NORMATIVE REACTIONS TO NORMLESSNESS *

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Christopher Bennett Becker, of Yale University, has written the preface and the annotations for Howard Becker's Presidential address. His painstaking and scrupulous preparation of the manuscript provides both the essential substance of the address itself and a felicitous introduction in the spirit of Professor Becker's own work.

Howard Becker was deeply and persistently concerned with "the historical process;" his contributions to its analysis include studies of both ancient and modern societies, but always with a view to more realistic understanding of the present social order and of man's possibilities in shaping the future. This paper illustrates, once more, these interests. Professor Becker would have been heartened, perhaps, by the fact that his paper is one of several on social change included in this issue of the Review.—The Editor.

THE address my father delivered at Saint Louis in April was essentially a rethinking of the problem of the relation of explicit normative systems to the societies that are the social medium in which they exist. This was, in a way, the central problem of all of his original work, and that is enough to make his words important. Nevertheless, I must ask you to bear in mind that in all probability he would not have considered publishing the address as it stood in his notes, precisely because of the central importance of the topic. He would have wanted to consider thoroughly the implications of this "rethinking" for sacred-secular theory before putting it down in black and white. Let me take a few minutes to express myself more precisely.

The "normative reactions to normlessness" that are the topic of his address are part and parcel of the larger trend he called *sacralization*. Sacralization is a term subsuming the processes by which societies are tightened, hardened, reintegrated, restored.

A certain part of the social action involved in these processes has the preservation, maintenance, or restoration of explicit norms or of entire normative systems as its *conscious* goal. Such restoration presupposes that the subjects involved have defined the situation confronting them as already "normless," or about to become so, in relation to a set of norms which they tend to define in absolute terms as *the norms* of their society. This constitutes "the normative reaction to normlessness."

The concepts of sacralization and the normative reaction were formulated by Howard Becker about a dozen years ago, and they came to play a steadily larger part in his thought with each successive reworking of sacred-secular theory. In earlier years, when he was setting up the sacred-secular continuum for the first time, late in the 1920s, he had in mind the study of what he termed "processes of secularization." [1] Secularization seemed to him then to be a general term under which it might even be possible

[1] Howard Becker, "Processes of Secularisation," *The Sociological Review*, 24 (April–July and October, 1932), pp. 138–154, 266–286.

to subsume what he then confidently spoke of as "the total historical process."[2] While admitting the analytical possibility of beginning with the accessible secular society and moving toward the isolated sacred society, he found immediate use only for the sacred-through-secular cycle, feeling then that this was the tool likely to prove indispensable to the student of the historical record.[3] The sacred was important largely as a point of departure; it was the starting-point of secularization.

This search for a single overriding trend in human affairs was part of the legacy left to the social scientists of the first quarter of the twentieth century by the social philosophers of the nineteenth. Thus it was that the thinkers who parted company with the self-appointed priests of secular progress did not at first venture far beyond the familiar horizons of the philosophy of history. The belief in secular progress was reformulated more acceptably as the study of the progress of the secular.[4] It seemed to Howard Becker, in the 1930s, that Weber's work, and his own, along these lines, stood in the service of "a nonuniversal, nontranscendent, nonrelative theory of the total historical process."[5] Figuratively speaking, the sociologist could embrace the muse of History with one arm, and ward off with the other her teleologically-minded parents.

And yet one of the dogmas of progress lay concealed within this very effort: I speak of the commitment to a belief in "*the total* historical process." This belief was more than likely to lead to a search for a single overriding trend in history, while the single-minded rejection of all older teleologies made it very hard to explain direction in history except through a kind of negative environmentalism, by the postulation of a series of negative tropisms. I think my

father might have agreed that his very earliest formulations of the sacred-secular continuum, with their almost exclusive stress on processes of *secular*ization, merit this criticism.[6] In fact, I am inclined to regard his increasing interest in processes of sacralization, and in "normative reactions to normlessness," as his attempt to realize the *full* range of possibilities offered by the sacred-secular schema. Fortunately, he had set up the schema with the logic and precision that were second nature to him, and which were amplified by his studies with Leopold von Wiese. His clear awareness of the movement from sacred to secular as only one of the analytical possibilities offered by the schema made it feasible to introduce the concept of sacralization without in any way invalidating his analyses of secularization.[7]

Here the impulse towards a broader view came from history itself. If the theorists of Wilhelmian and Weimar Germany showed him only one side of "the historical process," his own observation of the Germany of the thirties showed him the other. I have just spoken of his logic and precision; here let me add that his logic never left the service of precision. When new facts pressed upon him, he "tooled up" his workshop to be able to handle them. The success of Nazism showed him that the movement from sacred to secular could be reversed, and Howard Becker now became aware of the historical importance of "reactionary radicalism," of "sacredness by prescription," of

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[2] "Prospects of Social Change as Viewed by Historian and Sociologist," first published in 1940, reprinted as Chapter 3 in Howard Becker, *Through Values to Social Interpretations,* Durham: Duke, 1950, p. 164.

[3] "Processes of Secularisation," *op. cit.,* p. 286.

[4] See the list of theorists of such "total transition" in *ibid.,* section 4, for an idea of the pervasiveness of this belief in the first quarter of the century.

[5] "Prospects of Social Change . . . ," *loc. cit.*

[6] For instance, the heavy reliance, in "Processes of Secularisation," *op. cit.* (1932), on the end of "new experience," on "the tendency to respond more and more readily to new stimuli," and the stress on the secular as the "photographic negative" of the sacred.

[7] In like manner, a theorist who wished to remain within the framework of Weber's thought while perhaps insisting less on "disenchantment" and "rationalization" as overriding trends could easily do so by developing more fully the application of the concept of "communal action," *Vergemeinschaftung,* and more particularly the idea of *"übergreifende Vergemeinschaftung,"* to match the detailed treatment of "societal action" *(Vergesellschaftung)* throughout Weber's work. *Cf.* Max Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft,* 4th edition, II, 2 par.s 1–3 (pp. 199–207); III, 4, par.s 2–3 (pp. 631–640), the latter translated in H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, *From Max Weber,* New York: Oxford Galaxy, 1958, pp. 181–184.

the *prescriptive* society; [8] he came to see that societies of this type, though they come into being most often as the result of "societal continuity long enough to permit the rise of prescription out of tradition," could also arise from "the threat of societal discontinuity issuing from crises of various kinds," [9] as Hitler's totalitarian society rose out of the "tumult of the 'Twenties." [10]

This was the context of thought in which the concept of "the normative reaction to normlessness" took shape. Normlessness was originally used by my father as a translation of Durkheim's *anomie*,[11] and was then adopted as a term for the state of discontinuity and unpredictability of conduct found in "pronormless" societies, those that have approached the secular extreme of the continuum. But as he probed deeper into the stuff of history, and as he came to insist less on identifying the "total process of history" with a fixed and irreversible order of movement along the sacred-secular continuum,[12] he found it necessary to *generalize* the "normative reaction." In his words, "the 'normative reaction to normlessness' occurs not only when secularization reaches . . . extremes, but also, for instance, when one rigidly prescribed sacred sub-society clashes with another, or when one of prin-

cipled-secular variety too brusquely invades folk or prescribed bailiwicks." [13]

And his final position was that the normative reaction, as a *reaction,* is found wherever the subject defines the situation of action, the societal context, as "normless," and attempts to restructure it in accord with explicit normative patterns. The observer, then, cannot limit this reaction to the point on *his* scale which *he* designates as approaching "real" normlessness. The term loses the objectivist overtones of Durkheim's *anomie*. "Normative reactions to normlessness"—note the switch to the plural without article—normative reactions were now perceived to be an important aspect of sacralization, and sacralization, in turn, was perceived to be separable from secularization *only* for analytical purposes.[14] This is an important point, and one which deserves fuller treatment; but I think that I have now said enough about the overall trend of my father's thought within the sacred-secular framework to set his views on "Normative Reactions To Normlessness" in perspective, and I shall now proceed to read them to you.

A final word on the form and content of the paper seems in order. The outline of the address, and about three-quarters of the text, are taken over as they stand in Howard Becker's notes. Where the notes are sketchy, I have resorted to piecing; about half of the pieces are taken *verbatim* from other of his recent writings on the subject, and the rest I have tried to complete in what I hope is the spirit that moved the whole.[15]

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[8] "Reactionary radicalism" first used in Harry Elmer Barnes and Howard Becker, *Social Thought from Lore to Science,* Boston: Heath, 1938, in the treatment of Plato (pp. 124 and 314 of 2nd edition), arising out of the treatment in Howard Becker's dissertation on secularization and the Greek mind. "Prescription" first treated in "Values as Tools of Sociological Analysis," *Through Values to Social Interpretations,* Chapter 1; *cf.* p. 46, note 50.

[9] Howard Becker, *Man in Reciprocity,* New York: Praeger, 1956; section "The Rise and Course of Prescription," pp. 159–162, based on pp. 63–66 of *Through Values.* . . .

[10] Howard Becker, *German Youth: Bond or Free,* London: Kegan Paul, 1946; Chapter 6. This study of the German youth movement was largely responsible for the refinement in the treatment of sacred societies.

[11] *Cf.* Howard Becker and Alvin Boskoff, *Modern Sociological Theory in Continuity and Change,* New York: Dryden, 1957, Chapter 6, p. 173, note 63.

[12] *Ibid.,* p. 176: "Shifts from one societal type to another were also discussed, but not in order to demonstrate evolutionary or even developmental sequence; skipping and reversal is not only possible but also frequently evident."

[13] *Man in Reciprocity,* p. 189.

[14] *Ibid.,* p. 183: "The most that can be said of any society is that it is highly secularized or is secularizing rapidly, for sacred residues always remain or are *regenerated* in some form.

"Secularization, in other words, goes on in all societies—more rapidly, of course, when there is a great deal of affective nonrationality. But *sacralization also goes on in all societies;* what was once novel, and even heretical, eventually becomes traditional, and hard on the heels of tradition, in many cases, follows prescription. Loose societies thus become tight."

[15] All additions of consequence are bracketed, and subsequent footnotes indicate the source of all major additions. No theoretical points offered in the notes have been omitted.

In the following presentation, "normative" and "normlessness" are used as terms referring to certain aspects of culture. [The term "culture," in turn, is used in the broadly anthropological sense common since the seventeenth century, meaning human industry as it is manifested in its products.][16]

The term "normative," in the present context, refers not only to the fact that at the developed human level *all* conduct is oriented toward norms in some respects, but also to the fact that on occasion there may be *explicit* adherence to norms that are viewed as worthy of such adherence. (It might be well to distinguish between these two senses of "normative" by speaking of "norm-upholding," "norm-promulgating," or the like, to designate explicit adherence to norms. [In the present context, however, the coupling with the word "reactions" should make it clear that the reference is indeed to such explicitly normative conduct.])

"Normlessness," in the present context, must be taken as a *relative* term for the sociologist, inasmuch as, from his standpoint, no conduct, as long as it remains determinably human, can be *wholly* devoid of normative orientation. By given subjects, however, certain kinds of conduct may be regarded as having no normative orientation whatsoever; such subjects, therefore, may take "normlessness" in an *absolute* sense.

Evidence bearing on this absolute conception may be found among many peoples and many smaller groups and classes. Those persons who do not follow the norms viewed as *worthy* are often viewed as "animal-like," "not human," and so on. Indeed, terms such as swine, dogs, beasts, lice, snakes, and the like, may be freely used.

It must of course be granted that in some instances the non-observer of the worthy norms is recognized as explicitly adhering to a set of counter-norms, so to speak. The counter-norms are then given an absolute quality as wholly *un*worthy; they are evil incarnate, as it were, and such evil is regarded as non-human. Where this absolute level is reached, the supernatural beings who are credited with being "evil incarnate" are often represented as having tails, cloven hooves, horns, and other animal attributes that mark them as non-human. [The belief in the absolute evil of these counter-norms thus merely serves to confirm the fact that the subjects conceive of the worthy normative structure as absolute.]

We may, then, tentatively define normative "reactions" as efforts to adhere to worthy norms in the face of what is viewed as actual or potential normlessness.

[Thus far we have spoken of the normative reaction in terms of "given subjects" whose position in society has been left undefined. It would seem well at this point to reserve the right to distinguish, in certain cases, between the extremists or "zealots" who are willing to sacrifice all else to preserve the doctrinal and operational purity of a given normative system, and the "mundane majority" who are interested in having such an order imposed or reimposed upon society at large, chiefly in order to assure enough societal continuity to permit their own attainment of mundane ends not unduly remote. It may be remembered that a similar distinction is at the bottom of the typology of religious organization in which the cult, the sect, the denomination, and the ecclesia are placed on a continuum of adjustment to the needs of "mundane" society.[17]

Continuing in the present vein:] Orientation toward worthy norms is sometimes regarded by the subjects concerned as for the sake of the norms, and for that only. Any assertion that the norms are held worthy because they lead toward desirable ends not explicitly incorporated in the verbal formulations of the norms as worthy, is flatly rejected. "Virtue is its own reward;" "Do good, for good is good to do!" Nevertheless, many subjects implicitly and on occasion explicitly hold that adherence to worthy norms aids in or even guarantees attainment of ends, goals, or objectives essential for "the

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[16] Howard Becker, "Sociology and Anthropology," in J. Gillin, editor, *For a Science of Social Man,* New York: Macmillan, 1954, pp. 115–128. See also Becker and Boskoff, *op. cit.,* pp. 139–143.

[17] Wiese-Becker, *Systematic Sociology,* Gary: Norman Paul, 1950 (first edition 1932), pp. 624–642; last full treatment in *Man in Reciprocity,* Chapters 23–24. This addition to Howard Becker's notes is designed to make clear his distinction between the "zealots" and the "majority," which appears throughout the rest of the paper.

good life" here or hereafter. *Ideally* these ends are to be viewed as "unearned increments," but the saints and sages able to hold to such a view are few and far between. Most adherents of worthy norms view the attainment of any "good life" end as an "earned increment." What is more, this earned increment is often defined in mundane terms: "He shall sit under his vine and his fig-tree, and none shall make him afraid." The mundane thus looms larger than the spiritual, however the latter may be construed.

Indeed, the more or less immediately attainable mundane obscures visions of the mundane that can be reached only after a long lapse of time; present benefits are preferred to rewards so remote that only generations far removed can reap them. Those willing to suffer severe deprivation for the sake of great-great great grandchildren can be found, true enough, but they rarely constitute the majority of any ongoing society.

It is true that deprivation may, under some circumstances, be suffered by a majority, but in such cases the majority is likely to be under the control of a minority of zealots. "The classless society," for example, may be proclaimed as worthy of major sacrifice, and those who are to make such sacrifice in the here and now will then be graciously "permitted to volunteer." [But even so, the "building of the perfect socialist society" is broken down into "five-year plans" and the like, in order to furnish the mundane majority with more visibly attainable goals.]

In the light of the foregoing, it is perhaps safe to say that those hoping to attain mundane ends not unduly remote represent the majority of any society, whether or not this majority is in effective control of broad societal policy. The ends, as classifiable by the outside observer, can be reduced to four, the familiar categories of response, recognition, security, and new experience.[18] The

pursuit of ends thus classifiable is empirically ascertainable, regardless of the motivations, determinable only through personality-system analysis, of those pursuing such ends.

This classification is purely one of convenience. A smaller number may result in distortion of the empirical evidence, or in undue stretching of meaning. A larger number might result in mere cataloging of relatively concrete referents, with only arbitary limits. Occam's razor must be used, but without either shaving off flesh or leaving miscellaneous whiskers.

A tentative outcome of the considerations thus far advanced can be stated thus:

When, in a given society or appropriate part thereof, normlessness is viewed by adherents of the normative system held to be worthy as of wide scope, and therefore as endangering the continuance of the worthy normative system, an effort to extirpate such normlessness is likely to be made.

"Endangering the continuance of the worthy normative system" means, again in the light of the foregoing, that many adherents of the worthy normative system feel that their attainment, in mundane terms, of response, recognition, security, and new experience, is rendered less likely, or may even be thwarted altogether. *Ergo,* action against normlessness must be taken; otherwise put, "the normative reaction to normlessness."

This reaction, as initially viewed by the outside observer, may appear to be archaistic, or it may appear to be futuristic, [using these terms in the sense given them by Toynbee.[19]] On closer examination, however, it often becomes evident that given reactions are neither purely archaistic nor purely futuristic, even though the subjects concerned may so define them. Nazism, by many subjects viewed as an archaistic reaction against the normlessness of Germany

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[18] Howard Becker's note: "Note that Thomas's practice of classifying these as 'wishes' is *not* here adopted. Instead, Znaniecki's practice (followed by him from at least 1925 onward) of referring to them as 'tendencies' toward the attainment of response, recognition, security, and new experience —which says nothing about the individual *genesis* of such tendencies—is expressly followed."

[19] The use of Toynbee's terminology indicates that Howard Becker regarded Toynbee's treatment of "schism in the soul" and "disintegration" as pertinent to the "normative reaction." For the former's development of "archaism" and "futurism," see Arnold J. Toynbee, *A Study of History,* London: Oxford, 1939, Vol. 6, pp. 49–132. For Becker's appraisal of the first six volumes, see the chapter on "Prospects of Social Change," in *Through Values . . . ,* pp. 149–154.

after World War I,[20] and defined by these subjects as a return to *Deutschheit* ("essential Germanness"), had of course many futuristic components, such as the coming of the millenial kingdom and the conquest of the world, as promised in the song:

Today we hold the Fatherland,
Tomorrow the world is ours.

Communism, for many subjects a reaction against the normlessness of the late Tsarist regime, and held by them to be futuristic, has many archaistic components, some of them quite basic Marxist beliefs, as for example the *return* of an originally classless society, although at a "higher level on the spiral of progress."

Note, however, that although the outside observer may regard archaism-futurism as always combined, though now with more archaism, now with more futurism, the orientation of many of the more zealous subjects is, from their own standpoint, purely archaistic or purely futuristic. Indeed, ruthlessness in wiping out those held responsible for normlessness may be in direct proportion to the strength of belief in the archaistic or futuristic purity of those doing the wiping out.

Having tried to say, in some detail, what is meant by "normative reactions to normlessness," it may be well now to consider some of the ways, more concretely speaking, in which subjects adhering to what they hold to be the worthy norms come to view other persons physically "within" their society as basically normless. [Lying at the root of the problem is the sober fact that *some* degree of discontinuity is empirically manifest in all known societies.[21] This dis-

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[20] Howard Becker's note: "See the writer's *German Youth: Bond or Free,* Chapter 6, 'Tumult of the 'Twenties.' " (*Cf.* note 10 above.)

[21] *Cf. Man in Reciprocity,* pp. 189–190, especially the following: "The often-evidenced plurality of value-systems within an inclusive society is obviously a fact of major practical significance, but it also has crucial theoretical bearing. . . . Park, Hughes, and your humble servant . . . have always assumed . . . that any given society that is empirically manifested may be found, on examination, to embody several different and even discrepant value-systems. Everything that we know about social stratification, for example, bears witness to this." See also Becker and Boskoff, *op. cit.,* p. 174.

continuity may manifest itself in many ways: for example, as a gap between generations, as internal conflict between separate normative systems within a single inclusive society, or as the intrusion of a new or alien "innovation." Obviously these forms of discontinuity may coincide in any given case, but let us analyze them in turn.]

First of all, there is always, in all societies, some "cultural loss through lapse." Socialization is never complete in the sense of full transmission of every aspect of the previously prevailing culture. The history of words, their forms and their etymologies, abounds with illustrations of this truth. [In the present context, cultural lapse is manifested in] the attrition to which worthy normative systems are invariably subject. [This easily observable truth is bound to cause concern among those adhering zealously to a given normative system.] The world is always going to the dogs; to change the figure, "the pearl of great price," the epitome of virtue, is always being ground away by those to whom it has been transmitted and who should preserve its luster undimmed. This supposedly *wilful* grinding away by the oncoming generation may be viewed as the result either of the native iniquity, the "corruption from within," of those responsible, or as the result of their succumbing, through "corruption from without," to temptation stemming from the normlessness of the utterly alien [or non-human] with whom they have somehow come in contact.

[Next come the ways in which internal conflict may produce societal discontinuity. As previously stated, the worthy normative system may either deliberately exclude certain norms nevertheless adhered to by a part of the inclusive society; or it may suddenly find itself confronted with norms defined as "innovations."

The former is particularly likely to be the case where the normative system is of sectarian origin. Disregard for the needs of "mundane" society, pushed to the extreme in the belief that the world is about to end, is likely to leave its mark on the normative systems formulated by the zealots of a sect. If this sect nevertheless wins a wide following among the mundane majority of the inclusive society, we are likely to witness the

phenomenon elsewhere dealt with as "the ageing of the sect." [22] The mundane majority, while accepting the sectarian definition of those excluded from the sect as normless, may find that their attainment of other ends in mundane terms is thwarted if, for instance, their own children are among those excluded. Such parental affection will then be defined as excessive, by strict sectarian standards; but that does not mean that it is likely to disappear.

The foregoing analysis is borne out in detail by the history of the Calvinist churches in New England. Initially their requirements for membership were very rigid indeed. As time wore on, however, the sectarian spirit began to lose out in the struggle with everyday life and parental affection. Finally it was decided that members could be admitted provisionally on less stringent terms, and the "Half-Way Covenant" was initiated. In other words, children or other persons whose calling and election was not sure, and who might turn out to be among the normless reprobates, were nevertheless taken within the church. Eventually, in some of the New England churches, well over three-quarters of the members had gone only as far as the Half-Way Covenant, and hence were not among that very small group of whose election and ultimate salvation one could be absolutely certain.

Here the unhallowed, unholy, "normless" state of a large part of society, which doubtless afforded a certain perverse gratification to the true sectarians, was taken by the mundane majority to threaten its attainment, in mundane terms, of ends easily classifiable under the headings of response, recognition, and security. The result was a normative reaction to this normlessness, a reaction which had the effect of tightening, of sacralizing society as a whole, although the tightness of the worthy normative system had been somewhat impaired in the process. We might mix two Scriptural metaphors, and say that, while the lump of so-

ciety had been leavened, the salt of sectarianism had lost some of its savor.

This particular normative reaction was conceived as a response to a threat of discontinuity that had features of a gap between generations, but also of internal conflict. This is equally true in the case of our other pattern of internal conflict, of conflict caused by cultural innovation.] Just as surely as there is always cultural loss through lapse, there is always, in all societies or parts thereof, some cultural innovation, deriving from independent origin or from diffusion. Such innovation may affect either material or nonmaterial culture—[or let us rather use Woodard's more convenient terminology, and say that the culture affected may be] of expressive, technical, or controlling variety.[23] Some of the new culture traits do not come into direct conflict with the normative system held worthy, but many do. Those who "take up with the new-fangled contraptions, doings, and notions" are, at the very least, unable, in terms of sheer time and energy, to absorb the worthy normative system fully, much less to effect appropriate adjustments to the conflicts that the innovations involve. This results in accusations of normlessness, and the normative reaction.

I am aware that the particular "normative reactions to normlessness" to which I have pointed are among the more extreme manifestations of the type. I have done this designedly, simply for the purpose of maximum clarity. These manifestations are empirically in evidence, of course; I make bold to say that as a sociological theorist I have little interest in fictions of any sort, regardless of the symbolism used to disguise them. Many things are logically *possible* that, viewing the available evidence without resort to manipulative ingenuity, are not empirically probable. We are not at liberty to build "models" of Airedales with cast-iron stomachs and swivel-caster feet. There is no substitute for remaining in close touch with the empirical evidence, with "the damned facts."

[In the study of "normative reactions to

[22] *Man in Reciprocity,* pp. 346–348, where the "Half-Way Covenant" is dealt with. Howard Becker's notes carry a reference to the Covenant at this point, and I have somewhat altered the scope and the order of his presentation here in order to make full use of the treatment offered in *Man in Reciprocity.*

[23] James W. Woodard, "A New Classification of Culture and a Restatement of the Culture-Lag Theory," *American Sociological Review,* 1 (February, 1936), pp. 89–102.

normlessness," as here defined, the views of the subjects involved constitute perhaps a larger part of the "damned facts" than in many areas of possible sociological investigation. Add to this the fact that these particular views, to most of us, are unattractive, and it becomes obvious why normative reactions have not received the attention they deserve from the social scientist.[24] So-called reactionary social movements have been described and analyzed at length, to be sure, but primarily by persons hotly biased against them. The sociological light resulting therefrom has been fitful and feeble; it has been of scant service even to those working for sweeping change and yet wishing to avoid counterchanges that might nullify

[24] What follows, within the brackets, is added *verbatim* from *Man in Reciprocity*, p. 189.

their best efforts. What we now need is sustained and dispassionate study, predictively oriented, of what is likely to happen next in societies undergoing rapid secularization of whatever kind. Then the study of "desegregation," to choose an obvious example, can be conducted with some sort of grand strategy in mind; otherwise, nothing but day-to-day tactics, often self-defeating, will be used.

But these considerations carry us far outside the immediate frame of reference, to say nothing of present limits of time.] In conclusion, then, it must be remarked that no assertions about what is "really" normless, and what is not, have here been made. Time-worn truisms may still be true: "If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences."

A RECONSIDERATION OF THEORIES OF SOCIAL CHANGE *

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The apologetic attitude of sociologists on the subject of social change is unwarranted. Both empirical generalizations and theoretical derivations are available. For theoretical derivation, however, various modifications are necessary in the usual models of society employed by functionalists. Such modifications permit the identification of the sources of change in all societies. Various non-social causes and social determinisms have been rejected but other dynamic factors remain. These include both flexibilities and strains inherent in the structure of societies. It is suggested that a "pure" theory of social change, independent of substantive identification of the patterns undergoing transformation, would be uninteresting. Rather, social change can be integrated with standard theory around the very structural topics already in use.

THE mention of "theory of social change" will make most social scientists appear defensive, furtive, guilt-ridden, or frightened. Yet the source of this unease may be in part an unduly awe-stricken regard for the explicitly singular and im-

plicity capitalized word "Theory." The several social scientific disciplines, and notably economics and sociology, do provide some fairly high-level, empirically-based, and interdependent propositions concerning social change.

The present paper presents some suggested conceptual organization of the problem, and some illustrations of interrelated propositions. The exposition is taxonomic and programmatic rather than discursive. Many of the alleged propositions are hypothetical, but any resemblance between them and real data, living or dead, would be comforting.