STATUS INCONSISTENCY RECONSIDERED:
Theoretical Problems & Neglected Consequences

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION*

With increasing economic prosperity in the recent postwar period, issues of status and prestige have been substituted for political struggle and class-linked ideology in Western societies. Politicians, sociologists, and ordinary men seem to be primarily concerned with the mechanisms for attaining and maintaining high social status and not so much with economic survival. Democratic societies with growing economic surpluses are continually forced to reconcile the constitutionally guaranteed equality of all of their members with the factually existing inequality of opportunities and life conditions.

For these societies to fill positions which are considered to be of great service, it is said, people must be motivated to acquire the necessary qualification and to meet the role obligations once they occupy these positions. Social mobility, it is further argued, is a functional requisite of economic development as it effectively exploits a population's potential of talent and motivation. As mobility enhances the rationality of economic action, the chances for greater mobility increase in turn. However, horizontal and vertical mobility may lead to imbalanced status dimensions such that the individual is evaluated highly in one respect and less favorably in another. Of course, the reverse has been suggested as well, namely, that mobility with respect to different bases of status may serve to equilibrate inconsistent status dimensions (e.g., Hartman 1974).

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We chose to explore the idea of status inconsistency for various reasons inspite or perhaps because of its much disputed theoretical and methodological potential. While in a survey article Meyer and Hammond (1971: 99) call attention to the concept of status inconsistency as "one of the most important fundamental ideas about modern society", Olsen and Tully (1972) arrive at the conclusion that it should be abandoned as it adds so little to the current sociological enterprise. Moreover, in a recent paper, Hope (1975: 322) purports "to reopen" the "issue which many sociologist regard as settled" in that he defends Lenski's (1954; 1956) earliest statement of status-inconsistency theory against attacks on its coherence.

The value of status (in)consistency as a subject matter for social research has been disputed on methodological as well as substantive grounds. On the one hand, inconsistently ranked substatuses have been found to result in individual stress or the desire for change (e.g., Lenski 1954; Goffman 1957; Zelditch and Anderson 1966); to create personal difficulties leading to the development of a number of alternative response mechanisms or techniques in order to cope with the inconsistency problem ranging from overconformity to psychosomatic symptoms (e.g., Lipset 1964; Hofstadter 1964; Jackson 1962; Sampson 1966); to lead to political movements (see, e.g., the papers in Bell 1964); and to destabilize as well as to integrate the social system (e.g., Lenski 1954; Simmel 1955; Coleman 1957; Galtung 1966).

On the other hand, authors like Hyman (1966) and Blalock (1966; 1967a; 1967b) have concluded that many effects of status inconsistency can hardly be distinguished from the independent effects on behavior of basic status dimensions.

The primary problem, however, seems to be that the social influences of imbalanced status attributes on an individual's behavior are not directly observable, although they may have observable effects. Nevertheless, these social forces are real because their effects are real, regardless of whether any stressful experience through imbalanced status attributes can be observed. People respond to situations not necessarily as they really are, but as they perceive them to be. Of course, as the social realm is of an indirect nature or hidden behind meanings, it is subject to considerable interpretation (Cuzzort 1969: 26-28; Strasser 1976: Ch. 1). When Durkheim (1965) derived his explanation of religious phenomena from their (integrative) effects on society, where were then the methodologists to call Durkheim to scientific order? The only observable things that he had access to were the members of some religious group gathering to worship some sacred objects.

Not surprisingly, therefore, we shall direct our main efforts at examining the consequences of different types of status inconsistency on the individual, group, and societal level. In trying to accomplish these tasks we shall emphasize direction of inconsistency as opposed to magnitude. This also seems to reflect recent developments in the field, namely, that the mapping of the concept of status inconsistency has changed from interval scales into ordinal scales as Lebowitz (1974: 8) notes (cf. Lenski 1954 and Jackson 1962 for examples of interval and ordinal mappings respectively).

Although much research has recently been done on the subject under the various headings of status inconsistency,

status congruence, status crystallization, rank balance, etc.,[1] there has been little effort to systematically relate the findings or to develop a general theoretical statement concerning the consequences of status disequilibrium for the individual, society, and intermediary groups. Research on status inconsistency has traditionally been characterized by widespread inconclusiveness and often contradictory results and by findings more often than not based on a hodgepodge of facts, mostly derived from research on other topics. Most importantly, perhaps, there is lack of theoretical tradition in inconsistency research leaving the sheer endless number of ad hoc findings unrelated to a coherent structure of concepts, definitions, and assumptions.

We also believe that a systematic discussion of the major theoretical problems and the consequences of status inconsistency may render valuable insights into the genesis and nature of some types of deviant or non-conformist behavior which cannot be sufficiently explained by an approach that centers on class antagonism and economic interests. Finally, this study should be taken as a modest attempt to explore an important area of inquiry (1) into the distributive aspects of social stratification, namely, how people manage to attain status, become status inconsistent, and manage to change their disequilibrated statuses; and (2) into the relational aspects of social stratification, namely, by attending to the social-structural processes involved in the creation and resolution of status inconsistencies and by asking the question, "what functions does status inconsistency serve and who benefits from it in present-day society?"

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[1] All of these terms will be used synonymously with status equilibrium in this paper; similarly, the notion of status dimensions will be used synonymously with status ranks, substatuses, an individual's statuses, stratified properties, status attributes, and status characteristics.

The present research memorandum is therefore organized around two tasks. The first is to introduce concepts and to examine assumptions central to the explanation of status inconsistency and the processes of status equilibration. Chapter 2 aims at cursorily illuminating substantive and methodological presuppositions which have been largely neglected in the theory of status inconsistency. Assuming that a theory of status inconsistency presupposes a general theory of status, in Chapter 3 we introduce the concept of social status and elaborate upon the various status dimensions and their interrelationships. Our second objective will be to suggest some additional factors which have not been sufficiently taken into account in the prediction of the behavioral consequences resulting from status disequilibrium. Chapter 4 is devoted to an outline of a theory of status equilibration which is more concerned with the attitudinal and behavioral implications than the causes of disequilibration. An attempt to develop a typology of responses to status disequilibrium is made in Chapter 5 while in Chapter 6 we present a survey of problems with delineating the scope of social phenomena within which status inconsistencies occur and with providing conceptual tools to predict the direction of inconsistency effects. Finally, in Chapter 7 we pay attention to some macrosociological implications of social mobility and status inconsistency in an analysis of the much neglected consequences of types and the extent of status inconsistencies for stability and conflict in post-capitalistic societies.

2. THEORETICAL PRESUPPOSITIONS OF STATUS INCONSISTENCY RESEARCH

Numerous studies have shown how the individual comes to accept society's definition of him and to orient his behavior accordingly. Especially since the 1950's systematic research has been undertaken to investigate the ways in which individuals may act to change society's definition of them and subsequently their self-conception. One such set of studies has led to the development of a theory which we shall call status equilibration. As the title suggests, this theory is based on an equilibrium model. Discrepancies, i.e., conflicts, between the social evaluations of various status attributes of a given individual are seen to create stress at the personality level and a resultant desire to ameliorate this condition with important consequences on the societal level. Possible reactions to status inconsistency which have been studied or suggested include many forms of more or less deviant responses such as mental illness, social isolation, racial prejudice, crime, aggression, political extremism, group conflict, and social movements.

Why do we expect status inconsistency to have effects? What sorts of effects will it have? Discrepant status attributes may be experienced as violating rules that define for actors appropriate, fair, and often necessary constellations of stratified attributes. As we shall see in greater detail later, inconsistent individuals are confronted with conflicting expectations which generate uncertainty about who they are and how they should behave in various situations. Normative ambiguity and behavioral uncertainty are thought to be threatening, frustrating, and hence stressful because the inconsistent attribute(s)

is (are) integrated through the aforementioned rules into the larger social system. In that the status inconsistent person will act to reduce the stress in some specific way, he differs from the consistent person whose position on the particular vertical dimension is of the same level. Of course, some status inconsistencies are more stressful than others. Whether, and the extent to which, actors in a given social system are affected by status inconsistencies ultimately depends on motivational considerations (Meyer and Hammond 1971: 94).

2.1 Marx, Weber, and the Functionalists' Dilemma

The multi-dimensionality of stratification systems had been at the center of the continuing debate over the most powerful strategy of explaining social stratification ever since Marx and Weber set its sociological stage. They shared an enduring concern with studying the peculiarities of capitalist societies and their characteristic inequalities. They focused their attention on the crucial historical change which led, for the first time, to men working not in family or neighborhood groups but in work places such as factories and offices under the authority of masters through the exchange of their labor for wages in the formally free market, resulting in exploitation and alienation from labor's product and the material and organizational means of production (cf. Fallers 1973).

For Marx, property ownership and the division of labor lead to common economic interests out of which classes arise. More generally, given the laws of capitalistic development, the common class situation would necessarily give rise to class organizations (Bendix 1974: 152-153). Weber differs from Marx in that he did not consider the capitalistic mode of production to determine all social life. According

to Weber, capitalism could only become such a pervasive force in modern society because it developed within the limits of an increasingly rational way of life in Western societies (Löwith 1960: 20).

Consequently, Weber's analysis broadens rather than refutes Marx's concept of the economic determination of class situations. For Weber, ownership of the means of production or dependence on wage labor are only special, though important, cases of class situations, thus rendering the connection between class situation and class organization problematic.

> Class situations exist wherever men are similarly situated by their "relative control over goods and skills." This control produces income, procures other goods, gains them a social position, and leads to a certain style of life. Those in a common class situation are often led to similar sentiments and ideas, but not necessarily to concerted action. By contrast, class organizations occur only when an immediate economic opponent is involved, organization is technically easy (as in the factory), and clear goals are articulated by an intelligentsia (Bendix 1974: 152).

In other words, class situations vary with the common experiences of individuals in reaction to shifting economic circumstances. Moreover, as a consequence of rationalization pervading all segments of society and generating a system of inescapable dependencies, Weber depicts another feature of modern Western societies: the growth of bureaucracy. By Weber's time, regional and national governments as well as great capitalist enterprise, trade unions, and political parties of conservative, liberal or socialist persuasion

were coming to be bureaucratized. As suggested by the quotation above, economic, professional, religious, and ethnic interests may be contingent upon the economic and political solidarity of workers. That is to say, the very process of organizing a class creates new interests, a new awareness of status, and subsequently "inequalities of status which impede concerted action on a broader front" (Bendix 1974: 152). In sharp contrast to Marx who assigned to the industrial working class a theoretically and practically privileged position, Weber saw its historical triumph as by no means assured, precisely because its associations such as the trade unions and political parties showed a tendency toward internal oligarchy and bureaucratization that produced new inequalities (Michels 1949; Gouldner 1969; Fallers 1973).

In short, besides class(es) Weber sees other independent, though interacting, forms of stratification which refer to ranges of crucial life experiences other than work. Far from underestimating the pervasive influence of the economic class situation in social life, Weber seems to be inclined to attribute to the various forms of social power (military-coercive, state-political, bureaucratic-organizational) primacy in accounting for the ways in which people are organized and have control over valued goods and services. Like Marx, he sees in the class situation (in terms of an individual's or group's market position) a constant factor pervading most segments of society; but Weber, unlike Marx, regards power as a variable that helps to explain the variations in stratification systems and whose saliency depends on the common experiences of individuals in response to economic (e.g., occupational, technological) and social conditions (e.g., legal, professional, organizational, ethnic, ideological). How one relates to people with whom one

resides, plays, worships, and has sexual intercourse constitutes another structure of experiences Weber calls status group(s). The third realm of crucial experiences is the political party in which men line up for power struggles (Collins 1975: 54).

In line with his microsociological perspective, Weber did not use the notion of dimension but spoke instead of "communities of action" when referring to these distinct ways of concretely organizing people and resources. Every group is seen as a part of the economic, social, and political order and not as the inevitable by-product of economic organization. Groups "are formed by common economic interests, a shared style of life, and an exclusion of outsiders meant to improve the group's life-chances" (Bendix 1974: 153). Class, status, and power thus appear as "alternative forms of social power" (Mann 1975: 2). Although prestige, reflected in a style of life, "is at least as enduring a basis of group formation as a common situation in the market" (Bendix 1974: 152), its source must be sought in the other elements of Weber's tripartite model of social stratification, namely, class or party:

> The development of status is essentially a question of stratification resting upon usurpation. Such usurpation is the normal origin of almost all status honor. But the road from this purely conventional situation to legal privilege, positive or negative, is easily traveled as soon as a certain stratification of the social order has in fact been "lived in" and has achieved stability by virtue of a stable distribution of economic power (Gerth and Mills 1958: 188).

These considerations suggest a series of arguments central to the discussion in the following chapters.

First, the Weberian concept of status embodies a prestige component and an ideological component. The quotation testifies to the fact that status is a second order dimension of stratification derived from, and a possible outcome of, class situation and political power. If the identification of life style with the consumptive aspect of social stratification is correct, it may be justified to interpret status as a delayed effect of its productive aspect, i.e., of class relations (Strasser 1973: 38). In the quotation it is also pointed out that status in the sense of prestige refers to the progressive stabilization and reified legitimation of factually existing differentials in power and privilege. Status, in the sense of ideology, thus refers to the "means of emotional production" (Collins 1975: 58) which not only transform classes into status groups but also make legitimacy an important focus for efforts at domination.

> If status is the mutual recognition of honour differentially attached to positions, it is the legitimation, or the ossification of existing relations of domination whose source must be elsewhere. For, as many writers have suggested, stable relations of domination will become moral ones with the mere passage of time (Mann 1975: 8).

Far from denying the importance of status as a stratificational dimension[2], we suggest to keep its aspect of prestige or social honor analytically separate from its aspect of ideological power in terms of cultural and religious belief systems.

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[2] Status as a dimension of stratification must be distinguished from the concept of status as a combined indicator for several evaluated attributes of an individual (see especially Chapter 3).

Second, in opposition to Marx's view of society as "a set of coherent groups neatly bounded off from each other along a single dimension" (Collins 1975: 50), Weber demonstrates that different orders or dimensions of stratification do not line up neatly. This suggests not only multiple causation of structured social inequality but also the need to study possible effects of incongruence resulting from the behavior of persons whose position varies on different status dimensions as compared with individuals who are consistently ranked on these dimensions. It is assumed that some congruence rules define what are to be considered consistent, and also inconsistent, relations between status dimensions. These rules, to be sure, tend to reflect the strategies of legitimation that prevail in a given social system about the proper constellation of status dimensions.

Thirdly, status inconsistency research takes up questions addressed primarily by functional theorists of social stratification, though on a different empirical and analytical level. Functionalists regard rewards, mostly income and occupational prestige, as <u>the</u> selective device that motivates the most able individuals to acquire the qualifications necessary to fill the most important positions and to meet the obligations once these positions have been occupied (cf., e.g., Davis and Moore 1945). Of course, what one regards as primary needs of society, from which criteria for positional significance may be derived, will depend on what one recognizes as the basic social values and the extent to which they are accepted.

Since man's actions are thought to be evaluated and sanctioned according to their functionality for the maintenance of <u>some</u> value system, a correspondence between social evaluation and reward is seen as an important presupposition of social stability. In other words,

functionalists hypothesize equilibrating processes (e.g., through congruence rules) that operate to align an individual's position on different scales of talent or qualification and reward on the one hand and criteria of social evaluation on the other (Broom and Jones 1974; Slomczynski and Wesolowski 1974; Kimberly 1966). However, functional theory has maneuvered itself into a dilemma. On the one hand, it presupposes a system of privileges based on social talent whereby the ranks of actors on certain attributes (income, prestige, power, etc.) are to be aligned in order to be of maximal value in solving the motivational problem of social recruitment. On the other hand, several mechanisms operate in social reality that make stratification a less effective device to solve society's recruitment problems. Tumin (1953; 1963) especially has shown that social stratification tends to contribute to inheritance of class status thus favoring ascription of positions in society and limiting the possibility of recruiting the most talented persons. As a further consequence, positive self-conceptions of members of society will be unevenly dispersed, thus reducing opportunities to develop creative potentials and creating differential loyalties vis-à-vis society.

Another likely effect is that potentially more status inconsistencies occur as the consequences mentioned above violate, at least to some extent, congruence rules of achievement-oriented, democratic societies. Whether the violation of these rules will be experienced as inconsistent depends, among other things, on the efficiency with which the elite uses its power to disseminate an ideology that sanctions the status quo. If Ogburn (1933) is correct in hypothesizing that the material culture, above all technology, changes at a faster rate than the adaptive culture including customs, laws, government, and education, one may assume that changes in the occupational structure

due to technological developments will effect changes in the educational structure much more than the other way around (Bornschier and Heintz 1975; Fischer-Kowalski and Strasser 1974). In spite of continuous educational lags, technological development has contributed to considerable economic growth and subsequently to an increased capacity and willingness on the part of post-capitalistic societies to redistribute income. We may therefore expect that these instabilities in the system of social evaluation and stratification generated by technological and economic changes will lead to an increase of status inconsistencies of the type income > occupation > education. Undoubtedly, attempts will be made by some groups to maintain these economic advantages and to transform leading reward substatuses into investment substatuses, if for no other reason than to raise the degree of legitimacy which is generally higher for the investment substatus hierarchy than for the reward substatus hierarchy.

These changing constellations of interests which emerge in times of gradual social transformations (rather than revolutionary changes and economic depression), seem to represent the essence of what we shall later describe as the tendency toward status politics (Ch. 7).

Three propositions are suggested: (1) The interdependence of status dimensions is the result of divergent forces operating in the social structure and <u>not</u> of some objective complementarity between the investment and reward aspects or the ascribed and achieved dimensions of one's social status. (2) In times when investment aspects such as education, qualification, occupational experience, control of means of production and organization, etc. dominate the relationship between substatus hierarchies, we expect more attempts at changing the <u>status quo</u> (i.e., the distribution

and/or meaning of the leading substatus) and ensuing conflicts than in periods with an emphasis on reward aspects such as income, immaterial privileges, prestige, power, etc. (3) The degree of legitimacy of a status dimension in relation to other dimensions depends on its social accessability (e.g., via educational programs or income policy) and its individual reversibility (e.g., an individual's educational substatus is less susceptible to "loss" than, say, income).

Moreover, some kinds of inconsistencies seem to be necessary to a given social system, since some social resources like authority or power must be allocated not only to balance prestige and/or income but also to carry out certain activities at all (Meyer and Hammond 1971: 94). As illustrative examples we may refer to the low-prestige and high-authority position of the policeman and the high-prestige and low-authority position of the staff technical advisor.[3]

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[3]On the one hand, evaluated status characteristics are always embedded in the specific functional context of institutions, on the other hand, a social system cannot allocate baldly, and/or its dominant groups are simply not willing to, say, prestige to positions in accordance with market, reward, or investment considerations. "A violation of the presumed defined relation between an evaluated status attribute and its functional context leads to the same kind of status inconsistency pressures as a violation of the defined relation (or congruence rule) between one attribute and another. Thus, the American priest or professor experiences the status inconsistency of prestige unmatched by comparable authority or rewards. But if he is paid like a merchant and given authority over federal programs and grants, he trades one kind of status inconsistency for another. Persons then, all of whose evaluated attributes are properly aligned with each other are likely to experience status inconsistency with respect to the functional problems they face" (Meyer and Hammond 1971: 94-95).

One could also say that a stratification system may confront occupants of social positions with status-role discrepancies as well as with status inconsistencies. Status-role discrepancy takes as its point of departure the functional distribution of rewards, which presumably causes a gulf between self-evaluation according to achievement and reward. Status inconsistency, by contrast, is based on the distributive structure of inequality assuming that frustration is produced by a more or less pronounced incongruence of evaluated status attributes. There are three alternatives to eliminate the stress problem caused by each of these types of status discrepancy: (1) The first possibility is to change roles (i.e., special functions carried out), thus effecting a change in at least one status dimension, and at the same time to maintain the given social evaluation of roles. (2) Another possibility involves a change in social evaluation standards and at the same time keeping the same roles occupied. (3) Thirdly, it is possible to situationally reallocate roles or functions, which, however, will subsequently entail a process of re-evaluation as well. In the first case, we are dealing with horizontal and/or vertical social mobility, while the other cases imply an indirect change of positions in the long run, which will occur in the empirical system of stratification when roles come to be evaluated or allocated differently.

Social mobility, it seems to us, essentially constitutes the functionalists' dilemma. If the stratification system does not (and perhaps cannot) fulfill the social function of most efficient recruitment of talent through differential privilege, opportunities for upward (and downward) mobility must occur if democratic societies are to be capable of redeeming their promise of equality of opportunity. In other words, status inconsistency is basically a consequence

of contradictory traits of modern industrial society: (1) This society establishes norms that define the relationship between one's position (and performance) on the one hand and the rewards it entails on the other hand. Its members are expected to guide their behavior according to these rules thus signifying the enduring relationships between the parts of the stratification system. (2) In opposition to the static aspect of expectation rules the same type of society presupposes a relatively high degree of class and stratum fluidity, i.e., social mobility based on the expansion and contraction occupational structures as well as on the extent of access to elite positions by members of lower social strata. This dynamic element seems to relativize the normative principle of expectancy and account for its frequent violation leading to specific individual experiences and reactions. The key to adequately explain the change of the system of stratification lies ultimately in the extent and kind of interdependence of these stratificational elements (cf. Smith 1973: 18).

Discounting the ethnocentristic flavor of their statement,[4] Blau und Duncan (1967: 437), in their classic work on the American occupational structure, strike the right cord:

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[4]This polemic refers to the fact that more job openings do not yet make for greater openness of a society unless they are linked to a change in the value system. That is to say, values and norms of an universalistic-achievement type serve as an explanatory link between an expanding economy (i.e., more openings in certain occupations) and a more equalitarian, open society (i.e., mainly recruitment and advancement of men in high-status occupations from a broader social base). Blau and Duncan (1967) fail to distinguish between demand mobility and social distance mobility when they arrive at their conclusions.

> The superior opportunity for upward mobility in American society is what sustains the egalitarian ideology, which expresses this opportunity in exaggerated form, and which has profound implications for the status structure.

The great extent of opportunities available to the majority of the active labor force in the United States may be reassuring that everyone gets his chance if he is willing and capable and will likely reinforce the traditional belief in the value of an open-class society.[5]

In conclusion we may state that economic development and the concommitant expansion of the occupational structure of most modern Western societies has undoubtedly increased social mobility, but certain patterns of social mobility, and of status inconsistency for that matter, may be expected to produce new inequalities (Allardt 1968: 22; Strasser 1974: 35).

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[5]This is so inspite of or perhaps precisely because talking about an "open-class society" to make sense presupposes knowledge of the "critical amount" of mobility necessary for the concrete society in operation. No one has ever defined it. Instead, most students of social mobility have recurred to a cultural tradition which is objectively definable -- a cultural tradition that assigns a high value on social mobility. Lipset and Bendix (1954: 34) suggest several factors which may help to explain the continuing effects of this belief system: (1) On the one hand, the absence of a feudal past legitimized the new class of capitalists, while (2) on the other hand, the constant high rate of social mobility supported the belief in the "open-class" value. Furthermore, (3) the patterns of business careers at the bottom and at the top seem to confirm the same belief. Then, (4) especially the increase in educational opportunities keeps the steady expansion and provision of opportunities convincingly alive. (5) The patterns of upward mobility of children of immigrant or certain ethnic background seem to demonstrate the effectiveness of this belief. And (6) the consumption capitalism minimizes the differences between the standard of living in working-class and middle-class occupations, and thus operates in the same direction.

To generally attribute a stabilizing and integrative function to the system of stratification is untenable; rather, it seems that there is a tendency in post-capitalistic societies to stabilize their bases of acquiring and distributing valued goods and services by other than stratificational means. As a consequence, stratification by status in the double Weberian sense is favored. Of course, this kind of stratification has in turn significant effects toward a stabilization of the existing social structure provided that its general goals are attained. However, since technological repercussions, economic change, and social mobility are, at least to some extent, contingent upon the stability of status-stratification, we may hypothesize with Weber (Gerth and Mills 1958: 193-194) that in periods of great technological and economic transformations the class situation will be pushed to the foreground and class politics will be favored (Hofstadter 1964: 85). We have reason to believe that this proposition does not apply to all forms and developmental stages of post-capitalistic society. We shall attend to this question at some length in Chapter 7. Nevertheless, our theoretical frame of reference does give the explanatory edge to Weber's legacy as its separation of the dimensions of class, status, and authority seems to account for the continuities and changes of stratificational aspects in modern Western societies more completely than Marx's "traditional" view of the fusion of stratificational attributes.[6]

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[6]Here, Tönnies' distinction between communal and associational forms of social organization and his observation that the latter (ideal-)type characterizes modern capitalistic societies, is of great relevance. The interested reader is referred to Cahnman (1973) and Hermann Strasser's review of this book in Contemporary Sociology, 4 (1975: 545-547). Bendix (1974: 157) illustrates the point succinctly: "If 'modernity' is shorthand for the separation of class, status, and authority, then 'tradition'

2.2 Conceptual and Operational Consideration

The theory of status equilibration is based on the proposition that an actor's position in a social system -- with respect to the distribution of social rewards and responsibilities -- is dependent on a multi-dimensional system of social ranking. That is, one's social status is determined by the position on a number of status hierarchies, not on a single dimension from high to low.

Studies of social mobility, and of status discrepancies for that matter, provide insights into the participation of individuals in their society. That is to say, they may furnish answers to the questions of (1) how members of society come to occupy a position (access aspect) and (2) how status is assigned to occupants of social positions as soon as they have begun to carry out the social function implied by their position (performance aspect). Research into the effects of mobility processes has traditionally been based on the idea of the transition from feudal to civil society, whereby the crucial difference between these types of social order is attributed to the way of attaining a position. In feudal society the principle of ascription played the dominant role, i.e., one's position in life was mainly determined by inherited characteristics. Civil or

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stands for their fusion. Until the early modern period, economic activities were an aspect of the household. Status depended more on the individual's family ties than it does where modernizing tendencies prevail. In this sense, India is a striking example of a traditional society. Her social relations hinge on differences existing from birth. Individuals deal with one another as members of religious, ethnic, or linguistic communities. This communal membership is given an elaborate cultural rationale. Such ascendance of the group over the individual exists elsewhere as well: the prevalence of communal ties characterizes the traditional aspect of societies."

industrial society, by contrast, attempted to unite the Enlightenment ideals of freedom and equality with the principle of equality of opportunity, professing that every citizen should at least theoretically be able to occupy any position in the social rank order, as long as he was willing to fulfill its prescribed tasks (cf. Svalastoga 1965: 40).

However, the historical, ideal-typical distinction between the ascriptive and achievement-based models of status attainment must be kept apart from the given, concrete status dimensions based on ascription and achievement which exist in contemporary industrial society. Thus, the measurement of social status includes position on both ascriptive and achieved status hierarchies.[7] Only a change in the social evaluation of an ascribed characteristic can effect a change in its ranking on a continuum from high to low. An actor's position on achieved status hierarchies is subject to change according (at least theoretically) to individual efforts, although ranking, as we shall argue in some detail below, is a matter of social evaluation.

[7]Ascriptive status refers to those status characteristics which are not subject to change through personal effort. The ascribed status attributes most commonly used in measuring social status are: (a) racial-ethnic group; (b) age; (c) sex; (d) and often religion. Achieved status positions are those which the actor may attain through personal activities. Achieved status variables frequently used in the measurement of social status are: (a) income; (b) occupation; (c) education. If one does not refer to individuals but rather to families, the question of ascription and achievement becomes one of the relationship between production, more likely dominated by achievement orientation, and reproduction, more likely dominated by ascriptive criteria than the area of production. In feudal society, occupation and family and, consequently, production and reproduction were closely connected while, in industrial society, they differentiated and came to be increasingly separated rendering more freedom to the respective sphere and greater efficacy to the principle of achievement.

Status equilibrium refers to the social and psychological condition resulting from congruent rankings on all status hierarchies measured. Conversely, status disequlibrium refers to the condition resulting from an imbalance among an actor's positions on various status hierarchies which are associated with his overall social rank. We may conceptualize this phenomenon on a continuum from perfect status equilibrium (e.g., a Protestant, male, middle-aged M.D. earning DM 10.000 per month or the wife of a foreign worker from Turkey cleaning floors in a restaurant earning DM 700.- p.m.) to completely disequilibrated social status characteristics (e.g., a low paying job with high educational prerequites and low prestige: nurses in some countries).

However, if we are to follow Durkheim's (1950: 110) explanatory dictum regarding social facts, we can understand social stratification only by categorizing the organization of social aggregates into meaningful units of social structure from which individual prestige, power, and privilege are derived (Hodge 1962: 337). In other words, it is argued that status (dis)equilibrium should be treated as a group, rather than an individual property. Naturally, the units of observation are not necessarily the appropriate units of analysis. Hodge (1962) has suggested occupation to be the most salient membership group, if for no other reason than the amount of time we spend at occupational activities and the functional relation that exists between such status dimensions as education, occupation, and income, enabling us to relate other dimensions to occupational groups in a theoretically fruitful way. However, the implicit assumption that the objectively measured differences between, say, actually invested education of some occupational group will coincide with the subjectively experienced inconsistencies of each of its members seems to be untenable. Thus far

status inconsistency research has explicitly focused attention on the internal inconsistency of individual rankings.

Studies of status inconsistency concentrate on the direction of the departure of an individual's or social grouping's actual status dimension(s) (e.g., education or income) from its (their) expected state. Thus, they indicate that the degree of status inconsistency and the type of inconsistency are the two most important factors in determining the type of response. That is to say that certain inconsistencies measured in "objective" terms and inferred by the investigator will not show any of the usually predicted responses (cf. Portes 1972; Kenkel 1956; Kelly and Chambliss 1966). To put it in yet other terms: Dimensions of social stratification show some autonomy as is demonstrated by the case of a change of occupation which results from additional educational attainment and which does not automatically lead to economic advancement (cf. Slomczynski and Wesolowski 1974: 9). Consequently, it is true that some effects of status inconsistencies can hardly be distinguished from independent effects of basic status dimensions on behavior (cf. Hyman 1966; Geschwender 1970; Treiman 1970).[8]

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[8] In fact, Taylor (1973) has shown that not only are there different levels of interaction among independent variables but also different types, among them "augmentative", "suppressive", and "inverse" interaction effects. If one takes the result of additivity as the basis for expected effects, then augmentative effects occur whenever the combined effects of two or more independent variables are greater than those expected. Suppressive interaction effects of the combined effects of independent variables are less than the expected, while inverse effects result from a combination of the independent variables in an opposite direction than expected on additivity.

We may anticipate that the crucial problem of status inconsistency theory is to decide what constellations of statuses and attributes of status are in fact inconsistent and subsequently why inconsistent statuses have certain consequences for individual actors, groups of social actors, and the entire social system (cf. Meyer and Hammond 1971: 91-92). In general, inconsistencies between achieved and ascribed statuses have been found to have the greatest and most consistent influence on the various dependent variables studied (cf. Segal 1969; Lupri 1972).

The relationship that is presumed to exist between social status and attempts at status equilibration is based on the psychological effect that social evaluation of the actor's status dimensions has on his self-evaluation. If an actor's positions on all status hierarchies relevant to his overall social status are consistent, he will be evaluated and ranked in a similar manner in all social spheres and his self-image (seen here as a reflection of the evaluation of significant others) will be consistent. If, however, an actor's positions on various status hierarchies are inconsistent, he may be subject to conflicting views of himself, depending on which status variable is made salient at the time. The literature suggests that such a condition is disturbing to the individual and often produces frustration and insecurity.

According to Lenski's (1956; 1967) original theses, status inconsistency is stressful because it is more rewarding to the actor to consider himself in view of his highest status while it is more rewarding to others to view him in terms of his lowest status. Thus a conflict between expectations and experiences is thought to result which may be stressful to the individual. The literature also suggests that, given this condition, the actor will attempt

to alleviate it, by conventional or unconventional means. However, while it is probably true that it is more rewarding to consider oneself in terms of one's highest status dimension, it is not at all plausible that the audience finds it (necessarily) rewarding to view ego in terms of the latter's lowest status. The second proposition simply does not follow from ego and alter's attempt to maximize their self-interest. If this were true, man's desire for high status would always rank above all his other goals. The truth is that man's self-interest leads him to order his objectives in hierarchies and priorities, so that in some situations high status may indeed turn out to be the dominant goal that guides his behavior.

Another assumption prevalent in most status inconsistency studies that there is a close fit between the so-called objective status rankings and the subject's own perceptions of reality must be likewise discarded (Box and Ford 1969).

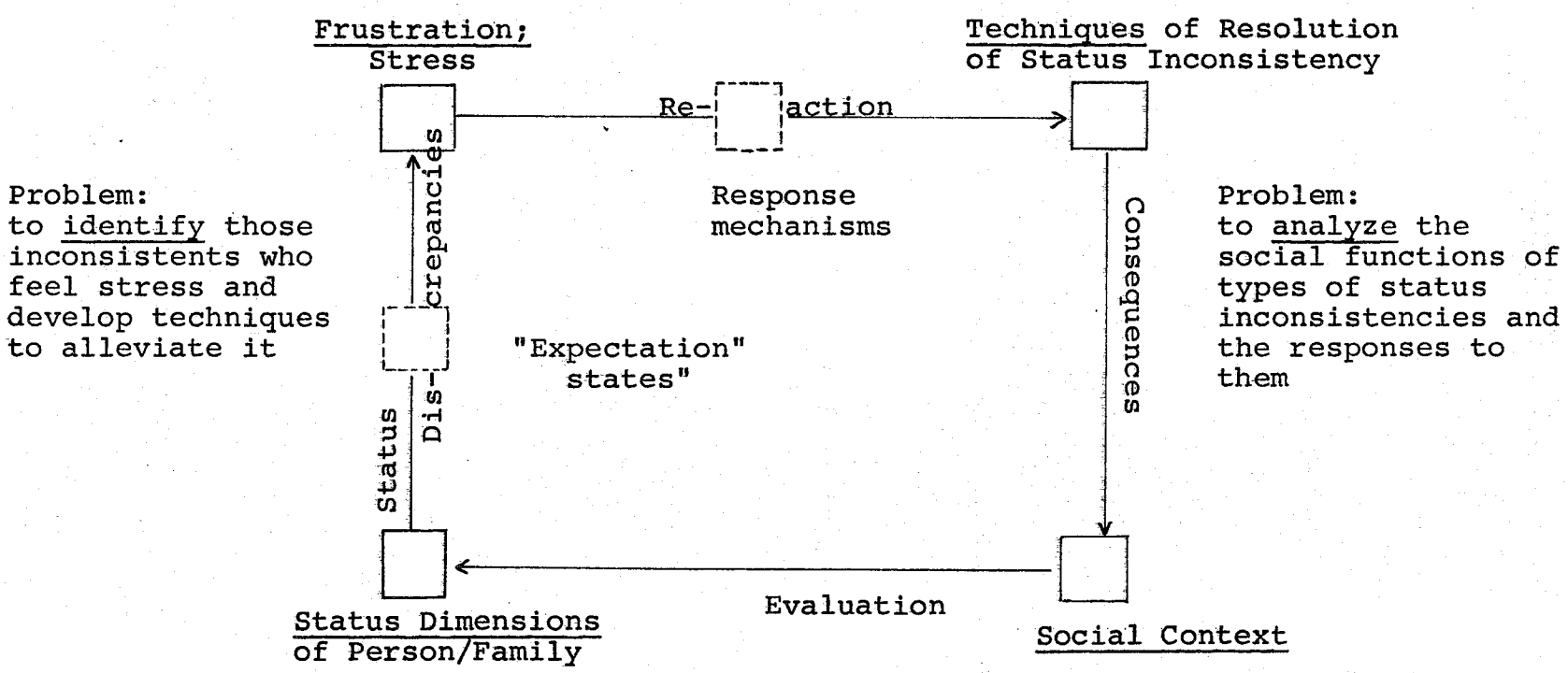
In that we recognize that status attributes may vary considerably in their salience to the actor and in their likelihood to create conflicts in expectations, we should echo a note of scientific caution:

> The consistency of combinations of stratified social positions -- statuses -- or of specific evaluated status attributes is defined by socially established sets of rules, norms and expectations, not by the mechanical operations of a researcher who equates social ranks or levels on a number of dimensions and looks for stress among the "deviants" (Meyer and Hammond 1971: 92).

These theoretical considerations diagrammatically summarized in Chart 1 leave us with many unanswered questions: which

bases for status are most important to the determination of status (dis)equilibrium?; why and under what conditions does the status inconsistent feel frustrated?; is this a necessary reaction?; what determines which response the individual will adopt to solve his problem? It is to these questions that we now turn.

Chart 1: Theoretical Model of Status Inconcistency



3. THE CONCEPT OF SOCIAL STATUS: DIMENSIONS AND EXPECTATIONS

The concept of social status generally refers to a position in a social system (1) with respect to the distribution of prestige, rights, obligations, power and authority; and (2) which involves reciprocal expectations of action with respect to the occupants of other positions in the same system (cf. Gould and Kolb 1964: 692-693). Most importantly, a theory of status inconsistency presupposes a general theory of status as the sociologist "cannot identify effects of inconsistency without first looking at effects of status" (Hope 1975: 341).

It has long been recognized (e.g., Weber 1947; Sorokin 1927; Lenski 1966; Bendix 1974) that most stratification systems are multi-dimensional (e.g., they have economic, political, occupational, etc. bases of stratification) and hence it has been assumed that social status involves several dimensions, i.e., that one's position with respect to the distribution of social rewards and obligations is determined not by position on one but several status hierarchies. This assumption is indeed fundamental to the theory of status equilibration. However, a multi-dimensional basis for status does not necessarily follow from a multi-dimensional stratification system.[9] Were the

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[9] For example, Heller (1969) found in her study of a Jewish community in Poland that, although there were several bases for stratification (occupation, wealth, lineage, etc.), the status of the "learner" was by far the highest in terms of power and prestige even though he did not hold a "job", did not earn money and did not have

social status not multi-dimensional, the theory of status equilibration would, of course, be irrelevant.

The multi-dimensional basis of status suggests that in order for a theory of status equilibration to apply, there must not only be different avenues for the acquisition of status, but these bases must also be linked in some manner, interdependent to some extent. That is, the different status dimensions must neither be valued exclusively as means nor as ends in themselves (e.g., getting an education solely for the sake of occupational success and of learning, respectively) but rather socially defined as interrelated -- perhaps as means to other ends as the case of the general goal of power-prestige would suggest. Attainment in relation to this general goal must not be based on a single status dimension, although society's evaluation of social roles in terms of their capacity to contribute to the realization of fundamental values may lead to the formation of a dominant hierarchy of status dimensions.

Thus, status inconsistency research takes up questions that functional theorists of social stratification have

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ancestors of high status.

> The learners, less than one percent of the population, devoted all their time to learning, from which they derived no material benefit. No one looked down on them for not occupying themselves with making a living. On the contrary, they were treated with great respect. Usually the wife was the economic provider...Learning was a goal in itself and one pursued it with love and joy...it was not supposed to be used as a means of obtaining material benefits (Heller 1969: 184, 188).

Although wealth and lineage were highly valued in the community, the "learner" did not need either to be the most respected. In fact, by being a learner, one created one's own "yikhus" or pedigree that would then be passed on to one's children.

addressed, though on a different empirical and analytical level. The status of an individual in a social system is viewed as depending on the evaluations the other members of the system make of him based upon (1) the individual's position (function) in the system, (2) his performance in this position, and (3) his qualifications. Although performance can be taken as an indicator of ability in many cases, members of a social system tend to assess the individual's ability independently. In other words, both ability and motivation to participate in the social system are thought to affect the level of the individual's performance especially with respect to special functions (which are not common to all positions in the system), while the level of performance of universal functions will be affected mostly by his motivation (Kimberly 1966: 214-216).

As social evaluations of special and universal functions of the individual's position are viewed as determining his status in the social system, we concur with Kimberly (1966: 216) in referring to a number of types of status evaluation: function status, performance status, ability status and loyalty status (the latter with respect to universal functions). Functional theory assumes that in the long run the motivational substratum of society effects that its most capable members occupy the most important positions (i.e., carry out those special functions others depend upon most).

Such a theoretical orientation hence presupposes modes of status attainment as well as status equilibration which assure that positions are adequately filled and that the functions implied contribute to the achievement of differentially evaluated system goals. Since skills and qualification tend to be relatively fixed once the

opportunities of formal schooling have been exhausted, imbalanced statuses are expected to be equilibrated by social mobility of individuals with respect to (special) functions or by re-evaluation or situational reallocations of functions if mobility with respect to functions is not possible. Of course, such a general statement does not say much as long as the individual's status aspiration is not taken into account, as an intervening variable. At any rate, according to the functional perspective, the likely effect of situations in which the individual is not able to equilibrate his substatuses by direct means is a reduction in his motivation to participate in the social system (cf. Lenski 1956), that is, to withdraw from it or to rebel against its cultural goals and institutionalized means. All this, to be sure, is in turn linked with the psychological discomfort that results from discrepancies of some magnitude between the individual's special functions and his ability at the personality level.

Another aspect of the interdependence of status dimensions involves their compatibility. That is, statuses may reinforce each other, contradict each other, or merely be neutral in relation to each other. For example, in most industrialized societies there is generally a high correlation between occupational (prestige) and income dimensions. A highly regarded occupation is expected to bring a high level of income; if it doesn't, these statuses are "disequilibrated". But imagine a society which stresses that rulers must be kept poor to stay honest. A person high on political power and low on income in such a society would not suffer from status disequilibrium because the negative correlation between high political power and high income is socially sanctioned (his statuses would be disequilibrated if he were high on both power and income). Similarly, one would not expect status equilibration to be relevant in situations

where statuses are neutral in relation to each other, e.g., the statuses of worker and father.

It is therefore suggested that an individual's substatuses which are seemingly imbalanced may indeed not give rise to any sign of status inconsistency if one or both of two conditions are given: (1) The structure of rewarding social roles which show inconsistent status dimensions on "objective" grounds is balanced by some compensatory mechanism. Slomczynski and Wesolowski (1974: 13) refer to teachers, scientific and nursing personnel in Poland as being characterized by relatively high qualifications, low pay, and very high prestige -- all cases in which the (compensatory high) prestige factor operates to balance a structure of inconsistent substatuses. (2) Certain attributes of social status such as education may be valued not only for being instrumental in attaining social system goals (i.e., as investment) but also for representing a specific type of reward (i.e., as consummatory).

> If motivation to gain education is conditioned by the conviction that education is a value in itself, then consideration of other rewards for filling a particular professional role may be of small importance for the individual. Education was demonstrated to be a desired value independently of other values (Slomczynski and Wesolowski 1974: 13; cf. also Wesolowski 1969: 507-508).

In short, differential ranking on different status dimensions does not in itself produce status disequilibrium. As Sampson (1966: 220) notes:

> It appears that the meaningful sense in which rank positions may be said to be incongruent...does not occur with any discrepancy between positions but

> rather with any discrepancy that implies inconsistent expectations for the behavior of the occupants of the positions. This consideration suggests that it is not the mere location on a status hierarchy that is important, but rather the expectations connected with that location.

Malewski (1966) also suggests that in order to establish status disequilibrium it is not sufficient that some status factors rank higher than others unless those differences are inconsistent with the normative expectations of the actor's social milieu. However, little empirical research has been done so far on the interrelationships between different status dimensions with respect to the implications that rank on one has for the expectations of rank on others. Most theorists simply assume (1) that the variables they use (income, education, age, racial-ethnic status, etc.) are characterized by complementary expectations and (2) that ascriptive dimensions account for considerable variance when linked to achievement dimensions which clearly points to their differential elasticity as to resolving problems of status inconsistency and social mobility (cf. Warren 1975: 8).

However, it is not enough to say that consistency in ranked substatuses is normatively expected, although it may be empirically infrequent (cf. Nam and Powers 1965), if one fails to understand the process by which rewards come to be related to the formation of expectations about ranked positions on various dimensions of evaluation which represent the basis for the allocation of rewards in social systems (Cook 1975). In order to determine the relationship between status attainment and the extent of status consistency there must be (1) a distribution rule which specifies how rewards should be allocated, (2) a

congruence rule, closely related to the former, which defines consistent relations between status dimensions, and (3) more or less well-defined expectation states which refer to the individuals' states of knowledge of the relevant dimensions of evaluation necessary for determining what level of reward to expect. As we shall elaborate upon later, the distribution of socially valued outcomes in given situations is based upon dimensions of evaluation which include ascribed and achieved attributes such as seniority, age, sex, ethnicity, level of education, level of need, skill, performance, etc. The findings of a recent experimental study which was designed to clearly state the conditions under which justice and consistency concerns are likely to emerge in social systems, indicate

> that whether or not a situation is defined as inequitable depends upon the amount of knowledge an individual has concerning the positions or ranks of persons in the same situation on social dimensions which serve as bases for the distribution of valued outcomes, goods or services (Cook 1975: 387).

These results not only confirm earlier notions of status inconsistency (e.g., Lenski 1956; Jackson 1962; Zelditch and Anderson 1966) but also conclusions that knowledge of individuals' ranks plays a decisive role in determining the reactions to inconsistency arrived at by McCranie and Kimberly (1973) from a different theoretical perspective (cf. also Box and Ford 1969: 395-397).

Although some kind of complementary interdependence must characterize the different status dimensions in order for the condition of status (dis)equilibrium to obtain, the status dimensions must also be seen as distinct to some degree. That is:

> ...individuals do not average (their own or others') disparate status ranks and thus arrive at an unequivocal rank on a basic "mean status" continuum which guides their behavior. If status inconsistency were psychologically dispensed with in this fashion, it should not be disturbing for the individual. The fact that it is disturbing implies that occupation, education, and racial-ethnic status are experienced as separate and distinct status dimensions...(Jackson 1962: 480; cf. also Kimberly 1966: 217).

Thus far, we have established four conditions necessary for status (dis)equilibrium to exist: (1) There must be a multi-dimensional system of social ranking such that no single status characteristic determines one's position in the social system. (2) There must be a complementary interdependence between the expectation states surrounding various status dimensions which determine position in the social system. (3) Ranks on the various status dimensions cannot be averaged out in a "mean status" that determines social position and social treatment but rather must be evaluated and responded to as discrete dimensions. (4) Social evaluation that determines the level of reward to expect presupposes certain states of individual knowledge of the relevant evaluative dimensions.

We may say that a condition of <u>status equilibrium</u> exists when an actor has similar rankings on all status dimensions or rankings balanced by equivalent mechanisms (compensatory rewards, value system taking into consideration consummatory types of rewards) relevant to his position in the society (or group) with regard to the attainment of an over-all goal (e.g., power-prestige, social acceptance). <u>Status disequilibrium</u> is the condition resulting from an imbalance

among an actor's ranks on the various interdependent status dimensions relevant to the attainment of some general goal.[10] It is precisely because men seek to maximize their self-interest that they will not necessarily attempt to equilibrate their substatuses in terms of their highest social ranks as their self-interest leads them to rank their goals in hierarchies -- the desire for high status rank on all dimensions being one goal, though an important one, among other goals. However, as a general principle, we may expect that "To the extent that he has the resources, each individual gravitates toward that world where he shines brightest" (Collins 1975: 83; our emphasis).

This brings us to the problem of which statuses are most relevant to social evaluation and goal attainment, i.e., do the different types of status have varying degrees of influence?

Berger, Cohen and Zelditch (1966) distinguish between two types of status that may be of relevance here: diffuse status (or master status) and specific status (instrumental or complementary status). Diffuse statuses generally refer to broad categories of persons or positions in a society (e.g., female, black, Ph.D., executive, etc.) which have a set of specific statuses associated with them. These specific statuses comprise a general expectation state that exists with reference to the incumbants of the master status (e.g., females are defined as having certain specific statuses like mental and physical weakness and are expected to behave in a certain way because of this).

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[10] This conceptualization not only limits the types of status discrepancies which may be called status disequilibrium but, by defining status dimensions as means to a more general goal, it broadens the implication of the theory to all types of goal-oriented social situations.

Specific status characteristics refer to single abilities or behaviors that are differentially evaluated (e.g., mathematical ability, promptness, strength, beauty, etc.).[11] However, it is diffuse status that serves as the major basis of evaluation in most situations and thus is the most relevant to our task. For example, in Berger, Cohen and Zelditch's (1966: 30-31) discussion of small group studies, they relate that in task-oriented groups where all the members have the same diffuse statuses, a power-prestige order arises around specific status characteristics. However, when the members have dissimilar diffuse status characteristics, these represent prior status orders that are activated, regardless of their relevance to the task. In other words, diffuse status characteristics are activated whenever and because actors hold beliefs that actors with a given state of a given characteristic (e.g., high mathematical ability) can in general be expected to do well in a respective task situation (expectation).[12]

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[11] The various status disequilibrium studies have all focused on the ranks that one's diffuse statuses are accorded in the society, but specific status characteristics may also be important in a slightly different type of status disequilibrium. That is, certain specific status characteristics have come to be associated with diffuse statuses, but what happens if someone who is defined as occupying a particular diffuse status does not fulfill the "general expectation state" associated with it? For example, what if a black or a "Gastarbeiter" has specific status characteristics exactly the opposite of those ascribed to him by the stereotype? Or, what if a person has meticulously acquired all the specific status characteristics that surround a diffuse status (e.g., education, experience, technical knowledge) but is not accorded the master status? Although such diffuse-specific status discrepancies pose a fascinating question, it is outside the scope of this study.

[12] Unless otherwise noted, when we speak of status equilibrium, we shall be referring to relations between diffuse statuses.

However, this would also mean making the perhaps unrealistic assumption that the status characteristics in question are known to the audience. Box and Ford (1969: 193-194) have shown that such a generalization cannot be made since some statuses are easily concealed.

Another distinction between types of status was first employed in status equilibration theory by Jackson (1962) and has been widely used since then. This involves the achieved vs. ascribed status comparison. As mentioned above, one's rank in relation to both types of status is a matter of social evaluation; achieved status can (theoretically) be gained or lost through personal effort whereas one is born into (or develops into, as with age) an ascribed status which can less likely be changed through individual effort. However, the classification of status as achieved or ascribed does not always reflect the nature of the status characteristics in concrete instances. For example, education, income and occupational prestige status may be practically ascriptive in terms of the socio-economic class one is born into (e.g., for the black child born in Harlem, a low ranking on traditionally used measures of "achievement" is virtually ensured). And, as Rush (1967: 87) points out, education may take on the characteristic of an ascribed status for, once attained, it cannot be lost.

Galtung (1971: 277) makes the distinction between ascribed statuses which are indelible (e.g., age, sex) as opposed to delible ones (e.g., religion, citizenship) and between visible and less visible ones (e.g., a light-skinned Mexican-American may have a much easier time of "escaping" the implications of his racial status than a dark-skinned Mexican-American or a black). Similarly, Schnore (1961) distinguishes between ascribed and achieved characteristics

and these in terms of being reversible or irreversible. Indeed, the degree of reversibility of ascribed and achieved status criteria seems to depend decisively upon the individual's situation in his life cycle. Smith (1969) plausibly argues that some dimensions of social status may be reversed only up to a certain age. In other words, beyond a certain age limit, which varies with respect to different status dimensions, the elasticity of the behavior of inconsistent individuals will change considerably.

We may therefore hypothesize (1) that the more a status dimension in an inconsistent status configuration is ascribed and the longer such an inconsistency has existed, the greater will be the effect of such a type of status inconsistency if it has any at all; (2) that, generally speaking, increasing age implies increasing importance of ascribed criteria at the expense of achieved criteria (Zimmermann 1973: 89-90; Smith 1969); and (3) that practically all status dimensions may be variable, at least to some extent, in the long run (Foladore 1969). Hypothesis (2) does not only refer to an individual's declining capacity to change certain status characteristics by personal effort, but also to the fact that one's achieved characteristics tend to take on an ascribed character with progressing age. Nevertheless, it is possible that one's ethnic substatus as compared with short-run characteristics such as education and income may change over a longer period of time, although little can be accomplished in this case by personal effort alone.

Segal (1969) studied the effect that the distinction between visible and less visible low ascribed status has on voting where it appeared in conjunction with high achieved status.

Using ethnicity and religion as ascribed statuses, he hypothesized that the status inconsistent with visible low ascribed status would be exposed to more frustration than the "low visibility" inconsistent and would thus favor liberal politics. The low visibility inconsistent would be more moderate unless his low ascribed status was made relevant to him by specific political issues or candidates. Segal's study using data from the 1960 national elections in the United States supported his hypotheses.

We can conclude that the extent of visibility is an important, if not the most important, aspect of the knowledge of the criterion on which the status inconsistent's audience bases its evaluation of his status. As the fact of status inconsistency can be established only in relation to relevant audiences, the extent of visibility or the ease with which some substatuses can be concealed is of great practical, empirical and theoretical significance. Box and Ford (1969: 193-194) have well documented how the high degree of structural differentiation and relatively high rates of social and geographical mobility in modern society facilitate the concealment of poorly valued substatuses. Not surprisingly, therefore, in a study by Hyman (1967) individuals were found to be discontent with the lower rank in their status inconsistency patterns only when the visibility of these individuals and their respective poorly valued status dimension was great. However, as March and Simon (1958) have amplified, we should not forget that the visibility of factors on which individual decisions are based is highly variable.

Most of the work in this area has assumed an achievement-oriented society with strong vestiges of ascription still operative (see also Chapter 7.3). For example, Jackson (1962) predicts that the low ascribed-high achieved

individual will blame the system for continued discrimination after he has fulfilled his achievement responsibilities while the high ascribed-low achieved individual will blame himself for not having achieved what his high ascribed status should enable him to. But, as Galtung (1966: 170-171) points out:

> The crucial test of the theory would be in a traditional society where the intrapunitive person should be the one who has achieved more than his station should warrant. The opposite case would be the person who acquires less education than his caste position should warrant. If he sees it as his prerogative, yet it has not been given him, then obviously society is to blame. This should also be the case with the white unskilled worker in the Deep South. Living in a caste society, he should feel that his failure to have a higher occupational status is due less to his own shortcomings than to something in the structure. He has been refused the occupation it is his right to have as a white man.

Some of the implications of the achieved-ascribed distinction will be discussed again in subsequent chapters. Suffice it to say here that this conceptualization, however unclear, has been valuable in many of the studies of status equilibration done in the United States and elsewhere. Discrepancies between achieved and ascribed statuses have generally shown a stronger relationship to the several dependent variables that theorists have studied than have other types of status discrepancies.

To summarize thus far, social status refers to an actor's position in the social system with respect to social

rewards and responsibilities and it involves reciprocal expectations with regard to actors occupying other positions. Status disequilibrium exists when there is a discrepancy between one's ranks on the various dimensions that determine one's overall position. In order for this discrepancy to be "meaningful," the different status dimensions must be interrelated in some complementary way such that rank on one implies that there "should" be a corresponding rank on another. Another way of viewing this is that no one status dimension can be sufficient to establish overall social status, thus rank on each is a "means" for defining one's position, say, in the power-prestige order. The type of status most important in overall evaluation is diffuse status (although specific statuses are important in homogeneous groups). Two important sources of diffuse statuses are ascription and achievement.

We now turn to the motivational aspect of the theory, i.e., give a condition of status disequilibrium, how does this affect the individual?

4. MOTIVATION AND THE EQUILIBRATION PROCESS

4.1 Aspirations and Expectations

According to the theory of status equilibration, individuals characterized by status discrepancies are more vulnerable to certain types of frustrations and pressures than are individuals with consistent status configuration (either high or low). Although it should not be denied that frustration or stress may be the effect of other factors than status inconsistency, most inconsistency research does not measure stress independently from status inconsistency, thus defining the latter as an indicator of the former. It is assumed that the individual who is confronted with divergent expectations and demands experiences frustration, embarrassment, i.e. stress. Most unfortunately, however, little is known about the relationship between the degree of inconsistency and the intensity of stress (as an informative attempt, cf. Abelson 1968). There is some evidence in other sociological quarters as to how and why structured social inequality and stress are related. For example, Pearlin (1975) traces emotional stresses that are experienced in marriage to differences in spouses' status origins. It is shown that people to whom status advancement is important and who have married mates of lower status are apt to have a sense of loss, which, in turn, leads to a disruption of reciprocity, expressiveness, value sharing and even affection in marital exchange. That is to say, when the achievement of status is a goal of high priority, principles of the larger society seem to have a streneous influence on marital transactions which acts as an immediate antecedent of emotional stress.

This is not to say that the person with consistently high status will not want more; the process of status striving does not imply self-limiting properties. In the absence of agreed upon limits and strict definitions of "success", the Durkheimian dictum concerning human "needs" may be true: The more one has, the more one wants, since satisfaction received only stimulates needs instead of fulfilling them. Neither does it mean that the individual with consistently low rank will not be under pressure to achieve, especially if there are visible signs of other's attainments around him. However, the theory of status equilibration posits a different type of frustration than that of "unfulfilled appetites".

> Status aspiration and status inconsistency are sources of two quite different pressures on the individual. Status aspiration generates a pressure to maximize the heights of the individual's substatuses. Status inconsistency generates a pressure to equalize the heights of the individual's substatuses (Kimberly 1966: 221-222).

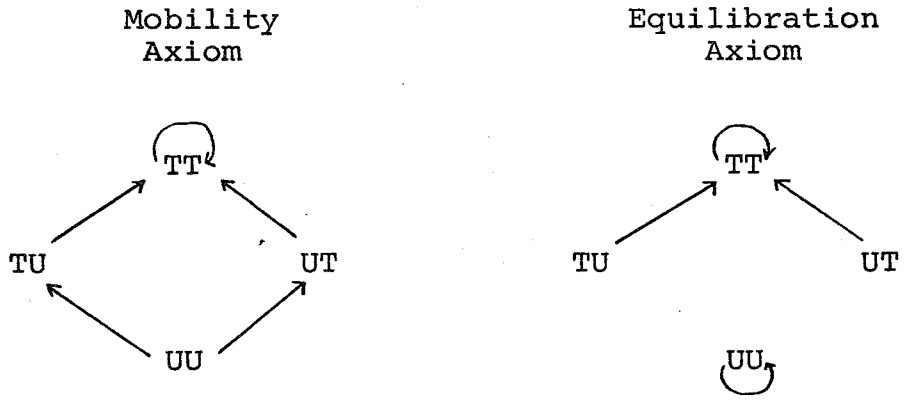
Of course, the pressure to strive to equilibrate one's statuses is not to be confused with a general pressure for upward mobility and status striving in achievement-oriented societies. Contrary to Lenski's (1956; 1967) hypothesis that both ego and alter seek to gain social acceptance in terms of their highest social rank dimensions, and that alter will try to define ego in terms of the latter's lowest substatus, we concur with Kimberly (1966) that, while attempting to maximize his self-interest, the status inconsistent merely wants to equalize the

heights of his substatuses.[13] As mentioned earlier, men's self-interest leads them to rank their objectives in hierarchies, but not necessarily high status above all other objectives. It will depend on the empirical situation whether high status or some other objective (e.g., sex, peace, cooperation) will guide their behavior.

Galtung (1966) diagramatically illustrates this difference between the pressures of status aspiration and status equilibration:

(1) Axiom of upward mobility: All individuals seek maximum total rank and the only stationary status set is the status set with only high statuses.

(2) Axiom of rank equilibration: All individuals try to equilibrate their status sets upwards, and only status sets with equal ranks are stationary.



(Note: T stands for "topdog" status; U for "underdog").

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[13] The findings by Segal et.al. (1970), based on a national sample of the United States, offer support for the view that status inconsistents average their substatus hierarchies rather than see themselves in terms of their highest rank. While we are in agreement with Warren's (1975: 20) formal critique that the crucial point in determining the character of expectations encountered by status inconsistents in whether others (and not the inconsistent actor) average the inconsistent's ranks, we must point out again that differing status hierarchies cannot be couched into a "mean status" that determines social status and social treatment but rather must be evaluated as discrete dimensions.

> The rank-equilibration axiom will also predict a general trend towards increases in total rank, but with the important exception that status sets within statuses of equal ranks constitute (quasi)stationary states in this process, "eddies" in the flux of social mobility (Galtung 1966: 158).

The distinction between aspirations to maximize one's status and expectations associated with one's rank on various status dimensions is important to the motivational aspect of the theory. While an individual may aspire to maximize his position in the power-prestige order, he may also expect, based on his rank on the relevant status dimension in a given situation, that occupants of other positions in the same system will react to him in a certain way. It is the frustration of these expectations in regard to evaluation and treatment that leads to the frustration referred to in status equilibration theory.

However, expectations and aspirations are interrelated in a number of important ways. First, expectations regarding what social responsibilities and rewards "ought" to be associated with a particular status in a social system influence aspirational levels (e.g., both expectations and aspirations of blacks in the United States have changed in relation to the status of "black" from the time that it meant "slave" to today; the same is true of the status of females in many countries). Secondly, a high position on one status dimension, coupled with aspiration, may lead to the expectation that one "ought" to have corresponding status on other dimensions. This is what Galtung (1971) calls the ideology of self-righteousness: since I am high on X, it is right and proper that I also be high on Y. Thirdly, there is the possibility that status aspiration may lead to mobility on one status dimension,

resulting in status disequilibrium between the newly raised status variable and one's other ranks. And Benoit-Smullyan (1944) brings in the idea of the pressure to maximize one's status position when he predicts that a status inconsistent will act to raise his lower statuses to the level of his high one(s), but will not be expected to equilibrate his statuses by lowering the higher one.

However, we do not need to posit some universal status striving motive to explain how an individual comes to have disequilibrated status ranks. Of course, the lack of motivation to qualify for a specific position may create the high ascribed-low achieved inconsistent. Structural factors may also produce status disequilibrium. The institutionalization of a system of compulsory education or the manpower and training needs of a war-time economy may create large groups of people with newly raised educational or occupational statuses which are at odds with their other rankings. Zetterberg (1966) describes achievement motivation as a built-in feature of social structures that have changing reward systems:

> For example, changes in the units and anchorage points of scales of evaluation are inherent in the age-grading that prevails in all human societies. The baby...can count on much love or appreciation without regard to how well he performs. But as he grows older, more effort and ingenuity are needed to maintain the evaluation so freely accorded during childhood; with age the anchorage point moves upward until old age again relaxes it. Societies in which prosperity, knowledge, and other institutional values are expanding are also ones in which the anchorage points for the corresponding reward patterns are pushed upward. In such societies one has to "keep up with the

> Joneses" to maintain evaluation. Here, as in age-grading, the process is beyond the individual's control... Thus we have derived the motivation to achieve from the motivation to maintain (Zetterberg 1966: 138-139; our emphasis).

Change in one's reference group may also be an important source of motivation to aspire. For example, to the undergraduate, attainment of the doctorate may signal "success" but the closer he comes to that goal, the further "success" retreats. When one becomes a Ph.D. or M.D. among many other Ph.D.'s or M.D.'s, the success referent changes and requires still more or another achievement, e.g., in research and publishing or in medical practice. As cogently demonstrated by reference group theory (Cohen 1955; Kelman and Baron 1968), a change in one's reference group may help to eliminate a discrepancy between the values of the inconsistent individual and those of his original reference group. Of course, this may also lead to status discrepancy in the first place, especially if the value attitudes held by the individual are central to him. At any rate, the important point seems to be that as the member of society interprets, rather than passively receives the world of his experience, one cannot assume an individual's objective rank on an occupational prestige scale to have the same subjective meaning to him. Thus, a subjective measurement of status inconsistenty, if any, is called for (Gordon and Wilson 1969).

Although the question of how status dimensions come to be disequilibrated -- through individual aspirations, changing expectations, structural factors, etc. -- is important, the theory of status equilibration is more concerned with the consequences than the causes of disequilibration. So, let us now turn to the theoretical underpinnings of the "motivation to equilibrate."

4.2 Self-Image and Social Evaluation

Assuming that, for one reason or another, an individual's statuses are inconsistent, what effect does this have on him and why?

The most basic motivational assumption made by the theory of status equilibration is based on Cooley's (1922: 184) evaluative internalization proposition, i.e., that an individual's self-evaluation is a function of the evaluations made of him by others in his social milieu. Among the rewards of social life are the favorable evaluations we receive from others and among the sanctions available to society are unfavorable evaluations. Combined with this are the assumptions (1) that to attain and maintain a consistent, positive self-image is rewarding to the individual (while the opposite is frustrating); and (2) that the individual will act to maximize his gratification. From these assumptions comes the postulate that the individual will (attempt to) engage in those actions and associations which bolster and maintain a positive self-evaluation and will avoid those which threaten this self-image.[14]

Another set of assumptions already touched upon above on which the motivational aspect of this theory is based may be called expectancy congruence: the tendency to achieve and maintain an internally consistent and externally valid set of expectations (Sampson 1966: 218). This involves one of the cognitive units discussed by Festinger (1957) -- the relationship between expectation and occurrence;

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[14] For a discussion of various implications of this postulate, see Zetterberg 1966.

i.e., certain underlying expectations exist regarding the relationship between two phenomena such as the relationship between behavior and reward (e.g., the belief that there is a positive relationship between hard work and reward). Such underlying expectations also accompany the relationship between one's status position and the liabilities and rewards attached to it, including the behavior of others in regard to that position.

> Each status position carries with it a set of behavioral expectations regarding both the behavior of the occupant of said position and the behavior of all persons with whom he interacts. Each individual occupies several positions and possesses several sets of behavioral expectations which may either reinforce or contradict one another. The status consistent possesses sets of behavioral expectations which reinforce or are consistent with one another...The status inconsistent possesses sets of expectations which conflict with one another (Geschwender 1969: 407).

The postulated need or goal -- to achieve and to maintain a favorable, consistent self-image through a consistent set of expectations -- is supposed to be frustrated by the condition of status disequilibrium. Differential ranks on status dimensions expose the individual to conflicting evaluations by others which are disturbing to his self-image. Thus the behavioral expectations attached to a status position may be frustrated in one's interaction with others, especially in situations where one's lower or lowest status dimension (1) is socially visible, (2) cannot be concealed even through segregated audiences, or where the inconsistent's audiences cannot be formally or

informally restrained from discrimination against him. If this occurs, the postulated desire to maintain congruence between expectation and experience is thwarted. The literature suggests that the individual who is subject to conflicting evaluations, depending on which status variable is made salient at the time, and whose expectations are thwarted by the behavior of others, will feel frustration, anxiety and insecurity. And, given such problematic feelings, the individual will act to alleviate them.

Before turning to the means by which individuals may act to alleviate the effects of status disequilibrium, let us look at some factors which specify the above assertion that status disequilibrium is a disturbing condition for the individual.

4.3 Reference Groups and Relative Deprivation

The first point is that the condition of status disequilibrium must be made salient to the individual in such a way as to be disturbing to him. As obvious as this is, the question of how status disequilibrium is activated is a factor too often neglected by the literature.

In order for status inconsistencies to be perceived as such, the individual must of course have some comparative and/or aspirational-normative reference group against which he compares, or towards which he orients, himself. In Zelditch and Anderson's (1966) article, "On the Balance of a Set of Ranks," they discuss several conditions necessary for the "activation of comparison" to take place.

> If Robinson Crusoe had been a garage mechanic making $ 40,000 a year would he have known he was overpaid? If he made $ 1,000 a year would he have known he was underpaid? Satisfaction with a given rank is a relative satisfaction (or deprivation) established by comparison with others like oneself. But if that is so, then it is possible that no rank balancing is activated because it is possible that an actor does not compare himself with others. We shall refer to this as "vacuous balance." (Zelditch and Anderson 1966: 250).

In order for the feeling of relative deprivation in relation to others to develop, Merton and Kitt (1950: 61) suggest that

> ...some similarity in status attributes between the individual and the reference group must be perceived or imagined, in order for the comparison to occur at all. Once this minimal similarity obtains, other similarities and differences pertinent to the situation will provide the context for the shaping of evaluations.

But even if comparison with such a group is made, an individual objectively characterized by status disequilibrium may not be "disturbed" by it. Whether it is made meaningful to him will also depend on the status characteristics of his audience. For example, a black doctor (low ascribed-high achieved) who remains in a black ghetto will not "suffer" from his status disequilibrium in the larger society because only his high achieved status will be salient in his relations with other blacks (but if he

attends conventions of the American Medical Association he will be temporarily disequilibrated). Neither will the status inconsistent who compares himself with others who are similarly inconsistent be "disturbed" by their inconsistency. For example, if a professor at a small college which pays all professors $ 5,000 a year remains insulated, i.e., compares himself only with other professors at that school, it is likely that he will not perceive a discrepancy between his status ranks. Whether individuals, in setting their aspirations, are more influenced by, say the (ascribed) position of their racial group in the larger social structure than by their position in their own racial group, apparently depends on the type of aspirations under consideration (e.g., Lorenz 1972).

As suggested by Box and Ford (1969: 191-192), there is no reason why status inconsistents would not select audiences also composed of inconsistents. At any rate, the assumption made by much status inconsistency research that ego's audience consists of individuals none of whom has a status ranking lower than his own highest rank is highly questionable. In order to activate a balancing process, in other words, one must compare oneself with someone else who is not imbalanced in the same way as oneself (Zelditch and Anderson 1966: 251). But even this does not necessarily result in a comparison which will be "relatively depriving." A female executive may compare herself with the male executives in a company and wonder why she is only making DM 5,000 a month as compared to their DM 8,000. But, if she compares herself with other women in her neighborhood who are slaving over the laundry and cooking or are making DM 1,200 a month as secretaries, she may feel relatively satisfied with her position. Although the latter type of comparison is possible, the former is more probable. That is, it is more likely that

the individual with a High-Low status configuration will identify with the High-High (i.e., use it as a comparative reference group) rather than the Low-Low group in order to maximize his gratification (Benoit-Smullyan 1944; Lenski 1956 and 1967; Galtung 1966 and 1971).

Feelings of relative deprivation, very much like status aspiration, are not limited to status inconsistents. However, the status inconsistent is in a unique position because of the expectations that are attached to his high rank(s). A status consistent person, say, in the lower middle class, may experience relative deprivation when he compares himself with the upper middle class and may even feel the system to be unfair (e.g., he had to quit school and go to work so he never had a chance). But the person whose status is inconsistent expects that certain social rights and rewards will be attached to his high status. Thus a person with high education and low income may feel deprived when he compares himself to others with high education and high income (and, perhaps, even more so when he compares himself to those with low education and high income) because his expectation state, based on some congruence rule, is that education deserves (also) monetary reward.

Other factors which may be related (although they have not been tested) to how disturbing a condition of status disequilibrium will be are (1) the degree to which the individual "buys" the values of the system, (2) the degree of ego involvement with a status dimension and (3) the permanence of a rank. As for the first factor, there are people who view attainment of rank on certain status dimensions as ends in themselves (e.g., education) even though they are situated in a social system which views it as a fundamental means to other goals. The second

factor -- ego involvement with a status -- may be directly related to the third, permanence, although it is possible that some people may view some status characteristics (e.g., religion, race) as totally irrelevant to social ranking despite differential social evaluation (i.e., they may refuse to attribute legitimacy to social evaluation of such characteristics). In relation to permanence, it is likely that a status perceived as only temporarily low may not be an acute source of disturbance (e.g., the individual who has to settle for a low paying, low status job while going through graduate school).

Another factor, related to relative deprivation, which may affect the salience of status disequilibrium has been suggested by Homans (1961) and modified by Zetterberg (1966). This is the "distributive justice" proposition and pertains to the relationship between investment and rewards. Homans describes education and ethnicity as investments and occupation and income as rewards. A state of distributive justice exists when the individual perceives that his rewards are commensurate with his investment. We seriously question Homans' classification of ethnicity as an investment and occupation as solely a reward (e.g., is it not possible, indeed likely, that people view their job experiences as an investment from which they hope to gain rewards in the way of better jobs, promotions, etc.?). Occupation seems to imply a reward component (i.e., occupational prestige) as well as an investment component (i.e., qualification and experience), thus suggesting that we might view occupation as the intervening variable between education and income (cf. Stolzenberg 1975). Drawing on findings in economics of education, Hodge (1962: 338) formulates the economic analogy in the sense that "education may be seen as the investment whereby 'occupational stock' is acquired and upon which income is the 'dividends'."

However, as the example of income and wealth becoming an investment for education and/or other rewards such as power and authority shows, it would be erroneous to assume a unidirectional functional relationship between stratificational dimensions (cf. Bornschier and Heintz 1975). It is the meaning of social stratification that the meaning of stratificational investment and reward can be inverted.

That the economic analogy is deficient can also be demonstrated by briefly examining the intriguing question of why, in some societies, many occupations with high skills and low income (e.g., teachers and nurses) are aspired to by parents with regard to their children and preferred by the children. One explanation is that these occupations may have high rewards other than income; that is to say, the structure of one's overall status may be equalized by a central status dimension: occupational prestige. Another explanation refers to the situation in which educational attainments are not only considered as investments but also as a type of reward (Slomczynski and Wesolowski 1974: 13). These aspects of social evaluation and the formation of subjective expectation states must be taken into account if status inconsistency research is to produce conclusive findings.

Therefore, it may well be that certain status dimensions represent more of an investment than others and thus carry different types or degrees of expectations as to social rights and rewards. Zelditch and Anderson (1966: 252) propose that:

> A person is more likely to focus attention in a comparison on those ranks that represent investments than on those that do not...Thus, comparing himself with a person of lower

> education but the same pay, he is likely to say, "Why am I not better paid," rather than "I am doing rather well, because compared to others with the same pay, I have more education."

Homans also suggests that the individual who perceives his investments to be greater than his rewards will feel anger while the individual who sees his rewards as greater than his investments will experience guilt. The first response seems plausible and is supported indirectly by much of the status equilibration research. However, the second response does not seem plausible (except in an ascriptive society) for it suggests that the black executive and the plumber making $ 18,000 a year should feel guilty about their "good fortune." A modification of Homans' justice proposition made by Zetterberg (1966: 139) seems to make more sense. He compares degree of commitment, or "ego investment," and reward:

Chart 2: Relationship Between Degree of Commitment and Rewards

	COMMITMENT	SOCIAL REWARDS	REACTION
1.	High	High	Neutral
2.*	Low	High	Emotive (positive)
3.**	High	Low	Emotive (negative)
4.	Low	Low	Neutral

* Homans' guilty men ** Homans' angry men

What the exchange approach does contribute is also a modification of the thesis that people maximize their self-interest by trying to adjust disequilibrated status ranks to their highest status dimension. Exchange theorists point out that status attributes cannot simply be

considered in terms of conformity to, or violation of, congruence rules, but also in terms of the profits and losses they may bring to actors' individual biographies (Meyer and Hammond 1971: 97; cf. also Homans 1961; Kimberly 1966; Blau 1964).

Similar results may be derived from a representative study of Austrians over the age of twenty who were asked to assess their substatuses as well as their overall status rank in terms of their performance-achievement ("investment") and actual income ("reward"). Persons with relatively high educational standards and relatively high income as well as individuals who ranked themselves lower than middle class were found to feel more often undervalued than members of other classes (Kreutz 1968/69). There is reason to believe that the negative status difference in both categories of respondents was due to their tendency to evaluate their achievement according to their own values, while in their self-evaluation on the basis of income they were guided by status allocation as it actually occurred. (A status-role discrepancy is produced as described on p.16 of the present study.) This seems to prove that rewards are to be viewed as separately based on occupational position, actual performance, motivation, and skill. Consequently, inconsistency among status dimensions "results from the allocation of persons to positions on the basis of attributes other than skill and motivation and which do not accurately reflect skill and motivation" (Kimberly 1974: 25). Interviews must also be considered as opportunities to disseminate one's own goals and values (cf. Phillips 1973).[15] However, the number of individuals

[15] A basis principle in understanding social stratification is to realize that the difference between the social reality perceived by the individual and his value options, i.e., the difference between perception and evaluation, tends to coincide with the difference between distributive and productive-functional inequality. For a discussion of these concepts, see Dahrendorf (1967).

who rated themselves relatively high on economic grounds, and who evaluated their achievement as higher than their income, could be expected to be rather small compared to those individuals who considered themselves to belong to the lowest income class, and who felt that they were not economically rewarded according to their achievement. This type of status inconsistency occurs only when economic subordination is subjectively experienced and not when it already factually exists (see also Chapter 5.1).

As a special case of reference group theory, the idea of relative deprivation does in fact contribute to the explanation of some status inconsistency phenomena. Social groups and classes, particularly low income groups, consisting of a relatively high number of status inconsistents feel they may legitimately claim a higher economic rank in relation to the existing income distribution. The idea of relative deprivation assumes that all social groups compete for the same scarce resources such as jobs, income, fringe benefits, apartments, durable commodities, etc., i.e., distributive inequalities amenable to observation. They apparently differ in their respective strategies of legitimation of productive or functional inequalities based on the value options prevalent among them (cf. Collins 1975: Chs. 2-4). Nevertheless, the social group which is usually referred to as working class does face a dilemma of legitimacy as well: Society makes workers feel inadequate and at the same time responsible in the sense that they translate the restrictions on their freedom into self-doubt, thereby assuming responsibility for their (temporary) frustration and (often enduring) alienation (Sennett and Cobb 1972: 95). In addition, existing opportunities for upward mobility not only strengthen a belief system that places a high value on social mobility but also helps to sustain acceptance of

the social and political order by the lower classes (Lipset and Bendix 1959: 77). This is somewhat contrary to the view that social stratification tends to weaken the loyalty of the lower classes to a given system of values and norms (e.g., Gouldner 1970: 304-313).

4.4 Summary

The theory of status equilibration assumes three types of pressures to be operating on the status inconsistent: (1) status aspiration, the pressure to maximize the heights of one's status ranks; (2) relative deprivation, resulting from a feeling of unfairness about one's position in relation to others, and exerting the pressure to eliminate the negative (status) difference between performance and achievement on the one hand and reward on the other; and (3) status equilibration, the pressure to directly equalize one's status ranks or to find functional alternatives (e.g., concealment) to alleviate status discrepancies. Although the first two types of pressures are not limited to the status inconsistent individual, they are related to his attempts to equalize his status ranks. Status aspiration pressures will make him seek to raise or effectively conceal his lower status ranks rather than lower his high ones and relative deprivation makes him feel unjustly deprived of the rewards (e.g., rank on other status dimensions) which he expects to be associated with his high rank because (he perceives that) such rewards are positively associated with the rank for other actors.

In addition to these pressures, two "needs" are postulated: to achieve and to maintain (1) a favorable self-image and (2) expectancy congruence. Because of these needs, status disequilibrium may be a frustrating condition for the individual when it subjects him to contradictory

evaluations (affecting his self-image) and thwarts his expectations with respect to treatment by others. These frustrating conditions may obtain when the individual is placed in a milieu where others are not characterized by the same status configuration (i.e., the individual is not insulated from differential evaluation and treatment).

In general, the more people there are in his reference group who have higher rank than him on his low status dimensions, or the more important they are as reference persons, the greater the relative deprivation he will feel. However, as exchange theory has taught us, the self-interest of interacting individuals is not necessarily confined to the single goal of maximizing social status dimensions. It depends on the goals of the actors involved whether they bring equal statuses or differential statuses into play or whether, subsequently, everyone's highest status claim is satisfied or the actors are pegged down to their lowest rank. The salience of ego's status disequilibrium may also be affected by his commitment to the system of evaluation, the perceived permanence of his low rank(s), the degree of commitment or investment involved in the attainment of his high rank(s) and, significantly, by his audience's state of knowledge of the relevant dimensions of evaluation as well as of his low rank(s). Chart 1 (p.27) has summarized the causes and consequences of status inconsistency.

Next we will discuss the avenues available to the individual in his attempt to relieve the effects of status disequilibrium.

5. RESPONSES TO STATUS DISEQUILIBRIUM

Given the condition of status disequilibrium and given the activation of this condition (through comparison) such that it becomes a "felt", i.e., depriving or anxiety-producing condition, what may the individual do to alleviate it? The prediction of responses to status disequilibrium is perhaps the most important part of the theory yet it remains the most ambiguous as, for instance, Jackson and Curtis (1972) and Zimmermann (1973) have demonstrated again recently.

Jackson and Curtis' analysis of random samples of male heads of households in six American communities of different size produced "little or no evidence ... for a variety of mobility or inconsistency effects previously hypothesized in the literature" (Jackson and Curtis 1972: 707). Nevertheless, the authors did venture the idea that this result could be due to the fact that an "inconsistent person typically acts to his situation by adopting simultaneously a number of attitudinal or behavioral responses" or that he responds "in different ways, depending on several contingencies ..." (p.710), including the particular pattern of his inconsistency, as we have seen earlier in this study. To test these possibilities, two indices of responses were constructed by combining the scores on four variables (commonly thought to be related to inconsistency) selected out of the 43 dependent variables used in the study.[16]

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[16]Not surprisingly, neither the summed responses hypothesis nor the alternative response hypothesis was supported by the test results.

The tacit assumptions of most studies, including Jackson and Curtis', on this subject, i.e., (1) that existing status configurations are relatively constant over time, or where this is not the case (2) that certain reactions are more or less directly observable (Stehr 1971: 36) and (3) that there is a close fit between "objective" status rankings and the actor's own perceptions of reality (Box and Ford 1969: 195), is highly problematical, if not erroneous. It tends to render a good deal of research effort at best incomparable and at worst futile.

Perhaps we should emphasize that, on the basis of empirical conditions of individual aspirations, of changing expectations, and of social structural and historical factors, the assumption must be made that statistically constructed types of status inconsistency per se are not socially experienced inconsistencies. If status discrepancies do affect individuals, these persons, as Jackson and Curtis (1972) following Treiman (1966) speculate, learn various techniques of adjustment and resolution, each at a different speed, to master their problems. Research into status inconsistency, it seems, must try to sort out these people, who had never or not yet experienced problems of status disequilibrium or had already adjusted to them, among those who had recently become mobile and inconsistent. In other words, one of the crucial tasks of this type of sociological inquiry is to find out (1) what the congruence norms are that link different substatus hierarchies, (2) what determines the legitimacy of these substatus hierarchies, and, most importantly, (3) what are the mechanisms that effect or prevent a transfer of legitimacy from the more to the less legitimate, i.e., less valued status dimension. To equilibrate imbalanced status dimensions does mean above all to transfer (status) legitimacy through informal or institutionalized means.

We shall now move on to review some of the research that has been done relating status disequilibrium to various responses and then suggest a framework which both integrates these findings and takes into account some important variables ignored in past research. The various responses to status inconsistency can be interpreted as a consequence of the principle of expectancy congruence in the sense that status inconsistency generates more or less contradictory sets of behavioral expectations. By taking into account the different conditions which give rise to status discrepancies, certain types of responses may be predicted.

5.1 Status Equilibration and Mobility Striving

Earlier it was suggested that pressures of status aspiration, or more generally, to maximize one's self-interest combine with pressures for status equilibration to produce efforts to adjust one's lower substatuses to the level of one's higher substatuses in one way or another (Benoit-Smullyan 1944; Zetterberg 1966; Malewski 1966; Box and Ford 1969; Galtung 1966 and 1971). Thus, one response to status disequilibrium may take the form of upward mobility, or at least aspiration to be upwardly mobile. This response is possible only if the low status is of the achieved variety, i.e., capable of change through individual effort, or if the system of status evaluation itself changes.

In a study done by Fenchel, Monderer and Hartley (1951), an attempt was made to test the hypothesis that individuals will act to equilibrate their statuses upward. Using undergraduate college students as their sample, they had the students rate themselves according to actual and desired status in five reference groups. Using the difference between actual and desired rank as a measure

of status striving, they found that the students desired a status in all groups which was equivalent to their highest actual status in a group. Homans (1961: Ch. 12), in his study of status among clerical workers, also found that those who perceived their occupational status to be higher than their material rewards protested and demanded that their income be raised to a level more in line with their job responsibilities.

Since individual upward mobility is possible in relation to achieved statuses, we could expect mobility striving to be a possible response to the following kinds of status disequilibrium: (1) High ascribed-low achieved inconsistency or (2) inconsistencies between different achieved variables.

Several considerations have to be taken into account in order to adequately assess the relationship between status inconsistency and social mobility. (1) Status equilibration always implies social mobility -- either on the basis of one or more status dimensions or on the basis of changing criteria of social evaluation. However, every status dimension is to some extent autonomous; that is to say, mobility in one dimension does not produce corresponding mobility in other dimensions. As pointed out earlier in this study, their relative autonomy has a lot to do with their differential reversibility when the mobile (inconsistent) individual's age or the specific variability of the various dimensions (e.g., income, education, ethnicity) is taken into consideration. Moreover, status dimensions are also autonomous within limits with regard to the standards of social evaluation be they based on strata norms or on some societyl norms of distributive justice.

(2) Although it is justified to assume that both mobile and inconsistent individuals are affected through similar

intervening mechanisms such as conflicting behavioral expectations (Jackson and Curtis 1972: 701), the assumption of the additive model that mobile persons combine or average the characteristics of people in their class of origin and those in the class of destination is highly arbitrary (Hope 1975: 340). Since it is the differences in social values and behavior due to the differences in kinds of people encountered in given social settings that constitute the individual's experiences, we can neither assume a one-to-one correspondence between social values and social status locations nor a diffusion of social values that averages the influences stemming from the class of origin and from the class of destination (cf. Warren 1975: 14-15). Given different influences from these strata and life styles, it is likely that people who are actually or potentially mobile and/or inconsistent will follow different mobility and/or inconsistency cycles. Accordingly, people who have "made it," say, on relatively inelastic dimensions such as education may be expected to complete their mobility cycle on more reversible substatuses such as income within a shorter period of time than those with reversed status characteristics. For other people, certain objectively defined patterns of status inconsistency (e.g., high income-low occupational prestige) do not constitute subjectively felt inconsistency on the basis of, say, their family tradition (e.g., Mafia boss). As a consequence, the question must be raised whether status inconsistency should not be limited to those cases in which mobility cycles are inconsistently passed.

This brings up the complicated question of how the position of the status inconsistent differs from the socially mobile. As Warren (1975: 25-27) suggests, the crucial differences have to do with their social integration patterns -- past,

Chart 3. Differences between Mobile and Inconsistent Individuals

Type of person / Pattern of social integration	Mobile		Inconsistent	
	new	long time	new	long time
Alienation	social isolation (breakage of societies)		sense of normlessness (expectational conflicts)	
Social Contacts	temporarily isolated or new social attachments	subcultural ties with similar people ("on-the-make pattern")	tends to bridge status below and above	experiences stress in bridging role, adapts by role segregation and selective interaction
Life Style and Value Position	prefers to live in large and diversified community environments that provide linkages with others in similar situations			
Political Identities	group attachments tend to be further manifestations of their marginality		depending on type of inconsistency: E > I/O = Democratic/liberal I > E/O = Republican/independent	
Stratum Location			in middle strata more frequent inconsistents, but less well tolerated than in upper & lower strata	

present, and future. Consequently, the inconsistent and the mobile will experience stress under different circumstances and for different reasons. Relying on Warren's discussion of the issue, the major components of these differences are summarized in Chart 3.

From this summary the conclusion may be derived that the kinds and extent of social contacts helps decisively to distinguish between status inconsistents and mobiles. In our discussion thus far an important role has been attributed to the same variable in explaining the origin, i.e., the activation of status inconsistency, as well as some of its consequences, i.e., the formation of response patterns. Finally, Warren (1975: 26) is right when he states that, "in the long run, status inconsistents come to change places with the newly mobile: to avoid undesirable social contacts and to be marginal in the classic sense of this concept."

5.2 Status Equilibration and Political Extremism

Lenski (1954) was the first to do a study relating status disequilibrium to political attitudes. Lenski (1954: 406) hypothesized that:

> Individuals characterized by a low degree of status crystallization differ significantly in their political attitudes and behavior from individuals characterized by a high degree of status crystallization, when status differences in the vertical dimension are controlled.

Although his general hypothesis does not predict direction of difference in political attitudes, his study involved only political liberalism. Lenski used data relating to three elections and took Democratic voting to be an

indicator of relative political liberalism. He also asked 50% of his voter sample about their views on contemporary political issues. In general he found a significant relationship between low status crystallization and political liberalism, i.e., those characterized by low status crystallization were more likely to vote Democratic and express liberal views than were those characterized by high status crystallization. More specifically, he found that: (1) Low ascribed-high achieved inconsistents were more likely to be liberal than high ascribed-low achieved inconsistents. (2) Low education-high occupation inconsistents tended to be more liberal than those characterized by high education-low occupation. (3) High occupation-low income inconsistency was more closely associated with liberalism than was high income-low occupation inconsistency. In fact, the latter type was less likely to be liberal than were status consistents. In addition to Lenski's (1954) study showing more liberal attitudes, in his later study of voting patterns in four countries (1967) and in Broom and Jones' (1970) examination of the Australian case the same political preferences were shown when inconsistency type (1) was given.

Another study, by Gary Rush (1967), attempted to relate certain configurations of achieved status inconsistency to both right and left political extremist attitudes. Using the variables of education, income, and occupation, he found that educational status was the most important predictor of the type of extremism when it was present in an inconsistent relationship with other achieved variables. The importance of education is seen as due both to its quality of investment with resultant expectations about rewards and the "breadth of perspective" it gives, lessening bonds to tradition. Rush found that high educational status, coupled with low income or occupation

is more likely to lead to left-wing attitudes than is status consistency (this is in opposition to finding (2) of Lenski's study); low education, coupled with high occupation or income is more likely to lead to right-wing extremism.

The empirical generalization that there is a positive correlation between status inconsistency and right-wing extremism is also confirmed by Eitzen (1970) who studied Wallace supporters in a Midwestern city during the 1968 presidential election campaign; by Rohter (1969) whose inconsistency formula was occupation $>$ education, while Grupp (1969) discovered inconsistencies along educational and occupational lines in members of the John Birch Society. On the other hand, Lupri (1972) did not find any relationship between characteristics of status inconsistency and voting preference for the right-wing NPD in the 1969 Bundestag election in West Germany. Moreover, NPD supporters showed a significantly higher extent of status consistency than any other group of voters or non-voters. However, of the status inconsistents who supported the NPD almost two thirds were characterized by a single type of status inconsistency: high income, low education and either high or low occupational status. Only 38% of the whole voter sample showed this type of inconsistency. The author suggests that status inconsistency on the basis of low education, low or high occupation and high income indicates that a status overevaluation exists. Similarly, Eitzen's (1970) status inconsistents were predominantly of the type income $>$ occupation $\sim$ education. Hence it is to be expected that a social status such as this will be defended and an attempt will be made to join a party, which promises to stick with the status quo or to establish the status quo ante (Lupri 1972: 274). In line with Lenski's (1954) initial thesis, though, and in contradiction to other studies

(Kenkel 1956; Kelly and Chambliss 1966; Jackson and Curtis 1972) that political liberalism is related to a smaller extent to status consistency, is Lupri's (1972: 272) finding that those who voted for the liberal FDP were lacking most in status consistency.

One problem with these and other studies that have attempted to relate status inconsistency to liberalism and conservatism is that they treat these political attitudes as unidimensional. Perhaps Lipset's (1964) multi-dimensional approach to liberalism and conservatism more closely mirrors reality. Lipset's theory is that the status inconsistent person tends to extremist political attitudes (either right or left of center, or both, depending on the issue involved) more than the person whose status is consistent. He distinguishes between two aspects of liberalism-conservatism: attitudes on civil rights and civil liberties and attitudes on economic affairs. Thus, depending on which issue is salient, the status inconsistent will react in a liberal or conservative manner, according to the type of inconsistency he suffers from. A study by Kelly and Chambliss (1966) seems to support the view that liberalism and conservatism are multi-faceted attitudes.

In his study of "Status Consistency and Preference for Change in Power Distribution," Goffman (1957) found that persons characterized by status inconsistency were more likely to advocate social change than were those whose statuses were consistent. He also found that intensity of preference for change varied directly with stratum position. To explain this, he suggests that individuals in different classes probably perceive differing ranges of possibility for bringing up their lower status characteristics. His revised hypothesis is that:

> The degree of status consistency is inversely related to the extensiveness of preferences for change in the distribution of power when experienced opportunities for upward mobility are low (Goffman 1957: 288).

This suggests that those characterized by low ascribed-high achieved inconsistency, those with low achieved-high ascribed inconsistency and those with achieved status inconsistencies who perceive little opportunity for raising a low achieved substatus will be the groups most likely to advocate social change, particularly a change in power structures.

Malewski's (1966) research also supports Goffman's prediction that the individual who does not perceive the possibility of raising his low status through upward mobility will advocate system change:

> If...[he] cannot raise the lower factors..., he will tend to reject the system of evaluation which justifies his humiliation and join those that are opposed to that system (Malewski 1966: 306).

Similarly, Benoit-Smullyan (1944) accounted for the participation of the French merchant class in the French Revolution in terms of the existing discrepancy between their great (achieved) wealth and low (ascribed) esteem during the ancien régime.

In sum, these studies, as well as other literature in the area, suggest that status inconsistencies -- as they violate those norms which define for actors appropriate, just, or necessary combinations of stratificational attributes -- may be related to dissatisfaction with the social system as expressed through political attitudes.

This is not to say that inconsistencies always stem from violations of normative rules integrating valued attributes of an individual, since they may also be the result of felt deprivation or dissatisfaction of certain types of actors (cf. also Meyer and Hammond 1971). The literature also suggests that the individual who perceives the possibility of raising his lower status dimension through individual effort is less likely to advocate changes in the system, i.e., he will choose the "easier" of the routes (upward mobility or reallocations of functions within an organizational context rather than system change) to equilibration. Recent developments in the recruitment policies, student movement, and changes in the structure of faculties at West German and some other European universities are illustrative examples.

Attempts have been made to predict the direction of political response for the low ascribed-high achieved and high ascribed-low achieved inconsistents as left-wing and right-wing, respectively. Supposedly, those with low ascribed status, in an achievement-oriented society, will strive for progressive measures to break the remaining ties to old systems of ascription while those with high ascribed status will try to "reinstitute" an (envisioned) old social order, or reactivate the former bases of evaluation which accorded their ascriptive status more prestige.[17] In either case, the attempt is to maximize rewards by emphasizing one's most salient status. Thus, the black doctor interacting with the white factory worker will emphasize achievement as most important while the white worker may emphasize race. Although this prediction

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[17] For a historical example, drawn from the time of the French Revolution and its aftermath, see Strasser 1976: Ch. 1.

of left-right direction works fairly well in some countries, it is of course limited to a particular socio-political context. Generally speaking, if we assume that people tend to believe in that which they regard to be most pleasant for them, we can expect that downwardly mobile individuals will stick with old attitudes longer than people who are upwardly mobile (Collins 1975: 73-75).

Ringer and Sills (1953) found in their study, "Political Extremists in Iran," that high education-low income inconsistents were overrepresented on both the revolutionary left and nationalistic right (but both types of extremists shared a common anti-colonialism). Thus, it would appear that such factors as the historical situation and the content of the ideology of left and right-wing groups may be as important as the type of inconsistency in determining the appeal of conservative or liberal responses.

These dependent variables in status inconsistency research are markedly different from other "responses" such as withdrawal from social interactions, individual stress symptoms, racial and other prejudices, and deviant behavior to be dealt with below. There is some evidence that status inconsistencies lead to different forms of advocating social change, maintaining the status quo, or re-establishing some status quo ante depending on the saliency of the issue at stake and the type of inconsistency.

5.3 Status Equilibration and Overconformity

Both Lipset (1964) and Hofstadter (1964) discuss the phenomenon of overconformity in their theories of status politics. They see over-conformity to an assumed American tradition as an attempt (1) to make low ascribed ethnic status "invisible" or less salient; or (2) to effect change in the social evaluation of low ascribed status groups with a "see how white we can be?" strategy.

Zelditch and Anderson (1966: 264-265) also discuss the overconformative response in their article, "On the Balance of a Set of Ranks":

> What looks like a radical-right protest may also result, not from a desire for radical change, but from mobility. This process is, roughly: ego is upwardly mobile, tries to associate with members of the class into which he has risen, is rebuffed, or thinks he is rebuffed, believes this is due to his speech, clothes, attitudes, and other signs of his lower ranks, and therefore tries to change in these respects. This then leads to strict conformity or even overconformity with the beliefs and values of the upper stratum.

Perhaps this is a partial explanation of the "Blacks for Wallace" phenomenon of the 1972 election year in the United States.

5.4 Status Equilibration and Psychosomatic Symptoms

Important work in this area was done by Elton Jackson (1962) with his study on "Status Consistency and Symptoms of Stress." Jackson hypothesized that the degree of status inconsistency, though not studied as subjectively experienced, would be directly related to psychological stress, using the number and severity of psychophysiological symptoms as an indicator of stress. He found all forms of status inconsistency to be stressful but certain types were more closely related to symptom rates than others. Those with high ethnic-low occupation or low education inconsistencies had higher rates of psychosomatic symptoms than status consistents or those with the opposite

configuration (low ethnicity-high occupation or education). The groups with the highest symptom rates exhibited the same type of inconsistency that Lenski had found to be only slightly correlated with liberalism while the types with low symptom rates were the same ones Lenski found to have the highest tendencies towards liberalism. Thus, Jackson suggests that political responses and psychosomatic symptoms may be alternative consequences of status disequilibrium. His general conclusion is that the high achieved-low ascribed person sees a social basis for his problem and tends to favor system change while the low achieved-high ascribed inconsistent tends to blame himself for not achieving the position he feels his high ascribed status warrants.

An unpublished study done by Kleiner, Parker and Taylor which relates to inconsistency and stress is reported by Sampson (1966). Although this study was not done as a direct test of status disequilibrium as so many studies in the field, inconsistencies between two achieved variables were found to be related to incidence of mental illness:

> They hypothesized a relationship between the level of aspiration-level of achievement discrepancy and the incidence of mental illness. Their rationale suggested that this discrepancy produced frustration and stress for the individual who responded by a flight into illness. They used educational rank as a measure of the individual's level of aspiration and occupational rank as a measure of achievement. The discrepancy of which they speak, therefore, is an index of status congruence... (Sampson 1966: 220).

They arrived at the conclusion that such incongruence led to a higher incidence of mental illness. And, as Hyman (1967) was able to demonstrate, only those subjects whose visibility in the public was great showed signs of strain as a result of their lower rank.

In sum, psychological stress represents another possible effect, i.e., a variable intervening between the condition of status disequilibrium and the type of response, i.e., self blame vs. system blame. However, concurring with Broom and Jones (1970: 1000) we may hypothesize that there is an inverse relationship between the degree of stress caused by status inconsistency and the kind of mechanisms available to avoid and reduce stress (see also Chart 4, p. 86).

5.5 Status Equilibration, Avoidance and Withdrawal

Although the avoidance and withdrawal responses do not, strictly speaking, achieve equilibration of status ranks, they may nevertheless "solve" the individual's problem. If the individual avoids those who subject him to unflattering evaluations and frustrate his expectations, his disequilibrated condition will be less disturbing. One of Malewski's (1966) propositions tends to support this -- when the individual cannot raise his lower status dimensions, he will show a tendency to avoid those who react to them negatively (although he may also be engaged in activities directed towards system change).

Lenski's study of "Social Participation and Status Crystallization" (1956) also lends support to the idea that avoidance may be a response to status inconsistency. Lenski (1956: 460) hypothesized that:

> Persons with a low degree of status crystallization are more likely to be subjected to disturbing

> experiences in the interaction process and have greater difficulty in establishing rewarding patterns of social interaction than others.

He found that status inconsistents were less likely to participate in voluntary relationships, join voluntary organizations or maintain voluntary ties for sociable motives than others. In general, he found them to be more socially isolated than the status consistents.

Withdrawal may be seen as a slightly different response than avoidance. With the avoidance technique, the individual continues his routine, avoiding unnecessary contact with those who react to him unfavorably or in whose presence he feels uneasy (in terms of his self-image and expectations). With the withdrawal response, the individual removes himself from all (or as much as possible) contact with those who treat him unfavorably and e.g., retreats into a subculture. Thus, the black doctor may leave the white hospital and return to the ghetto to practice; the M.A. teaching at a university with a Ph.D. faculty may transfer to a small college or go to work for a company where few have more education than he does. In fact, Lebowitz (1974: 12) reports a study by Hughes (1945) who was able to demonstrate that physicians not conforming with the stereotyped image of physician were likely to withdraw from a wide range of activities within the professional community. They were also found to specialize in fields which fit their lower ascribed status attribute. For example, more female doctors than expected would practice in specialties such as pediatrics, obstetrics, and psychiatry where a nurturant role is emphasized.

Or, withdrawal may take a more extreme form such as a "hermit" response or an emotional form -- mental illness.

Retreatism into alcohol or drug use are also possible outcomes.[18] Of course, the most extreme form of withdrawal is suicide and, indeed, Gibbs and Martin (1958) found a relationship between status inconsistency and propensity towards suicide.

However, Geschwender (1968) did find the opposite pattern of inconsistency (high ascribed-investment, low achieved-reward) to be associated with low rates of membership in voluntary associations, of participation and of holding of offices. We do not view these findings as necessarily contradictory, simply because both patterns (H-L and L-H) may result in withdrawal in order to reduce dissonance. Easto's (1973; reported in Warren 1975) study of 1500 black and white adults in the Detroit area led to the conclusion that income, education, and occupation inconsistency effects existed regardless of associational activity level; as participation increased, though, inconsistencies were triggered. This suggests that the level of social participation is contingent upon the predictive utility of the status inconsistency concept. Specifically, among those whose participation level was high, status inconsistency turned out to be a better predictor for anomia than the various status dimensions taken singularly. Easto remarks that voluntary associations tend to be mixed with respect to residential characteristics of members, to draw together the socially mobile, and often to be heterogeneous with respect to the very status characteristics of their members. Participation in such heterogeneous groups may therefore be seen as operating to heighten, i.e., to trigger, "the actor's perception of his status inconsistency by serving as a setting in which conflicting expectations are

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[18] For a more elaborate discussion of this aspect, see also Solloway and Strasser 1976.

encountered" (Easto 1973: 40).

Participation in voluntary associations may be considered as an intervening link between status inconsistency as an indicator of one's status location in a society and the behavioral consequences for individuals in the sense of a triggering mechanism for status inconsistency. However, as Knoke (1972) could demonstrate, there are other forms of social organization which mediate between the objective conditions of the social structure and the subjectively defined situation of the individual. For Knoke, marginal groups such as ethnic subcultures tend to function as insulators, as organizational shields against status inconsistency. However, by implication, one could contend that, if a marginal person joins a marginal group he is no longer a marginal person, with the same justification as that the marginal individual who joins such groups may become even more "marginal" (Warren 1975: 18-19).

These rather divergent circumstances involved in some aspects of the status equilibration process may also explain why there is little agreement in the literature as to the relationship between social participation in groups and status inconsistency.

5.6 Summary Statement of Responses

It is argued that if an individual is characterized by status disequilibrium, and if this condition is made salient in such a way as to be disturbing to him, he will seek to remedy the condition.

In general, the literature dealing with status equilibration suggests that those status inconsistents characterized by high ascribed-low achieved status may be expected to react

(1) by attempting to raise the low achievement variable through personal effort or (2) by turning their frustrations inward or (3) by advocating a reactionary program involving a desire to return to past systems of evaluation in which ascriptive, or simply different, criteria were more important.

Also, generally speaking, the most likely responses for those characterized by high achieved-low ascribed status inconsistency are (1) to advocate programs of social change designed to alter the system of evaluation so that achievement criteria become much more salient than ascriptive ones or so that the evaluation of their ascribed status as "low" will be changed; and (2) to withdraw from associations in which their ascribed status is salient.

These possibilities of solving ego's problem to avoid the divergent assessments and their consequences can also be put in more familiar, Mertonian terms. Merton (1968: 193-211) classifies the individual's (role) adaptations to given social situations in terms of cultural goals and institutionalized means for the attainment of these goals (cf. also Sampson 1966): (1) the conformist response of raising the lower rank dimension (achieved variables); (2) the ritualist adaptation of concealing the lower stimuli (audience segregation); (3) the innovative response of raising the higher rank, although it is doubtful whether the conflicting expectations can be resolved by increasing inconsistencies in the long run (compensatory rewards; e.g., further increase of income vs. low education); (4) to retreat from those interactions causing embarrassments (disengagement strategy; e.g., to eliminate membership in certain voluntary organizations); (5) the rebellious adaptation by actively rejecting the

evaluation system of alter and attempting to replace it by a different one (systemic change strategy; e.g., to vote for right or left-wing parties).

Although the summary statement given above is fairly representative of the major findings in the area, it ignores some important variables suggested earlier in this paper as well as in the theory of status politics theory and the literature on deviance. We will now turn to a further consideration of responses to status disequilibrium.

6. PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS IN PREDICTING RESPONSES

What renders most status inconsistency research empirically questionable and its theory so difficult to formulate is that it is faced with the coexistence of different consistency norms and varying structural locations of consistent and inconsistent status configurations. The fact that these linkages between substatus hierarchies are not individually but socially defined makes them hardly amenable to measurement on the level of individual consciousness, on the one hand, and produces individual variations in relation to the adherence to these (congruence) norms, on the other hand. However, there are not only socio-economic substatus hierarchies which give rise to the distinction between investment (e.g., education) and reward statuses (e.g., income), but also more general rank hierarchies based on the distinction between ascribed and achieved attributes. Although these distinctions are based on the assumption that status attributes are normatively interrelated, the ranked attributes may be more or less isolated from each other, more or less reversible, and more or less of an instrumental nature. These and other factors make individual consciousness and behavioral manifestations rather unreliable predictors of inconsistency effects. Nevertheless, in this section we would like to suggest a few revisions to the theoretical summary presented in Chapter 5.6.

First, many theorists propose that it is the discrepancy between ascriptive and achieved substatuses that is the most important in determining the type of response. Although a discrepancy between these two types of status dimensions may be particularly acute, we suggest that it is the nature of the lower substatus that is important

in determining which responses are probable. We assume that the perception of deprivation caused by inconsistent rank relationships is stressful although different consequences may be activated depending on the type of inconsistency and the kind of alleviating responses the inconsistents see open to them. In other words, we could predict the same range of responses for both those with high ascribed-low achieved and high achieved-low ascribed inconsistencies, though for varying reasons.

Second, Jackson (1962) predicts that self-blame is characteristic of the low achieved-high ascribed inconsistent and system-blame is characteristic of the high achieved-low ascribed individual. However, we prefer Cloward and Ohlin's (1960: 113) formulation of self-blame and system-blame as functions of the attribution of legitimacy to the system:

> We would like to suggest two situational variables that seem to us rewarding approaches to an investigation of the social conditions that produce external attributions of blame for failure: (1) the relative discrepancy between institutionally induced expectations (as distinct from aspirations) and possibilities of achievement, which produces a sense of unjust deprivation; and (2) highly visible barriers to the achievement of aspirations, which give rise to feelings of discrimination.

Thus, high ascribed-low achieved inconsistents (e.g., poor rural WASP's) who feel that their failure to achieve is due to systemic exigencies rather than to personal failure, may well, in contradiction to Jackson (1962), experience a sense of injustice rather than guilt. Cloward and Ohlin (1960: 116) also suggest that:

> Those who appraise themselves as better equipped than their fellows according to the formal criteria of advancement seem inclined to blame the system rather than themselves when their expectations of achievement are not met.

This applies both (1) to those with low ascribed status who have fulfilled the formal criteria for advancement (e.g., education, job experience) and have not been rewarded (e.g., with income, promotions); and (2) to those with the achieved status inconsistencies of high education-low occupation or income and high occupation-low income.

Third, we suggest that there are a number of plausible alternative responses not taken into account by the theory (e.g., system blame may be expressed through crime, aggression, etc. as well as political movements).

Fourth, we disagree with the literature which suggests that the direction of political response can be determined solely by the type of inconsistency. In agreement with Lipset (1964), we are of the opinion that left and right-wing attitudes are multi-dimensional and the direction of the response is determined by many factors other than the specific type of inconsistency (e.g., the issue, the candidate's or party ideology, the historical and cultural context).

Using the variables of self-blame and system-blame, perception of opportunities and nature of lowest status variable, we can arrive at the following tentative survey of possible responses to status disequilibrium (Chart 4).

Chart 4. Responses to Status Disequilibrium

Low Status Characteristic:	Response Mechanisms: SELF-BLAME — PERCEPTION OF OPPORTUNITIES *		SYSTEM-BLAME — PERCEPTION OF OPPORTUNITIES *	
	OPEN	CLOSED	OPEN	CLOSED
ASCRIBED	1. Over-Conformity	1. Intra-punitive response (e.g., psychological stress, suicide) 2. Rationalization ---------->	1. Political Expression 2. Collective Mobility ---------->	1. Avoidance/ Withdrawal 2. Extra-punitivity (e.g., aggressive behavior) 3. Resignation
ACHIEVED	1. Individual Mobility Striving	1. Intra-punitivity 2. Rationalization ---------->	1. Political Expression 2. Innovation (Merton's) ---------->	1. Avoidance/ withdrawal 2. Extrapunitivity 3. Resignation

* Perception of opportunities refers to the belief in the possibility of effecting a change in the position of one's lower substatus. Such perception is seen as affected not only by the objective existence of legitimate and illegitimate opportunity structures, but also by internalized prohibitions, reference group opinion, age, perception of reward, cost ratio, feasibility, etc.

However, there are a number of considerations not taken into account by Chart 4. For example, the means adopted to raise one's lower status may also be affected by fear of losing one's already high substatus(es). Some substatuses are more vulnerable to loss than others (e.g., income and occupation are vulnerable whereas education and the ascribed statuses are relatively invulnerable; they are indirectly vulnerable, i.e., through changing criteria of social evaluation). The individual's overall position also seems to be relevant here, i.e., an individual with a status configuration of HHHHHL has more to lose by adopting socially unacceptable responses than a person with a LLLLLH status position. Perhaps this will be included in the perception of opportunities, i.e., high risk may color the perception of what alternatives are really feasible.

The political theory of cross-pressures deals with an important aspect of reference group theory and may also be of importance in determining responses. Segal (1969) and Smith (1969) suggest that status inconsistency may lead to cross-pressures from different membership groups and that such pressures may affect political attitudes and behavior. For example, the black doctor characterized by status disequilibrium, as a consequence of the membership groups implied by his status configuration, may be subject to cross-pressures. He will be expected by his primary group affiliates to behave in a certain way politically while his fellow medical associates may hold more or less contradictory expectations for his behavior. Such would be the case, for example, if the issue of a U.S. federal or state program of free and/or additional medical aid to poverty stricken people arose. As a black, he is (at least visibly) associated with a minority group that would obviously benefit from such a program; he would therefore be expected to support it and also draw support from his family and racial peers. But, as a member of the medical

profession he would be expected by his colleagues to oppose any such program as it might be a detriment to the income of the profession. Four avenues are then open to him: (1) he can side with his racial group and face hostility toward him from his professional peers; (2) he can side with his professional peers and face hostility from his racial group; (3) he can take a compromise position and hope that the sanctions imposed will be light; or (4) he can withdraw into political apathy. (Of course, he could also lie to one of the groups about the position he is taking in order to avoid sanctions.)

Thus, such cross-pressures from different membership groups may act in contradiction to Lenski's liberalism hypothesis and produce a conservative, moderate or withdrawal response.

Johnson, in his Revolutionary Change (1966: 80), discusses a similar mechanism which tends to neutralize extreme responses to status frustrations.

> The chief systematic mechanism militating against [status protest] is multiple role playing. Normally, a single individual will play numerous roles -- worker, father, citizen, member of a recreational association, religious communicant, labor union member, and so forth -- and under conditions of (societal) equilibrium the interests of one role will counter-balance the interests of another, keeping the actor's total status interests ambiguous.

In that all cases of status inconsistency imply contradictory sets of behavioral expectations, they involve by definition role conflicts. In its attempt to offer solutions for individual role strains, role theory has resorted to conceptual devices similar to those of reference group

theory (e.g., Goode 1960): (1) change of value orientation (e.g., compartmentalization, priorities, delegation) and (2) change of situation (e.g., to eliminate, to extend, to establish barriers against role relationships).

There are many other interesting considerations which may affect the response of the status inconsistent. Some have suggested that the degree of inconsistency may affect the strength of the response, i.e., a discrepancy of H-L may be more frustrating than that of H-M(edium) or M-L.

Although the degree of frustration may be directly related to the degree of discrepancy, high frustration does not ensure an active response. For example, the greater the distance one would have to raise one's lower rank to bring it up to the level of the high one, the lower the possibility of doing so may seem and a passive response may be adopted.

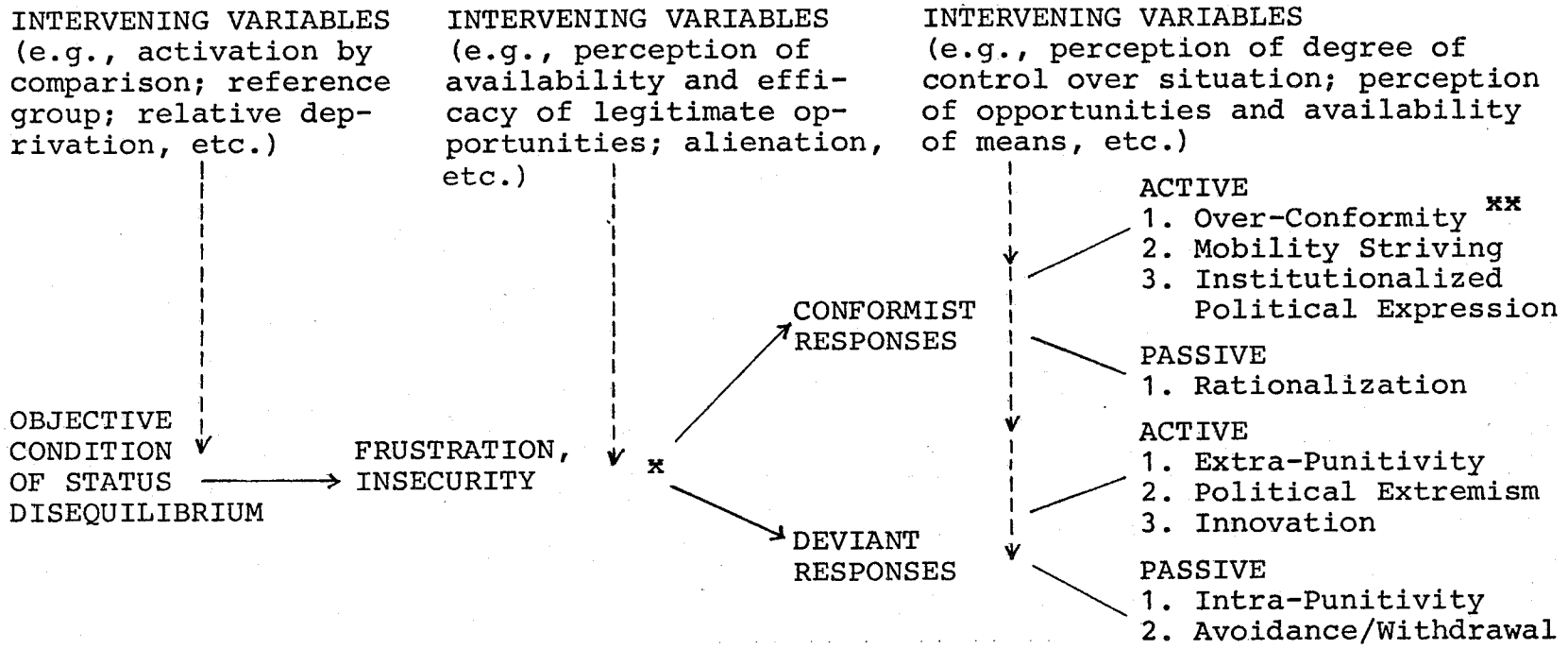
Another configuration which may be related to intensity of status frustration involves a "double (or triple) loaded" inconsistency. For example, the young, black female with high achieved status may be exposed to more discrepant and frustrating experiences than the middle-aged black male with the same achieved status.

The empirical cases presented in this chapter and the types of responses discussed in the previous chapter testify to the fact that the theory of status equilibration is virtually plagued with problems of prediction. In sum, as mentioned earlier in this paper, differently ranked status attributes give rise to overlapping expectations and behavioral implications. As a consequence, no matter which set of evaluated attributes the actor acts on, he will be defined as <u>deviant</u>, at least by one part of his audience.

These kinds of expectational, behavioral, and situational ambiguities may ultimately be referred to as the reason why status inconsistencies are stressful. Early studies on status inconsistency have established and elaborated upon this proposition (e.g., Lenski 1954; 1956; Blau 1956). The number of intervening variables whose effects have not been systematically researched is so great that it is extremely difficult to predict the type of response which will result, even from specific types of status inconsistencies. However, it has been our intention to delineate the scope of social phenomena within which status inconsistencies occur and to offer conceptual tools in an attempt to predict the direction of some inconsistency effects. Chart 5 (p. 91) illustrates this problem.

The tasks of future research must be (1) to study the expectation states that surround each status position so that we may know which discrepancies between ranks can meaningfully be said to produce disequilibrium; (2) to identify the conditions under which disequilibrium is activated or neutralized; (3) to identify the intervening variables which determine the type of response (or, at least, the directions, e.g., conformist - deviant, active - passive). Although some suggestions have been advanced in this paper, the many factors involved in determining the consequences of status disequilibrium have yet to be systematically ordered into a predictive model.

Chart 5. Directions of Response to Status Disequilibrium



x Deviant behavior, like conformative behavior, is seen as goal-directed or purposive action that is selected from the alternatives available to the actor through a decision process. The perspective on deviance used here is succinctly stated by Jessor et al. (1968: 42-43; our emphasis): "When conforming behavior fails to eventuate in important gratification or consistently falls short of achieving the goals sought, alternative behaviors will be employed to achieve those goals or to adapt to the failure to achieve them...Within this theoretical perspective, deviant behavior occurs when the expectation of its maximizing valued goals attainment or preferred outcomes is higher than that for conforming behavior."

xx Overconformity may also be seen as a deviant response (e.g., in Parsons' compulsive performance category).

7. THE SOCIAL FUNCTIONS OF STATUS INCONSISTENCY IN POST-CAPITALISTIC SOCIETY

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the much neglected consequences of types and the extent of status inconsistencies for social stability and conflict in post-capitalistic societies. This approach is warranted in that an attempt is made to add new elements to a body of knowledge which has thus far linked the phenomenon of status inconsistency with negative consequences for both the individual inconsistent and the social system. Similarly to Slomczynski and Wesolowski (1974), we would like to open a new way of looking at the importance, which also means political significance, of status inconsistency in a given social system.

7.1 Social Conflicts Resulting from Status Inconsistencies

Several types of conflicts may result from status inconsistencies. Many of the responses to status disequilibrium (see Charts 4 and 5) can be classified as conflictual or potentially conflictual. The various intrapunitive, rationalization, avoidance and withdrawal responses represent intra-personal conflicts over self-image and expectation frustrations or internal value conflicts. Aggression and innovation relate to conflict between the individual and the social system. Conflict between individuals with different status inconsistencies inheres in each one's attempt to improve his life situation which, more often than not, means to maximize his own status vis-à-vis other actors. And, collective mobility and political expression represent great conflict potential between status groups.

In short, a state of social disorganization may result from the various consequences of status inconsistency -- high rates of mental illness, drug addiction, individual animosities, loss of faith in the legitimacy of the system, group jealousies, etc.

The theory of status equilibration holds somewhat different implications for social stability than traditional theories of class conflict. To various segments of society, the latter envision a struggle for a redistribution of power, while the former implies attempts to raise one's position in relation to the existing power-prestige order. This does not mean that status equilibration attempts are limited to individuals -- they may involve whole status groups (e.g., peasants, the poor, blacks, migrant workers) trying to change the social evaluation of their status from a low to high (but this is done in an attempt to raise their low status attribute(s) to a position equal to that of their high status attribute(s) in order to more fully share in the rewards implied by their high substatuses). That is, they are not rejecting the whole reward structure but trying to maximize their position in relation to it. It is true that this may involve overall social change -- to broaden the opportunity structures or to redefine the importance of certain criteria that determine social evaluation -- but this is done in an attempt to remove barriers against "moving up the ladder to success."

Traditional economic interest and class conflict models cannot explain the reaction of the status inconsistent because he is located, in effect, "between classes" and is part of a social structure in which divergent forces and groups operate that do not line up neatly along a single dimension. The distinction we are trying to make here is similar to the one between status politics and interest politics

developed by Hofstadter (1964) and elaborated by Lipset (1964), Schweitzer (1974) and others. The concept of status politics involves the politically-oriented attitudes and activities which may result from feelings of status insecurity. Although originally developed to explain the American strain of status-striving and status insecurity, it may well be applicable to the conditions arising in any country undergoing changes in its criteria for according status and other rewards. Status politics:

> ...refers to political movements whose appeal is to the ... resentments of individuals or groups who desire to maintain or improve their social status... The groups which are receptive to status-oriented appeals are not only those which have risen in their economic structure and who feel that the rapid social change threatens their own claims to high social position, or enables previously lower status groups to claim equal status with their own (Lipset 1964: 309).

In contrast to status politics, the phenomenon of class or interest politics refers to the political struggle on material, economic grounds - usually to the clash between those who favor redistribution of income and those who favor maintenance of the status quo. According to both Hofstadter (1964) and Lipset (1964), interest politics predominate during times of depression and economic discontent and during national emergencies while status politics become salient during times of economic prosperity when many individuals can improve their economic position. As touched upon in Chapter 2, the instabilities in the social evaluation of roles and the distributive system created by economic changes and social mobility tend to be accompanied by more or less successful attempts at

arresting these instabilities by status distinctions which may help some groups to fortify the economic advantages they have won in the course of these social transformations (Bendix 1974: 153).

> During depressions, the dominant motif in dissent takes expression in proposals for reform or in panaceas. Dissent then tends to be highly programmatic -- that is, it gets itself embodied in many kinds of concrete legislative proposals. It is also future-oriented and forward-looking, in the sense that it looks to a time when the adoption of this or that program will materially alleviate or eliminate certain discontents (Hofstadter 1964: 85).[19]

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[19] Although it has long been recognized that stratified groups necessarily imply hereditary effects, the essence of status politics seems to follow directly from de Tocqueville's conception of equalitarianism with its belief in an easy and unbounded career open to everyone according to his ambition:

> The same equality which allows every citizen to conceive these lofty hopes renders all the citizens less able to realize them; it circumscribes their powers on every side, while it gives freer scope to their desires (de Tocqueville 1946, I: 138; our emphasis).

Several decades later, Max Weber was inclined to emphasize the "specific life style" that characterizes the "status situation" at the expense of elaborating upon the economic or "class situation" of certain social groups. However, in his historical reflections on the present topic he argued:

> When the bases of the acquisition and distribution of goods are relatively stable, stratification by status is favored. Every technological repercussion and economic transformation threatens stratification by status and pushes the class situation into the foreground. Epochs and countries in which the naked class situation is of predominant significance are regularly the periods of technical and economic transformations. And every slowing down of the shifting of economic stratifications leads, in due

On the other hand, status anxieties are seldom expressed in a clear-cut political program for there are not simple policy-solutions -- the difficulty involves the whole social structure.

> Where there are status anxieties, there is little or nothing which a government can do. It is not surprising therefore, that the political movements which have successfully appealed to status resentments have been irrational in character, and have sought scapegoats which serve to symbolize the status threat (Lipset 1964: 309).

Although Hofstadter and Lipset were writing about the American scene, we may hypothesize that their concept of status politics should apply in any social system which is undergoing extensive structural changes. Where the foundations and rationales for distributing rewards, prestige, power, etc. are being changed, status insecurities may well arise among those who were the recipients under the old system and among those who are seeking to establish their positions on the basis of new opportunity structures and evaluation systems.

Thus, we may expect that, beyond <u>individual</u> rank inconsistency, <u>systematically</u> induced status inconsistencies occur when certain kinds of status attributes are in

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course, to the growth of status structures and makes for a resuscitation of the important role of social honor (Gerth and Mills 1958: 193-194; our emphasis).

The history of modern society is decisively shaped by the varying social-structural arrangements designed to resolve that dilemma of <u>homo hierarchicus</u>.

general over- or undersupply even though at the initial point in time all status dimensions in a given system are regarded as balanced. Meyer and Hammond (1971: 95) refer to Cancian (1965) as stating that in a rapidly growing economy new rewards and market needs may be generated more quickly than institutions of education, prestige, and deference can respond to. As a consequence, a number of individuals will become status inconsistent. In connection with our considerations above, we can speak of the dynamics of distributive lag -- in some societies an important preparatory stage toward a system of status politics.[20] Another example of systematically generated inconsistencies refers to the various policies of income equalization that may render inconsistent groups of individuals at either end of the stratificational system. The relevance of the ideas of relative deprivation and

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[20] That the frequency of status inconsistencies with income at the leading substatus tends to increase in post-capitalistic societies is supported by Bornschier and Heintz (1975) who computed inconsistencies on the basis of data from different studies (Machonin 1970; Blinkert et al. 1972; Eitzen 1970; I = income; E = education; O = occupation): This type of inconsistency occurred in West Germany in 46.6% ($I > O$, $I > E$) and in the United States in 48.5% ($I > O \sim E$, $I \sim O > E$) of all cases, while education was leading in 18.6% ($E > O$, $E > I$) and 27.3% ($E > O \sim I$, $E \sim O > I$) of all cases respectively. Other status dimensions were dominant in 34.8% ($O > E$, $O > I$) and 24.3% ($E \sim I > O$, $O > I \sim E$) of the cases. The corresponding figures for the CSSR were: 33.9% ($I > O > E$, $I > E > O$), 17.3% ($E > O > I$) and 48.9% (others and those not fitting the operationalized categories).

Of course, a possible dominance of investment substatuses in socialist countries does not (necessarily) mean the same thing as it does in highly industrialized, non-socialist countries. Actually, every society has its specific types, frequency, and mode of change of status inconsistencies (for illustrative examples, see Slomczynski and Wesolowski 1974; Lupri 1972; Broom and Jones 1970; 1974; Lenski 1954).

reference groups for a more detailed interpretation has been noted in Chapter 4.3.

Lenski (1954) was the first to suggest that a society characterized by a large population of status inconsistents would be unstable, although he did not pursue societal implications at any length. Galtung (1966) has tried to systematically analyze the effects of status inconsistency on the stability of the social order and (1971) the relationship between aggression and status inconsistency. And Berger, Cohen and Zelditch (1966) have drawn some conclusions about social conflict from their analysis of rank disequilibrium. The following discussion will draw important insights from these sources, the status politics theory, and considerations to be derived from developments in post-capitalistic societies relevant here.

7.2 Consociational Democracy: The Strategy of the Status Quo Through Status Politics

Recent developments in post-capitalistic societies (particularly in Western and Central Europe but also in the United States) suggest that status politics is becoming the most salient feature of these societies with, contrary to the predictions made by Marx, Weber, Hofstadter and Lipset, no likely return to interest politics. A number of countries are beginning to follow the example of Austria's "consociational democracy" (Lijphart 1968/69: 17-22) in that they increasingly adopt non-competitive patterns of political decision making. There is a body of evidence that social systems of the post-capitalistic type are geared toward securing stability by emphasizing their capacity to react effectively to persisting problems and to adjust to changing conditions. They do that at the expense of the

quality of their democratic structure as measured in terms of individual rights, the extent of representativeness, and public responsibility of the governmental system (Pelinka 1974).[21]

The question of the extent to which current parliamentarism can still be considered as institutionalized competition must thus be complemented by the query of what its possible functional equivalents, or at least functional alternatives, may be.

On the one hand, in post-capitalistic societies the state and semi-public agencies have been called upon to take actions that complement and substitute for regular processes of a market economy as well as to compensate for dysfunctional effects of its capital accumulation process. In that the state apparatus regulates societal development through planning, it made itself into an addressee of actionable rights and claims of organized groups, the phenomenon of which Daniel Bell calls the "revolution of rising entitlement" (Time, November 10, 1975). The focal point of state activities is not so much

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[21] The political subsystem of most post-capitalistic societies has changed insofar as (1) in practice, not the parliament but the preparliamentary sphere formed by the government, the bureaucracy, the political parties and the imperatively coordinated associations (Max Weber's Verbände) exercise the legislative functions; (2) the parliament actually exerts a control function that is most visibly demonstrated by the relationship between government and opposition; (3) the principle of parliamentary responsibility and the fact that party patronage pervade large parts of society contributed to a fusion of the traditional state powers; the functional differentiation between government, supported by the majority, the parliament, and the controlling opposition represents a new form of separation of powers (Bagehot 1965).

the prevention of economic crises (though a permanent concern) but rather the prevention of crises resulting from procuring legitimation from the population (input), from the rationality of the supply of commodities (output) and, finally, from the motivation toward work and social integration (Habermas 1973; Offe 1971: 161; Fischer-Kowalski and Strasser 1974: 109-144).

On the other hand, the major forces of production in society -- capital and labor -- find organizational expression in dichotomous political instruments of roughly equal strength: labor and employer organizations. These associations claim, explicitly or implicitly, that, on the basis of their constituency, they are legitimately competent to participate in the decisions over matters of economic and social policy as well as public finance. In their long history of conflicts, these contending parties have come to appreciate a mutually corresponding organizational structure to facilitate the acceptance of common rules and conformity with them. This minimal consensus through conflict experience is increasingly complemented and enforced by the following facts: (1) that these societies are conceived as fragmented; (2) that their leaders realize the danger of an unstable development of fragmented, highly differentiated societies; (3) that developing a systematic capacity to provide solutions that meet the demands on the part of the basic (economic) subcultures, must have priority; (4) that the leaders have access to a mechanism[22] enabling them to overcome the conflict, which exists between the sub-cultures (classes), on their own level (Lijphart 1968/69: 22-23).

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[22]Above all, we have in mind institutions in which labor and employer organizations -- by law or custom -- are equally represented, such as wage and price boards. In Austria there are some 220 parity institutions, set up to conduct public affairs whereby the major contenders legitimately interpret the public interest through their respective interest situation, finally culminating almost every time in a historic compromise.

And, most importantly, assumptions about the future development of society are added to the aforementioned consensus over common rules regulating the conduct of conflict: (1) priority of economic growth and/or relative full employment; (2) persistence of conflicting interests based on the consensus that the principles of a market economy (i.e., private ownership of the means of production, free enterprise systems within limits) remain outside the scope of issues to be resolved through conflict; (3) a policy of income distribution that is dependent upon the rate of economic growth (e.g., the Austrian case as described by Matzner 1974).

The important thing is that these basic labor and employer associations obtain their legitimation independently of each other. Unlike political parties, they need not derive their legitimation from a continuous struggle against each other. Rather, legitimation is given on the basis of the dichotomous relationship between labor and capital and the associations that represent them. Since each is aware of its relative strength as well as its respective functionality for social stability, accomodation between them (i.e., taking into account and respecting the major interests of both) is achieved by accepting the principle of unanimity. Such a consociational mechanism is thus characterized by a lack of formal institutionalization of competitive behavior and a minimal exposure to the public. In short, the parliamentary system satisfies the democratic needs of the public, while the consociationally arranged decision making process procures societal stability. The side-by-side of competitive and consociational processes makes a general absorption of social conflicts possible and hence maximally stabilizes the societal status quo.

Moreover, contrary to some political analysts (e.g., Lachs 1976; Glatz and Tálos 1974), these considerations suggest that the formation of consociational society is more affected by the current political and economic conditions of highly industrialized Western countries rather than a result of a historical learning process. In the case of Austria, the latter factor probably accounts for much what happened in the two decades after 1945.

Contrary to Simmel's (1955: 39-40) and Coser's (1956) contention that, "Conflicts in which the participants feel that they are merely the representatives of collectivities and groups... are likely to be more radical... than those that are fought for personal reasons" (Coser 1956: 118), we expect in societies with strong consociational tendencies ideological alignments and conflict to exist only at the basis of the social system, while the elite groups at the top are extremely sensitive to stability. The striving for the maintenance of social stability establishes between them a consociational relationship that relegates conflict to a ritual (Pinner 1967). The conflict at the base is generally resolved by a negotiated consensus at the top: Close relationships among elite groups are contrasted with a fragmented, non-integrated base which is split into dichotomous groups (Lijphart 1968/69: 26).

We are thus led to the hypothesis that, in a consociational society, the forces participating in the political and economic decision making process are pretty much given rather than determined by the electoral process and can hardly be changed.

Michels' (1949) "iron law of oligarchy" of second order (i.e., on a societal rather than only on an organizational level) takes effect. The oligarchic tendencies are

additionally enforced in those societies, in which the leadership of the political party system is intertwined with that of the system of imperatively coordinated associations. A similar effect, although it may sound paradoxical, is generated through the extension of participatory rights to the wider public with respect to other than political segments of social life. This is so, because an extension of participatory rights in a basically consociational society will strengthen the leadership of the respective associations mainly because of their advantage on informational and consociational grounds.

Countries such as Austria, West Germany, Great Britain, Sweden, and the United States, that are moving in the direction of consociational democracy show somewhat contradictiory characteristics with regard to social mobility and its consequences. On the one hand, because of the oligarchic tendencies described above, the chances for members from lower social strata to move into elite positions tend to be lower than in Western societies with no consociational characteristics. On the other hand, consociational societies, by their very nature, favor status politics, by means of which the major groups attempt to realize important aspects of the fundamental interests of their membership. These interests are mutually acknowledged and their realization often proceeds according to the principle of "monopolistic competition" (Riesman 1953: 247).

Consociational society is likely to increase the total number of individuals whose status is found to be inconsistent at the given time of investigation. As indicated, consociational structures have important consequences with respect to the mechanism of status attainment and of status (dis)equilibration and as to the

scope and intensity of ensuing conflicts between groups. Mills' (1956) "power elite" and Riesman's (1953) "veto groups" merge into a new form of domination, in which the questions of income distribution are relegated to questions of economic growth and in which social conflict is resolved in negotiation. The compromise, on the basis of the given social structure, is the destined result of all major decision processes. Consociational society (Sozialpartnerschaft), in other words, is not only an instrument for income policy but, in practice, a system of cooperation, and often collaboration, between government, labor, and industry in all areas of social and economic policy (cf. Kienzl 1975; Lachs 1976).

Consociational society presents itself as basically "classless" (cf. Ossowski 1963: 100-118), although it may turn out to be the most effective form of society in concealing and reproducing social inequalities. The point should be emphasized that stratification involves a hierarchy of groups rather than of positions or of individuals who possess unequal amounts of income, prestige, and power (Wrong 1969: 518). The same applies to an adequate understanding of the problem of status inconsistency and the nature of status politics. Consociational democracy promotes status politics on the group level and at the same time reduces individual chances of upward mobility (and probably downward mobility as well, at least for politically protected groups of individuals). There is reason to believe that enforced status politics will bring about more changes in single status dimensions (such as income, social security and other fringe benefits, power, privileges, and prestige through representation and participation on all levels of organizations, etc.) rather than global statuses, thus also likely increasing the number of status inconsistent individuals in the particular

society at a given time.[23]

It should be pointed out that status politics is implemented on a social-organizational and, sometimes, on a societal level which is most clearly expressed in union wage policy and the state's guaranteed income policy. The standardized group incomes that result from these policies affect large groups of people in a society. If one compares the total reward level of different groups (e.g., the rank-and-file of different unions), one will discover differences in one way or another; that is, the same status dimension of individuals from different groups may be differently affected by these policies. By contrast, chances for upward mobility, although a group or strata phenomenon to a considerable extent, refer to the individual's structure of opportunities to change his overall status or single status dimensions in an upward direction.

There is reason to believe that in consociational Austrian society the opportunity structure seems to be more restricted for some groups than for others by mechanisms controlling social ascent (e.g., party patronage, license practices) which are not found to that extent in other societies. As these mechanisms of social mobility (e.g., political fealty) take on the characteristic of a status

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[23]This development, it is speculated, will in turn affect the structure of social evaluation and hence the individuals' expectation states which refer to their knowledge of the relevant dimensions of evaluation necessary for determining what kind and level of reward to expect. However, it is also possible that status discrepancies will be less felt, possibly because of a changing value system, and thus less likely to become a matter of individual and social concern. As a further consequence, strong relationships between particular dimensions of structured social inequality may be loosened. If status inconsistency occurs frequently,

dimension which will generate status inconsistency, this in turn will stimulate mobility in those cases in which that status index is flexible (cf. also Galtung 1966). In a limited sense, one could formulate the proposition that inconsistency among substatuses occurs because of the operation of ascriptive processes (cf. also Kimberly 1974: 26). However, this does not contradict our contention in Chs. 1 and 5.1 that, in a multi-dimensional system of social stratification, as individuals who become mobile are likely to imbalance their status equilibria assumed to exist prior to mobility, they, in turn, tend to become mobile in order to equilibrate their overall status. Such a cyclical relationship of mobility and status inconsistency is never smooth or unidirectional; that is, it is based on fragmentary knowledge, which individuals have about each other's actual status developments, and is embedded in a structure of society that is driven on by divergent forces whose effects on stratificational concerns of individual behavior are by no means in the realm of safe predictability.

A consociational society such as Austria is characterized by the capacity to stabilize the existing social structure by emphasizing status politics which gives rise to a set of mechanisms that contribute effectively to providing a high degree of legitimacy to this society's system of stratification. Specifically, until recently (1) Austria, like other post-capitalistic societies, was blessed with continually high growth rates of valued goods and services to be distributed; redistribution was possible via economic growth suggesting a positive correlation between growth and legitimacy. (2) Although the mobility chances are not

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we may expect, with Slomczynski and Wesolowski (1974: 16-17), that the popular image of society would reflect functional relationships between various social groups rather than higher-lower relationships.

and have never been evenly distributed, consociational societies have managed to provide a relatively open class system with specific characteristics. On the one hand, consociational societies promote sponsored career mobility more than other highly industrialized societies -- the reason being the pervasive influence and the protégé function of political parties, consociational institutions, and the state (bureaucrats) in all spheres of social life. On the other hand, status politics, in the sense of continually providing chances to improve single dimensions of one's social status, particularly income and participatory rights, seems to lend normative power to the factually existing opportunities for social mobility in this society, simply to the chance of being able to get ahead. Status politics in a consociational framework virtually minimizes anti-status-quo conflicts, although it clearly contributes to the maintenance of the existing stratification profile of society.

In sum, for consociational society status politics represents an effective instrument for eliminating the potential "clash of material aims and needs among various groups and blocs" and for institutionalizing instead the "clash of various projective rationalizations arising out of status aspirations and other personal motives" (Hofstadter 1964: 83). In a sense, what we are dealing with here is the strategy of modern industrialized societies to conceal the contradiction of declared equality in the face of apparent inequalities. This is accomplished by, among other things, a relatively high degree of artificial mobility: low-ranked members of society are assured of their social value; the passing nature of existing inequalities is emphasized; diffuse and vague standards as opposed to clearly defined criteria of social ranking are stressed; and the attainment of cheap status symbols is facilitated (cf. Tumin 1963).

7.3 Criss-Cross Theory and Social Stability

Although the main focus of this chapter is on the conflict potential of status inconsistencies and its political consequences, let us briefly mention some of the ways in which the existence of status disequilibrated individuals may act to promote stability in a social system.

First, the existence of H(igh)-L(ow) status configurations[24] may act to reduce class conflict by providing individuals who can bridge the gap between the HH's and LL's. Galtung (1966: 148) defines criss-cross as "the degree to which there are individuals who can serve as bridges between completely disparate conflict groups in the structure." As mentioned in Chapter 4.3, another function served by the LH's is to "legitimize" the system to the LL's by demonstrating that mobility within the system is possible. Cloward and Ohlin (1960: 124) suggest that:

> If exposing the existence of discriminatory barriers to opportunity can result in the attribution of blame for failure to "the system" it may be that publicizing successful careers can increase the tendency to attribute blame to personal inadequacy.

And Merton (1968: 294-295, n.12) notes that:

> ... conspicuously "successful" individuals who have risen rapidly in a social hierarchy and who are much in the public eye function as models or

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[24] Note: In dichotomized status configurations of this type, the first letter always refers to the ascribed status dimensions, the second to the achieved status dimensions.

> reference figures testifying to a mobility-system in which, apparently, careers are still open to talent. For some, these success-models are living testimony to the legitimacy of the institutional system and in this comparative context, the individual deflects criticism of the system onto himself.

Although status inconsistents may help to reduce class conflict, they are themselves a highly unstable group. Nevertheless, their instability may also be minimized by their links with various groups. As discussed earlier, multiple loyalties may serve to prevent social conflict by keeping the actor's total status interests ambiguous or by promoting a response of apathy or withdrawal under cross-pressures (which may, however, result in intrapersonal conflict). However, the conflict-reducing potential of multiple-group loyalties is considerably reduced by the pressures for status aspiration and equilibration. As noted several times, the HL inconsistent tends to adopt the HH's as his reference group and reject the LL's in order to maximize his status. Thus in a conflict between the H's and L's, he is more likely to side with the H's. As Galtung (1966: 162) says:

> A person will try to define interaction so that his highest perceived status is activated... The consequence of this axiom is well known in sociology. Generally, the social structure is more closely tied together at the top than at the bottom. At the top, there is association and mutual acceptance, because to accept the other is to accept oneself. At the bottom, there is a corresponding dissociation and rejection, for to accept the other fellow would be to accept one's

> own situation. Thus, one gets the famous patterns of self-hatred among the underdogs...

In other words, elite groups and upper classes are so cohesive because most of their members consider their respective group or class as one to which they belong and to which they refer. It is membership and reference group in one (cf. Touraine 1974: 66-67).

7.4 Status Configurations and Conflicts Between Groups

Galtung (1966) identifies several status relationships which have varying potentials for social conflict. In general, status sets with no links between them have a greater conflict potential (because of lack of cross-pressures or multiple loyalties) than those with links. Thus we would expect the HH vs. LL and HL vs. LH status sets to be more generative of conflict than HH vs. HL, HH vs. LH, HL vs. LL or LH vs. LL status sets because of shared status (and, supposedly, shared interests). Although there is some potential for antagonism between the HH and LL, this is more of a class conflict than (individual or) status conflict because, in interaction, the roles of superordination and subordination are well-defined. Naturally, the greatest conflict potential is to be expected to exist between the HL and LH status sets (e.g., the white laborer and black doctor):

> The lower the total rank distance, the more intense the conflict between status sets with no links... First, the lower the total rank distance, the more the parties will perceive each other as competitors since they are the same distance from the summit of the status-set system. Both will be on an equal footing with the upper class on one dimension, which will make them emphasize that

> dimension at the expense of the other, yet fear that the other group will do the same... This will contribute to more intense conflicts than those between the TT and UU, where nothing similar applies.[25]
>
> Second, when two persons A and B meet in two different contexts, and with different rank order -- in one context with A as superior, in another with B as superior -- much psychological flexibility will be needed... Finally, there is the insecurity stemming from uncertainties as to rank order. A TU may look at a UT and vice versa, and each will try to define the interaction pattern to come out on top... Hence, each will be treated by the other as the underdog, and if they are not willing to accept this, resentment will develop. But between the TT and UU there are no such problems since the rank distance exists regardless of context (Galtung 1966: 161).

This perspective modifies Lenski's contention somewhat that the society with a large number of status inconsistents will be unstable; according to Galtung, it is the type of inconsistency that produces the problem. Thus we would expect a society in transition from an ascriptive to an achievement-based system of evaluation (or vice versa) to have great conflict potential. And this is the same conclusion reached above in the discussion of status politics. The H(ascribed) L(achieved) groups find their claim to status through ethnicity slipping while the LH's demand the reward they expect from their achievement.

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[25] T stands for "topdog" status; U for "underdog" status.

The same principle may hold true for inconsistencies between different achieved variables and between different ascribed characteristics. Thus the individual high on education and low on income will stress his academic credentials when in interaction with one low on education and high on income (who may ask "If you're so smart, why aren't you rich?").

7.5 Opportunities and Social Conflict

It has been assumed throughout this paper, that, if possible, an individual will attempt to equilibrate his substatuses through individual upward mobility; if this is not perceived as possible, he will adopt alternative responses. The implication of this for conflict potential is dual: The more open the system is in terms of upward mobility, the less the reservoir of resentment created for those whose low status is an achieved one, but the greater will be the number of high achieved-low ascribed inconsistents.

However, even if the individual's low substatus is an achieved one, there are many factors contributing to the individual's perception of the opportunity structure. Zelditch and Anderson (1966: 261) envision the following possibilities:

> How is mobility blocked? Ego may be too old to expect to change ranks. Or the rank that must be changed may be an ascribed rank. Or the opportunity structure may be limited. Or the rank might be one, like religious denomination or national origin, to which actors are so sentimentally attached that even were it possible to "pass" for someone of higher rank, ego might not want to convert or assimilate. Or, very important, alter may be willing and able to prevent ego from changing his ranks.

Individual mobility in relation to visible ascribed status dimensions is, by definition, blocked within the existing system of stratification. Mobility (via legitimate routes) in relation to achieved substatuses will be, in virtually all societies, blocked for some despite the social system's claims to equal opportunity and classlessness.

> The democratic ideology of equality of opportunity creates constant pressure for formal criteria of evaluation that are universalistic rather than particularistic, achieved rather than ascribed... However, the democratic society, like other types of society, is also characterized by a limited supply of rewards and opportunities. Although many are eligible for success on the basis of formal criteria, relatively few can succeed even in a rapidly expanding economy (Cloward and Ohlin 1960: 119).

But even though mobility is (perceived as) blocked, this does not necessarily lead to external conflict; responses such as withdrawal, resignation and self-blame (internal conflict) are possible. Zelditch and Anderson (1966) suggest that a necessary condition for conflict to result from status disequilibration is a limited supply of valued goods (e.g., limited opportunities, power, prestige) and a sufficient condition is the definition of the situation in zero-sum terms. Thus, if striving for an education by group A is perceived by B as proportionately reducing its chances, conflict will result. Similarly, if whites (or males) interpret the attempt of non-whites (or females) to elevate the social evaluation of their racial (sexual) status as necessarily resulting in a corresponding decrease in the status of "white" (or "male"), then conflict will ensue. According to Zelditch and Anderson (1966: 265), conflict results:

> If ego wants to compel others to redefine W (weight of social evaluation of a characteristic) in the same way as he himself defines it, change must create conflict... If there is conflict it must be both because ego can change S (stratification of a social system) in no way that does not involve forceful compulsion and because alter resists change... If ego changes W what he will do is decrease the importance of his lower rank... Therefore, if most others do consent to redefinition, some previously well-established actors in S are suddenly displaced. If ego is imbalanced, so is any alter who compares himself with ego, but some of these alters are particularly affected because their imbalance is the converse of ego's... So some alters will always resist change.

At this point Zelditch and Anderson (1966: 266) bring in one qualifying condition for their prediction of conflict:

> Any zero-sum that does not result in withdrawal results in conflict... If at this point ego isolates himself from others, he makes his new definition of W an altogether private reaction... But, since evaluations are so peculiarly dependent on the way in which the public grants one's claims ego may want to obtain consent from at least some others. Despite our previous line of argument it still does not follow that conflict occurs because ego might obtain consent from just those who have something to gain and nothing to lose, and so long as this group insulates itself it is not brought into conflict with those others who have something to lose and

> nothing to gain... There will be conflict only if they are forced into contact, or if either compels consent from some meaningful audience whose evaluations are important to the other.

7.6 Social Organization and Conflict

Anything that facilitates communication of grievances between similarly blocked inconsistents and organization of those inconsistents may promote conflict. Those who previously responded by isolation, resignation, etc. may adopt a new response if they believe that group mobility or group redefinition of the stratification system is possible (Coser 1956: 8, 37).

> Once organization exists, it may activate many persons who were isolated or insulated, give them social support, make the injustice they feel more real, reinforce the impulse to action and make them feel more powerful (Zelditch and Anderson 1966: 262).

Although those with the same type of status inconsistencies will have the most clearcut interests in organizing, they may also form alliances with those with similar frustrations. In fact, the organization and public expression of discontent may have a "snowball effect," leading to the emergence of other similar groups (e.g., Black Power, Chicanos, Red Power, Women, Students). Johnson (1966) suggests that the dynamic element, which overcomes cleavages based on perceived differences in the problems faced by various groups, is ideology.

> Without ideology, deviant subcultural groups such as delinquent gangs, religious sects, and deviant patriotic associations, will not form

> alliances; and the tensions of the system which lead particular groups to form these associations, will be dissipated without directly influencing the social structure. Once persons whose latent interests have become manifest have an ideology, however, the society will tend to polarize into two groups; one group with an interest in maintaining the status quo and another with an interest in and an ideology for altering the status quo (Johnson 1966: 81).

Thus, individuals with disequilibrated statuses which they cannot equalize through individual mobility provide the "fuel" for inter-group conflict or perhaps revolution, even if they have not responded in an individually aggressive manner to their status frustration.

7.7 Implications for the Reduction of Social Conflict

The conflict-minimizing potential of status inconsistents for a social system has already been discussed (criss-cross, multiple loyalties, etc.). The reduction of the number of inconsistents in a system may thus remove their cohesive potential as well as their disruptive tendencies. That is, if we move to a society characterized only by HH's and LL's, there will be no actors tying the two strata together to prevent ruptures and class conflict. Functional alternatives such as consociational elements will take their place. Another possibility would be to reduce the number of status inconsistents in Galtung's conflict-prone group -- the HL vs. LH's -- while maintaining status inconsistents with status linkage -- HL/LL or HH/HL -- to serve the criss-cross function.

A third suggestion would be to provide as much opportunity for mobility as possible and abolish (i.e., make irrelevant to social status) all bases of status which are not amenable to individual change. Such an attempt would likely encounter great resistance from those with high ascribed statuses and seriously undermine the strategy of status politics. This is particularly true for the "new" elites in consociational societies.

Galtung (1971) suggests increasing the number of dimensions on which status can be accorded, thus making a single low one less important and increasing sources of gratification (as well as occupying the actor's time with new status strivings rather than disgruntlement). He also suggests that the number of people in a system may affect the conflict potential. The more people there are to interact with, the more likely it is that a status inconsistent can find a milieu in which interaction is rewarding and expectation frustrations are few. This is less likely in the case of a consociationally organized society, the basis of which is more fragmented (than in a society with more competitive elements), while the elites at the top can demonstrate unity. Encouragement of the formation of insulated groups such as subcultures or even counter-cultures (cf. Yinger 1960) would also serve to diminish status frustrations.

Another possibility would involve the redefinition of status dimensions (e.g., education, authority) as ends in themselves rather than as means for the attainment of other goals (Wesolowski 1969; Slomczynski and Wesolowski 1974). Disequilibrium could also be neutralized by a reduction in the separateness of status dimensions such that one's ranks on all dimensions would be averaged

rather than evaluated individually. Along this line, Galtung (1966: 159) suggests:

> ...the dissemination of a new ideology, to the effect that mixed status sets of the TU and UT types are held up as laudable combinations: the learned worker, the woman politician, and the like. Complementarily, the man who tries to be topdog on all dimensions is not commended, he is denounced as greedy and ambitious.

Lastly, a means of reducing social conflict and aggression (but increasing intra-personal conflict) is to deflect criticism of the system onto the individual for his failure to achieve or to assimilate, which does occur in post-capitalistic societies to a considerable extent.

No doubt there are many more implications for reducing the instability of status disequilibrates. However, the ones just proposed are not likely to be realized given the unimaginativeness, short-sightedness and commitment to the status quo so characteristic of many policy makers (most of whom have nothing to gain but much to lose from re-evaluation of status characteristics).

From these rather cursory considerations we can predict rather great instability (in the form of conflict, individual aggression, psychosomatic stress, etc.) within the developing nations in the midst of a transition from ascribed to achieved bases for status. For reasons discussed in this chapter, this is not likely true for the United States and Western Europe inspite of the fact that, while espousing democratic ideology and raising people's expectations, these countries still maintain rather strong vestiges of ascription and tend to develop

effective mechanisms of maintaining an inequalitarian status quo. In their foremost attempt to secure stability (even) at the expense of democratic quality, Western societies with consociational characteristics favor status politics, thereby reducing chances for upward mobility and at the same time generating more status inconsistencies, at least as measured in objective terms.

In focusing on consequences of status inconsistent individuals for the stability of post-capitalistic societies we have found that even widespread status inconsistency is likely to produce positive effects toward the maintenance of the existing structural arrangements of these societies. Although the prediction of specific types of conflict and the conditions under which conflict will result from status disequilibration must await further development of the theory, it does help to identify social groupings which may develop some potential for discontent, aggression and conflict as well as have integrative effects on a societal level.

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