

*The functionalist theory of stratification: Two decades of controversy*, George A. HUACO, Yale University.

The author examines the 1945 and 1948 versions of the Davis-Moore functionalist theory of stratification. The analysis explores the basic postulates, assumptions, and logical articulation of the theory and isolates its distinctively functionalist components. This is followed by a historical account of the major criticisms leveled at the theory. The critics have succeeded in showing the fallacious and tautologous character of the functionalist components, thus, in effect, destroying the theory as a theory. Despite this destruction, various portions of the Davis-Moore theory are shown to be usable, to contain valuable insights, and to be capable of further development.

*Ideology and the functional analysis of cultures*, Harold FALLDING, University of Waterloo.

Sociology can be free from appraising value judgments, but characterizing value judgments are inseparable from it. It is thus a science that deals with the same questions as ideology reckons with, although in a purely characterizing way. Part of its concern is to judge cultures and it does this by measuring properties inherent in them. A culture is an ordering of symbols for a meaningful, dignified life. The dimensions for measuring any culture are (1) the sufficiency of its symbols, (2) their attractive power through meaningful inclusion in coherent wholes, (3) their consistency through absorption into a single reference system and (4) their appositeness to human needs.

*Functional analysis and the problem of rationality, a note on the dilemma of the actor as observer*, Roy TURNER, University of British Columbia, Vancouver.

Functional analysis rescued religion from the oblivion to which positivists would have consigned it, by taking 'society' rather than the individual act as the unit of analysis. The history of functionalism has been a record of increasing concern with such holistic units as societies and social systems. One consequence of this shift away from social action (in the Weberian sense) is that the issue of rationality has become largely redundant. Yet the problem remains: How do we account for 'contributions' to the social system in terms that make sense of the perspectives of social actors? An examination of unit actions as they are understood by social actors suggests that functionalism in fact incorporated many of the tenets held by positivists, and that it makes untenable (and implicit) assumptions concerning the 'objectivity' of the scientific observer.

*R. K. Merton's concepts of function and functionalism*, Hugh LEHMAN, Western Washington State College.

In this paper an attempt is made to provide an analysis of the meaning of the term *function* and related terms as they are used by R. K. Merton in the first chapter of his book *Social Theory and Social Structure*. Several problems are suggested which must be solved if statements about functions are to be considered scientifically adequate. Secondly the term *functionalism* is defined and several of Merton's functionalist explanations of social phenomena are stated and criticized.

## ERRATUM

In *Philosophy of Science*, volume 32, No. 3, p. 230, lines 3–5: Read "According to Stevens the coefficient of variation is said to be permissible for ratio scales, mean and standard deviation for interval and ratio scales, and the median for ordinal, as well as interval and ratio scales."