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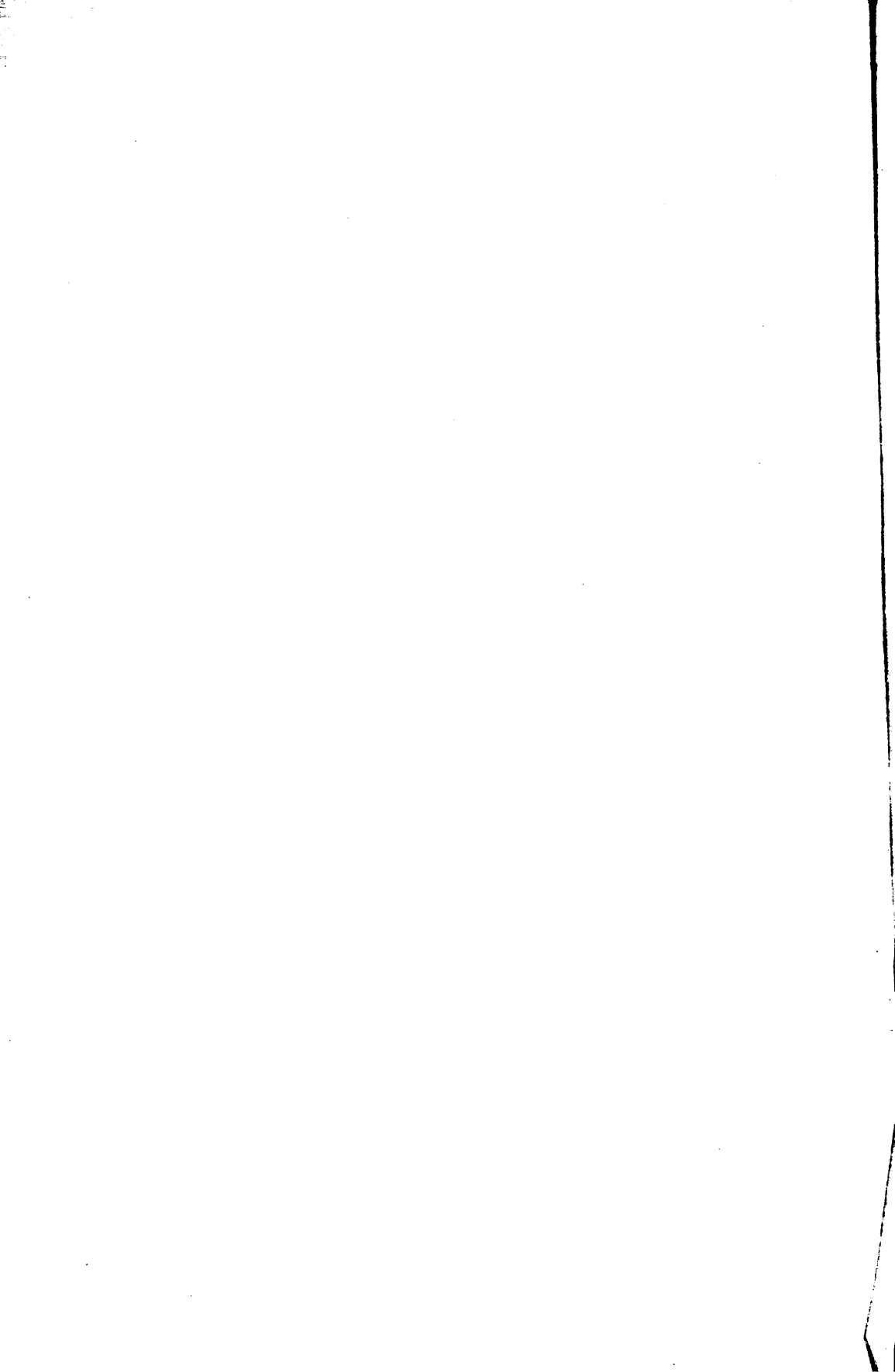
Monograph Series 3.

Irén Annus

**SOCIAL
REALITIES
IN
THE MAKING**

JAE Press
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IRÉN ANNUS

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The Structuration of Society
and the Constitution of American Identity

*JATE*press

Szeged 2005

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FOREWORD

It gives me great pleasure to introduce this volume as the eleventh in the series entitled *Papers in English and American Studies* (PEAS) published by our Institute of English and American Studies. The Institute prides itself on being the first ever in Hungary to have launched an American Studies program. Under the leadership of Dr. Bálint Rozsnyai, the program was founded in 1985 and matured into a major degree program by 1994. It has exhibited great development in terms of the number of staff, infrastructure, student body, teaching potential as well as research output of which this volume is the first representative in the PEAS series.

As Shelley Fisher Fishkin, current president of the American Studies Association, claimed in her presidential address in Atlanta in November 2004, American Studies has been open to a wide range of methodologies and approaches, and connected to this is the assumption that its definition may well vary from place to place and even from scholar to scholar. Reassuring as this view may look at first sight, she also pointed at the existence of major tendencies that have influenced the development of the field in one way or another ever since the 1960s, with the emergence of women's and the civil rights movement, various sorts of minority consciousness, and, in our times, transnationalism (*American Quarterly* March 2005, 19). In other words, history seems to have molded the contours of American Studies world wide, to a great extent offering concerns and emphases, raising certain issues for scholarly attention. Thus, however much these may vary, no institution of American Studies can have the power to remain unaffected by these processes. Consequently, the American Studies program has as its major components the more recently developed fields of cultural studies, ethnic and minority studies, women's studies or popular culture alongside the more traditional fields having a longer record such as history, intellectual history, literary history or the history of American religions. Both research and teaching have focuses in these fields.

This work by Irén Annus addresses the issue of identity, a theme that has been a major concern in American Studies since its founding in the 1950s and a problem that cuts across quite a number of the sub-fields of American Studies. Identity is

probably best placed at the intersection of several disciplines, such as history, sociology, literature, minority and migration studies, or transnational studies – in short, it is a ubiquitous organizing principle for theorizing various problems in American Studies.

Dr. Annus undertakes to survey theories of identity conceived and blossoming in the American (i.e. US) soil, following chronological order, in order to show how they were, to a considerable degree, responses to changing historical circumstances. She also provides an analysis of these models by, at the same time, constructing a narrative about the development of American identity as she conceives it, from white Anglo-Saxon Protestant fathers through melting pot believers and all the way down to contemporary multiculturalism and identity politics. She does this within a conceptual framework centered around nation, ethnicity and identity, offering a usable map for readers to find their way in the labyrinth of proliferating theories of American identity in the last century. She also does this with grace and ease in a delectable style, making professional jargon accessible even to the lay reader.

Interestingly, but hardly surprisingly, the book also highlights the great irony that needs constant reflecting upon: when doing American Studies as national studies (i.e. studying the USA), what does one do in the face of contemporary theories of identities that actually question the existence of stable, essentialist conceptions of identities, including national identity? Does the national focus then seem to have melted into thin air? One may argue, as Fisher Fishkin did in Atlanta, that the transnational perspective can show a way out of the collapsing structures represented by the nation as a conceptual category; furthermore, now, at the dawning of the age of deterritorialization (a possible consequence of globalization) we may look into a brighter future. Tough problems that will keep us busy for a long while, this work offers a useful perspective on them.

All that remains to be said is that one wishes that her work, ambitious in scope and persistent in its aim to make sense even to a non-expert English “reading” audience, reach an ever expanding readership of students, colleagues, lovers and haters of the USA alike, and, last but not least, students of American identities.

ZOLTÁN VAJDA
Associate Director of IEAS

PREFACE

This volume offers two studies to readers interested in social sciences in general and in American studies in particular. One presents the theory of structuration, one of the most recent metatheories on social existence and realities. It was developed in 1984 by Anthony Giddens, one of the most prominent social thinkers of our times. The other piece traces the various ways and contexts within which understandings of American identity have changed within social sciences, especially within sociology. Both of these studies grew out of a need to fill two gaps in Hungarian academic writing: one, the need to provide the Hungarian audience with an introduction to the theory of structuration—a theory unfairly neglected in Hungary—through a publication readily available; and two, to provide an understanding of how social realities have been captured through theorizations on identity in the US.

Part I is devoted to Giddens' grand theory, which is greatly praised for having attempted to overcome the dichotomy between giving primacy to a micro- or to a macro-level analysis in the social sciences. The first chapter outlines the way in which this theory emerged and covers the most prominent scholars and notions to influence Giddens in the process. This is followed in the second chapter by a detailed discussion of the theory of structuration, its internal logic, and its key terms and concepts. The third chapter opens with a review of the reception of this theory in the social sciences, outlining the main points of praise and criticism. Finally, a discussion of the various areas in which this theory has proven significant in social theories—such as identity studies—and in social research closes Part I.

Part II surveys the more influential social theories in the US regarding American identity. A study of this kind may be valuable in showing how modern identities are constructions, always in the process of changing, and thus of making, as well as the ways in which the borders dividing groups are flexible and depend on various understandings of realities and ways of theorizing about them. A discussion of these identity models in a historical sequence also reveals how circumstances and contexts contribute to the semantic field of identities along with the social and cultural practices that the given group embraces.

I would also like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to all those who were of particular help to me in this project. These include the Council for Academic Affairs at the University of Szeged for financing the publication of this book; Erzsébet Barát for her precise, insightful comments, but even more so for her never failing, long-term academic support; Zoltán Vajda for his well-placed comments; Etelka Szónyi, my editor, for her consistent attention to my publications; our two friends, Linda Silaghi and Attila Tombácz, for being there in a pinch; and last, but not least, my loving husband for always standing by me and for his meticulous proofreading of the text, and our sweet children for having put up with me—or my absence—while working on these pieces.

PART I

THE THEORY OF STRUCTURATION

INTRODUCTION

The theory of structuration set forth by the British sociologist Anthony Giddens¹ is probably the most influential grand social theory to have appeared in the last 20 years. Its significance stems from the fact that it claims to be a social theory, embracing a number of issues late twentieth-century social scientists have included in their research. To that end, it also integrates a number of concepts and theories which have marked the various fields of social sciences throughout the century, thus offering a critical reassessment of the theories to have emerged during this period. Giddens' theory has been much debated, praised and criticized, but has definitely become an exceptional contribution to social sciences and research which cannot go unnoticed.

Having developed out of a thorough critical study of the classics, this comprehensive theory on the constitution of societies was the fruit of a long journey. An outline of this venture and the ideas which have shaped Giddens' thinking may assist one in seeing the process in which this theory has taken shape. Thus, Chapter 1 is devoted to the discussion of Giddens' early work and the roots of structuration theory. Chapter 2 follows this with a discussion of the theory of structuration, organized around three areas: (1) the micro-level analysis of actors and action; (2) the macro-level analysis of structure(s) and institutions; and (3) the introduction of the duality of structure which, in Giddens' understanding, binds these two realms together in a dialectical relationship. Chapter 3 outlines the critical reception of the theory of structuration and the areas which have drawn on it, either in theorizations or actual research, in the years following its publication in its most comprehensive form in 1984.²

¹ Anthony Giddens, *The Constitution of Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

² Giddens, in some of his earlier works, also refers to this new theory, discussing certain aspects or propositions.

CHAPTER 1: GIDDENS AND THE ROOTS OF HIS THEORY OF STRUCTURATION

This chapter outlines the background of the theory of structuration, thus contributing to a more thorough understanding of Giddens' theory as well as to the location of this theory on the map of social sciences. Giddens proposes a grand theory which, he claims, must be interdisciplinary in nature³ and should regard areas, which are larger in scope than the traditional ones we have become familiar with, such as sociology, anthropology, or ethnography, to mention but a few.⁴ He presents his social theory which borrows from findings and considerations of various disciplines, and is also able to encompass issues which he holds "to be the concern of all the social sciences."⁵ He proposes that these issues regard the nature of human action and self, of social interaction and institutions, as well as of social analysis. He maintains that his theory aids one in understanding how social realities are constituted in contemporary societies, which he defines as the period of late modernity.⁶ The sections to follow outline the intellectual passage through which he arrived at the theory of structuration: his early works and assessment of previously constructed theories and concepts.

³ Interest in various disciplines has characterized Giddens from the beginning. Already as a student, he wanted to major in philosophy, but once he found that it was not possible, he majored in psychology and sociology.

⁴ He claims that sociology, for example, is "not a generic discipline to do with the study of human societies as a whole, but that branch of social science which focuses particularly upon the 'advanced' or modern societies." Giddens 1984, xvii.

⁵ Giddens 1984, xvi.

⁶ This periodization already locates him with regard to his understanding of the self and societies. He explains his position in an interview with Lars Kaspersen in 1993 with the following reasoning: "I attempt to distance myself from concepts such as postmodernity and the postmodern. The postmodernists view our world as fragmented, which in my opinion is not the case. The development of society is to a great degree characterized by a duality between fragmentation and unification, between disintegration and integration. Today we can observe the dissolution of states, families, and friendships, but at the same time we see being recreated new units and relations which cut across the former bonds." Lars Bo Kaspersen, *Anthony Giddens. An Introduction to a Social Theorist* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), 143.

1. The Early Giddens

Giddens' first major book entitled *Capitalism and Modern Social Theory*⁷ expresses his interest in social theories in general. His analysis and criticism of such classics of sociology as Karl Marx, Max Weber, and Emile Durkheim demonstrate not only his extensive knowledge of the field but his dissatisfaction with the explanatory force of these earlier theorists. He argues that contemporary capitalist societies have broken away from the old formulas captured by these scholars and their systems can, therefore, no longer be used to describe late modernity. Ultimately, this hints at the possibility of his moving on later in his career to construct a theory which can capture contemporary societies with more success, provided that generally applicable theories describing modern Western societies can exist at all.

Relying on Marx and conflict theory, in his next study, *The Class Structure of the Advanced Societies*,⁸ Giddens analyzes modern social change and the role of violence—a recurring theme for him as, for example, in *The Nation-State and Violence*.⁹ These works are concerned with more general societal changes, structures, and functions. Giddens seems to turn away from empirical macro-level analysis in society—a quintessential feature of British sociology—to the realm of theoretical modeling,¹⁰ that is, the development of the theory of structuration, so that in his later works in the early 1990s he can focus on a microanalysis of the individual, the self, the most prominent works on which are *Modernity and Self-Identity*¹¹ and *The Transformation of Intimacy*¹². This continuum seems to indicate his fascination with both of the classical trends: the dualities between agency and determinism, action and structure, as well as individual and system, having been expressed through structuralism, functionalism, and conflict theory, on the one hand, and phenomenology and symbolic interactionism, on the other. His attraction to, as well as his partial rejection of, both of these major trends indicate that in some way they will both be reworked in his structuration theory.

⁷ Anthony Giddens, *Capitalism and Modern Social Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971).

⁸ Anthony Giddens, *The Class Structure of the Advanced Societies* (London: Hutchinson, 1973).

⁹ Anthony Giddens, *A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism, Vol. 2, The Nation-State and Violence* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1985).

¹⁰ The British empiricist tradition in sociology preferred to execute social analysis by looking at various phenomena in the first phase, using various methods, such as surveys or statistical analysis in the assessment, and then conceptualize about the findings in the second, descriptive phase, which allows for empirical generalizations based on which theory-building may begin. This method of social analysis often described as inductive is challenged by Giddens, who prefers the deductive model, as implied by the fact that he proposes a social metatheory for consideration as the starting point for social analysis.

¹¹ Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity. Self and Society in the Late Modern Age* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991).

¹² Anthony Giddens, *The Transformation of Intimacy* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992).

This theory is based on Giddens' firm assumption that "[S]ocial theory does not 'begin' either with the individual or with society, both of which are notions that need to be reconstructed through other concepts. In structuration theory, the core concern of the social sciences is with recurrent social practices and their transformations."¹³ This reconstruction takes place through his evaluation of the schools of classical social thought which he considers insufficient to capture social realities in a complex and exhaustive manner.

He has undertaken this complicated task, resulting in the gradual emergence of the theory of structuration during the second half of the 1970s, and the first part of the 1980s. The first time Giddens refers to it is in his *New Rules of Sociological Method*¹⁴ in which he concentrates on interpretative sociology and searches for a satisfactory position to recognize the "centrality of the interpretation of meaning" in sociology. The next study to contribute further to the development of his theory is *Central Problems in Social Theory*,¹⁵ which provides a criticism of structuralist and post-structuralist thought. A brief synopsis of his conception serving as the basis of the new theory is introduced in *A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism: Vol. 1*¹⁶ while a complete exposition of his system of thoughts is provided in *The Constitution of Society*, the book fully devoted to this theory.

2. The Roots of the Theory of Structuration

In the "Introduction" to *The Constitution of Society*, Giddens proposes to reach beyond a theory with a sociological bias, meaning that his is a social theory addressing issues which are of concern to all the social sciences; however, he maintains a sociological bias in that his theory is with a concentration upon modern Western states and societies.¹⁷ He claims to break with the traditional orthodoxies of assigning superiority either to actors or structures and to offer a comprehensive framework applicable to "the illumination of concrete processes of social life."¹⁸ He introduces the concept of the duality of structure as the way to destabilize the dichotomy between subjects and objects, that is, actors and structures, by arguing for a relationship between them which is dialectical in manner.

¹³ Giddens 1991, 203.

¹⁴ Anthony Giddens, *New Rules of Sociological Method* (London: Hutchinson, 1976).

¹⁵ Anthony Giddens, *Central Problems in Social Theory* (London: Macmillan, 1979).

¹⁶ Anthony Giddens, *A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism, Vol. 1, Power, Property and State* (London: Macmillan, 1981).

¹⁷ He also calls for a shift in the focus of social research from epistemology to ontology, placing issues regarding existence in the center of investigation.

¹⁸ Giddens 1984, xvii.

The two classical trends, however, have also supplied him with some of the basic elements of his theory insofar as he has had to consider the role of the acting agent in the light of its relations to the structure(s) and institutions of modern societies. The classics have also convinced Giddens that a social theory has to address the realm of social praxis, reproduction, and transformation with reference to the role of time and space, which have also become key notions in post-structuralist thinking. Giddens, therefore, also regards the positioning of the actors or the various time constraints involved, that is, the problem of enclosure and disclosure in social action. However, it is also necessary to pair these various ontological issues with some epistemological ones, such as the ability of the actors to initiate, control, and monitor their actions as well as the development of their knowledgeability.

Besides the classics, Giddens also considers carefully the propositions set forth by his contemporaries. He finds that his model that addresses these latter issues regarding actors can revolve around (1) the results of recent psychological investigations, especially findings regarding cognitive processes, that is, how the mind, the conscious, and the unconscious work; as well as (2) what is commonly referred to in the literature as the linguistic turn in the social sciences which evokes the issues of the construction of meaning, verification, and falsification as well as the intersection of acting and speaking. Other contemporary post-structuralist scholars also raise the issue of the role and function of ideology, power, knowledge, structure, and institutions in the reproduction of society, questioning the agency position of the individual and redefining it as an ideologically interpellated subject, a position Giddens rejects. However, other post-structuralist views do leave their mark on his methodology and conceptual development.

What follows is an attempt to elucidate Giddens' conviction that a crisis exists in the social sciences since, he claims, social scientists have been unable to overcome the classical dichotomy between micro- and macro-level analyses. This crisis thwarted the emergence of a holistic, integrative theory that would successfully combine both of these trends. The present chapter outlines his criticism of the various schools of thought¹⁹ and explores which notions put forth by these trends he has found applicable and valid in constituting his own conception.²⁰

¹⁹ The following discussion does not offer a comprehensive introduction to the various schools but focuses only on those more important notions which Giddens draws on significantly in his theory.

²⁰ The main sources used in this text, although not indicated regularly, are Giddens 1981, 1984 and 1991, as well as Kaspersen. Other sources include Anthony Giddens, *Social Theory and Modern Sociology* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1987), Anthony Giddens, *Politics, Sociology and Social Theory. Encounters with Classical and Contemporary Social Thought* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), Ian Craib, *Anthony Giddens* (London: Routledge, 1992), and Ruth Wallace and Alison Wolf, *Contemporary Sociological Theory. Continuing the Classical Tradition* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1995). In the discussion of the various trends and scholars, the classification offered by Wallace and Wolf is followed.

2.1 Positivism

Positivism is often referred to as “the positive philosophy of science” which expresses that it is a stand or philosophy which favors “positive” knowledge, meaning knowledge based on experiment and/or systematic observations of the primary source of knowledge as opposed to metaphysical “speculation”. As a result, it prefers empiricism and so-called inductive methods, which place verifiable facts in the center of research, from which theoretical conclusions derive through generalizations. The phrase also indicates the way in which positivism regards sciences, actually favoring natural sciences over social sciences. As a result, it prefers the application of natural-scientific models in the study of social life, not only indicating empiricism, but also the conceptualization of societies as organisms, thus social laws as analogous to laws which describe regularities in the natural sciences. It also views humans as objects in the larger organism of society and argues for the study of facts which, thus, must be separated from values. The acknowledged founder of positivism is Auguste Comte, who is also claimed to have invented the term sociology to signify the science of society as he envisioned it.

Giddens rejects positivism outright stating that its basic assumption of humans as mere objects and its structuring a scholarly field on the basis of natural-scientific thinking and methodology are unacceptable and long outdated. He believes that the social sciences are about human beings who are knowledgeable acting agents and have the will power to act knowingly on decisions they have consciously made. Thus, they must not be treated and analyzed as objects. People also vary: they have their own internal as well as external features, so other disciplines, such as psychology, must also be incorporated into social research in order to be able to gain a fuller understanding of human action. Since individuals are not mechanically created either and are aware of a great deal regarding what is happening, as well as how and why it is happening, they cannot be treated as if totally identical nor be categorized as simply as inert objects can be.

Giddens also feels the need to expand the issues involved in social examination which Comte²¹ reduces to two major areas: an analysis of (1) social statistics dealing with the mechanisms of stability, order, and reproduction in society; and that of (2) social dynamics, which examines the background, nature, and direction of social change. Though Comte also states that investigation begins with facts and is aimed at facts, that is, he embraces a theory relying on objectivity and empirical research, he gives priority to theoretical laws and describes various phenomena in relation to previously set theoretical frameworks.²² Giddens, however, prefers the deductive

²¹ Auguste Comte, *The Positive Philosophy* (1842) (New York: C. Blanchard, 1958).

²² These are seemingly contradictory dispositions because, on the one hand, Comte claims that the examination of facts must serve as the basis of social analysis, but, at the same time, he also seems to believe in the primacy of a theoretical framework which precedes social investigation. However, what Comte

method in social sciences, affirming that testing clearly defined theorems in research is a more fruitful method in social analysis.

Giddens also rejects Herbert Spencer's²³ ideas which serve as the basis for functionalism: the view of society as a living organism in which the seemingly different, independent parts are actually interdependent—they work together, each fulfilling a specific function, in order to maintain an equilibrium in society, thus granting social stability, order and survival. It is rather interesting to observe that, at the same time, Spencer also implies the idea of social evolution by concluding that society changes from elementary or primitive forms of social order to more complex structures, such as the industrialized Western societies. Thus, he also establishes the basic principles of the evolutionary theories, which also identify change with linear progress, thus evaluating and classifying societies, also implying a sense of predeterminism and the view of history as a form of development. In this manner, Spencer's theory unites the basic ideas of the two most influential social trends of the early 20th century, functionalist and evolutionary theories, both of which Giddens is rather critical of.

2.2 Evolutionary Theory

Evolutionary theory unites the works of two major German classics, Karl Marx²⁴ and Max Weber²⁵. Although both scholars are considered to be representatives of the same major school, evolutionary theory, their work resulted in the development of two separate trends: (1) conflict theory which relies heavily on the writings of Marx; and (2) analytical critical theory which embraces the ideas of Weber. An excellent comparison of these two trends is provided by Wallace and Wolf, who claim that the most apparent difference between them lies in the fact that in conflict theory the task of the social scientist is expected to be not only to describe processes as an outsider but also to offer an evaluation of the phenomena in question based on his own personal values and beliefs, while analytical theorists require that the scholar be an objective eye, therefore, the author's personal values and convictions be excluded from the analysis.

expresses by theory may be best understood as his philosophical conviction and supposition that natural sciences must be taken as the model for social scientific investigation, with all their conceptualizations, methodological considerations, and manners of investigation as well as the idea that, as in natural sciences, all phenomena are interrelated and, thus, the outcome, i.e., the theoretical conclusion emerging as the result of the analysis of a given phenomenon, can be connected to an already revealed law or regularity, in line with the overall model regarding the operation of society.

²³ Herbert Spencer, *The Principles of Sociology* (New York: Appleton, 1896).

²⁴ See, for example, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Selected Writings* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1968).

²⁵ See, for example, Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization* (1922) (New York: The Free Press, 1964).

They consider the second difference between the two schools to be the fact that conflict theorists view society as being shaped by a single decisive factor: the economy, which establishes a ruling class opposed by the oppressed masses on the basis of their differential relationship to the means of production, while analytical theorists claim that complex structures and various sources of power divide society along several lines. Therefore, it is not necessarily the private property of the means of production that defines the power potential of a given social group, but also religion, education or politics.

As the third difference, the authors mention that conflict theorists believe in the possibility of the existence of a conflict-free state, namely communism, and make the assumption that history moves in the direction of this conflict-free ideal state form, while analytical theorists do not rationalize about an ideal state because they recognize that conflicts will continue to exist as long as societies do. As a result, they claim, societies do not move toward a utopian state but toward a more complex social structure. Weber, for example, predicts that the next level of development in the Western hemisphere will be a society taken over by bureaucracy.

However, as Wolf and Wallace point out, these two trends share a number of similarities. They both imply determinism and uniformity in human history as well as in the direction of social change, both viewing societies and change in terms of social conflict. Just like functionalism, they also favor macro-level analysis and a deductive approach and are convinced that predetermined mechanisms play a crucial role in social life.

Giddens strongly criticizes these schools for their developmental view of history and their belief in the notion of universal determinism, in a normative illusion, on the basis of which societies can be evaluated and branded, as well as their reduction of the individual either to a powerless subject, completely unaware and manipulated by the power structure, or to a power-hungry individual in a particular power position, who deprives, alienates, and subjugates the overpowered, oppressed majority in order to maintain its power and the existing social structure which allows for this. Giddens also contends that neither individual actions nor social changes can be defined in a uniform and deterministic manner and he rejects the implied parallel between classes,²⁶ on the one hand, and social change and development, on the other. Last, the temporal framework inherent in both trends, namely, the notion that time always involves change which is progress, is also challenged by Giddens.

²⁶ Both Marx and Weber use the term class, but with a different understanding and implications. Marx views class as the basic unit of structural division in modern capitalist societies, while Weber regards it as one type of group in his typology of organizations, in which (1) class is a group of people with the same position in economic life with regard to property, potential purchasing power, and marketable skills; (2) status group is a group united by a shared mode of life, often the result of common education and/or social prestige; while (3) party is an association aimed at securing power and advantages for its members and leaders. Thus, Marx's concept of class is defined in terms of the relationship to the means of production; Weber's in terms of shared market position, leading to shared life chances.

Nevertheless, these notions and their criticism are incorporated into his discussion of evolution, history and change, and capitalist societies in *The Constitution of Society*.

2.3 Functionalism

Functionalism, along with structuralism, was the most highly praised sociological trend during Giddens' university years. The most prominent representative of this trend, the American Talcott Parsons along with his outstanding student, Robert Merton, made an attempt to mould functionalism together with structuralism, thus proposing a social theory which could capture the essence of contemporary modern societies. However, Giddens believes that they were not entirely successful in this endeavor.

This school, having been established in sociology by Emile Durkheim,²⁷ focuses on macro-level analysis: it examines the whole of society as a complex organic unit, which is composed of largely autonomous parts or sub-organisms—a conceptual framework proposed by Spencer. Just like in the human body, where organs function with the primary goal of maintaining the body, social organisms also operate with the underlying ultimate purpose of maintaining the whole organism, which is society. Functionalism, similarly to positivism, gives priority to this basic theoretical assumption, attributing to it some sort of an a priori position. Its basic suppositions—that social cohesion exists and that institutions serve certain given functions necessary for the maintenance of this cohesion and social equilibrium—indicate that institutions and functions in societies have priority over individuals, who are essentially subjected to and often unaware of these functions. All events and actions are intertwined and serve the sole purpose of providing social permanence and balance; thus, events and actions may be viewed with a sense of determinism. It is this determinism, implying the consideration of functions as the primary motive for actions as well as the reduction of human beings to subject positions, that Giddens refuses to accept.

If the basic function of the establishment is to provide social balance and permanence, how should social change be conceptualized? Functionalism, relying on Spencer's essentially evolutionary view of history, compares the development of societies to that of biological organisms: the way a cell divides and each time forms a more complex structure, societies also break with their previous patterns at certain points²⁸ and develop a more complex system which reflects the more recent functions society needs to fulfill in order to be able to maintain its existence. Change can be understood through an analysis of the systems and these new functions, in the

²⁷ See, for example, Emile Durkheim, *The Rules of Sociological Method* (1895) (New York: The Free Press, 1982).

²⁸ Durkheim explains these points by introducing the notion of anomic, meaning "normlessness": whenever anomic occurs on the social level, certain changes are bound to occur in the system.

course of which they must be regarded as social facts, i.e., objective realities, as Durkheim suggests. This evolutionism also indicates that social change should be conceptualized as a form of progress, which follows the same course everywhere, and is thus both universally applicable and determined.

Giddens rejects the functionalist notion that each society develops in an organic way from simple to more complex structures. He believes that just because systems have certain needs, i.e., certain new functions necessary for the maintenance of social equilibrium, this does not mean that they will be automatically met. This mechanical way of approaching social reality and history as a form of predetermined progress, therefore disregarding the mental capacity and ability of the individual to act on his own, provides another point of departure for Giddens from this trend. Moreover, if it is accepted that it is only societies that are in the position of being able to act and have their needs met, then societies must also be provided with their own consciousness, needs, drives, and the power as well as the means to have these needs fulfilled. But what is the origin of this consciousness? And what about people? Should they not be considered? After all, they provide the body of societies, the various institutions and functions. Can they not also shape societies? These are further points Giddens raises in his criticism of functionalism.

Of the various functionalist thinkers, Talcott Parsons' concepts have had a lasting impact on the development of Giddens' theory in two areas. One is Parsons' theory of action,²⁹ in which he considers how motivated actors perform actions. Parsons proposes that in the course of actions, people set their goals first and act in order to achieve them. While acting, they must consider two social components: (1) the situation in which the action takes place, which includes the available means and conditions; and (2) the social standards as well as regulations which provide the framework for human action. With this reasoning, Parsons is able to expand the constraining limits of functionalism and to assert the possibility of motivated human actions—even if he conceptualizes it strictly within the framework of the social structure and the limitations it places on action. The idea of motivated actors and the need to examine the context of action, including norms and regulations, have found their way into the theory of structuration.

The other area which has had a lasting impact on the theory of structuration is Parsons' description of the systems of action.³⁰ Parsons claims that there are four systems which regard the life and action of individuals. The first one is actualized with the birth of the individual and provides the behavioral organism. The second one is the personality system which is the result of identity formation. Both of these systems are primarily tied to the individual, a theoretical stand which represents another possible point of departure from the original ideas of functionalism. The other two systems are tied to the whole of society: the social system, with its def-

²⁹ Talcott Parsons, *Action Theory and the Human Condition* (New York: The Free Press, 1978).

³⁰ Talcott Parsons, *The Social System* (New York: The Free Press, 1951).

inition of roles³¹ and interaction, and the cultural system, which includes platforms connected to value transmission and maintenance, such as religion and education. This division of systems which binds them both to the individuals and systems foreshadows some aspects of Giddens' notion of the duality of structure.

Two areas in the work of Robert Merton³² have also contributed to Giddens' theory. One is related to Merton's understanding of functions: his definition of dysfunctions, as opposed to functions, associated with human action, as well as his distinction between manifest and latent functions. Merton seems to treat these notions as dualisms and not as dualities, that is, not as two intertwined notions originating in and representing the essence of the same thing, as if two sides of the same coin, only seemingly in opposition. While Giddens draws on the differentiation between the two types of functions, he refuses to accept the dualistic nature between them. He proposes a model duality capturing the dynamisms of action, generally overcoming the differences between the two major sociological trends with regard to their focus on the role of the individual versus the structure when examining society.

Merton's role-set is the second area which can also be detected in the theory of structuration. Merton departs from the basic assumption that each individual occupies a status in a given society. Status is connected to social structure and is accompanied by a set of roles which describe and prescribe the behavior of the individual in the given status under various circumstances. This is a conceptualization primarily about the prescribed nature of face-to-face public action as determined by social standings, a notion also featuring symbolic interactionism.

2.4 Phenomenology

Phenomenological sociology, which is rooted in the Kantian concept of the centrality of the individual, was developed as a distinct philosophical school by Edmund Husserl.³³ He believes that all experience is channeled to the individual through the senses; thus, knowledge is of sensory origin. The various sensations are transmitted to the individual consciousness, where they serve as the basis for the construction of knowledge of them. In describing what reality is, therefore, individuals must describe the way they perceive, see and evaluate the world, that is, describe the process through which the constitution of knowledge takes place. As it happens in the individual consciousness, this theory considers individuals to be free and rational actors, thus, their actions are conceptualized as unbound, not mechanically determined by their social or cultural milieu. Therefore, actions and social

³¹ The concept of role highlights the social expectations attached to given statuses, social positions, and situations.

³² Robert Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure* (New York: The Free Press, 1968).

³³ Edmund Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations. An Introduction to Phenomenology* (1929) (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1960).

reality must be understood on the basis of individual interactions; as a result, the central role in action is assigned to individuals. The belief that human activity must be interpreted as meaningful for the actors expresses a concern for subjective meaning and gives way to the development of phenomenological or interpretative sociology, the founder of which is the Austrian, Alfred Schütz.

Giddens defines this school as existentialist and connects it to another trend, hermeneutic phenomenology.³⁴ He states that the major difference between existential and hermeneutic phenomenologies lies in their focus in social analysis: existential phenomenology is concerned with the analysis of culture and society on the level of the individual, i.e., the way and mechanisms through which culture is internalized in the individual, while hermeneutical phenomenology is a field primarily oriented towards the collective aspects of culture. This difference alone implies that the object of the analysis must also differ: existential phenomenology focuses on the self and the processes of internalization, while the concern for hermeneutical phenomenology is with texts, and, thus, language, resulting in the attempt at defining the nature and structure of communication, i.e., the communal nature of culture.

2.4.1 Existential Phenomenology

Alfred Schütz, a student of Husserl's, has developed this thought³⁵ on the premise that understanding is subjective, and that it emerges out of the individual's evaluation of particular situations, in the course of which the actor draws on a common stock of knowledge, thus using typifications or recipes when acting and thinking. This assumes that the world is constructed of certain types of things and acts, from among which the individual chooses when acting and elaborating discursively on actions. This presupposes that the actors regularly find themselves in certain taken-for-granted situations in which they expect their partners to act according to certain prescribed scripts; the participants in the interaction, thus, can draw conclusions and define their own roles and conduct their own actions. This common sense knowledge, therefore, which is developed through experience and socialization, serves as the basis for everyday interaction.³⁶ Schütz contends that the purpose of sociology is to examine the process of understanding through a set theory which enables one to view individual actions as free of preconceptions and to discover how the actor recognizes situations and assigns meaning to them.

³⁴ Anthony Giddens, *Studies in Social and Political Theory* (London: Hutchinson, 1977).

³⁵ Alfred Schütz, *The Phenomenology of the Social World* (1932) (Evanston, Ill: Northwestern University Press, 1967).

³⁶ Erzsébet Barát, in a comment, argues for the lack of actual agency position and autonomy of the actors in Schütz's theory since his process of socialization merely implies one's capacity to recognize the appropriateness of a pre-given role and to assess a given situation and thus, the agency of the actor consists in the assessments and assumptions of a self-penetrating system only. As a result, no action otherwise, that is, no change originates in the actor.

Giddens relies on Schütz in his application of a number of notions. One is the idea of the common stock knowledge which reappears in Giddens' idea of the structure and of the mutual knowledge. The ability of actors to act in accordance to their own free will and to determine the course of their action is also a key aspect of the theory of structuration, as is the understanding that actors monitor action and are able to reflect on them discursively. That is, the constitution of meaning as performed by the actor is also a notion Giddens himself applies in his theory of structuration.

One major trend generated by these ideas is ethnomethodology³⁷ with Harold Garfinkel as its key representative. Ethnomethodology relies on the basic assumption that cultural typifications identified as institutionalized knowledge of the real world exist and are the basis for everyday interactions. In order to understand the way meaning is constructed, these typifications must be disregarded in the course of the interaction. The tool for this analysis is language, as it is the most complex indexical system in a society, one, which is generally used in interaction, acquired through interaction and routine, and applied on the basis of social consensus. Language is also a field around which a great deal of presupposed knowledge may be organized.³⁸ Therefore, through breaking away from the traditional usage of the language in given situations, all these presuppositions can also be disregarded, and the analysis of the actual process of meaning construction may begin.³⁹ In his work, Garfinkel examines how social order is created through our activities, primarily through talk and conversation. He points out that when the consensus underlying verbal communication is broken, interaction and, thus, social integration is threatened, leading not only to cognitive but also emotional misreadings between individuals.

Giddens draws on Garfinkel's findings at two points. One is Garfinkel's entrust of the individual with the ability of giving a rational account of his actions. Giddens proposes that through these evaluated actions one assigns meaning to the social world. The individual is able to reflect on actions, to evaluate them, therefore, to de-

³⁷ "Ethnomethodology is the investigation of the rational properties of indexical expressions and other practical actions as contingent ongoing accomplishments of organized artful practices of everyday life." Harold Garfinkel, *Studies in Ethnomethodology* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1967), 11.

³⁸ Following is an example of underlying presuppositions in language. The question "Did you like your soup?" involves the following information: I know you, I know that you had soup and that you have finished eating it; I know that you do not always like soup and I express my curiosity as to whether this time you liked it or not. As this example indicates, there is usually more meaning and knowledge behind each statement than the actual words uttered allow one to predict, and the statement cannot be fully understood unless we know the consensus behind it.

³⁹ He asked his students to pretend that they were unaware of the consensus around which language is structured and to act upon the word-by-word meaning of utterances, thus breaking the set of institutionalized linguistic knowledge in interaction. Some examples: "I am sick of him!" "What do you mean? Why, you should see a doctor if you are sick!" or: "Hi! What's up?" "Well, I don't see anything!" Garfinkel 1967, 49.

velop knowledge regarding them, and to act accordingly. This leads to the second point Giddens borrows from ethnomethodology, which is the assertion that actors are knowledgeable: they possess explicit as well as implicit, that is, taken-for-granted, knowledge of the social world. However, their knowledge does not necessarily need to be verbalized: that is, the mere fact that knowledge is not communicated does not mean that it does not exist or that the actor is unaware of it.

The most outstanding representative of existential phenomenology is Peter Berger.⁴⁰ His basic assumption is that any body of knowledge can become socially accepted as reality. The body of knowledge comes to life through the acts of individuals, who continuously share and create reality through actions and interactions. Berger termed this process the social construction of reality and contended that the task of sociology should be to examine the way this process takes place. He himself identifies three moments in this dialectical process: externalization,⁴¹ objectivation,⁴² and internalization⁴³. This indicates that Berger considers the presence of an objectivated world of institutions which seems to constitute an organized reality of individuals and is constantly re-created by the actors in it, an idea which occurs in the theory of structuration as well. But while Berger focuses on the non-determined subjective meanings developed by actors and considers the constructed reality the background within which inquiry must begin, Giddens places equal emphasis on the analysis of the established social order and the interaction between the two levels: the individual and the institutional.

2.4.2 Hermeneutical Phenomenology

Hermeneutical social theory aims to reach “beyond the description and structural analysis of the text ... [to] find the hidden meaning”⁴⁴ in it. Its point of departure is rooted in the realm of social phenomena where actors act with a purpose; thus, individual actions can be interpreted by re-creating the actor’s intentions and motives, in the course of which the real, but at the same time also hidden, meaning of the action may be revealed. Hegel’s idea of historical cycles has resulted in the emergence of the phenomenon of the hermeneutic cycle, which supposes that understanding can be constituted in cycles in which collective memories are continually and selectively re-assessed.

⁴⁰ Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality* (New York: Doubleday, 1966).

⁴¹ This refers to how the individual creates its own social world: its construction of his social reality and its re-creation of social institutions.

⁴² This refers to the notion in which the individual perceives everyday life as an objective and ordered reality which imposes itself upon the individual. The major tool for this is language.

⁴³ This concept regards socialization by which the social order is legitimized and the individuals internalize objectified reality. If this process is disturbed, individual identity crises will occur.

⁴⁴ Zygmunt Bauman, *Hermeneutics and Social Science* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978), 10.

Martin Heidegger⁴⁵ has also contributed greatly to the theoretical development of this school. He maintains that meaning is constituted, and, since it cannot be separated from the historical circumstances or traditions in which it comes about, it is context-bound. But what is behind knowledge or these secondary constructs? The task is to investigate *Dasein*, the world humans produce out of their experience. Considering time a vital aspect of human existence, he assigns it a central place in his scheme. Everything can be defined and interpreted in terms of time: even individual life, which is nothing but a temporal state spent while waiting for death. Giddens draws on three of Heidegger's ideas in (1) arguing for a "hermeneutically informed social theory"; (2) assigning a crucial role to time in social analysis; and (3) declaring that the human state of awaiting death results in social contradictions.

Hermeneutic sociology is the science of social interpretation, and, consequently, developing a theory, a discourse is a hermeneutic activity in itself. But when applying a social theory, one may engage in two types of discourse: (1) on the level of the subject of the analysis; and (2) on the level of the theoretical discourse regarding the first. In order to elaborate on the relations between these two types of discourse, Giddens introduces the idea of double hermeneutics. He defines it as the intersection between two frames of meaning: one constituted by the lay actors regarding the social world, and another one which is the metalanguage introduced and used in social analysis by the scholar, who is also constituted as an actor in a given society. When discussing what happens at the intersection of these two frames, Giddens contends that inevitably slips may occur, working in both directions.

2.5 Symbolic Interactionism

Symbolic interactionism is a term first used by Herbert Blumer⁴⁶ in 1937 to refer to a field of social psychology which addresses the question of how individuals develop socially as a result of participation in group or social life, an issue of concern for Giddens also. In Blumer's view, infants depend on adults for direction in social action, i.e., they learn the rules, which constitute the community, through interaction. Blumer states that in the process of understanding action, each group relies on its own shared set of symbols and various meanings attached to them, which are transmitted to infants. As symbols call for a response in interaction, it is in a way key to the conduct of meaningful interaction. Moreover, proposes Blumer, stimulus and response are equally significant for interaction, and interpretation appears in the space between these two, it being an action consciously performed by an active, self-identifying individual. Within the group, however, the individual is an entity and an

⁴⁵ Martin Heidegger, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology* (1927) (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982).

⁴⁶ Herbert Blumer, *Symbolic Interactionism. Perspective and Method* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1969).

active constructor, who interprets, evaluates, defines, and maps actions. That is, meaning in everyday life emerges through interaction.

Today scholars representing this school engage in research in four areas: (1) the production of meaning and culture through symbols, that is, through signifying practices; (2) the emergence of meaning and the processes involved in it in a social world where lives are always shifting and becoming; (3) the nature of interaction and its most basic unit, the self; and (4) the underlying patterns of social life through the study of symbols and interactions. Of these, Giddens is most interested in the nature of interaction and the ways the self may be conceptualized in order to emerge as a knowledgeable agent.

One of the main scholars involved in researching this area, George Herbert Mead, states⁴⁷ that the self is acting and creative, and it becomes an individual through social processes. He differentiates between two phases of the self, which are: (1) the state of 'I' which is unorganized, creative and spontaneous; and which reaches (2) the state of 'me' once it possesses organized attitudes developed through responses from others—that is why it is often described as the self-concept, that is, the way people see themselves through the eyes of others. 'Me' is social and determined, and connects the self to the wider society, thus plays a crucial role in self-interaction, which is role-play in the form of an internal conversation in which the self takes things into account and prepares for an interaction, as if rehearsing. This implies that there are pre-set norms and roles on the basis of which the individual may prepare for an interaction, presuming that it is aware of the role and the text the other participants will use in the course of the interaction. The self, thus, evolves through signifying practices, through symbols and communication in interaction, which also implies the self's relational position. The concept of the self, the manner of its participation in interaction and the process of the constitution of meaning in interaction are three major areas in which Giddens finds Mead's propositions significant.

Giddens also owes a great deal to Erving Goffman⁴⁸ and his theory of dramaturgy, which has evolved out of the idea of role play. Goffman also shares in the belief of the knowledgeability of the actor and views individuals as real-life actors. For him social reality is constructed by roles, played by every individual in accordance with a script, which, in essence, is nothing more than a socially defined mode of behavior and way of speaking, acquired through practice until a routinized acquisition. He makes a distinction between the public realm which he calls the front region and the private sphere which he terms as the back region. He considers social interaction as acting in the front region, while conceptualizes the back region as a place and time reserved for the self, where one can retire after the series of role plays

⁴⁷ George Herbert Mead, *Mind, Self and Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1934).

⁴⁸ Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1959).

performed in public day after day—as if a domain of life outside and beyond the scope of roles. Goffman points out that the various roles are defined by place and time; consequently, the circumstances must also be considered when examining interactions. He calls the method he proposes for the execution of such a project frame-analysis, indicating that his primary concern lies not with the action per se but the surroundings and circumstances under which it is performed. This idea can be linked to the work of Garfinkel, who calls attention to indexical expressions: terms which carry more meaning than what the actual linguistic utterances would imply due to the specific timing and spacing of their being used as well as the previous knowledge of the actors involved.

Giddens also argues that social practices are constrained by time and space as well and believes in the routine nature of social reproduction. He concludes that individuals are not conscious of these daily routines, being governed by traditions, which are the dominant factors of day-to-day reproduction. Much like Goffman, Giddens considers face-to-face interactions and their analysis central to his theory. But Giddens refuses to focus primarily on micro-level analysis and calls for an equal consideration of macro-structures in social analysis. At the same time, he relies on Goffman's findings on routine actions, that is, roles, and his typology of interaction, wherein he isolates different types of gatherings on the basis of their nature, purpose, and context.

2.6 Time-geography

The importance of individual time and space in social interaction has been addressed in the social sciences by T. Hagerstrand.⁴⁹ He assumes that daily life is routinized. In the course of interaction certain constraints occur, which he sets out to analyze, concluding that these are bound to time and space.⁵⁰ Thus, very often these limitations also contribute to the establishment of daily routines as they are the material axes of existence. Through an analysis of the physical domains of time and space, which enable him to map individual and social routines, he examines routines, which comprise a major portion of individual biographies.

Although Giddens is rather critical of Hagerstrand's work in *The Constitution of Society*, he considers Hagerstrand's findings regarding the impact of time and space on actions crucial and draws on them when developing his own concept of regionalization. His main objections to Hagerstrand's time-geography include the claim that he, similarly to the structuralists, (1) employs a weak conception of human agency; (2) renders individuals subject to the circumstances of action; (3) considers

⁴⁹ T. Hagerstrand, *Innovation as a Spatial Process* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976).

⁵⁰ For example, individuals have a limited capacity to participate in more than one activity at a given time; they can only be in one place at one time, that is, geographical location and movement are always connected to time.

structure not only as a given in everyday life but as a supreme force; (4) concentrates on the constraining properties related to the body; and (5) offers a deficient theory of power and change.⁵¹

2.7 Psychoanalysis

Giddens draws on psychoanalysis in four major areas. First, he refers to the propositions of Sigmund Freud, founder of this discipline, in developing the notion of agency in the theory of structuration. Giddens departs from Freud's concept of the unconscious and his model of the psyche consisting of the id, ego, and superego,⁵² reworking their implications and combining them with theorems offered by Erik Erikson in his conceptualization of child development, discussed below. In the theory of structuration, Giddens also considers routine vital to agency, as the force upon which individual ontological security evolves, as well as to social action, since he regards most daily action as routinized. Thus, he considers break in routine dangerous, resulting in the emergence of critical situations. At this point he refers to Erikson and Freud, both of whom analyze anxiety and fear as reactions to danger and loss of trust, and propose models of tension management which Giddens finds inspirational in his discussion of the development of the self and in his analysis of critical situations.

Giddens also draws on Erikson's object-relations theory.⁵³ Erikson is concerned with the dynamic internal aspects of individuals, but, at the same time, also acknowledges the impact of the external world and social organizations. His theory, therefore, focuses on the way the individual behaves and adjusts to its environment. In his vital concept in the theory of structuration identified as the duality of structure, Giddens develops this further, capturing this interdependency between individual actions, on the one hand, and social circumstances and organizations, on the other. The second field in which Giddens draws on Erikson regards his analysis of personality development and socialization. Erikson proposes that child development takes place through eight stages. Giddens borrows the first three, assigning a crucial role to the first one, in which the infant learns about routines and develops its own, as a result of which its sense of trust and of security emerges along with that of its personal identity.

⁵¹ The propositions of time-geography have been challenged by a new set of issues related to the wide and rapid spread of the various forms of media, which (1) question the absolutely constraining aspect of time and space on the selves; and (2) contribute to the appearance of a set of new concerns as the result of the recognition that the technological revolution and the media have challenged traditional conceptualizations of identities, agency, and interaction. On the analysis of these and the mediated self, see, for example, Debra Grodin and Thomas R. Lindlof eds., *Constructing the Self in a Mediated World* (London: Sage, 1996).

⁵² Sigmund Freud, *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis* (1924) (New York: Perma, 1949).

⁵³ Erik Erikson, *Childhood and Society* (1950) (New York: Norton, 1963).

2.8 Structuralism

The beginnings of structuralism can be tied to the work of Ferdinand Saussure,⁵⁴ who distinguishes between *langue* and *parole*, understanding them to mean the underlying abstract structure of the language and its actual realization, a distinction which can be linked to Noam Chomsky's later analysis⁵⁵ of competence and performance. Saussure believes that the analysis of language involves the identification of the rules governing the deep structures of the surface phenomenon of actual sentences. That is, this universal and finite number of rules which speakers are aware of only indirectly governs their production of an infinite number of sentences in their ordinary communication. Language, thus, consists of (1) a system, which exists prior to actual communication-it is socially constructed and shared, and speakers draw on it in the course of speaking; and (2) the utterance, the individual realization of the system in language use. His claim that there exists an underlying structure to any signifying practice has provided the key notion in structuralism.

Saussure also views language as a system of signs, where signs are made up of two parts: the actual sound image, which he identifies as the signifier, and the underlying concept, which is the signified. He considers the relation between these two parts arbitrary, which contributes another concept of structuralism. Moreover, Saussure also claims that meaning is acquired as a result of relationality, which is centered around difference, thus providing yet another key concept for structuralist thinking.

The term structuralism has become widely used in the social sciences as a result of the work of the French cultural anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss, whose analysis of kinship relations, myths, and religions has gained wide acceptance for this new approach.⁵⁶ He is convinced that there is a deep structure, i.e., underlying rules and structures expressed in social realities and events, and that the role of a social scientist is to search for these deeply rooted rules, which are present in most cultures, but are expressed in various ways on the surface level of social interaction because of the differing transformational rules that apply in the universally shared deep structure. His line of thinking is similar to that of Chomsky's in that he is also in search of the deep structure in grammar, common to all languages, such as the need for the grammatical subject and predicate for the ideal speaker to be able to create sentences.

Structuralists believe that binary oppositions govern our thoughts: they are transformed into cultural signs by taking on meaning. The purpose of interpretation is to discover these and, in the process, to reach the deep structural framework invisible to the subjects since individual life and the concept of reality are defined by

⁵⁴ Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics* (1916) (London: Collins, 1974).

⁵⁵ Noam Chomsky, *Topics in the Theory of Generative Grammar* (The Hague: Mouton, 1966).

⁵⁶ Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1967).

these underlying structures and rules. By identifying with this line of thinking, Vladimir Propp⁵⁷ is able to identify 31 basic functions of narration and Lévi-Strauss examines the system of mythemes, the units of myth, which recur in various cultures.

Giddens applies the structuralist approach when developing his conception of structure, which he conceptualizes as rules and resources agents draw on in interaction, existing only in their memory traces. At the same time, he observes a discrepancy between structure and practical, conscious activities on the part of individuals, a gap which, in his opinion, structuralism fails to bridge. He does not deny that basic structures exist and comprise an underlying framework of elements and regulations which determine actual actions, but he also argues that actors are knowledgeable and powerful and thus able to act contrary to rules and expectations.

Giddens also conceptualizes social action in sets of axes or dimensions. One type of these are related to Hagerstrand who argues for the time and space constraints on the human body and action in using vertical and horizontal axes. However, Giddens introduces context as the third element which binds time and space together, drawing on Saussure's claim that meaning is relational. Moreover, Giddens employs another notion vital to structuralism, the distinction between syntagmatic and paradigmatic dimensions in a system of axioms, the first one expressing the "patterning of social relations in time-space", the latter the "virtual order of 'modes of structuring' recursively implicated" in social action and reproduction.⁵⁸

Giddens also concludes that performance—which is social interaction in his understanding—is rule following. However, Giddens criticizes the structuralist elimination of the role of the actor in performance on the grounds that rules are by nature transformative, so by virtue of this, people who apply these rules possess transformative power. Giddens also argues against the view of individuals as merely being subject to structures, institutions, or power, absolutely unaware of their own situations and constraints, as through reflexivity individuals become knowledgeable and aware of their situations.

2.9 Post-structuralism

Post-structuralism⁵⁹ was born in France in the late 1960s, rooted in the same Saussurean linguistic tradition as structuralism. However, representatives of this non-specific, interdisciplinary school⁶⁰ have re-discovered Saussure's theory by realizing that language is self-sufficient: that words may mean something without

⁵⁷ Vladimir Propp, *The Morphology of the Folktale* (1928) (Austin: Texas University Press, 1968).

⁵⁸ Giddens 1984, 17.

⁵⁹ Although Giddens does not refer to specific post-structuralist ideas in his theory of structuration per se, he is intimately aware of them. Some of these seem to appear in certain places in the theory of structuration; therefore, it is necessary to discuss them among the intellectual currents which, even if indirectly, helped in shaping it.

⁶⁰ There is still an ongoing debate over the precise meaning of post-structuralism.

having a definite referent in the extra-linguistic world and that, therefore, all languages and language-related phenomena may be autonomous. Post-structuralists also identify with the concept of intertextuality, as proposed by Julia Kristeva,⁶¹ which signifies the conceptualizations of texts as inseparably interwoven with other texts, present, past, or future. This concept is rooted in Mikhail Bakhtin's model,⁶² which views the text as a site for dialogic interaction between various modes of discourse and among a multiplicity of voices, all of which are expressive of social phenomena, groups, and speech communities.⁶³

In his "Structuralism, Post-structuralism and the Production of Culture,"⁶⁴ Giddens examines the various themes which commonly recur in post-structuralist writings, which are: (1) linguistics; (2) the relational nature of totalities; (3) the de-centering of the subject; (4) the relation between writing and text; (5) the question of history and temporality; and (6) signification and cultural production. Although he opens this study with the statement that post-structuralism is a "dead tradition of thought",⁶⁵ some post-structuralist observations and notions have found their way into his theory.⁶⁶

2.9.1 Semiotics

Modern semiotics, the study of signs, is also rooted in the linguistic theory of Saussure.⁶⁷ Its point of departure is the basic premise that meaning is defined by the relationship between the signifier and the signified, which relationship is understood to be arbitrary and conventional. If one accepts this thesis, then the referent, or re-

⁶¹ Julia Kristeva, *The Kristeva Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986).

⁶² Mikhail Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* (1929) (Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1973).

⁶³ Christopher Bryant points out the fact that Giddens' structuration theory actually draws on this model and is dialogical in that it hopes to "refer to relations between the social sciences and the lives of the human beings whose behavior is analyzed." Christopher Bryant, "The Dialogical Model of Applied Sociology," in Christopher Bryant and David Jary eds., *Giddens' Theory of Structuration. A Critical Appreciation* (New York: Routledge, 1991), 176–200, 189. He continues with the claim that it is through the dialectic of control that the knowledgeability and capacity which enable the positioned scientist to carry out such projects emerge.

⁶⁴ In Anthony Giddens and Jonathan Turner eds., *Social Theory Today* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987), 195–223.

⁶⁵ Giddens 1987, 195.

⁶⁶ Several authors, such as Roy Boyne, Susan Hekman, Wallace and Wolf, criticize Giddens for not taking post-structuralism and post-modernism seriously and for using only certain notions—at times with inappropriate interpretations—from the concepts of this trend. For the specifics, see Roy Boyne, "Power-knowledge and social theory. The systematic misinterpretation of contemporary French social theory in the work of Anthony Giddens," in Christopher Bryant and David Jary eds., *Giddens' Theory of Structuration. A Critical Appreciation* (New York: Routledge, 1991), 52–73; Susan Hekman, "Hermeneutics and the Crisis of Social Theory. A Critique of Giddens' Epistemology," in Jon Clark et al. eds., *Anthony Giddens. Consensus and Controversy* (London: Falmer Press, 1990), 155–165; and Wallace and Wolf, 1995.

⁶⁷ For a thorough analysis of semiotics from the beginning, see Winfried Nöth, *Handbook of Semiotics* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995).

ality, is not part of the signifying system. Signifiers can also refer to various meanings; any of these variations may, thus, occur in the mind of the listener. The speaker cannot control which exact meaning must be attached to the signifier; it would, therefore, follow that there exists a chain of signifiers along which meaning may slide. If this is the case, meaning is to be understood as unstable as well as individually constructed. Emile Benveniste⁶⁸ observes that language, a social symbolic order, is the means through which subjectivity is also constituted. But Giddens asks the question: what determines the signifiers? He proposes that it is the various social and political strategies which are historically specific to the culture.

The other major linguist who has contributed to the development of semiotics is Charles Peirce⁶⁹ with his theory of semiology. In his system, a signifying process called semiosis involves signs, their objects, and their interpretants as well as the grounds, which are the means through which signs signify, as mediated by the interpretant. He also distinguishes between three types of trichotomies the interpretant may receive, the most important one being performance. In this realm three types of signs may appear: index, icon, and symbol. It is specifically the indexicality of the sign, that is, the context-dependence of meaning which has impacted Giddens' theory.

Clifford Geertz argues for a semiotic concept of culture, viewing human behavior as "a symbolic action which signifies", i.e., as a system of signs, a text. Thus, he continues, "culture is an interworked system of construable signs; it is a context within which elements can be described."⁷⁰ Social action is the surface structure, the articulation of the deep structure, which is a collection of structures, that is, of cultural forms. Interpretation consists of the separation of these two levels and the ascription of meaning to the events—it is like the act of closely reading a text. This close analysis of the reading of social production is called thick description, which is the method for recovering the meanings of social events and texts, along with the various cultural patterns and manners of thinking, which contributed to its existence and meaning.

Scholars applying the study of semiotics in their analysis view cultural actions and processes as processes of communication; they, thus, suppose that linguistic analysis can be applied as a method for cultural analysis as well. In this process of analysis they also suppose that beneath the signs actually received, there lies another layer of signification and structure which govern these messages. The goal of the scholar is to analyze either of these layers or their relationship to each other, which is also one major concern Giddens addresses in the theory of structuration.

⁶⁸ Emile Benveniste, *Indo-European Language and Society* (London: Faber, 1973).

⁶⁹ Charles S. Peirce, *Peirce on Signs. Writings on Semiotics* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1991).

⁷⁰ Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Harper-Collins, 1993), 14.

2.9.2 New Historicism

New Historicism, primarily shaped by the works of Michel Foucault and Louis Althusser, both of whom considered human experience to be shaped by social institutions and ideological discourses, gained popularity as of the early 1980s. It maintains that the historical and cultural context of a text's production along with its understandings, interpretations, and criticism must be considered when one reflects on a given text. New historicists also believe in the need for new approaches to texts; in this way, they do not depart from political or intellectual history, as this was also the case with traditional historicism, which considered literature and literary history as part of cultural history, but they rather conceptualize history as a narrative about past events and as a form of representation. Thus, in their understanding, there exist many histories, not just one homogeneous concept of history. As historians themselves are also involved in certain histories, they do not occupy an objective and detached position—a claim traditional historians upheld.

Louis Althusser⁷¹ regards ideology⁷² as the major organizational principle of a culture's signifying practices which constitutes the social subject as well as maintains social unity and stability through ideological state apparatuses. Michel Foucault, on the other hand, defines power/knowledge⁷³ as the ultimate forces responsible for the formation of modern states and for the determination of social practices which are the means by which individuals are placed into subject positions.

Among the works by members of this school, Giddens admires Foucault's the most: his fervent quest to locate regimes of knowledge as well as to arrive at a definition of power and the way it is exercised in discourses as well as controlled through surveillance. He finds that what emerges as legitimate knowledge is the effect of complex relations of power. Power defines regimes of truth, which, then, establish ideological discourses and institutions through which the social is shaped. That is, knowledge and truth are themselves caught up in power and the social struggles over it. In his works, he textualizes history and examines the various discourses specific to certain periods. He proposes that discipline, surveillance, and punishment play the key role in maintaining the social order in which individuals are merely subjected to the interests and workings of the power structure. Power—that is, action—truth—that is, knowledge—and ethics—that is, morality—are the three axes along which the Foucaultian subject is constituted.

⁷¹ Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," in *Lenin and Philosophy* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971), 127–86.

⁷² He conceives ideology as a body of discursive practices, situated in material institutions, such as political, educational and religious institutions, which subject the individuals through interpellation. He sees the purpose of the dominant ideological discourses as serving the interests of the ruling classes.

⁷³ Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge. Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972–77* (New York: Pantheon, 1980).

Giddens refers to Foucault at several points, but his major interest lies in Foucault's findings regarding power and ideology. Giddens believes that knowledge may not only restrict but liberate the actors, and, as such, can be a means of power. The theory of structuration regards human beings as knowledgeable agents "although acting within historically specific bounds of the unacknowledged conditions and unintended consequences of their acts."⁷⁴ This statement, reflecting the Foucaultian consideration for historically determined circumstances, marks a crucial point in Giddens' theory: how knowledgeable and powerful the actors can be and how the impact and power of the institutions regarding the actors' potentials can be defined. At the same time, Giddens rejects the notion that power, discipline, and punishment are the sole true agents of history and believes that Foucault's work lacks both a comprehensive study of the state and a theory of the subject as such.

2.9.3 Deconstructionism

Deconstructionism also reaches back to Saussurean linguistics, drawing on the proposition that meaning is constituted in the course of signifying practices. The elements participating in this constitution are rooted in a hierarchy of conventional values. The signs gain their identity only insofar as they are differentiated from one another in a given context as opposition or differences. Jacques Derrida's concept of *differance* is a further development of this notion, conveying the divided nature of signs.⁷⁵ Derrida also argues that the idea of structure always presupposes a center of meaning, which he explains by people's desire to center as this centering guarantees presence. It is this centrality, for example, of the universal and homogeneous ideal subject, which is to be decentered, thus ensuring that neither part of the pole becomes central and guarantees presence. One way to deconstruct is to allow the marginalized one to subvert the dominant one—which is the method Foucault calls genealogy in his work.

Derrida's consideration of the notions of absence and presence is indirectly reflected in Giddens' theory as well when Giddens contends that the presence of one element automatically implies the absence of the other. Moreover, seeing human experience as a series of signifying practices and a play between sign and language appears in Giddens' concept of the discursive nature of agency: the claim that agents always monitor their actions in order to understand and make sense of what is happening to them.

The influence of Jacques Lacan⁷⁶ and his works also appears in Giddens' theory of structuration. Lacan states that the human unconscious is structured just like a language, wherein one signifier can be attributed to different signifieds. The concept

⁷⁴ Giddens 1995, 265.

⁷⁵ Jacques Derrida, *Writing and Difference* (London: Routledge, 1978).

⁷⁶ Jacques Lacan, *Ecrits. A Selection* (London: Tavistock, 1977).

of the private chain of signifying in the unconscious is not new as it has already appeared in Freud's works, although only in his discussion of dreams. Lacan also considers difference, i.e., the notion of presence and absence, central to the establishment of the societal frame from early childhood on, and he constructs around this notion his model of the process through which an infant attains its sexual subjectivity,⁷⁷ a concept Giddens himself applies in his theory. Lacan's idea about subject positions, that is, culturally determined social locations, which speakers must assume each time they communicate, also appears in the theory of structuration.

⁷⁷ The three stages he examines are: (1) the imaginary state, wherein the subject is not differentiated from the world and unconscious and conscious images are not separable; (2) the mirror stage, which marks the transition to the symbolic stage, wherein awareness of differentiation develops and language as well as subjectivity are acquired; and (3) the symbolic state, which is characterized by language and representation, the cornerstones of normalcy and sanity.

CHAPTER 2: THE GRAND THEORY

The chapter to follow presents the theory of structuration itself: the basic terms and concepts used, the train of thought and logic applied. The structure of the chapter endeavors to be faithful to Giddens' conceptualization and thus introduces his thinking in Section 1 regarding the micro-level analysis of actors and action, followed by his ideas regarding the macro-level realities of the structure, structures, and institutions in Section 2, so that these could lead to the understanding of his conceptualization regarding the constitution of societies through a discussion of the essential notions of the duality of structure as well as power and change related to it in Section 3.

I. Actors and Actions

This section introduces concepts which are micro-sociological in nature within the framework of Giddens' theory: that of the individual, defined as actor or agent, and that of his social encounters, or actions.

I.1 Actors

The human individual in modern societies is granted the capability of acting and, therefore, can be defined as an actor or agent.¹ This term signifies "the overall human subject located within the corporeal time-space of the living organism."² Human agency is the result of the fact that Giddens conceptualizes the individual as knowledgeable and powerful: through the reflexive monitoring of action and discursive offering of the assessment of action and interaction—including intentions and consequences, whether intended or not—the agent possesses knowledge about social action and life. Based on this knowledge and the fact that without actors and action society cannot exist, actors are empowered to act independently, of their own accord, even differently from or contrary to norms and expectations.³

¹ Giddens uses these terms as synonyms.

² Giddens 1984, 51.

³ Giddens 1984, 9. However, Giddens fails to provide further, sufficient argument for why individuals must be conceptualized as powerful and thus as possible originators of social change. His response to the frequent argument that individuals may have no choice to act otherwise because of social constraints is that having no choice does not automatically mean the dissolution of their possible action, as "action logically involves power in the sense of transformative capacity." Giddens 1984, 15.

Agency, thus, includes several factors: one's ability to perform actions,⁴ one's intentions in acting, and one's ability to intervene and act otherwise. However, agency is not identical with the 'I/me' or the 'self'. The 'I' is a linguistic category which "comes about only via the 'discourse of the Other'—that is, through the acquisition of language—but the 'I' has to be related to the body as the sphere of action."⁵ 'Me' is also tied to linguistic competence; however, it presumes a more complex conduct of the language in which control over the body and knowledge of human conduct in various social contexts are also expressed. The 'self', on the other hand, is the image of the agent, "the sum of those forms of recall whereby the agent reflexively characterizes 'what' is at the origin of his or her action."⁶ The self is "the agent as characterized by the agent"⁷ and is closely related to memory and body.

In introducing how the agent develops, Giddens borrows from ego-psychology, mainly from the findings of Erikson.⁸ Giddens proposes three stages of personality development resulting in the transformation of the body into an acting being. The first stage represents the development of trust⁹ in the infant, closely bound to presence and absence, rooted in the infant's basic bodily needs. To achieve trust in the infant, parents and other social actors must display repetitive series of actions or routines, using typified schemes,¹⁰ resulting in predictability and continuity as well as knowledge and certainty of how things happen and why. This trust, which results in confidence, is also a two-way process, since, although a basic trust with all its mechanisms develops in the infant, the social partners also need the conviction that the infant has trust in them; they, thus, will be able to act in accordance with the social dynamism of the given milieu.

The second stage is tied to projection and introjection built around the mechanisms of the personality, expressed in autonomy or certainty versus doubt or shame. It is rooted in one's self-esteem and self-image and can be traced in all walks of life, from bodily appearance to performance and talk. However, Goffman's distinction between front and back regions indicates that a full understanding of some features,

⁴ This ability is an indicator of individual power.

⁵ Giddens 1984, 43.

⁶ Giddens 1984, 51.

⁷ Giddens 1984, 51.

⁸ Craib states that "the psychological processes are much more complex than Giddens allows for, and that [as a result] his analysis takes away an important depth and level of understanding of agency." 1992, 143.

⁹ Wallace and Wolf consider Giddens' discussion of trust and routine one of the strongest points of the theory of structuration.

¹⁰ Here he borrows from Alfred Schütz, who maintains that the basic act of consciousness is typification, which is a process whereby actors group together typical elements in their series of experiences, thus building up typical models regarding social interactions—actions, objects, as well as people participating in them—which result in the construction of knowledge and of the shared social world.

such as doubt or shame, may be difficult to attain since they are more commonly expressed in the back region, which may be hard to map.

The third, final stage coincides with the development of language skills and is centered around the appearance of initiative versus guilt. At this stage, the child comprehends the difference between the meanings of ‘I’ and ‘me’ and is able to locate itself not only in linguistic roles but also social ones. As the notion of initiative implies, the child is able to break away from close family dependence, a process often referred to as the Oedipal transition, and moves toward autonomy and outside relations. In this way, the foundation for the reflexive monitoring of action is laid and the child is transformed into an actor.¹¹

What constitutes the actor? Giddens considers two constituents: the mind/psyche and the body. Upon discussing cognitive factors, he borrows from Freud, who divides the psychic organization of man into three parts: id, ego, and super-ego. Giddens applies this three-part model and, based on this, proposes his own model, which differentiates between the unconsciousness and consciousness, the latter being classified further as consisting of two components: practical and discursive consciousness, with no sharp dividing line between them.

Bodily mechanisms	Expression	Result
1. Oral/Sensory	trust/mistrust	ontological security
2. Muscular/Anal	autonomy/shame, doubt	bodily control
3. Locomotive/Genital	initiative/guilt	routine

Figure 1: The development of agency¹²

The unconscious provides the individual’s “basic security system”.¹³ One is not able to give verbal expression to the unconscious; it can be understood only in terms of memory, that is, the Heideggerian presencing, which draws on the past in the present, relying on a recall device to help one remember. Closely linked to memory is perception, which is “the medium whereby the past affects the future,” and is “identical with the underlying mechanisms of memory.”¹⁴ This is a flow of activity, in the course of which the individual processes new incoming information as well

¹¹ Barát comments that this conceptualization of the development of the agent is essentially evolutionist in that there seems to be a linear progress towards the utopia of a free and autonomous agency.

¹² Modified from Giddens 1984, 57.

¹³ Boyne criticizes Giddens for rejecting the notion that it is the unconscious that actually structures conscious life (1991, 69).

¹⁴ Giddens 1984, 46. Barát points out that this model presupposes an unchanging, fixed unconscious, which contradicts Giddens’ earlier proposition that memory is the emerging result of remembering and forgetting, and as such it is situational and motivated by a particular moment of interpretation.

as mentally adjusting it to the pieces already stored and locates it in the societal framework.

Here Giddens aims to overcome the difference between the traditional subjectivist approach, which states that the individual is the processor of perception, and the objectivist approach, which holds that the object-world organizes our perceptions. Perception, just like memory, is tied to time and presence, i.e., it represents spatial and temporal continuity and integrates the body with its various sensory systems. However, it is significant to emphasize that perception is also selective as it is impossible for one to observe a number of elements in the course of an interaction. He views this filtering as positive since it is an indicator of the individual's active engagement in the interaction.

"If memory refers to [the] temporal mastery so inherent in human experience, then discursive and practical consciousness refers to *psychological mechanisms of recall*, as utilized in contexts of action."¹⁵ Practical consciousness is closely tied to the capacity of the actors to monitor social actions in their environment, which provides them with the knowledge they possess regarding what is done, and how and why, in the flow of day-to-day conduct. Thus, practical consciousness is the major, though not exclusive, realm of the reflexive monitoring of action. Through the process of reflective monitoring, the human being becomes a knowledgeable agent,¹⁶ possessing tacit knowledge of daily social conduct.¹⁷ If this is the case, then regular, habitual actions, that is, routines, are also connected to this field; they are significant as they provide (1) social reproduction with a material grounding and (2) the agent with trust and ontological security, the key drives leading the agent in its participation in the reproduction of social practices.

Knowledgeability and the ability to verbalize knowledge offer a platform for shifting to the introduction of discursive consciousness. These are a result of the agent's permanent reflexive monitoring of action and account for the agent's credibility criteria, i.e., both the agent's ability to provide reasons for its actions, thus also validating them, as well as its awareness of what is happening in the social environment as well as how and why it is happening. It relies not on tacit but also on discursively available knowledge and gives way to the rationalization of action.

¹⁵ Giddens 1984, 49.

¹⁶ Boyne, in his criticism of Giddens, finds it "hard if not impossible to speak of the 'knowledgeable social actor'." 1991, 55.

¹⁷ However, Giddens is not specific regarding the mechanisms which would guarantee actors the free intellectual capacity to know and the power to act differently; that is, he does not elaborate on what allows actors to go beyond the recognition of appropriateness in their assessment. If this is missing from his concept of agency, reflexive monitoring, knowledgeability and power only enable actors to notice and enact social norms, reducing change to mere accident. Giddens, however, emphasizes the inherent possibility of acting contrary to norms after recognizing and assessing them, which may lead to consciously induced change. However, this remains a claim as he does not support it with sufficient argumentation.

Discursive consciousness indicates those types of recall which the agent can express verbally while practical consciousness connotes the forms which the agent is familiar with in his actions but cannot verbalize.¹⁸ As noted previously, the two types of consciousness do not comprise strictly distinct categories and may overlap as well as supplement each other. The intersection of these two, that is, of saying and doing, placed in a spatial and temporal continuum, accounts for the notion of praxis, discussed further in Section 2.

1. unconscious
2. consciousness
 - a. practical consciousness
 - b. discursive consciousness

Figure 2: The cognitive model of the agent

The second factor to consider in constituting actors is the body, the “locus of the active self”. Various issues, all related to the positioning of the body in time and space, such as the division of the body into front and back regions or the consideration of presence, co-presence, and absence as well as bodily autonomy, control, and limitations, are crucial to the elaboration on the role of the body in a social context.

Traditionally, social positioning has been connected to social roles: functionalist structuralists, such as Parsons, hold that it is tied to societal integration based upon value consensus, while the other school of thought, which includes Goffman and his dramaturgy, maintains that it is shaped by the individual and not structural properties—although allows that the sets, circumstances, and rules in role plays are determined by these. For Giddens, “[A]ctors are always positioned in respect to the three aspects of temporality around which the theory of structuration is built.”¹⁹ Thus, the positioning of the body refers to (1) the positioning of the body in relation to others in co-presence; (2) one’s relation to the seriality of actions across time and space;²⁰ and (3) the intersection of the two, i.e., the actor’s positioning within the much longer life span of institutions and structures.

Upon dividing the body structurally, in terms of the nature of action, Giddens relies again on the findings of Goffman. He maintains that agents play roles which can especially be relatively freely observed in the front region, in the domain of

¹⁸ The unconscious also contains various modes of recall, but the agent has no access to them either because they are from the period when the agent could not speak—and thus the models became connected to the agent’s basic security system—or because they have been repressed.

¹⁹ Giddens 1984, 84.

²⁰ Everyone is positioned at the same time in (1) the *durée* of daily life; (2) in one’s life span; and (3) in the duration of institutional time. These are the three time-relations Giddens considers in his theory.

public interaction. However, the actors also retire to their back region, which marks the intimate, private realm where they are likely not to play various roles or feel obligated to meet various social and behavioral expectations.²¹

Upon analyzing action in the front region, we must consider the question of absence, presence, and co-presence, which concerns the spatiality and movements of the body, as oriented toward itself as well as others. Goffman's considerations of the body as a means of acting and Wittgenstein's philosophical meditation over the issue of the context-dependence of action²² entail closed, physical, face-to-face interactions, the group of which should be extended to situations in which not all of these conditions would necessarily apply, such as telephone conversations. Investigations regarding the significance of individual body parts, body language, the exhibition of presence as well as the autonomy of the body, its limitations, and one's ability to control it may assist social scientists in clarifying the precise manner in which the body is a part of human interaction.

The actor's position as situated in time and space refers to its position not only in encounters and in the *durée* of daily activities but also in the actor's life cycle, including its position in the web of its social relations, which is closely bound to social identities,²³ system integration, and system reproduction. The intersection of the individual's position and that of institutions, which provides the locus for system reproduction through reproductive practices in routinized and situated interactions, regulated by various clusters of rules, is also identified as a frame. Naturally, one may not be fully aware of all these rules and may err, in which case situational improprieties may occur—but in most cases actors are aware of the bulk of the rules, and, consequently, their engagement in encounters results in successful interaction.

This indicates that one possible reason behind change may lie in situational improprieties. Although Giddens is often critical of other theorists for not offering a satisfactory model for agency and, thus neither power nor change, both of which he considers inherent in it, he falls short of providing such a model himself. With regard to change, he already concludes in the "Introduction" that "the search for a theory of social change...is a doomed one."²⁴ The reason for that is, he continues, that "[I]n explaining social change no single and sovereign mechanism can be spe-

²¹ Barát observes that this model conceptualizes the actor as caught within the theatrical metaphor indicating that the public/private divide comes to mean subjection/agency. If this is the case, there is no agentive action in the front region, but the performance of the norm, which is unlike the position of powerful agency. Moreover, the private is also not necessarily free of socially prescribed roles, which often tend to be gender-specific.

²² His question regarding the difference between raising one's arm and one's arm simply going up is the example given to illustrate this point.

²³ As Goffman points out, actors draw upon these identities in their daily interactions as they provide the pattern to be followed in actions.

²⁴ Giddens 1984, xxviii.

cified; there are no keys that will unlock the mysteries of human social development, reducing them to a unitary formula.”²⁵

Giddens conceptualizes agents as humans with transformative capacity, that is, power is a given feature of agency.²⁶ He writes: “to be an agent is to be able to deploy...a range of causal powers.”²⁷ That is, agency and power are connected primarily by logical implication through his definition of the term ‘agency’. This is confirmed as he continues: “An agent ceases to be such if he or she loses the capability to ‘make a difference’, that is, to exercise some sort of power.”²⁸ With this twist he turns his definition around and considers power a condition for agency, as opposed to earlier theories which conceptualized power as the result of that. A page later he also proposes that power should be conceptualized as having two faces, one of which is the “capability to enact decisions” which agents favor, the other is the “mobilization of bias” that is inherent in social institutions.²⁹

Situational improprieties present one possible obstacle to the knowledgeability of the agent.³⁰ Knowledgeability expresses the agent’s awareness of rules and tactics applied in a given social milieu, which is one of the necessary conditions for successful interaction and the maintenance of social life.³¹ Giddens identifies four factors which contribute to the production and content of knowledge which agents tend to draw on: “(1) the means of access actors have to knowledge in virtue of their social location; (2) the modes of articulation of this knowledge; (3) circumstances relating to the validity of the belief-claims taken as knowledge; and (4) factors to do with the dissemination of available knowledge.”³² The stock of knowledge agents draw on contributes highly to the success of social action.³³

²⁵ Giddens 1984, 243. For further discussion of his understanding of change and power, see Section 3.

²⁶ Richard Kilminster, however, claims that agency and transformative power are often limited by complex social interdependence, which Giddens does not elaborate on. Richard Kilminster, “Structuration theory as a world-view,” in Christopher Bryant and David Jery eds., *Giddens’ Theory of Structuration. A Critical Appreciation* (New York: Routledge, 1991), 79–115.

²⁷ Giddens 1984, 14.

²⁸ Giddens 1984, 14.

²⁹ This understanding of power foreshadows his concept of the duality of structure to be discussed in Section 3.

³⁰ We must note here that the knowledge Giddens refers to is not the Foucaultian knowledge applied in the constitution of subjects.

³¹ With this gesture, Giddens presents the “dignity of capable human actors”, according to Kilminster (1991, 79).

³² Giddens 1984, 91.

³³ Nicos Mouzelis argues that structuration theory focuses on the individual actor and only briefly regards the study of collective actors. Nicos Mouzelis, “Restructuring Structuration Theory,” *Sociological Review* 37 (1989): 613–35.

1.2 Actions

“Action is a continuous process, a flow...actors ordinarily sustain throughout their day-to-day lives”³⁴ and not simply a collection of discrete, independent acts. Giddens develops his stratification model, in correlation with his model of agency, to indicate the three major components of action as related to agency. However, although action is performed by agents, it is closely bound to the systems and to the given temporal, that is, historical and spatial circumstances, since these influence one another as well as define the context in which actions occur. Further explication of these areas, therefore, would be very much called for.

The model of agency sheds light on and explains the components of action as a system parallel to it, as expressed in the figure below. The unconscious is responsible for shaping series of actions as expressed by the various drives, wants, and needs which motivate the actor into action. In Giddens’ view, “[F]or the most part motives supply overall plans or programs—‘projects’ in Schütz’s term—within which a range of conduct is enacted. Much of our day-to-day conduct is not directly motivated.”³⁵ The actor may or may not be consciously aware of the complexity of motives just as it may or may not grasp the real motives underlying various series of actions.

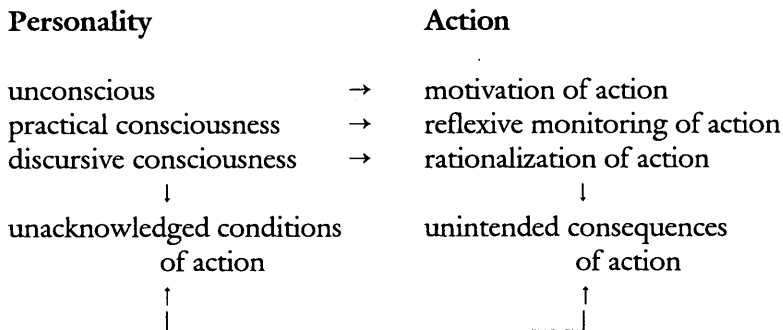


Figure 3: Stratification model³⁶

Motives are sharply distinguished from reasons for actions; the latter is an outgrowth of the reflexive monitoring of action,³⁷ which is the permanent involvement

³⁴ Giddens 1984, 9.

³⁵ Giddens 1984, 6.

³⁶ Modified from Giddens 1984, 5, and John Scott, *Sociological Theory. Contemporary Debates* (Brookfield, VT: Elgar, 1995), 205.

³⁷ “This is rarely undertaken in a fully conscious way”, according to Scott (1995, 205).

of the agent in the conduct as well as in the context of social action and interaction, whereby it monitors not only itself but also all other participants as well as that which preceded and that which will follow the interaction. It is through the reflexive monitoring of action that the agent locates itself in action and is able to see its actions not as a series of separated acts but as a flow, a continuous process. Similarly, the agent's monitoring is also a permanent process, performed as if routine, that is, the agent may engage in it completely unaware that it is doing so.

However, when asked about what the agent has performed, or how and why it has done so, the agent is usually able to explain the nature of and steps in its action and offer the reasons/intentions, as a result of reflexive monitoring. The ability to verbalize about action, embedded in discursive consciousness, is defined as the rationalization of action. Just as in the case of the two kinds of consciousness, no sharp distinction can be made between reflexive monitoring and the rationalization of action since these two areas may often overlap. Again, rationalization does not mainly regard individual acts but rather refers to the notion of the agent's general idea and understanding of its own activity, including its ability to locate discrete acts in the overall flow of action and support them with reasoning. However, it is possible to fail to predict all the possible conditions and consequences of action which, structuration theory maintains, may result in change.

If it is presumed that the reflexive monitoring and the rationalization of action are interlaced, how can motivation be connected to these activities? Or, in other words, how is consciousness connected to the unconscious in human action? If we accept Giddens' theorem that motives are clustered around the individual's drive to maintain ontological security resulting in trust through tact³⁸ in society, then two factors must be considered: one is related to the second field constituting the actor, namely the body; the other regards the type of action which may result in a feeling of safety.

The autonomy of the actor's bodily control is the first condition of achieving ontological security. Bodily autonomy is linked to the feeling of shame by Erikson; this is the basis for the division of personal front and back regions which became essential in Goffman's dramaturgy later. In the early stage of development, shame is associated with the back region or 'behind', where the child can hide until a proper action takes place in the vicinity, re-establishing his confidence in the front region. With time the front region expands, as Goffman points out, and becomes the indicator of the division between the public versus the private life as well as the difference between the conduct of activity in these two realms, similar to the difference in conduct in on- and off-stage performance.

Ontological security, the drive which motivates actors and in which the autonomy of bodily control is essential, is guaranteed and maintained in action; this is

³⁸ Giddens views tact as the group of mechanisms through which actors are able to maintain the conditions of trust through their constant reproduction.

the second component in granting essential trust. In order to define what kind of action can provide this, Giddens' typology of interaction³⁹ must be introduced. Giddens borrows it from Goffman, who proposes the following classification:

1. Informal: gatherings → a. unfocused
 b. focused: encounters (→ routine)
2. Formal: social occasions

Figure 4: Types of interaction

Giddens understands gatherings as assemblages of two or more people in a non-formalized context while he defines social occasions as formalized social events with sharp temporal and spatial boundaries in a given environment. He differentiates between unfocused gatherings, in which the main reason for communication lies in the co-presence of actors, and focused gatherings, which denote coordinated, planned gatherings in an informal manner, which both Goffman and Giddens define as encounters, or face-to-face interactions.

However, Giddens adds that these encounters "typically occur as routines".⁴⁰ And it is this type of interaction, that is, routine, which can bridge the gap between the unconscious and the conscious since, by creating a safe context in which the agent can relate to his social milieu, it provides the basis for his ontological security. As Giddens notes, routine grants the predictability that contributes to the continuity of the personality of the actor as well as the reproduction of the institutions in society.⁴¹ However, it must be pointed out that these are not independent processes but are intertwined; thus, routine must also be viewed as a key element in connecting the agent and the society.

As it has been previously mentioned, autonomy of the body and control over it provide a major aspect to be considered in the presence of the body in interaction. The other significant factor is the front region and Giddens' understanding of the term. In contrast to Goffman, he argues that the front region of the body must be more than a mere facade where one can witness the agent playing various roles; thus, the difference between front and back regions is not identical to the difference between disclosure and enclosure of the individual self. Front regional action is not

³⁹ The various typifications Giddens introduces imply that he envisions certain closed systems in social analysis so characteristic of functionalism and structuralism. Moreover, here he regards only face-to-face interactions, but ontological security may be affected by other factors, such as mental constructs originating in one's reading/interpretation of the information presented by the media.

⁴⁰ Giddens 1984, 70.

⁴¹ Bryant and Jary, in the "Introduction" to their monograph on Giddens, point out that one of the limitations of structuration theory is the fact that it regards the reproduction of social relations and practices "as a mechanical outcome." 1991, 7.

experienced as a performance by most actors as their sense of ontological security is expressed in them.

In certain cases actors may also express their enclosed selves in the course of their interactions as they may rely on their back region as a type of resource while acting. There are also highly ritualized social practices which may have a lasting impact on the back region, which may be disclosed during an interaction. These propositions lead to two implications regarding regions: (1) that front and back regions cannot always be sharply distinguished; and (2) that in the operation of the front personal region, surveillance plays a major role.

In addition to agency, with its cognitive, psychological, and corporeal aspects, the second major field contributing to action is superstructure. Without going into further detail about it at this point since it will be discussed in the following section, it should be noted that it is present, directly or indirectly, in the constitution of the actor as well as in the temporal and spatial dimensions of interaction, which is the third component to consider in analyzing action.

Upon discussing time-space relations in interaction, Giddens draws largely on the findings of time-geography, especially the works of Hagerstrand. Hagerstrand's basic premise rests on the conceptualization of everyday life as a series of routinized actions, bound to the body of the actors, its limitations, and its movements in time and space.⁴² He points out five limitations constraining the body in the daily routine: (1) the indivisibility of the human body limits the capabilities of movement; (2) the agent's life span is of a limited nature; (3) agents usually do not tend to perform more than one task at a time and each task has a duration; (4) movement in space is always bound to movement in time; and (5) one body may occupy only one space at a given time. These five conditions comprise the material axes of human existence, both in daily and in longer activities, and can be visually illustrated in a set of coordinates where the possible time-space span, which is volume with all its constraints, is represented by a prism.⁴³

Giddens supplements this notion with the idea of locales,⁴⁴ meaning the space which serves as the constrained setting of interaction but also contributes to making the interaction meaningful. These locales are typically grouped into regions⁴⁵ which express zones of activity in time-space relations as connected to routinized social practices. The most common zones would be tied to daily and weekly practices, but

⁴² Late modern compression of time and space, as already pointed out earlier, may question the validity of this claim with regard to analyzing the conduct of daily life now.

⁴³ The prism can best be used to represent possible realms of daily activity and the fields used express maximum volume.

⁴⁴ Locales may range from a room or a shop to cities or even nation-states.

⁴⁵ For example, modern Western houses are typically regionalized by floors: the ground floor provides the place for daylight activities, while the second floor, with its bedrooms and bathrooms, is tied to resting and used mainly at night.

some may include one's entire life span. Giddens offers four modes for regionalization: (1) form, meaning the boundaries, both physical and symbolic, of regions; (2) character, defining the arrangement of regions in the wider social system; (3) span or scale, indicating regional differentiations, often rooted in time or space but resulting in socio-economic and cultural differences; and (4) duration. When a long duration of time is under consideration, a distinction may generally be made between central and peripheral regions: the former indicating the establishment, the latter locating the outsiders. This may refer not only to institutions but also to societies as well as the geopolitical system of the world.

Before proceeding any further, the nature of social context must be discussed in more detail. Contextuality is "the situated character of interaction in time-space, involving the setting of interaction, actors co-present and communication between them."⁴⁶ Contexts are positioned and, thus, inform the agents co-present about the frame of the conduct of the interaction. This implies that context is often routinized and it "connects the most intimate and detailed components of interaction to much broader properties of the institutionalization of social life."⁴⁷ However, when this routinized nature is disturbed, a critical situation may arise, which may ultimately result in the emergence of a new set of routines replacing the old one.

An example Giddens discusses in order to illustrate this is Bruno Bettelheim's study of the interaction in the Nazi concentration camps during World War II.⁴⁸ In his book Bettelheim describes how some of the Jewish prisoners had lost their old selves and became akin to the Nazi soldiers, behaving, dressing, acting, and speaking the way the Nazis did. The major causes for this traumatic and completely unexpected change lay in the dramatic change in the context of interaction: the formerly applied institutional routines were destroyed in the camps and along with them the individuals. The process of this change took the following course: resulting from the lack of routine and the destruction of the autonomy of bodily control, including the disappearance of back and front regions, everything became unpredictable and senseless; consequently, the original individual trust and ontological security had disappeared. The only solution to this situation, which lasted for a longer *durée* of time, was for the prisoners to identify with the new representatives of authority, acquire new patterns of action modeled on them in the new context, and re-establish some sort of predictability and certainty through fresh rules learned through re-socialization. Giddens uses this example to illustrate the significance of context in socializing, that is, uniting the actor with the institutionalized structures.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Giddens 1984, 373.

⁴⁷ Giddens 1984, 119.

⁴⁸ Bruno Bettelheim, *The Informed Heart* (Glencoe: Free Press, 1960).

⁴⁹ Giddens uses this case study merely as an example of critical situations which may come about through the loss of ontological security resulting from the loss of routine.

2. Structure(s) and Institutions

Having introduced the major ideas regarding actors and actions, this chapter will now turn to a discussion of the elements bound to macro-level analysis. The key terms to cover include societies and systems, structure and structures, as well as institutions and social collectivities.

2.1 Societies and Systems

Society is defined by Giddens as a marked unity of people with boundaries separating them from others. Society, however, cannot be regarded as a single, individual unit existing separately from other societies. Although, typically, societies are bound to locales, (1) they are open, that is, they are linked to other societies and may, therefore, impact each other; and (2) the way they are organized may not be solely characteristic of and integral to a single society but rather various types of societies. This is the basis for Giddens' conclusion that all societies must be viewed as part of an intersocietal system organized along time-space edges and are, thus, partly constituted by the intersection of the various social systems in this intersocietal context.⁵⁰

He distinguishes between three characteristic features of societies as follows: (1) they are bound to specific locales; (2) they maintain a legitimate claim on those locales as part of a whole set of normative elements around which a given society is organized; and (3) their members possess a shared feeling of common identity. These social systems are patterned as the outcome of reproduced social practices.

Societies exist in time and space⁵¹ and are based on various mechanisms of societal integration, that is, on structural or organizational principles. Depending on the types of structural principles used, Giddens proposes three basic types of societies, the typology for which can be seen in the following figure.

⁵⁰ Through this line of reasoning he hopes to provide a definition of society which is able to unite the two basic meanings of the word, one being "social association", the other "a unity, a state". He defines societies as "social systems which 'stand out' in bas-relief from a background of a range of other systemic relationships in which they are embedded." Giddens 1984, 164.

⁵¹ Gregor McLennan considers Giddens' emphasis on the significance of time and space inappropriate as, in his opinion, they do not play a central role in social theory, as he points out in his work "The Temporal and Temporizing in Structuration Theory," in Jon Clark et al. eds., *Anthony Giddens. Consensus and Controversy* (London: Falmer Press, 1990), 131–39, 139.

Type of society	Structural principles and organization	Dominant locale
Tribal society (oral culture)	tradition (communal moral practices) kinship group sanctions	band groups or villages no state
	<i>existential contradictions</i>	
Class-divided society (writing)	tradition kinship politics (military power) economic interdependence (low) formal codes of law symbolic coordination → state develops	symbiosis of country and town agricultural state
	<i>existential and structural contradictions</i>	
Class society (capitalism)	routines kinship (family) surveillance politics (military power) economic interdependence (high) technology administrative power	city (created environment) nation-state
	<i>structural contradictions</i>	

Figure 5: Typology of societies⁵²

The differentiation between these three types of societies is based on a number of features. Tribal societies are structured around tradition and kinship as the most significant binding elements. They share the fact that their cultures are oral. This type of society includes hunter-gatherers living in hordes, bands, or tribes, and small

⁵² On the basis of Giddens 1981 and 1984.

agrarian communities living in villages. This type of society is characterized by existential contradictions which refer to “an elemental aspect of human existence in relation to nature or the material world”, and are void of structural contradictions, which refer to “the constitutive features of human societies”⁵³ which first emerge in the second type of societies: class-divided societies.

These structural contradictions evolve as the result of increased “time-space distancing” resulting from the appearance of writing systems and advanced transportation. These contributed to two significant changes: (1) a change in the nature of communication, which no longer needed to be face-to-face encounters; and (2) the possibility of information storage, which allowed for the emergence of the state, along with political and military power as its distinct features. Tradition and kinship in these societies remain significant; however, towns develop and become the dominant locale as they evolve into “the ‘storage container’ of administrative resources”⁵⁴ around which states are organized. The towns in this model, however, remain in close symbiosis with the country. This results in low economic interdependence between the urban and rural locales as well as between classes, which do occur, replacing the gender-based division of labor which characterizes tribal societies—although, as Giddens claims, there is no actual struggle between the classes. Examples of this type of society include city-states as well as agrarian and feudal states.

The third type of society is the class society, which is characterized by capitalism and nation-states. Modern capitalism, the outgrowth of the disembedding of state and economic institutions, is the first truly global type of societal organization, characterized by a new interconnection between states and economies as well as the appearance of surveillance, the major form of social integration, which Giddens defines as “the coding of information relevant to the administration of subject populations, plus their direct supervision by officials and administrators of all sorts.”⁵⁵ The locales have become “manufactured or ‘created environments’” centered in urban areas. This type of state is characterized by high economic interdependence, both within states and classes, and as theirs is a created environment, overall structural contradictions may appear.

These types of societies do not represent an evolutionary model to be followed by all societies, nor are they solely characteristic of a given age; nowadays, for example, all three types exist in various parts of the world. Giddens claims that because of the recent developments in technology and the expansion of politics and economy, individual societies cannot really be studied separately but rather as parts of intersocietal systems, since different individual societies are indeed part of a global existence, influencing as well as being influenced by other societies around them.

⁵³ Giddens 1984, 193.

⁵⁴ Giddens 1984, 183.

⁵⁵ Giddens 1984, 183–4. Interestingly, here he uses the attribute “subject” to capture the nature of the population, which is contrary to agency which he argues for otherwise in his theory.

Giddens maintains that societies are based on systems, meaning “the patterning of social relations across time-space, understood as reproduced practices”,⁵⁶ consisting of interdependent institutions and collectivities. Social systems establish the relations between actors and are organized as regularly performed practices, that is, they are reproduced by means of repeated social actions. Social systems are typically not in unity to the same extent that biological systems are, for example, and display a high degree of variety. They are organized hierarchically as well as laterally within societies, and institutions within them are viewed as “articulated ensembles”.

Actors are placed into these by way of integration, which indicates reciprocity of practices, the relations of autonomy, and dependence between actors and collectivities.⁵⁷ Depending on these as well as their temporal and spatial framework, Giddens distinguishes between social and system integrations. Social integration refers to the reciprocity of practices existing between actors in co-presence, thus uniting actors in face-to-face interaction, while system integration binds the actor to collectivities over an extended period of time and space, thus uniting individual actors to groups of people in a more general sense and manner.

2.2 Structure and Structures

In Giddens’ model, it is structure which contributes to the maintenance of the system.⁵⁸ He defines structure as reproduced social practices⁵⁹ embedded in time and space, always both enabling and constraining, deriving from the relationship between structure and powerful agency.⁶⁰ These two features, that is, enabling and constraining, comprise a whole and are in a dialectical unity which can be best grasped in terms of various social constraints.⁶¹

⁵⁶ Giddens 1984, 377.

⁵⁷ Although Giddens claims in a number of places that there is societal differentiation, he chooses not to elaborate on the origin and nature of this nor on the forces shaping their relations.

⁵⁸ Annus notes that Giddens does not offer a sufficient explanation with regard to the source of structure and the organizing principle behind it. She proposes that ideology may be viewed as one type of binding force which constitutes structure. Irén Annus, *The Structuration of Mormon Identity* (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation. Szeged: University of Szeged, 2000)

⁵⁹ Margaret Archer claims that there exist elaborate structures which cannot be reproduced by practice alone because of certain properties they maintain. Margaret Archer, “Human Agency and Social Structure. A Critique of Giddens,” in Jon Clark et al. eds., *Anthony Giddens. Consensus and Controversy* (London: Falmer Press, 1990), 73–84.

⁶⁰ As Archer states, Giddens “never acknowledges that structure and agency work on different time intervals.” 1990, 81. Moreover, she continues, he also fails to analyze fixity or duration resulting from his understanding of structuration as always a process and never a product, that is, always in the making and never in the being.

⁶¹ J. B. Thompson claims that one of the drawbacks of the theory of structuration is the fact that it lacks a concept of structural differentiation, which is a truly significant component of social systems and analysis, in his “The theory of structuration,” in D. Held and J. Thompson eds., *Social Theory of Modern Societies. Anthony Giddens and his Critics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

Upon discussing constraints, Giddens relies a great deal on the writings of Durkheim. He distinguishes between four types of constraints—social, material, structural, and sanctional—which may be interpreted as essentially four aspects of the same notion. Social constraint originates in the fact that the individual coexists with the given structure throughout its life span and becomes involved in the life of institutions by means of socialization, through which constraint on as well as enablement of individuals and institutions coexist and emerge in a unity.⁶² In this, both agents and institutions maintain their own constraints over the other.⁶³

Institutions cannot exist without human agency and the power associated with it to continue or change social praxis, which is essential to the maintenance of institutions. However, structure also exercises constraining power over agents, deriving from the fact that its existence is typically far longer than the life span of an individual; it may, as such, be presented to the individual as objectively given, comprising a collection of duties or obligations to be fulfilled, thus essentially limiting the power of agents to act otherwise. It can, therefore, be concluded that constraint appears at the crossing of structure and agents, representing not only limitations but also various forms of power,⁶⁴ that is, enablement, as well.

In addition to social constraints, Giddens distinguishes between three other types of constraints: (1) material constraints; (2) constraints associated with sanctions; and (3) structural constraints. The previously introduced material constraints include “the constraining aspects of the body and its location in contexts of the material world.”⁶⁵ Sanctions, which are aspects of power which constrain and may be expressed and experienced in various ways and to varying degrees, ranging from disapproval to violence or death, typically entail the highest degree of asymmetries in power: they empower certain agents at the expense of limiting the power of others. Structural constraints⁶⁶ are rooted in the contextuality of the action, that is, in the structural properties of actors situated in interaction. These constraints are usually

⁶² Kilminster observes that structuration theory “does not at any level contain a fully relational conception of constraint because of Giddens’ failure to incorporate the reality and concept of human interdependence into his theory.” 1991, 97.

⁶³ Giddens maintains here that the two parties have equal power and potential to intervene; however, in the case of agency, this power originates in the definition of agency, while in the case of institutions, it is supported by an elaborate system of surveillance, as Giddens notes in other sections.

⁶⁴ An important duality can be traced in Giddens’ treatment of the term ‘power’. In the structural context, it is used to indicate hegemonic power, while power granted to the individual to act otherwise may present power which is a threat to hegemony. This duality may be understood if structural power is considered hegemonic, and, through various techniques, is able to utilize the power of the actors for its own maintenance. However, Giddens maintains, the power enabling one to act in a structurally non-prefigured way leading to change which falls outside the existing system, remains a possibility.

⁶⁵ Giddens 1984, 174.

⁶⁶ Giddens relates reification to these constraints, which signifies cases wherein social phenomena take on object-like properties which they actually do not have.

experienced as objective, given features⁶⁷ that the agents are unable to change; therefore, they place limitations on human agency as well.⁶⁸

Structure consists of rules and resources, implied in social practices, which can be traced back to human consciousness, as it comprises the theoretical framework within the individual memory regarding how a system is organized and maintained. This makes it possible for a variety of social practices to coexist and binds them together in time and space. The word ‘structures’ in the plural is a term used to indicate the transformed, specific sets of rules and resources which appear in the “institutional articulation of social systems”.⁶⁹

Rules are defined as “[T]echniques or generalizable procedures applied in the enactment/reproduction of social practices”.⁷⁰ They can be formulated, that is, verbally expressed, and may, thus, result in a codified form,⁷¹ which is limited only to an interpretation of the rule and not the rule itself. These should be distinguished from exemplifying rules, which are not formulated, and may therefore be applied in interactions. The awareness of how these rules or formulae relate to practices is at the core of the actor’s knowledgeability, located foremost in its practical consciousness. These rules are used in daily activities as typified schemes of action. They may also be classified as rules of normative sanctions/elements and rules which function as codes of signification, that is, in operation in the constitution of meaning. As for their characteristics, they can be described in terms of four other distinct features which are summarized in the following figure.

intensive	tacit	informal	weakly sanctioned
:	:	:	
shallow	discursive	formalized	strongly sanctioned

Figure 6: The characteristic features of rules⁷²

Resources, which form the other constituent of structure, can be divided into two groups: (1) authoritative resources which indicate non-material resources, rooted in the fact that some agents have power over others in a given society; these

⁶⁷ This is achieved by presenting certain situations as inevitable; this, in turn, is achieved by leaving no or only few options open to the actor.

⁶⁸ Thompson maintains that Giddens underestimates the constraining aspects of structure on agency.

⁶⁹ However, Giddens fails to address the question of what the origin of these rules and resources is and what the consequence of changing them might be.

⁷⁰ Giddens 1984, 21. Thompson criticizes Giddens for not distinguishing between various rules, thus indicating that they are of equal significance in social life, when, in fact, some are more enabling and others more restraining.

⁷¹ For example, laws, bureaucratic rules, and regulations.

⁷² Giddens 1984, 22.

include: aspects of the organization of time and space relations and paths; the production and reproduction of the body, including human relations; and the organization of personal chances; as well as (2) allocative resources, which are material resources deriving from human dominance over nature, including not only raw materials and powers of the environment but also the means of material production, such as technology and machinery. Both types of resources derive from various powers and, therefore, are involved in the generation of power in a given society. In terms of power, authoritative resources refer to the capacity to generate command over people while allocative resources denote the same capacity with regard to objects: the natural environment and physical artifacts.

It is also clear that various sociological schools emphasize the significance of certain resources over others, e.g., Marxism considers allocative resources the generic/central force in the history of human development. However, Giddens maintains that these two types of resources are interdependent and work in union in social systems.⁷³ In modern nation-states, these resources are stored, recalled, and disseminated by the media, which is, therefore, of crucial significance as the container of all information, that is, knowledge. The most recent developments in technology have elevated the media to an even higher and more prominent level since the information which can be stored by the various existing technologies surpass the human capacity for information storage. Consequently, the media plays a key role in nation-states in treating knowledge—such as collecting, storing, or disseminating it—and is, therefore, the most significant power container.

Structure may be described in terms of structural principles and properties. Structural principles, as illustrated in Figure 5, refer to the principles or factors upon which societal totalities are organized, while properties indicate the already structured and institutionalized features of various social systems as they are reproduced across time and space. In discussing structural principles one may find various contradictions, which can be classified as existential and structural. As mentioned earlier, the first entail the essential contradiction between human existence in relation to nature and the material world while the second refer to differences between the various constitutive features existing in societies

If structure is understood as a collection of rules and resources and, thus, provides the theoretical framework for social life, then structures should be interpreted as isolable sets of rules applied and resources used in interaction and in the articulation of social systems. To use a linguistic analogy, structure is like language and structures are like speech, that is, language put into practice.

⁷³ The model Giddens offers actually captures the state of a hegemonic status quo, where certain agents have power over others and there is differentiated access to resources which are interdependent—but there is no discussion of possible situations characterized by lack of reinforcement between resources or conflict between agents, or other conditions which may challenge the hegemonic state and contribute to change.

Structure and structures are organized around three major roles in societies, which correspond to the various rules and resources structure entails: (1) signification, resulting from rules of signification applied in social interaction; (2) legitimation, based on rules of normative sanctions; and (3) domination, reflecting the structure and functioning of resources. Two types of domination may occur: political domination, which emerges as a result of managing authoritative resources, and economic domination, which is the outcome of the handling of allocative resources in societies. These three domains of structure(s) correspond to the appropriate types of institutions, which have developed in order to represent and maintain these domains, as well as to different types of interaction, through which they may be at work.

2.3 Institutions and Social Collectivities

Institutions can be defined as chronically reproduced rules and resources on the societal level. The two types of rules as well as resources, therefore, contributed to and stimulated the emergence of four types of institutions in modern societies. Signification results in the appearance of social symbolic orders and defines modes of discourse; legitimation leads to the development of legal institutions, which are organized around and in accordance with various aspects of domination, exercised through two spheres: political as well as economic institutions.

Agents participate in the functioning and maintenance of these institutions through interactions which are shaped by various modules, namely: (1) communication, which establishes the agents' link to discourse and symbolic order through interpretative schemes; (2) sanctions, which assist in binding actors to legal institutions by urging them to maintain certain norms; and (3) power, which results in maintaining the structure of domination through various facilities.

In this manner, as Figure 7 illustrates, the basic structure(s) give way to the development of appropriate institutions which are maintained by the agents through their participation in social interaction. However, the knowledgeable agent, the one with the ability to monitor these interactions, is also capable of modifying or altering these interactions and so too these institutions. This interdependence between agents and institutions is considered to be the key notion in structuration theory, signified as the duality of structure, which, in essence, describes the way social systems are reproduced.

Structure(s)	Theoretical domain ← Rules and resources	Institutional order ← Interaction (modalities)
Signification (S-D-L)	Coding ← rules of signification	Symbolic orders/modes of discourse ← Communication (interpretative schemes)
Domination (D-S-L)	– Authorization ← authoritative resources – Allocation ← allocative resources	Political institutions Economic institutions ← Power (facility) ⁷⁴
Legitimation (L-S-D)	Normative regulation ← rules of normative sanctions	Legal institutions ← Sanctions (norms)

Figure 7: Structure and institutions⁷⁵

The duality of structure involves not only the reproduction of institutions but also of collectivities, that is, of collective actors. Depending on the type of relations holding the groups together, Giddens distinguishes between associations and organizations. In the case of associations, reproduction takes place through the regularized conduct of the members, i.e., through routine encounters. Typically, they are reproduced on the basis of specific traditions, which legitimize the existence of these associations and act as the medium connecting the daily conduct of life to the longer *durée* of the institutional life of the associations.

Organizations, on the other hand, are reproduced mainly because of the conduct of daily lives, are not rooted in traditions, and are characteristically bound to some segments of society; as a consequence, their appearance may be bound to the existence of class-divided societies or social movements. Social movements are usually highly regulated, aim at achieving a new social order, and, unlike organizations, are typically not bound to a specific locale but are applicable in more general terms and areas.

⁷⁴ Power and facility feature both types of institutions.

⁷⁵ Compiled from various sources in Giddens, 1984. The letter S refers to signification, D to domination, and L to legitimation. The order of the letters signifies the importance of the dimensions of structure in the given form of institution. Kaspersen states that these “represent Giddens’ attempt to avoid every form of determinism and reductionism.” 2000, 62.

3. The Constitution of Society

Giddens, in order to overcome the dualism between theorizations in the social sciences which tend to favor either agency or systems, introduces the key concept of his theory to grasp the interaction between these two forces: this is the duality of structure. This model, however, captures system reproduction primarily. This brings about the issues of social change and power—two domains Giddens treats lightly in his theory. His thoughts on these notions, nevertheless, must also be presented in this section.

3.1 The Duality of Structure

The key concept in the theory of structuration is the duality of structure, the notion which combines actors and systems, binding them to structure in a dialectical interaction and making structure a property and feature of both.⁷⁶ It refers to “structure as the medium and outcome of the conduct it recursively organizes.”⁷⁷ This structure, that is, the set of rules and resources, marked by the absence of actors, is recursively re-established through social systems, which are situated activities and reproduced relations between actors and collectivities, organized as social practices. The agents draw on the various rules and resources in their daily lives, and systems, grounded in these activities as well as also shaped by the same rules and resources, are re-constituted, just as the agents are, through the very same process. Thus, structure can be conceptualized as both restraining and enabling, both for the agents and the systems.

Agents are able to monitor their actions and possess knowledge regarding what is done, as well as how and why it is. However, their understanding may not always be proper or full, and their actions under certain circumstances may have unintended consequences or unacknowledged conditions which may result in change. These unintended consequences, granted that they feed back into system reproduction, are called causal loops and lead to homeostatic system reproduction. However, agents can use their power to institute various changes in system reproduction; Giddens defines this notion as reflexive self-regulation. The workings of both agency

⁷⁶ A post-modernist reading of Giddens may allow for the consideration of this model as decentering and recentering. Giddens, in his model, proposes to overcome the traditional dualism in social sciences which have centered either on the agent or on the system as the dominating force behind social life, thus decentering their traditional opposition. However, by introducing the new model of the duality of structure with the claim that this is the concept truly signifying social processes, he places this duality in the center, thus performing an act of centering.

⁷⁷ Giddens 1984, 374.

and systems result in integration,⁷⁸ which, as has already been pointed out, may be of two kinds: (1) social integration, defining the reciprocity⁷⁹ between agents in co-presence; and (2) system integration, which signifies the same process but involves agents not present in time and space during the encounter.

System reproduction is automatically accompanied by social reproduction in which actors rely on four key factors: (1) mutual knowledge; (2) autonomy; (3) trust; and (4) routine. These result in typified schemes which agents use to get through various situations, having considered the general rules applicable as well as particular features of each given situation. However, if these schemes or rules are damaged, thus leading to the emergence of crisis situations, the old manner of acting should be re-adjusted in order to build up individual trust again. If one is unable to do that, one will be found unfit to function in the given society and, as a result, treated as an outcast.

Routinized practices are the primary form of expression of the duality of structure. Routine or praxis, which are encounters performed without direct motivation in a seriality, connects agents and systems by granting (1) the continuity of the personalities of the actors, giving them a sense of ontological security;⁸⁰ and (2) the continuity of social life and system by reproducing the institutions; thus, structure provides a “generalized motivational commitment”,⁸¹ whereas routine binds the actors to systems and vice versa. However, these practices may not simply be mechanical repetitions: unacknowledged conditions, unintended consequences, or intentional modifications may all result in change. Giddens, therefore, concludes that there is no determinism involved and that there are no *a priori* or absolute outcomes for actions.

Practices are often related to social positions and roles, with various rights, obligations, and sanctions as well as standardized markers, such as gender or age. In this sense, they are one of the essential contributors to social identities which help agents to locate themselves in the social web of institutions as well as to maintain their continual sense of trust and security in the given society.

⁷⁸ As the duality of structure Giddens proposes captures primarily integration and system maintenance, his theory is that of hegemony, ultimately standing closer to theorizations which give primacy to systems over agents.

⁷⁹ This is the reciprocity of autonomy and dependence in interaction. Giddens, however, does not elaborate on how true reciprocity comes about, that is, how equality to difference should be conceptualized.

⁸⁰ His repeated emphasis on the individual's drive to reach and maintain ontological security signals that it would be contrary to the essential interests of the individual to engage in conflict or social struggle as that may threaten this sense of security.

⁸¹ This is Wolf's term.

Dimension of interaction	Structural modality	Structural property	Feature
Communication	semantic rule	signification	cultural/interpretative
Sanction	moral rule	legitimation	cultural/interpretative
Power	resource	domination	transformative/regulative

Figure 8: Dimensions of the duality of structure⁸²

The structuring of interaction may occur in three ways, parallel to the three structural properties of social systems: (1) communication, that is, the constitution of meaning; (2) sanctions, meaning the constitution of norms and expectations; and (3) power. The first two are considered to be constitutive, cultural processes related to rules through which meaning and norms are standardized. Power is regulative and transformative and regards the management of resources, allowing for control, change, and achievement.

Communication is bound to the reflexive monitoring of action: agents are able to view actions, including their contexts, temporal and spatial dimensions, as well as the behavior of other actors co-present. As a result, agents are able to make sense of what they have seen and to discuss it: they may offer accounts, reasons, evaluations, predictions, etc. The constitution of meaning is achieved through various interpretative, typified schemes incorporated in the stocks of knowledge of the actors.

Communication may take an oral or written form. The unit of oral communication, that is, talk, is conversation with definite opening and closing limits, strict rules regarding turn-taking and coordinating who is entitled to participate and how. In both oral and written communication the issue of time and space is crucial: conversations presume co-presence in time but not in space, while the written form typically appears in situations of absence, both in time and space.⁸³

Sanctions are normative features, establishing norms, rights, and obligations. They are expressive of accountability: for what purpose and with what justification an action is performed. They may be formal or informal: laws or regulations are usually formal, written expressions of sanctions. They usually entail constraints but may be enabling for some agents and are, therefore, closely linked to power.

⁸² A modified and completed figure taken from Scott, 1995.

⁸³ This has led Giddens to the consideration of transportation and technical development—especially that of electronic signaling—in his discussion of communication.

3.2 Power and Change

Essential to the duality of structure is power, the third structural property Giddens describes.⁸⁴ He conceptualizes power as the capacity and means to perform tasks and “the freedom to act otherwise”.⁸⁵ Power is capability, the “capacity to achieve outcomes”⁸⁶ and the very medium of freedom—although he adds without any further elaboration that power also has constraining properties. He locates the source of power in action by maintaining that “action logically involves power in the sense of transformative capacity.”⁸⁷ This definition refers both to individual and social action, which he explains with the two faces of power as mentioned earlier: one denoting the power of action invested in the individuals, the other inherent in institutions. Giddens sees power being exercised through the media of resources, as “a routine element of the instantiation of conduct in social reproduction.”⁸⁸

Agency’s power is transformative, which in Giddens’ model enables the actor to act otherwise by which he means “being able to intervene in the world or to refrain from such intervention, with the effect of influencing a specific process or state of affairs.”⁸⁹ Action is the exercise of power in order to secure outcomes to the extent that the agent is able to do it. This condition is emphasized because unintended consequences and unacknowledged circumstances may modify these outcomes as well as certain constraints, originating from the fact that interaction always contains both relations of autonomy and dependence—which is what he defines as the dialectic of control. Giddens claims that when the human individual ceases to exercise power, it ceases to be an agent.⁹⁰

Power is also inherent in systems. Its features and manner of operation is the same as in the case of agents. Power is “generated in and through the reproduction of structures of domination”⁹¹ which are constituted by allocative and authoritative resources. These resources are not fixed and as such are able to change and operate as the medium of power changing. The primary medium for domination per se is the information storage of the various resources. Giddens sees the nation-state as the new storing place of information and therefore the new type of power container.

Through the criticism of power struggles and change as conceptualized by evolutionary theorists and historical materialism, Giddens arrives at the conclusion that

⁸⁴ Giddens points out that power must be separated from exploitation. 1984, 5.

⁸⁵ Giddens 1984, 5.

⁸⁶ Giddens 1984, 257.

⁸⁷ Giddens 1984, 15.

⁸⁸ Giddens 1984, 16.

⁸⁹ Giddens 1984, 14.

⁹⁰ Archer also criticizes Giddens for not elaborating on the conditions which make the agent’s freedom and use of power possible, that is, the nature and relation between enabling and constraining dimensions of systems for the individual action.

⁹¹ Giddens 1984, 258.

no single mechanism—such as struggle over economic resources—may be specified to explain social change, as it may be the result of a number of factors.⁹² However, he defines the two major mechanisms through which change may come about as the consequences of agents' actions, both intended and unintended, and of unacknowledged conditions.⁹³ Action and interaction are bound together and to the social system through signification, domination, and legitimation, so these are the dimensions of structure which must be studied in an analysis of change. As these dimensions are materialized in various institutions, they may be analyzed through the study of the corresponding political, ideological, economic, and judicial institutions.

Giddens considers these the first domain to consider in the overall conceptual apparatus he develops which may assist in analyzing social change. These are: (1) structural principles, meaning the study of the modes of articulation in various institutions; (2) episodic characterizations, referring to the delineation of change in modes in comparable form, as an episode with a specifiable beginning and end;⁹⁴ (3) intersocietal systems, meaning the outline of the specifics of the relations between them; (4) time-space edges, denoting connections between various types of societies; and (5) world time, referring to the study of transformations in a temporal and historical context.

⁹² The lack of a definition of social change in the theory of structuration is one of the criticisms expressed by Kaspersen.

⁹³ Craib notes that Giddens offers no reasoning for “why unintended consequences should take the form of regular patterning.” 1992, 159.

⁹⁴ This episodic character, that is, discontinuist view of history and social action, is considered by Kilminster to be one of the weaknesses of the theory of structuration.

CHAPTER 3: THE AFTERMATH OF THE THEORY OF STRUCTURATION

This chapter examines the presence of the theory of structuration after its publication. Section 1 discusses the reception of structuration theory, with special focus on the various points of criticism it has received. Section 2 presents the ways Giddens and his theory have contributed to later theorizations—especially to the understanding of self-identity in late modernity—and social analysis.

1. The Reception of the Theory of Structuration

Since the appearance of *The Constitution of Society*, the theory of structuration has been the subject of fierce debate in sociology.¹ The concepts and ideas have been subject to critical evaluation, receiving vehement criticism from some scholars, such as Cohen, and appraisal from others, such as Craib or N. Gregson.² However, all agree that structuration theory is one of the most original and comprehensive theories to propose to overcome the classic dichotomy of sociology: the question of whether theory should grant priority to individual(s) or institution(s)/structure(s) in an examination of the structuring and organization of modern societies. Most scholars acknowledge the significance of Giddens' efforts which, all agree, place the study of society in a new perspective by calling for an integrative approach which would incorporate findings in a number of disciplines over an extended time period, addressing a wide range of issues, placing ontology in the center of investigation.³ Bryant and Jary welcome his sensitivity to intersocietal relations and argument for a new aspect in social analysis: the consideration of global phenomena and world society. "It is difficult indeed to see how English-speaking sociology could have maintained any coherence at all without Giddens raising these issues, and I find it difficult to conceive of any social theory that would not find something in his

¹ The more significant works regarding the debate over the theory of structuration include: Ira Cohen, *Structuration Theory. Anthony Giddens and the Constitution of Social Life* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989); Craib, 1992; Jon Clark et al. eds., 1990; and Christopher Bryant and David Jary eds., 1991.

² N. Gregson, "Structuration Theory. Some Thoughts on the Possibilities for Empirical Research," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 5 (1987) : 73–91.

³ This feature is often welcomed, even if at times it is difficult to separate issues of ontology from those of epistemology.

work on which to build,” claims Craib.⁴ The often controversial nature of this theory did indeed stimulate social scientists to re-examine and re-evaluate a wide range of concepts and notions, which in and of itself would already represent a major contribution to the development of the social sciences.

The series of debates, however, often point out a number of weaknesses in the argumentation and concepts of the theory of structuration, among which the selection of the more frequently objected to aspects are presented in the following. One common set of criticisms regards the interdisciplinary nature of the theory. While the idea itself is widely welcomed, Giddens receives attacks from Craib and Cohen, for example, for having drawn on various ideas from various schools and scholars, thus presenting a “theoretical omelette”⁵ of some sort which was possible only through (1) the misreading the works of these other scholars and/or (2) the reinterpretation of their original ideas.

The second group of criticism regards his conceptualization of agent and agency. His account of the agent rests on psychological processes which are considered neither sufficiently elaborate nor thorough and, as a result, fail to grasp the real depth and complex nature of human personality—as stated by Boyne and Craib. Barát points out that Giddens, although he criticizes evolutionary theory, conceptualizes the development of the agent as progressive, towards absolute free agency, which, in her opinion, is a utopian construct. Giddens’ concept of free agency is also frequently challenged as it lacks sufficient supporting argumentation, as do the concepts of the knowledgeability and the transformative power of the agent, as contended by Barát, Boyne, Craib, and Cohen. Giddens’ agent seems to be locked on the level of assessment and action in accordance to norms and expectations, which is also strengthened by the fact that the Giddensian actor seems to be rather a subject in the front and an agent in the back region, as Barát observes, which calls for another line of criticism. This observation, however, is in line with the claim that Giddens discusses social action as a mechanical, routinized system reproduction, thus grasping the essence of agency in system reproduction and hegemony rather than power and change, as noted by Bryant and Jary, among others.

Giddens also seems to be lacking in his discussion of social action and interaction. Cohen⁶ argues that Giddens’ account of social relations fails to regard seriously several important distinctions in social action, such as the nature of face-to-face interaction. Kilminster also considers the discussion of other types of interaction as well as of social interdependence as a contributing factor to social action and reproduction lacking. Mouzelis notes that social action is also presented by Giddens as primarily performed by individual actors, but the role of collective actors,

⁴ 1992, 196.

⁵ This descriptive term was introduced by Craib.

⁶ Ira Cohen, “Structuration Theory and Social Praxis,” in Anthony Giddens and Jonathan Turner eds., *Social Theory Today* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987), 273–308.

equally significant, is not really developed. Craib also calls for a serious consideration of morality and trust in human action, which Giddens fails to elaborate on.

The third area of criticism focuses on Giddens' treatment of structure, institutions, and systems. Annas observes that the theory of structuration does not address the conditions for the emergence of structure nor describes its nature. These would be crucial as, according to Giddens, structure informs actors and defines the content and nature of the various rules and resources they draw on in action—thus, also defines social institutions and group formations. Thompson claims that Giddens underemphasizes the constraining nature of structure and, in so doing, assigns too much power to actors as well as fails to acknowledge the concept of structural differentiation and the significance of social differentiation in daily life. Archer and Kilminster join him in remarking on the lack of a sophisticated discussion of constraint: its relational nature and position in relation to the enabling forces in systems and structure. Archer also considers Giddens' elaboration on time and place insufficient inasmuch as they are considered primarily as factors regarding individual action. Moreover, Thompson also notes that Giddens' conceptualization of rules, their nature, and various forms of operation is also oversimplified.

Besides structure, practice is discussed in a random manner, claims Archer. She notes that for Giddens, practice is always a process and never a product and thus social system is never analyzed in a state of equilibrium nor as actually elaborate structures which are the outcome of various factors other than practice alone. At the same time, Giddens also argues against a continuist view of history, as well as against a dynamic principle that would help one in accounting for social change, claims Kilminster. Craib joins him in finding major shortcomings in Giddens' treatment of power, regular patterning as well as change. Kaspersen⁷ comments that while Giddens discusses cultural production, he never actually offers a concept for culture, which would be necessary in order to account for differences in actors, action, rules and resources, etc.

The fourth area of criticism regards the theory of structuration and social research. Giddens claims to present a metatheory, which, according to Kilminster, is much rather "explanatory prescription" for social researchers than descriptive. Cohen even goes further when noting that "[I]f we adopt structuration theory, there will be things that we are not allowed to think and, depending on our commitment to the framework, things we do not want to think."⁸ Structuration theory remains on the level of abstraction, comments Gregson, separated from and inapplicable in empirical social research. Kaspersen also laments that "the theory never produces a concrete analytical instrument,"⁹ and therefore remains isolated from the series of social phenomena it proposes to capture. Nevertheless, it has had an impact on a

⁷ 2000, 163.

⁸ 1992, 119.

⁹ 2000, 162.

number of scientists who have carried out research in the spirit of Giddens' theory of structuration, as well as inspiring the emergence of new models, as introduced in the following.

2. The Impact of the Theory of Structuration

Despite the criticism which the theory of structuration has received, it is regarded as a truly remarkable metatheorization on the social. Various concepts and thoughts have made their way into the works of a number of social scientists, both on the level of theoretical conceptualizations and actual research projects and analyses. One prominent area the theory of structuration has impacted on within the realm of theoretical sociology is that of theorizations on the social self and identity. Structuration theory and the concept of the duality of structure have provided the essential understanding of social realities underlying the internal-external dialectical identity model proposed by Richard Jenkins in 1996, the focus of the discussion in Section 1. Section 2 outlines Giddens' propositions with regard to social research in light of the theory of structuration along with some of the exemplary pieces of social analysis which have utilized the basic claims and notions Giddens has put forth in his theory of structuration.

2.1 The Theory of Structuration and Social Modeling

The theory of structuration provided the basis for Giddens' later projects, one of which focused on the individual and self-identity. He summarizes his observations in *Modernity and Self-identity*, where he maintains that self-identity is a "reflexively organized project...[that] consists in the sustaining of coherent, yet continuously revised, biographical narratives, takes place in the context of multiple choice as filtered through abstract systems."¹⁰ He proposes that the central feature of modern self-identity is life planning in which the self develops a trajectory from the past to the desired future.¹¹ This process takes place with the purpose of locating the self in a framework which provides it with ontological security.¹² Giddens proposes that self-identity is routinely created and sustained by the individual through continuous reflexive activities.

¹⁰ 1991, 5.

¹¹ He claims that language is the mediator, the "time machine" that makes the repetition of social practices possible over generations as well as allowing for a differentiation between present, past, and future.

¹² This framework comprises one's responses to the four basic existential issues in the autobiographical fashioning of one's identity, which regard: (1) existence and being; (2) finitude and human life; (3) the experience of others; and (4) the continuity of self-identity. Giddens 1991, 55.

Based on Giddens' theory of structuration and theorizing on the late modern self, Richard Jenkins proposes that, as identity is constituted by the social which is "the field upon which the individual and the collective meet and meld,"¹³ all types of identities must be viewed as social identities. Jenkins defines social identity as the "systematic establishment and signification between individuals, between collectivities, and between individuals and collectivities, of relationships of similarity and difference."¹⁴ He proposes that his model, capturing the internal-external dialectic of identification, describes the process in which all identities are shaped. It is "an understanding...of the 'self' as an ongoing, and in practice simultaneous, synthesis of internal self-definition and external definitions of oneself offered by the others."¹⁵ Jenkins claims that both individual and social identities can be understood as constituted in one and the same process, which is the interplay between internal and external definitions.

Identities are rooted in social practices;¹⁶ it is, therefore, through an analysis of these practices that collective identity may be mapped. Giddens locates identity "in the capacity to keep a particular narrative going,"¹⁷ as a result, he claims, capturing the social practices in the individual narratives of members of a given collective—whether in the form of an independently structured or guided, written or oral narrative—is a useful method to reveal the dynamics of both the constitution of communities and their collective identities.

2.2 The Theory of Structuration and Social Analysis

Giddens presented his theory of structuration without ever applying it empirically.¹⁸ His theory is a mere theorization, which provides possible guidelines and offers researchers a series of ideas for consideration in social analysis. The discussion of these in the first part of this section is followed by a discussion of some of the studies which have drawn on the theory of structuration in the course of research and analysis.

The very fact that the theory of structuration has overall remained an isolated metatheory never tested in specific analysis has provided Giddens' critics with a point of severe criticism which has frequently appeared in the literature. As a result, conceptualizations on how the theory may be put to use in social research is a

¹³ Richard Jenkins, *Social Identity* (London: Routledge, 1996), 17.

¹⁴ Jenkins 1996, 4.

¹⁵ Jenkins 1996, 20.

¹⁶ In the course of engaging in practices, the participants come to be positioned. These positions result from the relations of power, according to Jenkins.

¹⁷ Giddens 1991, 54.

¹⁸ Giddens states that structuration theory is not a research program: it offers concepts which may be used as devices in analyzing a variety of issues. 1991, 213.

constantly recurring theme in most works on structuration theory. Although Giddens has not applied it in research projects, he does give it some thought in *The Constitution of Society*. Giddens proposes that the theory of structuration lends itself to two major types of social research which, in essence, are in line with the core proposition of his theory, grasped by the model of the duality of structure, namely: (1) institutional analysis; and (2) the analysis of individual actions and agents. Depending on which of the two is in the center of the research, two types of bracketing are required: in the case of institutional analysis, the conduct of the agents must be bracketed, while in the case of the analysis of agency, it is the institutions, structures, and structural properties which must be bracketed.

This is not to suggest that once bracketed, these fields are rendered insignificant. On the contrary, only the combination of the examination of the two domains allows for the perspective put forth in the duality of structure and thus it serves as the requirement for a truly complex social analysis. Bracketing is simply a way to express emphasis at a given stage of the analysis, implying the necessity of focusing on one side of the social duality at a time, while considering the other domain as of secondary significance at the given stage. Naturally, an analysis of the duality of structure itself is also possible; in such an endeavor, institutional analysis and that of strategic conduct are united through conceptual shifts from one toward the other, with spatial and temporal features regarded as major intersections.

Upon turning to examples of research wherein the theory of structuration may prove a useful tool, Giddens mentions two areas. In micro-level analysis, he suggests: (1) the elucidation of frames of meaning, seeking answers to the 'why-questions': the reasons for action, in a wide context, involving the issue of the knowledgeability of the agents as well; and (2) the investigation of practical consciousness: its context, form, and ways of expression. As for macro-level analysis, Giddens proposes (1) an investigation into the bounds of knowledgeability in the context of time and space, including unintended consequences and unacknowledged conditions of actions, and (2) the determination of institutional orders, involving the examination of social and system integration through an analysis of the major institutions of a given social system.

Bryant and Jary note the significance of Giddens' notion of double hermeneutics which, in their view, calls for an anthropological aspect in social research. The implications of this with regard to research are: (1) the significance of the style of the analysis; (2) the understanding of the role of the scientist as a communicator who introduces "frames of meaning associated with certain contexts of social life"¹⁹; and (3) the application of the method of thick description which aims to establish connections between various levels and dimensions of meaning.

¹⁹ Bryant and Jary 1991, 15.

Although no study has been published in which Giddens' theoretical framework has been applied as a whole, Giddens contends that some analysis has been written in the spirit of his theory, two of which are discussed in the following. In the first piece, Paul Willis'²⁰ book entitled *Learning to Labour*, exemplary research is introduced focusing on how, through daily strategic conduct, students, as a result of the unintended consequences of their actions, contribute to the maintenance of the existing power relations and institutions, thus also create a process at the end of which they are unable to move upward on the social ladder. That is, their social position and life chances are determined primarily because of their improper assessment and management of certain situations through their own actions and behavior.

Another work Giddens highly praises is R.W. Connell's *Gender and Power*, published in 1987.²¹ In this study, Connell actually makes use of some notions set forth by structuration theory, but also applies certain other theories in the analysis. Although Connell also expresses criticism of some aspects of structuration theory, Giddens²² considers this work a good presentation of the duality of structure, the intersection of structure and social practice at work. Giddens is impressed by Connell's discussion of the role gender plays in relation to both the individual and structure: this study illustrates how social practices constitute structures as well as individuals and how they contribute to the maintenance of gender-based social roles and classifications.

A full-length study actually applying the theory of structuration was carried out by Annus in her analysis of the constitution of Mormon identity and social reality. The author regards social practices as the basic mechanisms in and through which the social, and thus identities also, are constituted. With a focus on actors and individual action, she examines various, specifically Latter-day Saint practices, and finds that (1) ideology is the force which informs and operates structure; and (2) agency is bound to individual realities which are rooted in personal identities, always in process, the constitution of which is marked by the interplay of not only realities embraced by the self—along with its Other(s)—but also of the cognitive framework and process through which one constructs identity by monitoring these realities, that is, practices. Thus, this work offers an empirical examination of some aspects of the theory of structuration along with a criticism which unfolds through this application.

²⁰ Paul Willis, *Learning to Labour* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977). Giddens' discussion of this book can be found in Giddens 1984, 289–304.

²¹ R. W. Connell, *Gender and Power. Society, the Person and Sexual Politics* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987).

²² For an elaborate methodological discussion of this study, see Anthony Giddens, "Structuration Theory. Past, Present and Future," in Christopher Bryant and David Jary eds., *Giddens' Theory of Structuration. A Critical Appreciation* (New York: Routledge, 1991), 201–221, 215–6.

Bryant, in his discussion of the dialogical model in Giddens' theory, proposes that "social research and policy making are forged through an extended process of communication between researchers, policy makers and those affected."²³ This proposition, in line with Giddens' prediction that "[T]here will be a deepening involvement of sociology with the formation of practical social policies or reforms,"²⁴ foreshadows Giddens' public role towards the end of the 1990s, when as a well-known public figure and advisor to British Prime Minister Tony Blair, Giddens developed a new social program, the third way, which in certain ways may also be conceptualized as an actual application of his theory—but only in theory, as the third way is the proposition of a political program for the future.²⁵ This program, widely known by the key phrase "no rights without responsibilities", offers a new understanding of individual rights which cease to be unconditional in Giddens' vision of the renewed social democracy, thus placing the relationship between the individual and state/society on a new set of premises. He presents his theory as he finds it necessary to assist in creating a social milieu in which individuals and states will be able to integrate new issues and find proper solutions to newly emerging problems of the twenty-first century.

²³ Bryant 1991, 194.

²⁴ Anthony Giddens, "Nine theses on the future of sociology," in Anthony Giddens ed., *Social Theory and Modern Sociology* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1987), 22–51, 44.

²⁵ Anthony Giddens, *The Third Way—A Renewal of Social Democracy* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998).

CONCLUSION

The theory of structuration has influenced Anthony Giddens' later work which can be best described as his analysis of late modernity. This analysis has been organized around two major areas: one moves in the direction of micro-level analysis of the individual,¹ examining the self in late modernity, addressing issues of self-identity, trust, risk and ontological security, life choices and the transformation of intimacy, while the other area addresses macro-level issues related to post-traditional societies,² dealing with issues such as reflexivity, institutional dimensions, and globalization.

By the mid-1990s, he also became more concerned with political issues,³ searching for alternative forms of politics which would be able to respond better to the new social and political challenges, facing governments and parties, confronting the welfare state. This shift may be viewed as a partial outcome of his analysis of post-traditional societies, and as the contribution of a sociologist to solving urgent societal problems, including an alternative way for politics and the redefinition of social democracy at the dawn of the 21st century. Whatever the topic of his works, he receives attention and impacts on manners of thinking, making him truly one of the most prominent social thinkers of our day.

As for his theory of structuration, despite the fact that it seems to be an impossible task to construct one theory which is able to comprehend all the fragments of late modern individuals and societies, despite the flaws in the argumentation and conceptualizations, despite its descriptive tone and abstract nature, it does remain one central force stimulating further debate about the realm of the social.

¹ See, for example, Giddens 1991 and 1992.

² See his *The Nation-State and Violence* and his *The Consequences of Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990).

³ See Anthony Giddens, *Beyond Left and Right—the Future of Radical Politics* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994); Anthony Giddens 1998; and Anthony Giddens, *The Third Way and its Critics* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000).

APPENDIX: MAPPING GIDDENS

One rather frequent comment on Giddens' theory of structuration is that it is rather complex and difficult to follow and comprehend. Perhaps some sort of a map leading the researcher through this labyrinth may be of help not only in gaining a more comprehensive understanding of the various categories and processes analyzed but also in pinpointing possible gaps or inconsistencies in this theory. This section on mapping Giddens does not follow slavishly the structure of his book, *The Constitution of Society*, nor of any other study of the theory of structuration, but reorganizes his train of thought so that it would follow a different system, perhaps easier to grasp. Naturally, this is only a map of his more essential theorems and categories; however, hopefully it proves a useful guide for all those who wander into the realm of structuration.

I. Actors and Action

I.1 Actor

A. Definition of actor + relation to *I/me* and *self*

B. The development of agency: Erikson

Bodily mechanisms	Expression	Result
a. Oral/Sensory	trust/mistrust	ontological security
b. Muscular/Anal	autonomy/shame,	doubt bodily control
c. Locomotive/Genital	initiative/guilt	routine

C. The constitution of actors:

- a. mind/psyche
 - i. unconscious
 - ii. consciousness
 - a. practical consciousness
 - b. discursive consciousness

- b. body – positioned in time and space (roles and rules)
 - i. positioning of body in encounters
 - front and back regions
 - presence/absence, co-presence
 - autonomy and limits of the body; control
 - ii. positioning of actors in social relations
 - iii. intersection of agent’s positioning with *durée* of life of institutions and structures

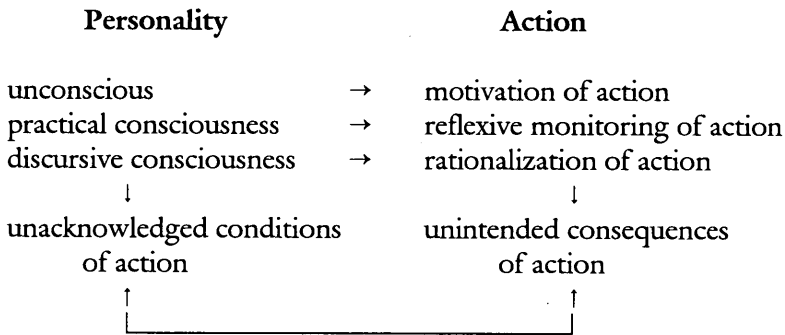
1.2 Action

A. Definition of action (as opposed to act)

B. How does action come about?

a. agent

- i. cognitive/psychological aspect → stratification model



- ii. corporeal aspects

- autonomy of bodily control
- overlapping of front and back regions

b. system

c. time and space

- i. time-space geography
- ii. locales, zones, regions
 - form, character, span, duration
 - central and peripheral regions
- iii. context

C. Typology of interactions

- a. Informal: gatherings
 - i. unfocused
 - ii. focused: encounters (→ routine)
- b. Formal: social occasions

Routine: with the autonomy of bodily control results in ontological security

2. Structure(s) and Institutions

2.1 Society

A. Intersocietal context → intersocietal systems

B. Features:

- i. bound to locales
- ii. set of normative elements
- iii. sense of identity

C. Patterned ← reproduced social practices

D. Agents ← social integration (between agents in co-presence)
← system integration (with collectives in time and space)

E. Typology of societies:

Type of society	Structural principles	Dominant locale and organization
Tribal society (oral culture)	tradition (communal moral practices) kinship group sanctions	band groups or villages no state

existential contradictions

Class-divided society (writing)	tradition kinship politics (military power) economic interdependence (low) formal codes of law symbolic coordination → state develops	symbiosis of country and town agricultural state
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existential and structural contradictions

Class society (capitalism)	routines kinship (family) surveillance politics (military power) economic interdependence (high) technology administrative power	city (created environment) nation-state
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structural contradictions

2.2 Structure and Structures

A. Structure:

- a. the societal theoretical framework consisting of
 - rules - of signification
 - of normative sanctions
 - resources - allocative
 - authoritative
- b. constraints - material
- structural
- sanctions
- c. structural - principles with possible contradictions - existential
- structural
- properties

B. Structures:

- a. definite sets of rules and resources based on structure
- b. domains - signification
- domination
- legitimation

2.3 Institutions and Collectivities

A. Institutions: bound to structure(s)

Structure(s)	Theoretical domain ← Rules and resources	Institutional order ← Interaction (modalities)
Signification (S-D-L)	Coding ← rules of signification	Symbolic orders/modes of discourse ← Communication (interpretative schemes)
Domination (D-S-L)	– Authorization ← authoritative resources – Allocation ← allocative resources	Political institutions Economic institutions ← Power (facility)
Legitimation (L-S-D)	Normative regulation ← rules of normative sanctions	Legal institutions ← Sanctions (norms)

B. Collectivities:

- a. associations
- b. organizations
- c. social movements

3. The Duality of Structure

Structure bound to agents through systems → structuration of social relations

A. In the course of this:

- reproduction
if by unintended consequences(= causal loops) → homeostatic system reproduction
- change
if by intention → reflexive self-regularization

B. Result: integration (social and system) achieved by routinized social practices

- grant continuity for systems and agents
- not deterministic
- bound to social positions → social identities

C. Social life = series of episodes: – small-scale
– large-scale

D. The dimensions of the duality of structure

Dimension of interaction	Structural modality	Structural property	Feature
Communication	semantic rule	signification	cultural/interpretative
Sanction	moral rule	legitimation	cultural/interpretative
Power	resource	domination	transformative/regulative

PART II

IN SEARCH OF AMERICAN IDENTITY

INTRODUCTION:

A NATION IN THE MAKING

The present study traces the various theories and models of American identity which emerged in the US, especially in social sciences throughout the 20th century. A study of this nature may be of importance for a number of reasons. It may highlight how modern identities, and as such, American identity, are social constructions, never-ending projects, which change in line with the corresponding dominant politico-economic interests, in the course of which these identities are continually re-created and reinterpreted. As a result, such a study may also reveal what strategies and forces may apply and in what particular manner in shaping and maintaining collective identities and social formations. It may also show how theorizations on social realities and identities are always embedded in specific times and locales and are the outcome of complex social, economic, and political factors. What this also indicates is that social sciences, therefore, cannot be considered a source of objective and independent representations of given phenomena, as they themselves are also products of these. A corollary of this embeddedness is the positioned nature of the scientists as well as the topics selected for investigation, also unfolding on these pages.

In light of these, in order to enhance a better understanding of these theorizations, they are introduced in the sequence of their appearance and contextualized in their contemporary milieu and related fields of interest. As works related to the definition of American identity and their formation abound, this work offers a selection of the more prominent trends and their representatives. A study of this sort must also touch upon major recurring notions in the field, such as 'identity', 'nation'

and 'ethnicity', an understanding of which is essential in a discussion of these theories. Thus, before an analysis of the various theories on American identity, contemporary conceptualizations of these terms are discussed in the following chapter.¹

¹ The meaning of these terms has changed throughout the years; this study, however, cannot undertake an analysis of the various semantic changes nor consider all theorists who contributed to the discussions related to social identity, nation, and ethnicity, but offers a cross-sectional analysis of the more pertinent works primarily focusing on the contemporary American context.

I. Theories of Identity, Nationality, and Ethnicity

Identity in general is considered a project characteristic of modernism, a phenomenon which has filtered into all areas of life. Thus, a wide array of academic fields, including literary studies, anthropology, psychology, cultural studies, and sociology, has focused on the analysis of identity: the ways it is formed, its content, manners of expression, representation, impact, and operation, along with its typology. Of the various types of collective identities, national and ethnic identities have been in the center of attention for quite some time, as these types of collective identities are present in all corners of the world, impacting all walks of life, let it be on the level of the individual or that of small social collectivities, nations, or international communities.

The works and approaches devoted to mapping the meaning of identities, both individual and collective,² are mainly related to two sets of epistemological premises. One of these is related to modernist and structuralist thinking, maintaining that identities may be related to essentialist, a priori, biologically given categories, which predetermine the nature and content of certain identities, calling for a normative, standardized outlook on social life and human beings and, therefore, on their identity. Structuralists claimed that identities draw on two types of sources: (1) a collection of these essential or given features which are viewed as stable and fixed, such as sex or age; and (2) a collection of socially constructed features which may be a matter of choice, such as occupational identifications, which may change throughout life. Structuralists also contended that social realities may be understood in terms of binary oppositions, which also applied to their understanding of identity: through identity the individual not only defines who it is but, also as importantly, who it is not. Embedded in this position is the possibility of practices of marginalization, colonization, sexism, and various other forms of discrimination—and thus the constitution of the “Other.” The series of differences are viewed as constructions,

² Smith stated that collective identities are also cultural identities. He maintained that these collectivities may be castes, ethnic groups, religious denominations, or nations, among others. In these cases the sense of community is based on five basic cultural elements, namely, symbols, values, memories, myths, and traditions, which contribute to the main dimensions of this sense: a sense of stability, rootedness, and unity; a sense of distinctiveness and difference; a sense of continuity; and a sense of destiny and mission, with its accompanying hopes and aspirations. This sense of community is in opposition to other collective identities, such as gender groups, classes, or regions, which Smith sees rather as interest groups. Anthony Smith, “The Formation of National Identity,” in Henry Harris ed., *Identity* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 129–53.

embedded in various realms of the social, and may therefore be explicable on the basis of material axes.

The second stance is related to poststructuralist understandings of identity which contended that identities should be conceptualized as inventions. The understanding of the previously stable, essentialist categories as inventions stems from the interpretation of the modern world as a culturally constructed domain. This cultural construction is conceptualized as a series of productive and inventive acts performed through language: therefore, reality is read as a text or discourse, with signs or symbols in operation. Identity is viewed as an ever-lasting project undertaken by the individual, emerging at the intersection of its multiple social positionings. As a result, identity is conceptualized as fragmented, always in the making, with no a priori, permanent core to build around.

1.1 Conceptualizations of Collective Identities

The term *identity* derives from the Latin word *idem* indicating sameness and continuity. Although this word has a long history, it really became a key term and the center of academic discussion in the first half of the twentieth century. The origin of these debates can be traced, on the one hand, to modern psychology, especially to the work of Sigmund Freud,³ and his theory of identification. Rooted in Freudian psychology, Erik Erikson's ideas contributed much to the establishment of identity studies in psychology. Erikson viewed identity as a process essential to the individual, the bond between the person and the communal culture, which represents the community itself. Thus, through the concept of identity he established the relationship between the individual, culture, and community. When the individual loses the sense of sameness and historical continuity which binds it to the community, identity crisis appears, as was shown in Erikson's studies during the 1940s. These studies, therefore, also proved that identity is essential for modern man's proper operation in contemporary society.⁴

The other field which contributed greatly to the emergence of identity studies is sociology. The more significant social theorists having influenced this field of scholarship include Emile Durkheim, Max Weber, Georg Simmel, George Herbert Mead, Thomas Merton, Pierre Bourdieu, Ervin Goffman, Herbert Blumer, Harold Garfinkel, Peter Berger, Anthony Giddens, Richard Jenkins, and Anthony Cohen. They all conducted research on the relationship between identity and the social

³ Sigmund Freud, *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis* (1924) (New York: Perma, 1949).

⁴ See, for example, Erik Erikson, *Life History and the Historical Moment* (New York: Norton, 1975). Freud and Erikson were the most influential thinkers in the later development of sociological identity study. As this study is concerned with sociological investigation, the rest of this section focuses on sociologists and cultural theorists along with their ways of understanding identity.

domain, trying to locate the forces, dynamics and methods at play in shaping identity. However, some of the more recent theorists also hoped to combine the impact of the social with that of the psychological domain, such as Teun van Dijk, who proposed that identity is a mental representation, the result of personal constructs, not only of social ones.⁵

As for the classification of identities, they were traditionally regarded as either self/personal or social/collective identities.⁶ The first type included fragments related to the body, gender, and sexuality as well as personality, while the second was tied to collectivities organized around class, religion, ethnicity, and nationality, among others. These classifications allowed for a series of presuppositions and expectations regarding social positions and actions as well as identities. Symbolic interactionism, for example, as presented by Erving Goffman,⁷ developed out of the recognition that identity is closely tied to the representation of the self in various social settings, in which consensus and expectations play a determining role. This brought about the notion that identity may also be understood as an interface between subjective positions and social situations.

Postmodernist theorizations, on the other hand, claimed that identity is a symbolic production, based on human-episodic-memory, in which a constructed abstraction regarding one's life and experience gradually emerges and is verbalized in various forms of narratives, as emphasized by Michel Foucault,⁸ Madan Sarup,⁹ Margaret Somers, Gloria Gibson¹⁰ and Stuart Hall,¹¹ among others. The significance of memory on the level of the collective is captured by history, and, as Hayden White¹² pointed out, by the twentieth century history was about describing or interpreting facts in order to support one mode of thinking over another. That is, mental processes related to identities are also bound to some purpose, which is often captured by the phrase 'identity politics'.

⁵ Teun van Dijk, *Ideology. A Multidisciplinary Approach* (London: Sage, 1998).

⁶ The possibility of typology as such is a sign of a structuralist approach, as it operates with the possibility of a given number of choices and underlying structures, also seeing everything in a dichotomy. It is this dichotomy that post-structuralists later called into question.

⁷ Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of the Self in Everyday Life* (New York: Doubleday, 1959).

⁸ Michel Foucault, "Megírni önmagunkat," in *Nyelv a végtelenhez: Tanulmányok, előadások, beszélgetések* (Debrecen: Latin betűk, 1999), 519–46.

⁹ Madan Sarup, *Identity, Culture and the Postmodern World* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1996), 130.

¹⁰ Margaret Sommers and Gloria Gibson, "Reclaiming the Epistemological 'Other'. Narrative and the Social Constitution of Identity," in Craig Calhoun ed., *Social Theory and the Politics of Identity* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), 37–99.

¹¹ Stuart Hall, "Who Needs 'Identity'?" in Stuart Hall and Paul du Guy eds., *Questions of Cultural Identity* (London: Sage, 1996), 1–17.

¹² Hayden White, *Tropics of Discourse. Essays in Cultural Criticism* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978).

The mental framework which provides the intellectual organizing principle for group formations is often defined as ideology, which in itself, in Slavoj Žižek's definition, is "a doctrine, a composite of ideas, beliefs, concepts, and so on, destined to convince us of its 'truth', yet actually serving some unavowed particular power interest."¹³ That is, various collectivities are formed in order to achieve certain interests related to gaining some specific power within the power structure, and members of the various groups identify with the specific goals and interests and subscribe—fully or partly—to the ideology which provides the intellectual stimulus for their efforts. Moreover, as Chris Jenks¹⁴ pointed out, ideologies are also able to generate "a practical sense of consensus," out of which a sense of unity and community may develop along with collective identity.

Hall also emphasized that identity is formed in "particular historical moments," under given circumstances,¹⁵ reflecting the specific interests at the given time. As identity is always bound to specific moments and circumstances, it cannot be conceptualised as stable and completed, but as always in the making—a claim he shared with postmodernist thinkers. He understood identity as comprised of various fragments, rooted in various experiences, both past and present, and personal understandings of these experiences in terms of their social implications.

What it implies is that Hall believes that the wider context of the manners of identity formation and the content of identity may actually be related to pertinent social, cultural, political, and economic undercurrents—a notion this study also embraces as a basic assumption. This materialist approach separates him from other postmodernist thinkers. However, he cannot be regarded a Marxist either, since he did not single out one specific force, as Marxists did the economy, as the ultimate power responsible for the practices and positionings of human beings in modern societies.

Modernists contended that group membership is maintained through various sets of practices and institutions, rooted in the specific group ideology characteristic of the given collectivity. Education, faith, socio-economic status, or class are often singled out as the most important factors to contribute to identity and membership maintenance, as claimed by Pierre Bourdieu,¹⁶ Talcott Parsons,¹⁷ Paul Willis,¹⁸

¹³ Slavoj Žižek, "The Spectre of Ideology," in Slavoj Žižek ed., *Mapping Ideology* (New York: Verso, 1994), 1–34, 10. Ideology-for-itself refers to its materialized forms.

¹⁴ Chris Jenks, *Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1995).

¹⁵ Hall, 1996.

¹⁶ Pierre Bourdieu, *Reproduction in Education and Society* (London: Sage, 1977).

¹⁷ Talcott Parsons and Neil Smelser, *Economy and Society* (Glencoe, Ill: The Free Press, 1956).

¹⁸ Paul Willis, *Learning to Labour* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977).

Michel Foucault,¹⁹ and Louis Althusser.²⁰ Postmodernists, however, emphasize other, cultural aspects of collectivities related to various semiotic fields, such as dressing, music, eating habits, architecture, media, film, or literature, as pointed out by Mark Gottdiener,²¹ Jack Solomon,²² Jean Baudrillard,²³ and Roland Barthes.²⁴ Moreover, they often conceptualized identity as emerging at the intersection of various experiences and positionings, such as gender, class or ethnicity.

Identity defines a group, locating and describing its members, positioning them as different from other groups of people—that is, identity is constituted through, and thus itself also constitutes, difference, an act of both inclusion and exclusion. This essentially structuralist approach, although still maintained as valid, has also been modified by more recent scholarship, aiming at determining the ultimate purpose and mode of operation of collective identities on the social level. Fredrik Barth²⁵ drew attention to the borders which delineate the dividing line between insiders and outsiders. The borderline, he claimed, is not static, but changing, as is inclusion and exclusion of membership and the cultural field related to the given group. What are crucial, according to Barth, are the changes introduced in the process of redrawing the borders and the underlying reasons which contribute to them which also introduce modifications in group membership and the cultural meaning associated with it.

Hall also pointed out the significance of boundaries, contending that identities must be conceptualized as “the point of suture.” However, he located suture between discourses and practices—which aim to position human beings as “social subjects of particular discourses”—along with various processes which constitute people as subjects. Thus, in his opinion, identities are “points of temporary attachment to the subject positions which discursive practices construct for us.”²⁶ Interpellation and subjectifying processes may be detected quite clearly in the case of nations and ethnic groups, as shown in the two sections to follow.

¹⁹ Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge. Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972–77* (New York: Pantheon, 1980). In later works, however, Foucault seemed to move toward postmodernist interpretations.

²⁰ Louis Althusser, “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses,” in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971), 127–86.

²¹ Mark Gottdiener, *Postmodern Semiotics. Material Culture and the Forms of Postmodern Life* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1995).

²² Jack Solomon, *The Signs of Our Time. The Secret Meanings of Everyday Life* (New York: Harper and Row, 1990).

²³ Jean Baudrillard, *Simulations* (New York: Semiotext(e), 1983).

²⁴ Roland Barthes, *The Fashion System* (London: J. Cape, 1985).

²⁵ Fredrik Barth, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries. The Social Organization of Culture Difference* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co, 1969).

²⁶ Hall 1996, 6.

1.2 Nation and Nationalism

The term *nation* was discussed at length by Liah Greenfeld²⁷ in a historical context, tracing the changes in the meanings of *nation* and *nationalism* through the ages. She analyzed the transformation of the idea of the *nation*, starting out from the original Latin form *natio*, meaning “a group of foreigners.” At medieval universities, the word *nation* indicated “a community of opinion” while later in church councils the very same word referred to “an elite.”²⁸ In the course of further developments in England, this term came to be used as the expression for “a sovereign people,” which, once borrowed by other countries and peoples by the modern age, indicated “a unique people.” This “zig-zag pattern of semantic change” was always bound to specific locales, time periods, and power situations.

Greenfeld put forth a number of propositions with regard to the contemporary meaning of the word, which is “a sovereign” and “a unique” people. One of these propositions is that this new understanding was essentially a principle out of which a political ideology emerged. As it was a generally applicable principle, it could not be specific to any group or locale, she contended. This ideology located sovereignty within the people, along with their recognition as fundamentally equal members of the nation. In this sense, argued Greenfeld, nationalism was the form within which democracy appeared. Nationalism, as a general principle, could not be bound to any specific group or locale. However, the meaning of nation as a sovereign people changed and, with that, particularism appeared while its unity with democracy disappeared. The reason behind this is the fact that after a while sovereignty did not lie with the people who acted “in some way as a political elite”;²⁹ but rather the political elite became comprised of a reduced number of people in power positions.

Julia Kristeva called attention to the fact that the emergence of the nations as sovereign and unique social arrangements also resulted in the legal and political differentiation between the Self(-ves) and the Other(s). She claimed that the modern concept of the political Other(s) was established by the French Revolution, but left its mark on the American Constitution as well. Kristeva argued convincingly that the *Declaration of the Rights of Men and Citizens* “shifts from the universal notion—‘men’—to the ‘political associations’ that must preserve their rights, and encounters the historical reality of the ‘essential political association’, which turns out to be the *nation*.”³⁰ Rights were granted to the members of the nation, that is, the

²⁷ Liah Greenfeld, *Nationalism. Five Roads to Modernity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992).

²⁸ Greenfeld 1992, 9.

²⁹ 1992, 10.

³⁰ Julia Kristeva, *Strangers to Ourselves* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 148.

citizens, but not to others, the foreigners.³¹ She contended that the “spreading of the French Revolution’s ideas over the continent triggered the demand for the national rights of peoples, not the universality of mankind.”³² It may, therefore, be concluded that nations are actually imagined and invented political communities which grant certain rights to their members, the people included—and, thus, with the same action, deprive the ones excluded of these rights. Therefore, humanism and true equality of men were disregarded and difference was justified and legalized.³³

Greenfeld placed the beginnings of modern nations and nationalism at the time of the English Revolution.³⁴ Werner Sollors, however, in his “Introduction” to *The Invention of Ethnicity*, traced the origin of nations to the French and American revolutions, which, in his view, challenged the royal and aristocratic European order and replaced it with national bourgeois systems.³⁵ In this process, the nation—often claimed to be organized around an ethnic group—was the invention which laid the new foundation for the emerging national unity, thus replacing the previous organizing principle which had been based on royal and/or religious affiliation. With the change of the organizing principle behind group formation and cohesion within given countries—whether they were tied to ethnicity or nation or both—the significance assigned to membership along with the manners and extent of the principle’s internalization and power of organization had also increased greatly in the modern era.

S. N. Eisenstadt³⁶ also placed the appearance of modern nations in the period of the American Revolution. Eisenstadt claimed that this Revolution was the only one which established a new collectivity, based mostly in religious-ideological and not primordial—or ethnic—terms, a nation based on the principles of equality, voluntarism, the sovereignty of the people, organized around the principle of newness, purity, and sacredness. Sollors considered the *Declaration of Independence* to be the

³¹ I must note that in the US, race, gender, and economic status also played a prominent role in the way rights were granted to the people. Thus, various dividing lines or boundaries were introduced and legalized, resulting in the development of seemingly natural group formations, already types of Others within the nation, although not foreigners in the legal sense of the word.

³² Kristeva 1991, 151.

³³ Erzsébet Barát in a comment noted that the members of the nation were understood as heterosexual males and thus nation was exclusionary not only toward other people, but also people within. This means that nation was a highly normative ideological construct, operating through regimes of truth.

³⁴ Greenfeld holds that the revolution showed how the English identified themselves as a special, elect nation, a notion rooted in the glorious Elizabethan era and resulting in the emergence of English patriotism, which entailed both “the idealistic commitment to the values of liberty, equality, and reason” as well as “the emotional attachment to the land, government, and ways of England” (1992, 401).

³⁵ Werner Sollors ed., *The Invention of Ethnicity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), xi.

³⁶ S. N. Eisenstadt, “Mirror-Image Modernities. Contrasting Religious Premises of Japanese and US Modernity,” in Richard Madsen et al eds., *Meaning and Modernity. Religion, Polity and Self* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 56–77.

source of “popular slogans for the termination of aristocratic systems, [after which] new hierarchies immediately emerged, often in the name of ethnicity.”³⁷

The emerging European nations did claim to grow out of ethnic communities;³⁸ this was the realization of ‘ethnicity as a political principle’.³⁹ The formal structures designed to host these nations were the modern capitalist or nation states which provided the legal, political, and economic unity necessary to hold together nations—which constitute “a territorial community of shared history, culture, and legal rights”⁴⁰—functioning through bureaucracy, emerging systems of institutions and methods of surveillance, relying on a “shared public, mass education-culture”⁴¹ and the media.

James Kellas defined a nation—emerging in the course of the the formation of modern nation states—as a group of people who feel united by “ties of history, culture, and common ancestry,”⁴² sharing objective characteristics, such as territory, language, religion, and common descent, and subjective features deriving from the people’s awareness of and affection for its nationality. Don Mitchell,⁴³ relying on the findings of Anthony Smith and Etienne Balibar, also noted that nations must also be viewed as “historical reality (a struggled-over people and place)...a community constituted through the institutionalization of practices of citizenship and socialized reproduction.”⁴⁴ He claimed that the state was not only the form, but also the force with the transformative power to constitute a given community as a nation through the creation of a certain kind of loyalty, emotional attachment, or a form of identification, maintained through the particular social practices and institutions people engaged in.

This proposition is in line with poststructuralist conceptualisations of nations as inventions—as contended by Sollors, Don Mitchell, Benedict Anderson⁴⁵ and Terry

³⁷ Sollors 1989, xii. In his discussion of aristocracy and emerging ethnicity in the context of the American Revolution and the *Declaration of Independence*, he fails to elaborate on what group he is referring to.

³⁸ This, of course, was not the case in the US, where the nation was bound to a state, established on the basis of economic and geo-political considerations, with its members being united by territory, citizenship, and residence, not by ethnic identification.

³⁹ This phrase is used in Ernest Gellner, “The Coming of Nationalism and Its Interpretation. The Myths of Nation and Class,” in Gopal Balakrishnan ed., *Mapping the Nation* (New York: Verso, 1996), 98–145.

⁴⁰ Smith 1995, 136.

⁴¹ Smith 1995, 135.

⁴² James G. Kellas, *The Politics of Nationalism and Ethnicity* (London: Macmillan, 1991), 2.

⁴³ Don Mitchell, *Cultural Geography. A Critical Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000).

⁴⁴ 2000, 270.

⁴⁵ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso, 1991).

Pickett,⁴⁶ among others. In this invention, as Anderson⁴⁷ pointed out, the most significant factor was the appearance of printed national language: he contended that it had laid the foundation for national consciousness by creating “unified fields of exchange and community below Latin and above the spoken vernaculars,” by giving “new fixity to the language” and by establishing a “language-of-power” which differed from that of the previous administrative era. As a result, members of these modern nation-states became united psychologically⁴⁸ and cognitively,⁴⁹ and the emerging national consciousness—with which people may identify in varying degrees—“which jells around a common descent, language and history, is itself mainly an artifact.”⁵⁰

Sarup called attention to another significant aspect nations shared when defining a nation as “a political arrangement of boundaries” within which unification is achieved by “incessant propaganda of shared attitudes” by the state, including the glorification and enforcement of “ethnic, religious, linguistic, and cultural homogeneity,” the selective construction of “joint historical memories” and the appraisal of a common destiny.⁵¹ The state, thus, develops nationalism, which, in Sarup’s view, is the set of ideology which in essence is needed to legitimate the existence of the state itself: the state claims that it is necessary as it represents the nation.

Sarup also proposed that that nationalism is so powerful because “it appeals to the real needs of people, their need for belonging.”⁵² Greenfeld also found the main drive behind the existence of nationalism today in the “psychological rewards inherent in nationality,”⁵³ making one feel good by amplifying one’s sense of worth and dignity through participation in a greater and more powerful community and a share in its virtues and successes. Thus, nationalism is the basis of a type of collective identity, rooted in power, constructed by the state at the intersection between the people, institutions, and practices, and assisting its members in maintaining a firm basis to position themselves in terms of their emotional and intellectual worth.

⁴⁶ Terry Pickett, *Inventing Nations. Justifications of Authority in the Modern World* (London: Greenwood, 1996).

⁴⁷ 1991, 44.

⁴⁸ Emotional aspects of group sentiment, loyalty, devotion, etc., upon which nationalism rests, should also be considered.

⁴⁹ For example, knowledge channeled through education or the media, the major means through which nationalism may operate.

⁵⁰ Jürgen Habermas, “The European Nation-State—Its Achievements and Its Limits. On the Past and Future of Sovereignty and Citizenship,” in Gopal Balakrishnan ed., *Mapping the Nation* (New York: Verso, 1996), 281–94.

⁵¹ Sarup 1996, 130.

⁵² 1996, 131. Barát noted that these needs are actually pre-given, outside signifying practices.

⁵³ 1992, 490.

In his discussion of nationalism, Craig Calhoun⁵⁴ defined it as a form of dominant ideology, typically rooted in various insurgent movements, while Mitchell agreed with Smith who identified nationalism as “an ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy, unity, and identity on behalf of a population deemed by some of its members to constitute an actual or potential ‘nation’.”⁵⁵ Calhoun defined nationalism as “the rhetoric of identity and solidarity in which citizens of the modern world most readily deal with the problematic nature of state power and with the problems of inclusion and exclusion.”⁵⁶ He also claimed that nationalism is constructed, is specific to the modern world system, and serves as a “crucial basis for standing in world affairs, and potentially for autonomy, and in which claims to statehood can be justified most readily by professions of nationhood.”⁵⁷ Basic tools used to achieve nationhood were already demarcated boundaries within which internal integration and homogenization were achieved through administrative integration and language standardization.

In his analysis of nationalism, Kellas claimed that it is a form of behavior as well, framed by the ideology of nationalism, providing the members of the nation with “a set of attitudes and program of action” in order to seek “to defend and promote the interest of the nation,”⁵⁸ resulting in a behavior pattern often linked to patriotism. That is, as Mitchell concluded, nationalism is also about the image of the ideal people, capturing the potential of a given nation not only in terms of what it can be but also in terms of what it wants to be. Thus, his view is in line with that of Ernest Gellner, who concluded that nationalism is not an invention and a type of ideology, but rather a phenomenon rooted in a “shared current condition,”⁵⁹ a necessity of industrial economic development, for which a homogeneous society – with its shared language and common culture, as well as its provider, an educational system – was necessary.

In this line of thinking, Benjamin Franklin, writer and printer, is often considered to be the founding father who not only spurred the emergence of the print media in the US but also united nationalism with literacy. The print media and literacy in the vernacular language are the two factors which Sollors regarded as the two prerequisites for the new cohesion in the modern states. In other words, he claimed that literature printed in the vernacular served as the basis for the invention of modern cultural communities as it could supply the ideology, language, and cultural context with the neo-traditions necessary for the new social constructs. It made

⁵⁴ Craig Calhoun, “Nationalism and Civil Society: Democracy, Diversity and Self-Determination,” in Craig Calhoun ed., *Social Theory and the Politics of Identity* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), 304–35.

⁵⁵ Quoted in Mitchell 2000, 271.

⁵⁶ Calhoun 1998, 305.

⁵⁷ Calhoun 1998, 314.

⁵⁸ 1991, 3.

⁵⁹ Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983), 56.

it possible for traditionally place-defined groups to be replaced by symbolically unified communities, where information channeled through various forms of the media could serve a dual purpose: to homogenize people as well as to differentiate among them and to maintain group formations.⁶⁰

Kellas provided a typology of nationalism in contemporary societies. He distinguished between three types of nationalism: ethnic, social, and official. He stated that

ethnic nationalism ... define[s] ... nation in exclusive terms, mainly on the basis of common descent[;] ... *social nationalism* defines itself by social ties and culture rather than by common descent[;] ... *official nationalism* is the nationalism of the state, encompassing all those legally entitled to be citizens, irrespective of their ethnicity, national identity, and culture.⁶¹

These seem to be in correlation with Smith's proposition of three patterns for state formation: a nation based on (1) a lateral-type of ethnic wherein nation is based on a given ethnicity with a national culture, largely defined by the upper classes; (2) a vertical ethnic wherein culture permeates all sections of the society, created by cultural revolutions under the intelligentsia; and (3) an emigrant-colonist ethnic comprising of various ethnic groups; in this case the "main agency for national transformation is utopian pioneering settlers who identify with their new environment and preach fulfillment in a promised land fashioned by their labors, often at the expense of indigenous peoples."⁶²

All authors agreed in considering nations to be constructions of modernity, viewing them as a typical signifier of this historical era. Many, including Greenfeld, Mitchell, and Sarup, argued that nations will eventually be dissolved and nation-states will be replaced by some other social structures, thus marking the beginning of a truly postmodern world. As nation-states emphasize dominance and boundaries, both physical and cultural, these will probably be replaced by some other organizing principles. As for what it will be, one can only stipulate, but certain contemporary tendencies provide a basis for more firmly based predictions.

Internationalism is one possibility, but Sarup refused to believe that it will serve as the basis for the new form of organization, as internationalism supposes the existence of nation-states as they are the points of departure for its existence. The other frequently mentioned phenomenon which will probably impact on the future is

⁶⁰ For a more elaborate discussion of the role of the media in group and identity formation, see Thomas Fitzgerald, "Media, Ethnicity, Identity," in Paddy Scannell et al. eds., *Culture and Power* (London: Sage, 1994), 112-136.

⁶¹ 1991, 51-52.

⁶² 1995, 149.

globalization, often tied to Immanuel Wallerstein's world system theory.⁶³ He argued that the global system today is held together by economic ties and relations, with core areas, which are the politically and economically most powerful states and the peripheral areas, which consists of the developing countries. The division of production and various economic functions between these areas contribute to the new world order. However, economic interdependence does not mean the dissolution of traditional state formations, nor, as Giddens noted in the "Introduction", the disappearance of political and military factors in the maintenance of the new world system.

The third possibility is related to deterritorialization. This is based on the assumption that neither economic nor political structures of dominations can be located within the borders of given nation-states, but these can be conceptualized rather within "spaces of flow." At the present stage, as Arjun Appadurai⁶⁴ claimed, there are disjunctions in the world which may be understood through an analysis of the five dimensions, or "scapes" of the global cultural flow: ethnoscaples, mediascaples, technoscaples, finanscaples, and ideoscaples. These scapes, however, do not contribute to the development of a homogeneous world, but are as likely to strengthen differences as they are to tone them down. The new leaders contribute to the emerging "globalized class," as Mitchell defined it, which is the only group appearing as homogeneous in this new order, characterized by cosmopolitanism, hyper-mobility, privilege, and luxury, "a class not tightly tied to any locale but at home in many."⁶⁵

1.3 Ethnicity and Ethnocentrism

The origin of the word reaches back to the Greek word *ethnimos*, meaning "national, of a certain nation or race." In English, the earliest meaning of the word ethnic was "a person who is not Christian or Jewish, a Gentile, heathen, pagan," while present-day definitions in standard dictionaries define an ethnic person as "someone of a racial, national or ethnic group." However, the meaning and significance of ethnicity indicate that these definitions fail to capture the complexity of ethnicity as well as the energies which it channels and the power it maintains.

The most recent debate over the meaning of ethnicity reaches back to the 1970s, when primordialist and biological interpretations of group membership achieved renewed currency. According to these interpretations, framed by the understanding

⁶³ Immanuel Wallerstein, "World-Systems Analysis," in Anthony Giddens and Jonathan Turner eds., *Social Theory Today* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), 309–324.

⁶⁴ Arjun Appadurai, "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy," in Steve Seidman and Jeffrey Alexander eds., *The New Social Theory Reader* (London: Routledge, 2001), 253–66.

⁶⁵ 2000, 280.

of ethnicity within the European historical context, ethnicity was viewed as a natural sociobiological force based on descent.⁶⁶ Membership was determined on the basis of blood relation and physical features, supposed a shared language and culture, values and traditions, a strong sense of history and ties to given locales. It was embedded in powerful narratives passed on both as historically verifiable facts and as part of traditions and elements of folklore. It was tied to emotions and symbols, had the potential of stirring people to action, unleashing enormous human power if necessary.

Sollors found this essentialist approach lacking in capturing ethnicity in the North American context. In order to overcome the shortcomings of this understanding, he proposed the use of the consent and descent models as possible means of analyzing contemporary American groups commonly referred to as 'ethnic'. In his 1986 book he illustrated how communities of consent are the outcome of cultural construction, as groups evolved out of descent may also be, either partly or fully. Accordingly, ethnicity must be understood as partly the result of a cultural construction, but this construction may refer to the whole meaning of ethnicity as well. However, he offered no definition of ethnicity in the course of his discussion of these models. It was in a more recent piece, "Foreword: Theories of American Ethnicity,"⁶⁷ that he provided the following definition, borrowed from R. Schermerhorn:

An ethnic group is...a collectivity within a larger society having real or putative common ancestry, memories of a shared historical past, and a cultural focus on one or more symbolic elements defined as the epitome of their peoplehood. Examples of such symbolic elements are: kinship patterns, physical contiguity (as in localism or sectionalism), religious affiliation, language or dialect forms, tribal affiliation, nationality, phenotypal features, or any combination of these. A necessary accompaniment is some consciousness of kind among members of the group.⁶⁸

Although this is probably among the most compact definitions of 'ethnicity', it falls short in a few areas. The discussion of these shortcomings may assist the reader to arrive at a better understanding of the term 'ethnicity' for the purposes of the present study. One point missing from this definition is that it fails to reflect upon

⁶⁶ Descent relations are based on "substance' (by blood or nature); consent relations describe those of 'law or 'marriage'." Werner Sollors, *Beyond Ethnicity. Consent and Descent in American Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 6.

⁶⁷ Werner Sollors, "Foreword. Theories of American Ethnicity," in Werner Sollors ed., *Theories of Ethnicity* (London: Macmillan, 1996), x-xliv.

⁶⁸ xii.

the process of ethnicization, which could shed light on who may become a member of an ethnic community and in what specific ways, along with the manners in which ethnicity may become a social force finding its way into various walks of social life.

A second point of criticism is that this definition treats the scope of the meaning of the term 'ethnic group' in rather broad terms. It must be highlighted that according to this definition (1) nationality may serve as the basis for ethnicity;⁶⁹ (2) religious groups may also be considered ethnic groups;⁷⁰ and (3) tribal cultures can also be viewed as ethnic communities. This indicates that the definition disregards any distinction on the basis of the nature and structure of society⁷¹ or of time⁷² in the application of ethnic categories, which would be desirable, as ethnicity is connected to the emergence of capitalist or nation-states, and as such, is a modern construction.

The definition also fails to indicate that the nature of the sense of unity in ethnic communities is also crucial: members must signify their relational position as an ethnic identity—and not as something else—with a collective name expressing it as such. This challenges the possibility of externally imposed definitions of religious groups as ethnic communities if they are in disagreement with that—which is often the case with the Latter-day Saints or the Amish.

This definition also disregards another important criterion Smith called attention to: the ethnic group's "association with a historic territory, or homeland, even if most of the community no longer resides in it."⁷³ This aspect cannot be neglected as the concept of homeland is a permanent segment in ethnic identifications: it is the concept through which the materialization and historical verification of a given ethnicity take place. The notion of historical identification bound to locales and time is always embedded in the idea of descent—whether real⁷⁴ or fictional—and as such, is key to ethnicity.

Schermerhorn's definition also lacks any consideration of the fact that ethnic groups—especially in the US—are also interest groups, united by common economic and political interests which they communicate to the outside world.⁷⁵ However,

⁶⁹ It must be pointed out that it is the other way round. It is possible not to have a nation built around an ethnic group—as was the case in the US—but there has never been a claim to a separate American ethnic group as such.

⁷⁰ It must be noted that no ethnic group can be defined on the sole basis of faith. Religion may be a significant factor in the constitution of ethnicity, but not the single feature.

⁷¹ Primordial or modern social structures.

⁷² The pre- or post-Enlightenment era.

⁷³ 1995, 133.

⁷⁴ The idea that necessitates the inclusion of descent, blood lineage, and historical identity in the notion of ethnicity derives from the sociobiologist approach.

⁷⁵ Naturally, ethnic groups are not homogeneous either; various sub-groups may, therefore, emerge, as socio-economic diversification often leads to the emergence of newer interests. Also, other interest groups may undertake to represent individual interests: this needs not be the exclusive purview of an ethnic group.

ethnicities cannot simply be reduced to identify classes, as Nathan Glazer and Daniel Moynihan's⁷⁶ or Milton Gordon's⁷⁷ somewhat Marxist proposals suggested when they claimed that one's position in the American socio-economic stratum is primarily determined by one's ethnicity. They argued that members of various ethnic groups are typically represented in a given social stratum—e.g., Jews in the upper classes⁷⁸ or Puerto Ricans in the lower classes because their ethnicity predetermines their economic possibilities and positions within the American scene, thus their culture, social positions and political behaviour.. However, in most cases ethnic groups are not absolutely class-bound, and usually various ethnic groups are represented in most layers of American society.

Instead of focusing on certain aspects related to given ethnic communities, such as their economic standing or culture, Barth⁷⁹ argued for the conceptualisation of ethnicity in terms of boundaries. He proposed that it is the boundary which defines an ethnic community, not so much the culture it encloses. He viewed the boundary as "a point of reference"⁸⁰ that signifies the group's relation to the outside, to its others, as well as the relation of the others to the group. He argued that the boundary is not permanently marked but is in a state of flux as an effect of the constantly changing context of the cultures and the power relations within the group as well as with the others outside the group.

Based on the primary principle along which ethnicities may be organized, Smith proposed a typology, distinguishing between three types of ethnies: (1) ethno-linguistic, wherein members share "a common vernacular code and literature"; (2) ethno-religious, in which case religious aspects alongside linguistic ones figure as the most dominant feature in signifying an ethnic community; and (3) ethno-political, wherein the community defines itself "by historical memories and political traditions."⁸¹ This classification sheds light upon the various forces along which ethnic communities may emerge, also identifying these as factors which may in part account for ethnicization.

With regard to an understanding of ethnicity within the North American context, the following points may be highlighted: ethnicity is a construction, based on the descent model—which is always regarded as real, although it may not actually be—in which peoplehood and the location of the group in space and time are as-

⁷⁶ Nathan Glazer and Daniel P. Moynihan, *Beyond the Melting Pot. The Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Jews, Italians, and Irish of New York City* (1963) (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1974).

⁷⁷ Milton M. Gordon, *Assimilation in American Life. The Role of Race, Religion and National Origins* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964).

⁷⁸ Gordon proposes that US society can be divided into six classes: two layers (lower and upper) can be found within each of the three standard strata (lower, middle, and upper), each with its own features and characteristic eth-classes.

⁷⁹ 1969.

⁸⁰ A term used by Sarup.

⁸¹ 1995, 133–34.

signed a central role: that is, a common homeland, shared ancestry, and historical past out of which a common culture with traditions, customs, shared language, etc., developed. This results in a strong sense of identification, both psychological and cognitive, a self-definition and a cultural context,⁸² the boundary, thus the content of which is always in the change. In the US, ethnicity often appears in power struggles, and its strength and worth may be viewed in various ways depending on the period and/or the context. Depending on people's current views on their ethnicity, their identification with it may weaken or strengthen. However, regardless of their ethnic identification, Americans strongly identify with the United States as their current home country.

Clearly, the American nation developed out of the citizenry of a young country and not out of an ethnic community. Nations are modern constructions, related to the emergence of modern states. They are legal and political formations, and as such, can be characterized by the consent model. National consciousness—the extreme case of which is nationalism—is often based on the state ideology necessary to justify the state's existence, define its positions, and maintain its citizens along with their support of state affairs. The citizens within a state are not merely united by cognitive and emotional ties but also by a highly developed system of various institutions, including administrative institutions which often practice various methods of surveillance over the citizens. As a result, people are officially signified in the world as citizens, on the basis of their nationality, and not ethnicity.

Nations, similarly to ethnic groups, attempt to establish a common symbolic culture based on descent, disseminated primarily through the media and the education system. Nation states primarily draw on the culture of the dominant ethnic community within their borders. In the US, however, ethnicity is associated with minority group status, as Richard Schaefer indicated, stating that a minority group is “differentiated from the dominant group on the basis of cultural differences such as language, attitudes toward marriage and parenting, food habits, and so on.”⁸³ As members of a minority group, he continued, members of an ethnic group tend to have less control or power than members of the dominant group—therefore, may feel the need to enter into power struggles for which ethnicity may offer a seemingly natural organizational form.

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In most cases, a separate language also marks the boundaries of an ethnic community.

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Richard Schaefer, *Racial and Ethnic Groups* (Glenview, Ill: Scott, Foresman and Co, 1990), 10.

2. The Beginnings: Shaping a Nation

Smith considered the US an example of an official nation: one resting on the principles of Calvinism as channeled through the Puritans and the founding fathers. The War of Independence was a political act—based on consent and not descent—with the purpose of achieving economic goals for a particular group of people in a particular geographical region, but not for an ethnic community, as was the case generally in Europe. However, in the early phase of colonial history, one ethnic group was often singled out as the one which had shaped the new nation of North America: the Anglo-Saxons.

Since Columbus' discovery of the Americas, immigrants from all corners of the Western world ventured forth to this New World. Columbus, of course, was not the first European to set foot on this continent,¹ but was the first one to create an image of the new land which could capture the contemporary imagination—and has done so ever since. His accounts of a land,² rich in resources and natural beauty, inhabited by natives filled with generosity and hospitality, offered a formula which various groups seeking a better life could tailor to their own desires. The word 'America' has come to signify a haven for all those who sought asylum from religious persecution, political distress, or economic hardships, as well as for those who hoped to make the most of their lives in a number of other ways.

By the time of the War of Independence, people from most European countries were represented among the inhabitants of the colonies, who totaled over 2.5 million. The territory of the contemporary US had been ruled by various countries, including Britain, France, Spain, the Netherlands, and Sweden, implanting their various cultures, values, and manners of thinking. This land was used to make the colonizing powers even richer but also offered a place where religious dissenters from these countries could find peace and the promise of a fresh start. Jews, for example, arrived early on, on the East Coast,³ along with the British Puritans, followed by members of other Protestant sects from Britain, such as the Quakers, and

¹ The first verifiable European traveler to land on the shores of the American Continent was Eric the Red, who established a small settlement around 985.

² On the analysis of Columbus' letters and other sources which assisted in the development of referential practices contributing to the constitution of the American continent as the land of desires, see Kenneth John Myers, "On the Cultural Construction of Landscape Experience. Contact to 1830," in David Miller ed., *American Iconology. New Approaches to Nineteenth-Century Art and Literature* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 58–78 and Nigel Spivey, *Enduring Creation. Art, Pain and Fortitude* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 173–80.

³ Jews arrived only on the present territory of New York and Rhode Island as all the other colonies prohibited permanent resident status for non-believers and non-Christians up to the second half of the eighteenth century.

still later the Methodists and Baptists, who appeared primarily in New England and the Middle Colonies. The French Huguenots also arrived in New England in higher number in the 1680s, but after receiving “less than an enthusiastic welcome,”⁴ continued on to South Carolina. Of all the colonizers, the British were represented in the highest number and had the greatest commitment to settling in the colonies—they did not intend simply to pass through, as many of the other nations did.

Therefore, it was inevitable that British culture and people would play a prominent role in shaping the future of the country. This chapter discusses the aspects of their cultural, religious and political heritage which left their marks on the new country established after the War of Independence.

2.1 Anglo-Conformity

The European nations which shared in the exploration of various parts of the North American continent were also driven by expansionism, hoping to gain economic advantages by securing control over certain areas. Of these powers, the English dominance in the North Eastern region of today's US was the most prominent by the mid-seventeenth century. As a result, all the thirteen colonies there were under British rule. Up to the late seventeenth century, English people comprised the largest immigrant group entering North America, making it “England's law, letters, and social patterns that had been transplanted to the colonies that became a nation. ...England's imprint on the land was the most distinctive, the most visible, the most determinate of things to come.”⁵ Although the various colonies differed and the English community was also quite heterogeneous, they had all these in common.

Anglo-Conformity is the phrase which came into common use to express the English dominance and the fact that newcomers' integration into the emerging colonial society naturally meant the acceptance of and identification with the English language, culture, way of life, and manner of thinking, the English rule, political interests and form of taxation, among others. This is a concept which, in certain periods even after the War of Independence, has recurred in varying degrees, last in the 1970s in Michael Novak's concept of WASPification.⁶

The thirteen colonies are often divided into three groups: Northern, Middle and Southern colonies, each with their own distinct features. In the North, the Puritans had become the dominant force, as the first large group of immigrants to the New Land to arrive with the purpose of establishing permanent settlements, as of 1620.

⁴ Leonard Dinnerstein, Roger Nichols and David Reimers, *Natives and Strangers. Ethnic Groups and the Building of America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 25.

⁵ Bernard A. Weisberger, *Many People, One Nation* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987), 33–34.

⁶ This concept will be discussed in Section 6.1.

“The New England people, almost to a man, were English and Puritan. ... The great mass of emigrants to New England were middle-class farmers, tradesmen, and artisans.”⁷ They arrived with a twofold purpose: (1) to find a refuge and a free land where they could freely practice their beliefs as well as (2) to build a stable economy which could provide them with security and strengthen their overall position.⁸ As they were determined to make the new land their permanent new home, they also realized the significance of establishing and developing the essential institutions necessary for the conduct of their daily lives as they had known them to be in England. They built their meetinghouses or churches, which initially operated as the center for various communal events and facilitated the management of the whole community.⁹ Besides operating as places of worship, churches also functioned as the city halls and courts, separated physically, and in terms of power and operation, only later. In the early years, the sacred and secular were intertwined, being separated by law only in 1791 in the Bill of Rights.

The Puritans instituted the first free popular education system in the New Land, first in the form of home schooling, then in the form of institutional public schools in 1647. Their faith in higher education was indicated by the fact that they also established the first universities in the colonies, Harvard having been the very first, founded in 1636 and opened two years later. The Puritans also set up the first printing press in 1639, which stood alone in the Colonies for almost 100 years, as well as launched the first successful newspaper in 1704. The first English also introduced town planning by rationalizing the structure of their settlements: the division of the land, the arrangement of lots and houses, streets and public buildings, along with the surrounding forests, meadows, and farmland. They also started to develop roads and trade routes, leading to the birth of a rudimentary form of business and trading activity within the colonies. A community and life with the potential of future independence started to evolve, based entirely on the English model, culture, and language.

Conformity to this system was an essential requirement for everyone in the communities. Any divergence resulted in exclusion, which may be considered natural, as early Puritans were strongly united by their belief system. Dissenters were forced out of the communities primarily because of religious disagreements, as was the case with Anne Hutchinson and Roger Williams.¹⁰ The Puritan community comprised

⁷ Samuel Eliot Morison, *The Oxford History of the American People, Vol. 1, Prehistory to 1789* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972), 112.

⁸ Morison 1972, Weisberger 1987, 47.

⁹ Actually, during the early years the realms of the secular were ruled by the sacred.

¹⁰ Anne Hutchinson was advocating the power of grace and the belief in personal revelation, downplaying the role of the Puritan clergy. She was tried and banished after having been found guilty in 1637. Roger Williams, ordained as an Anglican clergyman in Cambridge, offered his unrestrained criticism of the Puritan system, vehemently arguing for the separation of state and church as well as criticizing the regular violation of Indian rights in Massachusetts. He was found guilty by the General Court for advocating

a whole operating social unit, with a firm belief in its ability to survive and accomplish remarkable things on earth as the chosen people of God. Their firm belief enabled them to establish community cohesion with shared values, transplanted traditions, and the promise of a new life in the New World with a sacred mission to fulfill.

Besides the Puritan dissenters, other groups from Britain contributed further to the development of the Colonies; however, the contribution of these groups is often not highlighted as much as that of the Puritans.¹¹ Daniel Boorstin¹² pointed out three other forces which were significant in shaping the future nation: (1) Quakerism, with its pacifism and its religious freedom and tolerance; (2) the model of rural Virginia with its aristocratic overtones; and (3) Georgian philanthropy, the example of an experiment at assisting the disenfranchised. Due to Quakerism, the middle colonies were more varied and tolerant than New England. Quakers were probably the most persecuted believers in England as well as in the Northern colonies. Their belief in the inward light, a direct form of communication with God, made them question the need for any form of clergy, religious leadership and hierarchy, a fundamental concept staunchly upheld within traditional denominations. They were characterized by tolerance and understanding, therefore refused to bear arms or to take oaths and believed in non-violence and individual conscience. These ideals made them a group with a sense of social sensitivity and responsibility. Their appearance in Rhode Island, Delaware, and Pennsylvania, the last being the primary destination for their migration, made it possible to place white and Native Indian relations on a new basis and to legalize freedom of religion and tolerance.

Virginia and Georgia offered two other contributions, according to Boorstin, associated with the South. The Virginia model was a societal model developed out of a structure of primarily rural settlements, based on large plantations and on smaller lots of land cultivated by yeoman farmers. The planters, who were primarily Anglican in faith, owners of slaves, and holders of political as well as economic power, had understandably transplanted an aristocratic mentality, so alien to New England and the Middle colonies. Their wealth, refined taste, and love of beauty resulted in a number of outstanding pieces of art, especially in architecture, which are highly regarded in American art history today.

Unlike Virginia, a place where the most controversial American institution, slavery, was part of daily life, Georgia was built on goodwill and humanitarianism.

“new and dangerous opinions” and was banished from the colony. Later, he founded Rhode Island, where his ideas of tolerance and democracy were put to practice.

¹¹ Miller and Johnson contributed this to the fact that “it was the first of these traditions to be fully articulated, and...it has inspired certain traits which have persisted long after the vanishing of the original creed.” Perry Miller and Thomas H. Johnson eds., *The Puritans*, Vol. 1, (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), 1.

¹² Daniel Boorstin, *The Americans. The Colonial Experience* (New York: Vintage, 1958).

It wanted to create an environment which could help people to have a fresh start in their lives, thus banned slavery as well as hard liquor. Georgia was started as a Utopian experiment in 1732, by English philanthropists James Oglethorpe, with the purpose of offering a number of people a chance to start anew, especially debtors who were imprisoned indefinitely in England. His efforts were based on his strong sense of optimism and belief that the new land with its moral purity may contribute to the transformation of these fallen people.¹³

Greenfeld studied the relationship of the English colonists to their mother country in detail. She argued that the colonists had no desire to be separated from Britain for a long time. Moreover, being English was a significant factor which united all inhabitants of English descent in the Colonies, regardless of their place of residence or religious convictions. Greenfeld claimed: "The sense of exemplary devotion to and implementation of English values was shared by the Colonists everywhere and became a central element in the local American identity. Not only were they, indubitably, English, but they were better English than the English. Beyond this Americans of different colonies shared little...."¹⁴ She maintained that they, as Englishmen, were members of one nation, that of Britain, but as Americans, they were simply inhabitants of various provinces.

In Greenfeld's argumentation, the explanation for the reasoning behind the colonists' decision to fight for independence from Britain was also rooted in their strong sense of English national identity. Time and distance, she contended, prompted the Englishmen in the Colonies to embrace a rather idealistic and abstract form of patriotism. This "idealistic loyalty to national values, which could be and usually was as ardent a patriotism as the more earthly love of country, was by its very nature a stimulus for disaffection and revolt, for the more intense the commitment to the ideals, the more sensitive, the more intolerant, one became to the imperfections in their realization."¹⁵ Greenfeld saw this idealistic patriotism at play in the course of the English Revolution and then again in the War of Independence. This sense of Englishness and commitment to English values and ideals and the strong sense of national identity were by far superior to any other group identity in North America at the time. Thus, it was inevitable that it would remain a dominant force, influencing significantly the distinct American identity which was constructed after the War of Independence.

¹³ Weisberger 1987, 48.

¹⁴ 1992, 409. She defined the core English values or ideals as commitment to liberty, equality, and reason, often complemented by emotional attachment to the native land, government, and ways of England.

¹⁵ Greenfeld 1992, 412.

2.2 The Puritan Heritage

The cultural background of the Puritans, which was their Englishness, was embedded in their faith which was the second force at play in shaping the people to emerge in the US: Puritanism.¹⁶ The first exodus of Puritans consisted of Separatists, who arrived at Plymouth in 1620, from Leiden, the Netherlands. They were followed by a more moderate group, who arrived on the shores of Massachusetts bearing a charter to establish the Massachusetts Bay Colony. These settlers were formally entitled by Charles I to establish settlements, but they themselves set forth to accomplish a great deal more: to build a “city upon a hill,” as their leader, John Winthrop, defined it, “a model Christian state that all the world could imitate.”¹⁷

This phrase has since regularly been employed to express the intensity of Puritan faith and convictions regarding their future role in the New World. The Puritans accepted the authority of the Bible alone for the way they conducted their lives, finding the model society they wished to establish in their colony in God’s governance of Israel, as described in the Old Testament. Central to this model was the idea of the covenant which determined the success of a nation in its relationship to God. In this interpretation, keeping faith and morality in accordance with biblical law was the key to the future success of the nation. Therefore, it was essential for their successful survival to insist on strict religious practice and daily life. Related to the covenant tradition is the idea of the jeremiad, first appearing in Puritan preaching in the 1660s. It refers to the Old Testament prophet Jeremiah’s lamenting over things having gone astray, which he explained by the nation having turned away from God and morality. Since then, jeremiad has often appeared in the US, especially in critical times, as the response to growing secularism or moral disorder, warning people and calling for a return to faith and biblical values.

Biblical imagery and events also framed their Puritan mindset and were applied to their experiences. Their transatlantic voyage was interpreted as a new Exodus, which meant the projection of a sacred meaning on a secular act of migration. It signified the Colonies as the New Canaan, the Promised Land, and the people crossing as the Chosen People who were on a mission to prepare the way for Christ’s Second Coming. This belief resulted in their conviction that the Americans as a nation are on a mission on earth as well as in their fascination with the future, also characterized by change and progress, as Sollors argued in his *Beyond Ethnicity*. The Puritans also understood it to be their mission to transform the wilderness into a garden. As Alan Heimert pointed out, “[S]ubduing the wilderness quickly became

¹⁶ This section focuses on the discussion of the Puritan belief system and its direct implications, as the more secular, social, and cultural aspects of Puritanism have already been outlined above.

¹⁷ George Marsden, *Religion and American Culture* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1990), 16.

an exalted calling for the Puritan.”¹⁸ However, they interpreted this call both literally and figuratively: they were not only to tame nature but also those who inhabited it—the Native Americans.

Other specific Puritan tenets contributed further to the prominent role played by the Puritans. These included the belief in a personal relationship with God and in the view of work on earth as God’s handiwork. These provided the Puritans with a sense of certainty and superiority, confirming their sense of being the elect. Their virtues and strict orthodoxy encouraged hard work which was often rewarded by financial success. Their sense of obligation to help others made their community strong, their feel of the need to share their wealth contributing to emerging philanthropy. Their congregationalism gave an impetus to individual rights and expression of opinion through votes, establishing equality and independence among church members as well as creating a sense of social awareness and responsibility along with the identification with the governing body as a forum of true representation. Thus, congregationalism is often interpreted as a form of organization which introduced the seeds of democracy, election, delegation, and representation of individual power.

Sollors also argued that their belief in being one nation, the Chosen People, gave them a strong impetus to community building and the construction of peoplehood. As the Massachusetts Bay Colony, for example, was viewed as the body of Christ, it meant a peoplehood knit together by love—that is, by consent. However, he argued that the descent model had grown to significance among Puritans through faith, as “Christianity promises the transcendence of descent... [and] has given whites, and especially Anglo-Americans, distinct advantages, privileges, and even a superiority over other races.”¹⁹ This may provide another explanation for Puritan supremacy in New England, the institutionalization of Anglo-American white male supremacy in the US, as well as Americans’ overall respect for and fascination with the descendants of the early Puritans, the founders of the nation, who comprise the upper-upper class, in Gordon’s societal model of the US.²⁰

In his influential work *The Puritan Origins of the American Self*, Sacvan Bercovitch demonstrated that the Puritan legacy the US inherited was their rhetoric which survived “because it was compelling enough in content and flexible enough in form to invite adaptation.”²¹ With regard to the mechanisms through which Puritan rhetoric could be used by generations of Americans to follow, he proposed:

¹⁸ Alan Heimert, “Puritanism, the Wilderness, and the Frontier,” in C. K. McFarland ed., *Readings in Intellectual History. The American Tradition* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970), 60–73, 73.

¹⁹ 1986, 62.

²⁰ For a discussion of Gordon’s notions, see Section 2.

²¹ (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975), 186.

Colonial Puritan hermeneutics...evolved through an essentially symbolic interaction of perceiver and fact, thus allowing for different kinds of perceivers and a variety of historical contexts. The perceiver had to identify himself as a regenerate American but since the meaning of America lay in an act of will and imagination, he could claim that his interpretation embodied the only true America...[and] the terms of signification could change with changing national needs.²²

It was through these signifying practices of Puritan rhetoric that hegemony within the Puritan communities could be attained through the neutralization of conflict within the groups. Janice Knight proposed²³ that the result of the fact that Puritan rhetoric successfully intertwined sacred and secular purposes as well as the personal and group identities of the Puritans, was "America's claim to an exceptional destiny and the concomitant yet delusive claim of every citizen to share in the American dream of success."²⁴

2.3 The Enlightenment

The political tradition the English colonists shared before the War of Independence was also key to the construction of the new state, as expressed in its founding documents. These sacralized documents, the *Declaration of Independence* and the *Constitution*, which established the new country, introduced a new typology of political discourse and argumentation, drawing on the notions of the Enlightenment, which had been put into practice in these, as Sollors proposed.²⁵ "More universally accepted in eighteenth-century America than in Europe, they [the political and social ideas of the European Enlightenment] were more completely and more permanently embodied in the formal arrangements of state and society; and, less controverted, less subject to criticism and dispute, they have lived on more vigorously into later periods, more continuous and more intact."²⁶

In Bernard Bailyn's interpretation, the real American Revolution was actually the rationalization, symbolization, completion, elevation, and empowerment of the social and political forces and Enlightenment ideas in America—forces which had

²² 1975, 186.

²³ Janice Knight, *Orthodoxies in Massachusetts. Rereading American Puritanism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994).

²⁴ 1994, 4.

²⁵ 1986.

²⁶ Bernard Bailyn, "Political experience and Enlightenment Ideas in Eighteenth-century America," in C. K. McFarland ed., *Readings in Intellectual History. The American Tradition* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970), 114–123, 114.

already existed as a result of the political milieu in the Colonies and the close intellectual ties which had never ceased to exist between the Colonies and the Old Continent. As William Nelson observed, "Americans did not in 1783 cease to be historically English, to speak English, to live by what had once been English law and English political theories, to follow English practices in local government and English habits of political compromise."²⁷ However, they were able to articulate "a remarkable ideology" which captured "political individualism: individual man—his life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness—became the central concern of the whole political order".²⁸ Philip Gleason also pointed out the ideological nature of American identity, locating its origin in the era of the Revolution. He proposed that the American sense of nationhood and identity could be founded only on ideas, which he summed up as the nation's "commitment to the principles of liberty, equality, and government on the basis of consent."²⁹

The roots of the ideas which are identified as the segments of the ideology upon which the United States was established are propositions associated with the Enlightenment. Deism and rationalism framed Enlightenment thinking, which could be exercised only through individual freedom of thought, speech, and worship. The right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness constituted the natural rights of people in line with the Enlightenment. Relying on Locke and Voltaire, Enlightenment thinkers maintained that mankind had left its natural state and lived in societies which were based on the notion of social contract. In this manner of thinking, the government had to represent and protect the people who elected them, and a long series of abuses of power should result in a change of government.

Moreover, the Enlightenment also embraced the belief in the perfectibility of mankind and thus in human progress.³⁰ But progress propagated the possibility of the improvement of conditions on earth, thus providing the opportunity for more happiness for men here on earth. Man was viewed as whatever he makes of himself: his happiness and success depended only on him, which also lent a sense of optimism to the Enlightenment. Overall, claimed Horton and Edwards, "the Enlightenment has...made a greater contribution to our social ideology than any other body of thought. In its emphasis upon rationality, in its faith in human progress, in its belief in the benevolence and perfectibility of man, in its desire for social improvement, it has set a pattern"³¹ to be achieved in the future in the US.

²⁷ William H. Nelson, "The Revolutionary Character of the American Revolution," in C. K. McFarland ed., *Readings in Intellectual History. The American Tradition* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970), 147–160, 157.

²⁸ Nelson 1970, 158.

²⁹ Philip Gleason, "American Identity and Americanization," in Oscar Handlin ed., *The Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980), 31–58, 31.

³⁰ Rod Horton and Herbert Edwards argued that this idea was the secularized counterpart of the Puritan notion of establishing heaven on Earth. Rod W. Horton and Herbert W. Edwards, *Background of American Literary Thought* (London: Prentice Hall, 1974).

³¹ 1974, 78.

Greenfeld claimed that Thomas Paine—who had arrived in America only in 1774—in his *Common Sense*³² successfully used reason to argue why Americans should not be viewed as English.³³ Paine suggested that the “parent country” of America is not England, but the whole of Europe, and, accordingly, the American nation should identify not only with the English, but with “every European Christian,” therefore could do away with British rule. His proposition regarding the definition of the American people, thus, was more universal and inclusive than previous interpretations, in line with the universal principles Enlightenment thinkers seemed to advocate in general.

Within the Colonies, Benjamin Franklin was considered to be the main representative of Enlightenment ideals. As a deist and a rationalist, he believed in “the will of God and nature,”³⁴ and expressed his hope that the spirit of the French Revolution, “the Love of Liberty [and] ... Knowledge of the Rights of Man, may pervade all the Nations of the Earth.”³⁵ His *Autobiography*, written between 1771 and 1789, has been read as if the book of American virtues by generation after generation. Kenneth Silverman in his “Introduction” to Franklin’s writings proposed that his *Autobiography* owes much of its vast fame to the fact that “in tracing his development Franklin gave classic expression to three powerful ingredients of the American Dream: the ideals of material success, of moral regeneration, and of social progress.”³⁶

The two most influential documents to spring from the War of Independence, which were framed by the ideas of the Enlightenment, were the *Declaration of Independence* and the *Constitution*. The *Declaration* was drafted by Jefferson in 1776. The text drew primarily on the theory of Locke, his concept of the unalienable natural rights of men, namely equality, rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Jefferson also drew on the notion of social contract in his argumentation to present the Americans’ case and explain the reasons for doing away with the British rule. As the text, which is political in its premises, contains references to God, it is also considered key to the emergence of civil religion³⁷ in the US. It is also a document which was written in a simple, easy-to-understand manner in the language of the common man, presenting values and beliefs Americans still deeply identify with.

The *Constitution*, on the other hand, is void of any religious references and is a crystallized modern political document. It was the outcome of a thorough revision

³² Quoted in Greenfeld 1992, 422.

³³ This conceptualization was advantageous to those who argued against English rule as it challenged one of the basic presumptions justifying the English presence in the Colonies.

³⁴ In a letter to Elizabeth Hubbard, February 22, 1756, quoted in Benjamin Franklin, *The Autobiography and Other Writings* (London: Penguin, 1986), 250.

³⁵ In a letter to David Hartley, December 4, 1789, quoted in Franklin 1986, 259.

³⁶ 1986, ix.

³⁷ See Section 3.2.

of an earlier experiment, the first document to outline the operation of the new nation, the *Articles of Confederation*, in effect between 1777–87. The *Constitution* was a product preceded by fierce debate and intellectual struggle but was finally accepted by the Constitutional Convention in 1787 and has been in effect since then. Kenneth Janda et al. contended that the *Constitution* is rooted in the following four intellectual currents: (1) Republicanism, which envisioned a type of government in which “power resides in the people and is exercised by their elected representatives; government is the common business of the citizens conducted for the common good”³⁸; (2) Federalism, a distinctly American phenomenon in which state and federal governments share power and the responsibilities of ruling; (3) the notion of the separation of powers as proposed by Montesquieu; and (4) the idea of checks and balances, a principle developed by Englishmen Henry Bolingbroke and William Blackstone. These principles, along with the rights granted to the people in the Bill of Rights in 1791 and later amendments, including the right to freedom of speech, of the press, of assembly, of gun ownership, to mention just a few, have since shaped the political thinking and behavior of the American people³⁹ who embraced these as essential to their American identity.⁴⁰

The significance of texts and written discourse in general in the course of gaining independence and the emergence of the concept of American nation has also captured scholars’ imaginations. Wayne Franklin⁴¹ argued convincingly that texts, let them be the Bible and other religious texts, charters, grants, personal writings, or diaries, were essential to the creation and operation of the Colonies in their relatively long history. By identifying with his proposition, it may be concluded that the text of the *Declaration of Independence* and the *Constitution* were equally prominent in shaping the future of American society. On the other hand, Emory Elliott⁴² argued

³⁸ Kenneth Janda, Jeffrey Berry and Jerry Goldman, *The Challenge of Democracy. Government in America* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1992), 82.

³⁹ The question of citizenship also emerges here. Naturally, the various rights were granted to the citizens of the US, the circle of which has expanded significantly since then. However, citizenship is a legal category and is not bound to personal identification with the people residing in the US—especially since it has been home to constant waves of newcomers, thus often home to people who do embrace the American values, traditions, habits, and mindset, but are not citizens.

⁴⁰ One of the more prominent early accounts on how democracy and sovereignty of the people, instituted by the *Constitution*, was put to daily practice was given by Tocqueville, a Frenchman who spent nine months travelling in the US in 1831–32. His observations published in 1835 and 1840, confirmed majority rule in the US, but also warned of its danger which he saw in its efforts to homogenize society and to standardize daily actions, while demonstrating disrespect of differing or dissenting views and marginalizing divergence from the norm. Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (New York: Signet, 1984).

⁴¹ Wayne Franklin, “The US Constitution and the textuality of American culture,” in Vivien Hart and Shannon C. Stimson eds., *Writing a National Identity. Political, Economic, and Cultural Perspectives on the Written Constitution* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), 9–20.

⁴² Emory Elliott, “Constitution and imagination. The myth of reason—the reason of myth,” in Vivien Hart and Shannon C. Stimson eds., *Writing a National Identity. Political, Economic, and Cultural Perspectives on the Written Constitution* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), 21–33.

for a demystification of these sacred texts by claiming that the splendid ideals of the Enlightenment presented in these were considerably far from realization. Nevertheless, proposed Bercovitch,⁴³ “because the United States was conceived when its founders composed a written body of ideas, the result is that a person’s identity as a citizen depends not upon birth, but upon the individual’s allegiance to texts.”⁴⁴ Based on this proposition, one’s American identity involves belief in the Constitution, the rule of law, and compliance with the national ideology which is “the American Middle-Class Way,” in Bercovitch’s words. The constitutive power of the early texts was pointed out both by Stephen Fender⁴⁵ and Christopher McCrudden, the latter of whom also problematized the possibility of the constitutional construction of national identity. He concluded that

the success or otherwise of a constitutional construction of national identity seems to me to depend more on the extent to which it, first, addresses issues germane to what is perceived as the construction of the national identity; second, constructs issues which are accepted as constitutional, around which national identity can develop; and third, provides mechanisms by which the principles espoused are put into practice effectively.⁴⁶

This proposition is in line with later interpretations which regard social formations as constructions, also assigning texts an exceptional position in the process. Based on these arguments, however, the prominence of the early documents and the ideals which took shape in them must be regarded as a factor impacting American identity and various theorizations on it. With regard to the overall impact of the early immigrants to the Colonies, Greenfeld maintained that the American identity “was formed in the process of systematic, though presumably not entirely intentional, selection of certain characteristics of the colonial way of life and careful weeding out of others, the result of which was a uniform and eminently positive image.”⁴⁷

⁴³ Sacvan Bercovitch, *The American Jeremiad* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1978).

⁴⁴ Elliott 1993, 25.

⁴⁵ Stephen Fender, “Constitutional discourse. A commentary,” in Vivien Hart and Shannon C. Stimson eds., *Writing a National Identity. Political, Economic, and Cultural Perspectives on the Written Constitution* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), 33–38.

⁴⁶ Christopher McCrudden, “Written constitutions and negative rights. Some comments on Professor Currie,” in Vivien Hart and Shannon C. Stimson eds., *Writing a National Identity. Political, Economic, and Cultural Perspectives on the Written Constitution* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), 39–64, 63.

⁴⁷ 1992, 406.

3. Religion at Play: A Nation with a Soul

Religion has played a prominent role in US history since the arrival of the early colonists, thus is a significant factor to consider within the American mindset. The North American continent has offered refuge to followers of numerous other faiths beyond the Puritans who feared for their lives because of their beliefs. A series of awakenings signaled renewed interest among the Americans in the issues of the spiritual, laying the groundwork for a number of new religions to develop within the borders of the US. The fact that the first Amendment to the *Constitution* separated state and church and legalized the freedom of belief and speech, transformed the US to a state in which the freedom of conscience and faith is guaranteed to the citizens. The very fact that an amendment was needed to establish this, however, also indicates that religion represented a considerable force towards the end of the eighteenth century and it has remained the case since then. Religion provides people with a set of beliefs and a world view which impacts their lives at the core, leaving no areas of life untouched: faith may impact political behavior,¹ economic conduct,² social life,³ education,⁴ the arts,⁵ family life,⁶ etc. A country where over 90% of the people claim to be religious and to believe in the existence of God, is indeed a “nation with the soul of a church,”⁷ as Chesterton put it—therefore, aspects of the faith cannot be disregarded in a discussion of identity.

The wealth of literature regarding the religious impulse in the US forces one to be highly selective when determining which areas and works to touch upon when discussing American identity. This section focuses on two phenomena, both regarded prominent from the point of view of American identification: (1) religious awakenings in the US which, rooted in revivalism and the need to revitalize faith and fill it with renewed intellectual and emotional zeal, also marked major phases in the development of American society and identity, according to William Mc-

¹ For example, influencing voters' behavior by placing certain issues on the campaign agenda, such as abortion.

² The first classical piece regarding this is from 1904, Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York: Scribner, 1958).

³ Examples include the attitude towards alcoholic beverages which resulted in the temperance movement in the nineteenth century, or the issues of homosexuality or gender roles.

⁴ For example, the introduction of Darwinian evolutionary theory or Creation Science in school curricula.

⁵ Decisions regarding the exhibition of certain pieces of art based on their religious overtones and iconography or the lack thereof.

⁶ Interfaith marriages or the conduct of daily family events, among others.

⁷ Quoted in Marsden 1990, 237.

Loughlin;⁸ and (2) civil religion, a term which was introduced by Robert Bellah⁹ in the late 1960s to describe a phenomenon which has been part of the American scene from the very outset.

3.1 Awakenings

Basing his investigation on Tillich's proposition that religion is the soul of culture, McLoughlin ventured forth in his influential essay to analyze how religion can be mapped as the soul of American culture and in what way awakenings, these special moments in religious history, can be interpreted in relation to this presumption. He understood awakenings as long-term cultural revitalizations, originating in general cultural crisis and confusion, leading up to their resolution and the restoration of culture with a new world view. McLoughlin proposed that American history has been marked by five awakenings, namely: "the Puritan Awakening, 1610–40; the First Great Awakening, 1730–60; The Second Great Awakening, 1800–1830; the Third Great Awakening, 1890–1920; and the Fourth Great Awakening, 1960–90(?)." ¹⁰

He related the Puritan Awakening to the Puritan heritage of the American nation. Understanding Puritanism not simply as a form of theology but also as a social and economic theory enabled McLoughlin to present Puritanism in England as a form of challenge to the prevailing English world view which was primarily framed by Anglicanism. This challenge, however, was not well received; as a result, many Puritans felt threatened. The extremist wing left England, ultimately reaching the Colonies, where their tenets enabled them to transform "from rebels to founders," as McLoughlin put it, with a dynamism which would contribute to the emergence of a new culture, a civilized place, becoming the cradle for a new nation, different from England in a number of ways.

However, he argued, by the 1660s the religious fervor started to fade away in the Puritan communities, and by the early 1700s the voluntary covenant structure in them had also broken down. He located the main causes in the general cultural distress as well as in significant social and economic changes, the spread of Enlightenment ideas which challenged some of the tenets of Calvinism, as well as the changes in the relationship within the Colonies and between them and the mother country. Change was felt in all areas of life, and a new frame of mind had to come about to adjust to the new realities. These, of course, also prepared spiritually and

⁸ William G. McLoughlin, *Revivals, Awakenings, and Reform. An Essay on Religion and Social Change in America, 1607–1977* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978).

⁹ Robert N. Bellah, "Civil Religion in America," in *Daedalus* 96 (1967): 1–21.

¹⁰ 1978, 10–11.

intellectually the way for the War of Independence, establishing the common desire and spiritual strength to follow through with complete separation.

The pietistic group, as McLoughlin identified the energizing power behind the First Great Awakening, was represented by the influential British Calvinist George Whitefield and the leading American preacher Jonathan Edwards. Edwards maintained an evangelical Calvinistic theology but offered a world view which had shaken congregational life, injecting renewed zeal and belief into the faith and its followers. Besides spiritual regeneration, the people experiencing the awakening received a more optimistic, progressive, individualistic, and democratic world view, which combined sacred and secular life and placed them on more of an equal basis. In the course of the Awakening, essentially theocratic local societies had been transformed into communities where the need for the separation of state and church was understood if not desired. This revitalization was also powerful among the poor and the disenfranchised, including women and Blacks as well as Native Americans. As a result, in the course of this awakening, "God was democratized,"¹¹ preparing the Colonies to be democratized also.

This awakening had an especially significant social impact in the Middle colonies: it assisted acculturation in that region, where the inhabitants represented a variety of ethnicities and religions. The awakening gave the opportunity to these Dutch, Scandinavian, and German immigrants living in poverty to rid themselves of their earlier ties and to re-direct their attention to their present state, life and environment. This way, the awakening gave primarily "self-confidence and American identity to the recent immigrants."¹²

In the Southern colonies, however, revivalism went beyond providing a platform for renewed religious zeal; it contributed to a form of "social revolt," which aimed at replacing the relatively weak Anglican Church and its highly educated and well-to-do representatives with preachers who were of the people, the poor, the everyman. The success of Methodist and Baptist ideas and their rapid spread in this region by the end of the eighteenth century bear witness to this. Overall, argued McLoughlin, the First Great Awakening functioned as a force of intellectual and religious standardization and was the first current to impact people in all of the colonies, thus making the first step towards some type of unification and understanding which could serve as the platform for the upcoming fight for independence.

However, it was the Second Great Awakening which specifically expressed the new nation's search for national unity and identification. McLoughlin argued that through the War of Independence, Americans achieved independence and ceased to remain colonies and that through the founding documents they determined the modes of operation of this new state and the values to be maintained, but that they

¹¹ McLoughlin 1978, 75, after Alan Heimert.

¹² McLoughlin 1978, 88.

could not capture what it meant to be an American in common terms and, thus, how the new nation should proceed in meeting its full potential. Political debates and compromises, controversies between the Jeffersonian program envisioning a primarily agricultural country of independent farmers and the plan presented by Hamilton defining the future US as primarily a manufacturing and mercantile state, also added to a general sense of political uncertainty. Territorial expansion, increasing sectionalism, and the debate between believers of Calvinism and the rationalists of the Enlightenment contributed further to the general feeling of confusion.

In this milieu, McLoughlin claimed, the Second Great Awakening helped to define what being an American meant and what the future may hold for the nation. Timothy Dwight, clergyman and President of Yale, along with his best students, Lyman Beecher and Nathaniel Taylor, represented the beginning of this awakening in New England, hoping to give new life and meaning to faith from within. Their new-light theory later became known as the New School, which claimed the “consciousness of freedom within the self, plus the doctrine of self-love enlightened through the sensibilities under divine influence.”¹³

The Midwestern phase headed by Charles Finney focused on perfectionism. His work turned Western New York State into a “burnt-over district” where preachers from a variety of faiths spread the Gospel. Finney’s “professional mass evangelism,” as McLoughlin defined it, offered a method which made mass revivalist meetings and major public preaching possible. He embraced the revival techniques used on the frontier, and made them applicable in the urban environment. The Southwestern camp meetings were the largest forum for revivalism, where crowds gathered, usually quarterly, for a long meeting, which often lasted for a week. Methodist and Baptist preachers were in the lead in these, turning their religious group into the single largest US denominations by the end of the period.

In addition to the spread of older Protestant faiths, this awakening also gave the impetus for the first American faiths¹⁴ to be born and develop. This awakening represented the stage at which the American nation had to come of age as an independent nation, fulfilling its potential to the utmost and outlining the best possible future for the country. This included the recognition of the need for a change in the treatment of previously disenfranchised groups, such as Blacks or women. Although the US was still dominated by a white Protestant male majority, the increasing public appearance of women¹⁵ as religious or moral leaders marked the beginning of a new era for them as well.

¹³ McLoughlin 1978, 119.

¹⁴ These included Mormons, Adventists, and Jehovah’s Witnesses.

¹⁵ Women played significant roles as the leaders and major supporters of the temperance movement and of the overseas missionary activities among the highly evangelical Protestant denominations as well as being among the founders of certain religious organizations, such as Christian Science founded by Mary Baker Eddy or later the Theosophical Society headed by Helena Blavatsky.

It is this spirit of providing a platform for the previously marginalized population to become religious leaders and public figures, no longer reserving these roles for the privileged well-to-do or highly educated that captured Nathan Hatch's attention. He proposed¹⁶ that the most important feature of the Awakening was that it had democratized Christianity in the US. He understood this awakening as part of a general struggle to establish real equality and to become free of the binding influences of the past. As a result, low churches, such as the Methodist and Baptist Churches, managed to achieve major popularity, and poor, not highly educated people, such as Joseph Smith¹⁷ and William Miller,¹⁸ were able to appear in public as prophets and establish denominations—still thriving and with us even today. Thus, this awakening in Hatch's interpretation was also a social movement fighting to put the grand American values into practice and to seize the opportunities defined in political terms in the Constitution in actual reality.

McLoughlin claimed that the Third Great Awakening was related to the Civil War and its aftermath. The War confirmed the unification of the US, and the need for this unity to be expressed in terms of cultural and identificational unity became apparent. Regional differences marking culture, economy, and political thinking had to be harmonized in order for the country to be able to operate without disruption. However, the economic boom and industrial development which followed the Civil War not only added to the already existing regional differences but also amplified them and introduced other ones. In the North, the gap between the poorest and the richest had grown immensely, as industrialization called for unskilled labor which was provided by the greatest wave of immigrants to the continent at the turn of the century. Urbanization, the rapid development of science, progressive ideas and individualism, evolutionary theories and the spread of Freudian psychoanalysis as well as increasing social illnesses resulted in cultural confusion as well, generally undermining previously held Christian beliefs.

In this environment, the "old perfectionism and free will of Romantic Evangelism [which] portrayed man as unconditioned by nature, unbound by contingencies of heredity and environment, and capable of miraculous power over all obstacles in personal or social reformation"¹⁹ could not be maintained. McLoughlin proposed that the Third Awakening was a revival which aimed at purifying this belief of its miraculous nature and at pointing out man's limitations in trying to overcome some of these. It was a message primarily delivered to city dwellers, under

¹⁶ Nathan O. Hatch, *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989).

¹⁷ Founder of the Mormon Church and faith.

¹⁸ Originally a Baptist lay preacher, whose teachings resulted in the emergence of the Adventist denominations.

¹⁹ McLoughlin 1978, 156.

the leadership of preachers such as Billy Sunday,²⁰ Richard Ely,²¹ Washington Gladden, and Walter Raushenbusch.²²

The last of the awakenings is tied to the social and political unrest which started in the 1960s. The series of problems bound to the failure of liberalism indicated that there is yet another crisis under way. The old optimism and faith in America's mission and success were called into question by those opposed to the Vietnam War, and commitment to the old values was challenged by various minority groups, such as those of Blacks or women, or by the youth. Harold Bloom wrote²³ that Woodstock reminded him of a revivalist camp meeting where participants were spiritually revitalized. But Woodstock also meant drugs and violence, other symptoms of the 1960s.

The reaction to this loss of faith was twofold: conservative if not fundamentalist reaffirmation of the old order and belief, represented by preachers Norman Peale, Fulton Sheen, and Billy Graham, on the one hand, and the appearance of new alternatives, including oriental faiths, occultism, and other, semi-religious ideologies, such as Scientology or New Age. This awakening was to reshape America's spirit, to overcome various social, economic, and generational gaps, and to re-establish the belief in a common destiny and value system which had been challenged in the preceding decades. The original innocence and optimism were replaced by "premillennial pessimism among major segments of the population."²⁴ However, an overall survey conducted in the second part of the 1960s showed that "modernized, liberal theology" was gaining acceptance fast, along with orthodoxies in the Christian faiths.²⁵

The questions of whether the US is a Christian nation or not and how significant the role faith plays has often been debated. Some 50 years ago, Will Herberg proposed²⁶ that the US had been shaped not only by Christianity but also by Judaism. He argued that the immigrants, in order to be accepted in their new homeland, were expected to change their language, culture, and nationality—but not faith, which, thus, remained "the differentiating element and the context of self-identification and

²⁰ He is also often referred to as the national prophet, due to his wide influence and efforts to deplore new naturalism and to save Christian teachings against Darwinism.

²¹ He was a Reform Darwinist who tried to overcome the discrepancy between Darwinism and the Christian teachings on creation.

²² Both were leading figures of the social gospel movement which focused on social responsibility and called for cooperation and a sense of brotherhood.

²³ Harold Bloom, *The American Religion. The Emergence of the Post-Christian Nation* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992).

²⁴ McLoughlin 1978, 212.

²⁵ Rodney Stark and Charles Y. Glock, *American Piety. The Nature of Religious Commitment* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), 213.

²⁶ Will Herberg, *Protestant-Catholic-Jew. An Essay in American Religious Sociology* (New York: Doubleday, 1955).

social location.”²⁷ These differing faiths, however, also comprised a unity: he claimed that the Judeo-Christian tradition framed the “American Way of Life [which] is, at the bottom, a spiritual structure, a structure of ideas and ideals, of aspirations and values, of beliefs and standards.”²⁸ Moreover, he continued, the “very expression ‘way of life’ points to its religious essence, for one’s ultimate, over-all way of life is one’s religion.”²⁹

The search for the American religion as such was continued by Bloom who, unlike Herberg, claimed that American religion is neither Christian—which is about believing—nor Judaic—which is about trusting—but is expressed by a set of beliefs which captures Americans at their core: their focus on knowing, on individualism—which often leads to loneliness—and on freedom—frequently resulting in solitude. In this sense, he conceptualized the American religion as the “religion of the self” which is not “a religion of peace, since the American self tends to define itself through its war against otherness.”³⁰ Protestant Christianity is a “mask,” and the various Christian symbols are either not used at all, or if used, the understanding of their meaning has shifted significantly from the original Christian meaning.³¹ Robert Wuthnow’s proposition that “God is relevant to contemporary Americans mainly because the sense of God’s presence is subjectively comforting”³² signals one possible interpretation of the individualized, lonely religious experience Bloom was also describing.

However, neither Wuthnow nor other major scholars tend to challenge the belief that religion maintains a significant role in the life of most Americans. Wuthnow, unlike Bloom, did not argue for the loss of true religion and belief, but proposed that the American religion had undergone a major restructuring after World War II. Some of the phenomena he observed are identical with the ones described by McLoughlin as features of the Fourth Great Awakening. Wuthnow captured the more significant changes in this restructuring period as follows: “High rates of denominational switching and interdenominational marriage, reduced levels of denominational identity and cross-denominational tensions, as well as a pervasive amount of contact across denominational lines all point toward a declining monopoly of specific religious traditions over the enactment of religious convictions.”³³

²⁷ Herberg 1955, 23.

²⁸ 1955, 75.

²⁹ 1955, 75.

³⁰ 1992, 265.

³¹ The cross, for example, is typically not used by the Latter-day Saints; but when it is, it is understood to signify the resurrection with its powerful and optimistic overtones rather than the crucifixion and suffering.

³² Robert Wuthnow, *The Restructuring of American Religion* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 300.

³³ Wuthnow 1988, 301.

Renewal and decreasing influence of the mainline churches, a variety of religious groups, spiritual innovation, responses to the challenges of the period, including responses to AIDS, homosexuality and changing gender roles are the major features of the religious pluralism at the end of the 20th century, according to Thomas Robbins and Dick Anthony. In an excellent collection of essays,³⁴ they argue for religion still being a central aspect of American existence and identity, but with increasing tolerance and pluralism, on the one hand, and strong fundamentalism, on the other.

3.2 Civil Religion

The “essentially irrelevant role of religion in the very secular society that is America”³⁵ was pursued by Bellah who examined it through the analysis of political rhetoric in the US, focusing on various inauguration addresses. He proposed that the majority of Americans share in having a religious orientation which provides a significant dimension not only in the religious but also in the secular life. Bellah called this shared religiosity civil religion which, in Rousseau’s definition, is characterized by belief in “the existence of God, the life to come, the reward of virtue and punishment of vice, and the exclusion of religious intolerance.”³⁶ Civil religion unites Americans in the public secular realm, legitimates their actions and those of their leaders, and provides a moral frame of reference which never ceases to exist. It could only be achieved in a multi-religious country only if the terms and notions applied are non-specific. Civil religion is not bound to any particular religion: it lacks specific references to Jesus, Moses or any other figure or faith, talks about religion and God in general terms, in relation to the role and future of the US. Civil religion is indeed works with such vague concepts that it makes it possible for believers from various faiths to read their gods and beliefs into the texts, thus identify through it with the American nation and the goals it has set forth to pursue.

Marsden interpreted civil religion as “a sort of deification of the national enterprise, ... the attributing of a sacred character to the nation itself.”³⁷ He located the origin of civil religion to the end of the eighteenth century, where the three major aspects of civil religion in his understanding of the term appeared. These were also means through which the Puritan heritage could be harmonized with the secular principles upon which the founding documents of the US were based. Marsden listed them as (1) “the natural laws on which American rights were founded de-

³⁴ Thomas Robbins and Dick Anthony eds., *In Gods We Trust. New Patterns of Religious Pluralism in America* (New Brunswick: Transaction, 1993).

³⁵ Bellah 1967, 2.

³⁶ 1967, 5.

³⁷ 1990, 42.

monstrably originated with the Creator”;³⁸ (2) both civil and political leaders carried on speaking about the nation as if it were a biblical or Christian nation; and (3) the public veneration of the nation and its principles appeared through the institutionalization of a set of rituals and symbols, holidays and heroes, along with national shrines which bore a resemblance to Christian rituals and symbolism, holy days and saints as well as places of pilgrimage and worship. These were features believers from almost all religions could consider as being consistent with their specific faith—except for a handful of religions, such as ones confessing pacifism.

The phenomenon of civil religion has also been identified by a number of other terms, including public religion, the American religion, common religion, operative religion, political religion, or the religion of the republic. These terms may imply a slight difference in meaning, such as Herberg’s understanding, according to which civil religion is “an organic structure of ideas, values, and beliefs that constitutes a faith common to Americans as Americans, and is genuinely operative in their lives.”³⁹ It includes belief in a supreme being, “idealism and moralism,” liturgy and so on. Anthony and Robbins pointed out that “civil religion...imparts a religious dimension to the whole fabric of American life especially to the political realm.”⁴⁰ Marty proposed that civil religion may be highly individualized, that is, every citizen may have his/her own civil religion, thus calling attention to its episodic nature and questioning its real unifying functions in society.⁴¹

An overarching typology of the various meanings of the American civil religion was offered by Donald Jones and Russell Richey who proposed the following meanings: (1) civil religion as a folk religion which emerged out of the “actual life, ideas, values, ceremonies, and loyalties of the people.”⁴² Herberg’s proposition of viewing civil religion as “The American Way of Life” reflects this manner of thinking. (2) Civil religion as “the transcendent universal religion of the nation,” as expressed by Mead who viewed it as “the religion of the Republic” along with Bellah, both of them understanding it to be a prophetic, universal and thus formative, transcendent religious form. This understanding contributes to the interpretation of the American experience in the context of a universal reality. (3) This meaning is signified by the phrase ‘religious nationalism’. It views the nation as “the object of adoration and glorification...[with] a sovereign and self-transcendent charac-

³⁸ 1990, 43.

³⁹ Will Herberg, “America’s Civil Religion. What It Is and Whence It Comes,” in Russell E. Richey and Donald G. Jones eds., *American Civil Religion* (New York: Harper and Row, 1974), 76–88, 77.

⁴⁰ Dick Anthony and Thomas Robbins, “Civil Religion and Recent American Religious Ferment,” in Thomas Robbins and Dick Anthony eds., *In Gods We Trust. New Patterns of Religious Pluralism in America* (New Brunswick: Transaction, 1993), 475–500, 476.

⁴¹ Martin E. Marty, “Two Kinds of Two Kinds of Civil Religion,” in Russell E. Richey and Donald G. Jones eds., *American Civil Religion* (New York: Harper and Row, 1974), 139–160.

⁴² Donald G. Jones and Russell E. Richey, “The Civil Religion Debate,” in Russell E. Richey and Donald G. Jones eds., *American Civil Religion* (New York: Harper and Row, 1974), 3–20, 15.

ter.”⁴³ In this sense civil religion is like the religion of patriotism as understood by Marty. (4) Civil religion as democratic faith, a collection of enlightened human values and ideals Americans are able to identify with. (5) The last aspect is defined as Protestant, civic piety or Protestant nationalism, expressing the fusion of Protestant roots and American nationalism.

Whichever meaning is considered, conceptualizations of the relationship between state and religion, on the one hand, and citizen and believer, on the other, also remain another central issue. The First Amendment granted the legal separation of church and state, but a number of cases indicate that these two realms have not been successfully separated in all walks of life.⁴⁴ On the individual level, the question that arises regards the relationship between one’s role as a citizen and as a believer, that is, how an individual can differentiate between its disposition defined by the sacred and that related to its secular position, two roles which may be in contradiction at times.

John Coleman⁴⁵ proposed that the reason for a possible lack of harmony between these two roles is that Christianity has not presented one with a proper theology of citizenship. He contended that religion provides people with guidelines with regard to their behavior in most domains of the secular, such as in the family, at work, or in business, but not as citizens. Harvey Cox argued that the reason behind this discrepancy is that “the concept ‘citizen’ is itself an ideological construct.”⁴⁶ The two forces that shaped the relationship between the religious and the secular public domains were the separation of the two in the public sphere after the birth of nation-states, in the Protestant world primarily in the form of “various constitutional arrangements.”⁴⁷ The second reason, according to Cox, lies in the definition of the public realm: it was defined as a free, independent realm, established for “rational politics and social emancipation.”⁴⁸ This was an ideological construct, claimed Cox, as it was established by the victorious bourgeoisie in order to cement their own exclusive leadership without any challenges from the religious establishment who had shared in power previously. Originally, the public realm was designed to be free of value commitment and religious argumentation; therefore, bourgeois ideology could become the single vehicle dominating public debate and, therefore, could successfully secure bourgeois position and power.

⁴³ Jones and Richey 1974, 16.

⁴⁴ For example, prayers at school or having in Congress or army chaplains.

⁴⁵ John Coleman, “The American Civil Religion Debate. A Source for Theory Construction,” in *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 20(1981):51–63.

⁴⁶ Harvey Cox, “Citizens and Believers. Always Strangers?” in Thomas Robbins and Dick Anthony eds., *In Gods We Trust. New Patterns of Religious Pluralism in America* (New Brunswick: Transaction, 1993), 449–461, 451.

⁴⁷ Cox 1993, 453.

⁴⁸ Cox 1993, 453.

However, Cox also pointed out that the two realms cannot be fully separated as the same individuals act both as citizens and as believers and, as politics is a type of action guided not only by logic and interest but also morality and ethics, religion is likely to inform the believer's decision in the areas of the latter two when acting as a citizen. Cox understood civil religion to have developed in order to overcome the discrepancy between these two realms, but it has just caused further problems, as it is "neither completely civil nor completely religious. At points it contradicts the symbolic universe of those in religious communities and...it evokes images and values with which most secular participants in the civil community understandably feel uncomfortable."⁴⁹

At the same time, as of the 1980s, two obstacles to the possible development of an adequate theology of citizenship started to crumble in the US: (1) as a result of an "emerging international community," the exclusive borderlines for citizen action, that is, the organizational power of nation-states, have been brought into question; and (2) the leading figures of religious life have been invited to political events in the spirit of pluralism to express their views, thus helping shape political decisions, finding their way back to the public sphere and, through morality, to politics. Thus, in Cox's proposition, the dysfunctioning of civil religion may eventually disappear and a proper theology of citizenship develop, re-establishing the classical and "more wholesome idea of citizenship in the *civitas*," thus doing away with "the more modern bourgeois idea of the citizen."⁵⁰

The crisis of civil religion was first indicated by Bellah himself⁵¹ who saw contemporary spiritual turmoil as a response to the "empty" civil religion, an attempt to introduce "new American myths." In a discussion of the literature regarding the erosion of civil religion in the US after Bellah's critical piece, Robbins and Anthony, through a systematic analysis of the various new movements and faiths, concluded that "the present climate of moral ambiguity and the consequent polarization of monistic and dualistic world views are related to the erosion of a dominant American political-moral ideology or civil religion that we call implicit legitimation."⁵² This "erosion" is the result of the fact that the key elements of civil religion had been challenged in the post-World War II era by (1) a rejection of the *laissez-faire* economy as a result of increased state regulation; (2) a general feeling of the loss of personal autonomy in a highly bureaucratic society; (3) "moral pluralism and hedonism"; and (4) challenges to America's leading position after Vietnam, Watergate, and US-Soviet *détente*. They saw a polarization in the moral attitudes, New

⁴⁹ Cox 1993, 454.

⁵⁰ Cox 1993, 452.

⁵¹ Robert Bellah, *The Broken Covenant* (New York: Seabury, 1975).

⁵² 1993, 196-97.

Age occultism being at one end of the spectrum and “revitalized conservative Christianity” at the other.⁵³

In the last ten years, Christian fundamentalism has gained a stronger public voice than New Age movements; thus, the continuum seems to be stretching between fundamentalist and moderate Christians who, although higher in number, are quieter in voice. The struggle between the two groups continues. After 9–11, a new consensus and unity seemed to have emerged, but it fell into pieces once the War on Terror started to take shape. However, regardless of whether the fundamentalists or moderate Christians will take the lead in the future, one thing remains certain: faith has been, still is, and will continue to be a key component of American identity, a force the significance of which may be argued but not disregarded. “For countless individuals and groups in late twentieth century America, their religion is of primary value by which they seek and sometimes find allegiances higher than simply the nation and meanings deeper than those defined by a cultural consensus.”⁵⁴

⁵³ 1993, 499.

⁵⁴ Marsden 1990, 278.

4. One out of Many: Creating a Nation

The War of Independence offered the possibility for the American people to establish their own country, the basic structure of which was determined in the *Articles of Confederation*, soon replaced by the *Constitution*. However, by the end of the eighteenth century the political elite of the US had split into two over dominant issues concerning the future of the new country. One significant difference between the leading figures of the two forces, Alexander Hamilton of the Federalist Party and Thomas Jefferson of the Republicans, regarded the nature of society. Jefferson favored a democratic agrarian society based on the free individual farmer, while Hamilton envisioned a diversified industrial society, with strong trading and manufacturing. This disagreement foreshadowed not only a series of problems for the nineteenth century, but also the first two models which proposed to capture the nature of the emerging American nation and locate its place of birth.

One of these models was presented in the most elaborate way by Turner in his frontier hypothesis. According to this hypothesis, a new and unique American nation was on the rise on the American frontier, shaped by the native land and nature as well as the frontier experience. The other model which is known as the melting pot theory claimed that the new nation was to be born in the industrial urban setting: this superior nation was to emerge out of the immigrants representing many ethnicities. Both of these theories share in their proposition of conceptualizing the emergence of one American nation unified by descent, shaped by no single European nation or immigrant group. Both theories viewed the emerging community as a superior nation which is more noble, able, and virtuous than any of the ones in the Old World. The differences between the two theories regard the place and mechanisms through which this new nation develops, which may be explained by the differences in the time and the socio-economic context out of which they emerged.

4.1 The Frontier Hypothesis

This hypothesis claimed that the distinct American nation was to be born on the frontier, on the rural land, far from the civilized coastal towns. The theory was named after Frederick Turner's influential essay "The Significance of the Frontier

in American History”¹ written in 1893. Turner was the first historian to capture the importance of the frontier, the West, and the land, but not the first author to write about it. One famous piece had been written by J. Hector Crèvecoeur, who, although often classified as a melting pot theorist,² is more a representative of the frontier hypothesis.

Crèvecoeur’s work³ was published in 1782 and was among the first attempts to describe the nature of American people and society as something distinct and unique. He himself a Frenchman who did farming in the Colonies between 1769 and 1776, published his personal experiences in the form of a series of letters, a format which allowed him to use a personal voice and validated the experience he had put into words. It is in this volume, in Letter 3, that he posed his famous question: “What, then, is the American, this new man?” He proposed that the new man is someone who became regenerated in his humanity as a result of his life on the frontier. The new American is someone who had nothing and, thus, was nobody in his former home in Europe, but became a citizen in America, a full man again, whose efforts and work were rewarded. This new American is neither European nor of European descent, as he has a “strange mix of blood” resulting from intermarriages between the immigrants of various European descent. “Here individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men, whose labors and posterity will one day cause great changes in the world.”⁴ The American transplantation, thus, also gave an inherent greatness to the new American, who acts on new principles of democracy, obeys new laws and government, and embraces new ideas and opinions.

Crèvecoeur stated that the East is dominated by the English, but the rest of the land is the meeting place of “the poor of Europe,” where farmers, faced with the same circumstances and hardships, driven by the same desires, forget about their past, leave behind their manners and prejudices, and melt into one new, noble nation. The place where this new man and nation is born is the frontier, the farmland, where breaking the soil and cultivating their own land gave the people independence, dignity, satisfaction, and enormous happiness. And, as they work for themselves, they are very industrious and devoted, innovative and peaceful.

Crèvecoeur’s interpretation is highly optimistic and idealistic. He captured the essence of the American nation in an idealized and uniform description of immigrants who, as yeomen, lived in a democratic political structure in accordance with values, manners, and habits which were shaped by their daily lives and experi-

¹ In C.K. McFarland, *Readings in Intellectual History. The American Tradition* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970), 246–64.

² For example, in William Fischer et al., *Identity, Community, and Pluralism in American Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 12.

³ J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer and Sketches of Eighteenth-Century America* (New York: Penguin, 1987).

⁴ Crèvecoeur 1987, 70.

ences—and not forced on them by the Anglo-American elite. This milieu, however, was not representative of town life, the life of the manufacturers and traders, nor plantation owners and their slaves. The world Crèvecoeur described was characteristic of one segment of society and thus cannot be accepted as the standard norm at face value. However, Crèvecoeur was not the only author who assigned primacy to the impact of the frontier in the shaping of the American nation or evaluated change in an evolutionist manner. The most influential essay propagating this notion was presented over a century after Crèvecoeur, by Turner, at a conference for American historians.

Turner, a historian himself, was born and raised in the West, which had a lasting impact on him and his thought. His paper on the significance of the frontier proposed that the colonization of the American continent ran in tandem with social evolution and transformation among the colonizers. Through capturing the land, the immigrants were forced to return to primitive conditions and advance from there anew. This was a kind of rebirth which offered them new opportunities, including that of creating a new country and nation. He proposed that the very first frontier, which was on the Atlantic Coast, remained under European influence, but the further West the frontier line moved from the coast, the less English and European and, thus, more independent and American it had become. The frontier presented the newcomers with the challenges of nature and wild life, transforming their former manners of dressing, modes of traveling, housing, ways of living and thinking. Frontier life “promoted the formation of a composite nationality for the American people. ...In the crucible of the frontier the immigrants were Americanized, liberated and fused into a mixed race, English in neither nationality nor characteristics.”⁵ In parallel, dependence on England had also decreased, allowing for “the growth of nationalism and the evolution of American political institutions.”⁶ The frontier line in the middle region represented the most homogeneous society, where the people were tolerant, content, and easy-going, democratic in their thinking and appreciative of financial well-being. They represented mobility, optimism, an inventive spirit, and faith in themselves. All of these were features which frontiersmen shared and which had become characteristics of the American nation as well. The concept of free land had also become associated with opportunity and individualism along with hard work, all associated with the American people.

Although his hypothesis has remained key to students of American culture and the image of the frontier a driving force in history, this theory has its own shortcomings, as it has been pointed out a number of times. Ray Billington⁷ offered a

⁵ Turner 1970, 257.

⁶ Turner 1970, 258.

⁷ Ray A. Billington, “How the Frontier Shaped the American Character,” in C.K. McFarland, *Readings in Intellectual History. The American Tradition* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970), 272–281.

summary of the various points of criticism, which most often indicate the oversimplified nature of Turner's argumentation and hypothesis. Billington illustrated how the Westward movement, life on the frontier, the variety of people present and the growth of institutions there were all parts of a much more complex process than Turner described in his essay. With regard to certain aspects and features of the emergence of the American nation on the frontier, Billington agreed with Turner's statements, although assigned less significance to them. However, Billington, unlike Turner, argued that "democratic theory and institutions were imported from England," but the "frontier environment tended to make them, in practice, even more democratic."⁸ In his understanding, besides contributing to the strengthening of democracy, the frontier also "accentuated the spirit of nationalism and individualism in the United States."⁹ He saw other traits of the nation, such as inventiveness, being less bound by place and tradition, anti-intellectualism and materialism, optimism and belief in progress, as also part of the frontier experience, but not features which were born and shaped solely along the frontier lines. The frontier, he claimed, should be viewed as an area which, with its potential and abundant resources "provided an unusual opportunity for the individual to better himself"¹⁰ but cannot alone account for the distinctive characteristics of the American nation and civilization.

The concept of the frontier, however, has remained a significant part of the American identity and imagination. It has ridden itself of the environmentalist theoretical background as well as the evolutionary nature and transformed into an idea which symbolizes the next challenge the US must overcome in physical terms. The last frontier now is space, which presents both an intellectual and technological challenge. But the concept of the frontier also captured the energy of the American nation, its strength, dynamism, and self-confidence, along with dreams and aspirations, all features which make them Americans. Therefore, the significance of the concept of the frontier and the values and features associated with it must be regarded as another prominent part of American identity today.

4.2 The Melting Pot Theory

By the time Turner presented his hypothesis, the American frontier had reached the Pacific Coast and had thus been closed. With the closing of the frontier, a significant phase of American history had also come to an end. That and the outcome of the Civil War marked the beginning of a new era, which was characterized by un-

⁸ 1970, 277.

⁹ Billington 1970, 277.

¹⁰ Billington 1970, 279.

precedented industrial development, social and economic restructuring, urbanization, and mass immigration. The War evoked hope for the end of sectionalism and for cultural and economic integration and unification of the various regions and their inhabitants. Moreover, the sheer number of immigrants and their background called for a vision and a policy which could assimilate them into mainstream American culture rapidly, with minimal effort. The vision was captured by the symbol of the melting pot, the policy by the notion of Americanization.

The image of the melting pot was introduced by Israel Zangwill in his drama *The Melting Pot*.¹¹ This play is about a Jewish immigrant, David Quixano, and his efforts to start anew in New York where he has immigrated after the slaughter of his family in Czarist Russia. His hope to be able to step beyond the images of his past haunting him is his faith in America and the potential of a new nation which he imagines is then in the making. He states that "America is God's Crucible, the Great Melting-Pot where all the races of Europe are melting and re-forming!"¹² He borrowed an industrial image in the period of the industrial boom to capture the dynamics through which the new nation was coming about. This new American "has not yet arrived. He is only in the Crucible, I tell you—he will be the fusion of all races, the coming superman."¹³ And later he continued: "East and West, and North and South, the palm and the pine, the pole and the equator, the crescent and cross—how the great Alchemist melts and fuses them with his purging flame! Here shall they all unite to build the Republic of Man and the Kingdom of God. ... what is the glory of Rome and Jerusalem where all nations and races come to worship and look back, compared to the glory of America, where all races and nations come to labor and look forward!"¹⁴

These frequently quoted sections express the meaning of the melting pot theory in its full form. Similarly to the frontier hypothesis, supporters of this theory firmly believed that a new, united nation was to emerge in the US, but they saw the urban environment, the city as the birthplace of the nation and not the rural areas or the frontier. This was a consequence of the fact that by the end of the nineteenth century, urbanization and industrialization were developing dynamically, and thus urban areas were the sites of unprecedented changes in the US, decoded as part of the national progress. The immigrants arriving in order to provide the labor force for this unique boom also concentrated in the big urban centers and thus the primary place for their assimilation had to be conceptualized as being there. Since a large number of the newcomers also worked in mining and heavy industry, an image borrowed from that environment seemed a fitting one to grasp the way the nation was to emerge.

¹¹ (New York: Macmillan, 1909).

¹² Zangwill 1909, 37.

¹³ Zangwill 1909, 37.

¹⁴ Zangwill 1909, 199.

Supporters of both theories also believed that the emergence of the new nation would be accompanied by a change in quality as well: the immigrants were to lose their previous manners, values, mindset, and lifestyle and melt, creating a new nation which was to be superior to any of the Old World nations. However, unlike the frontier hypothesis, where Turner focused on the revitalizing nature of the frontier where the new values and features were exclusively characteristic of the American nation, Zangwill conceptualized the new nation as specific to the American land and characterized by a composite of the best features of the various ethnic and racial groups—therefore, combining the impact of the environment with that of heritage. The melting pot theory also addressed the issue of race and envisioned an amalgamation of all races into a nobler one. Zangwill envisioned the complex process of amalgamation as a long one, primarily boosted by intermarriage between racial, ethnic, and religious groups—which also appeared as a subplot in the drama. The act of becoming a real American is also depicted as a process of purification, as expressed by the phrase “purging flame,” in which all the previously held prejudices and hatred disappear, all wounds become healed, and thus members of various ethnic communities can indeed come together in harmony to create a superior community.

The process described is highly idealistic and mechanical, uniformed and standardized. It is also, as Gleason pointed out, deterministic in that it defined with certainty the nature of the upcoming nation; optimistic in supposing that the immigrant-experience would strengthen one’s commitment to the new home; and minimalist in its expectations of the immigrants in the process, assuming that “the conditions of American life, particularly egalitarianism and the opportunity for material improvement, would automatically transform foreigners into Americans.”¹⁵ The melting pot theory was in essence an assimilationist theory, with the presumption that every newcomer desired to change and assimilate into American society in a uniform manner and would do so—and whether everyone actually wanted to was never asked.

The policy of Americanization was born out of the desire to hone the immigrants’ assimilation process and thus gained increased public support fast. With time, it had also become associated with strengthening nationalism and nativism, reaching its peak in the years during and right after World War I. Americanization was a phenomenon which first appeared in the nineteenth century, as a part of the antebellum nativist controversies, present in the public effort to deal with the increasing immigration of the first significant Catholic group from Europe, the Irish, on the East Coast and of the non-white Chinese who landed on the West Coast in high numbers.

However, the last two decades of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth witnessed the mass appearance of Eastern and Southern European

¹⁵ 1980, 38.

immigrants, primarily Catholic in faith, ethnically highly diversified, of peasant origin, uneducated, illiterate, and often in poor health, who had flooded the Eastern industrial areas. After the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, the primary labor force to enter the Pacific Coast was of Japanese descent, adding further to the Asian component of the local population. The appearance of these masses so different culturally, ethnically, and linguistically from the majority of the population in the US, who formed their own ethnic-based neighborhoods, religious, benefit, and cultural organizations, was experienced as a threat by many Americans and, therefore, became a powerful drive for many to call for their assimilation. Cosmopolitans and liberal-minded citizens saw the need to help the newcomers to integrate into the American society soon, bearing in mind the immigrants' interests and advancement, while loyalists and patriots sought for a program which would assimilate the immigrants as soon as possible for their own sake and interests.

As a result, Americanization programs were launched all over the US, primarily using public schools and adult education. Courses on the responsibilities of US citizens, the meaning of the American *Constitution*, hygiene, home economics, and the English language were widely taught in various states, complemented by evening classes for adults in English as a second language and American civics as of 1907. These programs were designed to enhance assimilation as well as to speed up the process itself. These were standardized programs, with no consideration for the immigrants' position, life, and struggles, nor the fact that many of them were actually sojourners who were planning to return to their home countries. These programs and the various groups and agencies in support of them were on the increase, becoming ever more powerful, reaching forceful assimilation by the mid-1910s.

Of all these agencies, the National Americanization Committee was in the lead, launching new courses and programs, connecting them to already existing welfare programs, insisting on tying certain jobs and positions—such as public school teaching—to citizenship. During World War I, the US also expected immigrants to confirm their loyalties, and either apply for citizenship or return to their homeland. The fear that immigrants may present a possible threat to American society did not abate after the war, but intensified in the course of the Red Scare: the fear of possible political unrest within the borders of the country as the result of the spread of communism, captured by the so-called domino doctrine. However, the tightening up of immigration policy as of 1921 and the Palmer Raids in 1920–21 helped to ease the situation, and by the mid-1920s, the major phase of Americanization was at an end.

Americanization, actually, was in a way contradictory to the melting pot theory, although it was presented as if it were supplementing it. The melting pot theory conceptualized mainline American culture not as already existing, but as something in the making. The notion of Americanization, however, drew on the assumption that there was already a completed process which brought about a distinct main-

stream American culture and nation, and the Americanization programs assisted the immigrants in melting or assimilating into it.

The next question to arise then, is, what this American culture and nation to be embraced was about and what it represented. Walter Foster claimed that national unity “sought expression in political-social ideology...[with] a hard core of permanent values primarily in political institutions.”¹⁶ These values, proposed Gleason, were framed by Anglo-Saxonism, praising pride in the English heritage and language, interwoven with Protestant religious overtones. This idea was modified by Novak¹⁷ who, although maintained that Anglo-Saxon domination was the norm, added that the American culture was a Nordic jungle, also impacted by the heritage of the earlier Germanic and Northern European immigrants.

The superiority of the Anglo and Nordic peoples and cultures was also supported by contemporary scientific theories. The most influential work was probably William Ripley’s *Races of Europe* published in 1899. His anthropological classification of the three groups of European nations, the Teutonic, the Alpine, and the Mediterranean gave supremacy to the first race, basing the determining racial factors in the environment and not heritage. Seventeen years later, another work by Madison Grant entitled *The Passing of the Great Race* was published, which continued the same tradition, declaring the Nordic race to be the master of all races. “He regarded as “pathetic and fatuous” the belief that such miserable human materials [as the new immigrants] could be transformed into acceptable citizens through the influence of American institutions and environment.”¹⁸

The melting pot theory was placed within a wider context in the works of Robert Park, founder of the Chicago School, the first American sociological school. This school became famous for establishing urban sociology as a separate field within sociology and for introducing the study of urban ecology. Park viewed the city as a community with a moral order as well as the site of modern features and changes in humanity—therefore, he contended that the study of the urban community and environment should be the primary task of sociology. He maintained that in the urban environment the traditional kinship relations were transformed and, as a result, so too were urban inhabitants. He proposed that the four characteristic features of this new type of social life were competition out of which conflict developed, followed by accommodation, which resulted in assimilation.¹⁹ In the US cities, he observed competition and conflict between ethnic groups—and not between classes,

¹⁶ Walter O. Foster, “The Immigrant and the American National Idea,” in Colin Greer ed., *Divided Society. The Ethnic Experience in America* (New York: Basic, 1974), 67–83, 68.

¹⁷ Michael Novak, *The Rise of the Unmeltable Ethnics* (New York: Macmillan, 1972).

¹⁸ Gleason 1980, 42.

¹⁹ Robert E. Park and Ernest W. Burgess, *Introduction to the Study of Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1921).

as Marxist theorists claimed—and, granted that his model holds true, ethnic conflict would be followed by the immigrants' accommodation and assimilation.

In a 1928 piece he outlined his ideas regarding migration and the new communities which were the outcome of these human movements.²⁰ He proposed that human character was not determined either by physical environment or climate, as Montesquieu envisioned, nor by biologically inherited, innate qualities, as seen by Gobineau, but by a series of conflicts and cooperation, as maintained by Hume and Teggart. Migration is one of these, resulting in new contacts and “fusion of native with alien peoples.”²¹ He conceptualized it as a process, in which first changes in culture, customs, and habits take place, followed by “changes in race...as a result of interbreeding, by corresponding modifications in temperament and physique.”²² The acculturation, assimilation, and amalgamation of the various peoples, however, may take different forms and proceed at different speeds, but the process eventually will take place, primarily as a result of intermarriage. Thus, Park outlined a general, highly deterministic model, in support of the melting pot theory, proposing that full assimilation will take place in the US, too, with time.

However, as early as the turn of the century, studies addressing certain flaws in contemporary Americanization and assimilationist tendencies pointed to certain shortcomings in the melting pot theory as well. One of the first ones expressing criticism was Charles W. Chesnutt. In his classic piece “The Future American”²³ published in 1900, he criticized the melting pot theory²⁴ on the basis of it being incomplete and oblivious to certain facts. He saw “the future American race—the future American ethnic type” to come about through the mingling of immigrants with various racial and ethnic backgrounds. In this, he evoked the image of the melting pot. However, he envisioned this as a long process, and although he contended that it had started already, he predicted that it would take a very long time to complete. He saw the Black population in the US as the main factor significantly impeding the process. “The Negro element remains, then, the only one which seems likely to present any difficulty of assimilation. The main obstacle that retards the absorption of the Negro into the general population is the apparently intense prejudice against color which prevails in the United States.”²⁵ Prejudice against Blacks, he claimed, was expressed all over the US, but it was especially noticeable in the Southern states where not only customs and public view, but legislation and laws also operated to

²⁰ Robert E. Park, “Human Migration and the Marginal Man,” in Werner Sollors ed., *Theories of Ethnicity. A Classical Reader* (London: Macmillan, 1996), 156–167.

²¹ Park 1996, 159.

²² Park 1996, 157.

²³ In Werner Sollors ed., *Theories of Ethnicity. A Classical Reader* (London: Macmillan, 1996), 17–33.

²⁴ Naturally, it was not called the melting pot theory at the time, but the process he describes is the same as that captured by the theory.

²⁵ Chesnutt 1996, 28.

the effect of trying to keep the Black race apart from other races. He noted that the only hope he could see for reversing this situation may come from the “moral sympathy and support” of the North. Chesnutt, in essence, did not deny the possibility of the amalgamation of various ethnicities into a united American nation and race, but expressed concern for its future in the light of contemporary socio-political realities, also highlighting sectional differences within the US regarding the treatment of Blacks.

The melting pot theory had remained part of the American imagination for most of the century. Time, however, offered a new perspective on the great immigration wave of the turn of the century. Studies with new claims and understandings appeared in the 1940s as part of an unprecedented scholarly interest in American history, and as part of that, immigration history. A whole school of historians, headed by Oscar Handlin, published their stories of the immigrants and the way they shaped the American culture and nation. Ray Billington’s *The Protestant Crusade*²⁶ focused on the story of Protestant immigrants and their role in the New World, especially in the antebellum period. Carl Wittke’s *We Who Built America*²⁷ was a saga of the mass immigration which resulted in populating the US and developing it into an economic power. In line with this, Marcus Lee Hansen’s *The Atlantic Migration 1607–1860. A History of the Continuing Settlement of the United States*²⁸ and Oscar Handlin’s *The Uprooted*²⁹ focused on the series of contributions of the peasant immigrant stock, carefully analyzing the composition of the immigrant waves, various push and pull factors at play, the immigrant experience in the US, and their ultimate success.

These studies all seemed to imply that the immigrants had found their way into society as well as contributed to the host culture and society. As Handlin concluded, “the adverse effects of immigration seem to have been slight, the gains for Americans and newcomers considerable.”³⁰ Handlin also maintained that “American practice has come to accept the premise that all men are created equal no matter what degrees of diversity divide them. In this sense, it may no longer be appropriate at all to refer to ‘minorities’.”³¹ That is, ethnic diversity—which, in his view, entails strictly cultural and not biological differences—prevailed, and the various ethnicities enjoyed equal status. With this, Handlin offered an understanding which reached beyond the melting pot theory and moved in the direction of another theory which celebrates cultural diversity within society.

²⁶ (Boston: Smith, 1938).

²⁷ (New York: Simon, 1939).

²⁸ (New York: Simon, 1941).

²⁹ (Boston: Little, Brown and Co, 1951).

³⁰ Oscar Handlin, *Race and Nationality in American Life* (New York: Doubleday, 1957), 158.

³¹ Handlin 1957, 159.

5. Many in One: The Pluralist Society

In parallel with the melting pot theory and Americanization programs, dissenting voices started to emerge, but gained real weight only in the post-World War II era. These voices described a pluralistic society where immigrants and their descendants from various racial and ethnic groups may coexist without any forceful attempts made to create a homogeneous American society. Of the two theories which captured this pluralism, cultural pluralism developed at an earlier stage, and structural pluralism became a truly dominant voice in the late 1950s and '60s.

5.1 Cultural Pluralism

The term cultural pluralism has been tied to Horace M. Kallen and his essay "Democracy versus the Melting-Pot: A Study of American Nationality" first published in 1915.¹ He proposed an anti-assimilationist theory, arguing for a "federation of nationalities" in the US, borrowing Isaac Berkson's term.² Basing his argumentation on the basic political principle in the US, democracy, along with the notion of natural rights as defined in the *Declaration of Independence*, he posited that the US had been unfaithful to these ideals. "To conserve the inalienable rights of the colonists of 1776, it was necessary to declare all men equal; to conserve the inalienable rights of their descendants in 1914, it becomes necessary to declare all men unequal."³ That is, he viewed contemporary ethnic policy and Americanization efforts as being in opposition to the basic spirit upon which the US was founded.

He argued that assimilationist efforts aimed at "the adaptation of English speech, of American clothes and manners, the American attitude in politics. ...[and fusing immigrants] into beings similar in background, tradition, outlook, and spirit to the descendants of the British colonists, the Anglo-Saxon stock."⁴ Thus, he identified the common American with Anglo-Saxon descent, and Americanization with the attempt to transform all people into the image of these. "English is to us what Latin was to the Roman provinces and to the middle ages—the language of the upper and dominant class, the vehicle and symbol of culture."⁵ In this context, Americanization was interpreted as a form of domestic subjugation and colonization, which is

¹ In Werner Sollors ed., *Theories of Ethnicity. A Classical Reader* (London: Macmillan, 1996), 67–92.

² Quoted in Gleason 1980, 43.

³ Kallen 1996, 68.

⁴ Kallen 1996, 72.

⁵ Kallen 1996, 81.

contrary to the notion of democracy. The acceptance of difference is an integral part of real democracy, he claimed, and thus immigrants so different in so many ways must be accepted as they are and for what they are. In this sense, as Gleason also noted, he conceptualized the US not as a “nation with its distinctive nationality but a political state within which dwelt a number of different nationalities.”⁶

His writing was a plea for a “truly democratic commonwealth” in a federal republic, in which all nationalities would enjoy the right to maintain their own traditions, ways, and cultures, in harmony with each other. He argued for the recognition of the advantages a heterogeneous American society may offer, a nation united by geography and political principles. His view of the various groups as cultural entities within the American society prompted him to name his theory cultural pluralism. However, his argumentation remained a theoretical exercise, as he never gave concrete recommendations with regard to the specifics of the implementation, organization, and maintenance of his vision in reality. He believed that things would eventually fall into place, which was highly idealistic of him, as was the presumption that his political idealism may have such a major persuasive power that it could transform the American people into a commonwealth of the nations, living in full respect and harmony.

Another classic piece to contribute to the popularization of cultural pluralism was Randolph Bourne’s “Trans-National America” published in 1916.⁷ He claimed that assimilation was not taking place because the various groups were powerful enough “to take a share in the direction of their own destiny” and not tailor their lives to those of the Americans in every possible way. He regarded it as part of a longer continuum, starting with the first Puritans who, he claimed, had not crossed the Atlantic Ocean to assimilate into an already existing culture and society, but insisted on living up to their dreams: to find freedom and peace in a society with their own institutions and organizations. Bourne argued that the new immigrants followed the same traditions: they came to the new world to fulfill their dreams under circumstances of their own choosing, including maintaining their culture and organizing ethnic-based groups, schools, churches, etc. He continued with the proposition that the American culture was dominated by the Anglo-Saxons not because of some innate supremacy but simply because they were the first immigrants there to establish a colony. In the light of this, Americanization, which is in essence “Anglo-Saxonizing,”⁸ was wrong and doomed to failure.

Bourne also called attention to the fact that immigration to the US was the result of a need for their labor. “Let the Anglo-Saxon ask himself where he would have

⁶ 1980, 43.

⁷ In Werner Sollors ed., *Theories of Ethnicity. A Classical Reader* (London: Macmillan, 1996), 93–108.

⁸ Bourne 1996, 97.

been if these races had not come?”⁹ The American economy needed the immigrants, that was why they were there. They had been exploited so that the dominant Anglo culture could become even more powerful and, therefore, consider itself even more superior to the immigrants and entitled to expect them to happily embrace the Anglo-American way of life, culture, and language as superior. The other well-placed point he made is his reference to the seeds of ethnic politics, a phenomenon widely researched only a number of decades later. “It is not the Bohemian who supports the Bohemian schools in Chicago whose influence is sinister, but the Bohemian who has made money and has got into ward politics.”¹⁰ Members of ethnic groups who had learned the power of money and politics were the ones who would have a real say, influence and power in the long run.

The fact that various ethnic and racial groups have existed in the US side by side, within their cultural milieu, indicates that the US had become the “intellectual battle ground of the nations.”¹¹ This means that the meaning of the American nation and culture would emerge out of this battle sometime in the future. He contended that members of the second generation will play a key role in this future, as they are American as much as ethnic, carrying in themselves a sense of cosmopolitanism. This, he argued, may contribute to a more cosmopolitan nature of the American people which may distinguish them from, or even elevate them above other nations. He understood this cosmopolitanism or transnationalism as a “new consciousness” which is optimistic, filled with idealism, focusing on the future and, thus, ridding itself of the romanticized past. It is this transnationalism which may unite the nation by bringing new dimensions and understandings among the people.

The difference between generations and their attitude towards ethnic heritage was addressed later by Marcus Hansen, whose principle, referred to as the Hansen Law, has become a classic notion in the sociological literature. Presenting his thesis in 1938,¹² he proposed that the third generation tends to be the most successful in terms of mobility, economic success, and social integration. However, it is also the third generation that feels no sense of belonging and thus, in terms of identity, starts to return to the ethnic roots of the ancestry. Hansen’s famous concluding remark goes: “what the son wishes to forget the grandson wishes to remember.”¹³ Through a series of examples he illustrated how generational differences do a great deal to prevent the emergence of a homogeneous American society and identity in the sense melting pot theorists had envisioned it. His argument, which was not void of political overtones at times, led to the conclusion that “the epic of migration” to the US

⁹ Bourne 1996, 97.

¹⁰ Bourne 1996, 99.

¹¹ Bourne 1996, 102.

¹² Marcus L. Hansen, “The Problem of the Third Generation Immigrant,” in Werner Sollors ed., *Theories of Ethnicity. A Classical Reader* (London: Macmillan, 1996), 202–215.

¹³ Hansen 1996, 206.

is “a simple story of how troubled men, by courage and action, overcame their difficulties, and how people of different tongues and varied culture have managed to live together in peace.”¹⁴ Thus, what he was really proposing is that the cultural pluralist model had been successfully realized in the US. Considering the era in which his study appeared, Hansen may actually have seen this to be the case, but not in absolute terms, only in comparison to other parts of the world.

The notion of cultural pluralism gained public recognition in the 1920s. This decade witnessed the introduction of a series of immigration restriction laws, based on national origin, which resulted in a relaxing of tensions and worries over assimilation and Americanization. World War I put a natural halt to mass immigration and encouraged the clarification of loyalties and attachments among the immigrants. Thus, the restriction laws were to maintain the status quo which had developed as a result by 1921, when the Palmer Raids were over and the first quota act was introduced. Conceptualizations of various ethnicities living in peace side by side, united by a common set of political and human values seemed to calm the worries voiced by the various parties involved. Those who still doubted the possibility of this coexistence organized themselves individually, without government support. The most powerful organization in the 1920s was probably the Ku Klux Klan which had expanded its scope and marked Catholics as well as Jews for attack.

Nevertheless, the population started to find ease and comfort in the ethnic and racial scene in the 1920s, which was also a significant period in the cultural and political movement of the Black population, which presented its incomparable talent during the Harlem Renaissance. Still, the era of Depression strengthened racist voices. World War II, however, revealed the need to improve interracial relations and the need for a common ground for understanding between the various groups in the US. During these years, “[C]ultural pluralism came into its own as a term designating both the actual existence of social diversity and the belief that such diversity was good, provided it was not accompanied by ethnocentrism, prejudice, and discrimination.”¹⁵ Cultural pluralism was understood as a guiding principle based on which national consensus may be achieved. The popularity of this term also encouraged various groups living in this supposedly pluralistic society to claim total equality. The Civil Rights Movement fought for the realization of the equality of races and ethnicities: for the political and legal framework based on which true equality may become a reality in every possible way. Headed by the Blacks, it became a movement which brought about advantages not only to other racial and ethnic groups, but also to women, gays and lesbians, and other disenfranchised minority groups.

¹⁴ Hansen 1996, 215.

¹⁵ Gleason 1980, 45.

5.2 Structural Pluralism

As of the 1950s, a new generation of social scientists also addressed the issue of inequality in American pluralism among the various racial and ethnic groups. They argued for the existence of pluralism, but also for the existence of a set of structural differences related to the socio-economic position of the ethnicities and their social standings, significantly structured and predetermined for decades. This line of thinking was in agreement with the claims put forth by the civil rights activists and leaders, who were fighting for true social, economic, and political equality in a society which had not yet achieved it. Political pluralism was to be handled by Joseph McCarthy, whose name marked a period of efforts toward political homogenization. American society was pluralistic, but this pluralism was not always allowed to express itself nor was it always supported with equal treatment.

The 1950s also marked a split between the old and the new generation of researchers writing about the American nation. As of the late 1930s, it was primarily historians who took it as their responsibility to research immigration history and its impact on the American society, in light of which they drew conclusions with regard to the nature of the American character and nation. They wrote sagas which praised the immigrants and their contribution to American culture. That is, these works implied the completion of a classical form of melting pot theory, a process in which each ethnic group contributed to the American culture in the course of which the immigrants themselves also become Americans. However, the purpose behind these sagas was not to argue for one theory or another but rather to give a historical and thus objective account of the facts and events.

Facts and events were equally significant to the new generation; however, they were sociologists who relied on findings of their own in contemporary society and not those of the distant past. Research focused on racial and ethnic differences, providing a new understanding of these terms, and the tension between ethnic and racial groups. This overall paradigm shift resulted in a wealth of literature discussing how ethnically and racially divided American society and culture was—and what this entailed. The groundbreaking efforts were initiated by Glazer, Moynihan, and Gordon. In 1960 and 1961, Glazer and Moynihan conducted extensive research on the cultural landscape of New York City. They found that “[E]thnicity and race dominated the city, more than ever seemed possible.”¹⁶ Their work mapped various aspects of the life of these groups, capturing the most characteristic features as well, including family structure, religion, housing, community life, education, political participation, economic status, and occupational structure. The authors concluded that the various racial and ethnic groups were greatly separated and that they primarily socialized within their groups, within which moderate differences in eco-

¹⁶ 1974, ix.

conomic status may have occurred. These authors also maintained that “the specific pattern of ethnic differentiation, however, in every generation is created by specific events.”¹⁷ That is, the meaning of being ethnic in given ways and the implications it entailed were not fixed but changed under formative events, most of which were part of the American experience.

There were certain features and tendencies they could observe with regard to the various groups. Overall, whites did better than people of color in the City. Blacks and Puerto Ricans had the lowest level of self-organization, weakest political voice, and least social and economic power, while the Jewish community had performed the best in these areas. The level of education, prestige of occupation, and income level showed the same difference. Intermingling and intermarriage were not common between the ethnicities, let alone races, nor was assimilation or upward mobility, therefore. The findings suggested that racial or ethnic background was the dominant segment in identity and that this identity greatly determined one’s life chances and success in the socio-economic structure of the city.

In their long introduction to the second edition entitled “New York City in 1970,” they confirmed that the “long-expected and predicted decline of ethnicity, the fuller acculturation and the assimilation of the white ethnic groups, seems once again delayed.”¹⁸ They proposed three reasons which underlined the preservation of ethnic differences: (1) working-class and other occupational identities had lost their status and been replaced by ethnic identification; (2) calm international situation in which no home country was in danger and thus calling for support—except for Israel. As “involvement with and concern for the homelands decline, the sources of ethnic identification more and more are to be found in American experiences, in American soil.”¹⁹; and (3) religion also ceased to be a focus of ethnic identification. These points explained the actual transformation of the ethnic experience in the US which, in their estimation, primarily took place in the 1960s: the process in the course of which ethnic identification increased and was based on a series of new events, thus making “being ethnic” an essential feature of the American experience and identity.

In order to capture the meaning and the structure of this new American identity, Gordon²⁰ proposed a model which consisted of five concentric circles. The self was in the focus, carrying the most weight, followed by national origin, meaning English, German, Italian, etc, religion, race, and nationality, meaning being American, in this order of significance. This model indicated that identification with one’s ethnic heritage was an essential feature of Americans’ self-identification, more important than religion, as well as the fact that it was more difficult to disregard than

¹⁷ 1974, 219.

¹⁸ Glazer and Moynihan 1974, xxxiii.

¹⁹ Glazer and Moynihan 1974, xxxvi.

²⁰ Gordon 1964.

religion. Moreover, Gordon also accepted Herberg's proposition that one's affiliation with ethnicity is not voluntary, but with faith it is, thus it is possible to change faith, but not ethnicity.

This model captured a number of other features of the American society and identity. One feature was that it was not one potentially homogeneous society and culture but characterized by various kinds of subsocieties, each with its respective subculture. Ethnic groups, social classes, rural or urban residence, and regional identification comprised the four types of subsocieties in the US. Gordon saw the importance of these in being part of self-identification, which, in his understanding, is defined as one's locating oneself in a group in order to define oneself as compared to others. Although he agreed with Herberg regarding ethnicity as non-voluntary in membership, on the theoretical level he allowed for individual choice among subcultures—thus, logically, also among ethnicities. He also showed that political and economic institutions were typically ethnically mixed, but religion, family, and in part education and recreation tended to be ethnically enclosed. If this was indeed the case, most of one's life and activities took place within ethnically closed institutional forms, indicating that the ethnic component continued to remain core to identity in the US.

Gordon also agreed with Glazer and Moynihan in proposing that there had been a transformation of ethnicity and the ethnic experience. He stated that cultural pluralism, which he tied to the maintenance of the language, traditions, and habits of various ethnic groups, had been replaced by structural pluralism, meaning that people seemed to socialize and affiliate primarily with members of their own ethnic group. Another common area is the proposition that race is as significant as ethnicity if not more so, and the dividing lines between racial groups are more permanent than between ethnic communities, resulting from the fact that in the case of race, one must consider extrinsic, biologically determined features, considerably more prominent than features differentiating ethnic groups within one race. Both studies showed that racial differences between whites and Blacks were more accentuated than marked ethnic differences within each of these races.

Moreover, argued Gordon, ethnic background often determined one's opportunities and socio-economic success, as the strict social status structure he borrowed from Lloyd Warner indicated. According to this, there are six layers in American society, which can be characterized not only in terms of people's education, profession and income category, cultural patterns and behavior but also ethnic background. Typically, ethnic background determines one's prospects and future position within these layers. Naturally, people from one ethnic group may occupy various socio-economic positions, or classes, as Gordon defined them, thus introducing the term 'ethclass' to signify people of the same ethnic origin within the same class. He proposed that "the ethnic group is the locus of a sense of historical identifica-

tion, while the ethclass is the locus of a sense of participational identification.”²¹ He saw ethclass membership as a significant component of identity as it provided a firm basis for the individual while moving about, it remained with one even if one moved to another place to live or work. Gordon, however, hoped that orientation towards class may become more significant and saw the possibility of social homogenization through structural integration, which could be the possible first step towards full integration, in the course of which one’s integration into class may override one’s ethnic identification.

Some other interesting propositions have grown out of this study. One is that integration into class, meaning economic integration, entails other types of assimilation, including social and cultural integration. Two, Gordon also allowed for the understanding that ethnicity may be a matter of choice. This is understandable if one considers the fact that by the 1960s, some people were of such diverse ethnic backgrounds that they were given the choice of singling out one possible ethnic heritage of the many as “the one” they wished to embrace. Three, if ethnicity had changed regarding what it entailed, Barth’s proposition that ethnicity should be examined with primacy given to the ethnic boundary and focus not so much on the cultural features it encloses should be considered. This, along with Glazer and Moynihan’s conclusion regarding the nature of ethnicity which had been transformed and become part of the American experience and Americanness, as well as the ways in which it had begun to filter into politics, made everyone realize that the American nation was to remain an ethnically heterogeneous community, and the way boundaries between these groups would change would be determinant for the future. Thus, as Gordon proposes: “Ethnic communality will not disappear in the foreseeable future and its legitimacy and rationale should be recognized and respected.”²²

It has also become apparent from these works that the new understanding of ethnicity was also tied to a new pluralism, in a country where race and ethnicity came to be referred to as forms of minority status, and parallel with this shift, the role and impact of ethnicity and race had also changed. These concepts and groups had become players in the political and economic spheres, had become involved in power struggles through fights for various rights, and had formed alliances in order to move towards the center from the peripheries, which often carried in this definition prejudice, labeling, marginality, and the question of passing. The direction which social movements and the discourse on them had taken, show an essential transformation in which minority status and ethnicity, but especially race, had been transformed into a matter of existence, potential, changes, and fulfillments. This had become a driving force and informing agent in the operation of the fragmented self, its invention, and politicization.

²¹ Gordon 1964, 53.

²² 1964, 265.

6. One and Many: New Understandings of Social Standings

The 1970s witnessed an increasing interest in ethnic heritage, which was reflected in ethnicity being a central theme for researchers. Although the Civil Rights Movement was over, the emerging voices of various minorities—and among them of ethnic and racial groups—continued to increase gradually. The American nation could not have been further away from unity; people were highly divided on the basis of their convictions, political beliefs, and moral standings. They were all in the aftermath of the 1960s, in a period which was still filled with public debate. Americans no longer seemed to share even in the old American values and beliefs, especially after the highly demoralizing Watergate scandal. People needed new affirmations of their place in the world, and a return to their ethnic or racial heritage seemed to assist them in their striving for a sense of belonging.

New understandings of the American nation and identity had to be aware of the existence of plurality in society and the increasing power various groups started to gain. The possibility for this cultural diversity to exist in the American culture was explained by Lawrence Fuchs¹ in his analysis of the American nation and political culture. In this assessment, he made use of Almond and Vebla's term, *civic culture*,² in arguing that American culture was originally built on three principles, also basic to republicanism: (1) people can govern themselves through their elected representatives, who are accountable to their constituents; (2) everyone is equally eligible to participate in public life; and (3) all good citizens are free to differ in various areas of their private lives.

This last principle provided the basis for voluntary pluralism, which allowed for a large-scale intellectual and cultural diversity within the American nation—including diversity in ethnic cultures as well. This new invention of Americans—voluntary pluralism—in which individuals were free to express their ancestral affections and sensibilities, to choose to be ethnic, however and whenever they wished or not at all by moving across group boundaries easily, was sanctioned and protected by a

¹ Lawrence Fuchs, *The American Kaleidoscope. Race, Ethnicity, and the Civic Culture* (Hanover: Wesleyan University Press, 1995).

² This term was first used in 1965 to describe the American political culture in which “there is a substantial consensus on the legitimacy of political institutions and the direction and content of public policy, a widespread tolerance of a plurality of interests and beliefs in their reconcilability, and a widely distributed sense of political competence and mutual trust in the citizenry.” Fuchs 1995, 5.

unifying civic culture based on the American founding myth, its institutions, heroes, rules, and rhetoric.³

The concept of civic culture not only called for the toleration of ethnic or cultural diversity, but also encouraged it, thus making this type of social understanding the essential socio-political organizing principle, distinctly characteristic for the American people only. This allowance for diversity resulted in the emergence of new ethnicity, which soon led to other emerging concepts, such as multiculturalism, symbolic and invented ethnicity, identity politics, and the politics of difference.

6.1 New Ethnicity and Multiculturalism

The 1970s witnessed an increasing ethnic revival in US society, which was also reflected in a renewed interest in ethnicity and identity among social scientists yet again. It became obvious that ethnicity had remained key to the American experience and had persisted, although in a transformed form. The whole ethnic experience seemed to appear in new areas, taking new shapes and having new, unprecedented social and political impacts. This social scientific trend became associated with the phrase “new ethnicity,” and with Novak’s book, *The Rise of the Unmeltable Ethnics* as “the major manifesto of the movement.”⁴

In this book Novak presented his findings regarding the ethnic landscape and situation in the post-Civil Rights Movement period in some of the biggest American cities, such as New York, Chicago, and Baltimore. He claimed that it was the “era of ethnic groups” and of a religious boom, the latter closely linked to the former. His conclusion was the result of the major concerns he experienced on the side of the ethnic population in these cities regarding their self-definition and their perception of their life chances. The most prominent issue preoccupying ethnic Americans was to find out how to become an American, that is, a full member of society.

The question, thus, presupposes that the ethnic minorities in the early 1970s did not view themselves as proper Americans, that is, in a number of ways they felt excluded from the mainstream American culture and milieu, such as in opportunities for economic advancement and thus social upward mobility. At the same time, it also assumes that these minorities wanted to become Americans, and were still in the process of defining what it meant to be an American in practical terms and how someone should become one. Considering that Novak’s primarily target population consisted of third generation immigrants, it must also be noted that this problematization also displayed a set of underlying social problems: (1) the commonly shared experience and sense that the assimilation process had not been

³ Fuchs 1995, 5.

⁴ Gleason 1980, 54.

taking place; (2) the ethnic and racial minorities were dissatisfied with the realization of the concept of cultural pluralism—the main principle guiding domestic policy and treatment of ethnicities—since many interpreted it as a policy which stigmatized them and presented an obstacle to the actualization of their natural drive to be considered “just” Americans; and (3) the ethnicities were not in dialogue with policy-makers regarding their wants, but were subject to theoretical models and policies constructed and supported over their heads by outsiders in the power structure.

Novak, as part of mapping the various ethnic groups, also proposed to classify them along shared features, with religion occupying a prominent place among them. He contended that being an American equals in fact being a WASP, a White Anglo-Saxon Protestant. Consequently, any process of assimilation is identical with WASPification, an ideological transformation of any American subject into a WASP. He captured this in the following words: “[M]ore like a religion than like a nation, America required conversion of the soul.”⁵ The first and foremost element of this conversion was the acquisition of “the solitariness of Protestant consciousness” along with its implications, especially the loneliness of the individual.

However, a further look at the term is also telling. The second element of WASP expresses an ethnic category, which is preceded by a racial category: white. The addition of this racial category is significant in the American context, as Anglo-Saxons were white, and thus the need to explicitly denote their race became key in this racially diverse country, where race was a signifier of socio-economic, political, and historical standings. Granted that Novak is right in his assessment, the US of the 1970s must be regarded as a racially differentiated state in which race was still a concept—to which exclusionary practices were related—applied to position people in an unequal manner.

As for European white ethnic groups, the old immigrants who arrived from Northern and Western countries, were able to live up to the WASP cultural stereotype and thus by the 1970s become a part of the core power structure. This was the reasoning given to explain why Novak claimed that the American scene had not served as a place for the melting of all nations into one—it melted only the old immigrants into the center of power, the result of which was captured in his claim of the US being “the Nordic jungle”.⁶ Unlike the old Northern European immigrants arriving at the American shores up to the mid-1850s, the new immigrants landing after them, and their descendants from Eastern, Central, and Southern Europe had remained distinct throughout the years, comprising the group of PIGS, a highly derogatory and as such exclusionary acronym made up of the words Poles, Italians, Greeks and Slavs, referring to the country of origin of these new ethnic arrivals.

⁵ Novak 1972, 92.

⁶ Novak 1972, 72. The fact that in early British history there had already been a mixture of Nordic and Anglo-Saxon peoples, supported this reasoning further.

Novak concluded that the existence of various PIGS communities indicated that these groups had not assimilated into American society. As he phrased it, “Old America taught them ‘ethnic,’” that is, positioned them to be inferior, and marked them as the reason for unsuccessful assimilation. And, as Novak said, “the eyes of others are mirrors in which we learn our own identity,”⁷ so these groups had come to believe in their own inferiority and to feel guilty for being different, for not having been able to do the right thing: to WASPify. Based on his observations, Novak concluded that the US was not and had never been democratic as it had failed to provide equality and to respect the rights of all its people. He claimed that these were slogans from the perspective of WASPs and served the purpose of the reinforcement of their culture and power.

Novak contended that, besides WASP supremacy, the US was also characterized by modern industrialism and its values of individualism, competition, rationalism, and the pursuit of financial success. All of those who had not been given the option of embracing these values, failed to assimilate—that is, all the PIGS and Blacks. Therefore, claimed Novak, the renewal of ethnicity for these groups was inevitable, as it was this sense of ethnic belonging that was able to integrate the experiences of these social groups with their sense of reality in the US. The ethnic experience was the primary factor that framed one’s identity, and thus ethnic groups remained not only unmeltable but gained a renewed impetus for action and overall acknowledgement. Ethnicity came to be the only modality of agency for the members of these collectives.

This ethnicity, however, was new in that the meaning of ethnicity, the manner of its constitution and negotiation as well as its inherent potential for empowerment had changed. This new ethnicity did not denote a revival but a new phenomenon, which was built on the past without bringing it back. This new manner of thinking embedded in various intellectual currents resulted in the emergence of a great number of concepts, including multiculturalism and cosmopolitanism on the one hand, and invented ethnicity and identity politics on the other. Moreover, the appearance of these concepts and the phenomena they had grown out of, also put an end to the popular use of the notion of the melting pot: as of the 1970s, no one has really considered the melting pot theory and assimilationist approaches appropriate to capture US social realities.

In the last three decades of the 20th century, Americans were preoccupied with the proper understanding and expression of the multitude of social differences, be they ethnic, racial, gender-, class- or age-based, among others. Discourses of identity, difference, otherness, colonization, and power have transformed the debate by making it more sophisticated and considerate, as well as less prescriptive, universalist, and absolutist. Claims and statements have softened into propositions and

⁷ Novak 1972, 49. After Hegel.

suggestions, in the spirit of understanding the extremely complex nature of identity, both on the level of the individuals and collectives. In this intellectual milieu, however, it was never claimed that the American people were one in the ethnic or racial sense of the word, as proposed earlier by the frontier hypothesis or the melting pot theory, but understandings of pluralism underlined the various debates regarding other bases of unity among the people residing in the US.

This firm belief in pluralism was channeled through new histories, such as Bernard A. Weissberger's *Many People, One Nation* from 1970 or Leonard Dinnerstein, Roger L. Nichols and David M. Reimers's *Natives and Strangers* from 1979. These works emphasized how immigrants of non-Anglo-Saxon origin "also contributed ideas, talents, and especially labor to the building of America into the nation she has become."⁸ Researchers also started to consider the interaction between the immigrants and their descendants as well as the American host society, culture, and economy. As a result, social scientific research started capturing immigration and the ethnic experience as a two-way process.⁹

These new understandings of plurality resulted in further pursuits of its forms and meanings. Fuchs proposed that the Americans of European descent had been embracing the notion of civic culture and voluntary pluralism with regard to their ethnic heritage. However, he also maintained that throughout US history, there had been three other types of pluralism regarding the relationship between non-white minorities and the Euro-American¹⁰ host society, often determined by the latter, thus being three types of coercive pluralism: (1) tribal or predatory pluralism, which characterized the relationship between Euro-Americans and Native Americans, in which boundaries between the two groups were clearly marked and reiterated; (2) caste pluralism, featuring the relationship between whites and blacks, first in the form of slavery and then that of segregation, resulting in irreconcilable differences and predetermined socio-economic positions; and (3) sojourner pluralism, "a system designed by Euro-Americans for immigrants regarded as temporary residents, ... applied principally to two groups of non-European immigrants,"¹¹ the Asians and Mexicans. He saw sojourner pluralism as the least restrictive of the three, allowing the children of immigrants to enter the civic society more readily than those of Blacks or Native Americans. He proposed that these forms of pluralism were abandoned by the 1980s, as by then civic society had truly come about in the

⁸ Dinnerstein et al. 1979, vii.

⁹ See, for example, Colin Greer ed., *Divided Society. The Ethnic Experience in America* (New York: Basic Books, 1974) or Nathan Glazer ed., *Clamor at the Gates. The New American Immigration* (San Francisco: ICS Press, 1985).

¹⁰ He focused on differences along racial lines, thus implying that various racial groups were rather homogeneous.

¹¹ Fuchs 1995, 78.

US, having gotten rid of its racially exclusive nature—a claim many scholars would not agree with.

The 1980s witnessed the emergence of a new concept growing out of the notion of new ethnicity: multiculturalism. Kymlicka defined it as “minority groups demanding recognition of their identity, and accommodation of their cultural differences.”¹² Moreover, Kymlicka proposed that in the US multiculturalism had been used not only to equalize ethnic and racial groups, but also to “encompass a wide range of non-ethnic social groups which have, for various reasons, been excluded or marginalized from the mainstream of society ... such as the disabled, gays and lesbians, women, the working class, atheists, and Communists.”¹³ These groups fought in the political arena for recognition and for a halt to in-group discrimination. They were hoping to institutionalize pluralism, which would have meant mainstreaming the acceptance of diversity and difference.

David Hollinger¹⁴ distinguished between two prominent elements in American multiculturalism: pluralism and cosmopolitanism. The pluralist element built around Kallen’s model of cultural pluralism, which called for an unproblematic, peaceful coexistence of various groups in society—without actually affecting each other’s life trajectory the way melting-pot theorists envisioned coexistence. Cultural pluralism was also limited in that it focused strictly on cultural and social distinctions and disregarded other significant factors, such as the economy, which played a key role in the positioning of ethnic groups. It also predetermined group membership, fixing it onto “biological” and “historical” facts, thus fostering an essentialist approach to difference.

Cosmopolitanism, on the other hand, argued for voluntary group associations, as opposed to prescribed traditional group membership and thus promoted individual choice and conceptualized individual identity as an intersection of multiple identities. As such, it also allowed for the notion of flexibility, both in individuals and groups, thus enabling and entitling the individual to choose from among various identities as well as to change them, as no absolute social locations were accepted as binding with regard to identity. Cosmopolitanism also advocated tolerance and openness in embracing other, newly formed cultural communities within the American domain.¹⁵

¹² Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship. A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 10.

¹³ Kymlicka 1995, 14.

¹⁴ David A. Hollinger, *Postethnic America. Beyond Multiculturalism* (New York: Basic Books, 2000).

¹⁵ Barát observed that these two elements, in fact, resulted in the major requirement of the “cultivated citizen”—a term introduced by Ben Robinson—in US society, namely that s/he not “see” the particular historical conditions that make it possible for him/her to perceive pluralism as a matter of individual agentive choice and that of an apparently decentered and fragmented subject. Both in fact are the ideological precondition for a social subject who is better equipped for a heightened alienation of late capitalism’s globalized divisions of labor.

Identity and identity politics were key to multicultural efforts. Renewed debates on the notion of identity, its constitution, meanings, operation, and manners of affirmation became the center of scholarly debates and research projects. A number of fields and subdisciplines emerged and gained recognition—such as cultural studies, women studies, and ethnic studies—which pursued these issues within specific contexts. In the course of their research, criticism of multiculturalism also began to take shape. As of the 1990s, various voices critical of the dubious nature of multiculturalism started to be heard, dissatisfied groups and individuals made their concerns public, and the scholars started to specify the shortcomings of multiculturalism as well as to search for new approaches, better equipped to reveal underlying problems and to provide solutions for them.

Hollinger summarized the major points of the evolving criticism of multiculturalism. He proposed that multiculturalism provided a concept within which group struggles could be explained, justified, organized, and carried out—that is, it was a frame of reference as well as a frame for the constitution of meaning. The integrity of the various groups derived “not from culture but from a history of political and economic victimization based on bad biology.”¹⁶ If this was indeed the case, despite the multiculturalist claims to moving away from centralization and to an embracing of diversity, it did suppose homogeneity within the various groups, along with shared goals, inspirations, and a unified manner of action. Therefore, ultimately, the inflexibility which had characterized the mainstream culture which they hoped to reform, re-emerged in the ideology of multiculturalism.

Mainstream American society and culture, however, was in need of new conceptualizations in order to cope in a constructive manner with the increasing number of issues bound to race and ethnicity, including various claims regarding the ever-growing mixed-race population.¹⁷ Hollinger noted that by the late 1980s, “diversity has become too diversified”¹⁸ to be handled by multiculturalism. This, along with the increasing frustration and subsequent criticism of cosmopolitanists who claimed that “[T]he cult of particularity and difference hinders the development of any large, liberating vision that encompasses the stranger,”¹⁹ marked the beginning of the fall of multiculturalism in its original form.

As a possible new model, Hollinger put forth his postethnic perspective. This is a perspective which did not deny the significance of ethnic or other group affiliations, but instead of seeing identity as something biologically or historically given, he considered it as affiliations based on a matter of choice. Hollinger envisioned an inclusive mode of thinking, in which affiliations were not prescribed and particularized, but freely chosen, with no classifications which would call for value judg-

¹⁶ Hollinger 2000, 8.

¹⁷ Also discussed at length by Kymlicka, 1995.

¹⁸ Hollinger 2000, 12.

¹⁹ By geographer Yi-Fu Tuan, quoted in Hollinger 2000, 104.

ments. It was this consent-based respect for affiliations and difference of choices which he saw as the possible driving force to unite peoples within the United States. As he summed it up, his concept of postethnicity “prefers voluntary to prescribed affiliations, appreciates multiple identities, pushes for communities of wide scope, recognizes the constructed character of ethno-racial groups, and accepts the formation of new groups as a part of the normal life of a democratic society.”²⁰

Hollinger’s work is, however, a proposition and a theorization, not a model actually put in practice. Hollinger seemed to have drawn on some aspects of multiculturalism, but his theory approached social life from the perspective of ethnic and racial groups only and thus was concerned with a set of problems from that specific position. As the name ‘postethnic’ indicates, he envisioned a society the members of which had gone beyond concepts like ethnic identity and ethnic hierarchy within the American society, and through the act of leaving these behind, they also decentralized them. This model presupposed a utopian state, a uniform development of the Americans towards a fairer social system, in a highly prescriptive manner. He had nothing to say about the particular social conditions of enacting such consensus, leaving agency to be a mere promise and a matter of belief. Hollinger’s emphasized voluntarism was also challenged by Miri Song who observed that Hollinger’s model also disregards the fact that “the issue of affiliating with a particular group is unlikely to be determined by an individual’s desires and choices alone.”²¹ It is rather a matter of intersubjective negotiations whose outcome, i.e., the emerging identity, is open to the contestation of the participants.

6.2 Invented Ethnicity and Identity Politics

In the second part of the 1980s new ethnicity and multiculturalism gave way to the emergence of another line of thinking, claiming that new ethnicity was highly symbolic, an invented construct, and represented a key force in new types of politics: identity politics and the politics of difference. These notions were first introduced in the American context by Herbert Gans in his study on symbolic ethnicity in 1979.²² In this Gans, in line with suppositions regarding the emergence of new ethnicity in the US, ventured forth to map its constitution, content, purpose, and manners of operation. Despite his critical discussion of straight-line assimilationist theory, he envisioned new ethnicity as a possible new stage within the processes of acculturation and assimilation, and explained this phenomenon with two possible

²⁰ Hollinger 2000, 116.

²¹ Miri Song, *Choosing Ethnic Identity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2003), 42.

²² Herbert J. Gans, “Symbolic Ethnicity. The Future of Ethnic Groups and Cultures in America,” in Werner Sollors ed., *Theories of Ethnicity. A Classical Reader* (London: Macmillan, 1996), 425–59.

reasons, “neither of which conflicts with straight line theory: (1) today’s ethnics have become more visible as a result of upward mobility; and (2) they are adopting a new form of ethnic behavior and affiliation I call ‘symbolic ethnicity’.”²³

His argumentation had grown out of Hansen’s law which states that the third generation wishes to remember its ethnicity and heritage. Regarding new ethnicity as a phenomenon which is bound to third and fourth generation immigrants, Gans concluded that these generations had reached upward social and economic mobility, which is a significant step in assimilation. As a result, “people are less and less interested in their ethnic cultures and organizations...and are instead more concerned with maintaining their ethnic identity,...with finding ways of feeling and expressing that identity in suitable ways.”²⁴ The third generation ethnics were no more in need of ethnic organizations to assist them in their daily lives as they felt part of the American system, but still felt the need to remain ethnic and to express this in new ways—which were symbolic, and were characterized by a sense of nostalgia, alliance with the other members of the ethnic community, love for and pride in their old culture, tradition, etc. It was an affiliation which was primarily rooted not in the necessity for mere survival but rather satisfied an emotional need. These symbols had to be clear, visible, understandable, and highly simplified in meaning.

New aspects related to this symbolic ethnicity included, according to Gans, choice and political participation. Gans contended that ethnicity by the 1970s was not firmly embedded in the third-generation ethnic individual, but could change and disappear. Also, third-generation ethnics were often of mixed ethnic background or one of the parents’ ethnicity was not adequately passed over and thus they could choose which ethnic background they wished to embrace. Choice was also informed by stereotypes and the opinion of the larger society of the given ethnic group. Gans also observed that symbolic ethnicity “also takes political forms, through identification or involvement with national politicians and international issues which are sufficiently remote to become symbols.”²⁵ Thus, symbolic ethnicity is also a possible line along which ethnics may be organized for political purposes. As he himself noted, even “pan-ethnic coalitions” developed at various times, signifying how ethnicity may also provide the basis for various political activities or agency.

One significant point of departure from this study leads in the direction of viewing the emergence of new and symbolic ethnicity not as a step of a natural continuum towards a possible assimilation—which is regarded as impossible even by Gans himself in his epilogue to the 1995 edition of his study—but in the direction of conceptualizing ethnicity as a form of invention.²⁶ Joanne Nagel elaborated on the

²³ Gans 1996, 430.

²⁴ Gans 1996, 434.

²⁵ Gans 1996, 437.

²⁶ He says: “The notion that ethnicity would someday end in a totally melted American pot is not considered possible by anyone in the last decade of the twentieth century.” Gans 1996, 454.

notion of the “political construction of ethnicity” which, on the one hand, binds categories of ethnicity to politics and political struggles, thus establishing a discourse in which at least in part this biological category is artificially created.²⁷ Sollors argued further and claimed that ethnicity as a whole is an invention, with ethnic categories being the formal framework, the semantic fields of which are filled in accordance with the changing political contexts and socio-economic positions. This invention and reinvention of practices and their meanings indicate how ethnic groups and other social formations are constructed, always in the making. As Hall concluded, they are also “subject to the continuous play of history, culture and power.”²⁸

If identities are invented, the baggage of essentialist categories which had tended to bind identities to biological or historical factors, must also be discarded, especially in the light of the fact, that contemporary readings of history and the past also claimed that history is a narrative, also cultural construction, a form of power which enhances further power, as proposed by George Bond and Angela Gilliam,²⁹ among others. In this manner of thinking, therefore, it can be argued that one’s ethnicity and ethnic identification are not given factors but are matters of personal choice, based on individual goals and interests. If this is indeed the case, the factors framing the selection of identity and the dynamism of the construction and affirmation of identities should be investigated, as proposed by Miri Song.³⁰

Song found that internal as well as external factors figure significantly into one’s ethnic identification and representation. She claimed that the selection, negotiation, and affirmation of ethnic identities are much more viable within given racial categories than between races.³¹ With regard to racial categories, she claimed that the color line still existed in the US, Afro-Americans being at the bottom of the racial hierarchy and whites at the top. As a consequence, multiracial people seemed to have the most problems as, based on the one drop of blood principle, racial choice was not really available to them, and they belonged to no single race. She contended that multiracial people were often marginalized by monoraces, which resulted in the appearance of multiracial pan-ethnicity in the 1990s.

²⁷ Joanne Nagel, “The political construction of ethnicity,” in Susan Olzak and Joanne Nagel eds., *Competitive Ethnic Relations* (New York: Academic Press, 1986), 93–112.

²⁸ Stuart Hall, “Cultural identity and diaspora,” in Jonathan Rutherford ed., *Identity, Community, Cultural Difference* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1990), 222–37, 225.

²⁹ George C. Bond and Angela Gilliam eds., *Social Construction of the Past. Representation as Power* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 1.

³⁰ 2003.

³¹ This is significant as it undermines the general American tendency to theorize about issues and to address problems along racial lines, which presupposes a relatively high racial homogeneity when, in fact, this was not the case, according to Song. Moreover, educational and class-related differences added further to the complicated nature of various issues.

Multiracial pan-ethnicity had developed out of the shared experiences and concerns as well as drives of people with multiracial background. Cynthia Nakashima³² suggested that these desires were threefold: (1) to gain acceptance and legitimacy within traditional racial and ethnic groups; (2) to shape the identity and agenda of various mixed-race people into a common multiracial community; and (3) to establish connections in order to bridge differences between various ethnic and racial groups in order to form “a community of humanity”³³ and with that, initiate a new dialogue, leading to the dismantling of traditional dominant ideologies and their positioning of racial and ethnic groups.

The idea of choosing identities and the existence of mixed race communities were also explained in terms of ‘passing,’ a phenomenon which occupied some of the more recent scholarship. Linda Schlossberg, for example, maintained that “[T]heories of identity and subject formation in the Western culture are largely structured around the logic of visibility...[where] passing becomes a highly charged site for anxieties regarding visibility, invisibility, classification and social demarcation.”³⁴ Various aspects of passing as something or somebody else, thus doing away with some undesired feature, which may as well be rooted in ethnic or racial differentiation, call attention to the significance of the visible, the body and its operation as a signifier for a number of socially constructed categories, thus being used as a constraining locality as well as an enabling agency in social interaction.

Gans also proposed that symbolic ethnicity takes political forms, a view that is supported by a number of other scholars, including Hall, Nagel, Nakashima, and Song. This is connected to the notions of identity politics and the politics of difference, both appearing in the 1980s and tied to postmodernism and its conceptualization of the self and identity as fragmented. Identity politics “is used to refer to a commitment to one of the new social movements which emphasizes one element in the construction of our identity: gender, sexual orientation, ‘race’, ethnicity, or nation.”³⁵ Hall saw identity politics as part of a “counter-hegemonic war of maneuver”³⁶ which is aimed at repositioning various marginalized groups. Thus, identity politics opened up the platform for the self-organization and political struggle of various groups who felt they had been disenfranchised, treated as the “Other,” and wished to leave their assigned positions on the margins. Therefore, the construction or invention of identities, which in postmodern thinking are the outcome of an endless series of context-bound imaginary activities—thus always in the making,

³² Cynthia Nakashima, “Voices from the movement. Approaches to multiraciality,” in M. Root ed., *The Multiracial Experience* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1996), 79–100.

³³ Nakashima 1996, 81.

³⁴ Maria Carla Sanches and Linda Schlossberg eds., *Passing. Identity and Interpretation in Sexuality, Race, and Religion* (New York: New York University Press, 2001), 1.

³⁵ Sarup 1996, 52.

³⁶ Chris Rojek, *Stuart Hall* (Cambridge: Policy Press, 2003), 178.

with the possibility of negotiating and changing—may be in line with particular aims a given group wanted to achieve in the political realm. As Hall proposed, with new ethnicity, the struggle was located in the realm of the politics of representation.

The logical next step, the acknowledgement of the fact that societies are not homogeneous entities but are characterized by an “extraordinary diversity of subjective positions, social experiences and cultural identities”³⁷ had led to the construction of “politics which works with and through difference, a politics which does not suppress the real heterogeneity of interests and identities.”³⁸ One of the main advocates of the politics of difference in the US, Iris Young, located the beginning of this type of politics in the 1980s, considering it the result of the fact that as of the early 1970s, various marginalized groups came out in public and asserted their difference as a positive experience. One impact this had had was the dominant culture’s recognition of its own specificity, that is, the American dominant society’s self-definition. Interestingly, she captured this specificity not as WASP or Euro-American any more, but “as Anglo, European, Christian, masculine, straight.”³⁹

She argued that the dominant group, through the assertion of positive difference by marked groups, was forced to construct values based on which these positive experiences could seem deviant, as a result of which exclusion and dominance may be practiced, as opposed to understanding, toleration, and appreciation of difference. In light of this, it can be seen why the politics of difference may also be tied to the phenomenon of political correctness, which also aims at discontinuing racist, sexist, homophobic, ageist, and other patterns and practices of oppression. Young also claimed that the politics of difference was a way to achieve group liberation and emancipation. Based on her argumentation, the US can be conceptualized as a society of heterogeneous culture, constituted by a variety of groups which are on their way to gaining equal recognition and rights—and this is the essence of marked Americanness that Americans may embrace as a common denominator in their common identity.

6.3 The Color of Whiteness

Various social models of American identity and the development of the nation considered various European ethnicities as constitutive forces and potential components of the newly emerging nation. As has become clear from the previous chapters, up to the 1960s theorists generally disregarded other groups, such as Blacks,

³⁷ Sarup 1996, 61.

³⁸ Sarup 1996, 61.

³⁹ Iris Marion Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 166.

Native Americans and Asians, in modeling the American nation.⁴⁰ The impact of the Civil Rights Movement, which gave voice not only to Black dissatisfaction, but to that of all other disenfranchised groups, including Native Americans, women, and gays, left its mark on social science as well. As was revealed in the pioneering work of Gordon as well as of Glazer and Moynihan, Blacks appeared as a significant group in studies of the American social landscape, but Asians and Native Americans remained untouched in these studies.⁴¹ This may be explained by their minimal presence in cities, which was the primary focus of sociological investigation since the early 1900s, or by their relatively low number within the American nation, but the main reason was that their public voice and representation remained quite marginal. Asians have gained more visibility since the 1970s, as the ban on their immigration was lifted in the mid-1960s, and they have proved themselves quite willing and able to embrace mainstream American values and lifestyles. In fact, by the 1980s Koreans in the US came to be regarded as the single most successful immigrant group in terms of their assimilation, upward mobility, level of education, income, and overall achievement. Hispanics were likewise ignored in discussions of American identity; having immigrated as of the mid-1930s, they only began to gain recognition in the public and political realms through their efforts in the general upheaval of the Civil Rights Movement.

The groups discussed here as not having been integrated into theorizations on the American nation and identity are those which are currently considered non-white racial groups.⁴² The phrase *non-white racial group* draws attention to an implicit Othering of the *white race* as well as to American understandings of the words *white* and *race*. The fact that these understandings have changed was already indicated in propositions by former theorists, such as Turner, who wrote about the Jewish race as well as Italians, Poles, and Slovaks melting into one nation on the frontier, and Zangwill, who envisioned that the superior American nation would emerge out of

⁴⁰ According to the 2000 US Census, 75.1% of the total US population is White, 12.3% Black, 0.9% American Indian, 3.6% Asian, 0.1% Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, 5.5% some other race, and 2.4% two or more races.

⁴¹ For contemporary Hungarian studies discussing conceptualizations of race in the US see, for example, Éva Federmayer, "Black Woman and the Reconstruction of the Black Family. Jessie Fauset's *There Is Confusion*," *Hungarian Journal of English and American Studies* 1 (1996): 93–102; Tibor Frank, "'Race' as Value. Social Darwinism and U.S. Immigration," in Tibor Frank ed., *Values in American Society* (Budapest: Eötvös Loránd University, 1995), 125–148; Ildikó Hortobágyi, "The Hyphenated American," in Tibor Frank ed., *Values in American Society* (Budapest: Eötvös Loránd University, 1995), 149–v 158; and András Tarnóczy, "Political Correctness and Multiculturalism," in Tibor Frank ed., *Values in American Society* (Budapest: Eötvös Loránd University, 1995), 159–174.

⁴² Since 2000, the minimum categories for race introduced in the US Census have been: (1) American Indian or Alaska Native; (2) Asian; (3) Black or African American; (4) Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander; (5) White; (6) Some Other Race; (7) Two or more races. It also lists (1) Hispanic or Latino and (2) Not Hispanic or Latino as the minimum two ethnic categories, indicating that Hispanics may be of any race.

the various races, such as Jews, Russians, Hungarians, and Italians. All of these are groups which today are considered white ethnicities, but in fact, were viewed in racial terms in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The study of race, that is, of humankind, and the classification of peoples reaches back to ancient times. Both Greeks and Romans developed their theories of racial superiority which served to explain as well as to justify their power over other peoples in terms of nature. These early theories often focused on differences in physical appearance and in character. For example, in his "Politica", Aristotle explained these differences by climate, especially the impact of heat and cold on the human body, thus being among the first theorists to argue for the centrality of the environment in shaping the human body and character.⁴³ Christianity defined these differences in religious terms and offered explanations based on the Bible.⁴⁴ Both religious and environmentalist argumentations stressed the natural and inevitable quality of these differences. But tribal cultures were also captivated by the differences between various peoples in racial terms. Thomas Gossett, for example, discussed a North American Native legend according to which God created people as if baking bread. He baked the first man too long and thus it became a Black person, He took out the second too soon and thus created the white man, but finally He mastered His technique and "was able to produce the properly golden brown Indian."⁴⁵

The relationship between white settlers on the one hand and the Natives and Blacks on the other was one of forced separation from early colonial times on. Cotton Mather, for instance, viewed the Natives as "devil's minions, damned from birth by God and incapable of redemption," thus confirming the belief a century later that "at best the Indians were an inferior breed of men and at worst no more than savage beasts."⁴⁶ The anti-Indian sentiment and the perceived need to segregate the Natives in the colonies found expression, for example, in the Proclamation of 1763, which physically separated British America and the Indian Country just west of the Appalachian Mountains. Later, the Indian Removal Act of 1830 forced the removal of Native tribes to the Indian Territory in Oklahoma and reservations elsewhere. This was modified by the Dawes Act of 1887, which instituted allotment programs, meaning the dissolution of reservation land into small farms of 160 acres per Native family. In the mid-1800s, a series of Supreme Court rulings concluded that an Indian tribe was a "domestic dependent nation," and it was as recently as 1924 that Natives born in the US were granted full American citizenship. The policy of allotment was repealed only in 1934, as a result of the Indian Reorganization

⁴³ Discussed in Thomas F. Gossett, *Race. The History of an Idea in America* (New York: Schocken, 1971), 17.

⁴⁴ The legitimation of enslavement was interpreted, for example, by arguing that Blacks are marked the way Cain was after God's curse on him (Moses 1, 4:9-14).

⁴⁵ Gossett 1971, 7.

⁴⁶ Gossett 1971, 229.

Act, which re-established the unity of tribal lands – that is, it continued the physical and communal separation of Natives who wished to live on tribal land. This was one significant aspect of the Indian New Deal which attempted to improve overall conditions on reservations. However, newer programs in the early 1950s initiated the termination of tribal lands and the relocation of Natives into urban centers, leading to the Red Power and American Indian Movements of the 1960s. These struggles culminated in the confirmation of the powers of tribal councils and the maintenance of tribal lands, granted in the Indian Self-Determination Act of 1975, which is still in effect. Further acts passed later in the 1970s acknowledged tribal pluralism and attempted to express respect for the cultural integrity of the Natives by guaranteeing them equal rights in terms of welfare, health care, and religious freedom.

As for the Black population, forced separation from the rest of society was introduced by the institution of slavery. This economic institution was typically justified either by religious explanation or by theories of natural inferiority. Thomas Jefferson, for example, elaborated on how nature positioned Blacks with a lower status in his *Notes on the State of Virginia*, expressing his view that “Negroes” are aesthetically, mentally, and morally inferior to whites. Similarly to George Washington and James Madison, he could not envision the two races living together in peace as equals, and in an 1808 speech in Congress he saw the future solution to the racial problem “in the colonization of Blacks in Africa or in some other far place.”⁴⁷ This color-cast social system in the South, which stressed a rigid socio-economic division along the color line, ended legally between 1865–69, with the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments. However, it was actually replaced by a series of Jim Crow laws securing separate status of and discrimination against the Black population, which became the norm through the introduction of the separate-but-equal principle as a result of the Supreme Court ruling in the *Plessy vs. Ferguson* case in 1896. Parallel to this, the ideas of social Darwinism and eugenics began to flourish, and by 1900 it was widely accepted that both character traits and level of intelligence tend to be inherited and differ along racial lines. The medical profession also provided evidence through a series of biological findings for the differences between the races as well as the genders, contributing to yet another set of non-debatable arguments in support of maintaining racial differences, and thus social distinctions and barriers.

An increasing number of Blacks, however, started to voice their concerns and disagreement, initiating a fight for Black rights, under the leadership of the first of many similar organizations, which was called the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), established in 1909, with leaders such as W. E. B. DuBois and Thurgood Marshall. The appreciation of Black art – poetry, literature, and music, especially during the Harlem Renaissance era of the 1920s – bore witness to the special talents of this group. Still, it was not until 1954 that the

⁴⁷ Fuchs 1995, 89.

doctrine of separate-but-equal was reversed by the ruling in the case of *Brown vs. Board of Education*, and legal discrimination was banned only in 1964 by the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act the following year, primarily as a result of the Blacks' fight for racial equality, led by Martin Luther King and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC).

However, other forces within the Black community envisioned a different future for American Blacks. As early as the 1920s, the first powerful Black nationalist movement appeared. This movement envisioned "racial territorial pluralism in which Blacks would be given a state or a nation within the US."⁴⁸ Its leading figure, Marcus Garvey, however, supported repatriation and contended that Blacks must return to Africa and establish their union there, in their real homeland. In the 1960s, the Black Muslim Malcolm X expressed his dissatisfaction with the NAACP and the SCLC and propagated the self-separation of Blacks within American society. However, the movement regarded as the most aggressive and separatist of all was that of the Black Panthers, spurred on by their conviction that Blacks "form no part of the American nation."⁴⁹ These examples illustrate well how thoroughly Blacks themselves understood the depth of racism in American society and the extent to which they were not regarded as an integral part of the American nation.

This was certainly reflected in the sociological models discussed in the previous chapters. Gunnar Myrdal wrote in 1944: "White Swedes, Italians, and Jews could become Americanized in a generation or two ... Negroes were caught in their 'quarters' because of their inescapable social visibility."⁵⁰ In 1964, Gordon concluded that Blacks are indeed separate from the white population because of "the existence of a separate Negro social world with its own institutions and associations."⁵¹ He maintained that they represent the only group in the US which forms a separate subsociety as well as subculture. One obvious sign of racial separation was the view of marriages: in 1964, marriage between Blacks and Whites was still legally prohibited in twenty-two states. Glazer and Moynihan concluded in 1970 that the notion of color blindness in society is "unrealistic" and that "the purpose of 'white' ... is not to defend or maintain a 'white' culture or religion but to exclude blacks."⁵² They found that the fear of "the racial other" was the primary source of social conflicts as racialization was present in all walks of life. It comes as no real surprise, then, that various models of a distinct American nation disregarded Blacks as potential contributors in the emergence of this new nation. In 2003, Song concluded that the US is still a biracial country, with a firm dividing line between Blacks and

⁴⁸ Fuchs 1995, 107.

⁴⁹ Banton, *Race Relations* (London: Tavistock, 1969), 364.

⁵⁰ Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma. The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy* (New York: Harper, 1944), 667.

⁵¹ Gordon 1964, 163.

⁵² Glazer and Moynihan 1970, xxxix.

the rest of the population, as there is an overall view that “Asian and Latino Americans are less different from White people than Black Americans.”⁵³

This position is clearly reflected in the racial categories listed by the US Census Bureau in 2000 in which Latinos are not regarded as a racial category but as an ethnic one, members of which may identify with any race – including white. With regard to interracial relations, the 2000 Census also revealed that the smallest interracial group is that of Blacks and American Indians with 2.7%, and the second smallest is White and Black, with 11.5% of the total mixed race population. This seems to indicate that Blacks are the least likely to enter into interracial marriages – or that they comprise a significant portion of the category of more than two races. This Census also showed that 12.7% of the mixed race population is White and Asian. If we bear in mind the small proportion of the Asian population, this is remarkably high, and may be the outcome of racial perceptions: as Song is quoted as saying above, Asians rank higher than Blacks in the racial hierarchy.

The Asian presence is the result of two separate immigration waves. The early Asian immigrants were Chinese, who started entering in the 1840s on the West Coast. They worked primarily in mining and on railroad construction, but their presence – their physical appearance, culture, language, and faith – was so alien to American society that the first ethnic-based exclusionary act was introduced to put a halt to their immigration as early as 1882. Japanese immigration followed, but in 1908 the Gentlemen's Agreement banned the immigration of Japanese males, whereas the Ladies' Agreement in 1921 did the same for Japanese females. The exclusion of Asian immigrants signifies not only the course of industrial development and the attendant diminished need for cheap labor, but also an extreme anti-Asian sentiment. Asians, therefore, were also disregarded in theories on the American nation. Asian immigration was stopped completely by the national quota-based immigration act in 1924, and the doors were reopened only in 1965. Then immigrants seeking political asylum and better economic conditions started to enter the US. Due to their relatively late arrival, they were also disregarded in all major studies on ethnicity in the US and became a significant group for consideration only in the late 1970s.

The reference to Turner's and Zangwill's use of the word *race* in the second paragraph or the changing typification of racial categories by the US Census Bureau indicates how racial categories have been subject to ongoing reinterpretation and change – although they never challenged the superiority and power position of the white race. J. Kincheloe and S. R. Steinberg⁵⁴ located the beginning of modern Western conceptualizations of race in the late 17th and early 18th centuries, finding

⁵³ Song 2003, 125.

⁵⁴ J. Kincheloe and S. R. Steinberg, “Addressing the Crisis of Whiteness. Reconfiguring White Identity in a Pedagogy of Whiteness,” in J. Kincheloe et al. eds., *White Reign. Deploying Whiteness in America* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 1998), 3–30.

their roots in the intellectual tradition of the Enlightenment. They argued that the dominance of whiteness was established by the “privileged construction of the transcendental white male rational subject ... [and] whiteness was naturalized as a universal entity that operated as more than a mere ethnic positionality.”⁵⁵ Bhattacharyya *et al.* argued that this emerging rational white subject had the “capacity to define and regulate the subjectivity of others and to turn individuals into objects.”⁵⁶ Stuart Hall proposed that the examination of racial categorization should focus on “the specific conditions which make this form of distinction socially pertinent, historically active.”⁵⁷ The most recent field to deal with the complexity of these factors and to map the process of the historical construction of whiteness emerged under the name Whiteness Studies in the early 1990s.⁵⁸

Within this field, specific studies focused on the changing racial categorization of specific groups who were able to whiten in the course of history. The whitening of the Irish, for example, was mapped by Noel Ignatiev⁵⁹ and David Roediger,⁶⁰ while Sander Gilman⁶¹ showed how Jews were regarded as black-skinned and physiologically similar to Blacks from the 17th to the late 19th centuries. One racial classification from 1910 divided the population as “Slav, English-speaking European, native white, and colored.”⁶² Today White, according to the US Census Bureau, refers to people of European, Middle Eastern and North African origin. These are but a few examples of how the color of whiteness has changed throughout the last two centuries in the US.

Jacobson argued that the “contending forces that have fashioned and refashioned whiteness in the United States across time ... are capitalism (with its insatiable appetite for cheap labor) and republicanism (with its imperative of responsible citizenship).”⁶³ In light of this, he contended that the history of whiteness may be divided into three periods: (1) 1790–1840, starting with the first naturalization law in the US which limited naturalization to “free White persons”, which also initiated a debate on whether Catholics or Jews should be considered eligible or not; (2)

⁵⁵ Kincheloe and Steinberg 1998, 5.

⁵⁶ Gargi Bhattacharyya, John Gabriel and Stephen Small, *Race and Power. Global racism in the twenty-first century* (London: Routledge, 2002), 23.

⁵⁷ Cited in Peter Childs and Patrick Williams, *An Introduction to Post-Colonial Theory* (London: Prentice Hall, 1997), 191.

⁵⁸ An excellent analysis of the first ten years of the field is provided by Robyn Wiegman, “Whiteness Studies and the Paradox of Particularity,” *Boundary 2*: 26.3 (1999): 115–150.

⁵⁹ Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White* (New York: Routledge, 1995).

⁶⁰ David Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness. Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (London: Verso, 1991).

⁶¹ Sander Gilman, *The Jew's Body* (London: Routledge, 1991).

⁶² Cited in Matthew F. Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color. European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), 5.

⁶³ Jacobson 1998, 13.

1840–1924, an era marked by large-scale immigration, commencing with the mass appearance of the Irish in the 1840s, followed by other Europeans from Central, Eastern and Southern Europe, systematically regulated by the restrictive, nation-based legislation of 1924, which was based on “a fracturing of whiteness into a hierarchy of plural and scientifically determined white races;”⁶⁴ and (3) the post-1924 era, up to the 1960s, which witnessed “a dramatic decline in the perceived differences among these white Others,”⁶⁵ and thus whiteness was “reconsolidated” and interest in a changing “dominant racial configuration” connected to African-American internal migration, among other things, became focal. The result of this, argued Jacobson, is the contemporary perception of American society as basically biracial: Black and White. What is more, the concluding statement in the Kerner Commission's report from 1968 that the United States consisted of “two societies—one white, one black, separate and unequal”⁶⁶ still holds true.

⁶⁴ Jacobson 1998, 7.

⁶⁵ Jacobson 1998, 14.

⁶⁶ Cited in Jacobson 1998, 96.

CONCLUSION: A NATION OF CONSENT

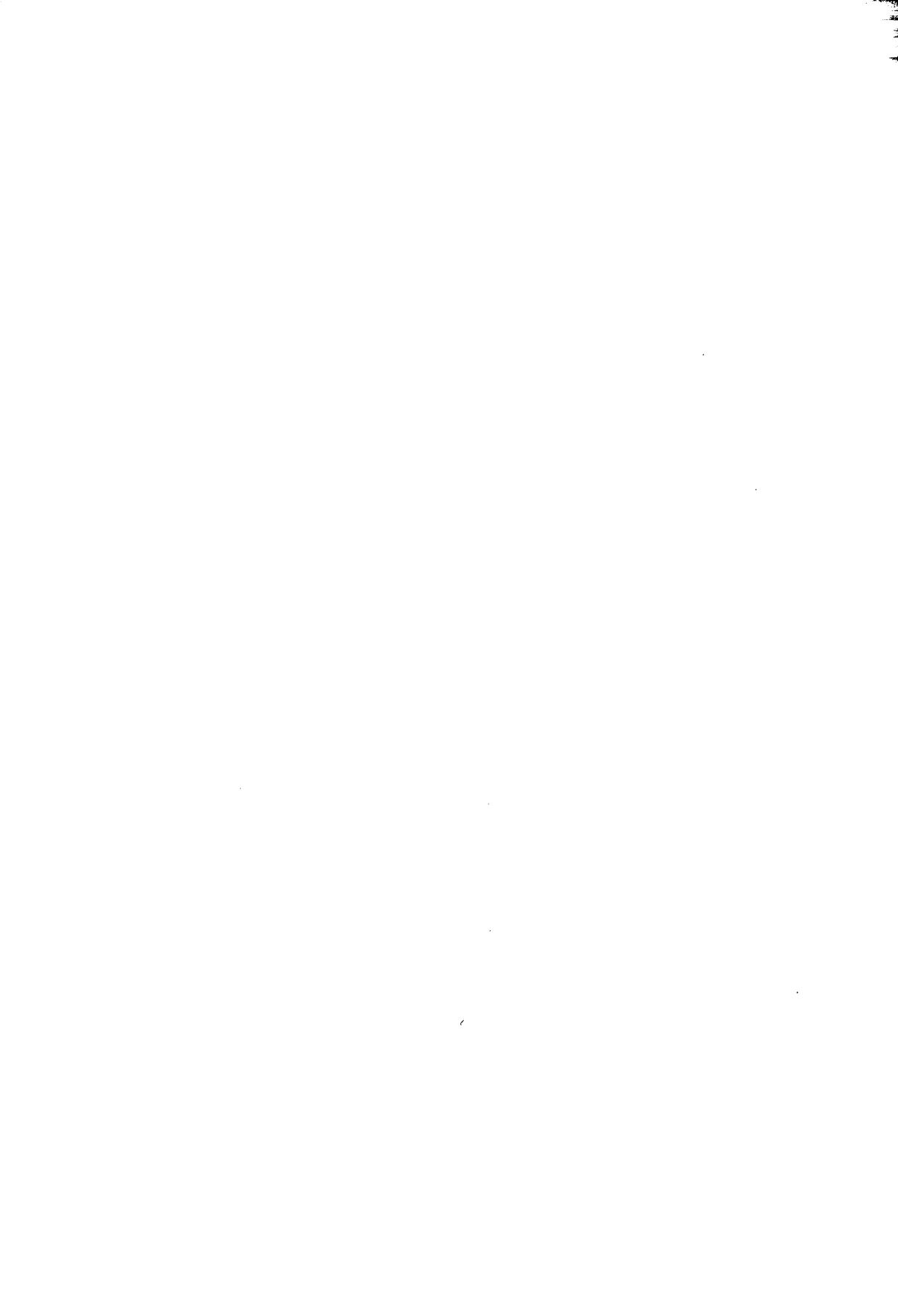
The previous chapters provided a discussion of various theories and models regarding American identity. This identity was always conceptualized as a form of national identity, and often revolved around the definition of the American people: who is an American? What makes one an American? How is one constituted as an American? What values, traditions, practices characterize an American? In what ways is being American a unique position? Answers to these questions revealed that these conceptualizations were primarily the result of their contemporary socio-economic realities. Depending on these, some theories were prescriptive, others descriptive; some worked with homogeneous categories, others emphasized multiplicity; some captured uniformity in processes, others diversity; some argued for descent, others for consent.

The War of Independence and the documents which established the US as an independent country were acts of consent, which were followed by theorizations which could couple it with descent—a natural consequence of mindsets which drew on the European nation-states and their ideologies. Up to the 1940s, an underlying scheme of the various theories regarded the possibility of the emergence of a homogeneous white American nation, united by essentialist categories, such as common ancestry—just as ethnic groups claim to be. The emerging Civil Rights Movement in the mid-1950s marked the beginning of an era which admitted to pluralism and differences, and aimed at theorizations which could grasp these, yet also united them within one common framework. The realization of how extremely diverse and multifaceted the American ethnic and racial landscape was shifted the focus to concepts, values, and ideologies which may keep this multiethnic, multicolored, and multicultural nation in one. Based on Sollors' proposition, the American nation was yet again conceptualized as a people held together by consent.

As for the core the consent is constructed around, which is political ideology in Greenfeld's interpretation, it has changed throughout the years, always being context-dependent and power-related. It drew on some features and values inherited from the Puritans and the Enlightenment of the founding fathers. It supposedly remained religious, tolerant, and independent. However, all these can be measured through difference; thus these features may call for the establishment of categories for their Other. The present era is one in which people in many of these collective categories wish not to be the Other, the marginalized, and are willing to fight to belong. However, their struggle will probably result in a rearrangement of social groups, but not the disappearance of difference based on marginalization and ex-

clusion—these differences will just probably shift in some direction, allowing for a more tolerant redrawing of the center/margin distinction. This is just as the models and theories do, which not only try to describe these processes, but also try to contribute to a heightened presence of social flexibility, since “the requirements of national economies, politics and ideologies influence the struggles between theories, including empirically-grounded ones”⁶⁷ as well.

⁶⁷ Gans 1996, 454.



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