



## Comparative Perspectives on Social Change.

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*American Journal of Sociology*, Volume 74, Issue 4 (Jan., 1969), 423.

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*American Journal of Sociology*  
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*Comparative Perspectives on Social Change.*

Edited by S. N. EISENSTADT. Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1968. Pp. 279.

I have never understood why it was commonplace to state that either the study or the "theorizing" of social change was neglected. As S. N. Eisenstadt demonstrates again in this collection of essays, there is a rich body of literature on these questions from which to choose. Only very few of the selections included here have appeared in previously published readers devoted to social change.

Eisenstadt's volume also illustrates how lightly academic boundaries are to be treated. The material provided by political scientists, anthropologists, sociologists, economists, and others is of similar merit—disregarding the discipline of the reader.

Probably the most difficult requirement to meet is the "comparative perspectives" the title promises. To be truly comparative, a selection must not only deal with more than one social or cultural setting but also have at least something to offer to enhance our awareness and understanding of the differences and similarities between two or more such contexts. Surprisingly, many of the sixteen selections which make up this subreader answer this requirement. Eisenstadt's own article (reprinted from *American Anthropology*) moves freely back and forth, comparing the data about China, Japan, and India, and the theoretical conceptions which have assisted their modernization. Similarly, S. P. Huntington compares the modernization of America to that of Europe. W. J. Goode's and K. Davis' comparisons are truly global.

Eisenstadt provides the volume with an Introduction of his own, which is very much in line with what one expects to come from his pen: analytic, technically precise, sweeping in implication. Only the usual army of references is omitted. Short notes introduce the sections of the book and help place the articles in the context of other articles, without limiting the commentary to the comparative dimension.

This subreader will be useful to students of social change, especially those interested in modernization and those without access to a fair library.

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*Criteria for Scientific Development: Public*

*Policy and National Goals.* Edited by EDWARD SHILS. Cambridge, Mass.: M.I.T. Press, 1968. Pp. 207. \$8.95.

*The Government of Science.*

By HARVEY BROOKS. Cambridge, Mass.: M.I.T. Press, 1968. Pp. 343. \$10.00.

Social scientists should feel challenged by two new books in the science and public policy field. Both contain attempts to formulate rational public policies that would promote the development and utilization of science, and yet neither includes an extensive examination of the social science literature relevant to planning in this area. Any finding of fault with their authors for this omission is really a criticism of the sociologists of science and the students of public administration whose work is so un compelling that it does not command the attention it deserves in the analysis of public policies toward science.

One book is a collection of articles from the first five years of the international journal of science and education policy, *Minerva*, assembled by its editor, Edward Shils. Among the fifteen articles are contributions by such leading practitioners and philosophers of science as Michael Polanyi, Alvin Weinberg, and Stephen Toulmin. Surprisingly, for a collection of independently prepared essays, there is a great deal of cohesion. In only the last five essays do the dialogue and debate among the contributors begin to falter and drift.

The central theme of the book is the same as that which Shils established for *Minerva*—the search for improved government science policies. Government has come to support science because of its usefulness in furthering a variety of social ends, such as defense, public health, and education. In the process of pursuing these ends, government decisions allocating funds to science affect its progress and its ability to serve society. Since the progress of science is thought to require free inquiry, there is a potential conflict between the needs of science and the needs of government. Reconciling the conflict by selecting criteria to guide government science allocations is the key policy issue.

The contributors approach various aspects of this issue. They establish and refine such important distinctions as that between basic research and technological development and that between big science and little science.