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The Problem of Order: What Unites and Divides Society. by Dennis H. Wrong

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and carried out by the missionaries), the restriction of freedom in the life of the missionaries, the nature of the formal ties between them and the committee (ties of almost total subservience to a patriarchal authority), and so on. His analysis of the contradictions between the different forms of authority is restricted, however, mostly to a study of how certain individuals reacted in innovative ways to challenges in the field only to meet the approbation of the ruling committee. The author's study of the organizational tension between deviance and creativity, as exemplified in the lives of three individuals, is itself a fine microstudy of the type of contradiction that plagues tightly structured organizational frameworks. Equally exemplary is his study of how the terms of solidarity defined by the practice of mutual surveillance tended at times to erode the basis of solidarity itself. In themselves, however, these studies do not give us more generalized (and generalizable) insights into the structural contradictions that inhere in the interweaving of different forms of authority in one organizational framework. This is perhaps a necessary trade-off, given the rich ethnographic detail of the analysis. In sum, the author successfully integrates an organizational analysis with a deep sensitivity to both the cognitive and structural dimensions of how a particular ideal of social order was institutionalized in a given time and place.

The Problem of Order: What Unites and Divides Society. By Dennis H. Wrong. New York: Free Press, 1994. Pp. x + 354. \$24.95.

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The problem of order is one of the most important in all of the social sciences. Given that human beings are at least capable of behaving in selfish and egoistic ways, how is society possible? How can they cooperate with each other to produce social order? In many social scientists' minds, this question is inseparably associated with Hobbes, so much so that "the problem of order" and "the Hobbesian problem" are often used interchangeably. A major contribution of Dennis Wrong's *The Problem of Order: What Unites and Divides Society*, is to remove this profound question from the exclusive domain of Hobbes. Wrong discusses how Locke, Rousseau, Freud, Marx, and Parsons all wrote on this problem and suggested their solutions.

In order both to conceptually refine the problem of order and to acknowledge the contribution of others, Wrong distinguishes two versions of the problem. One, which he calls the "hobbesian/freudian problem," or the problem of socialization, relates to how individuals can overcome their asocial nature in order to cooperate with each other. The other, which Wrong calls the "marxian problem," addresses intergroup conflict. (Wrong uses the lowercase to emphasize that, although they deserve credit for properly defining the problem, their solutions were unsatisfac-

tory.) While the marxian problem of intergroup conflict assumes at least a partial solution of the hobbesian/freudian problem (there can be no intergroup conflict unless members of each group can cooperate with each other *within* the group), solutions to both are necessary for social order. Wrong correctly points out that many past writers have completely overlooked this important distinction. It is not clear, however, why Wrong equates the hobbesian problem with the problem of socialization. Hobbes's solution to the problem of order, Leviathan, unlike Freud's solution of proper development of superego, does not require socialization of individuals into social and moral beings. In fact, it is precisely because such socialization is difficult that Leviathan is necessary to guarantee order.

This book is a product of a lifetime of deep thinking and incredibly wide reading, and anyone interested in the problem of order should read it. Wrong often meanders and digresses from the main topic, but he asks some of the intellectually most stimulating questions when he does, such as, Why do individuals seek social approval? Why do we care what others think of us as long as they don't physically molest us? (p. 69).

Perhaps the most frustrating thing about this book is that, while it extensively addresses and discusses it, it nevertheless fails to answer the question posed in the book's subtitle: What unites and divides society? Wrong does not offer his own solution or theory of social order. He does offer, however, a very casual account of how order is produced: "Repeated interactions give rise to habits. They are perceived by the actors and become expectations in the sense of predictions or anticipations of behavior. Aware of what is expected by the other, each actor feels constrained to live up to the expectation, partly out of a feeling that the other will be irritated, offended, or disappointed if the expectation is not fulfilled. In short, interaction generates habits; perceived, they become reciprocal expectations; in addition to their purely predictive and anticipatory nature, sensitivity to them endows them with a constraining or even an obligatory character" (p. 48). Or as Wrong summarizes, "Social order consists of people's expectations which are, by and large, or most of the time, borne out because other people are aware of them and live up to them" (p. 57).

As Wrong himself recognizes, it would be "a great mistake to regard the above account as even approximating an adequate explanation of social order, for there is a huge gaping hole in it" (p. 59). In his mind, "What is omitted is any discussion of motivation, of the human wants, feelings, and impulses that undergird and set in motion the whole process of social interaction out of which relatively stable institutions develop" (p. 59). This question is important, but to me the largest missing link in Wrong's account of social order above is the process whereby "constraining" and "obligatory" norms thus created actually produce normative behavior. The existence of norms is different from the existence of normative behavior; not all norms are effectively enforced. And it seems naïve to believe that human beings obey norms just because other people would be "irritated, offended, and disappointed" if they did not.

Perhaps it is not fair to criticize Wrong for his failure to offer a general

theory of social order. For he, in his autobiography, specifically denounces general theories in sociology; he believes that historical knowledge is sufficient to explain the empirical world ("Imagining the Real," *Authors of Their Own Lives: Intellectual Autobiographies by Twenty American Sociologists*, edited by Bennet M. Berger [Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990]). Nor is it his aim in this book to provide his own solution to the problem. "The aim of the present book is less to review comprehensively past discussions of the problem than to present a new, conceptually sharper statement of it" (p. 13). In my mind, Wrong reviews past discussions quite well, and he does indeed present a conceptually sharper statement of the problem of order. But those of us who seek *the* (or at least *a*) solution to this profound question, in the form of an empirically testable general theory of social order, must look elsewhere.

The Frankfurt School: Its History, Theories, and Political Significance.
By Rolf Wiggershaus. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1994. Pp. ix + 787.
\$60.00.

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Wiggershaus's monumental study of the history and intellectual trajectory of the Frankfurt school uses archival sources, interviews, and comprehensive analysis of published works to provide the most complete and up-to-date account of the development and contributions of one of the century's most influential group of scholars. Originally located within the Institute of Social Research in Frankfurt, the group—which included Max Horkheimer, T. W. Adorno, Erich Fromm, Friedrich Pollock, Herbert Marcuse, Leo Lowenthal, and their other associates—helped set the agenda for much social theory in the turbulent era from the 1930s through the 1960s. Through their influence on Jürgen Habermas and his associates, and on other social theorists and critics throughout the world, the Frankfurt school continues to be an important force in the contemporary era.

The translation of Wiggershaus's superb study, originally published in German in 1986, is therefore extremely welcome: anyone interested in contemporary social theory should read this book. Wiggershaus explicates the key positions of the Frankfurt school's critical theory of society and brilliantly traces its evolution and development. He lays bare for the first time the complex relations between various members of the group and raises serious questions concerning their positions at various times; thus the text is, in the best sense, a critical historiography.

Wiggershaus's text includes detailed discussions of the Frankfurt school's metatheory and their general theoretical positions, as well as their substantive contributions to contemporary social theory and criticism. Those unfamiliar with the group's complex trajectory will be surprised at the extent to which they contributed to methodological issues