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SUPERIORITY AND SUBORDINATION AS SUBJECT-MATTER OF SOCIOLOGY.[1]

I UNDERSTAND the task of sociology to be description and determination of the historico-psychological origin of those forms in which interactions take place between human beings.[2] The totality of these interactions, springing from the most diverse impulses, directed toward the most diverse objects, and aiming at the most diverse ends, constitutes "society." Those different contents in connection with which the forms of interaction manifest themselves are the subject-matter of special sciences. These contents attain the character of social facts by virtue of occurring in this particular form in the interactions of men. We must accordingly distinguish two senses of the term "society:" first, the broader sense, in which the term includes the sum of all the individuals concerned in reciprocal relations, together with all the interests which unite these interacting persons; second, a narrower sense, in which the term designates the society or the associating as such, that is the interaction itself which constitutes the bond of association, in abstraction from its material content — the subject-matter of sociology as the doctrine of society *sensu stricto*.

[1] *Ueberordnung und Unterordnung. Superordination and Subordination* would be a more precise rendering, but above appears on the whole preferable. Tr.

[2] *Cf.* my paper, "The Problem of Sociology," in *Annals of the American Academy*, November 1895, Vol. VI, No. 3.

Thus, for illustration, we designate as a cube on the one hand any natural object in cubical form; on the other hand the simple form alone, which made the material contents into a "cube" in the former sense, constitutes of itself, independently and abstractly considered, an object for geometry. The significance of geometry appears in the fact that the formal relations which it determines hold good for all possible objects formed in space. In like manner it is the purpose of sociology to determine the forms and modes of the relations between men which, although constituted of entirely different contents, material, and interests, nevertheless take shape in formally similar social structures. If we could exhibit the totality of possible forms of social relationship in their gradations and variations we should have in such exhibit complete knowledge of "society" as such. We gain knowledge of the forms of socialization by bringing together inductively the manifestations of these forms which have had actual historical existence. In other words we have to collect and exhibit that element of form which these historical manifestations have in common, abstracted from the variety of material—economical, ethical, ecclesiastical, social, political, etc.—with respect to which they differ.

Now geometry has the advantage of finding within its field very simple figures to which the most complicated forms may be reduced. Truths respecting these simple figures are therefore very widely applicable. From relatively few fundamental truths all possible arrangements of form may be interpreted. In the case of social forms, on the contrary, an approximate reduction to simple elements has not been made. Social phenomena are too immeasurably complicated, and the methods of analysis are too incomplete. The consequence is that if sociological forms and names are used with precision they apply only within a relatively contracted circle of manifestations. Long and patient labor will be necessary before we can understand the concrete historical forms of socialization as the actual compounds of a few simple fundamental forms of human association.

When one says, for example, that superiority and inferiority is a formation to be found in every human association, though the proposition certainly involves very profound insight into the essence of human nature and human relationship, yet the assertion is so general that it affords little knowledge of particular societary formations. In order to reach such particular knowledge we must study separate types of superiority and inferiority, and we must master the special features of their formation, which in proportion to their definiteness of course lose generality of application.

In what follows I will exhibit some of the typical species of superiority and inferiority, in so far as they construct forms of association between individuals. For we must observe that superiority and inferiority is by no means a formation necessarily subsequent to the existence of "society." It is rather one of the forms in which "society" comes into being. It is one of the manifold interactions between individuals, the sum of which we designate as the socialization of the individuals concerned. The sociological task is therefore to interpret historical examples so as to show, first, from what material or formal conditions this form of society, in its different variations, takes its rise, and, on the other hand, what material or formal consequences attach themselves to the relation so discovered.

Every social occurrence as such, consists of an interaction between individuals. In other words, each individual is at the same time an active and a passive agent in a transaction. In case of superiority and inferiority, however, the relation assumes the appearance of a one-sided operation; the one party appears to exert, while the other seems merely to receive an influence. Such, however, is not in fact the case. No one would give himself the trouble to gain or to maintain superiority, if it afforded him no advantage or enjoyment. This return to the superior can be derived from the relation, however, only by virtue of the fact that there is a reciprocal action of the inferior upon the superior. The decisive characteristic of the relation at this point is this, that the effect which the inferior actually exerts upon the supe-

rior is determined by the latter. The superior causes the inferior to produce a given effect which the superior shall experience. In this operation, in case the subordination is really absolute, no sort of spontaneity is present on the part of the subordinate. The reciprocal influence is rather the same as that between a man and a lifeless external object with which the former performs an act for his own use. That is, the person acts upon the object in order that the latter may react upon himself. In this reaction of the object no spontaneity on the part of the object is to be observed, but merely the further operation of the spontaneity of the person. Such an extreme case of superiority and inferiority will scarcely occur among human beings. Rather will a certain measure of independence, a certain direction of the relation proceed also from the self-will and the character of the subordinate. The different cases of superiority and inferiority will accordingly be characterized by differences in the relative amount of spontaneity which the subordinates and the superiors bring to bear upon the total relation. In exemplification of this reciprocal action of the inferior, through which superiority and inferiority manifests itself as proper socialization, I will mention only a few cases, in which the reciprocity is difficult to discern.

When in the case of an absolute despotism the ruler attaches to his edicts the threat of penalty or the promise of reward, the meaning is that the monarch himself will be bound by the regulation which he has ordained. The inferior shall have the right on the other hand to demand something from the lawgiver. Whether the latter subsequently grants the promised reward or protection is another question. The spirit of the relation as contemplated by the law is that the superior completely controls the inferior, to be sure, but that a certain claim is assured to the latter, which claim he may press or may allow to lapse, so that even this most definite form of the relation still contains an element of spontaneity on the part of the inferior.

Still farther; the concept *law* seems to connote that he who gives the law is in so far unqualifiedly superior. Apart from

those cases in which the law is instituted by those who will be its subjects, there appears in lawgiving as such no sign of spontaneity on the part of the subject of the law. It is, nevertheless, very interesting to observe how the Roman conception of law makes prominent the reciprocity between the superior and the subordinate elements. Thus *lex* means originally *compact*, in the sense, to be sure, that the terms of the same are fixed by the proponent, and the other party can accept or reject it only *en bloc*. The *lex publica populi Romani* meant originally that the king proposed and the people accepted the same. Thus even here, where the conception itself seems to express the complete one-sidedness of the superior, the nice social instinct of the Romans pointed in the verbal expression to the coöperation of the subordinate. In consequence of like feeling of the nature of socialization the later Roman jurists declared that the *societas leonina* is not to be regarded as a social compact; where the one absolutely controls the other, that is, where all spontaneity of the subordinate is excluded, there is no longer any socialization.

Once more, the orator who confronts the assembly, or the teacher his class, seems to be the sole leader, the temporary superior. Nevertheless every one who finds himself in that situation is conscious of the limiting and leading reaction of the mass which is apparently merely passive and submissive to his guidance. This is the case not merely when the parties immediately confront each other. All leaders are also led, as in countless cases the master is the slave of his slaves. "I am your leader, therefore I must follow you," said one of the most eminent German parliamentarians, with reference to his party. Every journalist is influenced by the public upon which he seems to exert an influence entirely without reaction. The most characteristic case of actual reciprocal influence, in spite of what appears to be subordination without corresponding reaction, is that of hypnotic suggestion. An eminent hypnotist recently asserted that in every hypnosis there occurs an actual if not easily defined influence of the hypnotized upon the hypnotist, and that without this the effect would not be produced.

When we advance from this preliminary question, to the particular differentiations of the relation with which we are concerned, three possible types of superiority at once present themselves. Superiority may be exercised (*a*) by an individual (*b*) by a group (*c*) by an objective principle higher than individuals. I proceed to notice some of the sociological significance of these three cases.

The subordination of a group to a single person has in the first place as a consequence a very decided unification of the group, and this is equally the case with both the characteristic forms of this subordination: viz., (1) when the group with its head constitutes a real internal unity; when the superior is more a leader than a master, and only represents in himself the power and the will of the group; (2) when the group is conscious of opposition between itself and its head, when a party opposed to the head is formed. In both cases the unity of the supreme head tends to bring about an inner unification of the group. The elements of the latter are conscious of themselves as belonging together, because their interests converge at one point. Moreover the opposition to this unified controlling power compels the group to collect itself, to condense itself into unity. This is true not alone of the political group. In the factory, the ecclesiastical community, a school class and in associated bodies of every sort it is to be observed that the termination of the organization in a head, whether in case of harmony or of opposition, helps to effect unification of the group. This is most conspicuous to be sure in the political sphere. History has shown it to be the enormous advantage of monarchies that they unify the political interests of the popular mass. The totality has a common interest in holding the prerogatives of the crown within their boundaries, possibly in restricting them; or there is a common field of conflict between those whose interests are with the crown and those who are opposed. Thus there is a supreme point with reference to which the whole people constitutes either a single party or at most two. Upon the disappearance of its head, to which all are subordinate—with the end of this political pressure—all

political unity often likewise ceases. There spring up a great number of party factions which previously, in view of that supreme political interest for or against the monarchy, found no room.

This transformation in the political life of a people occurs not merely in the case of a complete abolition of monarchy, but also in the case of gradual limitation of its power, *i. e.*, of the *quantum* of its superiority. The parliamentary history of Germany and of France shows this very clearly. The unification of the group-elements through common subordination expresses itself moreover in this, that in this case factional disturbances are much more easily quieted than when the elements are independent and subordinate to no one. Here comes in force the conception of the tribunal of final appeal (*höhere Instanz*), of such weight sociologically, *i. e.*, for every form of human association. The Greek as well as the Italian city-states in many instances made shipwreck simply for this reason, that they had over them no higher authority which might have adjusted differences, as would have been done if they were in common subordination to a central power. Where several elements stand opposed to each other, and none of them recognizes a superior power, conflicts are, as a rule, to be reconciled only by direct comparison of force. The Christian religion is credited with attuning men's souls to peaceableness. In so far as this is the case the sociological ground for the fact is surely the feeling of the common subordination of all beings to the divine principle. The Christian believer is filled with the conception that over him and every opponent, be the latter a believer or not, stands that supreme authority. This thought removes the temptation to forcible measurement of strength as far from him as under normal conditions it would be from those who are subordinate to a supreme principle.

This unification may present itself in two different forms, viz., as a leveling, or as gradation. In case a collection of human beings are alike subordinate to a single individual, they are in so far equal. The correlation between despotism and equality has long been recognized. On that account, from the other point of view, the autocrat often has an interest in equalizing the differ-

ences of social classes because marked superiorities and inferiorities in the relations between subjects come into real as well as psychological competition with his own supremacy. Thus we see in a large portion of European history, so long as feudalism and the legal differences of estates prevailed, that the struggles of the lower orders for legal equality were aided by the princes. The overlords sought to diminish the privileges of the nobility, because as rulers they elevated themselves to a more lofty and more equal eminence over an equalized society. But there is concealed in this relation between autocracy and the leveling of the ruled another social factor of great significance. This factor may be indicated as follows: The structure of a society in which a single person rules and the great mass obeys is to be understood only through the consideration that the mass, that is the ruled, includes only a portion of the personality belonging to the individuals concerned, while the ruler invests his whole personality in the relationship. Lordship over a developed society does not consequently differ so very much from rule over a horde, since the individuals build into the structure of the mass only fragments of their personality and reserve the remainder. There are wanting therefore in the mass, as the ruled subject, the resources, adaptabilities, the accommodations, the developments of power which the whole individual possesses through the unity and presence of his total psychical energy. Apart from consideration of this difference, this devotion of a mere fraction of individuality to the mass, the frequent facility of its subserviency is not to be understood.

Wonder has often been felt over the irrationality of the condition in which a single person exercises lordship over a great mass of others. The contradiction will be modified when we reflect that the ruler and the individual subject in the controlled mass by no means enter into the relationship with an equal *quantum* of their personality. The mass is composed through the fact that many individuals unite fractions of their personality,—one-sided purposes, interests and powers, while that which each personality as such actually is towers above this

common level and does not at all enter into that "mass," *i. e.*, into that which is really ruled by the single person. Hence it is also that frequently in very despotically ruled groups individuality may develop itself very freely, in those aspects particularly which are not in participation with the mass. Thus began the development of modern individuality in the despotisms of the Italian Renaissance. Here, as in other similar cases (for example, under Napoleon I and III), it was for the direct interest of the despots to allow the largest freedom to all those aspects of personality which were not identified with the regulated mass, *i. e.*, to those aspects most apart from politics. Thus subordination was more tolerable. It is one of the highest tasks of administrative art to distinguish properly between those characteristics of men with respect to which they may be included in a leveled mass, and those other characteristics which may be left to free individual development. For this distinction there is needed the most accurate knowledge of what is common to the mass, and what consequently is the material for the establishment of a common level, upon which the subjects may stand at a constantly equal height, while that in which the individuals composing the mass cannot be unified must be left outside the circuit of superiority and subordination. This is a formal sociological demand and arrangement which is by no means valid in political autocracies alone, but in every possible autocracy as well. It is therefore in this more exact sense that the leveling must be understood which corresponds with the superiority of a single person.

In the second place the group may assume the form of a pyramid. In this case the subordinates stand over against the superior not in an equalized mass, but in very nicely graded strata of power. These strata grow constantly smaller in extent but greater in significance. They lead up from the inferior mass to the head, the single ruler.

This form of the group may come into existence in two ways. It may emerge from the autocratic supremacy of an individual. The latter often loses the substance of his power, and allows it

to slip downwards, while retaining its form and titles. In this case more of the power is retained by the orders nearest to the former autocrat than is acquired by those more distant. Since the power thus gradually percolates, a continuity and graduation of superiority and inferiority must develop itself. This is in fact the way in which in oriental states the social forms often arise. The power of the superior orders disintegrates, either because it is essentially incoherent, and does not know how to attain the above emphasized proportion between subordination and individual freedom; or because the persons comprising the administration are too indolent or too ignorant of governmental technique to preserve supreme power. For the power which is exercised over a large circle is never a constant possession. It must be constantly acquired and defended anew if anything more than its shadow and name is to remain.

The other way in which a scale of power is constructed up to a supreme head is the reverse of that just described. Starting with a relative equality of the social elements, certain elements gain greater significance; within the circle of influence thus constituted certain especially powerful individuals differentiate themselves, until this development accommodates itself to one or to a few heads. The pyramid of superiority and inferiority is built in this case from below upward, while in the former case the development was from above downward. This second form of development is often found in economic relationships, where at first there exists a certain equality between the persons carrying on the work of a certain industrial society. Presently some of the number acquire wealth; others become poor; others fall into intermediate conditions which are as dependent upon an aristocracy of property as the lower orders are upon the middle strata; this aristocracy rises in manifold gradations to the magnates, of whom sometimes a single individual is appropriately designated as the "king" of a branch of industry.[1] By a sort of combination of the two ways in which graded superiority and

[1] Of course such developments take place not in clear cut form nor in strict accordance with a scheme of explanation, but always in devious courses and obscured

inferiority of the group comes into being the feudalism of the Middle Ages arose. So long as the full citizen—either Greek, Roman or Teutonic—knew no subordination under an individual, there existed for him on the one hand complete equality with those of his own order, but on the other hand rigid exclusiveness toward those of lower orders. Feudalism remodeled this characteristic social form into the equally characteristic arrangement which filled the gap between freedom and bondage with a scale of classes. Service, *servitium*, united all members of the realm with each other and with the king. In those times of primitive economy the king had no other resort for rewarding his officials and for binding the great men of his dominions to himself than by enfeoffing them with land and laborers. At first this bestowal was only for life tenure or at will, but the fief later passed into property. The king parted with some of his domain, and his greater subjects likewise assigned land as fiefs to their inferior vassals and thus a gradation of social position, possessions and obligations came into existence. But the same progress came about from the opposite direction. The intermediate strata came into being not alone through concessions from above, but also through accumulations from below. On the one hand small landowners, originally free, gave up their land to more powerful lords, to receive it back from them as a fief. These lords of domains on the other hand, through constant accretions of power, which weakened royalty could not prevent, rose in their turn to kingly power. It is consistent with this contemporaneous duality of genesis that the feudal form of society may have quite antithetical consequences for its monarchical head. While the outcome in Germany was that the central power became hollow, being changed into a mere form, the

by all sorts of collateral phenomena. The sociological type which we derive from all this is always an abstraction, but not other than those at the basis of every science. The object of a special science seldom occurs in the purity and isolation in which it is scientifically treated, but in reality always mixed and entangled with phenomena to which other branches of science are devoted, so that each special science treats only an abstraction. It is therefore better to acknowledge freely that this is the case with the new science of sociology.

French crown founded upon the same system its power to organize and control throughout the entire realm.

So much with reference to the forms which the group assumes in subordination to an individual, which forms, either in clear exhibit or as elements of a complicated manifestation, are to be found in the structure of the most various groups, ecclesiastical not less than political, military as well as relationships which receive their structure entirely from the traits of character of those who compose them. It goes without saying that similar phenomena may occur in case of subordination to a numerous body. The numerical composition of the superior power is not always characteristic of it. In the sociological respect thus far referred to it may be a matter of indifference if the superior position of the one person happens to be occupied by a number of persons.

In passing to consideration of the relations which are characterized by the superiority of such a number of persons, I observe that monarchy is the type and the primary form of the superior and inferior relation in general. Monarchy is so expressive and effective that it continues to have a function even in those constitutions which arose from reaction against it, in constitutions which directly purposed to introduce in the place of monarchy a division of the sovereignty. It has been said of the American President, as of the Athenian Archon and of the Roman Consul, that with certain restrictions they are still merely the heirs of the royal power, of which the kings have been robbed through revolution. Maine has shown that the democracy of the French Revolution was nothing but the inverted French monarchy, equipped with precisely the same qualities as the latter; and Proudhon declares that a parliament based on universal suffrage differs in no respect from an absolute monarchy. If the popular representative be infallible, indestructible and irresponsible, the monarch cannot be essentially more. The monarchical principle according to this claim is as vitally present and complete in a parliament as in a legitimate king. Just in this respect is the significance of the *form* of socialization to be correctly apprehended.

If the organization of the group, the reciprocal relation of its elements has once become somewhat fixed, it persists, even if the motive and specific purpose from which it originated is thoroughly changed and even completely reversed. Quite new elements are introduced into the surviving form, yet in consequence of the stability of the form these substitutes exercise their functions in quite similar fashion. We shall presently meet again this further working of the form of organization.

In reference to those social structures which are characterized by the superiority of a number of persons, a social totality over individuals or other totalities, it is to be noticed at once that the consequences for the subordinates are very unequal. The highest wish of the Spartan and Thessalian slaves was to become slaves of the state rather than of individuals. In Prussia before the emancipation of the serfs the peasants attached to the state domains had a much preferable lot to that of those upon private estates. The situation of India under British administration is far better than under the sway of the East India Company and its private interests. In the great modern industrial enterprises where there is no entirely individual control, but which are either stock companies, or are under equally impersonal modes of administration, the employés are better off than in the smaller concerns where they are subject to the personal exploitation of the proprietor.

At the same time the contrary may be observed. The allies of Athens and Rome, the territories which were formerly subject to single Swiss Cantons, were more cruelly oppressed and plundered than could easily have happened under the tyranny of a single master. The stock company which, thanks to the methods in force in the business, as just now observed exploits its employés less than the private entrepreneur, is not at liberty in many cases, *e. g.*, where indemnities or special aids are in question, to act as generously as would be possible for a private owner who need not give account of his outlays to any one. And in relation to momentary impulses; the cruelties which were perpetrated for the amusement of the Roman circus goers, the extrem-

est refinement of which was often demanded by the latter, would scarcely have been practiced by many of these if the delinquent had been accountable to a single person alone. An immediately coöperating mass knows no individual considerations, because in the mass itself the individual impulses and qualities are paralyzed so that it cannot feel any sympathy with that which is specifically individual. The chief consideration is however that the point in which all the members of a large group securely coincide is very low in the scale of the moral; that consideration and delicacy is always of an individual and personal nature; that it will not usually be possible to unite a great number upon the same personal considerations; and that, especially in an association for economic ends, unlimited egoism in pursuit of material advantage and in saving cost is the one interest to be unqualifiedly accredited to all.

But subordination to a single individual may be preferred to that under a body of persons upon more ideal grounds, viz., when the superiority and inferiority bears a personal character, when it is a relation of fidelity, and the superior appears rather as a leader than a ruler. In that case there is in subordination a certain freedom and dignity which disappears when one is subordinate to a number of persons. Accordingly, the princes of the sixteenth century in France, Germany, Scotland and the Netherlands often encountered serious opposition when they allowed government to be exercised by learned substitutes or administrative bodies. The prerogative of command was regarded as something personal, to which one would render obedience only from personal devotion. The relation of superiority and inferiority existed only between person and person, whereby a higher and worthier rôle fell to the subordinate in the relationship than he could preserve in the case of subordination to an impersonal governing body composed of several individuals.

Of great importance for the outline of the sociological picture is the question whether and in what degree the lordship of a numerous body is exercised directly or through agents. The "agent" is a very peculiar phenomenon, emerging in every

highly developed form of intercourse. This phenomenon manifests its genuinely sociological character in the fact that it occurs in the most diverse sorts of groups and in the service of the most varied interests, everywhere exhibiting however certain similar formal traits. This common fundamental characteristic consists in the transference of responsibility. The real consequences of his action do not fall upon the agent, as they do upon every one who pursues his own proper interests. The affair itself does not make him responsible. Only because the consequences of his procedure fall upon another, and this latter has some sort of power over him, can the agent's action produce pleasure or pain in himself. This circumstance must make the essential relationship between the agent and the object of his action take a shape quite different from that which appears when the action is direct, without transference to the agency of another. On account of the greater distance of personal interest from the object the requirements of the agent may be less immediate and precise, and on that account very wide scope is often present for personal differences, especially where a totality is represented by a single individual. Here is room for hard-heartedness and pleasure in cruelty, which assumes the appearance of rigorous care for the interests of the principal; for pedantry or actual conscientiousness, which, in effect, amounts to the same thing; for negligence and complaisance, which tolerates lax discharge of duty on the part of the subordinate on the ground that the generality can easily bear the injury. This wide scope which the vicarious principle gives to personal tendencies, that are often little restrained by the requirements of the action concerned, is evidently one ground for the fact that subjection to a totality may have such widely contrasted consequences for the subordinate.

A peculiar form of subordination to a number of individuals is determination by vote of a majority. The presumption of majority rule is that there is a collection of elements originally possessing equal rights. In the process of voting the individual places himself in subordination to a power of which he is a part,

but in this way, that it is left to his own volition whether he will belong to the superior or the inferior, *i. e.*, the outvoted party. We are not now interested in cases of this complex problem in which the superiority is entirely formal, as, for example, in resolves of scientific congresses, but only with those in which the individual is constrained to an action by the will of the party outvoting him, that is, in which he must practically subordinate himself to the majority. This dominance of numbers through the fact that others, though only equal in right, have another opinion, is by no means the matter of course which it seems to us today in our time of determinations by masses. Ancient German law knew nothing of it. If one did not agree with the resolve of the community he was not bound by it. As an application of this principle unanimity was later necessary in the choice of king, evidently because it could not be expected or required that one who had not chosen the king would obey him. The English baron who had opposed authorizing a levy, or who had not been present, often refused to pay it. In the tribal council of the Iroquois, as in the Polish Parliament, decisions had to be unanimous. There was therefore no subordination of an individual to a majority, unless we consider the fact that a proposition was regarded as rejected if it did not receive unanimous approval, a subordination, an outvoting, of the person proposing the measure.

When, on the contrary, majority rule exists, two modes of subordination of the minority are possible, and discrimination between them is of the highest sociological significance. Control of the minority may, in the first place, arise from the fact that the many are more powerful than the few. Although, or rather because the individuals participating in a vote are supposed to be equals, the majority have the physical power to coerce the minority. The taking of a vote and the subjection of the minority serves the purpose of avoiding such actual measurement of strength, but accomplishes practically the same result through the count of votes, since the minority is convinced of the futility of such resort to force. There exist in the group two parties in

opposition as though they were two groups, between which relative strength, represented by the vote, is to decide.

Quite another principle is in force, however, in the second place, where the group as a unity predominates over all individuals, and so proceeds that the passing of votes shall *merely give expression to the unitary group will.* In the transition from the former to this second principle the enormously important step is taken from a unity made up merely of the sum of the individuals to recognition and operation of an abstract objective group unity. Classic antiquity took this step much earlier—not only absolutely but relatively earlier—than the German peoples. Among the latter the oneness of the community did not exist over against the individuals who composed it, but entirely in them. Consequently the group will was not only not enacted, but it did not even exist so long as a single member dissented. The group was not complete unless all its members were united, since it was only in the sum of its members that the group consisted. In case the group, however, is a self-existent structure —whether consciously or merely in point of fact—in case the group organization effected by union of the individuals remains along with and in spite of the individual changes, this self-existent unity—state, community, association for a distinctive purpose—must surely will and act in a definite manner. Since, however, only one of two contradictory opinions can ultimately prevail, it is assumed as more probable that the majority knows or represents this will better than the minority. According to the presumptive principle involved the minority is, in this case, not excluded but included. The subordination of the minority is thus in this stage of sociological development, quite different from that in case the majority simply represents the stronger power. In the case in hand the majority does not speak in its own name, but in that of the ideal unity and totality. It is only to this unity, which speaks by the mouth of the majority, that the minority subordinates itself. This is the immanent principle of our parliamentary decisions.

To these must be joined, third, those formations in which

subordination is neither to an individual nor yet to a majority, but to an impersonal objective principle. Here, where we seem to be estopped from speaking of a *reciprocal influence* between the superior and the subordinate, a sociological interest enters in but two cases: first, when this ideal superior principle is to be interpreted as the psychological consolidation of a real social power; second, when the principle establishes specific and characteristic relationships between those who are subject to it in common. The former case appears chiefly in connection with the moral imperatives. In the moral consciousness we feel ourselves subject to a decree which does not appear to be issued by any personal human power; we hear the voice of conscience only in ourselves, although with a force and definiteness in contrast with all subjective egoism, which, as it seems, could have had its source only from an authority outside the subject. As is well known the attempt has been made to resolve this contradiction by the assumption that we have derived the content of morality from social decrees. Whatever is serviceable to the species and to the group, whatever on that account is demanded of the members for the self-preservation of the group, is gradually bred into individuals as an instinct, so that it asserts itself as a peculiar autonomous impression by the side of the properly personal, and consequently often contradictory impulses. Thus would be explained the double character of the moral command. On the one side it appears to us as an impersonal order to which we have simply to yield. On the other side, however, no visible external power, but only our own most real and personal instinct enforces it upon us. Sociologically this is of interest as an example of a wholly peculiar form of reaction between the individual and his group. The social force is here completely grown into the individual himself. As by metempsychosis it has changed itself into the individual's own instinct. Within the souls of the persons so affected the instinct comes into reaction with those other impulses which are more personal and individual. The result of this process often continues itself in the acts of the individual, by which he exerts an

influence on the group. The influence of the group upon the individual, and that of the individual upon the group, in the case of these ethical occurrences, are far removed in time from each other. The former influence, through the transformation just indicated, is changed into a subjective imperative, which thus presents subordination of the individual to the conditions of the life of his group, in the form of obedience to an ideal impersonal principle.

We now turn to the second sociological question raised by the case of subordination to an impersonal ideal principle, viz., how does this subordination affect the reciprocal relation of the persons thus subordinated in common? Here again it should in the outset be observed that before this ideal subordination came into existence it was preceded by various kinds of actual subordination. We frequently observe the exercise of superiority by a person or a class in the name of an ideal principle, to which the thus prevailing personality is itself ostensibly subject. It appears to be the logical course for this relationship to precede and for the real organization of authority among men to develop itself in consequence of this ideal dependence. Historically, however, the way is as a rule the reverse. From interrelations of very real personal power there arise coördinations of superiority and inferiority, over which gradually, through spiritualization of the dominant power, or through extension and de-personalization (*Entpersonalisirung*) of the whole relationship, an ideal objective power grows up. When this stage has been reached the superior, the immediate representative of the power so derived, exercises only the authority of this objective power. The development of the position of the *pater familias* among the Aryans exhibits this clearly. The power of the *pater familias* was originally unlimited and entirely subjective; that is, his momentary desire, his personal advantage was permitted to give the decision upon all regulations. But this arbitrary power gradually became limited by a feeling of responsibility. The unity of the domestic group, embodied in the *spiritus familiaris*, grew into the ideal power in relation

to which the lord of the whole came to regard himself as merely an obedient agent. Accordingly it follows that morals and custom, instead of subjective preference, determine his acts, his decisions, his judicial judgments; that he no longer behaves as though he were absolute lord of the family property, but rather the manager of it in the interest of the whole; that his position bears more the character of an official station than that of an unlimited right. Thus the relation between superiors and inferiors is placed upon an entirely new basis. While in the first stage the latter constitute only a personal competence, so to speak, of the former, the objective idea of the family is now created. The family is thought of as standing above all the individual members. The guiding patriarch himself is, like every other member, subordinate to the family idea. He may give directions to the other members of the family only in the name of the higher ideal unity.

An example of formally similar development is furnished by the most recent times with their increasing preponderance of the objective and technical element over the personal. Many sorts of superiority and inferiority which formerly bore a personal character, so that in a given relation one party was plainly the superior and the other the inferior, are now so changed that they are both and equally subject to an objective purpose, and the subordination of the one to the other persists only as a *technical necessity* within this common relationship to the higher principle. So long as the relation of the wage-worker is looked on as a rental contract—the laboring man is hired or *rented*—so long does the relationship contain essentially an element of subordination of the laborer to the employer. This element is excluded however so soon as we regard the labor compact not as rental but as purchase of labor as an economic good. Then is the subordination which the relation demands of the laborer, as has been said, only a subordination "to coöperative progress, which for the entrepreneur, in so far as he performs any activity, is as essential as for the laborer." The increased self-consciousness of the modern laborer must in part at least be

credited to this sociological perception. He has no longer the feeling that he is a subject person. He regards himself only as servant of an objective economic *technique*, within which the element that as entrepreneur or leader is superior to himself works no longer as a personal superior, but simply as a technical necessity. Inasmuch as the laborer is no longer hired as an entire person, but rather a quantitatively defined service is stipulated, he is freed as a man from the relation of inferiority. He now belongs to the relationship only as a factor of the process of production, *thus in so far coördinate with the leader.*

The disadvantages of the relation of modern servants, as it exists in central Europe at least, are traceable to the fact that here really the whole human being enters into the relation of subordination, since his service is not restricted to definitely limited tasks. Only under such restrictions does relative coördination of superiority and inferiority enter. This is the case in a measure when the persons in domestic service have only a certain defined part of the household work to perform. In so far they are coördinate with the mistress of the household, with whom they coöperate in discharge of the necessary tasks of the household. On the other hand the former, and still existing relation, which engaged domestic servants as entire personalities, made them subservient to no such objective purpose, but rather to the mistress of the house as a person.

To what extent subordination to an ideal objective purpose creates a sort of equality among those who have positions of superiority and inferiority within this process, is shown further by the relation between officers and common soldiers. If this coördination is most prominent in war, where subordination is so especially rigid, it is for the reason that in war the patriotic purpose which is above all individual considerations operates more powerfully and more perceptibly. In peace, on the contrary, this patriotic purpose falls relatively into the background, and the material technique of service becomes prominent. This is consistent with the utilitarian importance of the direct relationship of superiority and subordination, while constant and

conscious ranking under the highest purpose, to which the whole relationship is ultimately subordinate, is not so necessary.

In what manner the relation between superiority and subordination is modified by the fact that in its entirety it is subsidiary to an ideal purpose, depends upon the question, is the person in the superior station the representative of the higher objective principle as against the subordinate, or have they a similar relation to this principle, so that the gradation between them is a matter of technique and organization? The former case occurs in the relation of an official to the public; the second in his relation to subordinate officials. In the former instance the official represents the whole idea and power of the state over against the citizen, who by transgression of law, may have placed himself outside of normal civic relations. The power which the official exercises flows from that higher civic principle to which, to be sure, the citizen belongs, yet for the moment this power confronts the latter as an external constraint, and asserts itself as superior to him. In the relation of the higher to the lower official on the other hand, the civic principle, the superior idea, is alike present in both. The one represents this idea as well as the other. Superiority and subordination between them are not produced by the antithesis of two principles, but by organization within one and the same principle.

These two forms of superiority and subordination dominated by a higher principle, with their very different consequences, emerge in the most various social spheres and with the most manifold complications. In all the countless cases in which an objective idea, an abstract unity, manifests itself in hierarchical organization, this double relationship of the individual is to be found. He is clothed with the dignity and importance of that principle, and he therewith enters into a relationship of superiority to all those over whom the principle has power. This occurs most obviously in the case of civic officials, who by no means owe their superiority over the citizens to the power of their own personality, but only to that of the principle of which they are the exponents. The same is often the case with a member of a

priestly order, in short, in all those social structures in which each individual member, *even when he occupies a very subordinate place within the structure*, yet towards those without represents the whole power and importance of the principle. On the other hand, such attachment to an organization may give rise to a certain subordination to those without. This is true, for example, in the case of a member of a business house. In his position as representative of the interests of the business he must conduct himself with zeal and devotion towards the public, even though within the concern itself he occupies a very superior position. The like is illustrated by the begging monk, who within his order may hold a commanding and influential station, yet towards all others he clothes himself in the deepest humility and subordination.

We thus see the most remarkable complications emerge where superiority and inferiority between individuals is limited and crossed by the subordination of the whole relationship to a higher principle. From such a very special example it may be evident that only the most accurate analysis of the forms of the relations which occur among men may gradually lead at last to an actual understanding of the complicated structure of human society. For "society" means that these countless bonds, dependences, relations of equilibrium or preponderance establish themselves between individuals. It is evident that we can reach an understanding of these relationships only by casting the sum of a great number of real historical cases; that is, by leaving out of consideration the differences in the material content of these relations, and by making only the forms of the relations, in all their modifications, crossings and complications the object of our investigations, just as logic becomes a science when we disregard all defined and specific contents of thought and consider only the forms in which single representations are so combined as to form truths.[1]

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[1] Translated by ALBION W. SMALL.

(To be continued.)