

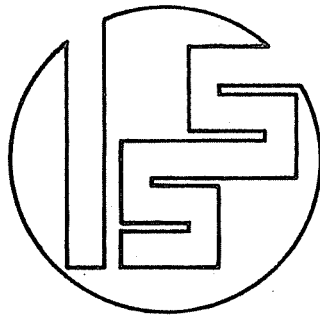
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OCCASIONAL PAPERS

ON SOCIAL STRATIFICATION AND SOCIETAL ARTICULATION:
Prolegomena to Comparative Stratification Studies
(with special reference to the Middle East)

C.A.O. van Nieuwenhuijze

Working Paper. The views expressed in this paper
are those of the author and not necessarily those
of the Institute of Social Studies.
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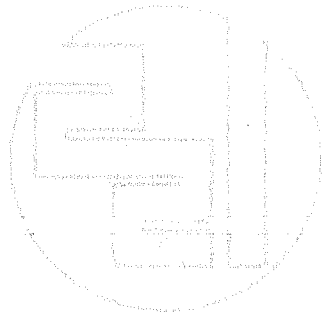
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ON SOCIAL STRATIFICATION AND SOCIETAL ARTICULATION : PROLEGOMENA
TO COMPARATIVE STRATIFICATION STUDIES
(With Special Reference to the Middle East)

C.A.O. van Nieuwenhuijze

This paper represents an attempt to rethink, and then to conceptualize afresh, that which is customarily dealt with under the heading 'social stratification'. This exercise follows from two circumstances that are not unrelated.

First, a drastic shift has occurred in the use of stratification concepts and theories, the implications of which are hard to foresee and harder to accept. As tools for sociological study, they appear only modestly successful. Work goes on more or less regularly, at the empirical¹ as well as at the theoretical² level, with regard to Western³ as well as non-Western⁴ situations. The results however are not particularly striking, so that there is not much incentive for special effort. Contrariwise, the interest in using stratification concepts and models has soared and is in no way limited to sociologists. Social critics,⁵ reformers and revolutionaries⁶ of various descriptions claim a 'scientific' basis for social action to be readily available in stratification, interpreted in the manner that each happens to elect.⁷ What these claims, indiscriminately made for developed and developing⁷ countries alike might lack in empirical founding and theoretical precision, is compensated by the zeal with which they are propounded.

The decisive factor in both connections seems to be the circumstance that at root, stratification concepts and theories are situated and dated: a circumstance that hampers the scholarly effort but that could hardly restrain those believing that they hold the magic key of enlightenment.

What appears as situated-and-dated as time goes on in a given area, will prove to be ethnocentric⁸ if applied to areas other than that where it was born. The second of the two circumstances referred to is that 'social stratification', once adopted for use with regard to areas other than Western Europe, has tended to raise more questions than it has answered. In order to bring this consideration home, the exercise that is to follow will be conducted with the express intention that its results must be usable with regard to the Middle East. A decision of this nature necessitates a good deal of rethinking and reconceptualization.⁹

If these considerations suggest the desirability of the proposed exercise, they are far from facilitating it. These are well-established concepts, models and perhaps theories, passed around as legal tender even by those who consider them objectionable. Any attempt at a critical review risks being trapped in the very routine they represent. Inevitably, then, it must be aimed beyond the mere substitution of a newly minted term for that which has become obsolescent. When something goes awry it is not sufficient to cure the symptom. A proper diagnosis probes further and deeper. If a concept turns sour, the conceptual fabric of which it is part cannot be healthy. Thus in asking what is amiss with 'social stratification' we must inevitably ask, not just what the term means and which purposes of conceptualization, description and analysis it is supposed to serve, but above all, which underlying perceptions or notions form its base; in other words, of which perceptual and conceptual complex or frame of reference is it part.

Nor will it suffice, in a case such as this where a special interest in Middle East conditions is involved, to look for a special concept that will do with respect to the Middle East what 'social stratification' has always done with regard to the West. (Implicitly recognizing, of course, that the latter has never been as general a concept as many have believed and quite a few perhaps still believe). The implied idea of a set of concepts, each relating to a specific culture context or area, and each the counterpart or equivalent of the other at a more general, perhaps more profound or more esoteric, level of abstraction, begs the question as to its premiss: if the set of area-specific concepts that should be the ultimate consequence of this approach would in fact represent a fundamental unity of conceptualization, then it would be only proper for this to show in the adoption of one unit of terminology. To be satisfactory for use with regard to various culture contexts, a concept should not simply be set off against some other concept intended to cover similar ground elsewhere. Rather, it should be attuned to operational features whilst allowing its user to account for a specific culture context.¹⁰

The proper initial question, then, probes for the order of phenomena to which belongs that which is ordinarily referred to as social stratification. Few would disagree that social stratification is the label for the sociologist's interest in the strata of society. Disagreements do exist as to the definition of both strata and society; their proliferation nowadays is a factor of disenchantment. Regardless of these differences of opinion, more general agreement becomes likely as one probes deeper. Grave disaccord is not likely to be met by the suggestion that, in the last resort, the student of social stratification deals with (specific variants, manifestations or instances of) the matter of unity and diversity.

It is a giant's stride from social stratification to unity-and-diversity, even if the latter be taken as an analytic or descriptive concept and not immediately as philosophical. Closer inspection is called for. For the sake of convenience this will be made in the reverse order, descending from the high to the lower levels of generality and abstraction; in other words, introducing an increasing degree of specificity. This exercise will involve the introduction of a third concept, namely societal articulation, which is of a decidedly lower order of generality than unity-and-diversity but of a somewhat higher order than social stratification. The purpose of its introduction is to obviate a number of difficulties inherent in social stratification and related terms currently in use. Its usefulness as a substitute for social stratification will be further substantiated by accounting for the difference between them in degree of generality or - if you prefer - specificity.

We begin with the matter of unity and diversity in simplest sociological phrasing.

People normally exist in collectivities. For present purposes it does not matter whether they experience these (either as insiders or as outsiders) or merely know that they exist. As a rule these collectivities are not simple units comparable to some homogenous substance, even when in people's views they may seem to appear as such. Somehow they will be configurations: such unity as a given collectivity will appear to have will at the same time turn out to be complexity. Larger

or major, not necessarily primary or prior, aggregates will coexist with smaller or lesser, not necessarily secondary or subsequent ones. So will large with large and small with small. Coexistence may or may not imply interrelatedness and interaction. Likewise it may or may not imply such variants of interrelatedness and interaction as we know under the labels co-ordination/subordination and composite/component. Note, in passing, how difficult it is to catch in words what every human being experiences all the time and what, in most cases, he is able to 'play' effectively with a minimum of thought.

In this presentation, both unity and diversity appear as multiple phenomena subject to a high degree of variation and modification, on and by themselves as well as in conjunction. This makes them fairly hard to identify and specify. Of the two, unity is clearly the more elusive. This needs underscoring as it appears, at first blush, to be at variance with the customary presentation. We are inclined to set out from unity in order to deal with diversity. We tend to forget that, in so doing, we merely postulate a presupposed unity which for all practical purposes is taken for granted but which, in fact, may well beg the question. We also tend to forget that our inclination to do this is a symptom of our conditioning: our conceptualizations and presentations are ordinarily situated and dated.

Depending on the reader's inclination, these observations may sound redundant or perhaps pedantic. They are not. This becomes clear once the high level of abstraction and generality at which we have just spoken of unity and diversity is relinquished in favour of the rather lower level of (what is yet unreservedly called) generality at which sociologists usually operate. This is the level at which fully concrete and specific, situated-and-dated, historical situations are dealt with in a generalizing manner, using the appropriate generalizing, that is de-specifying, dissimulating (piously called ideal-typic) jargon that, in this writer's opinion, has a good deal to do with the malaise that has befallen the discipline.¹¹ The level, more precisely, at which a given unit (*i.e.*, a unit that is given to the observer as a citizen and that in his capacity as a scholar he will then unthinkingly postulate as given), namely the nation-state, is experienced on the one hand as an ultimate unit, a universe in its own right, and on the other hand as being made up of numerous kinds of components, including administrative divisions and subdivisions, political and denominational segments, ethnic or other units and sub-units, and not to forget units or levels of exertion of political and/or economic power, rating, or a mixture of power and rating. At this level of abstraction, the assumption of an encompassing and at the same time ultimate unit as the given frame of reference is in fact no more than an undue fixation of the describing and analyzing mind, though a very strong one.¹² Upon closer inspection, aided by an awareness of conditions such as those of the Middle East, the assumption does not stand. As developments since 1945 have made increasingly clear, the tacit adoption of (the nation-state, called society, as) a pre-established, ultimate yet finite, encompassing frame of reference for the description and analysis of phenomena of social multiplicity is not really a firm conceptual basis. Any analysis, and the models used in its execution, that is based on this assumption is on shifting ground. In fact unity and multiplicity stand in a relationship that allows for no primacy, not even as an ad hoc analytic device. Their occurrence is fully simultaneous, a

mutuality of perspectives that together make up the human perception and conceptualization of social phenomena.

So much for fundamental critique. We are not yet through with this level of abstraction and generalization. It has just been suggested that at this level multiplicity appears as a multiple phenomenon itself. Given the (incorrectly assumed) unity that commonly serves as the frame of reference for description and analysis, a range of instances of multiplicity is envisaged. Remarkably, sociologists have rarely stopped to consider this multiplicity of multiplicities or, more correctly phrased, multiplicity as a sociocultural category, which will necessarily manifest itself as a proliferation of instances of multiplicity. Instead, such varieties of multiplicity as have at a given time and place attracted attention (for example by proving problematic issues in public affairs) have tended to find each its own enthusiasts or, as they are commonly called, specialists. This will explain (in an overly schematic manner) the emergence of a number of specialisms in sociology. It will also explain, yet by no means excuse, the mutual aloofness between them. The main determinant of this aloofness is the non-awareness of multiplicity as a fundamental category of perceived sociocultural reality and consequently of sociological conceptualization. This in turn is to be attributed to the lack, already signalled, of concern about true generality and about how to ascertain it. (A consequence, no doubt, of the overly drastic yet never fully consummated shift from aprioristic social philosophy to positive, empirical sociology.)¹³

What remains to be noted, in the meantime, is that none of these specialisms stands at the level of generality with which we are now dealing. Since each is supposed to refer to a particular kind, variant or instance of multiplicity, it represents a tacitly introduced additional element of specificity. In other words, it stands at the next lower level of generality or abstraction. The argument has not yet progressed sufficiently to warrant specific consideration of such a topic as social stratification. In order to do this, we should descend one more level. The moment to attempt this, however, is not yet.

First we must ask about a viable manner to conceptualize the categorical phenomenon of multiplicity as the necessary counterpoint to the equally categorical, simultaneous phenomenon of unity. Multiplicity is here envisaged as the epiphenomenon of a simultaneously emergent 'backdrop' of unity; and this statement remains valid if phrased vice versa. Multiplicity is envisaged as presupposing unity, corresponding to unity as implying multiplicity. These various phrasings and rephrasings may appear unnecessarily cumbersome, especially as they make hard reading (for which the writer apologizes). But they are useful. They make it clear that this way of envisaging the matter will result in instant liberation from the fixation on unity as a postulated datum which currently bedevils much sociological thought.¹⁴

Of course there is a price to be paid for this liberation. If unity is out as a frame of reference, the consequence is that there can be no fixed frame of reference at all. At best, there can be the anticipation of an ad hoc frame of reference, not necessarily in the shape of one comprehensive unit and certainly not in that of an ultimate unit, to serve as the backdrop for observed phenomena of multiplicity. It pays to rephrase this differently. The conceptual universe of a more or less hierarchical, neoplatonic description, where multiplicity emanates

and indeed proliferates out of pre-established ultimate unity stands rejected. Its place is taken by a conceptual universe where any ad hoc unit of perception or observation appears in a perspective of multiplicity in all directions, whether as a composite or as a component.

At this point there is need for a simple term to refer to this conception. We propose to speak of 'societal articulation', to denote that any observed units or entities will exist in a combination of (logically opposite features, namely) separateness or 'per se-ness' on the one hand and relatedness or interdependence/interaction on the other. At the same time the term is meant to connote that any larger sociocultural entity will consist of a number of (complexes of) lesser, component entities, as it in turn relates to units of comparable or major orders of magnitude and of various descriptions. It further connotes - thus showing where the parallelism ends between this line of reasoning and certain other strands of current sociological thought - that all this is not a system, whether open or closed, consisting of elements. Instead it is a broad pattern, a configuration of relationships engaged upon (in a manner that never exhausts their capacity for interaction and relatedness) by entities in an infinite number of varying descriptions.

Further clarification of the neologism 'societal articulation' may be gained from comparison with other terms currently in use. An advance warning is due, however. Fundamentally, the comparisons to be undertaken have a common flaw, namely the difference in level of abstraction, already noted, between this concept and all the others. The only exception will be 'communication'. The reader should keep this constantly in mind. The remarks that follow are in a sense superfluous, but they are enlightening.

To avoid undue broadening of the scope, all but one of the terms for comparison will be selected from the kind of multiplicity phenomena to which social stratification belongs. Given this option, it is convenient to start with this term and see how it compares with societal articulation.

Borrowed from geology for the customary purpose of analogical use, the term social stratification has a holistic connotation. This underscores the observations previously made, concerning the apparent preponderance of unity over diversity. Stratification, sociologically explained, suggests a whole that somehow consists of layers. Thus it appears to postulate the primacy of the whole, if not empirically at least conceptually. Contrariwise, the term 'societal articulation' is meant to be free of such connotation. 'Articulation' - considered as a feature of, or relating to, societies - predicates plurality or diversity in such a manner as to imply emergent (i.e., conceptually emergent, regardless whether empirically simultaneous or resultant) unity. No primacy either way is implied.

Likewise, 'societal articulation' is meant to elude some of the connotations or complications that give 'social class' its particular and occasionally peculiar flavour. The term 'class' has been derived, again for analogical use, from biology, where it served purposes of descriptive inventorization: a place for everything and for everything its place. Therefore, class, as a social category, is an almost useless concept unless envisaged in a perspective of classes, in the plural. Neither has allowance always been made for the fact that those who

adopted the concept of social class had concerns well beyond descriptive-enumerative classification. Although they may have been interested in conjuring up a conceptual unity out of infinite multiplicity and variety, that interest has never been very explicit, nor has it achieved a more than instrumental role. Their true interest was not so much in inventorization (indeed, precious few have even considered the possibility of a complete inventory) as in interpretation on the basis of inventorization (schematic rather than elaborated, partial rather than full), and ultimately in manipulation, action, control, steering or whatever other name they may have given to their involvement as thinking-and-acting subjects. A socially and morally significant element of inequality appears to be interpolated in such interpretations of what is, at root, merely difference.

In its turn, the plurality of classes has therefore not shown much significance, whether as a descriptive device or as an analytical tool, until it became interpreted as implying particular interrelations or particular kinds of interaction between classes - for example, division of labour, or such things as subordination, control, exploitation, competition or struggle. In short, the concept 'social class', in order to become useful to social philosophers and then to social scientists, tended to be tacitly or explicitly loaded with a substance that needed to be borrowed for the purpose. As often as not, the borrowing was done from some readily available stock of philosophical or ideological a priori notions or, as they are often hazily called, values. Contrariwise, the term 'societal articulation' is meant to be useful, not as a device for descriptive inventorization, but as an analytical tool, without such garnishing.

'Segmentation' is another term that comes to mind. There is especial reason to consider it here. It has gained relatively wide currency in Middle East studies, notably those relating to nomads (or, with the horrible standard term, nomadism). Tribal patterns are readily and effectively described as patterns of segmentation. The term is of basically the same kind as 'stratification'. As a means with which to get away from holism, 'societal articulation' is therefore again preferable.¹⁵

In one respect, however, segmentation is an improvement over stratification. It corrects the exclusive concern with layers by substituting an awareness that lines of fission can equally well be 'vertical' as 'horizontal'. In this respect, there is little to choose between segmentation and articulation.

But in another respect, the latter again appears preferable. The concept 'segmentation' obviates some of the difficulty inherent in 'stratification', and a fortiori in 'class', insofar as it more readily eludes the accretion of values. But it pays for this immunity by an inherent rather than overt liability. 'Segmentation', certainly when used with regard to the Middle East, appears qualified, to an extent hard to ascertain, by the fact that the formal principles of tribal kinship are its necessary frame of reference. This seems to imply that the range of possible relationships between segments and also between segments and wholes is determined in a limiting fashion. Thus, the concept 'segmentation' is bound to have a bias or colouring that is the more objectionable as it is hard to identify and even harder to ascertain in terms of its implications. Once again, the term 'societal articulation' is meant to be free of such inherent limitations as to the

nature and modalities of articulation as a societal phenomenon.

As an example of terms of a different order usable for comparison with 'societal articulation' we propose to select 'communication'.¹⁶ What about similarities and differences between articulation and communication? A notable similarity, to begin with, is that subjects predicated by either concept are sociocultural entities in the broadest sense of the word. Instances can range all the way from individual persons, through groups or categories of any order of magnitude, to optimal or maximal collectivities.

The difference is equally notable, and in this case it is not a matter of one concept being preferable over the other. To pinpoint it, a double operation seems required. The two appear to determine one another mutually, but in ways that are not strictly congruent. Institutionalized communication is a determinant of societal articulation, both within and between units. Obversely, societal articulation provides a frame of reference for actual (whether sustained or occasional) communication in its various modalities. Whether the accent, at a given place and time, will be on one or the other aspect, is largely a matter of circumstance. For example, under circumstances of general stability the accent will be other than under conditions of acute social change.

In concluding this exercise in explanatory comparison it must be repeated that (with the exception of 'communication') all these terms, like so many other terms referring to different kinds or orders of multiplicity, are not really comparable with 'societal articulation' because they belong to a lower level of generalization. This could not be objectionable provided it were properly recognized and accounted for. What makes it bad in practice is the compartmentalized perception that is mistakenly considered to underly it. The absorbing concern with particular kinds of multiplicity, taken in isolation from one another, has by and large prevented sociologists from effectively coming to terms with multiplicity by itself, as a basic category. To confound things further, the result is that the distinction between the two levels of generalization here kept separated (the second and third of this argument) is seldom recognized. Accordingly, the claims for the several specialisms concerned tend to be carelessly stated. They appear broader and more fundamental than they have cause to be.

This, then, could provide the explanation, omitted at the beginning of this paper, for the current dissatisfaction with a term such as social stratification. At the same time it will demonstrate why, for example with regard to the Middle East, social stratification turns out to be such an elusive topic and why, conversely, it seems wellnigh impossible to achieve a firm conceptual and analytic grip on some highly topical subject matter that is rendered opaque rather than accessible by the use of stratification concepts. Unfortunately, explanations of this type seldom help to improve conditions. They should therefore not be allowed to interfere with the progress of the argument.

The next step is the descent, previously postponed, from the level of abstraction at which societal articulation has just been introduced as a potentially useful analytic device, to the next lower level, where such categories as social stratification belong, given their greater specificity. The implication of the argument thus far is that social stratification appears in an unusual light. It would be inexcusably

rash to announce that social stratification is one of a number of varieties of societal articulation, the particularisms of which are such and such. Rather, there is occasion for a question. Could it be that social stratification, if necessary redefined so as to suit the new perspective in which it is bound to appear, may be introduced as one particular variant of societal articulation?

In order to answer this question properly, not one but two kinds of specification are required. One, already hinted at, is the qualification that will limit the scope of social stratification so that it will be of a lesser order of generality than societal articulation, and accordingly amenable to be ranged along with other conceptual categories of comparable orders of generality. The other specification, now to be introduced, is the qualification that will outline the scene against which the act is to be played, the backdrop anticipatorily envisaged behind the particular variety of social articulation that could properly be labelled social stratification. The second proposition might seem to amount to a proposal to fall back upon either culture or structure in an effort to obtain a grip on social stratification as a matter to be defined, with the risk that one ends up in the thick of a dispute on which of the two it really is. However, this is not the case. Indeed it could happen only if the proposition were an inadvertent relapse into the rejected construct of a given comprehensive unity as the fixed framework in which diversity becomes manifest. Contrariwise, the proposition made here corresponds to the mutuality of perspectives that has been postulated to determine the unity/diversity construct. Hence, the unity to be envisaged along the lines of the present argument will appear as an ad hoc, emergent variant of unity. No doubt it will be a sociocultural variant, but it could not be amenable to categorical definition in advance, whether as cultural or as social or as yet something else.¹⁷

The joint effect of these two acts of specification should be a firmer grip on the two matters that would make up social stratification as newly redefined. One is sociocultural entities (persons, groups or any other collectivity) of whichever specificity (e.g., ethnic group, social class, nation, clan, province, enterprise, village). The other is their interrelatedness, of whichever modality (e.g., co-operation, antagonism, dominance, exploitation, fusion, interaction, fission, separation). Any specificity of the one need not go together with any given modality of the other. Between the two a degree of mutual definition is probable, but - to repeat - no primacy of one over the other could be postulated. Nor, as already stated, is there reason to anticipate, from any instance of societal articulation, neat implications as to ultimate unity, there being no need for it as a postulated frame of reference.

At this point it does not matter that this rephrasing of the standard structural-functional paradigm has implications leading beyond structural-functionalism. Our purpose is more modest. It will allow a pinpointing of the range of modalities of interrelatedness - and perhaps by implication the range of specificity of sociocultural entities - to which the newly redefined term social stratification could usefully apply.

The demand just made, for two kinds of specification to be advanced and subsequently to be elaborated into a profile or perhaps a taxonomy of social stratification (newly redefined) in the Middle East (as one chosen area), is a tall order. An attempt to fill it could well result in a sizeable book. A much more limited exercise is proposed here. Two fairly broad observations will be made of which it is hoped that they will provide some bearings or a sense of general direction. The first will deal with the emergent 'backdrop' unity to be anticipated in dealings with 'social stratification' in the Middle East. The second will refer to the particular pattern, to put it briefly, of interrelated entities that could properly be labelled 'social stratification'.

The specific Middle East backdrop to feature as the frame of reference for societal articulation (and thus for 'social stratification' however defined: always assuming that the redefined concept will apply), can be summed up in the term 'convergent society'. This fairly new term, for which the writer must take some responsibility,¹⁸ can be presented as an attempt to improve upon C.S. Coon's concept of the mosaic¹⁹ by adding a crucial element. This is the built-in pole or core that will provide a measure of cohesion, perhaps consistency, to the entire complex, by serving as its focal or orientation point.²⁰

Two features of the convergent society stand out. One is that it is not strictly and formally circumscribed, as a matter of principle, and that accordingly it is a necessarily hazy proposition, both as regards definition of boundaries and in respect of the degree and modalities, notably the institutionalization, of its inner cohesion. The second is that as a complex, it will operate on the tacitly postulated primacy of its component elements rather than on that of the resultant composite, thus allowing a notable degree of variety as regards kinds and sizes of components. (One immediate implication of this state of affairs deserves special notice. The model of stratification that has been rejected in the preceding could never apply to the Middle East for the exact reason for which it was rejected in principle; namely, that the tacit assumption of a pre-established, fixed, embracing unity as the frame of reference for diversity, including stratification, is not tenable.)

Still on the matter of backdrop, two further comments are in order, both of which relate to the argument in L. Dumont's Homo hierarchicus.

The first refers to the difference in concepts used to describe or qualify the backdrop. The term introduced here is meant to be serviceable as a broadly defined device for operational analysis. The key terms used by Dumont in distinguishing the Western from the Indian backdrop, namely egalitarianism (with exceptions) and hierarchy, are of a different kind. They relate to basic values or orientations or underlying ideological-philosophical determinants. In so doing they manage to avoid the structure-culture dispute just mentioned, because they relegate the matter to a level of observation or conceptualization that is more profound, by one step, than the level at which the structure-culture dispute occurs. Instead of directly considering the unity serving as the backdrop, Dumont considers that which makes it a unity, namely the principle or principles underlying, first, this unity itself and then (in consequence of the manner in which this principle happens to be elaborated and implemented) the diversity into which it will be articulated. (The shift from unity as such to determinants of unity has no effect on the issue of preestablished versus emergent frame of

reference: the embracing unity that is postulated in the former case is implied in the latter. In this regard M. Dumont's construct is at variance with the construct developed here.) The question is whether anything is solved by moving to the apparently deeper layer. Cohesion and factor-of-cohesion are very much a chicken-and-egg proposition. Indeed, there is occasion to wonder whether for practical purposes they are not two descriptions of one and the same observed phenomenon, with no significant difference between them. This question is all the more pressing as the proposed shift to the deeper level begs the philosophical question of values as a distinct sociocultural category. In so doing it will at best substitute one deadlocked dispute for another. Hence this attempt to steer clear of the Scylla and Charybdis of these two disputes by opting for a different style of conceptualization.

The second comment refers to the fact that the manifestation of societal articulation, perhaps including stratification, is a fundamentally random, incidental, ad hoc phenomenon. There is no such thing as a full, complete system of social strata, also to be referred to as 'the society'. To conceive matters in this way is possible only at the cost of adopting the unwarranted formalism already exposed above. As Dumont observes, the actual manifestation is partial and incidental, not complete and systematic.²¹ The observer will perceive fragments rather than wholes. He is likely to be tempted to expand and systematize these fragments to the point where they will serve as building bricks with which to establish a complete building. But he should beware of this temptation. The blueprint he might produce, thanks to many elaborations, extrapolations and conjectures, would probably be dead wrong in a most fundamental respect. Under no conditions could it actually exist. This realization has escaped too many Western stratification specialists who, once taken in by the nation-state as an apparently given frame of reference, could not avoid the trap of systematization and completeness à outrance.

The matter of the backdrop thus having been presented to the extent befitting the occasion, what remains to be done is to provide an equally sketchy presentation of the other main concern, namely, the variant of societal articulation in the Middle East that could carry the label 'social stratification'.

This exercise will inevitably follow a roundabout course. For lack of a Middle Eastern conceptualization of societal articulation and social stratification, and again for lack of a pertinent set of concepts of non-Middle Eastern origin that would be relevant to the Middle East, the only available procedure is to set out from the Western concepts in an effort to ascertain, through analogy and contradistinction, what - if anything - social stratification should mean in order to make sense with regard to the Middle East.

As a starting point, this is hardly attractive. It is far from convenient to be confronted with the tangle of diverging and clashing definitions of stratification. We shall therefore cut the Gordian knot so as to avoid deadlock at the outset. To this purpose two of the commonly recognized features of social stratification will be singled out, namely 'rating' and 'dominance'. Four comments will argue and clarify this choice.

First, a minor observation. Dominance is not as common a term as, for example, control or exploitation. Yet it appears more useful than these. Its relative eclipse is easily explained by referring once more to the unwarranted adoption of the nation-state as the given unitary frame of reference. By the tacit standards implicit in most traditional stratification theory, stratification occurs within given societies or, more exactly, nation-states and the like. The groups or categories that could feature as strata are accordingly limited to subdivisions of nation-states, lending themselves, on the strength of one characteristic or another, for mutual relationships as interrelated strata. Goings-on beyond the pale of these given societies are not normally brought under the stratification label. The new concerns with decolonization and development have altered this state of affairs. Nowadays, analogical and perhaps allegorical use is frequently made of stratification terms in referring to relations between nation-states and blocs of nation-states. Conversely, a term like dominance becomes available for use with reference to conditions within nation-states.

Secondly, a more substantive comment. A double indicator has been suggested as the means to qualify the variant of societal articulation that might carry the label social stratification. The implicit suggestion is that, in being joined, the two meanings will result in one, as yet to be named. Why expect such solid result of an apparently hazardous combination? It could be argued that the two are not without certain actual or potential linkages. Conditions allowing, the former can stand for a degree of interiorization of the latter. Conversely the latter can signal the routinization or institutionalization of the former. All this, however, is not necessarily the case and where it happens, it can occur according to any of a number of possible modalities. In other words, this argument may be interesting, but is not particularly strong.

A more significant consideration is that the two selected indicators are (historical rather than etymological) off-shoots of the same key concept. Their common root is privilege. It so happens that the medieval West has used this concept in a mainly legal sense. But then, the legal verbiage was a terminological device of much broader purport than law. Social phenomena in toto were represented in legal conceptualization, much in the manner in which the contemporary Middle East used to conceptualize total societal matters in religious vocables. Therefore, this root concept, shed of its legal trappings insofar as they could have a limiting effect, is available as a starting point from where to launch the search for its equivalent by Middle Eastern standards. This equivalent would become, in turn, the key concept on which the redefined term social stratification, as relevant to the Middle East, should hinge. To facilitate matters one could tentatively replace the term privilege by one that has the proper ring of sociologese, such as 'ascendancy'. This is not really important. What is important is that the clue is here. However, this is not the occasion to follow it through.²²

Thirdly, an observation on the purposes to be served by the key concept thus to be developed. In most stratification theories, strata have been devised mainly in order to interpolate particular kinds of relationships or interactions. Whether these would feature as additions upon second thought or, on the other hand, the strata as pegs on which to hang certain actions or relations with which he was really concerned, depends entirely on the kind of sociologist one happens to observe at work. Either way the tacit introduction of a postulate of primacy for

either category, repeatedly rejected in the preceding, is bound to have a distorting effect. Such distortions should be possible to avoid by adhering to the unity/diversity construct proposed above as the basis for any conceptual dealings whether at the level of societal articulation or of social stratification. To do this, it is necessary to take the operational features per se, in their own right, as instances - perhaps analytically and typologically distinguishable instances - of societal articulation. In other words, the primary concern here is that which has hitherto tended to remain either secondary or subservient.

The overly abstract argument of the last paragraph is meant to say that if an adapted and elaborated ascendancy notion were to be the key concept determining the phenomenon of social stratification in the Middle East, the criteria and modalities of ascendancy on the one hand and the entities between which it occurs on the other, should be spelled out as mutually determining phenomena. Nothing is necessarily given in advance; nothing is necessarily secondary to something else. In a particular ascendancy framework and within the limits it shows, a particular group or category may emerge as achieving (or undergoing) a certain kind of ascendancy; but it is equally well possible that a pre-existent group or category, hitherto marked by qualifications other than in terms of ascendancy, turns out to feature in an ascendancy framework. Likewise, ascendancy may appear as respect, as domination, exploitation, or as yet something else, or as combinations, to varying degrees, of any of these. The concepts suggested here are meant as tools for analysis, not as pictures of total situations.

The fourth comment refers to social stratification as one of several variants of societal articulation. It is important to realize that one variant cannot be exhaustively studied in isolation from the others. It must be studied on and by itself, but then again it must be studied as intertwined with the others. A listing of these,²³ drawn up with regard to the Middle East, will include the tribal/kinship variant, the urban-village-nomadic variant, the variant of (culture) majority- and-minorities which will also appear as the ethnic variant,²⁴ the political-administrative variant and the division-of-labour variant,²⁵ - to mention only a few.

This intertwining of aspects is not unknown, even though it is rarely recognized let alone properly identified. It will normally show in the ever expanding scope that stratification theory is supposed to cover: a fairly pervasive difficulty in sociology and one that does not improve precision. The matter has already been mentioned in passing. Thus, for example, the matter of (culture) majority and minorities or the relationship between nomads and villagers may be covered, to an extent that will usually remain undefined, in dealings with stratification, because elements of rating and/or dominance can be traced in them. The most noted case of this sort of contamination is no doubt the Marxian short-circuiting, to the point of identification, between the stratification and the division-of-labour variants.²⁶ As it happens, this is an exemplary case of unwarranted generalization on the basis of what must be considered as sheer historical coincidence, the Industrial Revolution being probably the one event in world history when the intertwining between these two variants of sociocultural articulation was optimal. How distorting the impact of such unwarranted generalization can be is made clear in certain marxist treatises on social class (and all that pertains to it) in the Middle East.²⁷ That such distortion

is inevitable once this kind of approach is adopted, is better understood if we remember that with regard to, notably, the traditional Middle East, the term division of labour is inappropriate for lack of a distinct sociocultural category that could be labelled 'labour', and that consequently it had better be replaced by a term like 'division of toil/leisure'.²⁸

The theoretical aspect of this need to account for more variants of sociocultural articulation whilst studying one of them, such as social stratification (as redefined), has been taken care of above, where it is said that entities featuring in an ascendancy perspective may either be emergent entities or pre-existent entities hitherto determined in a different light. This distinction could be represented terminologically by speaking of primary and secondary stratification, with the understanding that occasionally the two will coincide or merge. Thus elaborated, it will serve as a rough-and-ready division of the kind of consideration that will apply according to whether the student will deal with the stratification variant on and by itself or alternatively with the stratification variant as intertwined with other variants.

There is, besides, an important historical dimension to this matter. An indirect reference to it was made above, in an observation concerning kinship as a major pattern of segmentation in the Middle East. Another remark, on the apparent elusiveness of social stratification in the Middle East, points to it again.

In the traditional Middle East, convergence upon the culture norm was the predominant feature of the sociocultural pattern. Societal articulation was characterized by a measure of primacy for component entities as compared with composites. The ultimate composite acting as the sociocultural frame of reference was relatively vaguely and variably defined, ranging all the way from umma to empire to confederation of tribes. Of the several variants of sociocultural articulation that were operational, the kinship pattern was predominant, for those concerned as much as for outside observers. Hence the tendency to consider kinship as virtually synonymous with social structure in the traditional Middle East, and this not merely at an 'ethnographic' level of reasoning but - certainly in anthropological writings - at an 'analytic' level as well.

By comparison, the contemporary state of affairs is drastically different, in consequence of the (ideally homogenous) nation-state having been imposed as the ultimate unit, effectively operating as the sociocultural frame of reference. Sociocultural articulation, in this new framework, tends to shape up in virtual polarization between the state on the one hand and citizens-as-families (rather than, as is the case in the West, as individuals) on the other. In this new relationship the matter of primacy remains undecided in principle but in terms of power, the state is the big winner. Thus, the family stands to suffer a measure of erosion. The kinship pattern, as the major variant of societal articulation, is bound to undergo the consequences. Likewise, in consequence of other aspects of social change, certain other variants of traditional societal articulation stand to lose significance. The best example is the urban-village-nomadic triad. Usually considered as a set of ecotypes, it basically relates to institutionalized management of resources given a certain state of technology. Under the impact of drastically changing technology, the urban pattern changes dramatically,

the nomadic pattern is threatened with extinction, and the urban-rural relationships pattern is in turmoil.

With some of the traditional variants of societal articulation thus losing significance in the context of social change and development, it is reasonable to anticipate that some others, perhaps hitherto less marked, will gain importance.

In the light of current developments it seems realistic to look forward to a more notable role for social stratification as a variant of sociocultural articulation in the Middle East of today and for some time to come. It is in keeping with this appreciation of the present state of affairs to look forward to a gradual increase in clarity and specificity of both criteria and categories of stratification. Likewise, it is realistic to expect, in both regards, a shift from secondary towards primary stratification, in the sense of the distinction just proposed.

In all this, the current vogue of interest in social stratification in the Middle East may or may not play a role. It would go too far to ascribe to it the role of a self-fulfilling prophecy. Mainly a matter of interest of foreign scholars, it is too much of an alien concern to be likely to exert this kind of impact. On the other hand, there is little doubt that for once the preoccupations carried to the field by foreign scholars happen to coincide with actual developments and are therefore in a position to achieve more meaning, than would normally be possible.

There are inevitably certain risks involved in this cross-cultural transfer of ideas. One of these is that the emergent social stratification in the Middle East might end up being moulded to a disproportionate extent according to elements of an alien pattern. Thus the emergence could show an undue amount of strains and frictions. The overall process of change could become more hazardous than it is bound to be anyway. In this respect theorists, including foreign theorists, should not take lightly the chance that they might turn out to be unintentional missionaries for a foreign and not necessarily wholesome ideology. And what to say to those, foreigners as well as Middle Eastern adepts of certain Western ideologies, who do the same on purpose? Think in particular of certain Marxist notions of class, and again of the middle class syndrome, as introduced by competing schools of theory, each consciously or unwittingly committed to its own underlying ideology. Besides, the current wave of interest in elite phenomena, though apparently tying in more successfully with traditional and contemporary Middle Eastern data, may in its turn prove not quite as ideologically innocent as some of its protagonists clearly assume it to be.

The argument of this paper has been developed setting out from (1) an acceptance of the current dissatisfaction with, and concern about the current overzealous use of, stratification theory, and (2) the expressly introduced demand that stratification be (re)defined, if possible, so as to be useful with regard to the Middle East. The paper has shaped up primarily as an exercise in conceptualization, and secondarily as an effort to point the way towards establishing and subsequently elaborating a consistent set of concepts relevant to the Middle East. Of the two exercises in specification required for the latter purpose, one, concerning the backdrop, has been advanced somewhat further than the other, relating to specific Middle East modalities of ascen-

dancy and to entities involved. In fact, the second has been brought up to, but not beyond, the point where the specific Middle East features remain to be filled in. (This would involve spelling out criteria of ascendancy, modalities of institutionalization and all the rest.) The corresponding point in the first exercise has not been marked in so many words but is easy to determine. All one needs to do is retract the argument to the point where the concept of 'the convergent society' will emerge as a specific variant of a less specific underlying concept. This, in turn, would refer to that which is commonly but unsatisfactorily called 'society'. (In keeping with the somewhat more systematic terminology of this paper it might be called ultimate or embracing socio-cultural entity, or perhaps, sociocultural frame of reference, or something to the same effect. The reader will notice that these terms, clumsy as they sound upon first hearing, are introduced not out of lust for jargon, but in response to a need for accuracy that is insufficiently met by a good deal of standard sociological terminology.

It will be clear that these are the points at which the act of specification with regard to given world areas should commence. Concepts developed up to these points are not 'area-specific'; they are nothing but broad analytic devices. This realization has interesting implications. Meant to cater to certain needs for conceptualization arising with special regard to the Middle East, this paper has had to incorporate a preliminary effort that, upon closer inspection, can stand on its own. Considered in this fashion, it turns out to be an exercise in laying the conceptual groundwork on the basis in which it will be possible, in matters of social stratification and related subjects, to account for area specificity.

Yet another reference - with due apology for repeatedly selecting the same work - to Dumont's important study of Indian social stratification will illustrate this. Rephrased in the terms here advanced, Dumont's argument boils down to the thesis that in India, ascendancy obeys mainly, if not solely, one criterion, to wit a specific purity concept (which no doubt is as much a pars pro toto proposition as privilege was in medieval Europe), applied in a highly systematic, perhaps formal and rigorous manner, in the perspective (or against the backdrop) of an emergent specific conception of society to the definition of which the un-Indian term hierarchy is a viable approximation.²⁹ Nothing could be more challenging than to undertake the attempt to achieve a corresponding specification such as could specify what social stratification in the West is all about. The excessive difficulty of this exercise, for Western sociologists, follows from the implied and inevitable need to review critically, and if necessary to part with, much of the well-worn conceptual complex (along with its tacit presuppositions) that we apply so routinely.

February 1973.

Footnotes

1. In empirical studies there is a tendency to move away from stratification as a general proposition towards some of its aspects or symptoms, such as mobility, career patterns or status awareness. Comp. P.M.Blau and O.D.Duncan, The American Occupational Structure, New York (Wiley) 1967, esp. Ch. 5; R.Genters, The Psychology of Social Classes, A Study of Class Consciousness, New York (Russell, Russell) 1961; R.P.Coleman and B.L.Neugarten, Social Status in the City, San Francisco (Jossey-Bass) 1971; D.V.Glass, Social Mobility in Britain, London (Routledge, Kegan Paul) 1954; K.Svalastoga, Prestige, Class and Mobility, Copenhagen (Gyldendal) 1959; M.M.Tumin, Social Class and Social Change in Puerto Rico, Princeton (U.P.) 1961, esp. Ch.29; W.L.Warner and P.S.Lunt, The Status System of a Modern Community, New Haven (Yale U.P.) 1942.
2. Comp. Th.W.Adorno, "Reflexionen zur Klassentheorie", Gesammelte Schriften 8: Soziologische Schriften 1, Frankfurt/M (Suhrkamp) 1972, pp. 373-391; E.Allardt, "Theories about Social Stratification", in J.A.Jackson, ed., Social Stratification, Cambridge (U.P.) 1968, Ch.2, pp. 14-24; W.Buckley, "Social Stratification and the Functional Theory of Social Differentiation", Amer.Sociol.Rev. 23/4, 1958, pp. 369-375; K.Davis and W.Moore, "Some Principles of Stratification", Amer.Sociol.Rev. 10/2, 1945, pp. 242-249 (for parts of subsequent debate comp. E.O.Laumann, P.M.Siegel and R.W.Hodge, eds., The Logic of Social Hierarchies, Chicago (Markham) 1970, Ch. 9.10, and W.E.Moore, "The Tumin-Moore Polemics, Remaining Points of Argument", in C.S.Heller, ed., Structured Social Inequality, A Reader in Comparative Social Stratification, New York (Macmillan) 1969, pp. 511-513); M.M.Gordon, Social Class in American Sociology, Durham NC (Duke U.P.) 1950; S.Ossowski, Class Structure in the Social Consciousness, London (Routledge, Kegan Paul) 1963; T.Parsons, "A Revised Analytical Approach to the Theory of Social Stratification", in R.Bendix and S.Lipset, eds., Class, Status and Power, Glencoe (Free Press) 1953, pp. 92-128; W.G.Runciman, "Class, Status and Power?", in J.A.Jackson, o.c., Ch.3, pp. 25-61; L.von Wiese, Gesellschaftliche Stände und Klassen, Bern (Francke) 1950.
3. Comp. M.S.Archer and S.Giner, eds., Contemporary Europe: Class, Status and Power, London (Weidenfeld, Nicholson) 1971; G.D.H.Cole, Studies in Class Structure, London (Routledge, Kegan Paul) 1955; J.A.Kahl, The American Class Structure, New York (Rinehart) 1953; T.H.Marshall, Citizenship and Social Class, Cambridge (U.P.) 1950; M.M.Tumin, Social Stratification, The Forms and Functions of Inequality, Englewood Cliffs NJ (Prentice-Hall) 1967.
4. Comp. S.H.Ali, Social Stratification in Kampong Bagan, A Study of Class, Status, Conflict and Mobility in a Rural Community, Singapore (Mal.Br.R.A.S.) 1964; A.Béteille, Castes Old and New, Essays in Social Structure and Social Stratification, London (Asia) 1969; A.S.Bujra, The Politics of Stratification, A Study of Political Change in a South Arabian Town, Oxford (Clarendon) 1971; H.Goldberg, "Elite Groups in Peasant Communities, A Comparison of Three Middle Eastern Villages", Amer. Anthropologist 70/4, 1968, pp. 718-731; G.Landtman, The Origin of the Inequality of the Social Classes, London (Kegan Paul) 1938; L.Plotnicov and A.Thuden, eds., Essays in Comparative Social Stratification, Pittsburgh (U.P.) 1970; M.D.Sahlins, Social Stratification in Polynesia, Seattle (Wash. U.P.) 1958, esp. Ch. 1; A.Thuden and

- L.Plotnivic, eds., Social Stratification in Africa, New York (Free Press) 1970.
5. Comp. P.Thoenes, The Elite in the Welfare State, London (Faber, Faber) 1966; Dutch orig. De elite in de verzorgingsstaat, Leiden (Stenfert Kroese) 1962.
 6. Comp. J.Woddis, New Theories of Revolution, A Commentary on the Views of Frantz Fanon, Régis Debray and Herbert Marcuse, London (Lawrence, Wishart) 1972.
 7. Comp. B.F.Hoselitz, "Social Stratification and Economic Development", Int. Soc. Sci. Journ. 16/2, 1964, pp. 237-252; N.J.Smelser and S.M. Lipset, eds., Social Structure and Mobility in Economic Development, Chicago (Aldine) 1964, esp. Ch. 4, 5.
 8. "La science se perd quand l'idéologie commence, et l'idéologie commence lorsqu'une société se prend comme référence absolue, centre de perspectives premières ou dernières", M.Godelier, "Rationalité et irrationalité en économie", Economie et socialisme, Paris 1966. Comp. R.A.Levine and D.T.Campbell, Ethnocentrism: Theories of Conflict, Ethnic Attitudes and Group Behavior, New York (Wiley) 1972; A.D.Smith, "Ethnocentrism, Nationalism and Social Change", Internat. Journ. of Compar. Sociol., 13/1, 1972, pp. 1-20.
 9. Symptomatic for the dissatisfaction that may result from the application to non-Western areas of Western concepts, is the noted polemic on the 'new middle class' in the Middle East, by M.Halpern and A.Perlmutter, in Compar. Stud. in Hist. and Soc., X/1, 1967-8, pp. 46-65, XI/1, 1969, pp. 97-108. Further on the problem of relevance of stratification concepts and theory under specific conditions, comp. V.L.Allen, "The Meaning of the Working Class in Africa", Journ. of Mod. Afr. Studies 10/2, 1972, pp. 169-189; J.Lopreato, "Social Stratification in a South Italian Town", Amer. Sociol. Rev. 26/4, 1961, pp. 585-596; P.Machonin, "Social Stratification in Contemporary Czechoslovakia", Amer. Journ. Sociol. 75/5, 1970, pp. 725-741; K.Mayer, "Diminishing Class Differentials in the United States", Kyklos 12, 1959, pp. 605-628; F.Parkin, Class Inequality and Political Order, Social Stratification in Capitalist and Communist Societies, London (MacGibbon, Kee) 1971; J.Pitt Rivers, "Social Class in a French Village", Anthrop. Quart. 33/1, 1960; S.F.Silverman, "An Ethnographic Approach to Social Stratification, Prestige in a Central Italian Community", Amer. Anthrop., 68/4, 1966, pp. 899-921; id., "Exploitation in Rural Central Italy, Structure and Ideology in Stratification Study", Comp. Stud. Soc. Hist. 12/3, 1970, pp. 327-339; R.Stavenhagen, Les classes sociales dans les sociétés agraires, Paris (Anthropos) 1969; C.Tardits, "The Notion of the Elite and the Urban Social Survey in Africa", Int. Soc. Sci. Bull. 8/3, 1956, pp. 492-495; A.Weinberg and F.Lyons, "Class Theory and Practice", Brit. Journ. of Sociol., 23/1, 1972, pp. 51-65; W.Wesolowski, "Social Stratification in Socialist Society, Some Theoretical Problems", Polish Sociol. Bull. 1, 1967, pp. 22-34.
 10. The term 'Culture context' begs the question, to be discussed in the paragraph to which note 17 refers, whether the reference in the background is to be defined as structural or as cultural. A vaguer term, inciting less dispute, may be preferable. For this reason the term 'area specificity' will be introduced further on.
 11. Out of an avalanche of titles old and new, just one example: N.Birnbaum, Toward a Critical Sociology, New York (Oxford U.P.) 1971. As is the case with many of these writings, the word critical appears sorely overworked, to the point of having lost any precise meaning. The reader finds it difficult, at times, to decide whether he reads an attempt at

understanding or just another symptom of a recognizedly critical state of affairs.

12. Comp. M.H.Fried, "On the Evolution of Social Stratification and the State", in S.D.Diamond, ed., Culture in History, New York (Columbia U.P.) 1960, repr. in E.O.Laumann c.s., The Logic of Social Hierarchies, o.c., Ch. 43, pp. 684-695; J.Schumpeter, "Die sozialen Klassen im ethnisch-homogenen Milieu", Arch.f.Sozialwissensch. 57, 1927, pp. 1-67.
13. Comp. R.Nisbet, The Sociological Tradition, New York (Basic Books) 1966; G.Gusdorf, Introduction aux sciences humaines, Paris (Belles lettres) 1960.
14. This distinction brings to mind Karl Popper's famous distinction between open society and closed community (The Open Society and Its Enemies, London (Routledge, Kegan Paul) 1945, 2 vols. The two distinctions differ in a manner that is worth noting. Popper rejects the closed community and advocates the open society as models for actual societal orientation and organization. His concern, albeit basically normative, is with actual conditions. Our concern is with conceptual tools for analysis, as distinct from models for description. One of these models for description, that of the pre-established ultimate unit, is roughly equivalent to Popper's 'closed community'. It is derived (through what this writer considers to be unwarranted quasi-abstraction and quasi-generalization) from incidental historical appearances as normatively experienced and presented by those concerned, namely the nation-state. The same nation-state, in an overheated variant, inspired Popper's attack.
15. The same applies to the term 'social differentiation' used, for example, by H.R.Barringer: "Social Change and Social Differentiation in Korea" in C.I.E.Kim, ed., Aspects of Social Change in Korea, Kalamazoo Mich. (Korean Research) 1969.
16. A somewhat more remote possibility for selection of a comparable concept is exchange. The circumstance that it is such a very broad concept appears as a drawback at first sight, but it might prove an advantage. Comp. further: P.Singelmann, "Exchange as Symbolic Interaction: Convergences between two Theoretical Perspectives", Amer. Sociol. Rev. 37/4, 1972, pp. 414-424.
17. The position adopted here obviates the dilemma signalled in note 10 and discussed with great lucidity by L.Dumont, Homo hierarchicus, The Caste System and Its Implications, London (Weidenfeld Nicholson) 1970, paperb. London (Granada, Paladin) 1972, orig. French ed. Paris (Gallimard) 1966, note 21c (p. 319 of Engl. paperb. ed.). Comp. D.Rothstein, "Culture Creation and Social Reconstruction: The Socio-Cultural Dynamics of Intergroup Contact", Amer. Sociol. Rev. 37/6, 1972, pp. 671-678.
18. C.A.O.van Nieuwenhuijze, Sociology of the Middle East, Leiden (Brill) 1971.
19. C.S.Coon, Caravan, The Story of the Middle East, New York (Holt) 1958.
20. Its definition is of no immediate significance for present purposes, and less so since some of the pertinent terms, such as culture norm or culture majority, might - wrongly - appear to reintroduce the false dilemma obviated in note 17.
21. L.Dumont, o.c., p. 95 (Engl. paperb. ed.).

22. The decision to abstain at this relatively early point in the argument follows from two considerations. One refers to the desirable size of this paper. The other, more important, is that this writer has no wish to repeat himself (comp. Social Stratification and the Middle East, Leiden, Brill, 1965), nor does he consider this the occasion to rework earlier writings.
23. Lest this tentative listing of kinds of societal articulation be open to challenge on grounds of ethnocentrism (creeping in into the act of identifying them), it should be stipulated that any list of actually occurring variants is bound to be area-specific and that on this ground the list tentatively made up here is in need of being checked against actual Middle East conditions.
24. This distinction should obviate the all too frequent complications resulting from the felt need to cover ethnic phenomena in stratification books. See, for example, Part VI of C.S.Heller, ed., Structured Social Inequality, New York (Macmillan) 1969. The most notable example, doubtlessly is T.Shibutani and K.M.Kwan, Ethnic Stratification, A Comparative Approach, New York (Macmillan) 1965. Comp. also, as one example out of many, E.Bonacich, "A Theory of Ethnic Antagonism: The Split Labour Market", Amer. Sociol. Rev., 37/5, 1972, pp. 547-559.
25. For a most apposite discussion, comp. T.D.Kemper, "The Division of Labour: A Post-Durkheimian Analytical View", Amer. Sociol. Rev. 37/6, 1972, pp. 739-753.
26. Comp. S.Ossowski, "The Marxian Synthesis", in E.O.Laumann c.s., The Logic of Social Hierarchies, o.c., Ch. 11. For an echo of the intertwining of stratification and division of labour comp. L.Dumont, o.c., p. 323 (note 24c). Comp. also N.Birnbaum, Toward a Critical Sociology, o.c., p. 101 ff.
27. Comp. some of the papers in Renaissance du Monde arabe, Louvain 1971.
28. Comp. Sociology of the Middle East, o.c., p. 593.
29. Comp. L.Dumont, o.c., p. 83, 99 et passim.

