SOCIAL MOBILITY, CLASS RELATIONSHIP AND NATIONALISM IN LATIN AMERICA


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Preliminar: no citar sin permiso del autor.
The experience of European industrialization has made us wont to think that the open conflict of two antagonistic classes is the necessary concomitant of the establishment of an industrial economy in which the new sections of industrial workers participate only through their work; democracy and mass consumption do not appear very late in this type of industrial society, and its development determines a progressive integration of the working sections or classes in the national society. In other words, the evolution of economic development and that of the social and political participation are parallel.

This example, however, cannot be taken as a model in the study of other social processes of industrialization; generally speaking, certain forms of social participation have been introduced in today industrializing societies before they had reached the economic maturity which Britain had achieved in 1884-85, i.e., when suffrage was finally extended to the majority of the working class male population.

This basic discrepancy between the different aspects of the passage to a mass society possibly provides a point of departure for a study of the social problems in Latin America. The new urban masses, and particularly the workers, are often incorporated into the political decision-making system and the mass consumption in societies which are not yet industrial societies. By industrial society I mean a society which defines itself as a certain social way of economic development - i.e., a society where the sources of the authority and legitimacy of power are the rational progress of production and the democratic control of the instruments and the results of production.

The masses mobilized by the industrialization, on the one hand, enter into new activities and a new type of life, and on the other hand, participate in the transformation and the voluntary development of that society. The more a society moves toward industrial civilization, the more naturally it orients itself directly toward that goal, and at the same time finds obstacles to development which are increasingly within the society itself. The more a society moves away from dependence upon nature, the more the national claim turns into social claims which oppose the social classes one against the other.
Besides these two elements of analysis—the progress of social integration and the internalization of the social conflicts in the society under consideration—there is a third one. The members of an industrializing society, of a society which undergoes a process of rapid transformation, cannot incorporate themselves to the society as it is, but to a society which is being transformed by their own movement. Beyond the individual social mobility, a collective mobility shows itself. Therefore, integration refers to a point which is intrinsically mobile, which in itself is defined by the very nature of collective mobility. It is in the very moment of what Gino Germani has called the mobilization of society when the goal aimed at shifts fastest and when, therefore, the consciousness of collective mobility and of "national mobility" can reach its maximum.

The analysis of collective social behaviors in developing societies must start with a consideration of the relationships between these three lines of evolution. This consideration is made less difficult if we distinguish, from the very beginning, successive stages of development and try to define them in sociological terms. The purpose of this report was defined as the study of "the social mobilization of the new strata in the national society, the growth of urban concentrations, and the changes in the occupational and class structure". This felicitous formulation puts together the three elements of analysis just distinguished: nationalism, social mobility and class relationships.

We must describe first how these elements combine themselves in the successive stages of the process of development.

II.— A social movement is defined by three elements: a principle of defense, which refers to the particular interests of a group or a social section; a principle of opposition, i.e., the definition of the adversary; and finally, a principle of totality, a certain conception of the public interest without which a conflict would be a purely private one and would not challenge the orientation of society. It is the central idea of this paper that, in every stage of the process of development, the themes of mobility, of nationalism, and of class relationships correspond to the principles of defense, opposition, and totality. But the correspondence will differ according to the stage which is being considered.

1.— In a first type of situation economic dependence prevails: in other words, the society under consideration partakes of the industrial civilization but as object. It supplies the industrial societies with raw materials, foodstuffs, or manpower, and is not engaged in a process of economic development. Power is not controlled by those who could direct industrialization to their own benefit, but by those who maintain a traditional patrimonial system, by those who are connected with foreign political or economic forces, or by those who try to enrich themselves through speculation, corruption, or violence.
In this situation, the public interest is defined in the first place as the
development, the starting up of society, its liberation from the external domination —
whether national or foreign — that stands against its progress. The opposition is
directed against what we could call the Anti-Nation and, particularly, against
what is often called imperialist forces or colonial domination. Action is taken
in the name of an exploited class, of the lowest-rank workers, (peones) or of the
landless and jobless people. We shall call a popular revolt such a social movement.

2.- In a second type of situation, society is already mobilized. A
national bourgeoisie or the State — or acting together in various combinations,
in different ways — have begun some economic development, and social movements
are controlled by the importance of individual social mobility, and even more, by
that of collective mobility.

The new workers or the new city-dwellers define themselves by their
own movement. They are the "barbarians" crossing the borders of the Roman Empire,
whose massive pressure makes burst limited democracy, the bourgeois parliamentarism,
which prevailed in Argentina before Perón, in Brazil before Getulio, and which
still prevails in Colombia. Collective actions, therefore, are carried out in the
name of the movement and of the newcomers; they are directed against a class, the
bourgeoisie, which controls institutions and the economic system, but this opposi-
tion is not absolute, for the new urban strata define the public interest as the forma-
tion of a new nation. In this situation, nationalism is defined as the creation of a
national unity rather than as anti-imperialism. This national unity, however, is not
the terminal point of a process of integration, but rather the aim of a movement
which overruns the institutional, and specially the political, system which then
comes into existence. G. Germani has called this type of social movements,
national-popular movements.

3.- In the last type of situation, a society in which the realities and
the problems of an industrial economy already prevail, confronts the internal resis-
tance of archaic social groups or structures. Against these resistances, movements
are made up which appeal to the people, to the majority of the citizens, movements
which are not purely working-class, although in Europe and the United States this
populism has been a favorable circumstance for the rise or progress of worker unionism.
The adversary of this type of movement is, then, all that which, because of its
immobility, exerts resistance to the movement, the forces of social conservation
represented by what we shall call urban or rural bourgeoisie rather than capitalism.
But even though the principal actors do not define themselves in terms of class, in
the marxist sense of the word, it is in terms of class that is generally presented that
which is being fought for. To illustrate this proposition with an European example,
we shall say that, in the moment of the "Dreyfus affair" which deeply divided France,
neither of the adversaries could define itself as to class, whereas the struggle itself
was interpreted by most people in terms of a social class conflict. This situation is
also to be found, at least partially, in the antagonism between the 1938 or present-
day F.R.A.P. and the conservative forces of Chile.
These three situations are therefore defined as different combinations of three identical elements, which we can summarize in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle of defense</th>
<th>Principle of opposition</th>
<th>Principle of totality</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I class</td>
<td>anti-nation</td>
<td>movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II movement</td>
<td>superior class</td>
<td>nation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III nation</td>
<td>anti-movement</td>
<td>class</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It would make no sense to content oneself with this scheme. We shall simply try to show that it can serve as a point of departure for more detailed analyses. Above all, it shows that the analysis of social and political problems of developing societies cannot be made by means of a single language, but must necessarily combine three themes, each of which has a very different position in sociological analysis, namely, mobility, class conflict, and nationalism. It is always possible to choose only one of these approaches. It is possible to consider these types of society as three successive stages of a process which goes from dependence to mobilization and, later, relative integration. It is also possible to show that the theme of nation undergoes changes: it was at first a goal to be created; later, it becomes a social force. It can also be underlined that, in the course of this evolution, there is a shift from a consciousness of one's own class to a consciousness of the opposed class and, finally, to a consciousness of class relations and conflicts. These three analytical approaches are equally valuable and the works which take any of these standpoints can arrive, and have already arrived, at many important results.

But it seems difficult that an understanding of the complexity of the situations studied, and even more of its real dynamics, could be reached in this way. A partial viewpoint cannot embrace a system of action, i.e., the combination of the goal one fights for, the enemy one fights against, and the principle in the name of which the struggle is carried on. This is the reason why the attempts to define the social stratification of these societies are, finally, somewhat vain. They are not so, if one is to consider the social behaviours which we can call a-political, as long as they do not constitute a historical action, i.e., an attempt to give certain orientation to the society, a social movement; but if it is used for the consideration of the problems of development, this type of analysis can only overemphasize one of the three principles of analysis - social mobility - reducing it to individual mobility and thus impoverishing it, since the simplest social translation of economic development is precisely collective social mobility.

III.- After defining the nature of the political-social problems in each one of the great stages of the process of development, it is natural now to look for the conditions which determine the transition from one stage to the following. For the agents of these changes are necessarily important social actors, whose relationships to the
basic elements and social dynamics previously indicated are to be defined with greater precision.

a. Let us begin with the first of the three stages which we have distinguished. In that situation, the unity of the three elements distinguished—and consequently the solidity of the system of historical action—will be best ensured by the presence of a strong revolutionary State. The strength of this central power derives from the support provided by the peasants or miners, underprivileged social sections which demand a quick betterment of their life conditions. But these demands easily clash with the requirement of increasing agricultural productivity and therefore with the "normal" sequence of stages of industrialization. The revolutionary power then finds itself caught in a dilemma which forces it to choose between the policy of industrialization—which logically presupposes, in the first stages, the advancement of the agricultural economy—and the respect for the claims of the popular revolt.

These difficulties can be overcome only if the State commands a strong power, resting upon a solid national homogeneity and a rigid administrative and political machinery—a situation which is more approached by Communist China than by any Latin American country. If these institutional instruments are lacking, it is difficult to reconcile the rural masses' desire of immediate gratification with the policy of economic development.

Without going here into a detailed analysis of this type of situation, it is possible at least to conclude that the three terms which constitute the historical dynamics of this type of society will tend to fuse together under the impulse of the revolutionary State.

If there is no such strongly integrating revolutionary power, there is a considerable risk of clash between the principle of defense and the principle of opposition. Slogans such as "the land to the peasants" or "the mine to the miners" are, on the one hand, likely to become a curb restraining economic progress; on the other hand, the requirements of the struggle against the adversary can place in power a political machinery which, while being capable of enforcing a discipline upon the population, disorganizes the spontaneity of the revolutionary movement—the "anibalista" period in Cuba can be regarded as an example of the latter situation.

If there is no revolutionary power proper, the unity and the ability to evolve of such a system of historical action can be ensured by a post-revolutionary State machinery, which progressively undertakes the transition to the second stage of development through the creation of State concerns and, later, through its own fusion—at least partial—with a national bourgeoisie. In this way, the Mexican post-revolutionary machinery has been able to set up the exceptionally solid framework within which a national bourgeoisie and a national-popular movement develop simultaneously: the unity and the tension between these two social forces define, from the sociological point of view, the second stage of development. As Presidents
change, either of these elements moves to the foreground, but its unity always remains ensured within the P.R.I.

This type of solution is possible only if the agrarian revolt occurs prior to the formation of such a political system. If that is not the case, and unless recourse is had to the revolutionary solution, it is exceedingly difficult to ensure the transition to the second stage of development, as shown by the Bolivian example: the popular revolt, on the one hand, and the institutional machinery partially supported by a middle class, on the other hand, tend to conflict and mutual cancellation, thus curbing society's ability to develop.

These three examples clearly show the direction which the analysis is to follow. If we consider the most "archaic" situations, the more they move away from the revolutionary path, the more the existing forces tend to conflict, or at least, to separation, and this leads us to consider separately the problems of mobility, those of nationalism, and those of the social classes.

b. The situation is a very different one in the stages characterized by the existence of national-popular movements. The optimal integration of the diverse elements of the system of historical action is not provided, in this case, by a revolutionary State, but rather by the alliance between the national or nationalist bourgeoisie and the national-popular movement. Brazil governed by Kubitschek with Goulart's cooperation provides the best example of this "national alliance".

The principle of unity of this system, then, is nationalism. The Brazilian example teaches us that, for a considerably long period, as different intellectual and political tendencies as those represented by O. Rangel, H. Jaguaribe, C. Furtado, and A. Vieira Pinto, can remain relatively united thanks to the tie of nationalism. If this ideological bond of union is lacking, an opposition is very likely to arise between a social mobility which has lost its collective meaning, on the one hand, and a nationalism turned to a national dictatorship with the support of the armed forces, for instance. If, on the contrary, the integrating nationalism commands too strong a dominance over the other elements of the historical situation, there is the risk of sacrificing economic development to the social integration of the new urban masses and of ending up in an authoritarian regime anyway, as has been the case in Argentina.

The transition from the second to the third stage of development, if not accomplished through the reconciliation of the national-popular movement and the national bourgeoisie, can be directed by groups which play a role similar to that of the post-revolutionary State machinery in the transition from the first to the second stage. Certain sections of the Army, sensitive to the Nasserist ideology and to its methods of action, can be tempted to take that role, in Argentina as well as in Peru.
c. In the last situation, characterized by the prevalence of populism, the revolutionary solution regains meaning, but this meaning is quite different from that which it had in the first situation. In this stage, it does not find itself forced to confront the tensions arising from the dilemma between the popular desire for immediate gratification and the demands of industrial development. The will to movement, populism, and the consciousness of a class conflict are brought together yet not intermingled in an action such as that of the Chilean Popular Front, or we could even say, as that of the Spanish or the French Popular Front. On the contrary, the "revolutionary" solution is more likely to occur in a situation similar to that of the United States - i.e., in a situation in which there is a rather full fusion between the three orientations of historical action. If the society following this path does not possess the dynamic quality which characterized the U. S. economy at the beginning of the century, the integration of the elements of action results in the stagnation of society, as in Uruguay. The danger of this type of situation is that the Popular Front may not succeed in performing its role of unifying agent, thus giving way to an opposition between an unveiled class conflict and the desire for economic and social "progress" - an antagonism which finds expression, in most instances, in a conflict between the Communist forces and the Socialist ones. In these cases we observe a rupture between a social movement and a "political class", and the general disorganization of political life, approaching the "stalemate" which, according to Stanley Hoffmann, characterizes the French situation at the beginning of the present century.

The comparison of these three types of situation leads us to a simple conclusion. As we move from the most archaic to the more modern situations, the principle of unity of the system of historical action shifts from the "top" to the "bottom" of society, from the revolutionary State to the Popular Front, with an intermediate situation of alliance of the national-popular movement with the national bourgeoisie. In terms of our earlier scheme, this means that the principle of opposition plays a central role in the dynamics of the first stage, while the principle of totality is central in the second, and the principle of defense has crucial significance in the third one.

This leads us to introduce a last element of analysis. In each stage of development, it is necessary to distinguish two types of ruling élites. On the one hand, the élites already mentioned, which ensure the maximum of unity to a system of historical action - revolutionary State, national-popular leaders, and Popular-Front leaders; and on the other hand, the élites which "unchain" the social movement. The more archaic the situation considered, the greater the distance between the two types of élites. The liberal intelligentsia unchains, in the first stage, the popular revolt, as shown by the role of the 26 de julio movement in Cuba. Following the European model, it is a radical or socialist middle class which unchains a Popular Front movement. In the intermediate stage, the petty-bourgeoisie plays an important role in the formation of national-popular movements. This "detonating" function, then, would tend to be performed by a social grouping which is one stage
advanced in relation to the historical situation.

But these groupings almost necessarily clash with the integration leaders — the liberal bourgeoisie is swept by the revolutionary State in the first stage, the national-popular upsurge overwhelms the petty bourgeoisie in the second, and, in the third one, the middle class and the socialist intellectuals themselves are overmatched by the Popular Front, just as more revolutionary movements overpass the European Social Democratic Parties. The twofold role — changing and preserving — of the "progressive forces" makes it possible for us to understand the complexity of its relationships with the national-popular movements and the other elements of the political system.

We are now in a position to get back to the previous analysis, combining the autonomy and the unity principles of the elements of a system of historical action.

We shall limit our consideration to only one of the three questions demanding examination, namely, that of social mobility. It holds a central position in the course of the second stage of the process of development. Here we deal with a collective social mobility, with the formation of a new action. Mobility becomes here its own end, it turns against any crystallization of social oppositions, barriers and conflicts. These societies define themselves, above all, as open societies, i.e. that in them individual and collective mobility are merged together. At the same time, this fusion determines a strong participation in mass movements, and a scant involvement in its activities. In a situation of popular revolt, on the contrary, collective mobility takes precedence over individual mobility, and this favors the existence of militants who devote themselves to a movement or a political machinery. Finally, in the "populist" situation, individual social mobility prevails, which is a favourable condition for the development of organizations pursuing mainly "instrumental" goals.

IV. — In today developing societies, the representation of society is determined by the relationship between two basic orientations of the social actors: on the one hand, the will to develop and modernize society and the struggle against the obstacles to this project; on the other hand, the desire of personal gratification. Both overlap in the intermediate situation. Instead, in the most archaic situation, there is a combination between a very strong drive of social integration and a keen sensitivity to the traditional social barriers: country-town, poor-rich, native-foreigners. In the more modern situation, a desire of personal upward mobility — and therefore a high sensitivity to the social-economic stratification —, and the consciousness of the collective social conflicts coexist. With these too brief suggestions, I would like to warn against an oversimplifying type of reasoning, according to which social attitudes and movements would be a reflection of the degree of economic development achieved by the society: in this way, one would pass from a
conflictive and revolutionary society to a stratified one in which competition
among individuals and among social groups becomes general.

The reflections presented here can constitute an introduction to certain
conception of social structures or, better, of systems of historical action. For if
we were to simplify our argument to the utmost, we could summarize it as follows:
In what different ways, and how, social stratification, class relationships and
political action combine themselves, according to the stage of development
considered? This question is a safe guard against the idea that these three elements
constitute three stages of social reality and that, as we pass from one to the other,
we move from substructure to superstructure, from an objective situation to one or
several political and social ideologies.

Finally, it was our purpose to underscore the usefulness of a directly
sociological definition of development. To approach the problems of development
in a different way does not imply to deny a priori the need of an economic analysis.
For the sociologist, development is not so much a fact as an orientation of action,
and, more precisely, a principle of legitimacy of certain societies which by this
reason we call industrial societies.

Thanks to this principle, we can regard social stratification, class
relationships and political movements as different aspects of the organization of
a collective experience; and it is possible for us to study the relationships between
the three elements, since they are sociologically comparable concepts.