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*Sociology and its Development in the United States*¹

FOR about 100 years definitions of sociology have budded weekly and bloomed semi-annually. In spite of all this activity there is not one that will today completely satisfy the profession. And furthermore, many of the definitions while pleasing to the ear, have very little relationship to what sociologists actually do. Sociology may in one instance be defined as the analysis of the institutionalized aspects of human behaviour, elsewhere it is "the study of the processes of social interaction", again it may be described as the "science of social relationships". Once I spent several weeks wading through a mighty volume labelled *Soziologie als Logoswissenschaft*. The end result was a bad case of eyestrain, and I have yet to find someone who can tell me what *Logoswissenschaft* means, let alone how to translate it.

The point, I think, is this. We will not discover what sociology is and does by reading what our philosophers think it should be. We may start with definitions, but we must end with what people calling themselves sociologists actually *do*. The definitions all suggest that there is a scientific concern with relationships between people, the processes of group life. And indeed there is. But this is certainly not unique with sociologists. Many varieties of people are concerned with social relations, economists, historians, political scientists, ethnologists, jurists, epidemiologists and policemen. I wish I might appropriate for sociology the highly informal definition of anthropology attributed to Professor Ralph Linton. "Anthropology" says he, "is the study of man—the study of man, embracing woman". Surely this has enough latitude for both of these related disciplines.

In order to visualize our field of study it is first necessary to delineate the area of the social sciences, of which we are a part. Then we must distinguish sociology from her sister social sciences.

The social sciences all deal with that category of phenomena which we may call the socio-cultural or the super-organic. The physical sciences study inorganic phenomena; biology investigates the organic world, the social

1. An Inaugural Address delivered at King George's Hall on February 10, 1949.

sciences are concerned with the super-organic. As the presence of life distinguishes living structures and processes, so the presence of mind or thought differentiates super-organic from the organic. This class of phenomena includes all of man's creations, his rules of living, his traditions, his inventions, his dogmas and his machines, his churches and toddy taverns. This we may call the *cultural*. In addition the super-organic includes the actual day by day interplay between men, communities and nations; the actual organization of men into religious bodies, corporations, nations, castes; the process whereby these men live together through competition, co-operation, conflict. This part of the super-organic we may call the *societal*. And it is to both the cultural and to the societal that we will refer in the terms *super-organic* or *socio-cultural*. These are the domain of the social sciences. With the exception of history, it is the function of each to draw generalizations, laws, regarding some phase of the socio-cultural universe.

How simple it would be if the concrete facts and events of socio-cultural life could be neatly parcelled out—this set of data labelled "Reserved for economists only", this bundle "Reserved for political scientists". But the methods of science are less simple. If we seek the role of sociology we will not go far by saying that sociologists study a particular set of events or situations. To a considerable extent the economist, the political scientist and the historian study the same concrete entities. They study from different viewpoints. Thus suicide has interested many sociologists (perhaps the most striking developments in sociological theory have come from Emile Durkheim's analysis of suicide in France). Suicide is a biological and a physical fact as well as a social fact. The process of poisoning is of interest to a chemist; the degeneration of body tissue concerns a physiologist; the drop from bridge to river is a problem for physicist; the specific reason for the man's jumping may be political or economic—yet again it may be the concern of a physician or psychoanalyst. Let me not elaborate the obvious. But let us be in agreement on the abstract nature of scientific inquiry. The fields of science are not separated neatly in the contexts of actual events; they may be separated by a process of abstraction, by abstracting from phenomena at large those elements which are of concern to the viewpoint and frame of reference or theory of the particular science. So also is it for the sociologist. I am only saying that all science relies heavily upon the method of analytical abstraction. To see what sociology is we think in terms of viewpoints, interests and frames of reference, and to a very limited extent in terms of concrete situations which are by nature sociological.

As a starting point let's say that sociologists analyze the processes whereby people live with other people and the kinds of groupings they form in the living. We are interested in those processes and groupings *as such* whether

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they appear in an economic context, a family context, or in the affairs of government or education. This can be illustrated by a recent research study of co-operation and competition. The process of competition was traced through family relationships, religious ideology and through its role in economic affairs. The researchers were interested in how deeply competitive elements enter into the total life of members of one society as compared to members of another society. How do competitive elements in family, educational and religious life affect personality development ; what inconsistencies appear between economic and religious ideologies in respect to the role of competition and how do these inconsistencies affect personalities. The sociologist studies the process of competition rather than some topical manifestation of it. He would recognize that the economist has used his own analytical tools in exploring certain aspects of the process and that there is overlapping in interest. But the frameworks within which the economist places his knowledge are different from the sociologist and hence yield a different type of understanding.

The way in which sociology cuts across the domains of other social sciences is not easy to express in a simple sentence definition. All the social sciences are studying some abstracted aspect of human behaviour. Very, very roughly the economist studies subsistence behaviour, its forms, uniformities and so on ; the political scientist, power and control behaviour ; the psychologist is concerned with individual behaviour, the historian with event sequences, etc. This would seem to leave little room for the sociologist. But there is in fact an important domain which is sociological : namely the composition, forms, organisations, functions, relationships and changes of human groups as such. This is not a matter of subsistence behaviour, nor of individual behaviour, nor of power-control behaviour. It is something that cuts across all these. It is the study of the phenomenon of human togetherness, human grouping, a study of the patterns along which human associations are built and change. This does not mean that modern sociology assigns itself the task of synthesizing the social sciences. Sociology's core problem is the analysis of the emergent togetherness of men, the patterns of human relationship, the configurations of groupings whenever men go about the things that the other social scientists choose to study separately. The sociologist's objective is *not* to synthesize science ; he studies the synthetic *product* of the separate aspects of behaviour, namely, human groupings, in their functional, structural, and processual aspects.

From such a core statement of sociology's problem field we must proceed to examine the different directions and emphases which have taken place in the actual practice of sociological research. To accomplish this a short historical excursion is in order. In order to grasp what modern sociology is

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and does, it is essential to look into its origins. Origins are particularly important for an understanding of American sociology which, like the country's cultural origin is characterized by a great dependence upon other nations.

Nominally sociology dates from the French positivist Auguste Comte writing mainly from 1830 to 1842. To Comte, this new field, the name of which he created, was to be the synthesis of scientific knowledge, the Queen of the Sciences. Through the synthesis of science we would come to a final understanding of the laws of nature, physical and social. Government could thus become a technical science, and Comte looked forward to the day when government would be simply the application of principles existing in the natural order of things. This type of positivism did not die with Comte—nor had it started with him. Unfortunately sociologists are today criticized in terms of such grandiose hopes. It is assumed that some universal natural order of harmony exists and the sociologists have fallen down on their job of finding it. The Queen of the Sciences would indeed be that discipline which integrated all knowledge into such a body of positive law.

Also in England was sociology created, only a little after Comte. Herbert Spencer—educationalist, biologist, psychologist, mathematician, engineer, political scientist, journalist, philosopher, and, forgive me, theologian—created sociology. Spencer sought to, and did in a way, synthesize all knowledge, and like Comte pursued an organic conception of society. Spencer's god was evolution, called by some, progress. He was developing many concepts now associated with the name of Darwin, prior to the "Origin of Species" and applying them to the sphere of the social. The impact of Spencer and his synthetic philosophy built upon evolution, was to greatly popularize sociology as such and sociology became an application of the methods of biological science to social phenomena.

One brief footnote will indicate how serious may be the consequences of such an enticing approach. If the concept of the survival of the fittest is turned into social terms, who then are the fittest? Obviously they are those social types who survive and wax fat in the doing. As any reasonable man can see it is the wealthy who are "fit", who are "best adapted to the social environment". This being clear then let us not fly in the face of natural law by proposing any measure to keep the *unfit* lingering on. Let us conform to natural law which compels us (whatever our weak humanitarian whimsies) to protect the vested interest and at no cost upset the status quo. That sociology was in Spencer's day a major intellectual reaction against socialism is no accident. Social Darwinism fit perfectly into the utilitarian and laissez-faire setting. (Parenthetically this tragedy becomes comical when we realize that at an earlier date sociology was synonymous with socialism and that again today sociologists are at least not inclined to be reactionaries. And

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of course the coincidental similarity in the terms sociology and socialism occasion widespread confusion).

It might be supposed that Herbert Spencer would be looked upon today as the Darwin of sociology. He produced its great system. He is probably the discipline's most important corner stone. Some of his concepts are important today. Yet Herbert Spencer is dead. Outside of a diminishing group of English scholars, Spencer is an historical curiosity. In America, Spencer stimulated Lester Ward, whose system also fell quickly to a shattering death. To understand American and continental sociology we must understand the murder of Herbert Spencer. Let me emphasize, however that much of Spencer's work has survived in modern concepts. He had brilliant insights and stimulated brilliant students. It is his system, his theory of society that was destroyed.

This is no place to go into the history of sociological thinking. But long prior to Spencer numerous chains of thought had been developing which are closely related to contemporary, particularly French, German and American sociology. Some of them lie in the roots of what became formalized as Utilitarianism but did not grow into the body of utilitarian economics and its contemporary sociological counterpart. In a completely literal sense, the writings of an obscure English wit, Bernard Mandeville, at the beginning of the 18th century, are "better" sociology in modern terms than most of that which Spencer produced in his voluminous studies. Taking some liberties with chronology, I would contend that recent sociology in method as in theoretic content has more in common with Ibn Khaldun, a 14th century Arabian, Montesquieu, Confucius, Hegel, Marx, Bayle, Hume, LePlay and Buckle than with the formal science of sociology developed by Comte and Spencer. But Spencer saw a discipline and founded it. He inspired others to pursue it, and in that pursuit the theoretic scaffolding toppled, while the discipline prospered.

How did Spencer die? First of all he died along with the general sickening of the utilitarian and positivist tradition of which he partook. More specifically he died with the demonstrable inadequacies of his own pretentious evolutionary framework.

In part, at least, evolution had become a red herring in the path of the social sciences, particularly anthropology and sociology, diverting, with a few exceptions, able intellects to a viewpoint that paid scant dividends. The effects of these efforts persist in our text-books when cultural history is couched in terms of orderly stages of development or it is accepted that "man evolved through successive stages from hunting and fishing to industrial society", or that "the family has evolved through a unilinear pattern from promiscuity to our crowning quasi-monogamy" . . . and so on. For those who slavishly followed these ideas of straight line, unilinear evolution their work has been obliterated. Only giants like Westermarck and Hobbhouse have begun with the

evolutionary frame of reference and made monumental contributions for this age and the next one. Even here however one might contend that their contributions would have been even greater had they not laboured so closely to the shadow cast by the evolutionary formula. It is no accident that in England much of what is elsewhere sociology is to be found in anthropology, political science, history and economics. The orientations and concepts of nominal sociology were simply not built for grappling with problems created by concrete historical processes, conflicts of class interests, population movements, and other earthy matters.

Sociology struck America close to the turn of the century. It struck from England, and from Germany, and France. From the Comtian and Spencerian tradition it struck exceedingly hard. With straight faces it was recommended at Brown University that sociology be given official recognition as the queen of the sciences, and that the entire university structure be reorganized so that sociologists might reign over their inferiors in biology, chemistry, and the other social sciences as well. This was synthetic science with a vengeance! At the same time that this intellectual virtuosity was being displayed at Brown, Professor Albion Small of the University of Chicago returned from Germany, afire with somewhat different ideas, also called sociology. He announced the purpose of sociology in terms reflecting utter confusion and replete with non-sequiturs. (Parenthetically it must be noted that at Brown University Sociology died a sudden and violent death—Chicago has developed a world centre in sociological research).

Of course what was happening was that the spark of an idea—the thrill of areas untouched in established disciplines—was running riot awaiting definition and exploration. Just what the area of sociology was, just what the approach was to be, just which of several conflicting viewpoints *was* sociology, nobody quite knew. SO—and I am sure you are guessing the answer—it ALL became sociology. Out of moral philosophy, out of social evolution, out of demography, out of philosophic radicalism, and out of local reformers and slumming parties, came a discipline. In part it was a logical fusion of consistent elements in each of these; in part it involved an opportunistic merging of diverse interests not provided for in existing disciplines. But behind these heterogenous origins, and perhaps I have exaggerated a little, there was a sound core of common viewpoint, mainly inherited from Europe, partly indigenous to America. This core was precisely what I described earlier as the analysis of social groups and processes as such. Around this core were certain axioms, the acceptance of which further unified diverse theoretic and practical interests. The basic axiom was that culture—the creations of man—are determinative influences in human behaviour along with the facts of natural environment and biological inheritance. Stated more concisely, Culture is an objective, dynamic reality. From this flowed

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inspiration to analyse the cake of custom, and its changes, its impact upon all phases of social life and personality. Secondly, there was an intense relativism—still the despair of our colleagues in philosophy and theology—the viewpoint that “the mores can make anything right”. Related to this there was a keen awareness that facts are meaningless except in their own cultural milieu. Finally there was acceptance of the position that a social group, any social group, has emergent properties; that it is something more than the additive result of its individual members. Coupled with these was an almost evangelical enthusiasm to do battle with the practical problems of a nation which was itself a strange experiment in human relations. It is an interesting point that in the fifty years of sociology in America, there has been but one system builder since Lester Ward, discounting uncreditables. And it will be a number of years before the significance of Pitirim Sorokin can be evaluated.

In order to show what sociologists actually do, it is necessary to break up the field into some of its major specialties. This I will do in part, and at the same time give minute samples of related findings or research activity. I wish that it were possible for me to point this material directly to the problems of Ceylon. You will understand that even a practitioner of a once synthetic science needs a little time to make cultural adjustments.

From these core definitions of sociology's problem field and with such axioms and postulates as those stated, sociologists have branched into many and diverse special fields. Some of these fields of specialty arise from the logical pursuit of the very definition of sociology, others represent extensions of sociological viewpoint and method into more or less arbitrarily defined channels. For example, studies of the participation of persons in various forms of organized groups, or studies of the process whereby group conflict is resolved, obviously are close to the heart of sociology's logical sphere. So also is the interest of sociologists in analyzing the structure of the local community as a configuration of interacting individuals and groups. The community has in fact become one specific area for sociologists, for it provides the elemental area within which most types of human associations grow. As community analysts, sociologists study man as a social animal *per se* in an effort to understand the integration of man's local social world, rather than the structure of certain portions of it. Classic examples of such studies are the Lynd's *Middletown* and *Middletown in Transition*. This integrative reconstruction of community organization is as important sociologically as are the highly specialized studies of particular types of group structures within communities.

Special mention should be given the family as an area of sociological research and knowledge. Here the core definition of sociology has been somewhat arbitrarily extended so that a particular contextual field has become

part of the body of sociology. Frankly I think this has happened because no prior social science had made this subject its special province. But the family has become as much a part of sociology as has the firm in economics or the state in political science. Here is what might be called a special sociology rather than the general sociology which is concerned with developing generalizations regarding social relations regardless of their context. In this instance the sociologists have, like the economists or the political scientists, singled out one institutional segment of society for detailed study. Research in this area ranges from Zoologist Kinsey's largely sociological report on *Sexual Behaviour in the Human Male* to studies on the effect of television upon the unity and organization of family activities. Certainly this is an area of research that can be pursued with most constructive results in Ceylon. Under the impact of Western and secularizing influences the family structure of this country will certainly be modified. Since the family is in all societies the dominant mechanism for the transmission of culture and the formation of personality, the research methods and existing sociology of family relations are developments of considerable importance.

It may seem strange that sociologists also have a special field in the study of population trends and migrations. Birth and death and movement might seem to be physical affairs rather than socio-cultural. But in actual fact birth rates are usually more responsive to the social organization and attitudes of a people than to natural fertility. Generalizations regarding population growth or decline are most directly based upon understanding conditions and trends in family and community life. Migration involves shifting of group memberships and occasions many pathologies in social relationships not felt in stable societies. Research in migration and human population growth is a field shared between sociologists, statisticians and economists, although most frequently its specialists identify themselves as sociologists. Beyond any doubt population analysis has developed into the most highly predictive branch of sociology. Thus the effect of war on the American population was reasonably well predicted, in terms both of growth and migration tendencies. Through inductive researches in many countries sociologists have nearly disproven the idea that migration to cities is selective of the most intelligent rural people. A recent well validated generalization aids in forecasting the conditions under which migrations to particular types of urban centres can be expected. We know that in all western countries city life reduces the birth rate sharply. We know that upward changes in the level of living have sharp effects upon birth rates—generally to stimulate them at first but in the long run to diminish them. There is a highly developed body of techniques and principles upon which to draw and I can only hope that we may stimulate students here to utilize them in the study of Ceylon's vital data.

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The field of minority group relations can be a generic category for what in America has been dominated by research in race relations. However, the findings which result from these studies have direct bearing upon the understanding of caste relationships and inter-group hostility generally. An example of social psychological study in this area is in the analysis of prejudiced persons and the roots of their discriminatory attitude. One suggestive result from such research is the principle of "displaced aggression". Very crudely phrased the idea is that discrimination is practised most bitterly by the frustrated and personally insecure members of the dominant group as an outlet for tensions created in fact by economic and other insecurities. Aggression toward the threatener of security, perhaps the boss, may be dangerous, hence tension is released by aggressive behaviour toward the powerless minority. Research done in instances of overt minority group conflict has brought forth some results in the form of practical generalizations useful in educational programs and in administration procedure for local tension areas. It might be noted that some widely used techniques for developing toleration are now, though experimental testing, suspected of having boomerang effects. While the generalizations in this field are significant, they do not usually have the degree of tested validity that is found in population analysis. The most widely tested and most valid principles in this sphere have to do with mental and personality testing of different racial groups. For example, no *informed* person can today believe in the idea of inferior or superior races.

Another moderately distinct speciality is that of human or social ecology ; the study of the spatial distribution of people and institutions, their movement in space and their relation to the natural habitat. In actual fact human ecology in America has been developed primarily in efforts to achieve laws of city expansion and to understand certain problems associated with urbanization. Most notably the concept of the "delinquency area" has been developed through the persistent discovery of crimogenic conditions in similar functional locations in city after city. Urban growth in a purely physical sense has a peculiar and definite effect upon crime rates and also upon the incidence of certain mental disorders, vice, and family disorganization. These generalizations have not, to my knowledge, been tested in Asian cities.

The field of social psychology includes contributions from both sociologists and psychologists, and others who are indistinguishable mixtures of the two disciplines. One major object of this study is the process whereby a human being in the strictly biological sense becomes a functioning member of society. This is referred to as the process of socialization. Specific attitudes and their formation are studied, the cultural roots of prejudice and frustrations explored. In recent years social psychologists have also made important contributions to analysis of communication, particularly mass communication in crowds, and in radio public. The basis upon which radio speakers can

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sway the feelings and action of thousands of individuals has, for example, been analysed. (I might add that the results are profoundly disturbing to anyone wishing to see public action based upon rational conviction rather than upon techniques of crowd hysteria).

The entire field of attitude study and public opinion polls has become a fertile one. On a superficial level the Gallup and similar polls are world famous. But beyond this type of statistical hack-work, attempts are constantly being made to get below the level of speech reactions and understand why people think and act as they do. For example, in company with two other sociologists, I spent a good part of the last two years working on the problem of university students' attitudes toward professors and higher education. This was not merely intellectual curiosity satisfaction. It was done at the request of University administrators and financed by a research foundation. As sociologists we accepted the job because it offered an opportunity to gain insights into a phase of the educational process which has been generally overlooked. More than 8,000 university students were interviewed and detailed data regarding their evaluation of *each* of their teachers secured. The result of this investigation in a normally successful university should give each of you cold shudders. For example: We ascertained the ages of all the teachers from university records and found that the older ones were, in the students' judgment, the best informed in their fields. We also found that in the students' eyes they were the *least* stimulating to thought, the *least* interested in the students, and the *least* tolerant to disagreement. In short the older men, most capable intellectually, were as far as the students were concerned, the least effectual teachers. We found as well that the student body had fairly clear cut ideas as to the objectives of an university education, but that the staff apparently defined its function in quite different terms. Whether student judgment in such a case is right or wrong matters not one whit—the students' attitude is one vital factor in the class room situation. Effective teaching is a two-way process—the student is not a passive receptacle, even if at times he acts like it. What the student *sees* in the teacher may be more important than what the teacher actually is. Research of this type is strictly sociological—it is the analysis of attitudes affecting group functioning; it is the analysis of one phase of a socio-cultural process—the transmission of culture, education. Adequate generalizations and adequate theories of social relationships must be built upon the basis of infinite numbers of such studies. Research techniques in attitude analysis are highly developed and the social psychologist has become a valued consultant in most institutional and government programs demanding large scale public co-operation or understanding.

The special field of "social change" analysis is one of sociology's most significant enterprises. The staggering growth of technology in our era has

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stimulated extensive efforts to understand the social consequences of invention, as well as the very process through which inventions come about. As a sample of research in this area let me describe a project with which I was concerned for several years . . . an analysis of the spread of a new highly productive type of maize seed through an agricultural population. Now it would seem evident that when a farmer accepts a new, more productive type of seed, the matter is of interest to crows, agronomists and economists—but surely not sociologists. But note this however: this new physical, and economically rational, technique had to go through very important social processes before it was widely used. It had to have an educational program—or call it propaganda—preceding it. Farmers not only had to learn of the new seed, they had to be convinced that it was better than the type of seed they, and their fathers before them, had been using. Here are very practical significant sociological problems; how rapidly under given conditions can a new technique be diffused throughout a society? What channels of communication are the most effective in spreading technological innovations? And most of all, why do some individuals resist an important innovation while others welcome it with open arms? These are issues relative to the operation of group processes, to the binding power of that cake of custom. By developing sound generalizations through inductive research we come ultimately to have predictive understanding of the rapidity and processes of social change, under given conditions.

The most famous principle developed from social change analysis is that of “Cultural Lag”. Cultural lag refers to the differing rates of speed between changes in technology and changes in related parts of the social structure and rules of behaviour. Thus we drive automobiles but cling to rules adapted to the bullock carts. It has been fairly well demonstrated that the process of technological change is inherently more rapid than changes in social rules and organization. The cultural lag concept is a vital step in an understanding of the genesis of many social problems. In an age placing great premiums upon technical inventions but not being able to enforce corresponding *social* changes, there results serious social ills.

Of course one way of resolving such technologically created difficulties is to liquidate the engineers. Let me suggest however that a slightly more intelligent course is to take advantage of the material gains they offer but at the same time see to it that the sociologists and economists get plenty of research money so that we can use them intelligently.

Rural sociologists are another, and very large, group of specialised sociologists who work primarily with the rural habitat. This means that every abstract speciality of sociology is practised among their numbers. Although not methodologically or logically a separate speciality, they have tended to be set apart as specialists on purely empirical grounds. As a group they have

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been dominated by insistence that research and scholarly activity be tied to things that matter to a functioning society. Rural sociology has grown in the environment of technical institutions where the engineers, the students, the agricultural economists and others have asked the very healthy question "What good is it?" . . . a question less frequently posed in the more effete ivory towers. And I believe study of the Rural Sociological Journal will show some very fair responses to that query.

This sample of sociological interests and special branches is but the beginning. The core of sociological premises cuts into many special fields. Other areas would include criminology, the sociology of religion, and of knowledge. In practice a single research project will usually cut across several of these fields. Before leaving this discussion I think two points should be clarified, one the relationship of sociology to anthropology, the other its relation to social welfare.

In so far as anthropology is a study of socio-cultural phenomena, I can see no useful or logical distinction between the two disciplines. Anthropology has done for prehistoric and primitive societies much of what sociologists have been doing for civilized societies. Anthropologists are now turning toward civilized societies as well. If there is any difference in method it is largely that the anthropologists have tended to specialise, in recent years, in a particular sociological approach, that of community analysis. In respect to the physical anthropologists there is little overlapping. They are much closer to the physiologists and anatomists and are not students of socio-cultural affairs.

Sociology is not the study of social problems; it studies scientific problems. So much would be evident. However, sociology—if it does its job—should stand in relation to social welfare service much as bacteriology or physiology stands to medical practice. For certain social problems, sociology has by historical accident or methodological equipment come to be a specializing discipline. Thus criminology is explicitly a sociological field, as is family disorganization. It is evident of course that aspects of these lie with the jurists and others. But by the same token that the sociologist is a student of the processes of group organization and of social norms, he is a student of group disorganization and the violation of the social norms. Finally it should be evident that much excellent sociology is written by historians, economists, geographers, psychologists, political scientists. This is particularly true in England.

The practical implications of the processes studied by sociologists have brought many of its students out of academic posts into government services, research foundations and into business. The United States Department of Agriculture employs more sociologists than any other institution in America. These men are engaged in research studies on population movements, standards of living, and changes in rural community life. They also provide consultation

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service on important projects such as the land settlement programs in the north-west where vast areas are being irrigated and new communities created. The sociologists advise policy makers on such matters as settlement patterns, what types of community services should be given priority, what kinds of settlers should make easiest adjustment to the new life, etc. The answers come from direct field research plus knowledge of principles derived from previous studies elsewhere.

The future of sociological theory and its practical application rests upon more and better formulated inductive studies. This in turn will bring greater departure from the philosophically derived concepts of the past. I am not decrying the importance of theory. But theory must be built upon infinite numbers of inductive researches. The study of sociology, neither today nor tomorrow, will give us a magic key to social complexities and problems. Today, it should give conceptual tools, viewpoints and some generalizations, theories and hypotheses which are useful in analyzing specific complexities and problems. The curse of the social sciences has been the armchair quest for some touchstone phrase or law, some formula that alone unfolds the intricacies of human society. Valid theories of social relationships come only through scientific observation of social phenomena, and the very skill of observing socio-cultural phenomena in an objective fashion is in itself no mean accomplishment. Sociology has a contribution to make in Ceylon, but not if it is viewed as a phase of philosophy or purely a class room discipline. Its contributions will be felt when it serves as a guide in the collection and analysis of data on Ceylon's society and culture. We must go into the field to discover the intricacies of changing roles of women, the conditions underlying a phenomenal homicide rate, the effect of colonization schemes upon family structure, the roots of resistance to technological advance, the effects of technological changes upon family and community organization, the attitudes of villagers toward issues of democratic government, the study of differential fertility rates, effects of cinemas on traditional values, and scores more. These are all bare and unmediated statements of random sociological questions. Any one of them, even apart from practical implications for Ceylon, is a valid problem for testing and refining hypotheses and theories. Sociology is not a hot house plant, a speculative discipline. It bears its best fruit in the open and close to the earth.

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