, members of a society will converge in their participation in corporate units in differentiated domains and in their contacts with members of diverse categoric units. Segmentation thus promotes structural equivalence that, in turn, promotes integration.

Segmentation also operates for communities that are differentiated because, even as diverse *types* of communities evolve in a society, each type will be much the same and generate structural equivalences. Thus, rural communities, industrial towns, big core cities, suburbs around core cities, cities devoted to providing services, and exurban communities – to name some of the basic types in post-industrial societies – are each similar in their structure and culture. Moreover, residents in any one type of city are structurally equivalent in their relations to all other types of communities, with this equivalence reinforcing the equivalences caused by living in the same type of community. And, if rates of geographical mobility are high, individuals and families may have experienced several types of communities, giving them equivalent experiences that furthers integration. Moreover, in media societies, it becomes possible to view other types of communities, with individuals once again having similar exposure to communities that they have never experienced first-hand. These segmentation dynamics are not confined to a society; indeed, the community structures of various types of societies converge. A suburb in China looks very much like one in the United States, especially when American developers build them. Thus, trade and exchange of goods and services also includes models of community organization that increase the structural equivalence among individuals in different societies.

Segmentation can, however, work against integration under certain conditions. When there are high levels of stratification within communities and inequalities in class are consolidated with categoric unit memberships, and particularly those categoric units that have organizational bases (e.g., ethnic and religious), tension and conflict within communities may be severe. And, if discrimination denies members of devalued categoric units access to neighborhoods and corporate units in resource-giving institutional domains like economy, education, and health care, tensions and conflict will be more severe. And, under these conditions, segmentation of this basic structure serves to replicate this tension-generating structure and escalate the conflict potential in each community. Indeed, as is often the case, when conflict erupts in one community, it often follows very rapidly in other communities revealing the same basic structure; and as conflict cascades across communities of a given type, it generates intense disintegrative pressures on the societal-system.

Thus, communities are one of the most important integrative forces of societal and even inter-societal systems. Since activities of individuals in corporate units in institutional domains and in various categoric units must be conducted in geographical space, this anchorage of all activity in community formations activates all of the structural mechanisms of integration, first outlined in Chap.4 (see Table 4.2) and subsequently discussed in the last two chapters. The structure of the system of communities will be greatly influenced by *which* integrative mechanisms are *most* operative; and in turn, just how communities are integrated has significant effects on societal-level integration.

### ***Cultural Integration of Communities***

The culture of a community is determined by the ideologies of the institutional domains within its borders, the subcultures among members of categoric units, and the content of broader societal-level texts, technologies, values, meta-ideologies, and ideologies. These elements, in turn, constrain the types of normative systems that organize corporate units within domains and the lifestyles of subcultures defined by parameters marking categoric unit membership. As a general rule, when there is structural equivalence in the organization of communities and community systems, cultural equivalence follows, unless there is something about the location of a community, such as isolation or unique demographics that cause it to develop its own culture.

When the institutional domains of communities are similar and organize daily life in converging patterns, individuals will be exposed to the same configuration of ideologies in these domains – thus generating cultural equivalence. If the corporate units within domains are structured in the same way and are distributed in the same proportions within domains across different communities, then the configuration of institutional ideologies and corporate-unit norms will generate similar cultures within the corporate units within institutional domains – thus increasing cultural equivalence. If communities have similar proportions of those institutional domains whose ideologies dominate the meta-ideology, then individuals will again be more culturally equivalent. If the distribution of categoric units, including class, is the same and the patterns of consolidation, intersection, and penetration converge within communities, then class and other bases for subcultural formation will be the same across communities. Thus, even as communities reveal internal cultural differentiation, the general patterns of cultural differentiation may converge and create cultural equivalences across communities that, in turn, provide a cultural basis integration of community systems and, by extension, the societal system as a whole and, potentially, inter-societal systems.

Yet, some patterns of cultural equivalence are more integrative than others. If different types of communities have radically different cultures because of their distribution of institutional domains and categoric units, they may be so culturally different from other communities that tensions across the system of communities may surface. For example, the culture of a rural community is very different than that evident in an industrial, suburban, or service-oriented core city. Each of these types may have common cultures, but the differences in the cultures of each type may be sufficiently great as to cause integrative problems. The problems increase when one form of community is becoming dominant over other forms, as is often the case, for example, for rural communities during industrialization and suburbanization.

Another pattern of cultural differentiation is internal to communities and if replicated in other communities, it works against integration within and between communities. High levels of stratification create large differences in class cultures that can erupt into conflict; and if these class differences are consolidated with categoric units and the cultures of their members, then cultural differences will be even greater and lead to more intense conflict. And, if these cultural differences are the outcome of, and markers for, discrimination against particular classes and categories of persons that deny access to corporate units in resource-giving institutional domains, then there is added fuel for cultural differences to become the basis for either episodic and/or organized conflict. And, when such conflict erupts in one community, it is likely to emerge in similar communities since the deprivations of subordinates will be pretty much the same. Conflict in one community will thus arouse the same negative emotions among structurally equivalent categories of persons in other communities, leading them to pursue conflict alternatives. And, as the conflict spreads and reinforces cultural divisions, it erodes the cultural integration of not only the system of communities but also the more inclusive societal formation in which these communities are nested.

Other bases for cultural integration or disintegration reside in the distribution of societal-level elements of culture. If there is consensus over values and meta-ideologies, individuals in corporate units, including community corporate units and systems of such units, will hold a common culture, which provides a powerful basis for cultural integration of a society. If, however, subcultures forming categoric units hold different values and reject or hold a different meta-ideology (say, one built more from the symbolic media of religion rather than the media of economy), and if this subculture is large or at least large within key communities, then cultural integration decreases, and indeed, cultural conflicts can evolve into organized conflicts among members of different categoric units.

If reproductive corporate units, such as families and schools, have socialized individuals into a core of common texts, then individuals will share this element of culture, thereby promoting integration of a society. However, if different communities instill varying texts – for example, the communities of the north and south before the American Civil War – these cultural differences can become a focal point for conflict mobilization.

The distribution of technology also generates cultural differences. Knowledge about how to manipulate the environment is not equally distributed; indeed, school systems, research and development arms of universities and businesses, positions in the division of labor of most corporate units, and other structural points of differentiation assure that knowledge in general and technology in particular are unequally distributed. These same divisions also cause broader cultural texts and interpretations of ideologies and meta-ideologies to be differentially distributed as well. The end result is that those holding high and low levels of technology will have diverging world views and will interpret texts, values, ideologies, meta-ideologies, and norms differently, and especially so if technological knowledge determines access to specific types of corporate units (and their resources) in institutional domains. For example, there is a growing divide in some post-industrial societies between the “high” and “low” tech labor force which reinforces class divisions and, moreover, increases inequalities of income, prestige, and power in such societies. Thus, the distribution of technology (a form of the symbolic media of learning and knowledge) is yet another valued resource that is unequally distributed, and one that is becoming increasingly important in stratification dynamics of post-industrial societies. Thus, knowledge, per se, is a valuable resource that is unequally distributed in complex societies but technological knowledge is even more valuable and even more unequally distributed in ways that cause cultural conflicts that reinforce structural tensions in the stratification system of a society. The greater these cultural divides become, the more intense are disintegrative pressures on societal and even inter-societal systems.

## **Elementary Principles on Societal Dynamics**

The elementary, though still complex, principles below focus on the conditions increasing the (a) formation, (b) adaptability, and (c) disintegrative potential of societal systems. These three dimensions of societies are influenced by the evolution of, and modes of integration among, institutional domains, systems of stratification, community formations, and inter-societal systems. Thus, many of the elements in the principles enumerated below



can be seen in earlier propositions, with those on inter-societal relations to be found in the next chapter. For the present, let me simply enumerate the principles that can be extracted from the long discussion in this chapter.

13. The level of societal formation is a positive function of the capacity of a population to demarcate and control territorial boundaries, with this capacity being a positive function of
  - A. The degree to which the four bases of power are consolidated by polity
  - B. The level of production and distribution within the economy
  - C. The efficiency of tax collection by polity
  - D. The level of coercive power of polity relative to neighboring polities and potential geo-economic and/or geo-political hegemons
  - E. The level of consistency among and consensus over generalized value premises, ideologies of institutional domains, and meta-ideologies legitimating polity and serving as its base of symbolic power
  - F. The level of structural and cultural integration among differentiated institutional domains, classes in the stratification system, and communities, with
    1. Inter-institutional integration being a positive and multiplicative function of
      - a. The conditions listed in 13-E above
      - b. The degree of differentiation of symbolic media within institutional domains and their rate and extent of circulation across institutional domains
      - c. The level of differentiation of distributive infrastructures and markets using money and credit to distribute resources within and between institutional domains and across community formations
      - d. The extent to which domination by polity revolves around the use of material incentives and markets, moderate levels of administration, and strategic use of coercion
      - e. The degree of autonomy of positivistic legal systems capable of developing universalistic laws, enforcement agencies, and adjudicative structures
      - f. The degree of intersection among categoric units with divisions of labor of corporate units in institutional domains and class positions in the stratification system
      - g. The rate of mobility of individuals across corporate units in institutional domains
      - h. The ratio of segmentation to differentiation among types of community structures creating structural and cultural equivalences



2. Integration of the stratification system being a positive function of either very high or very low degrees of stratification, with
  - a. High degrees of stratification being integrated through domination by polity and religion forming society-wide hierarchies
  - b. Low degrees of stratification being integrated by
    1. High rates of inter-class mobility
    2. High levels of intersection among categoric units
    3. High levels of penetration of intersections of categoric-unit memberships to all types of corporate units in diverse institutional domains
    4. High rates of circulation of symbolic media across institutional domains
    5. Democratic political formations relying upon a high ratio of symbolic/material incentives to administrative/coercive bases of power
    6. Consensus over egalitarian value premises, coupled with meta-ideologies revealing some tenets emphasizing equal opportunities for access to resource-giving corporate units in diverse institutional domains
3. Integration of community systems being a positive function of
  - a. The degree to which domination by central polity is mediated by intervening levels of political control and governance
  - b. The extent to which linkages among communities are built from market processes and distributive infrastructures designed to facilitate market transactions
  - c. High rates of inter-community mobility among members of diverse categoric units
  - d. Intersection of categoric-unit memberships with the successive penetration of these intersections through all types of community formations
  - e. The degree to which overlaps with institutional domains are equivalent across communities which, in turn, is a positive function of segmentation of community formations and, if differentiation among communities exists, segmentation of relatively few general types of communities
  - f. The degree of cultural equivalence arising from structural equivalences among communities such that meta-ideologies and ideologies of institutional domains are similar across communities

- g. The degree to which the society-wide culture composed of texts, technologies, and value premises penetrates community formations and generates cultural equivalences
14. The persistence and adaptability of societal formations to their environments are a positive function of the degree of institutional differentiation and integration within and between institutional domains, with adaptability being a positive and multiplicative function of
    - A. The degree of differentiation and autonomy between polity and religion as well as between polity and a positivistic system of law
    - B. The degree to which consolidation of power by polity is biased toward the symbolic and material incentive bases and the level of differentiation of an arena of politics for absorbing disputes
    - C. The level of development of infrastructures for expanding markets using money and credit, as well as the degree of oversight over-meta-markets
    - D. The level of production and rate of technological innovation driving production
    - E. the conditions of integration for institutional domains, stratification, and community listed under 13-F-1(a-f), 2(b), 3(a-g) above increasing adaptability
  15. The level of disintegrative potential in a societal formation is a positive function of the intensity and violence of conflict generated by internal stratification and geo-political involvements in inter-societal systems, while being a negative function of
    - A. The conditions of integration for institutional domains, stratification, and community listed under 13F-1(a-f), 2(b), 3(a-g) above
    - B. The number of symmetrical and non-exploitive geo-economic relations in inter-societal systems
    - C. The degree of consistency among and consensus over society-wide value-premises, institutional ideologies, and meta-ideologies

## Conclusion

I suspect that some would criticize my emphasis on integration in this chapter, but we need a label for the forces that bind institutional, stratification, and communities together or, conversely, pull them apart. A continuum with integration-disintegration at its poles seems to me still the best way to talk

about these macro-level sociocultural formations, despite their “functionalist” roots. The evolution of human societies has involved the growth of complexity, and the dynamics of this complexity inhere, to a great extent, in how macro-level forces push actors to find integrative solutions to this complexity or, as is always the case in the long run, to fail to find solutions. In the end, all social formations, and certainly societal formations, disintegrate but there is also negative entropy for a time, and this latter facet of societal evolution is the result of actors’ responses to selection pressures that allowed them to integrate, for a time, differentiated institutions, strata, and communities in ways that stave off societal disintegration.

Disintegration is most evident at the societal level because, once a society loses control over its territory, it has lost a key defining feature of all societies. But, in most cases, the institutional domains, systems of inequality, and networks among communities persist long after a society has “died” in this sense. Individuals must live in the units of meso-level structures and then integrate these into macro-level sociocultural formations; and thus, as societies crumble, they initially do so when they cannot sustain their territorial integrity; and if they disintegrate further, then the modes of integrating institutions, social classes, and communities are the next to fall. And, if these fully disintegrate, then destruction of persons and, hence, the population are not far behind. At times, ecological or geo-political forces can simply wipe out a population, taking not only their lives but their sociocultural formations with devastating speed. Most of the time, however, elements of domains, classes, and communities survive, often becoming the sociocultural protoplasm for building up new macro-level formations—new corporate units within domains, new communities, and new patterns of inequality and stratification, and finally, new societal and perhaps inter-societal formations.

We have only one domain of the macro-social realm – the properties and dynamics of inter-societal systems – to explore before summing up the principles of the macro universe. I have consistently mentioned geo-political and geo-economic processes, but now a more systematic analysis of these dynamics is needed. Today, there has been a very rapid growth in scholarship on “world system” and “globalization” processes.<sup>3</sup> Much of this work focuses on more recent historical periods, especially the rise of global capitalism. But, as Christopher Chase-Dunn has consistently emphasized,

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<sup>3</sup>See Amin et al. (1982); Arrighi (1994, 1999); Boswell and Chase-Dunn (2000); Chase-Dunn (1998); Chase-Dunn and Hall (1997); Frank (1980); Shannon (1996); Wallerstein (1974).

“world systems” or what I term inter-societal systems have existed since bands and simple communities organizing human endeavors have come into contact, either through conflict or trade (Chase-Dunn and Mann 1998). Thus, the principles that I develop in the next chapter may seem too abstract for contemporary scholars most concerned with capitalism – its growth and what is often (hopefully) prophesized, its collapse and rise of democratic socialism. This implicit ideological agenda distorts much analysis in my view, but more importantly, it narrows the focus to capitalism as a geo-economic formation. But, human societies have always developed geo-economic and geo-political formations since their first origins, and we need a more abstract vocabulary to talk about the dynamics of these formations in *all* times and in *all* places in history, not just over the last century or even the last several centuries. So, I am sure that what I have to say in the next chapter will disappoint contemporary world systems theorists, but since I am trying to develop a set of principles for all macrodynamic processes, I must draw what I can from the current literature but tailor its application to my purposes which, granted, are no longer very mainstream – despite the desperate need for sociology to codify its knowledge into abstract principles.



## Chapter 7

# The Dynamics of Inter-Societal Systems

Even though there were less than ten million people on earth for the first 185,000 years of human existence, hunter-gatherers from different sets of bands would inevitably make contact; and if this contact persisted for a time, then these early relations constituted the first inter-societal systems. The label, *inter-societal* system, connotes that it is societies as a whole that make contact and form relations; and such may have been the case when societies were very small. But even in these early contacts, it was actors within institutional domains that were forging the relations that define an inter-societal system. There can be many varieties of relationships and networks emerging among actors in key institutional domains. For example, small societies may exchange women in marriage, thus indicating that it is actors in the respective kinship domains that are forming relations. Similarly, when religion spreads from one society to another, it is actors operating within the religious domain that are the core of the inter-societal system. When students migrate from one society to another for education, the educational domain is the core of this inter-societal system. When teams from different countries compete in sports, this too is an inter-societal system created by the institutional domains of sport in each society. There can also be a demographic dimension to inter-societal systems, as when members of one population migrate to another; but typically, there is a “reason” for the migration – political, kinship, religion, or economic – and this reason almost always involves the structure and culture of one or more institutional domains. Inter-societal systems can also involve more purely cultural relations, as is the case when individuals from the same ethnic subpopulation or some other categoric designation like tribe or religion become partitioned in two separate societies and, yet, still maintain contact.

Yet, despite the varieties of institutional and demographic bases for inter-societal systems, the two most frequent and important are economic and political, with religion and kinship at times becoming equally significant.

When actors in the respective economies of two or more societies engage in exchange, a geo-economic inter-societal system is created, whereas when actors from polity form alliances or, alternatively, when they go to war, a geo-political inter-societal system is being forged. In this chapter, I will focus on the dynamics of these two types of inter-societal systems with the recognition that more conceptual work needs to be done on other types of inter-societal systems when actors from religious, kinship, educational, or virtually any domain in two or more societies develop social relations.

Moreover, different institutional bases for an inter-societal system almost always exist even when relations among economic or political domains dominate. Economic and political relations among actors in societies generate networks that facilitate the emergence of additional networks among actors in non-economic and non-political institutional domains – religion, kinship, education, science, health, sport, or arts. Indeed, as a general proposition, the more institutional domains involved in an inter-societal system, the more dense are the networks connecting actors and the more enduring is the system, although economic or political exploitation of one society by another makes this generalization highly conditional because of the tensions and potential for conflict that abusive political domination or economic exploitation inevitably generates in the long run. Again, it is what occurs in the respective economies and polities of the societies that determines the dynamics of inter-societal systems.

Geo-political and geo-economic inter-societal systems are not, of course, mutually exclusive. Geo-political empires created by alliances or by conquest almost always involve exchanges of resources and, thus, also evidence a geo-economic structure. Conversely, a geo-economic empire often involves geo-political actions, particularly if exchange relations among societies are exploitive and conducted under unfavorable rates of exchange. Typically, power is required to sustain these unfavorable exchanges. Geo-economic relations are, therefore, piggy-backed onto geo-political inter-societal systems, and vice versa.

As we will see, like any systemic set of relations, modes of integration of inter-societal systems influence their dynamics. There are, in reality, only a limited number of ways that complex systems can be integrated, whether this integration is intra- or inter-societal. One mode of integration is through the use of power, but the bases of power have large effects on the nature of the integration. If coercive and administrative bases are used, power-use translates into domination of one society by another, whereas if material incentives are used by the more powerful society (to encourage economic and political actors to conform) and indigenous institutional domains (including polity) are left largely intact, domination is less dramatic.

Another mode of integration is through exchange of resources, with the nature of the exchange being a critical variable. If the exchange is exploitive, with the more dominant society securing resources at low costs, then administrative-coercive political domination is likely, whether by indigenous political elites who have been co-opted by a foreign power or more directly by the coercive-administrative structure of the dominant society. If, however, the exchange is purely economic and mutually beneficial to the exchange partners, then this mutual dependence reduces the use of power to sustain the inter-societal system; and indeed, such systems often piggy-back political alliances and supranational political structures to regulate exchanges. Still another mode of integration is cultural – language, values, institutional ideologies, and meta-ideologies. With a common culture, economic and political actors are constrained by these cultural systems and, as a result, actors are more likely to negotiate economic and political relations. And a final basic mode of integration is through embedding whereby an inter-societal system is built from smaller societies being lodged inside larger societies. Embedding creates clearer lines of authority and flows of resources; and as long as the hierarchical relations among societies are not highly exploitive and do not involve too much consolidation of power in the coercive and administrative bases of the more inclusive society, embedding can effectively integrate a number of smaller societies and, at times, large ones into an inter-societal system.

## **Geo-Political Inter-Societal Systems**

### ***Variations in Geo-Political Formations***

Historically, population growth has set into motion selection pressures from production, distribution, and regulation; and as actors have responded to these pressures, the size, scale, and complexity of societies have increased. Herbert Spencer (1874–1896) was the first to recognize that these processes eventually lead to inter-societal selection; and he coined the famous phrase “survival of the fittest” to underscore this reality. Although the competition can take many forms, the most significant for the evolution of human societies has been geo-political. When societies go to war, this can be seen as Darwinian competition for resources, such as territorial space, human labor, material wealth and capital, or just about any resource that societies possess. Typically, the society that is more productive, larger, and better organized will win wars; and while this Darwinian selection does not always mean



that the population in the conquered society dies out, the political sovereignty of the loser is lost or compromised. In either case, the emerging inter-societal system will become more complex, as political authority is consolidated across a larger territory and as markets and distributive infrastructures are developed to facilitate economic exchange (even exploitive exchange) and movement of resources, persons, and information about the new territorial expanse. If a conquering society absorbs another, then the warring societies become one, whereas if they maintain some degree of autonomy from each other, then a geo-political inter-societal system emerges; and depending upon its basis of integration, it will persist for varying periods of time – typically rather short periods, although the Roman Empire lasted centuries and so it is possible for geo-political empires to endure for considerable periods of time.

Geo-political formations need not, however, be large. Settled hunter-gatherers, horticulturalists (and variants such as pastoral or herding societies), and small agrarian societies often form geo-political alliance and, equally often, engage in warfare that leads to a new and larger society or a geo-political inter-societal system. Typically, these kinds of inter-societal systems are small, although the Mongolian empire, which included what is today much of the Middle East and China, was the largest empire ever created by the amount of contiguous territory conquered,<sup>1</sup> and yet, the Mongols were not advanced economically. Similarly, the Meso and South American empires, such as those among the Inca and Aztecs, were created by horticulturalists without the aid of the wheel (and carts) and advanced metallurgy for weapon-making. As long as there was sufficient economic surplus or access to the surplus of those conquered, relatively low-technology societies can create geo-political empires using superior levels of coercive power through military organization. For the Mongols, this superior coercive power involved quick-strike tactics of warriors on horseback, which allowed them to conquer much larger and more productive societies, although they never could penetrate a well-organized agrarian society like Egypt, even though it was long past its peak power. The Mongolian empire could not last long, however, given the comparatively small size of the population in Mongolia, but the Mongols demonstrated how fast empires can form with high levels of coercive power. Similarly, the empires of Meso and South America were possible by superior military organization of key city-states that could conquer less-organized city-states.

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<sup>1</sup>The British Empire was larger, but not composed of contiguous territories.

Given the wide diversity of geo-political formations that have existed in human history, developing abstract principles on how their dynamics is difficult. Still, at the most abstract level of observation, there are some general patterns in the historical record. It is these patterns that will occupy my attention, but obviously, the unique and contingent historical details of particular geo-political formations require a different kind of analysis.

### ***Conditions of Geo-Political Mobilization***

Societies engage in geo-political competition and/or conflict for a number of interrelated reasons. One reason is that a society simply runs out of territory to sustain its population and begins to bump into the territories claimed by other societies. Indeed, if there is a prime force in the initial evolution of geo-political formations, it is population growth that leads a society to intensify resource extraction and production, often to the point of severe environmental degradation that begins to limit the resource base of a population (Carneiro 1967; Chase-Dunn and Hall 1997). Thus, population growth as it sets into motion increased production and regulation through polity also sets the stage for geo-political tensions and ultimately conflicts that, in turn, cause the formation of inter-societal systems revolving around political domination of one society by another. For, as key economic and political actors feel the selection pressures generated by circumscription (or presence of other societies limiting geographical expansion), depletion of indigenous resources, and environmental degradation, they often seek the move into more fertile territories where they confront members of another society. To do so, they must consolidate power around its coercive and administrative bases, and then mobilize for conflict.

If a society is successful in war with another, an inter-societal system emerges, but this system built upon domination by the winner in warfare. Domination can take many forms. The most complete form of domination comes when the winning society absorbs the conquered society, eliminating the latter as a sovereign state controlling territory. Another form of domination involves some form of tributary relationship in which the conquered society must give up some portion of resources in exchange for maintaining a degree of sovereignty and control of its territories. A related but less punitive form of domination is cooptation in which the institutional domains of the conquered society are sustained, but with the requirement that economic and political actors must pay taxes to the dominant society. A more benign form of domination uses superior coercive power as a threat to form

asymmetrical political alliances that allow the dominant society to forge unfavorable economic exchanges with the dominated society, typically extraction of needed raw resources. These diverse forms of domination all increase logistical loads on polity to monitor and regulate the actions of actors in the dominated society, but they do so to varying degrees. Conquest and coercive control of territories are always costly, even as the sovereignty of the loser in war is taken away, because conquered peoples rarely lose their cultural and geographical identity and, hence, are always resentful, forcing costly mobilization of coercive and administrative power by the conquering society. Each of the other forms of domination successively requires less reliance on the coercive-administrative bases of power. These relations are delineated in Fig. 7.1

As Fig. 7.1 outlines, population growth under conditions of circumscription – that is, other populations organized into societal systems are positioned at territorial borders – generates selection pressures for increased production which, in turn, increases the economic surplus to support the differentiation of an autonomous polity. If production causes resource depletion and environmental degradation, then polity is under selection pressures to expand territories to secure needed resources; and under these conditions, polity will consolidate power along its coercive-administrative bases. Once the consolidation of power is biased in this direction, decision making generally is slanted toward warfare with neighboring societies. Success in war will increase access to needed resources, but it also sets into motion dynamics that drain resources from polity. As the size of territories expands with success in warfare, logistical loads revolving around controlling the larger territory with coercive-administrative bases of power increase. Similarly, as conquered populations resent their loss of sovereignty, they begin to pose internal threats to polity, and especially so when domination revolves around heavy use of the coercive and administrative bases of power. These pressures decline, however, when domination is more co-optive than coercive and when the sovereignty of the dominated society is retained. Yet, as the direct and reverse causal arrows feeding into and out of logistical loads emphasize, dominant societies can often become locked into a self-escalating cycle of relying on coercive-administrative control as logistical loads increase; and at some point these loads become too great. Moreover, as the size of territories increases and, hence, as the diversity and size of resentful populations increases, logistical loads accelerate to a point of overload. Additionally, as the size of territories grows, the likelihood of circumscription increases as does the likelihood of confrontation with another powerful society increases, often leading to a “show-down” war that increases logistical loads even more.

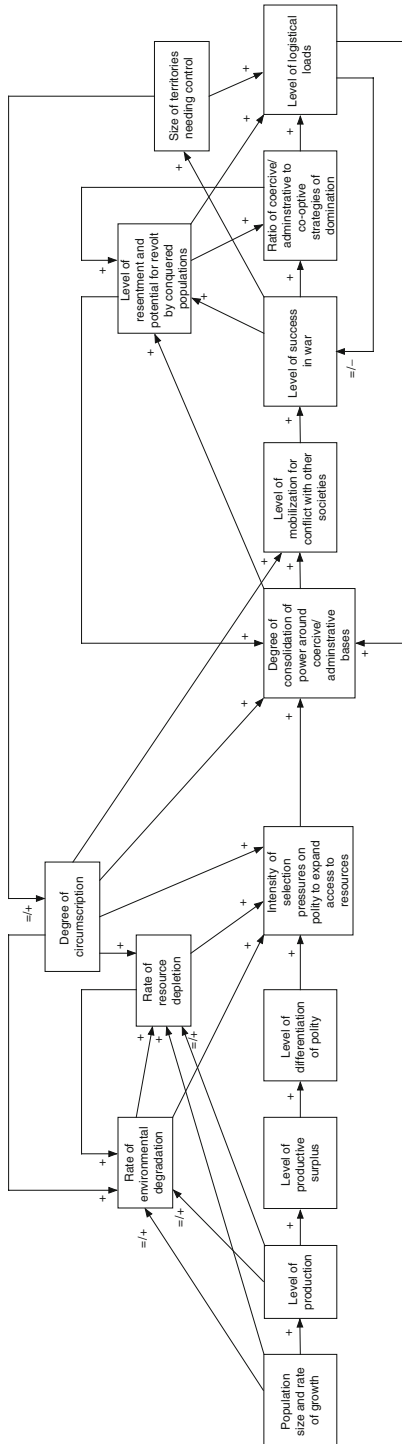


Fig. 7.1 Population growth, production, polity, and territorial expansion

Geo-political conflicts are often initiated because of cultural differences between societies, with key actors in institutional domains perceiving members of another society as potentially harmful and dangerous – as is the case when religious leaders proclaim the religion of another society to be blasphemous or when political and economic leaders believe that the ideologies of the polity and economy of another society are dangerous and threatening. When all of these conditions exist, geo-political engagement is inevitable because other societies are perceived, whether accurately or not, as an external threat; and as this sense of threat increases, polity becomes more centralized and begins to divert resources to building up its coercive base by expanding its military. Oftentimes, external threats are manufactured by polity and potentially other key actors in institutional domains like religion in order to legitimate efforts to centralize power and consolidate it around the administrative and coercive bases of power. Internal threats also cause polity to centralize power on these two bases to manage the potential threat, but equally often, external threats are emphasized in order to mobilize the symbolic bases of power to legitimate mobilization of the coercive base, while distracting and deflecting the tensions among internal actors away from inequalities and injustices within a society. This kind of deflection of attention outward is more effective when polity has a symbolic base of power that bestows legitimacy, but ironically, it is polities that are losing their basis of legitimization that are often the most likely to engage in geo-political actions as a means for quieting internal threats. This strategy only works as long as polity is successful in its geo-political activities (Weber 1922 [1968]; Skocpol 1979); and when polity loses prestige or coercive conflicts in the inter-societal system, de-legitimization can be rapid and invite internal conflicts. These dynamics are outlined in Fig. 7.2.

Threat from either internal or external sources will cause the consolidation and centralization of power around its coercive-administrative base. Polity will also seek to mobilize its symbolic base of power around the need to defend members of a society from “enemies.” This ideological mobilization has a negative effect on the level of counter-ideological mobilization among parties engaged in internal conflict and, for a time, may reduce the threat from these parties, while legitimating polity in its efforts to centralize power and mobilize for external conflict. Success in conflict becomes more likely with consolidation and mobilization of coercive power, although success is determined by additional factors (as I outline below). This very success increases logistical loads on polity, however. Whether from increasing size of territories or diversity of conquered peoples, logistical loads mount and increase the likelihood of failure to win wars and/or control territories which, as the long reverse causal arrows out of this variable back to internal conflict and counter-ideological

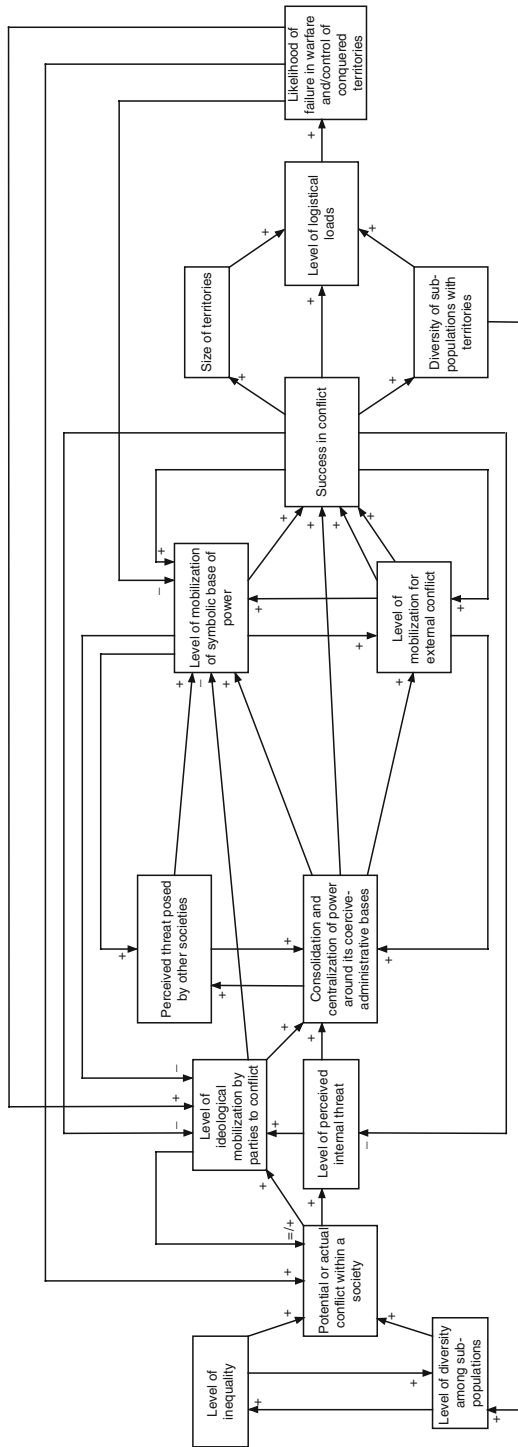


Fig. 7.2 External and internal threat and the mobilization for territorial expansion

mobilization denote, erodes the symbolic base of power and de-legitimizes polity. With loss of its symbolic base of power, polity will face the likelihood of internal conflict which, in turn, dramatically increases the likelihood of failure in the external inter-societal system.

### *Conditions of Territorial Expansion*

The conditions enumerated above increasing the mobilization of coercive power in response to selection pressures from population growth and perceived threats are one set of conditions pushing polity toward conflict with other societies. Another condition increasing the likelihood of conflict with other societies is the degree to which economic actors engaged in other societies are dependent upon polity for “franchises” and for backup from polity’s coercive capacities to support the activities of these economic actors (Weber 1922 [1968]). And a final condition, again as noted above, is the pressures on polity from a weak symbolic base of power that threatens de-legitimization that, for a time at least, can be forestalled by conflict with an external enemy. Yet, even under these conditions of mobilization of power for conflict, initiating conflict will typically not occur unless several additional conditions exist.

One of these conditions is perceptions by political actors of productive advantages over potential adversaries (Collins 1986). Another condition is the perception of coercive advantages along several dimensions, including the military’s size relative to potential enemies, its degree of organization and solidarity, and its military technology and armaments for waging war. Still another condition is marchland advantage whereby a society has natural barriers at its back (water and mountains, for example), allowing it to march out from its home base and, at least initially, fight only a one-front war. Leader’s perception of these advantages can, of course, be incorrect, with the result that a society may lose a war that it has initiated. When actors in polity perceive that they do not have productive, military, and marchland advantages, they will often seek to form political alliances with potential enemies, but if the conditions promoting mobilization of coercive bases of power are in place, it is often difficult to prevent military engagement. The likelihood of success in geo-political activities, once engagement starts, is dependent upon a society’s relative superiority in coercive power, size, level of production, productivity (efficiency of production), access to necessary resources, logistical capacity to move resources across territories through distributive infrastructures, and ability to sustain its marchland advantage.

The superiority of coercive power is related to the technology and weaponry of military corporate units, but as scholars as early as Ibn Khaldun have argued, the level of solidarity of these units is also critical to sustaining a coercive advantage (see also Turchin 2006; Turchin and Nefedov 2009). Production and, most importantly, productivity from the economy are also critical, especially as warfare in more complex societies involves not only loss of lives but also the destruction of weapons that must be constantly replaced. Distributive infrastructures become especially important, for moving military personnel, weapons, and information, when armies fight at long distances from a society's home base. Moreover, polity must be able to harness economic actors to sustain access to resources; and when societies are resource-rich, they have an advantage of ready supplies, whereas when they must gain resources from other societies through market exchanges or through political domination, the flow of resources and their cost (not only in terms of money but also in use of administrative-coercive controls) increase dramatically, often creating interruptions in the flow of key resources for military activities. And, if polity cannot finance the purchase of needed resources and armaments, these fiscal problems decrease chances of being successful in war. Thus, the taxation system employed by polity – its efficiency and capacity to extract wealth – is critical to its success in military engagements. Finally, sustaining the marchland advantage is essential to success in warfare. As long as polity does not have to fight a multi-front war, it can concentrate resources on one front, but inevitably, as a society marches out and its territories expand, it will eventually discover more enemies at its longer borders and, thereby, lose some of its marchland advantage. Still, if the home base of an emerging geo-political power is protected by natural barriers, it will retain the advantage of not having to protect its capital city, even if it must fight a multi-front war, and especially so if its enemies must devote resources to protecting their home bases. The dynamic interplay among these conditions is summarized in Fig. 7.3.

In Fig. 7.3, there is less “connectivity” among the processes in play because many of these are the outcome of historically and empirically contingent conditions that cannot be fully theorized. For example, level of productivity, ratio of coercive to co-optive strategies of control, and efficiency of tax collection are the outcomes of empirical conditions and contingent actions by actors in economy and polity. Similarly, marchland advantage and level of natural resources are related to geological and geographical conditions. Still, the model emphasizes that mobilization of coercive power will increase chances for success in war, but again, the variables critical to success are somewhat contingent. Size of military, for example, is related to size of the population. Sophistication of armaments is partly a



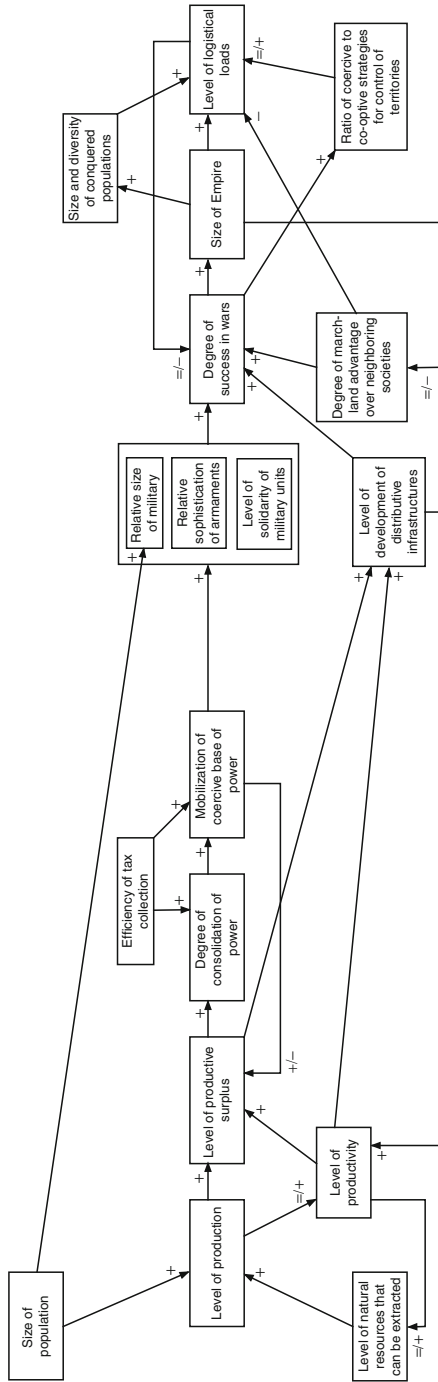


Fig. 7.3 Conditions affecting the size of geo-political empires

function of the level of productivity and the technological base of a society, while level of solidarity of military units is related to the broader culture of a society and the skills of military leaders to forge high-solidarity military units. Population size, sophistication of armaments, and solidarity of military units all increase the likelihood of success in wars, as does development of distributive infrastructures to move information, resources, armaments, and combat units about a territory. Moreover, to the extent that a marchland advantage can be maintained, success in war becomes more likely and reduces the level of logistical loads for an advancing society. If, however, rising logistical loads are met with greater use of coercive administrative power, the initial reduction of these loads is typically followed by ever-increasing monitoring and sanctioning burdens on polity (hence, the  $\neq$  sign on the relation between ratio of coercive to co-optive control strategies to logistical loads). Despite the contingent nature of values for some processes in play, population size, production, productivity, and economic surplus are critical to the consolidation of power and the mobilization of its coercive base for military actions. When societies cannot be productive and generate an economic surplus, they cannot sustain a war footing; and when they are small, they cannot put large militaries into the field to control territory. If they use mercenaries to do so, then costs and problems of control (and loyalty) make large numbers of mercenaries inefficient and, in the long run, ineffective.

### ***Conditions Increasing the Size of Geo-Political Formations***

The size of a geo-political empire created by conquest can vary enormously, depending upon a number of conditions. One is the capacity to maintain superiority of coercive power over potential internal and external threats. But, as I have emphasized, it becomes increasingly difficult to meet this condition as the distance from home base imposes ever-greater logistical loads on a growing empire. If the conquered populations are relatively weak, then superiority is easier to sustain. But, if there are segments of counter-coercive power inside or outside the empire's borders, then these only increase logistical loads. Moreover, the coercive technologies of a dominant society are eventually copied by segments within an empire or by potential enemies at an empire's borders. Copying involves more than weaponry and includes the organization of coercive forces; and thus, it becomes increasingly difficult for a military hegemon to maintain its coercive advantage. Such is particularly likely to be the case if conquered

segments of a population have been trained by the invading power for administrative and control functions, as was the case with the British Empire in India. Indeed, when the size of the population of a conquering society is small, it must rely upon mercenaries or recruit members of indigenous populations to maintain its coercive force, with the result that coercive advantages soon erode.

Another condition affecting the size of an empire is the capacity to sustain resource and marchland advantages. Resource advantages are easier to maintain than the marchland advantage, especially when a marcher state already has abundant resources and when it can expropriate them from conquered populations. A marchland advantage will decline as the size of the empire increases because, as boundaries expand, it becomes ever-more likely that enemies will appear on more than one front, thus increasing logistical loads for mobilizing coercive power and the resources to sustain this power. Levels of technology do not have as much effect on these increasing logistical loads as might be expected because even as communication and transportation technologies allow for rapid movement of resources, coercive forces, and information, high-technology systems are costly and impose another kind of logistical load on a geo-political formation. The movement of high-technology military resources is particularly costly because the armaments themselves are very expensive and because it takes a larger number of support personnel, plus logistical support (e.g., fuels, repair facilities), to move and maintain necessary coercive capacities. A lower technology coercive force may not be able to move rapidly or apply quick-strike coercive support, but it depends upon a less costly logistical-support system to sustain its lower-technology coercive force in the field. As the size of the territories to be controlled increases, the costs of high-technology forces can limit their deployment and, as a result, make forces vulnerable to revolts by conquered peoples, especially as the latter copy (or steal) military technologies and deploy lower-cost military units – as the Soviet Union learned, and as the United States is now learning in Afghanistan.

Another related condition determining the size of a geo-political formation is the capacity to maintain standing armies in territories, a capacity that becomes increasingly difficult as the amount of territory to be controlled expands and especially so for a marcher society whose indigenous population is small. When the latter condition prevails, the state must use mercenaries, recruit from the conquered populations new coercive forces, form a colonial regime using a combination of administrative-coercive power from the conquered population, or co-op local elites to administer and control conquered peoples. As I have emphasized above, none of these alternatives

represents a stable source of either coercive or administrative power; and thus, small marcher states rarely maintain their empires for very long. Again, high-technology cannot serve as an adequate substitute for “boots on the ground” – as the United States has learned in Iraq. Surveillance technologies and use of advanced forms of coercive power, such as airplanes and missiles, cannot control territories, especially urban territories, in the absence of a large military force with “boots on the ground.” Such technologies can win battles, but without the ability to have an army that can occupy in every region and neighborhood, territory cannot be effectively controlled by an invading army.

A fourth condition is the ability to sustain legitimacy of polity in its home base, which is often difficult if a marcher state taxes its home population heavily and/or if polity has difficulty winning wars and maintaining territory. Moreover, as a geo-political formation expands, the mounting logistical loads impose even greater financial burdens on the population in a polity’s home base. And, if those who are conquered are heavily taxed as well, then the logistical loads for monitoring and controlling a resentful populations in conquered territories become that much greater. If revolts within conquered territories are successful, even if only for a time, this limited success begins to erode the legitimacy of polity at its home base. If one advancing empire confronts another advancing empire, a showdown war becomes likely, dramatically increasing the potential for de-legitimization of the polity that loses a showdown war. A show-down war will not only tax resources and thus generate internal resentments, it will cause the loser to experience rapid erosion of its symbolic base of power, which in turn, leads to rapid de-legitimization of polity, thereby creating internal conflict at the home base.

A final condition affecting the size of a geo-political formation is the configuration of integrative strategies employed by a marcher state. Large-scale empires generally are produced by states with decisive coercive advantages, as was the case of the Romans and Mongols. But critical to controlling territories is the manner in which this coercive advantage is used. If coercive power is to be employed primarily as a backup to a co-optive strategy in which existing administrative bases of power of a conquered society are used to administer taxes and to pay tribute, the logistical loads for control of territories decline. Furthermore, if the marcher state leaves in place existing institutional domains, particularly economy, religion, polity, and law, its logistical loads for control of territories will decline even further. And, if the marcher state also incorporates conquered populations into its civic culture, while leaving in place the culture of the conquered population, it is more likely to increase its symbolic base of

power, even under conditions of empire formation. If, however, the conquering state relies heavily on coercive control and administration from the home base, the logistical loads for social control increase dramatically and limit how large an empire can become. Yet, if coercive power is used to sustain a *geo-economic* inter-societal system (see later analysis) in which resources and wealth accumulate, then the geo-political dimensions of this geo-economic system can endure for a longer period of time. Such is the case because of the capacity to use economic surplus to finance the coercive-administrative bases of power. In fact, many geo-political formations arise from economic competition among powerful states, with a “core” set of powerful societies engaging in periodic warfare and alliance formations which regularize access to resources in other, more “peripheral” societies (Wallerstein 1974). As world systems theories emphasize, geo-political and geo-economic inter-societal systems have significant effects on each other. In general, when geo-economic forces dominate an inter-societal system, it can become much larger because of lessened need to finance coercive and administrative bases of power to control territories. But, if the geo-economic system is highly exploitive, then logistical loads increase as coercive and administrative power must be mobilized to enforce unequal exchange relations between economic actors.

### *Conditions of Geo-Political Collapse*

The likelihood that a geo-political empire will collapse and begin to implode back on its home base increases under several interrelated conditions. One is the over-extension of borders beyond the logistical capacities of the state for transportation and communication. As borders are extended, logistical loads revolving around moving people, resources, and information across territories rise; and when distributive systems prove inadequate, internal revolt or attack from other geo-political formations at an empire’s borders become more likely and dramatically escalate logistical loads. If a hegemon cannot respond to these loads, then an empire may begin to retreat toward its home base. Another condition is high levels of military competition among core states. Military activity is expensive, draining the tax resources of societies; and when dominant societies are engaged in chronic conflict, it becomes more difficult for them to sustain coercive-administrative bases of power in conquered or co-opted territories, especially for those states that lose in conflicts among core states. Another condition is the loss of coercive, productive, resource, and marchland advantages relative to potential

enemies. The increasing size of an empire inevitably erodes at least some of these advantages.

These conditions set into motion yet another de-stabilizing condition: loss of legitimacy by the polity not only in its conquered or controlled territories (where it may not have had much of a symbolic base of power to begin with), but more importantly, in its home base. Warfare and costs associated with meeting the logistical loads of controlling territories generally put states in fiscal crisis, at least in the long run (Goldstone 1990); and the often simmering resentment among segments of a polity's home population leads to its de-legitimization when polity proves ineffective in controlling territories or maintaining its place in the system of other core states (Weber 1922 [1968]; Skocpol 1979). When the coercive and administrative bases of power reveal weakness, erosion of the symbolic base of power is likely to be very rapid. As conflict in the home base increases, the capacity to maintain a geo-political formation decreases. The more a geo-political formation has been based upon coercive control from the home base, the more rapid will be de-legitimization when this base of control proves ineffective. Other bases of geo-political control such as alliances, backed up by threats of coercive control, are somewhat less volatile, but if a state cannot sustain its favored position in geo-political alliances among states, this loss of "prestige" and "place" will also diminish the symbolic base of power of polity. Thus, as initial loss of control in a geo-political formation occurs, the symbolic base of power at a hegemon's home base can erode, thus accelerating the disintegration of a geo-political formation.

### *Elementary Principles of Geo-Political Formations*

Geo-political formations have taken such diverse forms, from warfare among Big Man societies of hunter-gatherers through tribal conflicts among chiefdoms to state-based empires, that developing abstract generalization outlining their dynamics poses a challenge. Additional theoretical challenges come from the fact that geo-political dynamics are related to contingent empirical and historical conditions that cannot be theorized. Still, it is possible to develop several general principles of geo-political formations that, I believe, can account for geo-political formations among both high- and low-technology societies and among state-based and non-state societies. The only scope condition in these principles is that a polity in some form must exist; that is, power has been consolidated around its coercive, administrative, symbolic, and material incentive bases.

16. The potential for geo-political mobilization by one society for territorial expansion through conflict with another society is a positive and additive function of:
- A. The capacity of a society to consolidate the bases of power into polity as an autonomous institutional domain, with this capacity being a positive and multiplicative function of:
    - 1. The absolute size and rate of growth of a population
    - 2. The level of surplus wealth generated by production
  - B. The degree of circumscription of a society by neighboring societies, coupled with resource depletion and environmental degradation, that place pressures on economic and political actors to find new resource bases
  - C. The degree to which the culture and institutional domains of neighboring societies are viewed by actors in polity, economy, and religion as an external threat, with the level of perceived external threat being a positive and additive function of:
    - 1. The level of economic competition between actors in the economic domain in different societies
    - 2. The level of perceived political competition with, or military potential of, another society
    - 3. The rate and level of past conflicts with another society
    - 4. The level of perceived divergence in values and ideologies, particularly religious ideologies with those of another society
  - D. The level of initial perception by actors in polity of internal threat which, in turn, is a negative function of rates of mobility between classes and a positive and multiplicative function of:
    - 1. The level of inequality
    - 2. The degree of class formation
    - 3. The linearity in rank-orderings of classes
  - E. The degree of centralization of power around its coercive and administrative bases which, in turn, is a positive and multiplicative function of 16-C and 16-D above
  - F. The propensity and ability of polity to use its symbolic base of power to formulate ideologies legitimating mobilization for conflict which, in turn, is a positive function of 16-C, 16-D, and 16-E above
17. The likelihood that the polity of one society will attempt territorial expansion through conflict and conquest is a positive and additive function of:
- A. The conditions listed in 16-A, 16-B, 16-C, 16-D, 16-E, and 16-F above

- B. Perceptions by actors in polity that they have a productive advantage over potential adversaries for financing military actions
  - C. Perceptions by actors in polity that their base of symbolic power is eroding from inequalities and internal threats
  - D. Recognition by actors in polity that they possess a marchland advantage
18. The likelihood of success of a society in conflict with other societies is a positive and additive function of:
- A. The capacity to mobilize coercive force which, in turn, is a positive and additive function of:
    - 1. Size of the population available for military mobilization
    - 2. Level of military technologies
    - 3. The level of wealth to support and sustain military activities and to purchase military hardware, which, in turn, are a positive function of:
      - a. Level of production
      - b. Level of productivity
      - c. Level of efficiency in taxation system
    - 4. The level of distributive infrastructural development to move resources, personnel, and military hardware across territories
    - 5. The level of solidarity within, and degree of coordination among, military corporate units
  - B. The extent of the marchland advantage enjoyed by a society over its adversaries
19. The size of a geo-political formation is a positive and additive function of a polity's capacity to:
- A. Rely upon co-optive strategies of control that do not rely upon intense coercive-administrative control of other societies which, in turn, is a positive function of:
    - 1. The ability to recruit members of conquered populations to the administrative structures engaged in taxation, monitoring, and control of their own population
    - 2. The tolerance and maintenance of high degree of autonomy in institutional domains, particularly polity, law, economy, and religion, of conquered or dominated populations
    - 3. The ability to convert a geo-political formation into a geo-economic formation (see propositions 21 and 22)
    - 4. The limitation of exploitive exchange relations in geo-economic activity (see proposition 22)



- B. Maintain superior coercive power which, in turn, is an additive function of the ability to:
    - 1. Prevent conquered or dominated populations from copying military technology, armaments, and organization forms
    - 2. Deploy large numbers of military personnel across dominated territories
    - 3. Construct and sustain distributive infrastructures
  - C. Sustain resource, productive, and marchland advantages
  - D. Sustain legitimacy at its home base and, if possible, to generate legitimacy among conquered populations through the mobilization of its symbolic base of power
  - E. Avoid a showdown war with another advancing polity
  - F. Respond to increasing logistical loads stemming from growing size of territories, increasing diversity of populations in these territories, and mounting threats from subpopulations within territories
20. The level of instability of a geo-political formation and the likelihood of collapse back to its home base is a positive and additive function of:
- A. The degree to which a dominant polity has lost its coercive, productive, resource, and marchland advantages which, in turn, is positive and multiplicative function of:
    - 1. The size of territories to be controlled
    - 2. The costs of maintaining a coercive-administrative presence in territories
    - 3. The number of hostile societies at boundaries of these territories and their relative coercive power
    - 4. The level of competition and/or conflict with other dominant societies engaged in geo-economic and/or geo-political expansion
  - B. The degree to which logistical capacities for distributive infrastructures have been exceeded
  - C. The level of internal threat at a polity's home base and/or the level of threat posed by subpopulations within a polity's territories
  - D. The extent to which a polity's symbolic base of power at its home based or in its extended territories has been eroded to the point of de-legitimatization of polity which, in turn, is a positive function of losing a war, losing out in geo-political and geo-economic competition with other dominant societies, or losing control of populations in conquered territories.

## Geo-Economic Inter-Societal Systems

Geo-economic inter-societal systems revolve around the movement of resources and finished commodities (and services) among societies. Early hunter-gatherers traded resources, often prestige goods; and trade became even more prominent with settled hunter-gatherers that were politically organized by a “Big Man” who would coordinate the movement of resources to and from other settled populations. Again, as the Potlatch festivals of settled gatherers in the northwest demonstrate, much of the trade was designed to gain prestige in a local inter-societal (or inter-band) system (Jonatis 1991; Atleo 2005; Seguin 1986). With horticulture, trade routes expanded as economic surplus and scarce resources (and more finished goods) were exchanged. The trade routes of the Inca in South America were extensive, and Chaco Canyon in the American southwest could only be sustained through trade with populations to the south in what is now Mexico and even meso America (Velez-Ibanez 1996). Equally often, as the Maya demonstrate, relatively small scale inter-societal systems were based upon geo-political conquests by city-states, but even here, geo-economic systems were often built over these political formations. Conversely, more purely economic exchange, such as the spice trade between Europe with south Asian societies, would lead to geo-political formations to protect trade routes, as could be seen with Venice during its golden age. Indeed, a great deal of geo-political activity over the last 3,000 years has involved efforts to either protect geo-economic advantages or to eliminate the trading advantages of other societies. These historical processes can be conceptualized as producing two basic types of geo-economic formations: (1) dependency inter-societal systems and (2) free-market inter-societal systems. Let me briefly summarize the contours of each.

- (1) *Dependency inter-societal systems.* When exchanges of resources and commodities between actors in a powerful society and actors in a less powerful and economically dependent society occur, a dependency inter-societal system formation is created. These exchanges are typically highly exploitive along several lines, including: (a) natural resources of the subordinate society are exchanged for physical capital (hard currencies, machines, implements, and other material objects for gathering and producing) from the super-ordinate society; and (b) natural resources of the subordinate society are exchanged for finished goods under highly unfavorable terms of trade. In these dependency empires, the economic hegemon uses its military power to sustain exploitive trade relations by coercing terms of trade and/or by reducing competition

from other societies by threats of coercive force. Much world systems theorizing emphasizes these dependency structures (e.g., Frank 1975, 1979, 1980; Wallerstein 1974, 1984, 1989) in which “core” nation-states engage in exploitive exchange relations with “peripheral” societies, often using “semi-peripheral” societies as a conduit for the flow of resources. In such systems, a geo-political formation is super-imposed upon a geo-economic formation. These geo-political structures can take a number of forms, ranging from colonial control of another society’s polity and economy through co-optation of economic and political elites with threats of coercive control, but the end result is a situation where the exchange of resources places the subordinate society at a great disadvantage in inter-societal trade. As Richard Emerson (1962) has argued, the level of power of actor A over actor B is a function of the dependence of actor B on A for needed resources; and if actors A and B are societies, then the key for society A is to have alternatives for the resources it needs and to limit the alternatives of society B for resources that it values or needs. And, the more society A can sustain this dependence, the more exploitive will exchange with society B become.

- (2) *Free-market inter-societal systems.* When exchanges between actors in two or more societies are relatively unconstrained (by use of power) and rely upon relatively open markets, a free-market inter-societal system has formed. These free-market systems have existed during all phases of societal evolution, from hunting and gathering to the current global economic system. And, they have been particularly likely to emerge when power has not been highly consolidated (e.g., trade among hunter-gatherers or trading networks such as the Hansciadic League) or when the relative power of trading partners has been sufficiently close to prevent one from superimposing a geo-political formation on top of a geo-economic system. These kinds of inter-societal systems revolve around the incentives from profits in markets, and as a consequence of this profit motive, they encourage the development of distributive infrastructures and open markets. Such systems have been only episodically evident in inter-societal systems since hunting and gathering, but in the last 50 years, free-market inter-societal systems have become global for the first time in human history. This free-market inter-societal system is built upon (a) high-speed communications made possible by information technologies, (b) distributive infrastructures that can move large volumes of resources and finished goods as well as services rapidly around the globe, and (c) highly differentiated markets and meta-markets that can manage high-speed and high-volume exchanges across the entire globe. This kind of system is highly dynamic but, because of the

proliferation of meta-markets, it soon becomes highly speculative and subject to periodic collapse – as has been evident since the early commercial revolution in Europe (Braudel 1979 [1982]) through the Great Depression to the present world-level financial crisis. The actors in free-market systems are corporate units within the economy, chartered within a nation-state, and corporate units within polity and law. There are always efforts by both economic and political actors to gain advantages in markets, especially advantages revolving around limiting access of trading partners to resources, but the nature of the distributive systems in the present-day free-market system mitigate against formation of dependency geo-economic systems. In markets that are truly global, alternatives for valued resources can typically be found, thereby reducing dependence upon a single powerful society. Indeed, as Emerson (1962) emphasized in his theory of power-dependence, dependent actors will always pursue “balancing operations” to reduce dependence. These operations include: finding alternative sources of resources and goods, doing without resources, providing more valued resources to trading partners in order to extract a better bargain, or limiting the alternative resources available to trading partners. Once free markets and distributive infrastructures are in place across large portions of the globe, these balancing operations are easier to effect, thus reducing to some degree the dependency of many societies on hegemony for valued resources, finished goods, or services. And, if core nations are in competition with each other, these balancing operations are even easier to effect by playing off core nations against each other. Even if cartels among societies holding highly valued resources emerge, they are difficult to sustain in the long run, as OPEC has learned from its efforts to control markets for such a valued resource as petroleum.

Historically, dependency systems have dominated regions of the world until the last century, and such is also the case today in some regions today, but clearly free-market inter-societal systems have become far more prevalent than dependency systems as world-level capitalism has spread to virtually all parts of the globe. Coupled with the collapse of communism in the Soviet Union and with the movement of capitalism into other communist societies, free market dynamics now dominate geo-economic formations. Just whether or not the contradictions posited by Marx will finally play themselves out on global capitalism is difficult to predict, although a far more likely projection is collapse of world-level meta-markets and the strengthening of regional trading blocks, such as the North American Free Trade zone or European Union. Even with this scenario playing itself out,

it is unlikely that geo-political empires can become as prevalent as in the past, even with instabilities in global capitalism. Indeed, as I have emphasized, high-technology coercion is too expensive to be sustained for long in the world system, as the United States has recently learned. With this preliminary definitional work, let me examine these two types of geo-economic systems in more detail.

### *The Dynamics of Dependency Geo-Economic Systems*

When a society is dependent upon another for the technology and physical capital necessary to extract resources and convert them into usable goods, it is likely that it will be subject to exploitive trade relations with the society that can provide these key economic elements. Such is particularly likely to be the case, as noted above, when the dominant society can prevent economic actors in other societies from providing these elements; conversely, dependency will decrease to the extent that competitive markets or strategic geo-political locations increase the number of societies seeking to provide technology and capital to a less-developed society. In essence, free-markets bring other actors in multiple societies into negotiation and trade, whereas a strategic geo-political location can provide valued geo-political resources to political actors in other societies, thereby balancing economic exchanges toward less exploitive profiles.

The level of development of markets and financial services has large effects on dependence. When a society does not have well-developed and differentiated domestic markets and meta-markets of its own, it becomes dependent upon societies that have these markets or, alternatively, upon global-level economic actors, such as the international Monetary Fund and World Bank, that can provide necessary capital and financial services. In either case, world-level actors or geo-economic/geo-political hegemons gain some control of indigenous economic and political actors through their hold on physical capital and its distribution. Dependency becomes particularly acute when chartered corporate actors of dominant economic or political powers provide capital for infrastructural development, financial liquidity, and market development. These corporate actors will generally serve their narrow self-interests, biasing development toward their goals and, in the process, taking control of the dependent society's economy, or significant sectors of this economy (Frank 1979). Such control is often achieved by co-optation of political actors in the dependent society, thus fostering corruption that, in turn, further erodes the capacity of a

society to control its economy and to generate indigenous sources of capital and technology. Corruption generally causes monetary instability, such as inflation, that increases dependence upon external actors for capital and financial services.

Entrepreneurial capacities are also an important force in dependency. If a less-developed society lacks efficient organizational formations (both private and governmental) for gathering, production, and distribution, all of these economic functions will be performed poorly, thus arresting development. Moreover, if this lack of indigenous entrepreneurial formations allows external economic actors to import their entrepreneurial structures into a dependent society, these external actors are likely to bias these structures toward their own agendas. Moreover, when economic actors from other societies provide entrepreneurial structures, they will typically demand high profits and low or zero taxes on their profits, thus depriving a society of needed capital to invest in building domestic organizational structures. Indeed, external actors have a vested interest in keeping wages of human capital low and taxation of physical capital very low, both of which reduce the amount of capital circulating in a society. Low wages lower domestic market demand and, hence, economic growth, while untaxed capital deprives polity of needed resources for mobilizing its material incentive base of power.

Such is particularly likely to be the case when external economic and political actors can “buy off” key political leaders in a society, thereby reducing the willingness of actors in polity and economy to push for less exploitive trade relations. Moreover, if organizational expertise is hoarded or if top positions in organizations are controlled by “foreigners,” needed skills in the pool of domestic labor for entrepreneurial activity are not acquired, thus increasing dependency on foreign managerial labor and organizational forms. Thus, when a society must import entrepreneurial expertise, its dependence on external actors for coordinating physical capital, skilled human capital, technology, and property systems increases, with the consequence of intensifying exploitive and unbalanced trade.

This escalating level of dependence can be exacerbated by a dependent society’s lack of a strategic geo-political location. Hegemons are more likely to offer better terms of trade and to provide needed services to a dependent society when they value the strategic location of a less-developed society. The hegemon is likely to provide needed capital, financial services, entrepreneurship, and technology when the dependent society can leverage its geo-political position. This leverage can only be effective, however, if political actors have not been co-opted and, as a result, can bargain with a potential trading partner bent on improving its geo-political position in a region.

Relations among core states are critical to the level of dependence of a society. If there is intense economic competition and/or warfare among core societies, these dynamics can be leveraged by domestic political leaders to rebalance trade relations, if they have not been fully co-opted by one or more core states. Conversely, when a society finds itself in a region dominated by a core state that is not at war or competition with other core states, it becomes more likely that the local hegemon will seek to control a less-developed society's access to capital, technology, entrepreneurial expertise, and financial services.

As I emphasized earlier, these conditions causing the formation of a dependency geo-economic system are becoming more difficult to sustain as world-level capitalism penetrates all regions of the globe. Yet, the clear intent of China to reabsorb Taiwan or the threats of Russia toward some of its former republics in the old Soviet Union (e.g., Ukraine, Belarus) indicate that powerful societies typically seek to control other societies in their region. Still, competition in free markets among economic and political actors can allow less-developed societies to seek technology, capital, organizational forms, resources, commodities, and services under more favorable conditions of exchange, even as a regional hegemon works to cut off access to global markets. While exploitation will not be eliminated in courting diverse sets of trading partners, unbalanced trade can be mitigated; and if a society has valued resources to offer exchange partners – resources such as lower-priced labor, natural resources, and geo-political location – then it can mitigate even further asymmetries in exchange relations. Still, dependency cannot easily be abolished because dominant societies can also bargain with societies often in desperate need for capital, technology, and organizational forms that can employ human capital; and to the degree that a hegemon can limit a less-developed society's access to resources from other societies, dependence will increase, even in a dynamic global geo-economic system.

### ***The Dynamics of Free-Market Geo-Economic Inter-Societal Systems***

Free-market inter-societal systems are built from trade relations among corporate actors in the economies of different societies. These corporate actors can take a number of forms, including for-profit corporate units, state-sponsored corporate units, and inter-societal cartels among corporate units. The dynamism of the inter-societal system increases when chartered, for-profit units dominate trade, although state sponsorship and protection of



these units from competition can, for a time, create market advantages (such as subsidy of production costs that allow for lower prices). Free-market inter-societal systems also require non-governmental agencies with the capacity to subsidize corporate actors in less-developed societies with needed capital and technology so that they can be competitive in inter-societal markets. If these kinds of agencies do not exist, weaker economic actors in less-developed societies will not prosper and, in all likelihood, will become part of a geo-political (see above) or geo-economic empire. The World Bank and International Monetary Fund are examples of such agencies. Moreover, there are always selection pressures for mediation of trade disputes in free-market inter-societal systems, especially since state sponsorship and cartels can disrupt free-market forces and give some actors competitive advantages. These kinds of mediating agencies are difficult to create and sustain, however, because of economic competition, often accompanied by political rivalry, among core societies in both geo-political and geo-economic inter-societal systems. Often markets become, almost literally, a battleground for one society to seek supremacy over others on both the economic and political fronts. The World Trade Organization is an example of one response to these selection pressures, but such a system is not wholly effective in keeping markets free or in preventing polity in core societies from giving its economic actors competitive advantages. In fact, this organization serves to mediate the competing interests of the most economically developed and politically powerful nations more than serving as an integrative force for the entire global economic system. Moreover, creating a world-level judicial system with real authority to adjudicate disputes and impose penalties is difficult without an effective source of supra-natural coercive and administrative power to back up decisions, although the outline of such a system has emerged over the last few decades. Still, these external agencies are rarely able to prevent dislocations and disputes in free markets because they can only use material incentives (wielded as “economic sanctions” and “fines”) rather than coercive power; and coupled with the periodic collapse of all markets, the power of these mediating agencies is further eroded as societies in the geo-economic system pursue narrow goals of protecting their own economic actors. The often repeated prediction that the global geo-economic system is moving toward some form of world government is probably overdrawn; a far more likely scenario, as I noted earlier, is that oscillations or even collapse of global markets will lead societies to retreat from global markets under rising pressures of polity to protect economic actors and domestic markets.

Obviously, a free-market inter-societal system requires free markets mediating trade between societies. Internal, domestic markets within a



society do not need to be entirely free, although the dynamism of the inter-societal system is reduced when domestic markets are highly regulated. The more free markets become global, the more extensive will be the inter-societal systems among societies. For free-market systems to become extensive and dynamic, the level of development in communication and transportation technologies must be high, and large-scale distributive infrastructures must be in place. The final element of a free-market system is the development of meta-markets for exchanging the instruments of trade at lower level markets (e.g., markets for money, equities, bonds, derivatives, and the like). Obviously, meta-markets increase the risks of deep market oscillations or even collapse which, in turn, can cause a cascading collapse of lower-level markets (Braudel 1977, 1979 [1982]; Collins 1990).

Inter-societal geo-economic systems are difficult to sustain not only because of instability of markets, especially meta-markets, but also because chartered corporate actors and the polities that support them often seek to create geo-economic empires in which a few key chartered and subsidized actors attempt to control whole sectors of global markets and/or the markets of other societies. The likelihood of geo-economic empire formation, where chartered economic actors in one society use market infrastructures to achieve competitive advantages in the differentiation markets of other societies or segment of global markets, increase under a number of basic conditions. First is the ability of these actors to produce goods and services in high demand in the domestic markets of other societies. Second is the ability to produce goods and services at a price and/or quality advantage over other potential or actual producers. Third is the degree of subsidy to producers in a society's domestic markets, whether this subsidy is in the form of direct and indirect capital and technological infusion or protectionist policies to limit imports of goods and services that might compete against those produced domestically. In free-market geo-economic systems, such policies are difficult to sustain without retaliation by the polity of other societies, but if polity can erect trading barriers while maintaining access to the domestic markets of other societies, often through promises that domestic markets will be opened in "the near future," then a geo-economic empire can emerge, although how long it can persist remains an open question. For example, China has effectively used this strategy of importing technology (legally and illegally), enticing foreign capital to invest with implied promises of access to its huge market, and maintaining trade barriers (to encourage domestic production) against imports from developed western societies. Moreover, by providing a source of comparatively cheap labor that draws capital investment in production from profit-oriented units in core societies with higher-priced labor, developing

societies like China and India can co-op economic actors from core states. Indeed, in a competitive global system where price has large effects on demand and consumption of goods and services, once one economic actor secures a cost advantage by relocating production, others must follow if they are to remain competitive in world markets. Fourth is the ability of corporate actors to secure needed resources for domestic production from domestic markets and/or from global markets. This strategy only works, however, if supply of resources in global markets exceeds demand and forces price competition. Fifth is the ability of economic actors to occupy strategic and central positions within regional and/or global systems of geo-politics. For example, Taiwan could enjoy rapid economic growth for most of the second half of the last century and into the twenty-first century because of its strategic position in Asia; similarly, Japan has been allowed to subsidize production because of its strategic position in Asia. And, sixth is the capacity of chartered economic actors to occupy central positions in regional meta-markets, as well as in regional commodities and service markets. For example, the European Union constitutes a weak, though effective, geo-economic empire because it has its own meta-markets and at least some protected domestic markets.

As I noted earlier in the analysis of geo-political empires, they are difficult to sustain over time (because of mounting logistical loads); similarly, free-market empires are difficult to maintain for long periods of time. Once a market for goods and services emerges, it inevitably pulls chartered actors of dominant economic powers into the market, often under state sponsorship. At times, near monopolies can be maintained, as was once the case for Microsoft for personal computer programming, but in the long run, the polity of societies subject to monopolistic or even oligopolistic control of technologies and products will seek to reduce their dependency through one of the balancing operations proposed by Emerson (1962).

The emergence of new core societies from what world-systems theorists denote as the “semi-periphery” (standing between the core and periphery) can be viewed as an outcome of efforts by semi-peripheral societies to reduce dependence upon the core (Chase-Dunn and Hall 1997; Frank 1998). The United States, China, and India represent examples of semi-peripheral societies that moved or are moving into the core, and in so doing, forged or are forging geo-economic empires that, in all likelihood will erode away (as is clearly the case for the United States and, in the long run, for China and India as well). Thus, older geo-economic empires decline (e.g., Portugal, Spain, The Netherlands, and United Kingdom), only to be replaced by new hegemony (United States, China, Japan, and India); and each time this transition occurs, the existing geo-economic empire declines and, for a time, is

replaced by another empire. Such empires are only possible, however, in free-market geo-economic systems.

Free markets for all of their dynamic qualities are, as Marx emphasized, inherently unstable because of their competitiveness. They often collapse from over-speculation, from declining rates of profit in highly competitive sectors, and from efforts by nations to give competitive advantages to their chartered economic actors. They also collapse when semi-peripheral societies replace older core societies. For example, the recent collapse on a global scale of meta-markets is partly the result of efforts in the United States to produce wealth at a time when its place in the world geo-economic system is declining, while that of China is increasing. Declining geo-economic empires often resort to military engagements in an effort to assert geo-political dominance and/or to financial manipulations in meta-markets to sustain, for a time, the illusion of profits for their corporate actors and wealth for their citizens. Indeed, the economic crisis in the United States in the first decade of the twenty-first century is the outcome of rapid depletion of wealth through expensive high-technology warfare on two fronts and unregulated speculation in meta-markets.

### *Elementary Principles of Geo-economic Formations*

21. The probability of a dependency-market empire, in which more powerful and economically developed societies engage in exploitive and unequal exchange with less powerful and less developed societies, is a positive and cumulative function of:
  - A. The lack of technological, physical, and human capital formation in the less developed society for extracting resources and converting them into goods and commodities
  - B. The lack of infrastructural development in the less developed society for distribution of resources
  - C. The lack of development and differentiation of (1) markets for distributing goods and services and (2) meta-markets for distributing financial services, equities, capital, bonds, and other instruments of capital formation in less developed societies
  - D. The lack of bargaining power possessed by a less-developed society, which, in turn, is a positive and cumulative function of:
    1. The lack of highly valued human and physical resources that cannot be easily secured elsewhere in the geo-economic system
    2. The lack of a strategic position in global or regional geo-politics

3. The inability of polity in the dependent society to mobilize all bases of power to control domestic production and to resist incursions by developed societies
  4. The lack of a sufficiently large population base, labor pool, and potential for market demand for goods produced by developed societies
  5. The inability to overcome the conditions listed in 21-A, 21-B, and 21-C above
22. The probability of a free-market empire forming, where economic actors chartered in one society or transnational agencies can dominate domestic markets in another society, is a positive and additive function of:
- A. The scale of global markets which, in turn, are a positive and additive function of:
    1. The level of development and prevalence of chartered corporate units in the societies comprising the geo-economic inter-societal system
    2. The level of capital formation and reach of transnational agencies to infuse capital, technology, and entrepreneurial models into the less developed societies in a geo-economic inter-societal system
    3. The existence and power of transnational mediating agencies to arbitrate trade disputes and to enforce its decisions
    4. The level of development of communication technologies and infrastructures
    5. The level of development of transportation technologies and infrastructures
    6. The prevalence of meta-markets trading financial services, including loans, bonds, equities, insurance, and other financial instruments
  - B. The capacity of one or more core societies in global markets to:
    1. Produce goods and services in high demand and low supply global markets
    2. Produce goods and services that enjoy a price or quality advantage over alternative producers
    3. Procure resources necessary for production from domestic sources, from dependent trading partners, or from global markets where supply exceeds demand
    4. Exert disproportionate control over global meta-markets and influence over transnational agencies
    5. Use its superior coercive power to force favorable trading arrangements

- C. The likelihood that one or more semi-peripheral societies in global markets can become a core economic power, which, in turn, is a positive and additive function of:
1. The capacity to protect domestic markets from imports from other global economic actors without retaliation by the polities of other societies, which is a positive and additive function of:
    - a. The bargaining capacities of polity to sustain trading barriers to imports, while convincing other societies to open their domestic market to imports
    - b. The bargaining capacities of polity to promise future trade concessions in opening its markets in exchange for immediate access to other societies' domestic markets, with these bargaining capacities increasing with:
      - (1) The size of its population and potential for high levels of market demand for goods and services when the markets are opened
      - (2) The size of its low-cost labor pool as an incentive for external economic actors to invest technology and capital in order to enjoy a price advantage in their and other societies' domestic markets
  2. The ability of polity to protect its own natural resources for domestic production rather than export these resources to other societies and/or the ability to secure resources from global markets at low costs
  3. The degree to which a society occupies a strategic position in geo-political rivalries among core societies and, as a consequence, can use this position to encourage technological and capital investment from competing core societies
  4. The degree to which a society occupies a strategic and central position in markets and meta-markets in the global system of markets
  5. The degree to which a society has greater political and/or economic power relative to its immediate neighbors in the geo-political and geo-economic systems
23. The likelihood of breakdown or collapse of geo-economic inter-societal systems and empires is a positive and additive function of:
- A. Instability in global meta-markets or the meta-market(s) of core economic hegemon(s)
  - B. Warfare among regional powers or global hegemons
  - C. Global economic recessions that cause polities in the global system to install trade barriers and other restrictions to protect domestic production

## Conclusion

All macro-level theorizing – indeed all general theorizing – confronts the problems of context and historical uniqueness. It is not possible to theorize about empirical details, especially as they intersect in complex ways in particular times and places. Rather, macro theorizing must rise above these details and explain *general patterns evident in* historical and empirical processes. In analyzing inter-societal systems, this task is particularly difficult because the scale and scope of inter-societal systems have increased so dramatically over the last 2,000 years. The generalizations that I offer above are my best effort to pull what is generic from the historical record and state the processes that I see as universal, or nearly so, in the dynamics of inter-societal systems, although these principles clearly reveal a bias toward societies that have formed a polity and that rely on markets for the distribution of resources. As I emphasized in Chap. 1, this level of theoretical analysis will miss what is of most interest to historians and to those fascinated by the confluence of empirical forces; and as I stressed at the beginning, this is a matter of preference and of one's explanatory goals. For me, I find fascinating what historians and researchers often find too vague and abstract. So be it, but there are still, I believe, generic processes in play in all historical cases, and these can be the subject of general theorizing.

These sets of propositions on geo-political and geo-economic inter-societal systems are my best guess about what is generic in relations among societies, or key actors in societies. These generalizations assume a certain level of political and market development, but they also apply to simpler, non-capitalist systems. Once clearly differentiated markets emerge in late horticulture and agrarianism, the geo-economic dynamics examined in this chapter come into play. And, once power is consolidated and centralized to any degree, the dynamics of geo-politics also emerge. As Chase-Dunn has emphasized, world systems do not have to be global; they can be regional and rather small scale (Chase-Dunn and Mann 1998). Indeed, for most of human history, such has been the case. Geo-political inter-society systems and empires have come and gone since humans first settled down from nomadic hunting and gathering. Similarly, geo-economic systems emerged the first time when pre-literate populations began to trade goods (including prestige goods). Perhaps the generalization offered above would need to be modified somewhat to account for these early and small-scale geo-political and geo-economic systems, but I would argue that the fundamental dynamics are the same in simple and larger scale inter-societal systems. As the valences for power, productivity, and distribution increase, however, so does the dynamism and scale of these inter-societal systems. Still, the same

basic macrodynamic forces are in play in both small-scale and global-level inter-societal formations. That is, population growth, production, distribution, regulation, and reproduction drive the formation of these systems, just as they drive the operation of societal systems.

## Chapter 8

# Principles of Macrodynamics

The macro-level social universe evolved under selection pressures that forced individual and corporate actors to find solutions to these pressures or face the disintegrative consequences. These pressures have not disappeared with the evolution of complexity; indeed, complexity itself generates second-, perhaps third- and  $n$ -order selection pressures. The first human societies were not very “macro” but as sets of bands developed common culture and inter-band relations, the first steps to building a more macro social universe were taken. Once population as a force pushed actors to form communities, the structural base of macro-level social reality was firmly established.

The early functional theories of evolution were not incorrect in tracing the movement of human society from simple to more complex forms and, then, positing new mechanisms of integration of this complexity. Nor were they completely wrong in seeing this as a directional evolutionary trend from simple bands to complex industrial-urban societies. Spencer (1874–1896) was the most perceptive in his recognition that societies evolve and disintegrate, only to reconstitute themselves or be absorbed by a more complex societal formation. Thus, evolution is not a lock-step linear movement of populations through stages, but there can be no doubt that human social organization has passed through a very limited number of phases. And we would have to assume that de-evolution would in all likelihood involve movement back to earlier societal and inter-societal formations.

The key for a sociological theory of macro processes is not to focus on phases or stages, per se, but on the generic processes operating during evolution, disintegration, de-evolution, and resurgent evolution as, by fits and starts, human society and inter-societal systems have grown more complex and encompassing. Stages of evolution are thus less important than the forces and processes operating across all phases of societal evolution. These processes are always operative when humans organize, but the valences and values of the variables in play have different weights and varying configurations of



causal effects on human social organization. Still, despite different empirical loadings of the variables involved, we should be able to develop some general principles that transcend societal type, time, and place; and while these principles will be very abstract and general, they do constitute some of sociology's basic scientific laws.

I am under no illusion that all sociologists will accept my claim that such laws can be discovered and articulated, but one of the reasons that sociologists read and re-read the classic theorists is because these early thinkers discovered many of these laws. Their isolation of the generic and universal in their theories is what makes the works of these founders so interesting; and if we supplement their insights with all that sociology has learned over the last 150 years, it becomes possible to posit some of the general laws of human social organization.

The purpose of this first volume on *Principles of Sociology* is dedicated to this epistemology – often contested, I grant you – but nonetheless fundamental to sociology as a science. I have done my best to translate what are often dense and detailed arguments into comparatively simple principles; and while these principles are robust and complex, they are nonetheless rather straightforward. There are only 23 of them, and though they are rather long, the same processes keep reappearing, which signals that the number of forces operating is actually rather small. The goal of this short chapter is to summarize the principles developed in each chapter so that the theory as a whole can be visualized. I have only slightly altered the principles from their presentation in earlier chapters because I can now cross-reference them a bit more readily when they are in one place rather than scattered across separate chapters. Otherwise, they are the principles that have appeared in Chaps. 3–7.

## **Principles of Macrodynamics**

### ***An Elementary Principle on Population Dynamics***

1. The size of a population is:
  - A. A positive function of the birth and immigration rates
  - B. A negative function of mortality and emigration rates
  - C. A positive function of the size of territory, size of settlements, and density of settlements
  - D. A positive function of the level of material surplus to support members of a population which, in turn, is a positive and multiplicative function of:

1. The level of production
  2. The level of distribution
  3. The rate of redistribution from centers of consolidated power
- E. A lagged negative function of the normative standard of living which, in turn, is a positive function of the conditions listed under D-1, D-2, and D-3 above
- F. A positive function of the degree of institutional differentiation and the formation of distinctive cultures to regulate relations among actors within and between institutional domains
- G. A negative function of the potential for societal dissolution and disintegration which, in turn, is a positive function of:
1. The level of first-order logistical loads which, in turn, are a positive and additive function of:
    - a. The absolute size of the population
    - b. The rate of growth of the population
    - c. The level of diversity of the population
    - d. The level of Durkheimian selection
    - e. The potential for a Malthusian correction which, in turn, is a negative function of the level of production and consolidated power
  2. The level of second-order logistical loads which, in turn, are a positive function of:
    - a. The level of inequality across social classes in the stratification system
    - b. The level of institutional differentiation without a corresponding development of structural and cultural integrative mechanisms to regulate relations among actors within and between institutional domains

### ***An Elementary Principle on Production Dynamics***

2. The level of production in a society is a positive and multiplicative function of:
  - A. The size of a population
  - B. The level of natural resources and access to these resources, with the latter being a positive territorial size, political control of this territory, and the conditions listed in C below

- C. The multiplicative relationship among (1) the level of technology, (2) the level of physical capital formation, (3) the level of skill of human capital, (4) the diversity of property systems, and (5) the degree to which entrepreneurial mechanisms revolve around (a) productive units that exchange their outputs with other productive and non-productive units and individuals, (b) exchange among units are regulated by tort law, adjudicative agencies of the law, and administrative agencies of polity, and (c) open and profit-oriented markets mediate exchanges through *money* as a generalized symbolic medium among all corporate units and between these units and individuals
- D. The degree of consolidation of power in polity to (1) regulate the coinage and supply of money, (2) direct legal system responses to new entrepreneurial demands, (3) tax physical capital without depleting investment in economic activity, and (4) mediate between actors controlling physical capital and human capital

### ***An Elementary Principle on Distribution Dynamics***

- 3. The level of distribution in a society is a positive and multiplicative function of:
  - A. The level of development of distributive infrastructures which, in turn, is a positive and additive function of:
    - 1. Size of a population
    - 2. Size of territory inhabited by a population
    - 3. Level of urbanization of a population in dense settlements
    - 4. Level of production
    - 5. Rates of domestic and inter-society migrations
    - 6. Level of external exchange with other societies
    - 7. Degree to which consolidated power is devoted to using taxes as capital for infrastructural development and for control of domestic territories
  - B. The sale, volume, and velocity of exchange which, in turn, is a multiplicative and positive function of:
    - 1. Size of the population
    - 2. Degree of urbanization of the population
    - 3. Level of production
    - 4. Degree to which money, credit, and financial instruments are in market transactions

5. Degree to which preferences among actors become individualized
6. Degree of horizontal and vertical differentiation of markets
7. Level of inter-societal exchange
8. Level of consolidated power and degree to which polity regulates the supply of money and the potential of over-extension of credit and over-speculative use of financial instruments in market transactions

### ***An Elementary Principle of Regulation as a Macrodynamic Force***

4. The level of regulation in a society is a positive and additive function of:
  - A. The degree of consolidation of the four bases of power which, in turn, is a positive and multiplicative function of:
    1. The size of the population
    2. The level of production and material surplus from production
    3. The level of exchange in markets using money and credit
  - B. The degree of centralization of the four bases of power which, in turn, is a positive and additive function of:
    1. The level of internal threat which, in turn, is a positive and additive function of:
      - a. The level of inequality and stratification
      - b. The rate and scale of immigration
    2. The level of external threat stemming from conflict with other populations which, in turn, is an additive function of:
      - a. The level of warfare with other societies
      - b. The level of economic competition with other societies
      - c. The extent of territorial expansion and empire building through conquest of other societies
      - d. The rate and scale of immigration
  - C. The degree of cultural differentiation among:
    1. Generalized value-premises
    2. Ideologies and norms of differentiated institutional domains which, in turn, is a function of differentiation of distinctive generalized symbolic media of exchange for each domain
    3. Meta-ideologies legitimating inequalities and stratification, while biasing generalized value premises

- D. The degree to which cultural differentiation leads to:
1. The ideology of polity (as an institutional domain) serving as one element in its symbolic base of power
  2. The meta-ideology combining all institutional ideologies serving as another element in polity's symbolic base of power

### ***An Elementary Principle on Reproduction as a Macrodynamic Force***

5. The level of reproduction in a society is a positive and multiplicative function of:
- A. The level of differentiation among institutional domains which, in turn, is a multiplicative function of:
1. Population size and rate of growth
  2. The level of production, especially as the level of technology increases
  3. The level of distribution, especially as markets using money and credit differentiate
  4. The level of regulation, especially as polity and law differentiate
- B. The level of differentiation of corporate units within institutional domains
- C. The level of cultural differentiation among (1) institutional domains and (2) corporate units within these domains

### ***Elementary Principles of Institutional Differentiation and Integration***

6. The degree of *inter*-institutional differentiation and the level of autonomy among institutional domains in a society are a positive and additive function of:
- A. The level of selection pressures which, in turn, is a positive function of:
1. The number of macrodynamic forces exerting pressure
  2. The intensity of the valences of these forces
- B. The availability of entrepreneurial actors to mobilize material and symbolic resources in response to selection pressures

- C. The ability of entrepreneurial actors to use symbolic resources to develop a distinctive culture which, in turn, is a positive and multiplicative function of:
1. The capacity to develop a generalized symbolic medium of exchange, discourse, and thematization
  2. The ability to use the generalized symbolic medium to articulate a coherent institutional ideology
  3. The ability to develop institutional norms for regulating conduct within and between corporate units in a domain
- D. The ability of entrepreneurial actors to use material and symbolic resources to create new kinds of corporate units
- E. The ability of entrepreneurial actors and those following the lead of these actors to forge a cultural and structural boundary marking off an institutional domain which in turn, is a positive and additive function of:
1. The conditions listed under 6-B, 6-C, and 6-D above
  2. The level of cultural integration among corporate units in a domain which, in turn, is a positive and additive function of:
    - a. The degree to which one generalized symbolic medium dominates discourse and exchanges within and between corporate units in a domain
    - b. The distinctiveness of, and consensus among actors over, the ideology constructed from the symbolic medium
    - c. The degree to which norms regulating relations among corporate units reinforce the ideology of a domain
  3. The ratio of segmented to differentiated corporate units in a domain
  4. The level of structural integration among corporate units *within* a domain which, in turn, is a negative function of (a) the degree of structural interdependencies created by markets and (b) the penetration symbolic media from other institutional domains into discourse, exchanges, and ideological formation in the culture of a domain, while being a positive and additive function of:
    - a. The rate of intra-institutional exchange using the generalized symbolic medium unique to an institutional domain
    - b. The rate of mobility of individuals across corporate units within a domain
    - c. The level of structural overlap among corporate units in a domain
    - d. The degree of structural inclusion and embedding of corporate units in a domain

- e. The degree of structural segregation in time and place of corporate units in a domain from those in other domains
  - f. The degree to which central corporate units in a domain dominate other corporate units in a domain
  - g. The degree to which key positions and roles in corporate units in a domain also define categoric unit memberships of their incumbents
7. The degree of *intra*-institutional differentiation in a society is a positive and multiplicative function of:
- A. The degree of inter-institutional differentiation which, in turn, is a function of the conditions listed under 6-A, 6-B, 6-C, and 6-D above
  - B. The rate and extent of circulation of diverse generalized symbolic media across institutional domains
  - C. The degree of differentiation of categoric units among members of a population
  - D. The size of a population
  - E. The diversity of resource niches within an institutional domain
  - F. The level of competition within any resource niche within an institutional domain
  - G. The rate and extent of exchange of corporate units in one domain with corporate units in other domains
  - H. The intensity of Spencerian selection pressures from each of the macrodynamic forces
  - I. The level of cultural and structural integration across differentiated institutional domains which is a function of the conditions listed under eight below
8. The degree of *inter*-institutional integration across differentiated institutional domains is a positive and additive function of:
- A. The level of consensus among individual and corporate units over societal-level values and meta-ideologies
  - B. The extent to which the generalized symbolic medium of each differentiated domain circulates among corporate units in other domains
  - C. The degree to which markets using money and quasi-markets distribute resources among corporate units within and between domains
  - D. The degree to which the consolidation of power revolves around the use of material incentives in markets, secular cultural symbols, moderate levels of administration, and only strategic use of coercion
  - E. The degree to which polity sustains an autonomous legal system capable of developing universalistic laws for regulating relations among individuals and corporate units, for adjudicating disputes

- among both individual and corporate actors, and for enforcement of laws and adjudicative decisions
- F. The degree to which membership in categoric units, positions in corporate units within institutional domains, and shares of valued resources are uncorrelated with each other
  - G. The overall rate of mobility of individuals across corporate units within and between institutional domains which, in turn, is a negative function of the level of stratification in a society, while being a positive function of 3-F above
  - H. The ratio of segmentation to differentiation among basic types of community corporate units and, thereby, the degree of structural and cultural equivalence among communities
9. The degree of *intra*-institutional integration within a domain is an inverse function of the degree of structural differentiation in this domain, while being a positive and additive function of:
- A. The extent to which the conditions listed in 8-A and 8-H exist
  - B. The degree to which a generalized symbolic medium emerges within a domain to direct discourse, thematization, and ideological formation within a domain
  - C. The degree to which a generalized symbolic medium and the ideology built from this medium are incorporated in the norms regulating conduct of actors within and between corporate units in a domain
  - D. The degree to which symbolic media from other institutional domains, and the ideologies and normative expectations from these outside domains, do not conflict with the culture of a domain as described in 9-A, 9-B, and 9-C above
  - E. The degree to which the culture and structure of a domain is dominant over that of other domains
  - F. The degree to which the same types of corporate units within a domain are structurally embedded within segmented community corporate units
  - G. The degree to which a domain evidences boundaries vis-à-vis other institutional domains which, in turn, is an inverse function of the rates of exchange of corporate actors in a domain with actors in other domains and the rates of circulation of other symbolic media, ideologies, and norms from outside a domain, while being a positive and additive function of:
    1. The degree of structural inclusion of corporate units within a domain
    2. The degree of structural overlap among corporate units within a domain



3. The rates of mobility among individuals across corporate units within a domain

### ***Elementary Principles of Stratification***

10. The degree of stratification in a society is a positive and additive function of:
  - A. Inequality in the distribution of valued resources which, in turn, is:
    1. A positive function of the level of economic surplus
    2. A positively curvilinear function of the degree of centralization of power within polity
    3. A positive curvilinear function of the degree of institutional differentiation, the salience of distinctive symbolic media within each differentiated domain, and the number of symbolic media circulating across domains
    4. A positive curvilinear function of the number of differentiated corporate units within institutional domains, and a positive function of the number of hierarchical structures within corporate units of all institutional domains
    5. A negative curvilinear function of the skill levels of human capital and the extent to which human capital is distributed by market mechanisms
    6. A positive function of the correlation among symbolic media distributed as valued resources and the correlation of this distribution with the distributions of prestige and positive emotions
  - B. The level of class formation in a society is a positive function of the degree of homogeneity among members of subpopulations receiving converging shares and profiles of valued resources which, in turn, is:
    1. A positive function of the level of inequality in the distribution of resources
    2. A positive function of the consolidation of shares on graduated parameters with nominal parameters marking categoric unit memberships
    3. A positive function of the degree of successive penetration of consolidated graduated and nominal parameters across types of corporate units
    4. A positive function of the correlation of positions in the divisions of labor of corporate units with specific categoric units defined by nominal parameters

5. A positive function of the level of discrimination which is a positive function of B-1, B-2, and B-3 above
  6. A lagged negative function of the number and variety of the symbolic media as resources being distributed in a society which, in turn, is:
    - a. A positive function of the degree of differentiation among institutional domains
    - b. A positive function of the degree of segmentation and differentiation of corporate units within institutional domains
    - c. A negative function of the degree of hierarchy of corporate units within institutional domains
- C. The linearity of rank-ordering of classes on a scale of worth and worthiness in a society which, in turn, is:
1. A positive function of the degree of class formation which, in turn, is a positive function of B-1 through B-5 above and a negative function of:
    - a. B-6(a) and B-6(b) above
    - b. The degree of intersection among all parameters marking categoric unit memberships
    - c. The degree of successive penetration of intersections of parameters marking categoric unit memberships across corporate units within institutional domains
  2. A positive function of the degree of ideological formation within institutional domains and the formation of meta-ideology from institutional ideologies that, in turn, determine value premises used to evaluate the worth of subpopulations and members of categoric units
  3. A positive function of the degree of consensus among members of a society over institutional ideologies, meta-ideologies, and value premises used to legitimate the system of stratification
- D. A negative function of the rate of inter-class mobility among individuals and family units which, in turn, is:
1. A positive and multiplicative function of:
    - a. The intersection of parameters marking categoric unit memberships
    - b. The rate of change in institutional domains, especially economy, but all other domains as well
    - c. The number and diversity of corporate units, and their rate of segmentation and differentiation, within institutional domains

- d. The use of markets as opposed to ascription for placement of human capital in positions of corporate units
  2. A negative function of 10-A, 10-B, and 10-C above
11. The level of integration evident in a system of stratification is a positive function of:
- A. Very high degrees of stratification in a society which, in turn, is:
    1. A positive and additive function of a high level of inequality in the distribution of resources, a high degree of homogeneity of members in social classes, and a high degree of linearity in the ranking-ordering of classes
    2. A negative function of the rates of inter-class mobility
    3. A positive function of the degree of consensus over legitimating meta-ideologies and value premises legitimating the system of stratification
    4. A positive function of the level of polity's consolidation of its administrative and coercive bases of power over its material incentive bases of power
  - B. A positive function of low degrees of stratification which, in turn, is a negative function of the level of inequality in distribution of resources, the degree of homogeneity of members in social classes, and the degree of linearity in the rank-ordering of classes, while being a positive and multiplicative function of:
    1. Rates of inter-class mobility
    2. Intersection, as opposed to consolidation, of class with categoric units
    3. Penetration of categoric unit memberships, including social class memberships, into the divisions of labor of diverse corporate units
    4. Diversity of resources distributed in corporate units across institutional domains
    5. Democratic forms of polity relying on its symbolic and material incentive bases as much as its administrative and coercive bases of power
    6. Consensus over egalitarian value premises, coupled with a meta-ideology revealing some tenets emphasizing equal opportunities for achievement and success
12. The level of disintegrative potential in a stratification system is a positive function of the intensity and violence of class-based conflict which, in turn, is a positive function of:

- A. The potential for breakdown of polity which, in turn, is a positive and additive function of :
1. Selection pressures from population on polity which increases with:
    - a. Population size and rate of growth
    - b. Proportion of younger age cohorts
    - c. Rate of urbanization
    - d. Cultural diversity among subpopulations
  2. Logistical loads with increase with:
    - a. Selection pressures from population, which increase with the conditions listed in 12-A(1) above
    - b. Rate and extent of geo-political activity
    - c. Use of power to sustain geo-economic activity
  3. Proportion of economic surplus used for patronage to elites
  4. Inefficiency and level of corruption in tax collection
  5. Increased demands by upwardly and downwardly elites for patronage
  6. Erosion of symbolic base of power which increases with:
    - a. Failure of geo-political and geo-economic activity by polity
    - b. Inability to secure sufficient resources to fund administrative and coercive bases of power by polity
- B. The potential for mobilization of lower classes for conflict against policy which, in turn, is a multiplicative function of:
1. Increased awareness of members of lower classes in their interest
  2. Withdrawal of legitimacy and polity's symbolic base of power
  3. Emotional arousal among members of lower and, at times, middle classes
  4. Periodic outbursts by lower and middle classes
  5. Intensity of emotional arousal and commitments to conflict by class members
  6. Incipient organization of social movement and conflict corporate units
- C. The level of violence of class conflict and the potential for social change is a positive function of 12-B(1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6) above, while being a negative function of:
1. Higher levels of organization of social movement and conflict corporate units which, in turn, is a positive and additive function of leaders to articulate goals and secure resources (members, money, and symbols)

2. An arena of politics in which competition and conflict is institutionalized which increases with:
  - a. Democratic election of political leaders
  - b. Rules and adjudicative mechanisms in law as a relatively autonomous institutional domain
  - c. Meta-ideologies with tenets emphasizing civil rights

### *Elementary Principles of Societal Dynamics*

13. The level of societal formation is a positive function of the capacity of a population to demarcate and control territorial boundaries, with this capacity being a positive function of
  - A. The degree to which the four bases of power are consolidated by polity
  - B. The level of production and distribution within the economy
  - C. The efficiency of the administration of tax collection by polity
  - D. The level of coercive power of polity relative to its neighboring polities and potential geo-economic and/or geo-political hegemons
  - E. The level of consistency among and consensus over generalized value premises, ideologies of institutional domains, and meta-ideologies legitimating polity and serving as its base of symbolic power
  - F. The level of structural and cultural integration among differentiated institutional domains, classes in the stratification system, and communities, with:
    1. Inter-institutional integration being a positive and multiplicative function of:
      - a. The conditions listed in 13-E above
      - b. The degree of differentiation of symbolic media within institutional domains and their rate and extent of circulation of across institutional domains
      - c. The level of differentiation of distributive infrastructures and markets using money and credit to distribute resources within and between institutional domains and across community formations
      - d. The extent to which domination by polity revolves around the use of material incentives and markets, moderate levels of administration, and strategic use of coercion
      - e. The degree to which an autonomous and positivistic legal systems capable of developing universalistic laws, enforcement, and adjudication

- f. The degree of intersection among categoric units with divisions of labor of corporate units in institutional domains and class positions in the stratification system
  - g. The rate of mobility of individuals across corporate units in institutional domains
  - h. The ratio of segmentation to differentiation among types of community structures creating structural and cultural equivalences
2. Integration of stratification system being a positive function of either very high and low degrees of stratification with:
- a. High degrees of stratification being integrated through domination by polity and religion forming society-wide hierarchies
  - b. Low degrees of stratification being integrated by:
    - (1) High rates of inter-class mobility
    - (2) High levels of intersection among categoric units
    - (3) High levels of penetration of intersections of categoric-unit memberships to all types of corporate units in diverse institutional domains
    - (4) High rates of circulation of symbolic media across institutional domains
    - (5) Democratic political formations relying upon a high ratio of symbolic/material incentives to administrative/coercive bases of power
    - (6) Consensus over egalitarian value premises, coupled with meta-ideologies revealing some tenets emphasizing equal opportunities for access to resource-giving corporate units in diverse institutional domains
3. Integration of community systems being a positive function of:
- a. The degree to which domination by central polity is mediated by intervening levels of political control and governance
  - b. The extent to which linkages among communities are built from market processes and distributive infrastructures designed to facilitate market transactions
  - c. High rates of inter-community mobility among members of diverse categoric units
  - d. Intersection of categoric-unit memberships, with the successive penetration of these intersections through all types of community formations
  - e. The degree to which overlaps with institutional domains are equivalent across communities which, in turn, is a positive

- function of segmentation of community formations and, if differentiation among communities exists, segmentation of relatively few general types of communities
- f. The degree of cultural equivalence arising from structural equivalences among communities such that meta-ideologies and ideologies of domains are similar across communities
  - g. The degree to which the society-wide culture composed of texts, technologies, and value premises penetrates community formations and generate cultural equivalences
14. The persistence and adaptability of societal formations to their environments is a positive function of the degree of institutional differentiation and integration within and between institutional domains with adaptability being a positive and multiplicative function of:
    - A. The degree of differentiation and autonomy between polity and religion as well as between polity and a positivistic system of law
    - B. The degree to which consolidation of power by polity toward the symbolic and material incentive bases and differentiating of an arena of politics
    - C. The level of development of infrastructures for expanding markets using money and credit, while limiting over-speculation in meta-markets
    - D. The level of production and rate of technological innovation driving production
    - E. The conditions of integration for institutional domains, stratification, and community listed under 13-F-1(a-f), 2(b), 3(a-g)
  15. The level of disintegrative potential in a societal formation is a positive function of the intensity and violence of conflict generated by internal stratification and geo-political involvements in inter-societal systems, while being a negative function of:
    - A. The conditions of integration for institutional domains, stratification, and community listed under 13F-1(a-f), 2(b), 3(a-g) above
    - B. The level of symmetrical and non-exploitive geo-economic relations in inter-societal systems
    - C. The degree of consistency among and consensus over society-wide value-premises, institutional ideologies and meta-ideologies

### ***Elementary Principles of Inter-Societal Systems***

16. The potential for geo-political mobilization by one society for territorial expansion through conflict with another society is a positive and additive function of:

- A. The capacity of a society to consolidate the bases of power into polity as an autonomous institutional domain, with this capacity being a positive and multiplicative function of:
    - 1. The absolute size and rate of growth of a population
    - 2. The level of surplus wealth generated by production
  - B. The degree of circumscription of a society by neighboring societies, coupled with resource depletion and environmental degradation, that place pressures on economic and political actors to find new resource bases
  - C. The degree to which the culture and institutional domains of neighboring societies are viewed by actors in polity, economy, and religion as an external threat, with the level of perceived external threat being a positive and additive function of:
    - 1. The level of economic competition between actors in the economic domain in different societies
    - 2. The level of perceived political competition with, or military potential of, another society
    - 3. The rate and level of past conflicts with another society
    - 4. The level of perceived divergence in values and ideologies, particularly religious ideologies with those of another society
  - D. The level of initial perception by actors in polity of internal threat which, in turn, is a negative function of rates of mobility between classes and a positive and multiplicative function of:
    - 1. The level of inequality
    - 2. The degree of class formation
    - 3. The linearity in rank-orderings of classes
  - E. The degree of centralization of power around its coercive and administrative bases which, in turn, is a positive and multiplicative function of 16-C and 16-D above
  - F. The propensity and ability of polity to use its symbolic base of power to formulate ideologies legitimating mobilization for conflict which, in turn, is a positive function of 16-C, 16-D, and 16-E above
17. The likelihood that the polity of one society will attempt territorial expansion through conflict and conquest is a positive and additive function of:
- A. The conditions listed in 16-A, 16-B, 16-C, 16-D, 16-E, and 16-F above
  - B. Perceptions by actors in polity that they have a productive advantage over potential adversaries for financing military actions



- C. Perceptions by actors in polity that their base of symbolic power is eroding from inequalities and internal threats
  - D. Recognition by political actors in polity that they possess a marchland advantage
18. The likelihood of success of a society in conflict with other societies is a positive and additive function of:
- A. The capacity to mobilize coercive force which, in turn, is a positive and additive function of:
    - 1. Size of the population available for military mobilization
    - 2. Level of military technologies
    - 3. The level of wealth to support and sustain military activities and to purchase military hardware, which, in turn, are a positive function of:
      - a. Level of production
      - b. Level of productivity
      - c. Level of efficiency in taxation system
    - 4. The level of distributive infrastructural development to move resources, personnel, and military hardware across territories
    - 5. The level of solidarity within, and degree of coordination among, military corporate units
  - B. The extent of the marchland advantage enjoyed by a society over its adversaries
19. The size of a geo-political formation is a positive and additive function of a polity's capacity to:
- A. Rely upon co-optive strategies of control that do not rely upon intense coercive-administrative control of other societies which, in turn, is a positive function of:
    - 1. The ability to recruit members of a conquered population to the administrative structures engaged in taxation, monitoring, and control of their own population
    - 2. The tolerance and maintenance of high degree of autonomy in institutional domains, particularly polity, law, economy and religion, of conquered or dominated populations
    - 3. The ability to convert a geo-political formation into a geo-economic formation (see propositions 21 and 22 below)
    - 4. The limitation of exploitive exchange relations in geo-economic activity (see proposition 22)

- B. Maintain superior coercive power which, in turn, is an additive function of the ability to:
    1. Prevent conquered or dominated populations from copying military technology, armaments, and organization forms
    2. Deploy large numbers of military personnel across dominated territories
    3. Construct and sustain distributive infrastructures
  - C. Sustain resource, productive and marchland advantages
  - D. Sustain legitimacy at its home base and, if possible, to generate legitimacy among conquered populations through the mobilization of its symbolic base of power
  - E. Avoid a showdown war with another advancing polity
  - F. Respond to increasing logistical loads stemming from growing size of territories, increasing diversity of populations in these territories, and mounting threats from subpopulations within territories
20. The level of instability of a geo-political formation and the likelihood of collapse back to its home base is a positive and additive function of:
- A. The degree to which a dominant polity has lost coercive, productive, resource, and marchland advantages which, in turn, is a positive and multiplicative function of:
    1. The size of territories to be controlled
    2. The costs of maintaining a coercive-administrative presence in territories
    3. The number of hostile societies at boundaries of these territories and their relative coercive power
    4. The level of competition and/or conflict with other dominant societies engaged in geo-economic and/or geo-political expansion
  - B. The degree to which logistical capacities for distributive infrastructures have been exceeded
  - C. The level of internal threat at a polity's home base and/or the level of threat posed by subpopulations within a polity's territory
  - D. The extent to which a polity's symbolic base of power at its home base or in its extended territories has been eroded to the point of de-legitimatization of polity which, in turn, is a positive function of losing a war, losing out in geo-political and geo-economic competition with other dominant societies, or losing control of populations in conquered territories

21. The probability of a dependency-market empire, in which more powerful and economically developed societies engage in exploitive and unequal exchange with less powerful and less developed societies, is a positive and cumulative function of:
  - A. The lack of technological, physical, and human capital formation in the less developed society for extracting resources and converting them into goods and commodities
  - B. The lack of infrastructural development in the less developed society for distribution of resources
  - C. The lack of development and differentiation of (1) markets for distributing goods and services and (2) meta-markets for distributing financial services, equities, capital, bonds, and other instruments of capital formation in the less developed societies
  - D. The lack of bargaining power possessed by a less-developed society, which, in turn, is a positive and cumulative function of:
    1. The lack of highly valued human and physical resources that cannot be easily secured elsewhere in the geo-economic system
    2. The lack of a strategic position in global or regional geo-politics
    3. The inability of polity in the dependent society to mobilize all bases of power to control domestic production and to resist incursions by developed societies
    4. The lack of a sufficiently large population base, labor pool, and potential for market demand for goods produced by developed societies
    5. The inability to overcome the conditions listed in 21-A, 21-B, and 21-C above
22. The probability of a free-market empire forming, where economic actors chartered in one society or transnational agencies can dominate domestic markets in another society, is a positive and additive function of:
  - A. The scale of global markets which, in turn, are a positive and additive function of:
    1. The level of development and prevalence of chartered corporate units in the societies comprising the geo-economic inter-societal system
    2. The level of capital formation and reach of transnational agencies to infuse capital, technology, and entrepreneurial models into the less developed societies in a geo-economic inter-societal system
    3. The existence and power of transnational mediating agencies to arbitrate trade disputes and to enforce its decisions

4. The level of development of communication technologies and infrastructures
  5. The level of development of transportation technologies and infrastructures
  6. The prevalence of meta-markets trading financial services, including loans, bonds, equities, insurance, and other financial instruments
- B. The capacity of one or more societies in global markets to:
1. Produce goods and services in high demand and low supply global markets
  2. Produce goods and services that enjoy a price or quality advantage over alternative producers
  3. Procure resources necessary for production from domestic sources, from dependent trading partners, or from global markets where supply exceeds demand
  4. Exert disproportionate control over global meta-markets and influence over transnational agencies
  5. Use its superior coercive power to force favorable trading arrangements
- C. The likelihood that one or more semi-peripheral societies in global markets can become a core economic power is a positive and additive function of:
1. The capacity to protect domestic markets from imports from other global economic actors without retaliation by the polities of other societies, which is a positive and additive function of:
    - a. The bargaining capacities of polity to sustain trading barriers to imports, while convincing other societies to open their domestic market to imports
    - b. The bargaining capacities of polity to promise future trade concessions in opening its markets in exchange for immediate access to other societies' domestic markets, with these bargaining capacities increasing with:
      - (1) The size of its population and potential for high levels of market demand for goods and services when the markets are opened
      - (2) The size of its low-cost labor pool as an incentive for external economic actors to invest technology and capital in order to enjoy a price advantage in their and other societies' domestic markets

2. The ability of polity to protect its own natural resources for domestic production rather than export these resources to other societies and/or the ability to secure resources from global markets at low costs
  3. The degree to which a society occupies a strategic position in geo-political rivalries among core societies and, as a consequence, can use this position to encourage technological and capital investment from competing core societies
  4. The degree to which a society occupies a strategic and central position in markets and meta-markets in the global system of markets
  5. The degree to which a society has greater political and/or economic power relative to its immediate neighbors in the geo-political and geo-economic systems
23. The likelihood of breakdown or collapse of geo-economic inter-societal systems and empires is a positive and additive function of:
- A. Instability in global meta-markets or the meta-market(s) of core economic hegemon(s)
  - B. Warfare among regional powers or global hegemons
  - C. Global economic recessions that cause polities in the global system to install trade barriers and other restrictions to protect domestic production

## Conclusion

For many, this kind of exercise is a waste of time at best and, at worst, a pretentious aping of the natural sciences (Halfpenny and McMyllor 1994). This cynicism takes sociology nowhere; if we cannot be a science, what is the point of devoting our energies to the study of human behavior, interaction, and organization? Thus, I find it irrelevant that some do not believe that sociology can be a natural science; and there is no point in debating those who challenge the fundamental epistemology of science. Either you believe that science is possible in studying humans and their creations (social structures and culture), or you do not. I take more seriously criticisms that my principles are wrong, incomplete, or too complex. One of the reasons for articulating abstract principles is that they make clear what I am asserting. There is no obfuscation by complex and vague textual discussions as is so often the case in theoretical sociology today; the principles are laid bare – granted some are (perhaps too) complex. These principles summarize

what I think occurs at the macro level of social reality; and these principles represent the best that I can do – at least at this moment. If these principles are found wanting, please correct them or, even better, articulate another and more parsimonious set. Dialogue at this level will be productive and give sociological theory more explanatory power.

If formulating principles is considered to be the wrong epistemological path, then sociology has nowhere to go except toward activism, ideology, philosophical discourse, and many other interesting intellectual activities that do not increase our understanding of how the social world actually functions. In my derisive and perhaps defensive moments, I refer to these activities as “talk about talk” that never ends. It is “humanities discourse” that is self-referential, often clever, and even interesting but it does not advance the discipline of sociology. The point of theoretical principles is to focus talk on a simple issue – how does the social world operate? – and related questions such as: What are the generic properties of the social world? What concepts and principles are needed to explain their operation?

This volume tries to answer these kinds of questions for the macro realm, which I conceive to be built from institutional domains, stratification systems, societies, and systems of societies. These sociocultural formations are what organize whole populations, but they are built from more elementary structures and processes that will be examined in Vols. 2 and 3 of this trilogy. Volume 2 moves to the micro realm of face-to-face interaction in encounters; and if there is a basic “building block” of all social reality, it is “the encounter” (Goffman 1967). Just like the macro realm of social reality, we need to understand the properties and dynamic forces driving the formation and operation of encounters; and with this knowledge, we should be able to articulate basic principles of microdynamics, as I do in Vol. 2 (see my earlier efforts on this score in Turner 1988, 2002).



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# Author Index

## A

Abrutyn, S., 106, 110, 119  
Abu-Lughod, J., 114  
Alderson, A.S., 23  
Alexander, J.C., 230, 235, 269  
Alvarez, A., 271, 274  
Amin, S., 286  
Arrighi, G., 286  
Atleo, R., 192, 309

## B

Balkwell, J.W., 168  
Barbalet, J.M., 163  
Benford, R.D., 204  
Berger, J., 168  
Bernard P.C., 168  
Blalock, H.M., Jr., 84  
Blau, P.M., 14, 134, 135, 167, 169, 182, 246  
Blumer, H., 9  
Boehm, C., 21, 153, 192  
Boserup, E., 46, 114  
Boswell, T., 286  
Boyns, D.E., 126  
Braudel, F., 69, 70, 76–79, 112, 129,  
130, 274, 311, 316  
Brinton, C., 5

## C

Carneiro, R.L., 113, 293  
Chase-Dunn, C., 21, 39, 44, 113, 238, 271,  
274, 286, 287, 293, 317, 321  
Cohen, B.P., 168  
Collins, R., 44, 84, 163, 166, 196, 230, 298  
Comte, A., 3  
Cosser, L.A., 255  
Crimes, P., 39

## D

Davies, J.C., 203  
Dawkins, R., 30, 99  
Diamond, J.M., 60  
DiMaggio, P.J., 36, 126  
Durkheim, E., 3, 23–25, 27, 34, 35,  
44, 47, 49–51, 53, 56, 57,  
95, 97, 105, 115, 116, 128,  
143, 217, 230, 235, 267

## E

Earle, T., 86  
Emerson, R.M., 247, 252, 310,  
311, 317  
Enard, W.M., 95  
Engels, F., 130  
Etzioni, A., 84

## F

Fisek, M.H., 168  
Frank, A.G., 286, 310, 312, 317  
Freeman, J.H., 107, 111, 132  
Friedkin, N., 126

## G

Gibbons, A., 95  
Giddens, A., 9  
Goffman, E., 16, 345  
Goldstone, J., 9, 94, 194, 196, 230, 305  
Granovetter, M., 74

## H

Habermas, J., 117  
Halfpenny, P., 344

Hall, T.D., 39, 44, 113, 238, 286, 293, 317  
 Hannan, M.T., 107, 111, 132  
 Hawley, A., 14, 69, 109, 111

**I**

Inoue, H., 271, 274

**J**

Johnson, A.W., 86  
 Jonatis, A., 309

**L**

Lee, R.D., 46  
 Lenski, G., 58, 61, 123, 153, 155, 193, 238,  
 239, 253, 255, 270  
 Luhmann, N., 34, 37, 53, 97, 107, 116,  
 117, 136, 174, 206, 217, 235,  
 252, 267

**M**

Machalek, R., 2  
 Malinowski, B., 192, 217  
 Malthus, T.R., 44–47, 54, 57  
 Mann, K.M., 21, 286, 287, 321  
 Mann, M., 84, 240  
 Marx, K., 3, 67, 74, 130, 163, 164, 180, 181,  
 191, 267, 311, 318  
 Maryanski, A., 22, 95, 100, 117, 150, 163,  
 217, 245  
 McCarthy, J.D., 189, 204  
 McMylor, P., 344  
 McPherson, J.M., 111, 113, 178  
 Mead, G.H., 3  
 Merton, R.K., 136, 203  
 Milner, M., 247

**N**

Nefedov, S.A., 222, 237, 299  
 Niemeyer, R., 271, 274  
 Nolan, P., 58, 238, 270  
 Norman, R.Z., 168

**O**

Okasha, S., 35

**P**

Paige, J., 204  
 Pareto, V., 3, 67  
 Parsons, T., 5, 6, 8, 9, 20, 34, 53, 62, 64, 97,  
 117, 119, 120, 127, 136, 174, 217,  
 235, 239, 251  
 Powell, W.W., 36, 126

**R**

Radcliffe-Brown, A.R., 12, 34, 217  
 Ranger-Moore, J., 178  
 Retzinger, S.M., 205  
 Runciman, W.G., 23

**S**

Sailer, L.D., 126, 166  
 Sanderson, S.K., 23  
 Scheff, T., 205  
 Schutz, A., 235  
 Seguin, M., 192, 309  
 Shannon, T.R., 286  
 Silver, B., 286  
 Simmel, G., 53, 62, 64, 67, 70, 72,  
 74, 75, 79, 117, 119–121,  
 235, 251, 255  
 Singleton, R., 187  
 Skocpol, T., 9, 93, 193, 230,  
 296, 305  
 Smelser, N.J., 62, 64, 117, 119, 120,  
 204, 235, 251  
 Smith, A., 51, 95, 128  
 Smith, R.F., 168  
 Snow, D.A., 204  
 Sober, E., 35  
 Spencer, H., 3, 5, 20, 23, 24, 26, 35,  
 44, 46, 47, 49, 51, 56, 57,  
 67, 94, 105, 115, 128, 217,  
 241, 242, 291, 323

**T**

Turchin, P., 222, 230, 237, 299  
 Turner, J.H., 1, 11–13, 16, 22–24, 44,  
 46, 47, 51, 57, 70, 84, 95, 100,  
 117, 121, 126, 129, 136, 146,  
 150, 153, 155, 160, 163, 187,  
 199, 204, 217, 222, 235, 239,  
 240, 245, 255, 274, 345

**V**

Velez-Ibanez, C., 309

**W**

Wallerstein, I.M., 286, 304, 310

Weber, M., 3, 5, 9, 32, 67, 70, 74, 75, 79, 85,  
93, 137, 138, 193, 208, 214, 230,  
240, 296, 298, 305

White, H., 127

White, H.C., 135, 181

White, L., 123

Williams, R.M., Jr., 190

Wilson, D.S., 35

Wright, E.O., 173

Wynne-Edwards, V., 35

**Z**

Zald, M., 189, 204

Zelditch, M., 168

Zelditch, M., Jr., 168



# Subject Index

## C

- Capital, human, 62–63
- Capital, physical, 62
- Categoric units, 15
- Class/classes
  - class boundaries, 166–167
  - formation, 166–173
  - mobility, 181–184
  - model of class formation, 171
  - model of mobility, 183
  - ranking of, 174–181
- Communities, 109–110, 114
  - cultural integration of, 280–282
  - evolution of, 270–274
  - and, institutions, 270–280
  - structural integration of, 275–280
- Conceptual scheme
  - complex, 5
  - simplified, 12, 17–20
- Conflict
  - inter-societal, 293–304
  - intra-societal, 199–208
- Corporate units, 15
  - and, institutional differentiation, 106–115
  - and stratification, 154–166, 201–202
  - types of, 109
- Cultural integration, 116–125
  - of communities, 175–182, 280–282
  - embedding of, 123–125
  - generalized symbolic media, 117–118
  - ideological formation, 119–122
  - institutional cultures, 116–123
  - of institutions, 223–230
  - intra-institutional forms, 142–144
  - norm formation, 121–122
  - principles on, 146–149
  - of societies, 215–247
- Culture
  - and, ranking of classes, 174–177

## D

- Differentiation
  - and, first-order logistical loads, 32
  - of institutional domains, 34
  - as integrative mechanism, 128–129
  - and, other forces, 31–35
  - population pressures, 32
  - and, second-order logistical loads, 34–35
  - and, selection, 23–37, 105–115
- Disintegration, 140–141
- Distribution, 67–84
  - Braudel's model, 76–77
  - Collins' model, 81
  - model of infrastructure, 67–70
  - model of market exchange, 79–81
  - principle of, 326–327
  - principle on, 82–84
  - Simmel's model, 72–75
  - Weber's mode, 70–72

## E

- Embedding of culture, 123–125
- Emotions
  - arousal for conflict, 206–208
  - and conflict, 204–205
  - unequal distribution of, 163–164
- Entrepreneurial mechanisms, 64–66
- Entrepreneurship and, geo-economic systems, 312–318
- Evolution of societies, 1–3, 21–22, 215–249

## F

- Forces
  - and, differentiation, 31–37
  - distribution, 67–70
  - Durkheim's model of population, 47–51
  - macrodynamic, 14

Forces (*con't*)

- Malthus' model of population, 44–46
- microdynamic, 17
- model of production, 59
- models of distribution, 67–82
- population, 42–57
- population and macro forces, 43
- population and other forces, 43
- production, 57–67
- regulation, 84–99
- regulation and culture, 94–98
- regulation and power, 85–94
- reproduction, 99–102
- and, selection, 27–31
- Spencer's model of population, 46–47
- synthetic model of population, 51–55

## Functionalism, 105

- problems of, 22–23
- selection dynamics, 23–27

**G**

## Generalized symbolic media of exchange, 37–39, 118

- circulation of, 118–124
- and, cultural integration, 117–122
- ideological formation with, 119–121
- and, institutional differentiation, 106–115
- norm formation with, 121–122
- unequal distribution of, 161–163

## Geo-economic systems

- dependency systems, 309–310
- dynamics of dependency systems, 312–314
- dynamics of free-market systems, 314–318
- free market systems, 310–312
- principles of, 318–320

## Geo-political systems

- disintegrative effects of, 304–305
- effects of threat, 294–296
- expansion of, 298–301
- mobilization of, 293–298
- models of, 295, 297, 300
- principles on, 305–308
- size of geo-political formations, 301–304
- types of formations, 291–293

**I**

- Ideology and ranking of classes, 174–181
- Inequality, material wealth, 155–158

## Institutional differentiation

- and, class formation, 169–181
- principles of, 328–332
- and, stratification, 201–202
- in types of societies, 217–223

## Institutional domains, 13

- differentiation of, 33, 37
- population pressures for, 42–45

## Institutions

- autonomy of, 106
- and, communities, 109–110, 113–114
- in communities, 216–235
- and, corporate units, 107–110
- evolution of, 106–115
- and, generalized symbolic media, 106–113
- integration of, 115–146
- inter-institutional differentiation, 106–110
- inter-institutional integration, 143–146
- intra-institutional differentiation, 111–115
- intra-institutional integration, 142–146
- model of differentiation of, 110
- principles on, 146–149
- and, resource niches, 111
- selection pressures, 112–113

## Integration

- of communities, 175–182
- cultural basis of, 190–191
- of institutions, 223–230
- of societies, 215–247
- structural basis of, 186–190

## Integration, mechanisms of, 115–146

- cultural, 116–125
- structural, 125–146

## Inter-societal systems

- disintegration of geo-political formations, 304–305
- elementary principles on geo-politics, 305–308
- geo-economic formations, 309–312
- geo-political formations, 291–304
- growth of, 298–301
- principles of, 338–344
- size of, 301–304

**L**

## Legitimacy, withdrawal of, 202–203

## Logistical loads

- first-order, 32
- second-order, 33–35
- from stratification, 196–200

**M**

- Macro reality
  - forces of, 13
  - sociocultural formations of, 13
- Markets, as integrative mechanisms, 129–131
- Meso reality
  - categoric units, 15
  - corporate units, 14
- Micro reality, 16
  - encounters, 16
  - forces of, 17
- Mobility, in stratification, 181–184

**N**

- Nomothetic theory, 9–12

**P**

- Parameters, 14
  - and, class formation, 169–173
  - intersections of, 134–135
  - and, ranking of classes, 176–178
- Population dynamics, 42–57
  - Durkheim's model of population, 47–51
  - Malthus' model of population, 44–46
  - population, 42–57
  - population and other forces, 43
  - principle of, 55–57
  - Spencer's model of population, 46–47
  - Synthetic model of population, 51–55
- Population, principle of, 324–325
- Power
  - administrative base, 85–86
  - coercive base, 85
  - consolidation of, 91–94
  - domination, 137–139
  - inequalities of, 158–160
  - material incentive base, 86
  - and, other forces, 89–94
  - and, selection pressures, 91–94
  - symbolic base, 86–89
- Prestige, inequalities of, 160–161
- Production dynamics, 57–67
  - elements of, 58–66
  - model of, 59
  - principle of, 66–67
- Production, principle of, 325–326
- Property, 63–64

**R**

- Regulation, 84–99
  - centralization of power, 91–94
  - consolidation of power, 91–94
  - cultural basis of, 94–98
  - mobilization of power, 85–87
  - principle of, 98–99, 327–328
- Reproduction, 99–102
  - principle of, 101–102, 328
  - shifting bases, 100–101
- Reproductive fitness, 30
- Resource niches, 111–113
  - and selection, 112

**S**

- Science, 2–4
- Selection, 23–31. *See also* Logistical loads
  - on categoric units, 36
  - on corporate units, 35–36
  - differences with biology, 27–31
  - Durkheimian, 24–27
  - and, first-order logistical loads, 32
  - second-order logistical loads, 33–35
  - Spencerian, 24–27
- Selection pressures, 112–114
  - Durkheimian selection, 112–115
  - second-order logistical loads, 112
  - Spencerian selection, 111–113
- Social reality, levels of, 14–17
- Societies, 13
  - communities in, 270–282
  - culture of, 215–217, 230–236
  - institutions of, 217–230, 237–243
  - integration of, 216–217, 230–236, 247–269
  - principles of, 336–338
  - principles on, 282–285
  - stratification of, 243–247
  - types of, 223–228, 231–236, 247–251, 255–265
- Stratification, 13, 37
  - class formation, 166–173
  - conflict processes in, 199–208
  - disintegrative effects of, 192–208
  - effects of institutional differentiation, 184–185
  - integrative effects of, 184, 186–190, 247–269
  - model of class formation, 171
  - model of conflict, 200
  - model of disintegrative effects, 195–199
  - model of ranking, 179



- Stratification (*con't*)
- model of unequal distribution, 165
  - principles of, 208–212, 332–336
  - properties of, 153, 244
  - ranking of classes, 174–181
  - unequal distribution of resources, 154–166
- Structural integration, 125–146
- differentiation, 128–129
  - domination, 137–139
  - inclusion, 131–133
  - interdependence, 129–131
  - inter-institutional, 145–146
  - intra-institutional forms, 142–143
  - mobility, 135–136
  - overlaps, 133–135
  - principles on, 146–149
  - review of, 140–141
  - segmentation, 126–127
  - segregation, 136–137
- Systems of societies, 13
- T**
- Technology, 58–61
- Theoretical sociology, 5–8
- conceptual schemes, 5–6
  - nomothetic theory, 9–10
  - principles, 7–8