MAKE HISTORY!
SEE PAGE 3
If you aren't already a member of the Historical and Comparative Sociology section, we invite you to join. If you are a member, please pass this copy of the Newsletter on to someone who might be interested in joining.

Prize for Best Grad Student Paper
The Section will award a prize for the best graduate student paper in historical/comparative sociology written in the last two years. Papers may be submitted by the authors or others to the committee for 1994: Nicki Beisel (Northwestern U.), Liz Clemens (U. of Arizona), and Fatma Muge Gocek (U. of Michigan), chair. Three copies of papers to be nominated should be sent to Fatma Muge Gocek, Dept. of Sociology, U. of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1382 by Feb. 15, 1994.

Graduate Student Forum Announced
The newsletter is establishing a "Graduate Student Forum" which will publish occasional articles focusing on concerns of graduate students interested in historical and comparative sociology, i.e. research methodology, theory, funding, employment, etc. We invite graduate students to contact us with letters, proposals for short articles, and other announcements. Our goal is to provide a forum for new issues, views and insights. For submission information, see page 2.

Issues in Sociohistorical Inquiry: Network Analysis

Networks, Culture and Agency

Mustafa Emirbayer
New School for Social Research

Recent years have witnessed the emergence of a powerful new approach to the study of social structure. This mode of inquiry, commonly known as "network analysis," has achieved a high degree of technical sophistication and proven extremely useful in a strikingly wide range of substantive applications. Sociological studies utilizing network analysis have appeared with increasing frequency of late; a veritable explosion of such work has taken place over the last fifteen years, particularly with the founding of two specialized journals, Social Networks and Connections, in the late 1970s. Today network analysis is one of the most promising currents in sociological research. Its practitioners include some of the most highly respected figures in the profession, researchers such as Ron Breiger, Ronald Burt, Mark Granovetter, David Knoke, Peter Marsden, Barry Wellman, and Harrison White; many other prominent sociologists, such as Claude Fischer, Edward Laumann, Doug McAdam, David Snow, and Charles Tilly, draw extensively upon network concepts. The late George Homans, in his reflections upon the last fifty years of sociology, justly described it as one (please turn to page 3)

Is there a Place for Network Analysis in Historical Sociology?

Roger V. Gould
University of Chicago

In one respect, the question posed by (and posing as) my title was settled several generations ago. Long before there was anything called historical sociology, it was clear to many scholars that patterns of social relationships made a considerable difference in such processes as the formation of modern states, the rise of working-class protest movements, and the institutionalization, in the form of urban political machines, of personalistic arrangements for the allocation of resources and public offices. Obvious examples include Lewis Namier's classic study of political patronage in eighteenth-century England, Marx's discussions of the role of factories in the development of class consciousness, and Weber's examination of party politics in Europe and America (see, especially, his trenchant comparative analysis in "Politics as a Vocation"). More recently, students of revolution, such as Theda Skocpol and Jack Goldstone, have explicitly pointed to networks of social relations as significant factors encouraging peasant (please turn to page 5)
Fatma Muge Gocek  
University of Michigan

The 1993 Section award for the article was given to Said Arjomand of the State University of New York, Stony Brook, for "Constitutions and the Struggle for Political Order: A Study in the Modernization of Traditions," which appeared in the European Journal of Sociology 33 (1992): 39-82. The prize committee-Kathleen Blee, Roger Gould, Philip McMichael, Susan Watkins and myself-concurred that the article addressed significant issues through original and well-executed research and argumentation.

The committee defined Said's endeavor as an analysis of the patterns by which international models of political order spread to and are modified by diverse national contexts. All members drew attention to this dual focus on both the limitations and the autonomous effects of institutionalizing power through constitutions. Indeed, all found particularly interesting the article's argument that the process of constitution-making is sufficiently affected by indigenous principles of order to lead to endemic crises due to the heterogeneity of these principles. Attention was drawn to the innovative use of a cumulative world time that Said employed in demonstrating the maturation and syncretic character of constitutionalism through a wide range of societal contexts. Although Arjomand's overall argument contrasted the Islamic world with Japan, he also drew on historical data from Europe, the United States, and elsewhere. One committee member commented that the evidence ranged smoothly from the sweep-

1994 Prize for Best Paper Announced

The section on Comparative and Historical Sociology will award a prize for the best article in historical and/or comparative sociology published in the last two years (i.e., since January 1, 1992).

Articles may be submitted by authors or by others. Send three copies of the article to Bruce Car ruthers, Department of Sociology, Northwestern University, 1810 Chicago Ave., Evanston IL 60208-1330. PLEASE NOTE: DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS IS EXTENDED TO FEBRUARY 1, 1994.
Emirbayer (cont. from page 1)

of the most encouraging new developments in the discipline (Homans 1986, p. xxvi).

The point of departure of network analysis is what we call the anti-categorical imperative. This imperative rejects all attempts to explain human behavior or social processes solely in terms of the categorical attributes of actors, whether individual or collective. Network analysis, as Barry Wellman puts it, rejects explanations of "social behavior as the result of individuals' common possession of attributes and norms rather than as the result of their involvement in structured social relations" (Wellman 1983, p. 165). In other words, one can never simply appeal to such attributes as class membership or consciousness, political party affiliation, age, gender, social status, religious beliefs, ethnicity, sexual orientation, psychological predispositions, etc., in order to explain why people behave the way they do. "Network theory builds its explanations from patterns of relations," notes Ronald Burt. "It captures causal factors in the social structural bedrock of society, bypassing the spuriously significant attributes of people temporarily occupying particular positions in social structure" (Burt 1986, p. 106).

We contend that there have been three models implicit in the literature on network analysis — models of the relationships among culture, agency, and social structure — that have led to varying degrees of difficulty in elaborating satisfactory explanations of historical processes. The first of these implicit models, that of structuralist determinism (Rosenthal, et al. 1985; White, et al. 1976), features a succession of network "snapshots" of social structure. While yielding many valuable insights, it neglects altogether social actors' beliefs, values, and normative commitments — or, more generally, the potential causal significance of symbolic and discursive formations — and offers few insights into the concrete historical mechanisms leading from one network configuration to another. A second and more satisfactory — but still problematic — approach is that of structuralist instrumentalism (Gould 1991; 1992; Bearman 1993). Studies within this perspective accept the prominent role of social actors in history, but ultimately conceptualize their activity in narrowly utility-maximizing and instrumental forms, often relying upon unwarranted assumptions about the overriding importance to historical actors of money, status, and power. And finally, the most sophisticated network perspective on social change, which we term structuralist constructionism (McAdam 1986; 1988; Padgett and Ansell 1993), affirms the possibility that actors' goals and aspirations might well be complex, multivalent, and historically determined; it inquires, for example, into such intricate processes as identity conversion (McAdam) and flexible opportunism, or "robust action" (Padgett and Ansell). And yet not even this model, at least as elaborated by network analysts to date, fully recognizes the (potentially) autonomous causal significance of cultural discourses, idioms, and narratives in shaping the complex event sequences that it examines.

Of course, cultural discourses, idioms, and narratives are deeply embedded within network patterns of social relationships. Social networks are, indeed, "phenomenological realities," as Harrison White (1992) puts it — or "networks of meaning." Culture and social relations interpenetrate with and mutually condition one another so thoroughly that it is well-nigh impossible to conceive of the one without the other. This is the respect in which culture can, indeed, be said to constitute, in Charles Tilly's felicitous formulation, nothing less than the very "sinews" of social reality.

And yet there is another — and itself no less critical — sense in which cultural discourses, narratives, and idioms are also analytically autonomous with respect to network patterns of social relationships. These symbolic formations have emergent properties — an internal logic and organization of their own — that require that they be conceptualized as "cultural structures" analytically separate from social structure. This is an insight that goes back at least as far as the classical Parsons distinction between cultural and social systems; indeed, it originates in the later Durkheim, who in his religious sociology was the first to underscore the internal logic of systems of symbolic classification (see Emirbayer 1993).

Cultural structures are significant because they both constrain and enable historical actors, in much the

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same way as do network structures themselves. They constrain actors, to begin with, by blocking out certain possibilities for action, sometimes by rendering such possibilities inconceivable in the first place. Cultural structures also constrain actors by preventing certain arguments from being articulated in public discourse or, once articulated, from being favorably interpreted by others or even understood. It is often under their aegis, moreover, that contending social groups wage their cultural and political battles.

But cultural formations also enable historical actors in diverse ways — for example, by ordering their understandings of the social world and of themselves, by constructing their identities, goals, and aspirations, and by rendering certain issues significant or salient and others not. Indeed, by constraining actors' possibilities, these cultural formations already "enable" them as well, since, as Niklas Luhmann has pointed out, the "reduction of complexity" serves precisely to enhance the range of alternatives open to individual and/or collective actors. Struggles to redefine the cultural and symbolic definition of such situations, and in so doing to identify certain actors (and types of action) with "purity" and "sacrality" and others with "impurity" and "pollution," constitute one of the most important dimensions of social conflict. Pierre Bourdieu's trenchant insights into the dynamics of classification struggles are helpful here in bringing these conflicts into sharper focus.

Network analysis errs seriously in ignoring the complex ways in which agency and structure interpenetrate with one another in all individual units (as well as complexes) of social action. All historical processes are structured at least in part by cultural discourses, narratives, and idioms, as well as by networks of social interaction. (Historical processes are influenced in part, too, by the internal dynamics and logic of personality; see Goodwin forthcoming.) The various "environments" (Alexander 1988) of action, in sum, ought never to be reified as separate, concrete entities, much less hierarchized as if one of them (social networks) were always more causally significant than the others.

REFERENCES
collective action, on the one hand, and the formation of elite revolutionary vanguards, on the other. Even more recently, Margaret Somers has invoked a number of ideas emanating from the social network tradition ("embeddedness," for instance) to make sense of the emergence of citizenship rights and the public sphere in England.

The reason for posing the question, however, is that the number of scholars going beyond invocation of network ideas to detailed analyses of actual social networks remains tiny. With the exception of John Padgett and Christopher Ansell’s analysis of kin and financial networks in 15th-century Florence, Peter Bearman’s study of patronage ties in Tudor and Stuart England, and my own work on insurgent mobilization in Paris, sociologists with historical interests and expertise have steered clear of systematic analyses of relational data using network techniques.

It does not seem to me that this indifference — one might even say aloofness — results simply from the difficulty of obtaining archival data of the type and quality needed for formal network analysis (though data concerns certainly are significant). I suspect, rather, that historical sociologists remain unpersuaded that the often forbidding formalisms that have emerged from the network tradition have much to offer in the way of insights that would not emerge from careful, theoretically informed, rigorous scholarship of the traditional sort. The same consideration has hindered the spread of social network analysis into sociological research in general.

It would be naïve to suppose that a short piece such as this one could convince skeptics of the potential usefulness to historical sociology of social network analysis; only a substantial body of serious empirical research will accomplish that, and such research does not, for the most part, exist yet. But I do think it worthwhile to point out a few research areas in which systematic network studies might prove especially generative of new insights and knowledge.

One such substantive area is the study of collective identities, whether in the context of protest movements, large-scale bureaucratic institutions, or emerging nationalisms. Most published research on these topics adopts a self-consciously culturalist stance, focusing on the discursive frameworks in terms of which political actors make sense of their own and others’ behavior. Yet it seems essential to supplement analyses of texts, symbols, and utterances with studies of the social interactions that push or pull human beings into (or out of) various and competing collective self-understandings (burgher or citizen; German or Hessian; wife or woman; Loyalist or Falangist; shoemaker or worker; colonial elite or anti-colonial revolutionary). Padgett and Ansell, for example, employ reduced-form “blockmodels” of kin and financial networks among the Florentine mercantile elite to explain how the structural position of the Medici allowed them to appear simultaneously as defenders of the patrician order and “heroes of the new men.” My own research on shifting forms of protest in Paris in the mid-nineteenth century uses marriage documents to show that the communitarian emphasis of the Commune depended crucially on neighborhood identities expressed in, and reinforced by, social relationships among neighbors that bridged the boundaries of craft and class. These studies strongly suggest that there is much to be learned by examining the ways in which discursive frames that classify people into collectivities influence and are influenced by the concrete social ties forged as the potential members of such collectivities go about their daily lives.

Analyses of social networks might also make a significant contribution to the study of the emergence and diffusion of state welfare policies (or, for that matter, any other state policies). To my knowledge, there are no systematic historical studies of the impact of informal social relations among state officials (and between state officials and private interests) on the process by which certain policies take hold and drive out competitors. There is however, a growing body of evidence in the sociology of organizations that documents precisely this sort of diffusion mechanism both in the contemporary public policy arena and in the corporate world; and proponents of the state-centered approach in historical sociology have furnished anecdotal evidence of such processes in the emergence and eventual hegemony of specific programs, such as unemployment insurance, as cornerstones of social citizenship rights.

Finally, the venerable topic of state formation itself is a strong candidate for research that takes seriously the structure of social ties. The view of the modern state bureaucracy we inherited from Weber takes as one of its major points of departure the separation of the

Name That Grad Student Prize

For the new Graduate Student Prize (see page 1), the C/HS Section has decided to conduct a "name that prize" contest. Please send in your entries for possible titles for the prize to Ann Orloff, section chair. She, along with the section officers and the prize committee, will decide on the winner. The contestant whose entry is accepted as the official title of the Graduate Student Prize will then be treated, by the Section, to one book of the winner’s choice from among any of the recent books written by section members. Please send entries to Ann Orloff, Dept. of Sociology, U. of Wisconsin, Madison, WI by February 1, 1994.
The Gender Lens (Sage Publications and Pine Forge Press; Series Editors: Judith A. Howard, Barbara Risman, Joey Sprague) is a new series of books directed toward demonstrating the importance of treating gender as a crucial sensitizing lens through which the wide spectrum of sociological phenomena must be seen.

The series will address several goals. First, these books will present the now considerable corpus of theory and research on gendered structures and processes organizing the worlds of work, politics, families, development, law, education, and a host of social domains, to ensure that theory and research on gender become fully integrated into the discipline as a whole. Second, each of the series volumes will enhance readers' sensitivities to the full array of social differences and to the intersections of systems of gender with other interlocking systems of oppression. Third, much of the boundary maintenance rhetoric within sociology is being replaced by attempts to build a transdisciplinary, multilevel framework based on a contextualized view of social action. This series will generate the terms of a multi-level theory of gender that will contribute to this general project. Fourth, the series is intended to generate an "intellectual collective" such that the contribution to a fuller understanding of gender is more than the sum of its individual contributions. The organizational and publication arrangements of the series are designed to promote this intellectual community.

The series will include several different types of books. "Gendered view" books will present "invitation" style treatments of relatively general fields such as social problems, family, or sociology as a whole. These books will be particularly useful in lower division courses, but will also be of interest to a broader public. "Gender focussed" books will summarize the importance of gender for understanding specific subfields of sociology, such as social psychology, organizations, education, medical sociology, or stratification. In some cases these monographs will serve as companion volumes, providing a lens for seeing traditional course materials in the area through a gendered perspective. In other cases, these books might serve as central texts.

These books will be of use in upper division undergraduate and introductory graduate courses. They are also intended to be bibliographic and pedagogical resources for scholars who do not specialize in the particular area, but wish a gendered overview. "Gender development" books will analyze the gendered character of the conceptual organization of substantive subfields, as well as more general theoretical and methodological debates within sociology. These books are intended for use in graduate seminars and as resources for scholars who wish to integrate the existing work on gender into their own research. In some cases the same substantive area might be addressed by several of these different types of books. Each of these books will offer both conceptual advances in analytic terms and language that is rigorous and accessible.

The first volumes will be available in August 1995. Authors are invited to submit manuscript proposals to Judith A. Howard, Department of Sociology, DK-40, University of Washington, Seattle, WA 98195; Barbara Risman, Department of Sociology, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC 27695-8107; and Joey Sprague, Department of Sociology, University of Kansas, 716 Fraser Hall, Lawrence, KS 66045.