

**PUBLICATIONS OF THE  
AMERICAN ACADEMY OF  
POLITICAL AND SOCIAL  
SCIENCE. THE OUTLINES OF  
SOCIOLOGY**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649005024

Publications of the American Academy of Political and Social science. The outlines of sociology  
by Ludwig Gumplowicz

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**LUDWIG GUMFLOWICZ**

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AMERICAN ACADEMY OF POLITICAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCE.

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# The Outlines of Sociology.

BY

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PHILADELPHIA :  
AMERICAN ACADEMY OF POLITICAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCE.

1899.

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Annex

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## THE OUTLINES OF SOCIOLOGY.\*

### INTRODUCTION.

Gumplowicz's "Outlines of Sociology" is distinguished from all earlier sociological works by the character of the sociological unit upon which it is based, which is the group. The author limits himself to the study of the behavior of social units, and especially to the study of the action of groups on each other and the action of the group on the individual. To compare Gumplowicz's theory with the theory of Giddings, and to use a metaphor for brevity, the former begins a whole stage later in the evolution of life; it does not account for but assumes group life.

Starting with cohesively aggregated life, Gumplowicz makes important use of the principles already accepted concerning the influence of environment, and especially of the economic wants and the tendency of desires to grow with the opportunity to satisfy them. To these he adds, as something new, the postulates that the normal relation of unlike groups is conflict and that progress comes through the conflict of groups. Hence the important sociological phenomena are those relating to the conflict of unlike groups and to their amalgamation and assimilation.

Sociology is considered the fundamental social science, for it deals with the same subject-matter that all social sciences deal with, and treats of laws and modes of behavior in group life that are common to all the special social sciences alike. If what is general and common to all is set apart as the sphere of a particular science, then what is peculiar to each differentiated class of phenomena may be properly left to a special science working on the principles of the general science as a basis.

Further, the special social sciences, which have developed in advance of the general science, must submit to a revolution in point of view, to a revision of method and a re-statement of accepted laws in harmony with the new ideas

\*[The translator takes pleasure in making public acknowledgement of the important assistance rendered him by his friends Dr. A. R. Hohlfield, Professor of German in Vanderbilt University, Dr. C. F. Euerick, Instructor in Economics in the same institution, and W. C. Branham, A. M., Co-Principal of Branham and Hughes School, String Hill, Tenn. The first named carefully compared the translation with the original and the others assisted in revising the proof.]

in sociology; while for the future, whether new social laws are first detected in general sociology or in one of the special sciences, it must be remembered that the phenomena which the latter study are social also, and that the special laws of their behavior are inherently social and must stand the test of sociological criticism.

Gumplowicz's sociology is not properly descriptive. Description falls to anthropology, ethnology, politics, history, comparative philology, the comparative study of law, religion, institutions, etc. It is considered the peculiar task of sociology to abstract the laws of the behavior of social phenomena.

The volitional element plays no part, or a negative one, in Gumplowicz's theory. Man, misled by the idea of human free will and by an anthropomorphic conception of deity, has overestimated his own influence and importance. He is most successful in art and invention, for here he strives to copy nature. In other spheres he is not infrequently found striving to preserve what nature has ordained to decay. But first striving to learn what the laws of nature are, he should next learn to adapt himself to them as best he can and to bear with resignation what cannot be avoided. Nature is unchangeable and so are her laws. The history of mankind is the history of a species as such. The fate which befalls the individual in society is not the fate which he merits always, but it is necessarily that which his group makes inevitable. Historic justice is not individual, but social.

FREDERICK W. MOORE.

## ARGUMENT.

### *Part I.*

Part I contains a survey of past progress in social science, intended to prepare the reader for the new departure in sociological thought which the author proposes to make.

He reviews the work of Comte, Spencer, Bastiau, Lippert and others, and the relations of economics, politics, the comparative study of law, the philosophy of history and the history of civilization to the science of society.

Incidentally four important propositions are laid down:

*First.*—Social phenomena are subject to the general law of causation as much as other classes of phenomena which have been successfully treated by the scientific method. This has been asserted or tacitly assumed by all the earlier writers; it is axiomatic.

*Second.*—Human acts, whether individual or social, are the product of natural forces and they excite reflection. The function of the mind or soul is secondary in point of time. In this the author differs from some of his predecessors.

*Third.*—Differing radically from other writers, the author denies that society is simply an organism analogous to but as high above man as man is above other organisms in nature. In his conception, society, the social group, the sociological unit, is an organism or organization entirely, (*toto genere*), different from any other. Considered as a whole it is unlike any of its parts. Its nature cannot be inferred from their nature, but more probably the nature of the individual will be influenced by it. His system begins with social elements (swarms, hordes, groups, etc.), and logically proceeds to the consideration of man, their product both in mind and body; the social process and its products; and finally the ethico-social products of the action of society upon the individual.

*Fourth.*—The author holds and defends the position that every political organization, and hence every developing civilization, begins at the moment when one group permanently subjects another. Subjection of some to others is the source of political organization and political organization is the condition essential to social growth. This proposition and the preceding constitute the corner stone of the author's theory.