World Societies

The Evolution of Human Social Life

Stephen K. Sanderson
Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Arthur S. Alderson
Indiana University, Bloomington
CONTENTS

Preface xi
Acknowledgments xiii

1 10,000 Years of Social Evolution 1
   The Ancestral Environment 1
   The Neolithic Revolution 2
   The Rise of Civilization and the State 3
   The Rise of Modern Capitalism and Industrialism 5
   For Further Reading 7

2 Theories of Social Evolution and Development 8
   Classical Evolutionism 8
   Marxian Evolutionism 11
   Twentieth-Century Evolutionism: First Generation 14
      V. Gordon Childe 14
      Leslie White 15
      Julian Steward 16
   Twentieth-Century Evolutionism: Second Generation 17
      Talcott Parsons's Idealist Evolutionism 17
      Gerhard Lenski's Technological Evolutionism 20
      Marvin Harris's Cultural Materialism 22
   Twentieth-Century Evolutionism: Third Generation 25
   For Further Reading 30

3 Preindustrial Societies:
   Hunter-Gatherers and Horticulturalists 32
   Hunter-Gatherer Societies 32
      Subsistence Technology 32
      The Original Affluent Society? 36
      Economic Life 38
Social Inequalities and Political Life  41

Simple Horticultural Societies  43
  Subsistence Technology  43
  Economic Life  45
  Social Inequalities and Politics  48

Intensive Horticultural Societies  49
  Subsistence Technology  49
  Economic Life and Stratification  51
  Politics  54

For Further Reading  55

4 Preindustrial Societies:
Agrarian and Pastoral Societies  57

Agrarian Societies  57
  Subsistence Technology  57
  Economic Life  60
  Stratification  61
  Politics  66

Pastoral Societies  67
  Subsistence Technology  67
  Political Economy  71

Causes of the Evolution of Preindustrial Societies  73
  The Evolution of Subsistence Technology  73
  The Evolution of Political Economy  79

For Further Reading  81

5 The Rise of the Modern World  82

The Emergence of Economic Markets  82
  Societies in Relation to the Market  82
  Aspects of the Market in Preindustrial Societies  84
  Some Qualifications: Precapitalist Commercialism and Its Growth  86

The Origins of Modern Capitalism  87
  European Feudalism  87
  Commercial Expansion and the Decline of Feudalism  88
  The Nature of Capitalism  89
  Early Capitalism between the Thirteenth and Sixteenth Centuries  90
  The Seventeenth Century and Mercantilism  91
6 Industrialization and the Expansion of the World-System 105

The Industrial Revolution and the Emergence of Industrial Capitalism 105
  The Industrial Revolution and Its Causes 105
  The Industrial Revolution in World-System Perspective 109
  Industrial Capitalism Since the Late Nineteenth Century 110
  The Japanese Transition to Industrial Capitalism 113

Hegemonic Rise and Fall in the World-System 116

For Further Reading 123

7 Industrial Capitalist Societies 125

Stratification in Industrial Capitalist Societies 125
  Income Inequalities 125
  Wealth Inequalities 128
  The Class Structure of Industrial Capitalist Societies 130
  Social Mobility within Modern Capitalism 132

The Origins of Parliamentary Democracy 134

Capitalism and the Welfare State 139

The Rise and Expansion of Mass Education 142

The Demographic Transition 148

The Rise of a Postindustrial Society? 151

For Further Reading 153

8 The Rise and Demise of State Socialism 155

The Origin and Nature of State Socialism 155
State Socialism and the Capitalist World-Economy 158
Reform within State Socialism and the Transition to Postsocialism 160
Stratification within State Socialism 163
The Modern Communist State: Leninist Regimes 166
The Collapse of Communism 171
Postsocialism: Achievements, Failures, Prospects 175
  The Economy 175
  Stratification 177
  Politics 178
The Future of Socialism 181
For Further Reading 182

9 Economic Development and Underdevelopment 183
  The Nature of Underdevelopment 183
Why Underdevelopment? 191
  Modernization Theory 191
  Dependency Theory 194
  World-System Theory 199
  Explaining Underdevelopment: Some Conclusions 202
Development in East Asia 202
  The Biggest Success Stories: The East Asian Tigers 203
  The Rise of China 205
Development in Latin America 207
Sub-Saharan Africa: A Failure of Development 211
World-System Position and the Form of the State 213
For Further Reading 217

10 Globalization 219
  The Nature of Globalization 220
    Economic Globalization 220
    Political Globalization 222
    Sociocultural Globalization 223
    What Drives the Globalization Process? 225
Globalization and Its Critics 225
Globalization and the Environment 232
Is Globalization Something New? 238
For Further Reading 242

11 Retrospect and Prospect:
The Past 10,000 Years and the Next 100 244

The Past 10,000 Years: Human Progress? 244
The Standard of Living 245
The Quantity and Quality of Work 247
Equality 248
Democracy and Freedom 249
The Concept of Progress Revisited 250

How to Judge a Society 251

Future Trends: The Very Large Scale 255
Future Trends: The Merely Large Scale 264
Conclusions: The Future from the Perspective of a
General Theory of History 268

For Further Reading 269

Glossary 271

Bibliography 279

Index 297
This book started out with the title *Macrosociology: An Introduction to Human Societies*, published in 1988 by Harper and Row. Second and third editions were published in 1991 and 1995, respectively, by HarperCollins, and a fourth edition appeared in 1999 under the imprint of Addison Wesley Longman. The current version is a major revision of *Macrosociology*, and because the revision is so substantial the book now carries a new title, *World Societies: The Evolution of Human Social Life*, and Arthur Alderson has been added as a coauthor. It was decided to give the book greater flexibility by retaining the core parts of the original book, mainly those that focused on the political economy of human societies and its evolution over the long term. Material on race and ethnicity, family, gender, kinship, and education has been almost completely eliminated, although some of the materials on education were reincorporated into the chapter on modern industrial capitalist societies.

This book has also been thoroughly reorganized. The old organization was topical, whereas the new organization is historical or evolutionary. We start with hunter-gatherer societies, move from there to discuss horticultural, agrarian, and pastoral societies, and then turn to the emergence of capitalism and industrialism, the rise and demise of state socialism, development and underdevelopment, globalization, and the future. The book has been thoroughly updated where necessary, and the materials on globalization have been expanded into an entire chapter. The original chapter on the future has been dramatically revised, with 13 bold predictions for the next 25 to 50 years. Because of the book’s reorganization, an entirely new chapter on theories of social evolution and development has been added, and appears as Chapter 2. This chapter might be too difficult for some students. If so, it can be eliminated without much loss, or the main points can be briefly summarized by the instructor. However, we believe it is important to include the chapter because some instructors will find it useful.

*World Societies* has also been substantially shortened and now appears in paperback at a much lower price. For those who used *Macrosociology* and felt committed to it, *World Societies* can still be used as a stand-alone text. But its much shorter length now makes it appropriate as a supplement to full-scale textbooks. Introductory sociology textbooks focus mostly on modern U.S. society. Some have comparative and historical content, but this is quite limited in the vast majority of cases. *World Societies* would serve as a very useful supplement for those who want to use a conventional text but who would like much more in the way of comparative and historical materials. This book could also be used very nicely as a supplement to the one other textbook that takes a fully comparative and historical approach, Nolan and Lenski’s Human Societies. Both of these books are evolutionary in approach, but take rather different perspectives and cover quite a different range of materials. They would complement each other very well for those who are teaching the introductory course in a comparative and evolutionary fashion, or other courses that have a
comparative and evolutionary format. *World Societies* would also be very appropriate for courses in social change and for courses in economic or political sociology.

For those instructors who have not used a comparative, historical, or evolutionary approach in teaching the introductory course, but who might have an interest in doing so, the merits of such an approach are discussed in Sanderson (1985).

A test bank of multiple-choice, true-false, and essay questions is available from the publisher.

Stephen K. Sanderson
Arthur S. Alderson
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to the sociology editor at Allyn and Bacon, Jeff Lasser, for seeing this book to completion and for being understanding when we submitted the manu-
script over a year late. Very special thanks are due to Christopher Chase-Dunn for
his useful critical comments on this book, for using every edition of its predecessor,
and for his unflagging support over the years.

I also thank the following people for their intellectual collegiality and friend-
ship, which have contributed in important ways to this book and various editions of
its predecessor: Chris Chase-Dunn, Tom Hall, Randy Collins, Pierre van den Berghe,
Jon Turner, Sandy Maryanski, Andre Gunder Frank, Al Bergesen, Sing Chew, Ed
Bell, Sam Clark, Mike Hammond, Josh Dubrow, Wes Roberts, Gerry Lenski, Victor
Garcia, Jeff Kentor, Tom Reifer, Herb Hunter, Bruce Lerro, Manuela Boatca, Harvey
Holtz, Tom Conelly, Bob Carneiro, and Paul Kamolnick. I am especially grateful to
my son, Derek Sanderson, for numerous stimulating conversations about issues of
sociological relevance over many years. Although not a sociologist or a student of
sociology, he has a keen sociological mind and eye nonetheless.

It is a special pleasure to be able to add Arthur Alderson as my coauthor. He
took the introductory sociology course with me in 1984. Macrosociology was still in
the process of completion (four years away from publication), and he and the other
students used a manuscript version of the book as the course’s main text. He seemed
fascinated by the comparative and historical focus of the manuscript, not realizing
that all of these other types of societies existed and could be studied systematically.
After the course, he became a sociology major and took several more courses with
me. Few authors are as fortunate as I am to be able to add as a coauthor a former
student who learned his first sociology from one of the earliest possible versions of
the book in question. In the future, I hope he will have the opportunity to shape the
direction of the book more and more.

Stephen K. Sanderson
No description can even begin to lead to a valid explanation if it does not effectively encompass the whole world.

—Fernand Braudel