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COMPARATIVE SOCIAL MOBILITY

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INTRODUCTION

Although all sociological studies of social mobility are implicitly or explicitly comparative in nature, in this review I discuss primarily recent studies of social mobility incorporating explicit cross-national comparisons or explicit comparisons over time within a given society. The various fanfares about “international cooperation” and “continuities in theory and research” notwithstanding, the actual recent number of such explicitly comparative studies, say in the 1970s, is not large. Despite the accessibility of expanded data processing facilities and the remarkable frequency and depth of international contacts, discussion, and cooperation, the implementation of detailed comparative mobility studies involving separate data sets remains a massive undertaking. Individual researchers and research teams alike inevitably encounter not only the difficulties of reconciling the separate data-gathering procedures and developing adequate measurement routines, but also the even greater problem of interpretation in the contexts of different historical, cultural, and social settings.

Nonetheless a number of ambitious studies have sought to compare trends and processes in many different countries, or have incorporated variegated and detailed comparisons over time, or have sought to use comparative studies to push the investigation of social mobility in new theoretical, methodological, or substantive directions. Other studies, more modest in scope or detail, have used explicit comparison of mobility to focus on more specific facets of the causes, processes, or outcomes

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of mobility; while still others have used comparisons of mobility only obliquely in comparative analyses of inequality and stratification. In this paper I review the range of themes, topics, and issues in recent comparative mobility studies and choose three specific themes for more detailed consideration: (a) mobility as a general indicator of societal “openness” and the “social opportunity” regime; (b) life-history factors in attainment of socioeconomic positions and status; and (c) mobility in strata- and class-formation and structuration.

THE USES OF COMPARATIVE MOBILITY STUDIES

The themes, topics, and issues of current comparative mobility studies are the familiar ones that have animated comparative mobility research at least since the 1950s, when large-scale British, Scandinavian, and American studies of social mobility were accompanied by initiatives, cooperation, and interchange fostered by the International Sociological Association. The major concern of mobility studies in the early post-World War II period was the determination of the rate of mobility of a society, community, or population category, where the rate of mobility was understood to be a measure of the openness or permeability of the social structure, a measure of social opportunity in that society, or perhaps a sociological-research-based indicator of the “goodness” of the society. And it followed that comparative studies of mobility would permit (a) comparison of the degree of openness, of social opportunity, or of goodness among countries, (b) assessment of the improvement or deterioration over time in a given society’s openness, permeability, or social opportunity, and (c) discovery of factors and correlates of the variations. Other themes of the earlier comparative studies of mobility included (d) the effect of specific social origins on mobility—i.e. the “equality or inequality of opportunity;” (e) elite recruitment and the effect of mobility on the composition of elites; (f) the effects of education on social mobility and opportunity; (g) the relationship between a society’s economic level, or economic development, and the volume and directions of its mobility; (h) the relationship between a society’s political organization and attributes and the volume and directions of its mobility; (i) the incidence and determinants of mobility values, orientations, or motivations; and (j) the political, social, or psychological consequences of mobility or immobility. As I note below, all of these themes, topics, and issues continue to appear in the 1970s, though several have been developed and reformulated considerably.

“Levels” of Intergenerational Mobility, “Openness” of Societies, and Equality of Opportunity

“Levels” of mobility, the openness or permeability of strata systems, and equality of opportunity remain easily the most prominent themes in comparative mobility studies in the 1970s. The major report of the findings of the 1973 American national mobility survey, probably the most elaborate and detailed analysis of mobility trends over time in a single country, is entitled *Opportunity and Change* (Featherman & Hauser 1978). The report introduces the analysis by re-posing the familiar question, “Has opportunity declined in America?” Initially, the authors equate opportunity with intergenerational mobility and the permeability of American society; later (p. 15) they adopt a more precise definition. In one of the more extensive of the cross-national comparative mobility studies appearing in the 1970s, Hazelrigg & Garnier (1976) examine the hypothesis that “industrial societies exhibit higher rates of occupational mobility and a more ‘fluid’ occupational stratification than do non-industrial societies, which, in turn, have lower rates and a less fluid stratification than do the industrializing or ‘transitional’ societies.” In a more recent and even more extensive cross-national mobility study, Tyree, Semyonov & Hodge (1979) also address variations in the level of mobility to test, in particular, the hypothesis that it is decisively influenced (net of other factors, such as development and industrialization) by the pattern of social status distances, continuities, and discontinuities—what they call the “shape of the stratification system.” In his comparative study of mobility in the four Scandinavian countries, Pöntinen (1976) distinguishes among (a) the amount of mobility, openness, or rigidity of a society, (b) the “number of opportunities” a society gives its members, and (c) the equality of these opportunities (p. 7). Miller (1975) compares trends in manual-to-nonmanual intergenerational mobility in several countries as primary indicators of changing or unchanging levels of mobility. Other, within-country comparisons (e.g. Rogoff-Ramsøy 1977; Duncan, Featherman & Duncan 1972; Goldthorpe, Payne & Llewellyn 1978) as well as additional two- or multiple-country comparisons (e.g. Andorka & Zagorski 1978; Treiman & Terrell 1975; McRoberts & Selbee 1978; Turrutin 1974; Boyd, Featherman & Matras, 1979; and Kleining 1978) all give some prominence to the concept of amount of mobility or overall level of mobility, and indicate a connection between this concept, on the one hand, and concepts either of societal openness or of amount of equality of social opportunity, on the other hand. Thus the view that social mobility reflects a feature called social opportunity continues in the 1970s to inform the comparative study of social mobility.

But the concept of the amount or level of mobility has been elaborated and qualified since the 1950s. Many of the comparative studies incorporate summary measures of the level of mobility for the respective countries or cohorts (Hazelrigg & Garnier 1976; Tyree Semyonov & Hodge 1979; Mayer 1974; Pöntinen 1976; Andorka & Zagorski 1978). But all now distinguish between structural and circulation (or between “forced” and “exchange”) mobility; they either measure only circulation mobility as an indicator of openness or opportunity or else measure total, circulation, and structural mobility separately. Almost all have incorporated more detailed descriptions of the origin-and-destination patterns of mobility into their discussions of levels or amounts of mobility. Only the two extensive multi-nation comparisons, Hazelrigg & Garnier (1976) and Tyree, Semyonov & Hodge (1979), use only summary measures for each society. The former shows five summary values (of “observed” mobility “circulation rate” and “status transmission”) for each country; the latter makes do with a single mobility index, the three-way-interaction (Father’s Occupation–Respondent’s Occupation–Country) coefficient in a log-linear model representation of father-to-son occupational (manual-nonmanual) shifts in the 24 countries compared.

Other studies—including most trend reports of the American Occupational Change in a Generation studies (the 1962 study is cited herein as OCG I, the 1973 study as OCG II), of the Nuffield College study of mobility in England and Wales, of the Australian National University (ANU) in Australia, of the Norwegian and Swedish national studies, and of other comparisons involving mobility in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, and Israel—purport to measure levels of mobility and equality or inequality of opportunity but present no summary measure or index of total mobility. Rather, measures of mobility, of access to occupational strata, of immobility or “inheritance,” or of socio-economic attainment are presented only for specific population subgroups—i.e. reckoned with respect to relative chances for access to or attainment of positions or rewards for persons with various attributes, social origins, characteristics, or life history characteristics, sequences, or trajectories. In these studies no single rate, amount, or level of mobility characterizes either the society or an age cohort within it.

Thus researchers have partially abandoned the idea of a single-valued characterization of the openness, fluidity, or permeability of a society without necessarily abandoning the concept of levels or amounts of mobility per se. For these authors there may be more or less intergenerational mobility from a given occupational origin stratum to one or several others; or a given occupational group or stratum may be more or less self-recruiting, or more or less permeable. They are interested in ascer-

taining the conditions, causes, and consequences of such variations, but for these recent investigators the concept of global societal rates of mobility seems to retain only limited interest and meaning.

Factors in Attainment of Individual Socioeconomic Position, Status, or Rewards

Discovery and assessment of factors related to individual mobility ["status attainment" (Blau & Duncan 1967)] have become central in the comparative mobility studies recently published. The great impetus for this line of inquiry appears to have followed the publication of a paper by Duncan & Hodge (1963) examining mobility using regression analysis and the subsequent adoption of regression-based "path models" by Blau & Duncan to describe and quantify the causal effects of prior variables (e.g. social origins, intelligence, educational attainment, or chains of linked prior variables) upon measures of individual socioeconomic status or rewards attained (such as occupational rank score or income). The most important of these factors has proven to be educational attainment; particular attention is paid to how much educational attainment may overcome disadvantaged social origins or may replace social origin as the central factor in attainment of social status or rewards. Comparative studies over time have sought to establish a trend in the extent to which educational attainment dominates the process of status attainment, a trend frequently characterized as heralding the progress of "universalism" or the "universalistic principle of stratification" in a society. Comparative cross-national studies have sought to explain the variations in the relative weight of educational attainment in the process of status attainment. Many comparative studies have reproduced path-model representations of the process of status attainment in two or several countries and have used these to compare the elements of the process.

The analyses of Blau & Duncan, similar work by their students and colleagues, and extensive international consultation and cooperation among students of stratification and mobility have resulted in widespread replication of certain items and standardization of certain strategies of measurement and analysis in subsequent mobility investigations carried out in many countries. These in turn have permitted detailed comparisons of mobility and status attainment processes as well as the comparison of rates or levels of mobility. Additional impetus to these investigations has come from the recent critique of the "educational-equality-for-social-equality" movement, which argues that expansion and perhaps some equalization of educational opportunities have not equalized general social and economic opportunity.

The theme of social mobility as a part of individual status attainment is expanded in the examination of mobility and status attainment in the context of individual life histories. Rogoff-Ramsøy in Norway (1974, 1977) and Mayer in West Germany (1974) have investigated how life cycle transitions and trajectories are intertwined with shifts in social positions, status, and participation and how historical events impinge upon the life cycle patterns, mobility, and status attainment opportunities of the cohorts affected at the various ages. Rogoff-Ramsøy has on the one hand claimed that the Duncan formulation of the status attainment process narrows the scope of stratification study from its traditional concerns and arbitrarily defines the socioeconomic scale of occupations as the central, almost the only, relevant and investigable dimension of social stratification and mobility (1974). On the other hand, she has adopted and extended the study of mobility in a life-history context, inquiring (a) how social setting and social origins bear on the life-histories and educational, occupational, marital, and political trajectories of cohorts, (b) how paths taken at any given life-cycle juncture bear upon subsequent attainment of positions and rewards, and (c) how historical events, social policy or intervention, or other exogenous factors impinge on career and other social trajectories. The controversial work of Boudon (1974) implicitly proposes a similar view of mobility and status attainment processes. His simulations seek to trace the aggregate effects of certain sequences of educational and occupational decisions upon persons originating in the several socioeconomic strata, upon their levels of mobility, and upon the openness or permeability of societies.

Mobility as Social Class or Strata Recruitment, Formation, and "Structuration"

An early theme of comparative social mobility studies (connected with analysis of "inflow" mobility tables) was the extent to which various classes, strata, or hierarchical groupings tended to be intergenerationally self-recruiting or open to persons of other (all other or specific other) social origins. Aside from indexing the openness of the society, the extent to which classes or strata absorb mobile entrants from other origins was hypothesized to bear on the attributes of the strata or classes themselves—e.g. on their characteristic political orientations, on their relationships with the other strata, or on their internal rigidity. The logic of many studies of elites and elite recruitment is akin to that of inflow analysis in mobility studies: The compositions, by social origins, of various elites are

compared to one another and to that of the total or non-elite population. Though in practice elites are not readily identified or studied in national sample surveys, Miller compared elite recruitment in the countries covered in his 1960 cross-national survey by designating the highest occupation group the “elite” in each country. He was not able to draw many conclusions about these elites beyond their relative homogeneity or heterogeneity with respect to social origins (Miller 1961). This theme reappears in the comparative mobility studies of the 1970s in direct and explicit form in the Nuffield group’s studies of mobility in England and Wales; it is expressed indirectly in the American OCG II studies and in the comparison of mobility in the four Scandinavian countries.

In addition, this is a central topic in the studies of Giddens, Parkin, and others who use mobility study results comparatively in their national time trend and cross-national comparisons, though they do not carry out such detailed comparative investigations themselves. This use of comparative mobility studies has shown how patterns and rules of recruitment to, and exclusion from, various classes and strata bear on the extent of class crystallization and on the nature of class profiles, attitudes and orientations, ideologies, normative differentiation, and inter-class relationships. Parkin compares classes and inequality in socialist society, or “command” systems, with those of capitalist society, or “market” systems (Parkin 1971). Giddens emphasizes (a) mobility patterns as constituting an important part of the very bounds of class relations, and (b) the transformation, crystallization, or institutionalization (“mediate structuration”) of persons in similar market positions into structurally significant social class categories and relationships. Although the process and outcomes are different, the role of intergenerational mobility in “mediate structuration” of the various classes is similar in both capitalist and socialist societies (Giddens 1973).

Dimensions of Social Grading and Social Mobility

Studies of social mobility have traditionally focused upon occupational ranks as reflecting the overall social ranks of individuals; on occupational categories or groups—usually ordered hierarchically—as reflecting significant strata, status groups, or classes; and on intergenerational occupational mobility, career mobility, and marriage of women of given occupational origins to men of given current occupational ranks, as representing social mobility. But sociological discussion of inequality, stratification, and mobility has always recognized a wide range of unequally distributed social rewards—i.e. attributes with respect to which

individuals may be ranked socially, or characteristics, resources, positions, or relationships around which hierarchically ordered groups may form and institutionalize interrelationships. Students of social mobility have conceived various alternative dimensions of social mobility—e.g. education, income, reputation, prestige, power, influence, community participation, consumption, knowledge, property ownership, exercise of property rights, control of resources, or, indeed, *access* to individuals, groups, or organizations favorably located with respect to such attributes or rewards (see Kerckhoff 1978). However, whether enthusiastically or reluctantly, almost all empirical sociological comparative studies of social mobility have chosen to rely entirely or mainly upon occupational positions or movement among occupational positions as indicators of individual social rank or hierarchical position, and upon attainment of occupational positions or movements among occupational positions as indicators of social mobility.

The topic of how to rank occupations and those holding them has concerned a number of mobility studies. Featherman, Jones & Hauser (1975), Featherman & Hauser (1976), and Hauser & Featherman (1977) deal with the issue of whether occupational prestige or occupational socioeconomic status is the appropriate attribute (*a*) with reference to which occupations are ranked and (*b*) with reference to which individuals are mobile. Using data for the United States and Australia, they conclude that the values and the legitimation, normative system, or consensus concerning the goodness and prestige of occupations plays a minor role, compared to the economic and socioeconomic dimensions, in shaping and sustaining the mobility processes in capitalist industrial societies. Treiman found high correlations among occupational grading scores obtained in many national occupation prestige studies (1978); he has developed a single occupational scaling procedure applicable to all countries and has argued that the scores or relative scores tend to be the same in various countries since division of labor may require similar skills and create similar patterns of shortage and abundance of workers. Goldthorpe & Hope (1972) argued against imputing any meaning to occupational status scores gleaned from opinion survey materials beyond a notion of “general desirability” or a “summation of popular assessments” of occupations, rather than prestige, socioeconomic status, or “collective representations.” Kerckhoff (1978) has pointed out that in different countries the influence of occupation in determining or indexing social rank or status may vary (e.g. in the United States and the United Kingdom); he indicates the parallel problem with regard to reckoning social origins.

Social Mobility and Transformations of the Occupational Structure

Early attempts to separate structural and circulation mobility led to various formulations of the relationships between (a) intergenerational changes in occupational composition of the labor force and (b) amounts and patterns of mobility. The most frequently expressed version of this relationship holds that the market and technological changes—prior and exogenous to the social mobility regime and involving diminishing agricultural employment and great increases in professional, administrative, and other nonmanual employment—“forces” enough intergenerational mobility to fill the new jobs. However, other formulations of this relationship suggested that the mobility regime itself might be a factor in the shifts in occupational composition (Matras 1967; Treiman 1970); but the difficulty of investigating empirically such direct and feedback relationships between occupational mobility patterns and the transformations of occupational composition of the labor force (Duncan 1966) has retarded this line of inquiry in the comparative mobility studies of the 1970s (cf Mayer 1979). Nonetheless there remains considerable interest in this theme, even beyond the question of measuring and comparing mobility, net of the effects of shifting occupational composition—especially in the Scandinavian studies. Pöntinen (1976) traced the recent occupational and industrial shifts in the labor force of the four Scandinavian countries to show that they are in different stages of development; but he mentioned only that these varying levels of development are constraints on mobility processes and subsequently related them to variations in occupation-group-specific outflow and inflow rates and patterns. Rogoff-Ramsøy (1977) studied ways in which property relations as well as variations in occupational origin affected various dimensions of social mobility and status attainment among three cohorts of Norwegian men studied in 1971–72. Andorka & Zagorski (1978) examined how structural factors—i.e. changes in the industrial and occupational compositions of the labor force—affected both the amounts of overall intergenerational mobility and the magnitudes of the specific origin-to-destination streams, for specific age cohorts at specific time periods, in Hungary and Poland.

Other Themes: Subjective Factors, Individual and Collectivity Consequences, and Marxian Perspectives

An issue frequently mentioned in the context of comparative studies of social mobility, past and current, is the variation in perceptions of ine-

quality, in expressions of stratum (class) consciousness or solidarity, and in attitudes toward social mobility. Sometimes comparisons of mobility rates (or of factors in status attainment processes) are used to support or contradict hypotheses about variation in attitudes toward mobility (e.g. Treiman & Terrell 1975; Kerckhoff 1974). But even cross-sectional studies of such subjective factors are few (see Mayer & Müller 1971; Mayer 1973 for reviews) and no recent comparative study deals directly with, or incorporates, such variables. Incorporation of subjective aspects into studies of social mobility awaits the development of valid and feasible strategies of measurement and analysis that will permit comparisons between countries, over several points in time, or across several cohorts.

Discussion of the consequences of social mobility, sometimes under the rubric of status inconsistency or status discrepancy, has been extensive and includes such topics as individual racial attitudes, voting or political behavior, marriage, socialization, residence, work satisfaction, and self-image; as collective or community political participation, and development of left-of-center political parties; class or strata crystallization, maintenance or erosion of social cleavages, solidarity and class- or strata-consciousness, and the legitimacy accorded inequality in the society. Here, perhaps even more than in the case of the subjective aspects of mobility, methodological issues remain unresolved (see Hodge & Siegel 1970; Hope 1975). There is no direct comparative study of the consequences of social mobility, though there have been frequent calls for them (Mayer & Müller 1971; Wesolowski, Slomczynski & Mach 1977).

Reviewing the positions and comment of Soviet and of Marxist and neo-Marxist writers with regard to theory and research on social mobility, Goldthorpe (1976) has noted that their general tendency has been to derogate such inquiries as attempts to legitimate inequality and class domination. But, he notes, Marx himself was alert to the bearing of social mobility on class formation, class relations, and the evolution of capitalism. In addition, Goldthorpe shows, modern mobility research is not inherently antagonistic toward or incompatible with Marxist or radical social analysis. On the contrary, Goldthorpe emphasizes both the possibility and importance of mobilizing modern means of empirical investigation to address issues of concern to analysis in the Marxian tradition (indeed, he begins this task himself: see Goldthorpe & Llewellyn 1977a).

In a paper delivered to an international seminar on stratification and mobility, three Polish sociologists, Wesolowski, Slomczynski & Mach (1977), review the main threads of analysis in Western social mobility studies in the 1950s, 1960s, and early 1970s. They note that in these

studies the representation and analysis of social status and class membership, and of their role in the life cycle, have developed independently of Marxist work on the same topics. They call for a bridging of the gap between the two orientations, asserting that the Marxist theory of social classes can add a great deal to the comprehensive analysis of social processes. They anticipate an original Marxist theory of social mobility. In order to move in this direction it is necessary to attend more explicitly to the measurement of class domination particularly and class relations generally. These calls for direct attention to the connections between mobility and class relations, class domination, and class reproduction have so far had no direct effect upon comparative investigations of mobility. However, recent attempts to "operationalize" various aspects of class relationships (Wright & Perrone 1977) and the critical discussion surrounding them may hold some promise for their inclusion in future comparative studies.

TRENDS AND VARIATIONS IN OVERALL LEVELS OF MOBILITY, OPENNESS OF SOCIETIES, AND SOCIAL OPPORTUNITY

Virtually all recent comparative studies of social mobility have paid some attention to the theme of volume or overall frequency of social mobility insofar as it reflects on the goodness of a society, and many have arrived, either parenthetically or as a central objective, at measures of overall levels of mobility. If it has never been entirely obvious exactly what is the social scientific meaning of this kind of analysis (cf Mayer 1979), the issue is nevertheless deeply implanted in the consciousness of social scientists who are ideologically, emotionally, politically, or religiously committed to diminishing the existing inequalities in access to social opportunities. In addition, Western ideological, religious, and political traditions and rhetoric reinforce sponsors of research in pursuit of the good, more open, more equitable society. Unfortunately, the mobility rate is not yet as standardized a measure as, say, a crude birth rate; nor are there refined mobility rates as comparable and widely accepted as any of the refined birth rates. In consequence, a "mobility crusade" or an "open society crusade" would be considerably less plausible than has been, say, the birth control crusade of recent years. In fact, after several tries at international comparisons of overall mobility rates, we still find it difficult to assert that mobility is higher or lower in one country than in another. In several recent international comparisons (Hazelrigg & Garnier 1976; Tyree, Semyonov & Hodge 1979), the United States and

the United Kingdom appear to rank consistently high; Italy, Spain, and the Philippines rank consistently low; and Denmark, Sweden, and Belgium are consistently of intermediate rank in "overall levels" of intergenerational mobility. Total mobility seems to have increased in most Western countries, owing primarily to increasing structural mobility and, especially, increasing nonmanual employment and diminishing agricultural employment. The trends in circulation or exchange mobility are much less clear; and the factors in variations in circulation mobility if less obscure than in the past, remain controversial.

The "industrialization" thesis, popularized by Lipset & Bendix (1959) and specified more precisely by Treiman (1970), holding that total and circulation mobility increase with increasing industrialization, has not received convincing support in the recent, more extensive comparative studies (Hazelrigg & Garnier 1976; Tyree, Semyonov & Hodge 1979); but it has received some support from studies that examined trends over time in conjunction with studies of changing occupational composition (Pöntinen 1976; Rogoff-Ramsøy 1977; Hauser & Featherman 1977; Goldthorpe, Payne & Llewellyn 1978). The version of this thesis that anticipates convergence of patterns of mobility in societies attaining similar levels of industrialization comes under strong attack in the studies of Garnsey (1975) and Erikson, Goldthorpe & Portocarero (1979).

Investigation of variations in total and circulation mobility has expanded recently beyond industrialization to include (a) explicit measures of social inequality (Tyree, Semyonov & Hodge, 1979), (b) indicators of overall political organization, and (c) comparisons incorporating types of political intervention in the economy [e.g. collectivization of agriculture, in the work of Andorka & Zagorski (1978)]. In her paper proposing new directions for the Norwegian national study of life histories and mobility, Rogoff-Ramsøy (1974) quotes from a work on income distribution by an economist, Jan Pen, bemoaning the fact that "there is no bridge between the figures on vertical mobility and income distribution. That theoretical bridge has never been built by the economists, because they have a certain contempt for sociology; the sociologists have done nothing about it because they are insufficiently conversant with the problems of theoretical economics." The paper by Tyree, Semyonov & Hodge (1979), the critical comment it is already generating, and attempts to improve on it are together a breakthrough of sorts in extracting comparative mobility studies from the "industrialization" cage. Their own discussion of the various ways of casting the relationships between economic equality, political democracy, and mobility will surely promote further and more elaborate analyses of these relationships. Both the Andorka & Zagorski

(1978) discussion of the role of collectivization in mobility, and the Wesoloski, Slomczynski & Mach (1977) call for more serious attention to mobility factors in the developing and socialist societies are attempts to progress beyond the industrialization hypothesis toward the investigation of political factors; but they offer few clues on how to achieve such progress in a systematic way.

A serious question remains concerning just what is being measured and described by the "overall level of mobility." In the traditional measures of total or circulation mobility, the concept refers to an actual or adjusted percentage of respondents who report occupations different (or in a different category) from those of their fathers; in the more recent log-linear measures it refers to the size (smallness) of statistical interactions between occupations of respondents and those of their fathers in the various time periods, cohorts, or societies. Within countries or societies the rules for classifying occupations and for determining sameness or difference in occupational category are often the same across cohorts or time periods, but this is not often the case for cross-national comparisons. But even when we assume that the classifications and rules are uniform across countries, generations, cohorts, time periods, etc, the meaning of the mobility rate of a country, or of the differences between the mobility rates of two or more countries, is still in question. Probably no one seriously conceives these as measures of equality. The rate, or the comparison, has often been said to describe the openness or permeability of societies. It is frequently studied under the rubric of "inflow analysis," and reflects, say, the extent to which occupational groups are self-recruited and the extent to which entrants who are not self-recruits are concentrated among the various origin-categories. Of course one occupational category—e.g. a middle-level clerical or skilled-manual category—may be relatively open by these standards while another—e.g. the professional or unskilled labourer categories—may be relatively closed by the same standards. Thus it is only by a considerable stretch of the imagination that most current indicators of "total" or "circulation" mobility can be construed as summary measures of the openness of a society's occupational structure to intergenerational recruitment. Similarly, the use of overall mobility measures or comparisons to reflect opportunity is subject to reservations, insofar as we connect opportunity to outflow rates and their analysis. Whatever the past merits of using total or circulation mobility measures to index the openness or opportunity within occupational structures, our concepts of "openness" and "opportunity" are today much more highly developed and differentiated and suggest we abandon this descriptive and analytical strategy.

LIFE HISTORY FACTORS IN MOBILITY AND STATUS ATTAINMENT

The analysis of life history factors in studies of inequality, mobility, and status attainment has moved in three distinct directions. First, replications and extensions of the Blau & Duncan (Blau & Duncan 1967; Duncan 1968) and "Wisconsin School" analyses (Sewell, Haller & Portes 1969; Sewell, Haller & Ohlendorf 1970; Sewell & Hauser 1972; 1975; Featherman & Hauser 1975) have dominated the comparative mobility studies of the 1970s, at least in number of studies and volume of results. These studies have inquired into (a) the effects of origin characteristics (e.g. race, ethnicity, place of birth or socialization, parental socioeconomic characteristics, number of siblings, and, sometimes, sex), certain kinds of life history factors (e.g. peer, teacher, or "significant others" influence, military service, marriage) and, sometimes, native ability upon an individual's educational aspirations and attainment; (b) the effects of both background factors and educational attainments upon an individual's occupational aspiration and upon his occupational status in his first, subsequent, or current job; and (c) the effects of background, education, and occupation upon individuals' earnings across populations and societies and over time.

Second, some of the language, and perhaps some of the logic, of human capital analysis in economics has been adapted to view background factors, characteristics, and attributes as inputs or resources invested to yield occupational positions, status, and rewards. In this terminology, one sees occupational status "returns" (or "payoff") to specific inputs or resources—e.g. "returns to education." Thus this branch of analysis studies the conditions under which occupational status returns to educational attainment are high or low; increase or diminish in time; or are unequal for different population groups or societies. The recent studies in the OCG II projects (Hauser & Featherman 1977; Featherman & Hauser 1978) use cohort and subpopulation comparisons of occupational status returns to educational attainment (and other resource variables) to investigate trends and variations in occupational status attainment.

Third, cohort analyses seek to relate occupational histories and career patterns to residence, school, household and family, and other patterns of social participation as they evolve in the cohort's life cycle. Such studies attempt to integrate analyses of inequality, mobility, and status attainment into a more general framework of life history analysis. (This was the initial rationale for Blau & Duncan's [1967] focus on the process of status attainment in their study of stratification and mobility.) This

kind of analysis may ultimately identify (a) the important junctures in life histories and (b) the factors bearing on continuation or inflection of trajectories at each stage; it may also elucidate the effects of historical events upon the subsequent life histories, mobility, and status attainment of cohorts affected at different ages.

Replications and Extensions of the Blau-Duncan Status Attainment Analysis

Comparative studies suggest cross-national similarities in the processes by means of which family background (parents' education and occupation) comes to account for a large part of variation in educational attainment. These similarities may reflect only the universal finding of positive correlations between measures of respondents' educational attainment and measures of parents' educational or socioeconomic attainments, the Blau-Duncan path-model analysis producing the appearance of a similarity of process behind the correlations. However, acknowledging the different formal systems of selection of pupils for the various educational tracks in the two countries, Kerckhoff (1974) concluded that the "processes of educational attainment in the U.S. and in the U.K. are similar in that the similar kinds of background characteristics and resources result in similar educational outcomes in both countries"—i.e. background characteristics are similarly related in the two countries to selection into academic and vocational post-primary tracks as well as to total schooling attainment (see also Treiman & Terrell 1975).

The Blau-Duncan path model format has been used in comparison of status attainment in the Scandinavian countries (Pöntinen 1974). Here the effects of the mother's education have been incorporated as well; in all four countries these effects are as large as those of the father's occupational status but are smaller than those of the father's education. The same format is used by McRoberts et al (1976) to compare the status attainment for three separate cohorts of anglophone and francophone males in Canada. The authors show the convergence not only of anglophone and francophone mean educational attainment but also of the very process of educational attainment—i.e. of the regression coefficients and coefficients of determination (R^2 s) over the successive cohorts analyzed (McRoberts et al 1976, Table 10). The same format is used by Curtis & Jackson (1977) to show basic similarities in the status attainment process in general and the process of educational attainment in particular among six US cities of different regions, sizes, and ethnic compositions. These authors find nearly equal effects of the father's and mother's education, but in all but one of the cities the greatest effect on a respondent's

educational attainment is that of the father's occupational status (Curtis & Jackson 1977, Table 3.1).

Treiman's (1970) corollary of the industrialization hypothesis—that the effects of social origins (parental occupation) on educational attainment is positively associated with industrialization—has informed several discussions. In their comparison of status attainment in two developing countries (Haiti and Costa Rica) and two industrialized countries (the United States and the United Kingdom), Lin & Yanger (1975) found support for the corollary. Educational opportunities increase for those who can afford them in the economically more developed countries (p. 516). However, the relationship “loosens” at middle levels of development: Among or within developed countries, correlations between parental characteristics and educational attainment should be lower as industrialization is greater or more pervasive. The latter is, in turn, akin to the “equality of educational opportunity” theme which has been an important topic of investigation of “status attainment” as well as an independently studied issue.

In an elaborate cohort comparison, Featherman & Hauser (1978) found that the mean educational attainment of each male cohort exceeded that of their fathers; the mean intergenerational change in educational attainment increased from 2.97 years for the 1907–1911 birth cohort to a peak of 3.77 years for the 1922–1926 cohort; the change declined for subsequent cohorts, reaching only 2.13 years for the 1947–1951 birth cohort. Featherman & Hauser suggested we may reach an educational-attainment plateau in the near future—both a leveling-off of average educational attainment and a convergence of fathers' and sons' educational attainments. Comparing cohorts both within and across the two American national mobility surveys (OCG I in 1962 and OCG II in 1973) Featherman & Hauser found that the effect of fathers' occupations on respondents' educational attainments has diminished. The effect of fathers' educations is the same overall in the two studies, 1963 and 1973, but diminishes across the birth cohorts, 1907–11 to 1947–51. Moreover, across the two studies and across the several cohorts the effects of other important social origin factors—e.g. race, farm origins—on educational attainment diminishes substantially. These findings were interpreted as evidence of increasing equality of access to school attainment, and diminishing disadvantage associated with lower-status social origins, race, or farm background.

The reverse of this cross-cohort trend appears in data for Scotland reported by Payne & Ford (1977): Correlations between father's occupational status and respondent's educational attainment increased over successive cohorts, which indicates that “the development of the educa-

tion has not been in the direction of open access" (p. 16). Payne & Ford mention that prior to the 1960s—and especially before 1952—all but a small minority left school at an early age despite formal openness and a tradition in which equal opportunity was a prime value. The Scottish schooling regime may thus be similar to that of a developing country. In summarizing their analyses, however, the authors assert "that the processes at work in Scotland are broadly in line with those in other industrialized societies."

The Blau-Duncan or "Wisconsin School" studies have focused on how background characteristics and life history factors bear upon the attainment of occupational status. They have involved (a) finding a procedure for ranking occupations (typically respondents' current and previous occupations and the occupations reported for their fathers, their wives, their fathers-in-law, etc, ranked by the same procedure);¹ (b) ascertaining current and previous occupations of respondents, their fathers, and anyone else whose characteristics are to be related to those of the respondents (usually in a sample survey) and obtaining information on the background, characteristics, and behavior of respondents; and (c) statistically analyzing the effects of characteristics and behaviors (their own and others') on respondents' occupational status attainments.

All such studies have found the most important factor bearing on a respondent's occupational status attainment to be the respondent's own educational attainment (typically but not exclusively measured in years of school completed). Moreover, the effects of other factors upon occupational status attainment are important primarily because they bear upon educational attainment. For example, in their study of the stratification process in six American cities, Curtis & Jackson (1977) found that the direct effect of the father's occupational status on the respondent's current occupational status is small and generally does not exceed the indirect effect it exerts through its effect on the respondent's education.

Blau & Duncan took their finding that educational achievement has more effect than social origin upon occupational status attainment as evidence of universalistic allocation or attainment of occupational status in the contemporary United States. They suggested that ascriptive fac-

¹ Students of mobility and status attainment have generally adopted their own occupational scoring procedures, though there has been a strong tendency for those in any given country to adopt the procedure already worked out by others in that country, if there is one. Thus, the Duncan scores are widely used in the United States, the Blishen scores in Canada, the Hope-Goldthorpe scores in the United Kingdom, the Kraus scores in Israel, and the ANU scores in Australia. Cross-national comparisons have thus been difficult. A recent effort to work out an international occupational prestige scale (Treiman 1978) may help to resolve this problem.

tors (parental characteristics and other background factors) had become less important owing to the efficiency demands of modern highly differentiated and high-technology society. Others have adopted similar interpretations, and one result has been that comparisons of status attainment processes across societies or over time were interpreted initially in these terms as well—i.e. as comparing the progress of universalism (or the entrenchment of ascription).

Variations in the process of occupational status attainment across countries or over time are typically imputed to variations in industrialization—e.g. to “transition to a service economy” (Featherman & Hauser 1978) or to “transformation from industrial to post-industrial society” (Bell 1973): Under increased industrialization, the weight of ascription in allocation of positions (and of their associated rewards) declines and that of achievement—especially formal education—increases [Featherman & Duncan 1972; but see also Kelley (1978) for a discussion of lagged family background effects on occupation]. But Pöntinen (1974, 1976) has suggested that differences in occupational status attainment among the Scandinavian countries, while connected with differences in degree of industrialization, can be explained by reference to occupational distributions and educational attainment distributions of respondents and fathers without invoking ascription or achievement factors.

Blau & Duncan did not incorporate “attainment of income” into their initial (1967) path model representation of the process of stratification, but Duncan extended the analysis to include it (1968). In a major extension of the OCG I studies, Duncan, Featherman & Duncan (1972) examined the income attainment (actually: reported earnings in 1961) alongside the educational achievement and occupational status attainment of four cohorts of American men (non-Negro, with non-farm background, and in the Experienced Civilian Labour Force in March, 1962, the survey date) aged respectively 25–34, 35–44, 45–54, and 55–64 in 1962. They found for all cohorts that the effect of occupation on income is “substantial” and that although there is a measurable direct effect of education on income, the indirect influence of education via occupation is greater than the direct influence. However, even the combined influence of all the prior variables studied—family background (father’s occupation, father’s education, number of siblings), respondent’s own educational achievement, and respondent’s occupational status—accounted for only a small part of the total variation in income. Income attainments are difficult to measure and even more difficult to compare; few comparative mobility studies incorporate income attainment measures. Still, all the various replications of the Duncan, Featherman & Duncan analysis, including the comparative studies (e.g., Curtis & Jack-

son 1977; Treiman & Terrell 1975; Hauser & Featherman 1977, Ch. 10) have obtained similar results.

Even if we adopt neither the achievement-vs-ascription nor the more-industrialized-vs-less-industrialized-society hypotheses, the studies of status attainment illuminate the processes that generate and sustain hierarchical orderings in societies. But the approach has been limited both in the detail it can reveal about variations in the process of stratification and in the explanatory factors it can indicate. Thus the cross-national comparisons based on this approach (e.g. Jones 1971; Boyd, Featherman & Matras 1980; Lin & Yanger 1975, Treiman & Terrell 1975; Kerckhoff 1974; Payne & Ford 1977; Pöntinen 1974) have revealed little more than that the United States, Britain, Australia, and Canada have some basic similarities, that Haiti and Costa Rica are different from the United States and Britain, that Scotland differs somewhat from England and Wales, that Finland differs from the other Scandinavian countries, and that Canada and the United States are closer to each other than to Israel. As merely first steps toward explaining the variations these studies invoke the level of industrialization, or the mix of ascription and achievement orientations, and, tentatively, the degree of class or strata crystallization. Within-country cross-cohort or cross-subpopulation comparisons have tended, for purposes of public policy, to stress similarities or convergences in the process of status attainment as progress toward equality of opportunity. Thus far the sociological insights have not been extensive.

At the intersection between public policy and sociological inquiry, status attainment studies have both catalyzed and fueled critical discussion of the relationships between schooling, social opportunity, and social inequality. Americans perceive extensive social mobility to be based on extended public education. This view, reinforced by received sociological wisdom and, more recently, by human capital rhetoric and analysis, has tended to merge with the view that equality of social and economic opportunity rests on equality of access to schooling. The social-scientific critique of this supposition that educational opportunity produces social opportunity has commanded widespread public attention; the place of the status attainment literature in this discussion can hardly be exaggerated.² The central work in this discussion, *Inequality* (1972) by Jencks et al, has drawn heavily on both the approach and the research findings of the status attainment school (especially on Blau & Duncan 1967; Duncan, Featherman & Duncan 1972; and Sewell &

²Of course, neither the supposition nor the challenge have been unique to the United States.

Hauser 1975). The book's central thesis—that schooling in America fails to equalize short-term cognitive achievement, long-term educational attainment, and adult income—has generated commentary that has at least fundamentally clarified our concepts of opportunity and equality (e.g. see Harvard Educational Review 1973; Levine & Bane 1975). Other recent works dealing with a similar theme have surely been both more readily and more critically received due in part to the Jencks et al work and its dissemination (e.g. Boudon 1974; Bowles & Gintis 1976; Ridge 1974) and many of these have also drawn heavily on the status attainment literature. The public policy side of the status attainment contribution has, of course, its own continuing effect on stimulating further inquiry; indeed, the more elaborate human-capital/returns-to-resources approach to analysis of life history factors in mobility and status attainment is a direct descendent.

Returns to and Conversion of Resources

The ideas of occupational-prestige returns to investment in education and of income returns to occupational status appeared in the comparison by Blau & Duncan (1967) of the occupational achievement of whites and blacks, though these authors make no direct attempt to represent them quantitatively. Hauser's (1973) direct measure of occupational returns to educational attainment (represented as regression coefficients) for US males of varying socioeconomic backgrounds showed the similarity of such returns for white males regardless of social origins.³ In an early analysis of the Norwegian national study, Rogoff-Ramsøy measured "real income per month of post-primary education" and showed that income returns to education at that level increased over time (by age) within cohorts and varied over time among successive cohorts of males (Rogoff-Ramsøy 1974).

In their report of the 1973 replication of the Occupational Changes in

³In his critique of the educational-opportunity-*qua*-social-opportunity thesis, Boudon (1974) suggested that, in addition to meritocratic principles of social (occupational) position allocation, a principle of social background "dominance" operates as well, such that "for the same level of educational attainment, the power of a group to attain [the highest level] positions is greater, the higher the social background of its members" (p. 131). Examining the joint operation of social origins and educational attainment by means of a simulation analysis, Boudon concluded "the analysis reveals that the main effect of the dominance structure is to give people with [highest] background a disproportionate ability to achieve the best social positions, even when their level of education is rather poor, whereas people with [lowest] background demonstrate a disproportionate weakness in reaching good social positions even when their level of education is rather high" (p. 133). See also Hauser's review (1976) of Boudon's book and Boudon's (1976) reply; and the symposium in *Social Science Information* (1975).

a Generation study, Featherman & Hauser (1978) cast their discussion of the processes of stratification and status attainment (in chapters 5–8, and distinct from their discussions of occupational mobility in chapters 2, 3, and 4) in terms of returns to background variables and socioeconomic achievements: educational achievement returns to the “resources for schooling which inhere in a family’s economic and social characteristics” (pp. 240ff); occupational returns to social background and schooling (pp. 252ff); and income or economic returns to schooling and occupational status (pp. 288ff and especially Tables 5.26 and 5.27). Featherman & Hauser used measures of economic returns to schooling and to occupational status to study in detail (a) the declining influence of social background on economic attainment over successive cohorts; (b) the increasing influence of education; (c) the changing relative influence of grade school and college, both over the life cycle for given cohorts and across cohorts in time; and (d) the changing effects of race on educational and occupational attainment. They addressed specific issues—e.g. the question of “over-education” (Freeman 1976); relationships between changing patterns of racial inequality at different educational levels and for various cohorts; and racial inequality in occupational attainment, careers, and earnings. They acknowledged adopting the terminology of human capital theory from time to time but asserted that they did not adopt the assumptions or the structural models specified by the theory (p. 289). However, by shifting the language and style of the analysis of status attainment, Featherman & Hauser moved the discussion to a larger forum, a forum in which scholars from several disciplines can share problems and data and expose one another to the kind of critical attention that was previously out of reach of students of stratification and mobility.

Cohort Life History Analysis.

The formulation by Blau & Duncan of the status attainment process as an individual life cycle process on which numerous social factors impinge has been combined with ideas and analytical devices familiar in the study of cohort life histories in population studies. Just as we compare successive cohort histories in order to study changing probabilities and contingencies of death, marriage, divorce, fertility, family formation, and entrance to and departure from the labor force, so can we examine and compare them to study career contingencies, mobility probabilities, and other facets of status attainment.

Use of cohort life histories to analyze social inequality, mobility, and status attainment processes has been discussed by Rogoff-Ramsøy (1973,

1974) and is illustrated in her work and that of her associates in the Norwegian Occupational Life History Study.⁴ A finding of age-related changes alongside cohort shifts in income returns to post-primary and higher education has already been cited. In her study of three cohorts of Norwegian men, Ellegaard (1976) found that both absolute and relative effects of fathers' occupational status (and of mothers' educational attainment as well) on the educational achievement of respondents diminished over successive birth cohorts (1921, 1931, and 1941 cohorts), while effects of fathers' education increased. Partitioning educational experience and attainment in various ways, including "accumulated months of education" at specified ages, she found that the effect of social background on education reaches a high level by age 15 and peaks at about age 19. This suggests to Ellegaard that social background has its major effect on educational attainment by determining which individuals choose to continue their educations beyond the compulsory level. Comparing the youngest and oldest cohorts, she notes that for the former (a much larger percentage of which continued beyond primary school at age 15) social background affected educational attainment much less than for the latter (42% of explained variance for the oldest cohort, 26% for the youngest). According to her data, the effects of the father's socioeconomic status on educational attainment at ages 20 and 25 decline over successive cohorts—especially from the middle (1931) to the youngest (1941) cohorts—but the effects of the father's education increase across the successive cohorts (Ellegaard 1976, Tables 20–22).

Intra-cohort analyses of the changing relationship of social background and education to occupations held at various points in the life cycle (first job, 1962 job as reported in OCG I, and 1973 job reported in OCG II) were carried out by Featherman & Hauser (1978) on the successive cohorts of OCG men. They employ a concept of "the socioeconomic career" of a birth cohort to denote both the sequences of measures of educational attainment, occupational status, or earnings at successive life-cycle junctures and the related measures, at each juncture, of the explanatory variables in the process of status attainment. Using this approach, they found that (a) the effects of social background on occupational achievement are greater at career beginnings than at any other stage; (b) the direct consequences of differential schooling, and especially the difference between college and grade schooling, are most

⁴See also the discussion in Goldthorpe & Llewellyn (1977a) and Bertaux (1974) on the limitations of cross-sectional studies for identifying and measuring "counter-mobility," in which previously mobile individuals are again mobile, but back to their levels or categories of origin.

prominent at the first job stage and diminish substantially thereafter; and (c) social background continues to affect the later occupational status indirectly through education and through its effects on first job status. Thus effects of education, and especially college education, on the statuses of subsequent jobs are mediated by the status of the first job and thereafter by the succession of jobs and occupational statuses held generally.

Featherman & Hauser found that, among men of similar social background and schooling, occupational status variation declines as each cohort ages. The authors thus advance an hypothesis of "crystallization of the socioeconomic life cycle." In the same discussion, they note certain variations in the socioeconomic careers of different cohorts, some of which can be imputed to historical events (entrance into the labor force during the Great Depression; military service in World War II; access to G.I. Bill benefits, etc) or to shifting patterns of "transition from full-time schoolboy to full-time worker." In particular, they use this analysis to introduce a skeptical note on the hypothesis of the "overeducated American" suffering diminished income returns to college education (Freeman 1976). According to Featherman & Hauser, the supposed young "overeducated, underpaid, cohort" may have included a substantial percentage of persons still in school, not yet in full-time employment, and therefore with earnings (returns to schooling) distinctly understated at the time they were studied.

The possibilities for extensions of cohort life history analyses of mobility and status attainment seem virtually limitless. Needed now are theoretical development and formulation of both general and specific hypotheses concerning (a) the relationships between historical events and the mobility regime and status attainment process, and (b) relationships between central life-cycle phenomena (e.g. early socialization, schooling, adolescence, courtship and marriage, family and household formation and composition, friendship, community participation, subjective evaluations of life cycle phenomena, and external variables affecting the life-cycle phenomena) and the processes of status attainment, social mobility, and access to social rewards and resources.

SOCIAL MOBILITY AND STRATA AND CLASS FORMATION

Of the recent cross-national mobility studies, only Pöntinen's (1976) study of the Scandinavian countries and the Erikson, Goldthorpe & Portocarero (1979) study of Sweden, Britain, and France examine inflow

rates with respect to recruitment into, and the social-origin composition of, occupational groups. Pöntinen imputes the inter-country variations in recruitment into and composition of given occupations groups (e.g. in Denmark the lower white collar stratum is dominated by workers' sons, while in Finland almost half the lower white collar stratum has a farm background) to the relative size of the respective origin occupation groups, the timing of economic development and industrialization, and consequent shifts in occupational distribution in the respective countries —i.e. to structural mobility factors. Erikson, Goldthorpe & Portocarero found a high degree of self-recruitment into the highest service, professional, and administrative classes in France and considerably less in Sweden and England. On the other hand, the English working class is largely self-recruited, while the working classes in France and Sweden extensively recruit farm-origin men. The English petty bourgeoisie draws members from the working class, the French petty bourgeoisie tends toward self-recruitment, and the Swedish petty bourgeoisie recruits the sons of farmers. The authors tentatively impute these differences to the “differing rhythms of their economic histories.” But neither Pöntinen nor Erikson, Goldthorpe & Portocarero attempt to interpret the recruitment or composition characteristics of the occupational strata or social classes.

Hauser and associates have addressed the measurement of occupational-group-specific origin-to-destination intergenerational and intra-generational movements. They have partitioned and distinguished analytically the total movement in each such stream due to structural factors (shifts in marginal occupational distributions) and circulation factors (occupational-origin-specific propensities to mobility, net of marginal distribution shifts) (Hauser 1978; Baron 1977; Featherman & Hauser 1978, Ch. 4). Using design matrixes and “new mobility ratios” Featherman & Hauser have characterized occupation-stratum-specific circulation mobility in (a) fathers'-to-sons' current occupations, (b) fathers'-to-sons' first occupations, (c) and sons'-first-to-sons'-current occupations as levels of “immobility” within any occupational stratum, levels of “upward exchange” between any two (ordered) occupational strata, or levels of “downward exchange” between any two strata. Examining these patterns across successive cohorts of American males studied in the 1962 OCG I and 1973 OCG II investigations, they found high immobility propensities in the farm stratum and fairly high immobility in the upper nonmanual stratum. Mobility from upper and lower nonmanual to farm occupations is surprisingly frequent; mobility both from farm origins to upper nonmanual strata and from lower nonmanual to upper manual strata is rare. There is considerable propensity for mobility from upper manual occupational strata origins to all other occupational strata, and

considerable propensity for mobility from all but the lower nonmanual strata to the upper manual stratum. Featherman & Hauser detailed the symmetries and the relatively few asymmetries in intergenerational and career mobility. Owing to the broad dispersions in both occupational origins and destinations of upper manual workers, and the high mobility between white- and blue-collar workers, they rejected the Blau & Duncan (1967) notion of a class boundary limiting movement between manual and nonmanual groups (pp. 177–79, 198–99).

Immobility in the farm stratum has been consistently high; rates varied somewhat in the 1945–65 period, without apparent pattern. Immobility in the upper nonmanual stratum increased from the beginning of the 1930s through the 1940s, declined sharply in the cohorts entering the labor force just after World War II, and rebounded thereafter; it seems now to have declined again since to its 1930 level (see the McRoberts & Selbee 1978 comparison of US and Canadian trends). There is little evidence of change over successive cohorts in immobility levels for other occupational strata, and the degree of career (first-to-current-job) mobility in all directions seems to have increased somewhat.

Introducing their analysis of occupation-specific mobility, which employs the design matrix model of mobility, Featherman & Hauser assert that the discussion of relationships between occupational mobility and class formation involves primarily “gross flows of manpower,” while their own discussion seeks to isolate the net or “underlying patterns of association” in the mobility. Yet in summarizing their analysis, they note (a) that, as is perhaps “consistent with the beliefs of the more extreme critics of rigidity in the American class structure” (p. 179), the immobility at the top and bottom of the occupational hierarchy is far more extreme than heretofore supposed; and (b) next to these extreme top and bottom strata of the occupational hierarchy are “transitional zones” with immobility levels and patterns of upward and downward exchange similar to those at the top and bottom. These extreme and transitional zones at top and bottom are relatively closed to both upward and downward mobility, which suggests to Featherman & Hauser that there exist “barriers to movement across class boundaries.” But immobility is almost nonexistent in the middle of the hierarchy: “Men of upper blue-collar origin are about as likely to end up anywhere higher or lower in the occupational hierarchy as in their stratum or origin. Obversely: upper blue-collar workers are about as likely to have originated anywhere higher or lower in the occupational hierarchy as in their stratum of destination. . . . There is no evidence of ‘class’ boundaries limiting the chances of movement to or from the skilled manual occupations” (Featherman & Hauser 1978, p. 180).

Apparently Featherman & Hauser do not take these results as addressing directly the questions of the relationships between mobility and class formation. More generally, they do not pursue the question of the implications of mobility patterns for the formation, composition, or nature of social classes or other hierarchically ordered groupings, perhaps postponing this for later attention. Yet their refined measures of occupation-stratum-specific mobility ratios or propensities open the way to more detailed attention to these relationships both within and across societies.

Explicit direct attention to the relationships between mobility and class formation is found in the work of Goldthorpe and his associates in the Nuffield College studies based on a 1972 survey of mobility in England and Wales. In a sequence of papers analyzing class mobility in Britain, these researchers (a) explore the changing size and origin-composition of the major social classes; (b) identify and compare the stable, recent-entrant, and counter-mobile elements in each class; and (c) examine empirically the extent of closure in certain classes, the existence of buffer zones restricting class mobility, and the extent to which worklife mobility counterbalances intergenerational mobility into higher level positions (Goldthorpe, Payne & Llewellyn 1978; Goldthorpe & Llewellyn 1977a, 1977b).

To test the closure thesis empirically, Goldthorpe & Llewellyn examine the inflow table for the basic intergenerational class-mobility matrix and find that the highest class—comprising higher-grade professionals, administrators, managers, and “large proprietors” (presumably proprietors of large businesses or enterprises)—recruits widely and is not homogeneous. Thus the data refute the closure thesis in this highest class (broadly conceived). The authors concede, however, that this finding may not bear on the hypothesis of the “relative closure” of elite or upper class groupings more narrowly conceived; and they do not yet undertake comparative examination of closure. Examining the outflow table for the intergenerational class mobility matrix, as well as some multiple-stage outflow tables (flow from the father’s class to the class of the respondent’s first occupation, and from the latter to the respondent’s current class), they conclude that the data do not support a manual-nonmanual buffer-zone thesis insofar as upward mobility is concerned but may support a downward mobility buffer-zone hypothesis. Goldthorpe & Llewellyn compare similar multiple-stage outflow data for different birth cohorts in order to test the counterbalance thesis, which holds that direct entry of lower-level-origin persons into higher-level positions—presumably upon accumulation of the appropriate educational credentials—diminishes those persons’ chances of advancement in the course of their working lives. The data show increases (over successive cohorts) in direct entry

to the higher levels of the class structure without any apparent decline in the chances of access via indirect routes. In the view of Goldthorpe & Llewellyn these results suggest that the relationships between mobility and class formation are complex: Recruitment and transition patterns, formations of homogeneous or intergenerationally stable subgroups, and career paths are likely to have varying implications in the different parts of the class structure.

In her study of mobility and changes in the economy in Norway, Rogoff-Ramsøy (1977) calls attention to the shifting bases for the hierarchical ordering of individuals and occupational classes. [See also her discussion of control of resources (Rogoff-Ramsøy 1974).] She notes that in the 1930s property relations were of great importance while education, qualifications, and formal authority in large work organizations were of little importance. In cohort comparisons, Rogoff-Ramsøy shows that property relations were a crucial factor (*a*) in the mobility patterns associated with the economic transformations since the 1930s, and (*b*) in determining an individual's chances to adapt advantageously to the occupational structure of the 1970s. At the same time, no new classes emerged; rather, the relative economic positions of different occupational statuses, classes, or workers were largely preserved.

As Goldthorpe and his associates have pointed out, the empirical study of relationships between mobility and class or strata formation is in its infancy, despite the near-classic status of the topic in sociological writings and despite the proliferation of mobility studies and comparative mobility analyses. Beyond the inflow table, there are as yet no familiar or conventional analytical formats for this enquiry. No direct and explicit cross-national comparisons extend beyond inflow or elite recruitment rates. Yet surely this is the area where mobility research must and can break out of what Rogoff-Ramsøy (1977) has called the "arithmetical accounting scheme" in the direction of sociological explanations. I return to this point in the concluding section.

CONCLUDING NOTES

A comprehensive theory of social mobility must not only address the movements of individuals and groups among social positions and ranks, but must also seek to appraise them in the (changing) contexts of (*a*) the population size and composition, (*b*) the social organization of the production of material goods, services, and other social rewards and resources, and (*c*) the institutionalized inequality in the distribution of rewards and resources. Elsewhere I have discussed such changes as "societal growth" and suggested viewing population growth and transfor-

mations and growth in knowledge and access to information as its key determinants (Matras 1979). The connections between mobility and population transformations, on the one hand, and changes in the organization of production, on the other hand, have conventionally been dealt with under the rubric of the distinction between structural (purporting to measure mobility induced by changing occupational composition) and circulation mobility. Recently, more refined distinctions between gross and relative stratum-specific immobility and mobility have been made possible by odds-ratio, log-linear, and related approaches. So far these have been used only to obtain measures of "opportunity" that are relatively uncontaminated by population transformations and changes in the organization of production; they have not been used to study the effects of such changes. Little attention has been paid to the effects on intergenerational or intragenerational mobility of: population growth; changing patterns of labor force participation and turnover; entrance of rural migrants, guest workers, women, or other important increments into the labor force; the aging of populations and shifting retirement patterns; or inter-community migration and population turnover. Other influences upon mobility and immobility have also been neglected—e.g. those of scientific management and bureaucratization, automation, multinational subcontracting and marketing, and of innovations in production, communications, accounting, and control in various industries.

The relationship between mobility and institutionalized inequality is conventionally subsumed under the rubric of "status attainment." A system of more-or-less-stable occupational rank is generally presumed to mirror differential entitlements and unequal distribution of social rewards and resources. Yet the study of ascribed and achieved factors of status attainment, of changing returns to education, and of the shift from property- to qualification-based rewards recognizes (at least implicitly) that the bases of social inequality may change over time. The relative salience of various kinds of entitlement shifts, and the interclass knowledge of such variations increases, over time. Such factors of entitlement include age and sex; seniority or duration in a community, other collectivity, or social position; orthodoxy, piety, or adherence to traditions; property ownership; kinship relations; knowledge, skills, or formal credentials; work, social, or political experience or achievements; and current or past deprivations. Comparative mobility studies should in the future address directly the effects of these "societal growth" factors on mobility.

The effects of social mobility on class or strata formation; on organization of production and occupational composition of the labor force; and on status, income, and other returns to education, background character-

istics, and other resources are frequently mentioned but are not often studied explicitly or systematically. Also deserving direct investigation in comparative mobility studies are: specific stratum or class responses to changes in its stratum-origin composition or to inflow-and-outflow-induced turnover; the processes of resocialization; how inter-class relationships involving residence, marriage, politics, friendship networks, deference and derogation, work-setting interaction, and competition or solidarity are affected by mobility into, out of, or among the strata or classes; and the bearing of mobility on intra-class or intra-stratum distributions of rewards and resources, on socialization, on life style and life cycle, on ideology and solidarity, and on symbolic and artistic expression.

Outstanding data resources and impressive techniques of measurement and analysis are now widely available to students of comparative social mobility. New understanding of how social mobility is enmeshed in the evolution of social organization, and of how it affects inequality and stratification, awaits more explicit and specific formulations and investigations of its causes, correlates, and consequences.

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