

concern, and his most insightful pages explore the social conditions that make it easier for persons to discover and express their individuality. In modern society, with its plurality of cultural and social groups, individuals are caught in the intersection of cross-cutting interests and expectations, where they sometimes thrive but also may perish. Expanding on Marx's idea of alienation, Simmel speaks of the "tragedy of culture." Our complex division of labor and highly developed money economy greatly magnify the distance between an immense realm of cultural products and the individual who cannot assimilate them. We risk becoming estranged from the products of

our own creative spirit. Simmel treats the conflict between individual and society in his most famous essay, "The Stranger," and explores the development of individualism in "The Web of Group-Affiliations," one chapter of his *Sociology* (1922). But his greatest work on this theme is the authoritative *Philosophy of Money* (1900). Here he works out the implications of the money economy for social forms and for individual freedom. He draws attention to the phenomena of impersonality, the trivialization of human relationships, the calculating outlook, and the egocentrism, but also to the very real advantages of the money economy for individuals.

## SOCIOLOGY

1922

### "The Web of Group-Affiliations"

#### ANALOGIES BETWEEN PERCEPTION AND GROUP-FORMATION

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... At first the individual sees himself in an environment which is relatively indifferent to his individuality, but which has implicated him in a web of circumstances. These circumstances impose on him a close coexistence with those whom the accident of birth has placed next to him. This close coexistence represents the first condition of the phylogenetic and ontogenetic development, whose continuation aims toward the association of homogeneous members

from heterogeneous groups. Thus, the family comprises a number of different individuals, who are at first entirely dependent on this familial association. However, as the development of society progresses, each individual establishes for himself contacts with persons who stand outside this original group-affiliation, but who are "related" to him by virtue of an actual similarity of talents, inclinations, activities, and so on. The association of persons because of external coexistence is more and more superseded by association in accordance with internal relationships. Just as a higher concept binds together the elements which a great number of very different perceptual complexes have in common, so do practical

considerations bind together like individuals, who are otherwise affiliated with quite alien and unrelated groups. New contacts are established between individuals which penetrate every nook and cranny of the contacts that are earlier, relatively more natural and that are held together by relationships of a more sensual kind.

### PROPINQUITY AND INTEREST AS A BASIS OF GROUP-FORMATION

The independent groups, whose alliances used to constitute universities at an earlier time, were divided according to the nationality of the students. Later on, so-called faculties were developed in the place of such alliances. These faculties were academic departments according to common areas of study. Thus, a group whose cohesion depended upon geographic and physiological factors, *terminus a quo*, was entirely replaced by a group whose cohesion was based on purpose, on factual considerations, or, if one will, on individual interests.

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

Although from the beginning workers came together on the basis of their similar activities, their association depended largely on the fact that they were neighbors. Unquestionably this contributed to a close contact between a specific trade and the

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

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

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### ORGANIC AND RATIONAL CRITERIA OF GROUP-FORMATION

In relatively uncomplicated situations age groups may function as a sociological criterion and may become a basis of division for the entire group. Like the division between the sexes, age groups stand midway between the organic and the rational. For example, in Sparta around 200 B.C. political parties were designated as the elders, the young men, and the youngsters. Similarly, among different primitive peoples one finds men organized in age-groups, each of which has a special social significance and a

special way of life. The basis of this solidarity is entirely personal and impersonal at the same time.

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

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

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

The period of the Renaissance demonstrated most clearly the power of intellectual and educational interests to bring together in a new community like-minded people from a large variety of different groups. Humanistic interests broke down the medieval isolation of social groups and of estates. They gave to people who represented the most diverse points of view and who often remained faithful to the most diverse occupations, a common interest in ideas and in knowledge. This common interest, whether one of active pursuit or of passive appreciation, cut across all previously established forms and institutions of medieval life. Humanism at that time entered the experience of all peoples and groups from the outside as something that was equally strange to all. And this very fact made it possible for Humanism to become a common area of interest for them all, or at any rate for certain people among them.

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

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

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

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

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

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## GROUP-AFFILIATIONS AND THE INDIVIDUAL PERSONALITY

The groups with which the individual is affiliated constitute a system of coordinates, as it were, such

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

A concrete object with which we are confronted has been called the synthesis of perceptions. And each object has a more enduring configuration, so to speak, the more various the perceptions are, which have entered into it. Similarly as individuals, we form the personality out of particular elements of life, each of which has arisen from, or is interwoven with, society. This personality is subjectivity par excellence in the sense that it combines the elements of culture in an individual manner. There is here a reciprocal relation between the subjective and the objective. As the person becomes affiliated with a social group, he surrenders himself to it. A synthesis of such subjective affiliations creates a group in an objective sense. But the person also regains his individuality, because his pattern of participation is unique; hence the fact of multiple group-participation creates in turn a new subjective element. Causal determination of, and purposive actions by, the individual appear as two sides of the same coin. The genesis of the personality has been interpreted as the point of intersection for innumerable social influences, as the end-product of heritages derived from the most diverse groups and periods of adjustment. Hence, individuality interpreted as that particular set of constituent elements which in their quality and

combination make up the individual. But as the individual becomes affiliated with social groups in accordance with the diversity of his drives and interests, he thereby expresses and returns what he has "received," though he does so consciously and on a higher level.

As the individual leaves his established position within *one* primary group, he comes to stand at a point at which many groups "intersect." The individual as a moral personality comes to be circumscribed in an entirely new way, but he also faces new problems. The security and lack of ambiguity in his former position gives way to uncertainty in the conditions of his life. This is the sense of an old English proverb which says: he who speaks two languages is a knave. It is true that external and internal conflicts arise through the multiplicity of group-affiliations, which threaten the individual with psychological tensions or even a schizophrenic break. But it is also true that multiple group-affiliations can strengthen the individual and reenforce the integration of his personality. Conflicting and integrating tendencies are mutually reinforcing. Conflicting tendencies can arise just because the individual has a core of inner unity. The ego can become more clearly conscious of this unity, the more he is confronted with the task of reconciling within himself a diversity of group-interests. The effect of marriage on both spouses is that they belong to several families; this has always been a source of enrichment, a way of expanding one's interests and relationships but also of intensifying one's conflicts. These conflicts may induce the individual to make internal and external adjustments, but also to assert himself energetically.

In primitive clan-organizations the individual would participate in several groups in such a way that he belonged to the kinship or totemic group of his mother, but also to the narrower, familial or local association of his father. Now these simple people are not equal to conflicts such as those just mentioned, which is basically due to the fact that they lack a firm awareness of themselves as personalities. With peculiar purposefulness these two kinds of association are therefore so differently arranged that they do not encroach upon each other. Relationships on the maternal side have a more ideal, spiritual

nature, whereas on the paternal side they are real, material and directly effective. In the case of the Australian aborigines, i.e., the Hereros, and among many other hunting tribes, maternal kinship, and similarly the totemic association, do not constitute a basis for community-living. They have no effect on daily life, but only on festive occasions of deep significance, such as marriage ceremonies and ceremonies occasioned by death and blood revenge. The last of these has an ideal, abstract character in the lives of the primitive peoples. The totemic association is transmitted through maternal descent and, therefore, it is often scattered through many tribes and hordes. It is held together only by common taboos on food and common ceremonials, and particularly by means of special names and special symbols on weapons. On the other hand, the paternal kinship-relations encompass all of daily life, waging war, alliances, inheritance, hunting, and so on. They do not have these taboos and symbols and do not need them, because the bond of a community in one locality and the convergence of their direct interests provide the basis for a sense of group-cohesion. At this stage, each connection which is not local usually assumes a more ideal character. It is the sign of a higher social development that group-cohesion can transcend local ties and yet be thoroughly realistic and concrete. But if the individual in a primitive tribe belongs to both the paternal-local group and to the maternal clan, these groups must be separated from each other in terms of the distinctly concrete or distinctly abstract values which they embody. Given the undifferentiated character of the primitive mind, this separation is a precondition for the possibility that the same individual belongs to both groups.

## GROUP-AFFILIATIONS AND THE FAMILY

The Catholic priesthood represents examples of multiple group-affiliations which are unique in kind and also in the degree to which they were successful. No estate was excluded from the recruitment of priests and monks. The power of the ecclesiastical estate greatly attracted both the highest and the

lowest social elements. In medieval England strong aversions between social classes prevailed generally. However, the priesthood, although it formed a strong and compact class, did not engender real class-hatred because it originated from all classes and every family had some relative who belonged to it. A similar situation was created by the fact that church-property existed everywhere. Because there was some church-property in every province and almost every community, alongside the infinite number of property titles characteristic of the Middle Ages, there arose an inter-regional uniformity of the clerical estate, which was both cause and consequence of its purposive unity. To date, this is the greatest example in history of the formation of a social group which cuts across all other existing groups. But at the same time it is characterized by the fact that it actually produced no overlapping of group-affiliations in the individuals. The priesthood could establish a relationship to, and could communicate with, all existing social strata in a manner which was entirely unbiased, because the individual priest was completely released from the ties with his social stratum; he was not even permitted to retain his name. Otherwise, these ties would have determined the personality of the priest together with those which he had newly gained in the priesthood.

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

Marriage constitutes a sociological determination of such finality that the individual is no longer quite free to attain a position in a group other than his family which would correspond to his interest in this second group. It is significant that the lower Russian clergyman, whose task demanded that he live among the people, is generally married, while the higher, ruling clergy are celibate. On the other hand, even the lowest ranking, Roman Catholic priest occupies in his village a somewhat abstract position which isolates him from the community-life of his environment. To be sure, the priesthood of the Russian Church is only an approximation of the Protestant clergy, which as a matter of principle is entirely enmeshed in civil life. The Russian priesthood is almost completely endogenous: priests of the Greek Orthodox Church seldom marry anyone other than the daughters of priests. Marriage is often so significant for the other sociological ties of the husband, that associations are actually differentiated on the basis of whether or not the marriage of their members are of consequence for these associations.

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

It is apparent that, for similar reasons, celibacy was considered appropriate for the soldier wherever a clearly differentiated military estate [officer corps] existed. However, in the Macedonian regiments of the Ptolemies and afterwards in the era of the Roman Emperors, soldiers were permitted to marry or to have concubines. [This distinction between officers

and men is similar to the distinction between the higher and the lower Russian clergy.] The regiments were often replenished from among the offspring of these unions. Only the thoroughgoing fusion of the modern army with the structure of national life has completely abolished the rule of celibacy for the officers.

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

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

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### MULTIPLE GROUP-AFFILIATIONS WITHIN A SINGLE GROUP

A typical example of multiple group-affiliations within a single group is the competition among persons who show their solidarity in other respects. On the one hand the merchant joins other merchants in a group which has a great number of common interests: legislation on issues of economic policy, the social prestige of business, representation of business-interests, joint action as over against the general public in order to maintain certain prices,

and many others. All of these concern the world of commerce as such and make it appear to others as a unified group. On the other hand, each merchant is in competition with many others. To enter this occupation creates for him at one and the same time association and isolation, equalization and particularization. He pursues his interests by means of the most bitter competition with those with whom he must often unite closely for the sake of common interests. This inner contrast is probably most pronounced in the area of commerce, but it is present in some way in all other areas as well, down to the ephemeral socializing of an evening party.

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

And the reverse tendency arises on the same basis: the individual's need for a clearer articulation and for a more unambiguous development of his personality, forces him to select certain groups. And from their combination he gains his maximum of individuality—the one group offering him opportunities for socialization, the other opportunities for competition. Thus, the members of a group in which keen competition prevails will gladly seek out such other groups as are lacking in competition as much as possible. As a result businessmen have a decided preference for social clubs. The estate-consciousness of the aristocrat, on the other hand, rather excludes competition within his own circle; hence, it makes

supplementations of that sort [i.e., social clubs] largely superfluous. This suggests forms of socialization to the aristocrat which contain stronger competitive elements—for example, those clubs which are held together by a common interest in sports.

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

## RELIGION AS A FACTOR IN MULTIPLE GROUP-AFFILIATIONS

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

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

Yet the power of religious motivation is equally apparent, where it is independent of all social ties originating from other motives, and where it is strong enough to bring together believers adhering to the same creed, in spite of all the differences between them which arise out of their other affiliations. This form of religious organization is obviously a highly individualistic one. The religious temper has lost the support which it had obtained from its integration with the entire complex of social ties. Now religious experience is based upon the soul of the individual and it is his responsibility; on that basis the individual seeks to establish a bond with others who are similarly qualified in terms of their religious experience, but perhaps in no other respect. Christianity in its pure sense is an entirely individualistic religion, and this has made possible its diffusion throughout the manifold of national and local groups. The Christian was conscious of the fact that he took with him his church-affiliation into every community of his choosing, regardless of the psychological influences and the duties which such a community exerted and made incumbent upon him. This consciousness must have created a feeling of individual determination and self-confidence.

This sociological significance of religion reflects its dual relationship to life. On the one hand, religion stands in contrast to the whole substance of human life; it is the counterpart and the equivalent of life itself, aloof from its secular movements and interests. On the other hand, religion takes sides among the parties in the secular life, though it had elevated itself above the world of affairs as a matter of principle. As such religion is an element of secular life alongside all its other elements; it becomes involved

in the multitude of changing relationships though at the same time it rejects this involvement. As a result a remarkable involution occurs. The disavowal of all social ties, which is evidence of a deep religiosity, allows the individual and his religious group to come in contact with any number of other groups with whose members they do not share any common interests. And the relationships again serve to distinguish and to determine the individuals concerned as well as the religious groups.

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

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

and ecclesiastical policy] form a joint group in political affairs.

One can assume without question that this emancipation of religious from political ties has also consequences in the opposite direction, in that it will make possible political mergers which would have been frustrated by the continuing unity of both. The most striking example is perhaps the union between Scotland and England in 1707. For both countries the advantages of becoming a *single* state were bound up with the continued existence of the two churches. Up to that time political and religious concepts had been closely interrelated in both countries. Only the separation of Church and State made the amalgamation of political interests between the two countries possible; otherwise the ecclesiastical interests would not have tolerated it. It was said of the two countries that they could preserve harmony only by agreeing to differ. Once this solution, together with its consequences for group-affiliation, had taken place, then it was no longer possible to abolish the freedom which had been gained. Hence the principle: *cuius regio eius religio*, is valid only if it does not need to be stated explicitly, but instead reflects the existence of a naive and undifferentiated condition in which Church and State are at one.

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

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

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

### **PRIESTHOOD AS A SPECIAL TYPE OF GROUP-FORMATION**

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

a mutual understanding, a cohesiveness among the priests, which under certain conditions can even drown out the substantive antagonism between Evangelical ministers and Catholic priests.

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

### **INDIVIDUALISM AND COLLECTIVISM IN MODERN SOCIETY**

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

Thus one can say that society arises from the individual and that the individual arises out of association. An advanced culture broadens more and more the social groups to which we belong with our whole personality; but at the same time the individual is made to rely on his own resources to a greater extent

and he is deprived of many supports and advantages associated with the tightly-knit, primary group. Thus, the creation of groups and associations in which any number of people can come together on the basis of their interest in a common purpose, compensates for that isolation of the personality which develops out of breaking away from the narrow confines of earlier circumstances.

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### CONCLUDING REMARKS

This is the principal pattern of the development of culture, which also comprises the sociological factors. Meaningful and profoundly significant institutions and behavior patterns are replaced by those which in themselves appear to be completely mechanical, external, and inanimate. But the latter have a higher purpose, which reaches beyond that of the earlier level of organization. And this higher purpose gives to the collective impact and to the consequences of institutions and behavior-patterns, an intellectual significance which is inevitably lacking in each single element. This is the characteristic of the modern soldier as over against the medieval knight, of factory work as over against handicraft work, of the modern levelling and uniformity of so many aspects of life, which were formerly left to the free and creative response of the individual.

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

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

