

Solidarity

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Solidarity is the integration, and degree and type of integration, shown by a society or group with people and their neighbours. It refers to the ties in a society - social relations - that bind people to one another. The term is generally employed in sociology and the other social sciences.

What forms the basis of solidarity varies between societies. In simple societies it may be mainly based around kinship and shared values. In more complex societies there are various theories as to what contributes to a sense of social solidarity.

Ibn Khaldun

`Asabiyyah refers to social solidarity with an emphasis on unity, group consciousness, and social cohesion, originally in a context of "tribalism" and "clanism", but sometimes used for modern nationalism as well. Ibn Khaldun's Muqaddimah described it as the fundamental bond of human society and the basic motive force of history. `Asabiyyah is neither necessarily nomadic nor based on blood relations. In the modern period, the term is generally analogous to solidarity.

Ibn Khaldun argues, effectively, that each dynasty has within itself the seeds of its own downfall. He explains that ruling houses tend to emerge on the peripheries of great empires and use the unity presented by those areas to their advantage in order to bring about a change in leadership. As the new rulers establish themselves at the center of their empire, they become increasingly lax and more concerned with maintaining their lifestyles. Thus, a new dynasty can emerge at the periphery of their control and effect a change in leadership, beginning the cycle anew.

It can be compared to Émile Durkheim's mechanical solidarity as opposed to the organic solidarity which he suggests can be found in modern societies.

Durkheim

According to Émile Durkheim, the types of social solidarity correlate with types of society. Durkheim introduced the terms "mechanical" and "organic solidarity" as part of his theory of the development of societies in *The Division of Labour in Society* (1893). In a society exhibiting mechanical solidarity, its cohesion and integration comes from the homogeneity of individuals--people feel connected through similar work, educational and religious training, and lifestyle. Mechanical solidarity normally operates in "traditional" and small scale societies. In simpler societies (e.g., tribal), solidarity is usually based on kinship ties of familial networks. Organic solidarity comes from the interdependence that arises from specialization of work and the complementarities between people--a development which occurs in "modern" and "industrial" societies. Definition: it is social cohesion based upon the dependence individuals have on each other in more advanced societies. Although individuals perform different tasks and often have different values and interest, the order and very solidarity of society depends on their reliance on

each other to perform their specified tasks. Organic here is referring to the interdependence of the component parts. Thus, social solidarity is maintained in more complex societies through the interdependence of its component parts (e.g., farmers produce the food to feed the factory workers who produce the tractors that allow the farmer to produce the food).

The two types of solidarity can be distinguished by morphological and demographic features, type of norms in existence, and the intensity and content of the conscience collective.

Quotes

International solidarity is "not an act of charity but an act of unity between allies fighting on different terrains toward the same objectives." - Samora Machel

"Unlike solidarity, which is horizontal and takes place between equals, charity is top-down, humiliating those who receive it and never challenging the implicit power relations." - Eduardo Galeano

"Solidarity is not a matter of altruism. Solidarity comes from the inability to tolerate the affront to our own integrity of passive or active collaboration in the oppression of others, and from the deep recognition of our most expansive self-interest. From the recognition that, like it or not, our liberation is bound up with that of every other being on the planet, and that politically, spiritually, in our heart of hearts we know anything else is unaffordable." - Aurora Levins Morales

"Solidarity does not assume that our struggles are the same struggles, or that our pain is the same pain, or that our hope is for the same future. Solidarity involves commitment, and work, as well as the recognition that even if we do not have the same feelings, or the same lives, or the same bodies, we do live on common ground." - Sarah Ahmed

"No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main. If a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were, as well as if a manor of thy friend's or of thine own were: any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind, and therefore never send to know for whom the bells tolls; it tolls for thee. Neither can we call this a begging of misery, or a borrowing of misery, as though we were not miserable enough of ourselves, but must fetch in more from the next house, in taking upon us the misery of our neighbours. Truly it were an excusable covetousness if we did, for affliction is a treasure, and scarce any man hath enough of it. No man hath affliction enough that is not matured and ripened by and made fit for God by that affliction. If a man carry treasure in bullion, or in a wedge of gold, and have none coined into current money, his treasure will not defray him as he travels. Tribulation is treasure in the nature of it, but it is not current money in the use of it, except we get nearer and nearer our home, heaven, by it. Another man may be sick too, and sick to death, and this affliction may lie in his bowels, as gold in a mine, and be of no use to him; but this

bell, that tells me of his affliction, digs out and applies that gold to me: if by this consideration of another's danger I take mine own into contemplation, and so secure myself, by making my recourse to my God, who is our only security." - John Donne, Meditation XVII

"There exists an international citizenship that has its rights and its duties, and that obliges one to speak out against every abuse of power, whoever its author, whoever its victims. After all, we are all members of the community of the governed, and thereby obliged to show mutual solidarity." - Michel Foucault (1984)

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